

# *Strategic Revitalization Plan for St. Andrews*

## *A Community's Vision for its Future*

*Produced by the efforts of many through the  
St. Andrews Visioning Project*

*July 1997*



*Historic St. Andrews--A village by the bay  
where cultural attractions, entertainment and commerce thrive.*

***This report is dedicated to the dozens of volunteers  
who worked with great commitment to create a compelling  
new vision for their community.***

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## *Section 1: Executive Summary*

St. Andrews is a historic waterfront community within the City of Panama City. Once a thriving community, the area has been economically depressed since the 1970s. Public sector efforts to revitalize St. Andrews began in 1989, when the central business portion of St. Andrews was determined to qualify as a blighted area, making it eligible under the state Community Redevelopment Act (Florida Statutes, Chapter 163). The St. Andrews Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) was established and a planning firm was engaged to write a redevelopment plan. In January 1990, property owners voted down (84 votes against and 72 in favor) a special levy to fund redevelopment.

In 1995, the City of Panama City received a grant from the Florida Department of Community Affairs--Florida Coastal Management Program to try a new approach. The grant funded a visioning effort that would engage the St. Andrews community in creating a plan for its own future. The grant specified that the grassroots revitalization plan should meet the following criteria:

- 1) have broad public support;
- 2) be realistic;
- 3) reflect multiple funding sources; and
- 4) recommend necessary regulatory changes.

The resulting strategic revitalization plan for St. Andrews meets these objectives and offers a blueprint for redevelopment compatible with this community's vision for its future. The plan was developed through an intensive visioning effort engaging as many of the St. Andrews stakeholders as possible over a one and a half year period. Citizens participated in three major town meetings and dozens of task force meetings, as well as a symposium and workshop.

Products of the St. Andrews Visioning Project include:

- A vision statement. This statement of the ideal future of St. Andrews guided the in-depth visioning on key areas. That vision: Historic St. Andrews, a village by the bay where cultural attractions, entertainment, and commerce thrive.
- Identification of the boundaries of St. Andrews, including feeder neighborhoods, as perceived by citizens involved in the visioning process. Defining boundaries will further attempts to win grants and engage citizens in redevelopment efforts.
- A Historic Preservation and Revitalization Plan. The St. Andrews Visioning Project commissioned SouthArc Inc. to carry out this plan to determine realistic strategies to preserve the area's cultural resources and spur the economy. Results include four proposed historic districts, a draft historic preservation ordinance and realistic marketing and promotion recommendations.
- Strategies for redevelopment developed by five task forces: 1) economic development; 2) design and planning; 3) promotion; 4) organization; and 5) history.

- Formation of the St. Andrews Project Partnership to carry the effort into actual redevelopment.

Strategies for achieving the vision of a renewed St. Andrews are summarized below.

#### Economic Development

- 1) Increase visitation to St. Andrews.
- 2) Assist current businesses.
- 3) Attract new businesses and developments in keeping with community vision.

#### Design and Planning

- 1) Employ traditional town planning approach compatible with vision of St. Andrews as a historic village.
- 2) Promote St. Andrews' environmental quality and provide for public access and enjoyment of natural resources; promote a clean, green appearance.
- 3) Encourage preservation and restoration of historic structures.

#### Promotion

- 1) Develop a regular calendar of festivals and events to attract people to St. Andrews; find individuals and organizations to carry out these events.
- 2) Carry out joint advertising campaigns through various media.

#### Organization

- 1) Form a partnership consisting of key stakeholders in St. Andrews who will see revitalization through.
- 2) Form a citizens' group to aid in grassroots efforts to strengthen St. Andrews' central business district and neighborhoods, and help with fundraising for revitalization.

#### History

- 1) Promote awareness of St. Andrews' history.
- 2) Find ways the past can catalyze revitalization.

## Section 2: Background

### 2.1 Origin and Funding

In October of 1995, the City of Panama City received a state grant to fund the St. Andrews Visioning Project, a grassroots visioning effort intended to spur revitalization of the historic waterfront community of St. Andrews. The Florida Coastal Management Program, a division of the Florida Department of Community Affairs, funded the project in the amount of \$62,750 over two fiscal years. These funds were provided from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). City funds spent on purchasing and developing the new Oaks by the Bay Park, as well as support services the city provided, were used as the local project match.

### 2.2 Approach

The St. Andrews Visioning Project (referred to hereafter simply as the Project) was charged with creating a realistic revitalization plan that was broadly supported by the local community. The intent of the grant was to involve the stakeholders of St. Andrews directly in the planning effort. A project director began work in December 1995, and on February 13, 1996, the City Commission appointed an Advisory Council. The Advisory Council consisted of 13 stakeholders of St. Andrews business community, residents, and the larger Bay County community.

Initially, the Project worked to determine how to carry out an effective visioning effort. Research into visioning projects around the country revealed that many municipalities had experienced positive results from visioning projects. Benefits of grassroots visioning included:

- For business--Reduced uncertainty and encouragement to invest
- For government--Positive, active citizen participation
- For citizens--Opportunity to improve community and enhance personal interests.

With a diverse Advisory Council in place to help guide the effort, the Project began to enlist the involvement of the community at large. This began with a pilot community meeting at Oakland Terrace Elementary on May 9 and led up to a town meeting on July 27th at St. Andrew Elementary.



## 2.3 Town Visioning Meeting

Advance preparations for the town meeting included a public relations effort to encourage attendance. Public service announcements and press releases were distributed and media interviews given. Meanwhile, Gulf Coast Community College's Citizen Leadership Institute trained several Advisory Council members as facilitators and provided additional trained facilitators for the event.

Almost 100 citizens attended the July 27 town meeting. After a brief orientation and slide show, they spent one and a half hours in brainstorming sessions in classrooms, generating dozens of ideas on various topics. The input is summarized below.

Values. Brainstorming began by asking those in attendance what they treasured about their community. The most mentioned assets of St. Andrews were:

- historic character
- marine setting and fishing heritage
- the natural beauty of the waterfront, marine life, and trees
- safe streets and neighborhoods
- retail business district
- good restaurants

Visioning. Citizens were asked to describe what the ideal St. Andrews of the 21st century would be like. Their responses are summarized below by topic.

- **COMMERCIAL DISTRICT.** Citizens envisioned an attractive, clean, well-lighted and thriving commercial district, with full occupancy of buildings, renovation of historic structures, and a variety of retail, dining, and nautical enterprises. Mixed-use developments including retail and residential were also suggested.
- **RECREATION.** Ideas in this category that found favor included regular events and festivals, sunset celebrations on the marina, a revitalized marina, enhanced parks and green spaces, concerts in parks, historical tours, bicycle paths, and a museum.
- **TRANSPORTATION.** Citizens suggested improved signage for parking, additional non-waterfront parking, bicycle paths, sidewalks and boardwalks, shuttle boat or ferry boat service, a trolley stop, and reduction of truck traffic on the retail corridor.
- **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.** Suggestions pertaining to the natural environment included preserving water access for the public, placing benches, trails, and boardwalks to enhance enjoyment of the natural beauty, continued protection for heritage trees, reliance on non-polluting industry, and creation of parks.

- **NEIGHBORHOODS.** Citizens imagined their future neighborhoods retaining an old-style look even for remodeling and new construction. Some citizens favored designation of historic districts. Other ideas were to have neighborhood watch programs in effect to promote safety and security, install more lighting, and enforce no loitering signs. Suggestions for new housing included a retirement community, upscale housing for professionals, and affordable housing. A suggestion was made to rezone mixed use neighborhoods as residential low density.

Directions and Solutions. In response to questions on how a revitalization effort could most effectively move the community from existing conditions to the ideal future, citizens offered suggestions that were later grouped into the categories of economic development, aesthetics and infrastructure, and organization and promotion. These suggestions are summarized below. In addition, citizens were asked “the \$25,000 question”--how they would spend that imaginary sum to move redevelopment forward. Those responses are included in each category as “specific spending recommendations.”

- **ORGANIZATION AND PROMOTION.** The greatest need was seen in the area of organization. Citizens perceived an urgent need to enhance cooperation between residents and businesses, and between the St. Andrews community and local government. They called for creation of an organization to serve as a voice for St. Andrews and that would develop a compatible agenda or unified vision for stakeholders. Citizens suggested that a master plan be developed and that grants be secured to help fund redevelopment. Promotional ideas included creating an information center and promoting St. Andrews through events, advertising, and signs.

Specific spending recommendations: Create self-governing improvement district; pay for advertising and promotion; commission master plan.

- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.** Suggestions for improving the local economy included implementing a Main Street or similar program on Beck Avenue, imposing code enforcement on blighted buildings, and getting businesses involved in redevelopment. Suggestions were also made to work with potential developers, especially for the Smith Basin property. Attracting more charter boats back to the area was also seen as a good direction.

Specific spending recommendations: Incentive to charter boats, financial incentives to new businesses; funding annual regular events and festivals.

- **AESTHETICS/INFRASTRUCTURE.** Keeping the area safe and clean was offered as a starting point for making it more attractive. Revitalization of the marina was also suggested. Pursuing historic designations was also favored. In the area of regulations, participants suggested restrictions on building height and signage.

Specific spending recommendations: Landscaping on Beck Avenue, clean-up, post entry signage, add police sub-station, demolish old Shrimp Boat restaurant, maintain trees, develop new park, declare historic district, convert St. Andrew Elementary to a neighborhood school.

Impact of Town Meeting. In reviewing the responses from the town meeting, one must bear in mind that brainstorming sessions yield a variety of suggestions, sometimes contradictory. Other suggestions may not be practical or legal.

In the case of the July 27th Town Meeting, the responses showed remarkable unity. The sessions had some heated moments, but out of the hundreds of ideas generated, many common threads were evident. Those in attendance pictured a revitalized St. Andrews as a place where visitors and residents alike could walk to a variety of interesting spots--including retail shops, a museum, marine attractions, and restaurants. They recognized a need for the various stakeholders to join together to rejuvenate the business district and pursue historic designations.

As of June, 1997, some suggestions have already been implemented, including posting of historic entry signs, development of the new Oaks by the Bay Park, demolition of several abandoned buildings, and litter clean-up.

The Project Advisory Council and Ward 4 Commissioner John E. Pilcher used input from the town meeting to craft the vision statement for St. Andrews, which was officially accepted by City Commission on August 17, 1996. The statement is:

*HISTORIC ST. ANDREWS--A VILLAGE BY THE BAY WHERE CULTURAL  
ATTRactions, ENTERTAINMENT, AND COMMERCE THRIVE.*

## 2.4 Task Forces

Analysis of the initial town meeting revealed that revitalization issues could be categorized into five areas. At a second town meeting, held September 17, task forces composed of interested citizens were formed to carry out in-depth visioning in the five task force areas:

- 1) Economic Development;
- 2) Design & Planning;
- 3) Promotion;
- 4) History; and
- 5) Organization.

These task forces continued throughout the second year of the Project until each one developed its proposed revitalization strategies. In this phase of the Project, presenters were enlisted on a volunteer or paid basis to share their expertise on relevant topics. In addition to presenters at public meetings and workshops, task force members shared their technical expertise on a voluntary basis. Expertise came from those skilled in professional planning, design, engineering, education, and real estate. Three public forums or workshops were held to bring current information to the public or focus on specific revitalization and planning issues.

## 2.5 Revitalization Symposium

On December 3, a symposium, "Experiences in Revitalizing Communities: Models for Success" was held at the St. Andrew Civic Club. Panelists were Glen Connally, Panama City Downtown Improvement Board and Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA); Jennifer Fleming, Pensacola CRA; Laverne and Cordy Matheson of the Bayou Chico Association, Pensacola; and Letta Gorman, Gorman Consulting, Inc. of Panama City. The panelists shared perspectives on how to jump start a stagnant waterfront business district. About 30 people attended the symposium.

Information shared from the various participants is summarized below.

### Panama City CRA/Downtown Improvement Board.

The downtown Panama City CRA has additional funding (apart from tax increment financing that sets aside a portion of ad valorem taxes for a CRA trust fund) from a special assessment that goes to its Downtown Improvement Board (DIB). This funding pays for festivals and physical improvements. Over a 10-year period, the downtown CRA/DIB has accomplished the restoration of the Martin Theater, McKenzie Park, the gateway to McKenzie Park, and the Visual Arts Center.

The downtown participates in the state Main Street project and has in the past received large grants from the state (for the Martin Theater). Other funding sources have included in-kind services, donations, buy-a-brick programs, and city bonds. Along with its offerings of regular festivals, the DIB offers matching funds for businesses to upgrade storefronts with awnings and works with banks to connect businesses with low-interest loans. The same governing body that oversees the downtown CRA and DIB governs the St. Andrews CRA.

### Pensacola CRA

Pensacola's downtown has undergone a successful revitalization since 1980 when its 1,300-acre CRA was established. Its 10-member City Council serves as its CRA. It has followed a strategy of investing public money in infrastructure (parks, landscaping and street re-design, upgraded lighting, drainage, benches) in core areas to promote private investment. Since 1980, the CRA and other public entities have invested \$39.5 million in improvements. That investment has paid off with private sector spending of \$113.3 million. City leaders view the Pensacola waterfront as a magnet for both business and pleasure and work enthusiastically with businesspeople who bring new ventures and ideas to the area.

The city has a policy of maintaining "reasonable public access" to the water and participates in lease arrangements with the private sector. It offers tax abatement for historic properties under renovation, and exemption from ad valorem taxes for a 10-year period for businesses that create new jobs.

The Pensacola CRA has experienced success by working closely with the public and stakeholders through such means as "Lunch and Learn" and evening workshops, lots of meeting with property owners and display of design renderings to help stakeholders visualize the finished projects. The CRA has drawn people back downtown by emphasizing music, food, history, and culture. Downtown parks offer family-style entertainment and plenty of festivals. Its latest major project, estimated to cost \$13 million, is converting its Bayfront Auditorium pier into a marina with 100,000 square feet of upland office, restaurant, and retail space through a public-private partnership.

### Bayou Chico Association

The Bayou Chico Association is dedicated to the restoration and preservation of Bayou Chico in Pensacola, an area once written off as terminally polluted (creosote was only one of the substances present). Through its decades of effort, Bayou Chico has experienced a major turnaround in water quality and greater appreciation for its heavily-used bayou. The non-profit group has a volunteer board of directors and sets annual priorities. Efforts have included clean-ups of sunken boats, pollution abatement, and outreach to encourage voluntary cooperation of marine industries and residents along the bayou. Local citizens remain informed through quarterly newsletters and an annual public meeting. This non-governmental group has successfully received grants from the Florida Communities Trust, the Nature Conservancy, and the state Department of Environmental Protection.

Bayou Chico works closely and at high levels with elected city and county officials, state environmental agencies, private organizations, and industry. The group is in the process of purchasing 1,300 acres of swamp on one arm of the bayou to maintain water quality, constructing a stormwater treatment area, and establishing a park and bird sanctuary. The panelists advised St. Andrews to focus on its waterfront area and set one or two action priorities each year.

### Gorman Consulting Inc.

Ms. Letta Gorman of Gorman Consulting, who has garnered over \$10 million in contracts and grants for Auburn University, emphasized the importance of having a strategic plan to redevelop St. Andrews. A plan would describe the shared vision of the future St. Andrews. Stakeholders and public officials need to work together to form this plan and submit it as an addendum to any grant application, she said. Public-private partnerships are the best path to success, and public money should be leveraged to bring the greatest return instead of being spent outright. For example, CRA or other public money could be used as a grant match, or to establish a revolving loan fund for St. Andrews businesses.

Ms. Gorman suggested seeking out a variety of granting agencies in addition to checking into possible funding from agencies such as the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Other sources could include education grants and private foundations whose parent corporations include Bay County businesses.

She urged formation of a partnership for St. Andrews wherein appropriate stakeholders could adopt different initiatives for revitalization, including applying for grants.

## 2.6 Waterfront Forum

On March 5, 1997, the St. Andrews Waterfront Forum was held to solicit input on the community's vision for its waterfront area. Approximately 30 people, including six boat captains, attended. The discussion focused on the possibility of charter fleets returning to St. Andrews. Boat captains indicated a strong interest in doing so, if they could gain certain assurances. They indicated concerns over the impression and image presented in St. Andrews in general, and the marina in particular, to their clientele. They indicated that their business is a tourist and entertainment industry dependent on favorable first impressions and an ability to draw in new walk-in customers each year. Improvement of the physical appearance of St. Andrews and better security and standards of behavior at the marina would make it possible for them to consider relocating. The possibility of grouping charter boats along Bayview Avenue was discussed.

## 2.7 Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop

A workshop, "Creating a Bicycle Friendly Village" was held April 1. Presenters were Henry Lawrence, co-chair of the Bike Committee for a Safer Bay County, and Carol Pulley, bicycle coordinator with the West Florida Regional Planning Council. The workshop was lightly attended by about 10 people. Ms. Pulley discussed the importance of creating a safer, more attractive community by re-designing transportation routes to allow for pedestrians and bicyclists. Mr. Lawrence and Ms. Pulley displayed a map of proposed bicycle routes and improvements, and the group proceeded to brainstorm on specific changes to include in the proposed design strategies for St. Andrews.

## **Section 3: Task Force Strategies**

### **3.1 Economic Development**

The following strategies for economic development were developed through task force meetings, the revitalization symposium and waterfront forum, initial town meeting visioning, and after review of a study carried out by L.D. Gorman, "Economic Development of St. Andrews." (See Appendix 6.3) Additional analysis of St. Andrews' economic development potential and realistic strategies for its economic improvement may be found in the St. Andrews Project Historic Preservation and Revitalization Plan conducted by SouthArc, Inc.

#### **Economic Development Strategies**

##### ***3.1.1 Increase the visitation to St. Andrews.***

- Encourage location of more charter boat fleets to St. Andrews marinas.
- Improve general image and visibility of St. Andrews.
- Build upon historic fishing village character of the community to create an alluring shopping, walking, and entertainment district in downtown St. Andrews.

##### ***3.1.2 Assist current businesses.***

- Encourage active merchants association.
- Link local businesses with technical resources concerning marketing, business plans, low-interest loans.
- Encourage joint advertising and promotions.
- Establish revolving loan fund for physical improvements.
- Establish central office for revitalization effort and to supply information to potential developers and new businesses.

##### ***3.1.3 Attract new businesses and development in keeping with vision.***

- Develop a "Doing Business in St. Andrews" package to promote area's assets and assist new businesses with navigating "red tape" such as permitting, zoning, and code regulations.

##### ***3.1.4 New Business Possibilities that Complement Vision***

## ***RETAIL***

Existing: Pawn, consignment, ceramics, crafts, art galleries, woodworking, native American artifacts, outdoor gear and canoes, custom fashion.

Proposed Retail Strategy: Attract businesses that emphasize personal service, high-quality items, unique items, or those with historical theme. Appeal to tourist and local market with a cluster of interesting shops.

### Future:

- Nostalgia shop. Movie posters & memorabilia (Clark Gable etc.)
- Boutiques/vintage clothes
- Ice cream parlor/old-time fountain
- More art-related shops
- Juice bar (non-alcoholic hangout for teens?)
- Recreation-oriented shops (such as new Canoe Shop)
- Antiques
- Books
- Imports

## ***SERVICE/PROFESSIONAL/INDUSTRIAL***

Existing: Medical/dental, publishing, electronics, car and engine repair and finishing, marine manufacture and services, engine repair and auto servicing.

Proposed Service/Professional/Industrial Strategy: Emphasize marine services, possibly in a "campus" setting, encourage service and professional offices along the Beck business corridor; attract other services in keeping with vision.

### Future:

- More marine businesses
- Professional offices



### ***ENTERTAINMENT/TOURISM***

**Existing:** Motels and motel courts, restaurants, bars, coffee shop, adult entertainment, charter fishing.

**Proposed Strategy:** Revive charter fishing fleets, offer appealing atmosphere for shopping, dining, and strolling both day and night.

#### **Future:**

- Return of fishing fleets
- Bed and Breakfasts
- Artists Colony (could convert existing motel or apartments)
- Increased "eco-tourism" emphasis (e.g. nature cruises, sea kayaking, small-scale aquaria of local marine life at marina or in local businesses to interpret marine life.)

### ***BASIC NEIGHBORHOOD GOODS & SERVICES***

**Existing:** Grocery store, gas stations and convenience stores, contract post office, bakeries.

**Proposed Strategy:** Create a community which contains the basic goods and services for residential neighborhoods within walking distance.

#### **Future:**

- Close-in banking, at least an ATM
- Drugstore
- Dry cleaners
- Produce market--could be farmer's market or health food store
- Deli/butcher shop
- Hardware store
- Barber shop

### 3.2 Design & Planning

The Design and Planning Task Force met over 15 times from October 1996 to May 1997, collectively committing hundreds of volunteer hours. Initially, the task force investigated design and historic preservation ordinances in other communities (Apalachicola, Cedar Key, Charleston, S.C. among others) and weighed various approaches to revitalization. The task force assisted in selection of a professional firm to carry out the historic preservation/economic development study. In addition this group identified key focal points in St. Andrews and developed plans for improving these areas. They worked with artists to draw sketches of these areas. The sketches were aids for the development of three airbrush color illustrations of focal points in St. Andrews.

Listed below are the first, chosen strategies for Design and Planning and second, descriptions of key focal points in St. Andrews.

#### **Design and Planning Strategies**

*3.2.1. Employ traditional town planning approach compatible with vision of St. Andrews as a historic village on a human scale.*

##### **PLAN FOR AND ENCOURAGE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE USE**

- Calm traffic along Beck Avenue to 25 mph.
- Place striped pedestrian crossings and post "Yield to Pedestrian" signs.
- Provide marked bike lanes along Beck Avenue.
- Develop walking lane along Bayview Avenue.

##### **IN DOWNTOWN CORE:**

- Encourage siting of new businesses that provide for necessities of life within walking distance of residences.
- Retain mixed-use zoning that allows for dwellings above shops.

##### **DEVELOP ST. ANDREWS DESIGN CODE THAT ENHANCES CIVIC LIFE**

- Set appropriate height and density restrictions.
- Set standards for new commercial construction that are compatible with the character of historic St. Andrews.
- Define set back line for new construction and remodeling to create aesthetic alignment of building facades on "street wall."
- Involve citizen panel in developing code.

**3.2.2 Protect St. Andrews' environmental quality and provide for public access and enjoyment of natural resources. Promote a clean, green appearance.**

- Retain existing public access to bay and develop additional access points where possible.
- Improve water quality at public marina.
- Ensure safe access to bay for non-motorized boating.
- Continue to protect heritage trees.
- Encourage shoreline and wetland stabilization and restoration.
- Add greenery along streets, in parking areas, and at marina.

**3.2.3 Encourage preservation and restoration of historical structures.**

**ADOPT LOCAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE**

- Draw up measures that provide guidelines and incentives for property owners who elect to protect historic buildings.
- Adopt reasonable and flexible measures that are responsive to concerns of property owners.
- Appoint historic preservation committee to review development and remodeling plans for compatibility.

**AID IN SEEKING LISTING OF BUILDINGS ON NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES IF PROPERTY OWNERS FAVOR LISTING.**

### **3.2.4 FOCAL POINTS**

#### **ST. ANDREWS MARINA**

- Continue to provide for mixed uses at marina, including commercial, charter, and recreational boating.
- Delineate different dock areas for different types of boats.
- Establish prominent location for a row of charter boats.
- Add shade shelters, new trash receptacles, landscaping, and rest rooms.
- Construct observation tower at southwest corner.
- Convert Bayview Avenue to one-way northbound traffic, designating outer (west) lane for foot traffic to stroll along marina.
- Create landscaped median along Bayview Avenue to separate pedestrian and car traffic.
- Retain use of public boat launch.
- Maintain good security at all hours.
- Indicate availability of ample public parking at marina through signs on Beck Avenue.

[Bayview Avenue artist's rendering]

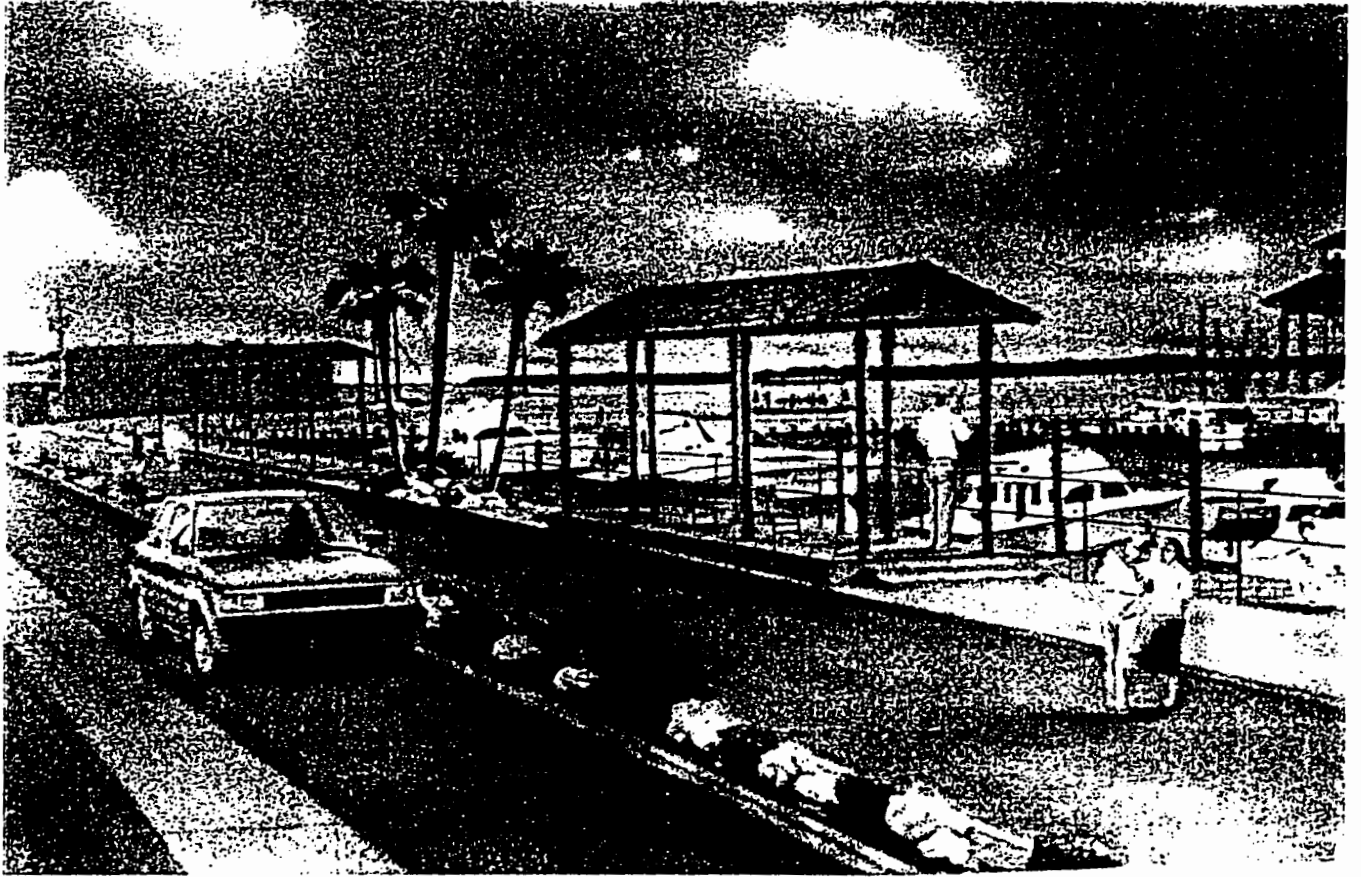


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### ***SMITH YACHT BASIN***

- Encourage new development that preserves public access to water and shoreline, for example, a fisherman's wharf-style development with boardwalks, supporting a variety of enterprises.
- Enlarge waterway from basin to Lake Ware by replacing culvert with small bridge.

### ***FUTURE FOCAL POINT--VISITORS' CENTER***

- A place to provide information (brochures, maps) on points of interest, lodging, shopping, dining, fishing and other recreational opportunities as well as local history.
- A place for public restrooms.
- A place to display a sampling of goods and services available in St. Andrews, including art work, menus, and other items.
- A place to rent or loan bicycles.

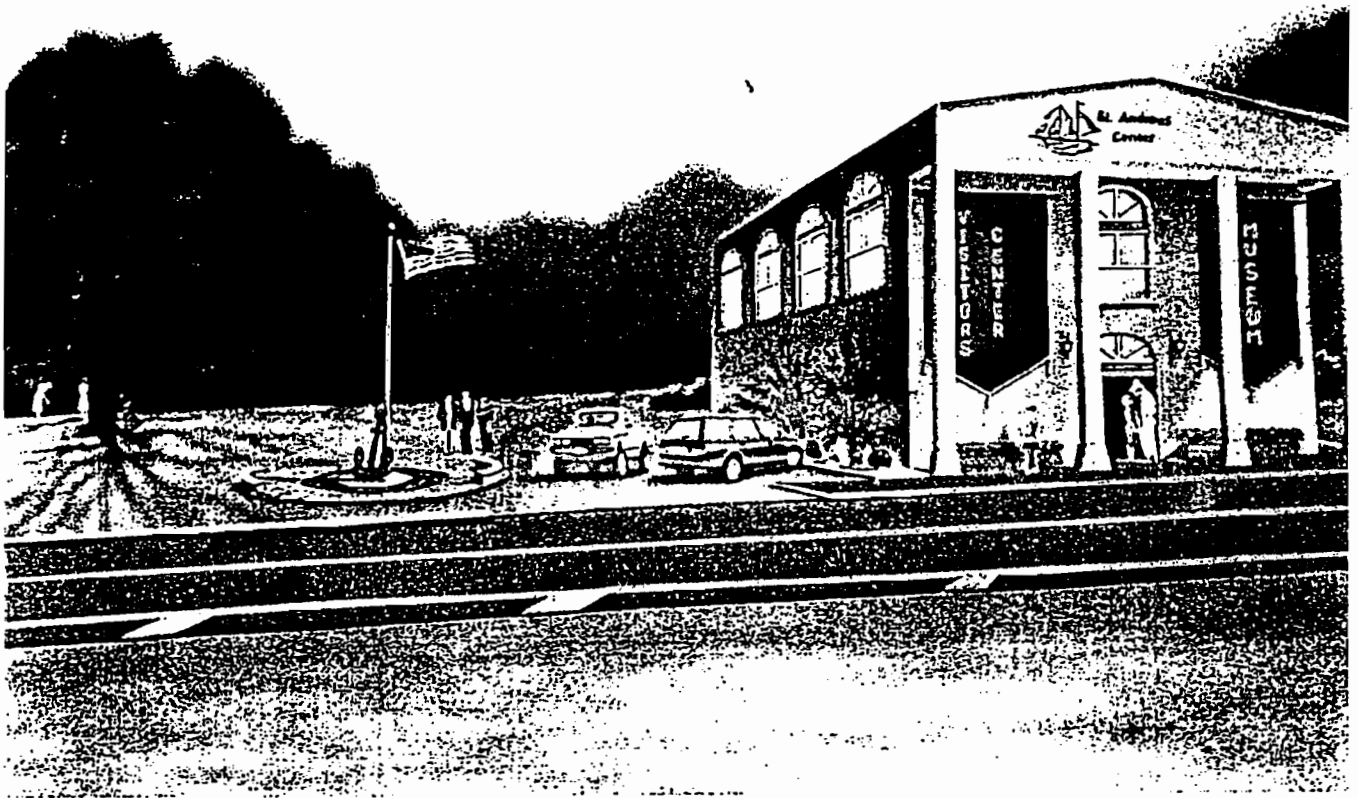
### ***FUTURE FOCAL POINT: HISTORY MUSEUM AND CENTER***

- A place to interpret the history of St. Andrews and features of Bay County history, including maritime history, Civil War, and other periods to be determined.
- Serve educational and cultural purposes for a variety of user groups, including school children, elder hostel, and "camps," and a meeting space for non-profit organizations.
- Complement and not duplicate other facilities, such as Junior Museum, McKenzie House, and Artifacts Gallery.
- Make use of latest technology to create a captivating attraction--for example, virtual reality to simulate episodes in local history.

## **BECK AVENUE**

- Upgrade lighting with attractive gaslamp style fixtures such as those used in Oaks by the Bay Park.
- Improve existing public parking areas with landscaping and signage.
- Provide trash receptacles that are emptied regularly.
- Add 4-5 foot bike lanes on each side to 15th Street on the north and 10th Street on the south.
- Retain on-street parallel parking on one side of street. Parking is eliminated from one side to provide room for bicycle lanes.
- Parking retained on west side from 15th to 14th Streets, on east from 14th to 13th, west from 13th to 11th Street, and east side from 10th to 11th.
- Calm traffic to 25 mph in central business district to increase pedestrian traffic. Direct through traffic onto 12th Street and Chestnut Avenue.
- Provide pedestrian crossings and post "Yield to Pedestrian" signs. Create landscaped "bulb-outs" at selected locations to reduce distance required for crossing.
- Install small diameter traffic circle at foot of Beck Avenue (62-foot interior diameter). Eliminate flashing signal. (See Appendix 6.5).
- Encourage merchants and property owners to fix up property.

[rendering of York Rite bldg]



Rendering of potential future Visitors' Center on 10th Street.

Illustration by Danny Alleman, Professional Art Studio. Photography by Leesa Coleman.



### 3.3 Promotion

After three meetings, the Promotions Task Force developed the strategies listed below.

#### Promotion Strategies

**3.3.1 *Develop a regular calendar of festivals and events to attract people to St. Andrews. Find individuals and organizations to carry out these events.***

- February/March: Mardi-Gras parade and celebration
- April: Good Earth Festival
- May: Old Town Seafood Festival
- October: Night in Old St. Andrews
- December: Boat Parade of Lights & Christmas caroling
- Add more events as capability to carry them out develops: including fall fine art festival, merchants' open houses, seasonal merchants' promotions.

**3.3.2. *Carry out joint advertising campaigns through various media.***

- Geared to local population
- Geared to tourist population

### 3.4 Organization

The Organization Task Force met four times. This group examined the institutional means by which other communities had carried out revitalization efforts and determined that a partnership approach was the key to success. The group assisted the formation of the grassroots citizens' group (the St. Andrews Citizens in Action) and nominated and selected initial members of the St. Andrews Project Partnership. In addition, this group applied to the state of Florida Waterfronts Florida Partnership.

#### **Organizational Strategies**

##### ***3.4.1. Form a Partnership consisting of key stakeholders in St. Andrews who will see revitalization through.***

- St. Andrews Project Partnership. This partnership was formed in May 1996 with the goals of setting priorities for revitalization, working to secure diverse funding, and guiding the revitalization effort overall. It will coordinate with the City of Panama City and the St. Andrews CRA. If St. Andrews is chosen for the new Waterfronts Florida Partnership, it will also serve as the Waterfronts Committee. Members of the Partnership include residents, business owners, and boat captains.

##### ***3.4.2. Form a citizens' group to aid in grassroots effort to strengthen St. Andrews' central district and neighborhoods, and help with fundraising for revitalization.***

- St. Andrews Citizens in Action. This citizens' group was formed in April. Its officers hope to recruit neighborhood coordinators for each of the eight St. Andrews neighborhoods. It will coordinate with other groups such as the St. Andrew Civic Club and the Partnership.

##### ***3.4.3. Pursue Waterfronts Florida Partnership.***

- State to decide in June. If St. Andrews is not selected this year, it still will be eligible for application in another two years. In addition, the Waterfronts Florida Partnership program will offer technical assistance to all applicant communities on a limited basis.

##### ***3.4.4 Encourage formation of active merchants' association.***

### 3.5 History

The History Task Force met several times. In addition to developing strategies, the group took action by producing a feature-length videotape in cooperation with Bill Hudson. The tape chronicles the history of the area through interviews with longtime residents and a wealth of photographs from the past. The group favored creation of historic districts, posting of signs for Historic St. Andrews, and, in the future, the creation of a history museum in St. Andrews. The feasibility of these ideas was evaluated in the Historic Preservation and Revitalization Plan by SouthArc, Inc.

#### History Strategies

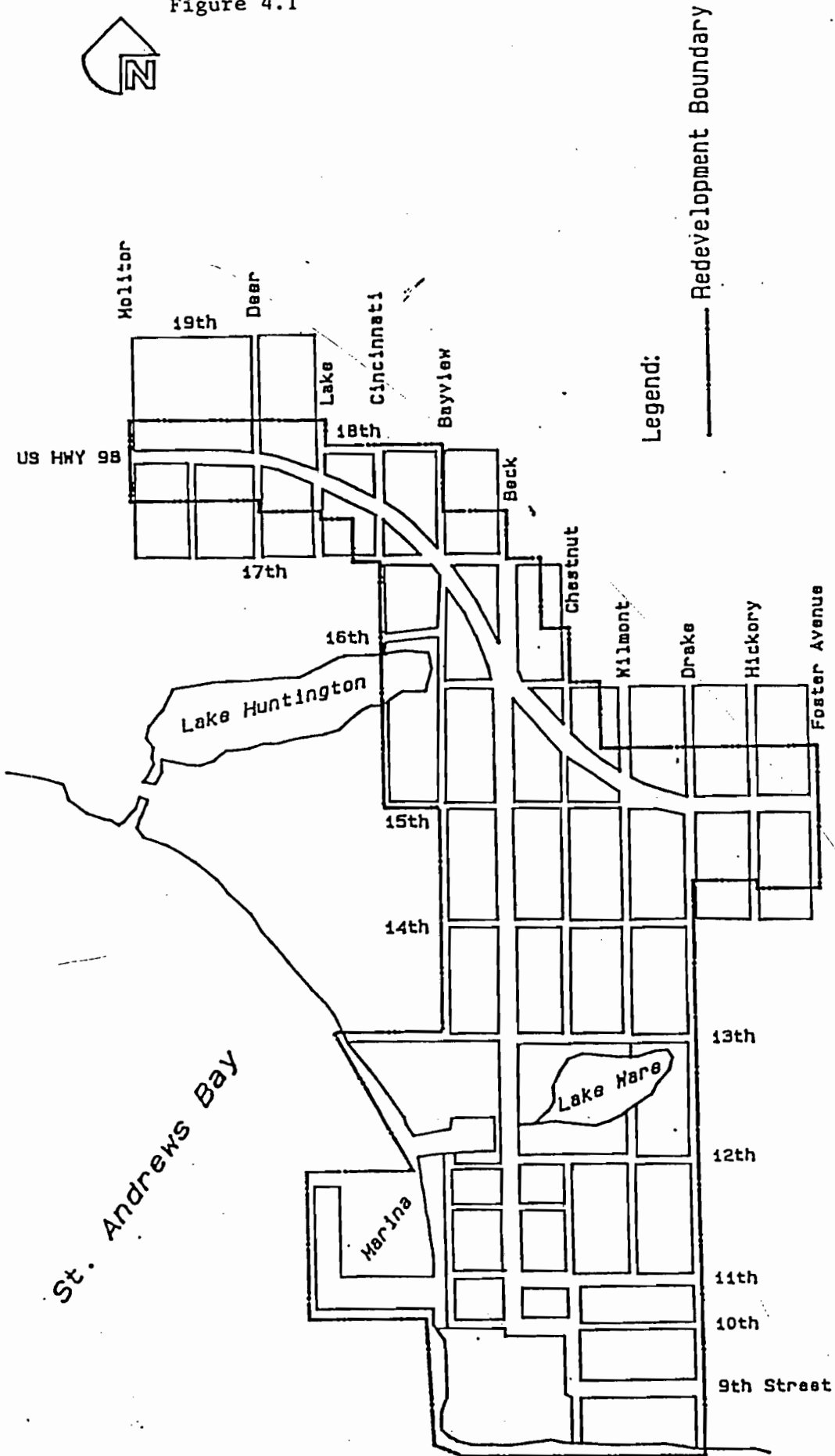
##### *3.5.1 Promote awareness of St. Andrews' history.*

- Develop a videotape on St. Andrews' history. This goal was accomplished.
- Maps and brochures explaining the area's historic (and prehistoric) landmarks could be developed in the future.

##### *3.5.2. Find ways the past might catalyze revitalization.*

- The Preservation and Revitalization Plan addresses this subject in great detail.

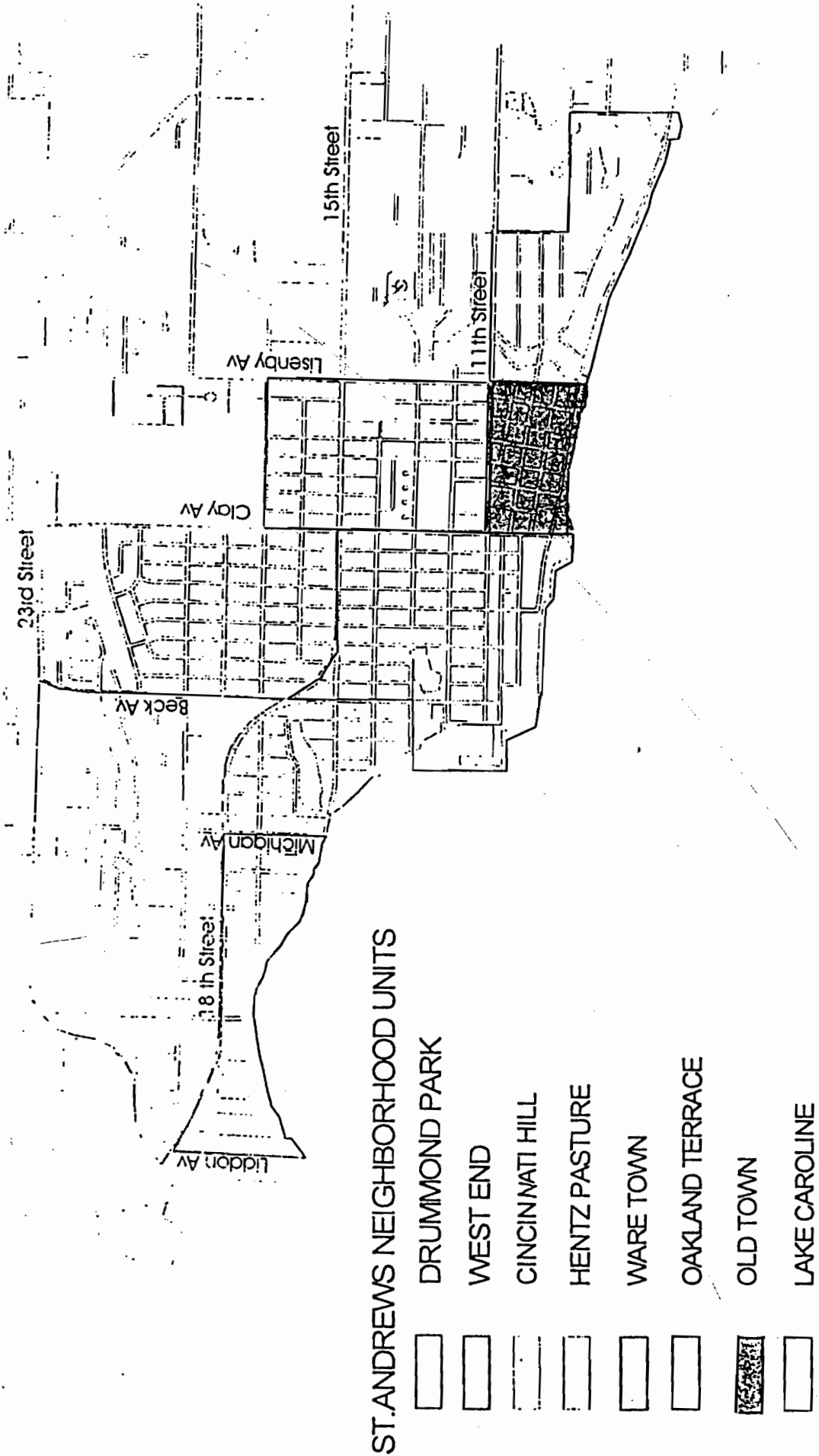
Figure 4.1



Source: Panama City Community Redevelopment Agency

# ST. ANDREWS REDEVELOPMENT AREA

Figure 4.2



ST. ANDREWS NEIGHBORHOOD UNITS

DRUMMOND PARK

WEST END

CINCINNATI HILL

HENTZ PASTURE

WARE TOWN

OAKLAND TERRACE

OLD TOWN

LAKE CAROLINE

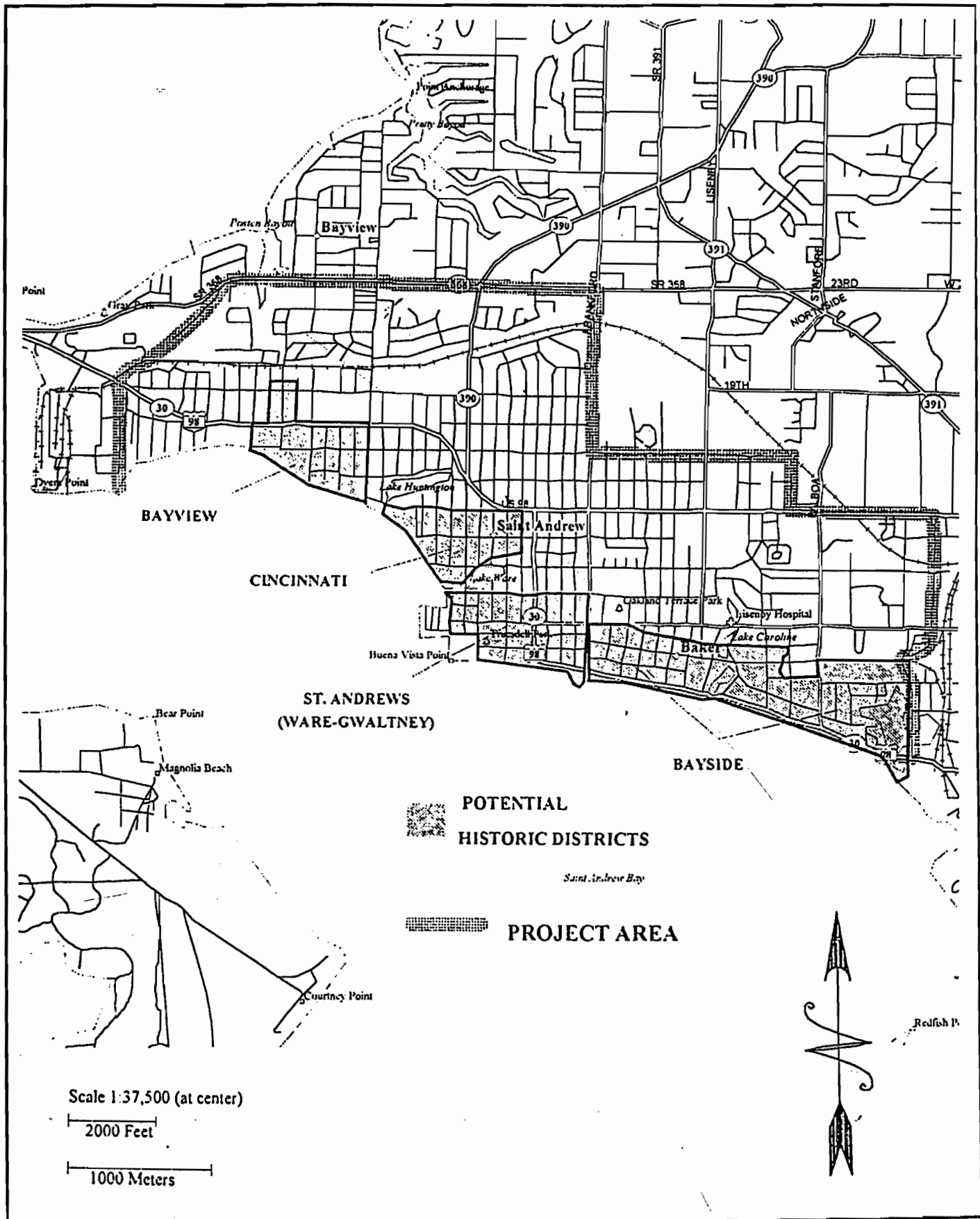


FIGURE 4.3 POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS WITHIN ST. ANDREWS PROJECT AREA, PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA

**SouthArc, Inc.**

Archaeological and  
Historical Services



Panama City and Millville to form the municipality of Panama City, the industrial profile included: the establishment of a dairy (1921),

From 1926 into the 1950's, economic development focused on the opening of the shipyards (1939) and subsequent Port Authority (1959), the establishment of the naval base (1945), sport fishing from Smith's Yacht Basin (1950's), the Shrimp Boat Restaurant (1950's), the opening of Carl Gray Park (1950's); the opening of Gulf Coast Community College (1957), the completion of the new Hathaway Bridge (1959), and the opening of a skating rink (1940's). Businesses and stores began to branch out from downtown as residents settled into outlying areas and the malls and shopping centers sprung up.

In the 1970's the fishing boats began to leave the area and commerce and tourism began to decline. Today, the businesses in the St. Andrews CRA focus on:

- AGRICULTURE**
- NONAGRICULTURE**
  - Nonmanufacturing*
    - Construction
      - Offshore
      - Contractors
    - Trade
      - Retail
        - Antiques
        - Coffees
        - Fashions
        - Art/Framers
        - Ceramics
        - Custom Wood
        - Grocers
        - Convenience Stores
        - Bars
        - Package Stores
        - Marine Parts
        - Pawn Shops
        - Dolls
        - Equipment Rentals
        - Gasoline/Service Stations
        - Billiards
  - Services
    - Food
      - Restaurants
      - Bagels



Marine & Fabrication  
Equipment  
Seafood  
Buildings & Sheds

Without substantiation from the statistics of the U.S. Census and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, it appears that the economic base of the St. Andrews has evolved from a balanced agricultural/nonagricultural (nonmanufacturing/manufacturing) base, through a reduced agricultural and increased nonagricultural (with increased nonmanufacturing) period, and into the resulting diminished agricultural and depressed nonagricultural status. The current status is largely dependent on nonmanufacturing industries, even though there are several manufacturing firms in operation in the area. Retail trade and services compose the primary nonmanufacturing employment in the area, with most of these businesses being small entrepreneurial operations.

Neighborhoods in the area are composed of predominantly older structures with a mix of owner-occupied and rental properties. Some subsidized housing exists. The median family income in the area falls between \$18,000 and \$24,000 with the majority of the population being white and under 65 years of age.

## Facts on St. Andrews CRA

### What is the CRA?

In 1989, a special improvement district, the St. Andrews Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) was established. It includes the central Beck Avenue business district, as well as several blocks on either side of Beck Avenue, and a thin strip on each side of U.S. Highway 98, starting on the west side at Molitor and extends along U.S. Highway 98 east to Foster (see map).

CRA's operate under Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes as a means of re-developing urban areas that fall into the state's definitions as slum or blight areas by a variety of measures, including presence of deteriorated structures, tax delinquency, and social factors.

CRA's may be administered by cities or counties directly, or their management may be delegated to another government body. In Panama City, the three CRA areas (Harrison Avenue area, St. Andrews, and Cove Blvd. ) are administered by the Downtown Improvement Board/CRA.

### How does a CRA fund redevelopment?

CRA's can facilitate redevelopment in a variety of ways. One tool for redevelopment is Tax Increment Financing (TIF). A TIF is in effect for St. Andrews. Instead of the full measure of ad valorem taxes going to city and county coffers, the TIF claims a portion of these revenues generated within the CRA for redevelopment purposes. When property values increase over the baseline value of the initial year, the additional revenues are set aside in a special fund. The "increment" equals the difference between the current ad valorem assessed values, at the current millage rate, and the "frozen" level of property assessments at the current millage rate, multiplied by a factor of 95 percent.

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{(minus)} \quad \text{Current ad valorem values X millage rate} \\ \text{Increment} \quad = \quad \text{Frozen ad valorem values X millage rate} \\ \quad \quad \quad = \text{Difference x 95 percent} \end{array}$$

The CRA revenues can be used as specified by state law. The fund may be used immediately or saved for planned projects. A CRA plan for redevelopment must be prepared. Such a plan was prepared for St. Andrews and approved in 1989.

Among allowed uses of CRA revenues are:

- \*land acquisition and clearance
- \*bond issuance costs
- \*principal & interest on bonds and notes
- \*planning, surveys, and financial analyses
- \*physical improvements
- \*administrative expenses necessary or incidental to carrying out the redevelopment plan

St. Andrews CRA Revenues

| <u>Year</u>     | <u>Assessed Value</u> | <u>Taxable Value</u> | <u>Tax Increment to CRA Fund</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1989= Base Year |                       | 15,932,884 ??        |                                  |
| 1990            |                       |                      |                                  |
| 1991            | 26,886,611 ✓          | 16,911,182           |                                  |
| 1992            | 26,456,850            | 16,629,701           |                                  |
| 1993            | 26,473,100            | 16,627,870           |                                  |
| 1994            | 26,491,561            | 16,541,561           |                                  |
| 1995            | 26,841,845            | 16,891,400           |                                  |
| 1996            | 27,192,794            | 16,993,166           |                                  |

## St. Andrews Project Partnership

**Jeanie Cathrall Adams, citizen representative**

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**Wayne Beachem, citizen representative**

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**Chris Boden, business representative**  
**CBGB's Parkside Coffees**

---

**Terry Eckhart, business representative**  
**Harbour Shops**

---

**Connie Head, citizen representative**

---

**Charles Gonzalez, citizen representative**

---

**Capt. Don Harper, commercial fishing representative**

---

**Capt. Richard Holley, charter fishing representative**

---

**Phoebe Masker, business representative**  
**Harbour House Restaurant**

---

**Kathryn Miller, business representative**  
**St. Andrews Harbor Real Estate**

---

**Jim Pigneri, business representative**  
**Uncle Ernie's Restaurant**

---

**John Earl Pilcher, city commission representative**

---

**Steve Rubin, St. Andrew Civic Club representative**

---

**Laura Roesch, business representative**  
**Hilton, Hilton, Kolk, Penson & Roesch**

---

**Nancy Wengel, citizen representative**

---

# St. Andrews Citizens in Action Agents of Change

## Officers

President: Ellen Mapelsden

Vice President & Historian: Virginia Matthews

Treasurer: Gertrude Mapelsden

Secretary: Robbie Fehrenback

Promotions Coordinators: Connie Head & Jerry Pilcher

Neighborhoods Coordinators: Joanne Holt & Terry Rubin

Advisor: Audrey Parker