

## New Beginnings

October marks the beginning a new era for redevelopment—an era when visioning shifts into action. Tremendous community input and support through the 20 plus workshops over the past year, combined with the contribution of top-notch professionals, have resulted in the document we call the “Revised Redevelopment Plan” that includes both the former “Downtown Redevelopment Area (DRA)” and the expanded North Port St. Joe area.

We appreciate the very public support of the communities and of individuals who have given of their time freely to attend our meetings and workshops. You have each contributed to the future of the city in a very real and positive manner. We offer a huge thanks to Mayor Mel, who has attended many such meetings and has been a vocal and appreciated supporter of both the agency and of the expanded area. Thanks to those who attended the Williams Avenue Improvements workshop last week; because of your comments we continue to improve our plans. Such is the way of redevelopment...a very public, ongoing community effort.

The City of Port St. Joe is preparing to adopt the revised redevelopment plan. Over the past 18 years, the redevelopment agency has been working from the original 1989 version. Times change and priorities change. Additional neighborhoods in the city both require and deserve the focus of attention and funding that a CRA provides. For this reason, we request the City approve the revised plan at the October 16 Commission meeting. The greater public good is served through adoption of the plan.

To this end, we encourage you each and all to attend the City-sponsored town hall meeting for public comment on Thursday, September 27, at the Senior Citizens’ Center. This workshop will begin at 5 PM. Throughout the spring, the PSJRA distributed over 400 copies of the “draft plan” to the public. If you already have a copy, please bring it with you. We will have a few to share at the meeting as well. New copies will be printed and available upon request after formal approval of the plan.

This plan provides a “framework” of potential programs as well as a “conceptual” budget and “estimated” revenue flow over the next 10 years. As priorities change, the plan has the built-in capacity to adjust to new circumstances. This redevelopment plan includes a variety of new options and allows the PSJRA to fund a wider variety of programs such as community celebrations and festivals. The essential element of affordable housing has also been added to the plan. Approval of the plan allows the PSJRA to begin funding programs in NPSJ and programs not included in the previous plan.

The public overview of the agency’s direction continues. Redevelopment is a process of consensus. The process is not ruled by individual desires but by the will of the majority. While we welcome the opinions of individuals, and while those opinions may very well provide value and adjustments to programs and processes, nevertheless, this is a group process to provide the greatest benefit to the community as a whole.

Please come and show your interest in your community and your support for the redevelopment efforts. There is only one reason for a redevelopment agency and that is to promote and cultivate a community that is more successful, vibrant and economically secure than it was before. It is simple for you to be a part of our new beginning—just

show up and keep the dialog going in the open and standing along side your friends and neighbors.