

# Bay Economy Watch



A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FROM THE BAY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE • SUMMER 2003, ISSUE 1

## Plans for New Airport Move *Forward*

### -Will Create New Land for Development and Conservation

The Bay County Commission voted in early July to send the Detailed Specific Area Plans (DSAP) for both the proposed new Bay County International Airport and the West Bay Area to the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Combined, the two planning documents would control the eventual development of the 4,000 acre airport complex and the 8,000 acre "regional employment center," a mixed use commercial and industrial district adjacent to the airport site.

"In addition to better air service, these land use plans will form the framework for future job creation in Bay County for the next 50 years," said Ted Clem, executive director of the Economic Development Alliance. "It's a planner's dream to be able to take a blank sheet of paper and plan development for the next century."

The decision to send the planning documents forward was an important next step in airport relocation project which began with an initial attempt to expand the current airport runways in 1998 due to inadequate runway safety margins. Airport officials were then encouraged by the permitting agencies to look at relocation alternatives after receiving comments from opposition groups to extension plans into the St. Andrews Bay. [75,000 Acre West Bay Sector Plan](#)



"In addition to better air service, these land use plans will form the framework for future job creation in Bay County for the next 50 years"

-Ted Clem, EDA  
Executive Director

Airport's Coming 1

Any possibility of acquiring enough property to build a new airport and they received a pleasant surprise. The St. Joe Company, the largest land owner in Bay County, was in the process of transitioning from a paper industry conglomerate into a real estate development company. Their leadership deemed a strong regional airport as a vital piece of infrastructure for their future development plans in Northwest Florida. They quickly agreed to donate the property needed for a new airport.

Bay County, The Airport Authority, and the St. Joe Company then entered into an agreement with the State of Florida to participate in the State's pilot program called Sector Planning for the new airport location and surrounding areas. The West Bay Area Vision was adopted in 2002 after much public input from citizens, environmental groups, and business leaders.

Marketing Award 2

Port Deepening 3

Trade Mission 3

Contact Us 4

Bay County Economic Development Alliance

Summer 2023, Issue 1

*continued from cover*

In addition to the land set aside for the airport and surrounding commercial development, the plan incorporates future residential areas and areas for environmental conservation.

The plan has received enthusiastic endorsements from local environmental groups such as the Audobon Society and the Nature Conservancy. Approximately 37,000 acres surrounding the West Bay coastline has been set aside for permanent conservation. Some of this property will be used for environmental mitigation during the development of the airport and commercial areas, and some will be sold to private or governmental agencies to manage as conservation areas.

"The West Bay Area Vision is a strong example of how careful, longrange planning can blend a future of growth with good stewardship of the land, conservation of biodiversity and

protection of the natural beauty of a place," said Billy Buzzett, Director of Strategic Planning for The St. Joe Company. "Not many communities take the kind of comprehensive approach to the future that is going into place right here in Bay County."

While the State reviews the DSAP's, the FAA continues its work on the Environmental Impact Statement of the proposed relocation of the airport. While the project is incredibly complex, airport officials are optimistic that the January 2008 completion date is very achievable for the new airport.

## EDA Wins State Award for Marketing

### Bay County Interactive CD-ROM

The Florida Economic Development Council (FEDC) recognized the VHS tapes used in years past to tell our story."

Bay County Economic Develop- The CD-ROM's interactive ment Alliance promotional tour covers Bay County's great interactive CD-ROM as the best quality of life, great business audio visual promotional mate- climate, great workforce, and

rial for a me- great location emphasizing dium size testimonials

"We are honored that our displays the infrastructure in marketing piece was recognized Bay County and distance of the as the best in the State,"

said county in relation to other major Ted Clem, Executive Director of markets. the Bay County Economic Development Alliance. "This The interactive CD-ROM is CD-ROM has been an outstand- one of many promotional items tool for us to showcase all the Bay

County Economic that Bay County has to offer as Development Alliance utilizes to a business location. We have market Bay County as an raised the bar tremendously attractive location for business from the traditional format of and industry. We have taken inspiration from our friend down under, where during earlier years, a board member went on a working holiday in Australia at <https://www.workingholiday.co>



## Harbor Deepening Underway at Port Panama City

Will Accomodate more modern vessels

1900 feet of the Port's dock bulkheads.

Panama City is making a completion of a new berth, replacnumber of major improve ing overhead power lines with ments this year. The most im- buried lines and high mast lightportant development is the deepen-

ing of the ship channel and berthing areas from thirty-two feet to thirtysix at low water.

"The additional four feet will accommodate a new higher percentage of the modern cargo vessels operating in the Gulf today," said Wayne Stubbs Port Director of Port Panama City, USA.

The harbor deepening project involves dredging 1.5 million cubic yards of material and reinforcing

ing replacing older structures with a new heavily paved cargo laydown area, implementing a port wide storm water management plan, paving key unimproved areas, and upgrading security facilities.

"All of these improvements are designed to create new capabilities for handling a wide variety of cargo at the Port. At the same time, the paving and lighting improvements will improve the appearance.

P

## Viva Mexico!

The International Trade Alliance, a committee of the Bay County Economic Development Alliance is planning an Outbound Trade Mission to the southern states of Mexico the week of Nov. 9-14.

The Outbound Mission to Mexico will visit two vibrant cities: Mexico City, the capital city

office in Mexico City and the participating companies so that prospecting is already done! Time is well spent as the companies go directly to potential customers in both cities. In addition to the appointments, participating companies will be attending a breakfast briefing and a reception in each of the two cities. These events will allow for interaction between American and Mexican company representatives as



Beverly Wakstein, Director  
of  
Business Retention and  
Workforce Development  
850-785-5206 ext. 32 or  
email at:  
beverly@baychamberfl.co  
m

## Bay County

City of Callaway

City of Lynn Haven

City of Panama City

## City of Panama City Beach

## Gulf Power

Panama City/Bay County Airport

Panama City Port Authority

St. Joe Comapny

Bay County  
Economic Development  
Alliance  
P.O. Box 1850

Panama City, FL 32402-1850  
1-888-Bay-Site (229-7483)  
Tel:(850) 785-5206  
Fax: (850) 763-6229



PRESORTED  
 STANDARD  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
 PANAMA  
 CITY, FL  
 PERMIT NO. 51

P.O. Box 1850  
Panama City, FL 32402  
Phone: 850.785.5206  
Fax: 850.763.6229

○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

A great place to live...

A great place to work!