

# Clay Veterans, Inc.

## Strategic Plan (2025–2030)

---

### Vision

A thriving veteran community where every veteran and their family can access support services, find camaraderie, and continue serving others — all from a dedicated, stand-alone facility with space for programs, events, and community gatherings.

### Strategic Priorities

- Operate and Strengthen the Veterans Center
- Build Membership Value Through Connection and Purpose
- Expand Programs and Participation
- Grow Organizational Capacity and Sustainability
- Secure a Stand-Alone Facility with Grounds

### Goals, Objectives & Success Indicators

#### Goal 1: Strengthen Core Programs

##### *Objectives:*

---

- Maintain consistent hours at the Veterans Center with front-desk coverage 5 days/week.
- Expand Open Door hours to 3 days/week and increase caregiver participation by 50% within 3 years.
- Scale Vet Tech assistance to support 80% of veterans requesting VA.gov help within 72 hours.
- Strengthen Support Services response process so veterans/families receive a resource connection or “warm handoff” within 7–30 days depending on need.

##### *Success Indicators:*

---

- 20% annual increase in veteran participation.
- Two new support service partnerships added by Year 3.

## **Goal 2: Grow and Engage Membership**

Clay Veterans membership will provide clear value through connection, purpose, and consistent opportunities for veterans and families to engage—both at the Center and throughout Clay County.

### ***Objectives:***

---

- Launch and sustain membership benefits that include: (1) Community Engagement Programs, (2) Camaraderie Groups, (3) Signature Social Interaction Events, and (4) Quarterly Communications about issues affecting veterans and families in Clay County.
- Reach 250 members by Year 3 and 500 members by Year 5.
- Maintain a 70%+ member retention rate year-over-year.

### ***Membership Benefit Area 1: Community Engagement Programs***

These programs provide structured, meaningful ways for members to continue serving the Clay County community while strengthening camaraderie.

### ***Programs:***

---

- “Continue to Serve” Community Projects (Quarterly)
  - Coordinate at least four member-led service projects each year (e.g., home accessibility partnerships, food pantry support days, community beautification, senior/veteran housing initiatives).
  - Plan and publish projects through the shared calendar and volunteer leadership team.
- Veteran-to-Community Service Teams
  - Establish small volunteer teams to connect with veterans in the community (VISIT) at nursing homes, assisted living, hospitals, and hospices.
  - Establish small volunteer teams to connect with veteran survivors experiencing loss or hospice circumstances (BEREAVEMENT).
  - Offer skill-based teams such as Light Outdoor Help, Admin Support, Resource Navigation, and Event Support.
- “Buddy Up” Connection Program

- Offer a monthly “bring-a-buddy” connection activity to reduce isolation and welcome veterans who are hesitant to attend alone.
- Use warm, low-pressure formats (introductions, casual conversation, and facilitated connection).
- Skills-Based Workshops and Community Learning Series (Quarterly)
  - Host workshops at the Veterans Center or with partners on navigating benefits systems, financial literacy, job readiness, caregiver planning, and estate planning education.
- Community Partner Project Pipeline
  - Create a system to accept project nominations from trusted partners (civic groups, churches, schools, county partners).
  - Review nominations and select projects for quarterly execution.

***Success Indicators:***

---

- Complete 4+ community engagement projects per year by Year 2.
- At least 30% of members participate in one or more projects/events annually by Year 3.
- Community partner participation grows annually (tracked).

***Membership Benefit Area 2: Camaraderie Programs (Member Groups)***

To strengthen connection and reduce social isolation, Clay Veterans will maintain specialized camaraderie groups. These groups provide consistent peer interaction and safe spaces for veterans and caregivers. Group schedules will be coordinated through the shared member calendar and supported by trained volunteer facilitators.

***Camaraderie Groups:***

---

- Combat Veterans Group

Peer connection for veterans with combat experience to share stories, rebuild belonging, and support one another.

- Caregivers Connection Group

Support and respite-focused connection for caregivers of veterans. Includes shared resources and practical problem-solving.

- Social Interaction & Connection Group (Veterans Who Are Isolating at Home)

A welcoming, low-pressure group designed to reduce isolation through simple connection activities.

- Bereavement Support Group

Peer support for surviving spouses, family members, and veterans processing grief and loss.

- Brain Injury Support & Navigation Group

Support for veterans living with brain injury or related cognitive challenges, including caregiver inclusion and resource navigation.

#### ***Implementation Objectives (2025–2030):***

---

- Launch at least two camaraderie groups in Year 1 and expand to all five groups by Year 3.
- Establish a consistent meeting cadence (monthly minimum; biweekly when volunteer capacity allows).
- Train volunteer facilitators using a basic facilitation and safety guideline checklist.
- Track participation and Support Services referrals to ensure veterans needing additional help receive warm handoffs.
- Publish schedules in the shared calendar and highlight group updates in quarterly member communications.

#### ***Success Indicators:***

---

- At least 30% of engaged members participate in at least one camaraderie group annually by Year 3.
- Year-over-year increase in participation for the Social Interaction & Connection Group.
- Positive participant feedback and reduced reported isolation among recurring attendees.
- Improved caregiver retention and satisfaction through Caregivers Connection support.

***Membership Benefit Area 3: Signature Social Interaction Events (Annual)***

In addition to ongoing camaraderie groups, Clay Veterans will host three signature annual events to reinforce belonging, celebrate milestones, and reduce isolation during key seasonal periods.

- Veterans Center Opening Anniversary Cookout (April)

A community cookout celebrating the opening of the Clay Veterans Center and reinforcing connection and growth.

- Vets-Giving Dinner (November)

A Thanksgiving-style gathering focused on gratitude, fellowship, and ensuring veterans who are alone have a place to belong.

- Vets-Holiday Dinner (December)

A holiday meal and social gathering to reduce seasonal isolation, strengthen friendships, and foster community support.

***Implementation Objectives (2025–2030):***

---

- Publish the three signature event dates each year no later than January 31 through the shared calendar and quarterly communications.
- Establish an event lead (staff/volunteer) and planning team for each signature event at least 90 days prior to execution.
- Secure venue logistics, food plan, and volunteer staffing plan at least 60 days prior to each event.
- Implement an outreach plan for veterans who may be isolated at home (calls, partner referrals, and direct invitations).
- Capture attendance, volunteer hours, and participant feedback after each event to guide improvements year-over-year.

***Success Indicators:***

---

- Three signature events conducted annually beginning Year 1.
- Year-over-year growth in attendance and volunteer participation (target: +10% annually).
- Measured reduction in self-reported isolation among recurring participants (survey feedback).

- Increased membership engagement during seasonal periods (November–December) reflected in renewals and participation.

#### ***Membership Benefit Area 4: Quarterly Communication***

Publish a quarterly update for members featuring current and future issues impacting veterans and families in Clay County, including local resource changes, upcoming projects/events, and organizational milestones.

##### ***Implementation Objectives (2025–2030):***

---

- Publish one quarterly communication in each quarter (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4) on a consistent release schedule.
- Standardize a one-page structure for readability: (1) What's New, (2) Upcoming Events, (3) Veteran Issues & Resources, (4) Ways to Serve, (5) Sponsor/Partner Highlights.
- Collect content inputs from programs (Open Door, Vet Tech, Support Services, Volunteer Service) no later than 15 days prior to release.
- Distribute through multiple channels (email, website posting, printed copies at the Center) to maximize reach.
- Track engagement metrics (open rate, clicks, requests for help, event sign-ups) and adjust quarterly topics based on member feedback.

##### ***Success Indicators:***

---

- Quarterly communication released on time 4x per year.
- Improved member engagement demonstrated by increased event sign-ups and volunteer participation following distribution.
- Increased referrals and resource connections initiated from shared updates (tracked by Support Services).
- Consistent sponsor/partner exposure that strengthens retention and funding relationships.

#### **Goal 3: Build Organizational Sustainability**

##### ***Objectives:***

---

- Increase annual revenue by 20% per year through sponsorships, grants, and donations.
- Establish and strengthen a membership dues system by Year 2.

- Train at least 10 dedicated volunteers and 2 part-time staff positions by Year 4 (as funding supports).
- Build a sponsorship pipeline with at least 50 active donors/sponsors by Year 5.

***Success Indicators:***

---

- Balanced annual budget by Year 3.
- Six months of operating reserves by Year 5.
- Diversified income streams (no single source >40%).

**Goal 4: Secure a Stand-Alone Facility**

***Objectives:***

---

- Conduct a feasibility study and identify property options by end of Year 2.
- Launch a capital campaign in Year 3 with a phased target (example: \$250k initial fundraising goal).
- Acquire land or building by Year 4–5 and begin build-out or renovation.

***Success Indicators:***

---

- Fully operational stand-alone facility by end of Year 5, with outdoor space for gatherings and programming.

**3–5 Year Roadmap**

**Year 1 – Foundation & Launch**

- Finalize and publish membership tiers and benefits; launch shared member calendar.
- Publish the annual schedule for the three signature events (Cookout, Vets-Giving, Vets-Holiday) and assign event leads.
- Release quarterly communications on a consistent schedule (4x/year) and publish on the website.
- Stand up Community Engagement Program: pilot at least two “Continue to Serve” projects.
- Launch at least two Camaraderie Groups and establish group facilitator guidelines.
- Expand Open Door hours and strengthen Vet Tech and Support Services response tracking.
- Formalize Volunteer Service tracking and referral process.

- Begin property research and develop a facility needs outline.

### **Year 2 – Growth & Consistency**

- Reach 250 members and strengthen renewal/retention processes.
- Execute all three signature events with standardized planning timelines and a +10% attendance growth target.
- Complete four community engagement projects and expand service teams (VISIT and Bereavement).
- Run all five Camaraderie Groups with at least monthly cadence.
- Increase center foot traffic and service utilization, track outcomes quarterly.
- Continue quarterly communications with improved engagement tracking and topic responsiveness.
- Conduct feasibility study and identify a short-list of property/facility options.
- Strengthen sponsorship pipeline and donor stewardship cadence.

### **Year 3 – Expansion & Capital Readiness**

- Launch capital campaign plan and secure lead sponsors/partners.
- Enhance quarterly communications to include sponsor highlights, impact metrics, and volunteer spotlights.
- Expand signature events to include partner participation, resource tables, or themed engagement activities.
- Add 1–2 enhanced Support Services offerings based on member needs assessment.
- Develop an online member portal for sign-ups, calendar access, and resources (as feasible).
- Hire first part-time Program Coordinator or Admin Support role (as funding allows).
- Increase project volume and partner nominations through the Community Partner Pipeline.

### **Year 4 – Facility Acquisition & Scaling**

- Acquire land or facility space (purchase/lease/partnership) and initiate build-out plan.
- Standardize event and communication workflows for sustainability and leadership transitions.
- Expand volunteer leadership roles and facilitator coverage for programs and groups.
- Build operating reserves and strengthen financial reporting for scalability.
- Expand membership benefits through partner perks and community-facing events.

### **Year 5 – Transition & End State**

- Complete build-out or renovation and transition operations to the stand-alone site.
- Host a countywide grand opening and community engagement event.
- Operate with a mature membership system, project pipeline, and sustained camaraderie programs, events, and communications.
- Establish a continuous improvement cycle (annual review of programs, metrics, and member needs).

### **End State**

A permanent Clay Veterans Center facility with indoor and outdoor program space, serving as the hub for veteran services, camaraderie, and community engagement in Clay County — where veterans connect, access support, and continue to serve.