





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report contains the hopes, dreams, and aspirations – the VISIONS – of the City of Fernandina Beach as expressed by the citizens. The purpose of this project was to help Fernandina Beach become more proactive in developing strategies to achieve a future desired by the citizens. If you don't know where you want to go, then any road will get you there whether you are a city or an individual. This VISION will help us move into the 21st century while preserving our historic heritage.

The initial section of this report contains a brief review of the PROCESS that was followed to discover the Vision.

The next section is the body of the report. This is the VISION and is organized into 13 key vision areas as identified during the visioning process. Each key vision area is presented in the same basic format. The sections identify WHAT the vision is, WHY it should be pursued, WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED, and WHO WILL BENEFIT. The last element in each key vision area contains more specific information relating to HOW to achieve the vision. The variations in the HOW sections reflect the format of the reports received from the various workgroup committees for each area. These formats vary based on the depth and type of information presented back to the steering committee from each workgroup committee.

The final section is the appendix. This section contains the raw data consisting of the ideas from the brainstorming sessions conducted at the public forums.

A last word on the format and the process. As the next phase of the visioning process goes forward – the implementation phase – driven by what ever entity is assigned, each key vision area can be easily expanded to include an ACTION section and a COST section.

THE PROCESS

Vision 2000 has been a citizen driven process. The purpose of the process was to scan the community and gather ideas about the future in order that the community could be proactive in dealing with the technical, economic and social changes. Along with the ideas, came goals and strategies. All the information came from the people.

Vision 2000 started in December 1998 with the formation of the Steering Committee that eventually included 28 people. In addition to regular Steering Committee meetings, four public forums have been held. The public was invited through newspaper advertisements, distribution of 15,000 flyers and direct mailings to 7,200 addresses. A total of 149 people attended the public forums and contributed 580 ideas in 11 categories. Following the public forums, 82 people volunteered to meet in 7 workgroups to translate the raw data into more consolidated visions. The eventual outcome of these meetings was reported back to the Steering Committee. The output of these workgroups was in 13 categories.

This yearlong process has scanned the community and now a VISION exists.

As you read this report a clear vision of what the citizens see as the future emerges. Sustained involvement at all levels of government, community and private businesses will be necessary for the action planning and implementation of these ideas in order for the VISION 2000 to come alive.

On behalf of the Steering Committee, I would like to thank all of the citizens who participated in the VISION 2000 process. In the public forums, as well as the workgroup committees, citizens volunteered their time, energy, and creative mental efforts to develop a positive vision of the future.

On behalf of myself, I would like to thank the members of the Steering Committee who have continuously supported this process. I would also like to thank the City staff, the City Commission, and various organizations that have contributed in many ways to the success of this project.

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VISION 2000 FINAL REPORT

VISION STATEMENT: DOWNTOWN/HISTORIC RESOURCES

WHAT:

To preserve, maintain and enhance the downtown area and other historic resources.

WHY:

To make efficient and effective use of existing buildings and infrastructure.

To establish downtown as an area attractive to local people and tourists.

To preserve the rich historic heritage of the city.

To promote the historic assets of the city and create an attractive place to live and visit.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

City Staff

Historic District Council

Businesses

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Tourists

Downtown Merchants

Future Generations

Community

Homeowners

HOW:

1. Ensure marina completion. (H)
2. Develop a River Front Walkway. (H)
3. Encourage Downtown summertime entertainment. (H)
Strategy:
Bring in local entertainment such as High School Jazz band, and groups from Amelia Island Arts Academy, and also UNF Jazz Band, River City Band, Marine Corp band etc.
4. Preserve, maintain, and expand historic district including Downtown. (M)
Strategy:
 - A. Use natural brick to restore the historic nature of Centre Street.
 - B. Use turn of the century street lights and appropriate signs to designate the Historic District.
5. Keep Courthouse a focal point of Downtown for government or possibly also Community use. (M)

6. Identify and promote the historic significance of Old Town. (L)
Strategy:
- A. Signs to indicate directions to Old Town and appropriate signs to indicate the streets and boundaries.
 - B. Encourage documentation at Amelia Island Museum of History.
 - C. Retrieve oral histories from those who live there or those who have lived in Old Town in the past.
7. Increase downtown Parking/garage. (L)
8. Explore possibilities of using the Lighthouse for Tourism. (L)
Strategy:
- Endorse the city and Amelia Island Lighthouse Committee's efforts to obtain and maintain the Lighthouse for historic uses.

* This Work Group gave priority rankings to items in each category. Rankings are listed at the end of each item. The rankings are listed below with a time line included.

H = High priority (Issue should be addressed in 12 to 18 months)

M = Medium priority (Issue should be addressed in 12 to 24 months)

L = Low (Issue should be addressed within 36 months)

VISION STATEMENT: TOURISM AND THE BEACHES

WHAT:

To balance and enhance the city's image as a tourist destination, to educate the general public as to the value of tourism to the city and the citizenry and to preserve and maintain excellent beaches.

WHY:

To provide the city of Fernandina Beach with viable recommendations that can be undertaken by the city, and by business and citizen groups.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

Army Corp of Engineers	Navy, Kings Bay
Port Authority	City
Private Businesses	Citizens

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

City	Real Estate
County	Merchants
Tourist	Hotels
Bed and Breakfasts	

HOW:

THE BEACHES

1. Renourish and maintain the beach dunes. (H)
Strategy:

The City should endorse the existing memorandum of understanding with the Federal Government, the State of Florida, Nassau County and the Army Corps of Engineers.

2. Improve, complete, and add beach accesses at dune over walks. (H)
3. Enhance and develop Seaside and North Beach Parks. (H)
Strategy:

Install permanent drinking fountains, permanent restrooms and covered picnic areas.

4. Clean up natural and man made wastes.(H)
5. Provide stationary and attractive garbage cans at all beach accesses. (H)

6. Control the use and number of signs on the beach and on North and South Fletcher Avenue. (M)
7. Enforce the safety ordinances on the beach with respect to motor vehicles in order to ensure the environmental integrity of the beach. (M)

MAIN BEACH AREA

1. Endorse the execution of the plan of the Main Beach Planning Committee in an expeditious manner with emphasis on a promenade, ADA access, a band shell with dished green, landscaping and an improved boardwalk. (H)
2. Explore possibility of creating revenue from parking fees to maintain Main Beach and the new facilities. (L)
Strategy:
Use honor boxes in parking facilities. Parking meters are not recommended.

DOWNTOWN WATER FRONT

1. Refurbish the Marina without delay and remove restrictions to flow of river through the Marina. (H)
2. Establish a water front park, boardwalk/promenade, and band shell to be used for gatherings, art concessions, and musical entertainment. (H)
3. Develop a port of call for small to medium class cruise ships. (M)
4. Ensure that there will be adequate parking for the water front park and the downtown. (L)

HISTORIC DISTRICT, 8TH STREET, AND CENTRE STREET

1. Expand, maintain, and improve the aesthetics of Centre Street from 8th Street to the Water Front. (M)
2. Beautify the entrance to the city from the Shave Bridge to Center Street (A1A/ 8th Street). (M)
Strategy:
A. Work with Nassau county to provide properly maintained landscaping and appropriate signs for direction and advertising.
B. Involve local clubs, organizations, businesses and corporations in landscaping and maintenance of the areas.

3. Actively pursue the development of a maritime museum/visitors center.(M)

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VISION STATEMENT: GOVERNMENT AND FINANCE

WHAT:

To recognize and embrace the desire of the community to maintain the city's small town character by implementing policies, procedures and ordinances crafted to ensure balance among the competing interests of residential life, economic development, historic integrity and tourism management.

To develop and implement policies, procedures, and long-term plans which foster cooperation among regional governments and the private sector to improve, infrastructure and services at a reasonable cost while anticipating long-term growth and population changes.

To take reasonable and prudent actions to control or reduce property taxes so that people of all economic levels will be able to continue living in Fernandina Beach.

WHY:

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local government; to reduce the cost of government without sacrificing service; to heighten interest and level of involvement in government among all sectors of the community.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

Citizens
Businesses
Other government bodies as appropriate, i.e. Nassau County School Board, State of Florida, Duval County, Camden County, Federal government.

City and county governments
Northeast Regional Planning Commission

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Citizens
City and county governments

HOW:

1. Strategy : Leadership. The City of Fernandina Beach will:
 - A. Take positive steps to solve internal problems (or change perceptions) by thoroughly discussing and addressing concerns raised by Dr. Lance deHaven-Smith in his September 1998 report to the City entitled *Growth Management and Decision-Making Issues in Fernandina Beach, Florida*.
 - B. Continue to build, through the Joint Planning Agency or other appropriate means, a productive and constructive relationship with Nassau County so that common services, e.g. public safety, may be provided in a cost-effective and efficient manner to citizens.

- C. Develop, implement and monitor a five-year plan which sets out priorities and actions necessary to achieve those priorities. The city will determine levels of service which will meet the city's needs in the 21st century, while responding to community concerns for fiscal responsibility. Along with the plan, the city will develop program evaluation and performance measurement standards for existing services and new programs.
- D. Work with Nassau County so that the citizens of Amelia Island may be united through rational and common-sense land use policies.

2. Strategy : Growth Management. The City of Fernandina Beach will:

- A. Sponsor a Growth Summit to bring all the key players to the table with an eye toward identifying and solving critical issues relating to growth, such as responsive and responsible government, land use, economic development, transportation, utilities, workforce development, and job creation.
- B. Fairly, consistently and scrupulously enforce the law and city codes to guard against commercial sprawl into residential areas and unauthorized commercial expansion.
- C. Examine existing zoning regulations and consider instituting changes which will bring more mixed use into the Centre Street retail area, revisit coastal area zoning, and re-examine zoning for assisted living facilities.

3. Strategy : Finance. The City of Fernandina Beach will:

- A. Control, limit or reduce city property tax rates so that citizens who have enjoyed living in the city in the past may be able to afford to live in the city in the future, even on fixed incomes.
- B. Broaden the tax base and adopt an incentive program to encourage businesses to rehab old properties before building new ones.
- C. Aggressively pursue grants from all sources so that programs such as city acquisition of green space may continue to grow.
- D. Re-examine the budget process with an eye toward adopting zero-based or performance based budgeting to insure greater accountability.

VISION STATEMENT: CITIZENSHIP

WHAT:

To develop Fernandina Beach as a city where citizens have a high degree of pride and involvement in their community, take responsibility over important issues, vote responsibly on public issues and contribute at all levels to government and community actions.

WHY:

To increase citizen involvement in all aspects of the community.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

Citizens

Community Organizations

Government

Businesses

Educational Institutions

League of Women Voters

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Citizens

Governments

Businesses

HOW:

1. Keep citizens involved in government and promote interest in serving in both elected and volunteer positions.
2. Develop a program designed to promote more understanding of the importance of voting and increase participation in voting.
3. Improve understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship through the use of neighborhood groups.
4. Increase awareness and involvement of high school students in all aspects of the community.
5. Make use of public referendums where feasible.
6. Create and distribute voter pamphlets with all referendums and candidates included.

VISION STATEMENT: COMMUNICATION

WHAT:

To develop an in-depth communication program that provides varied, prompt, and effective communications between the citizens and the government through a combination of electronic technology and hard copy that ensures easy access and thorough availability to meet the communication needs of the city.

WHY:

To have a better informed community that enjoys easy access to services and information.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

City Staff

County Staff

County Government

City Government

City Committees and Boards

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Citizens

City and County Governments

Schools

HOW:

1. Provide a City Newsletter to keep citizens informed of city events, goals, etc.
2. Coordinate with the county to provide one cable station county-wide.
3. Provide a City maintained web site that is internet accessible and provides for downloading of forms, filing information, department information, pertinent dates, etc.
4. Explore new uses of public programming and provide a public access channel schedule.
5. Provide electronic government access for people of all economic levels
6. Provide town-wide bulletin boards (electronic and hard copy) where citizens can be kept advised of news of interest to all citizens.
7. Develop better use of available radio to provide access to key people in the city government and to staff members.
8. Conduct town meetings where citizens can have face-to-face access with government officials and city staff.

VISION STATEMENT: PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

WHAT:

To develop Fernandina Beach as a community that provides services, funding, and policies that ensure the public health, safety and security of all residents.

WHY:

To ensure public safety for all citizens.

To provide for orderly, safe evacuations.

To ensure personnel responsible for public safety receive the best possible training, equipment and facilities.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

City Government

City staff

Regional Mental Health Professionals

County Government

Area Medical Organizations

Federal Government

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Community

Citizens

HOW:

1. Improve treatment conditions for persons with mental illness and/or substance abuse problems.

Strategy:

- A. Develop and implement an overnight crises center and Detox service at the local hospital.
- B. Train police to recognize mental illness by educating them about Baker Act regulations and crisis intervention techniques.
- C. Create a women's crisis center to house women and children who are victims of domestic violence.
- D. Lobby the State of Florida for funds to facilitate the transition from inpatient care to community outpatient mental health care (Assertive Community Treatment Program - ACT).

2. Develop a cohesive evacuation plan, with the County, to efficiently facilitate the timely exodus of residents in case of emergency.

Strategy:

- A. Develop and publish/communicate a plan to ensure a safe and orderly evacuation when flooding threatens.

- B. Include mentally ill persons in the same category as those with special needs when implementing evacuation plans in case of emergencies.
 - C. Improve public information communication/services related to evacuation orders and also to inform residents that they may return to evacuated areas.
3. Encourage the City Commission to build and support facilities that will house well-trained and equipped public safety personnel.
- Strategy:
- A. Explore interlocal agreements with the County for police and fire services to ensure that residents get the best protection available.
 - B. Offer competitive salaries to public service personnel to retain a trained staff.
 - C. Strictly enforce codes regarding derelict properties and enforce traffic laws including those violated by truckers.
4. Investigate need for local transportation throughout the City of Fernandina Beach.
5. Investigate and recruit other public agencies and government groups (i.e. Coast Guard, etc.) that may want to locate on Amelia Island.
6. Reduce/eliminate our drug problem and related crime by sponsoring further educational programs, further law enforcement drug unit funding, citizen crime watch expansion, and more supervised recreational facilities/activities for youth.

VISION STATEMENT: ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

WHAT:

To ensure Fernandina Beach is renowned for its livable, small town atmosphere, pristine environment, unspoiled physical beauty, and protected natural resources

WHY:

To maintain and protect the beauty of the island.

To educate the citizens on the environment.

To promote environmentally active entities to locate on the island.

To promote ecotourism.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

Community

Sierra Club

Citizens

Schools

City and County Planning Committees

Chamber of Commerce

City and County Governments and Businesses

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Citizens

Future Generations

Tourists

Businesses

Ecosystems

Communities

HOW:

1. Protection and preservation of the city's island beauty.
 - A. Formulate and establish a growth plan to ensure a community that is sustainable without exceeding the capacity of the environmental sensitivities.
 - B. Enact and/or enforce laws for the protection of the city's unique natural environment and critical ecosystems, to include its dunes and beaches, wetlands and hummocks, trees, open green spaces, and wildlife habitats.
 - C. Restrict clear cutting.
 - D. Identify unique barrier island habitat and establish structures to preserve wildlife.
 - E. Conduct a land assessment for purposes of maintaining open green spaces
 - F. Be a positive influence in its ability to work closely with other county leaders and government agencies on behalf of preserving and protecting American Beach.

- G. Establish a viable program designed to disseminate free environmental education and to facilitate individual involvement in and promote active and generous public support of the city's environmental resources
2. Reduction of and in some cases, the elimination of litter and pollutants.
- A. Reduce or eliminate contaminants and pollutants in the air, land, and waterways by identifying them, initiating cleanup, and using available technology/control to discourage future contamination or pollution.
 - B. Improve the collection, recycling, and disposal of garbage and litter produced by a growing population.
 - C. Develop and implement a plan to clean retention ponds, waterfront areas and waterways and to eliminate future build-up of litter and debris in these areas.
 - D. Coordinate existing agencies to keep roadways and beaches free from dead animals and debris.
 - E. Obtain federal funding for cleaning up inter-coastal waterways.
 - F. Monitor and publish city and island air and water quality.
 - G. Explore and implement chemical use policies for areas where runoff affects wetlands, estuaries, and other bodies of water. Implement species specific larvaciding and other less poisonous methods for mosquito/arthropod control.
3. Use local, state, federal and private sector help and funding for the city to acquire available green space.
- A. Buy pogy plant and turn it into a marine park.
 - B. Protect/develop Amelia River waterfront as a user-friendly environmentally sound recreation area.
 - C. Educate public (local, regional, national) about Amelia Island's resources and how they can be preserved, enjoyed and increased for the future.
 - D. Create special events that will encourage both the acquisition, and later safe use of these properties, and will promote better environmental practices for the future.
 - E. Develop a program to evaluate and acquire other green spaces/wetlands (either by purchase or donation) as they become available.

4. Build infrastructure to conserve and enhance our local environmental resources, and educate, encourage and promote local use and ecotourism.
 - A. Seek out and encourage environmentally active entities such as a university or a marine biology station to locate here.
 - B. Create interactive nature/marine learning centers in newly acquired green spaces that educate and encourage the public to preserve and appreciate our environment
 - C. Seek out and actively court green business/industry to locate here and actively support those we already have.
 - D. Coordinate marine learning activities with schools, organizations, and the public to promote safe use of our environmental resources.
 - E. Promote ecotourism.
 - F. Coordinate local volunteer programs to help with the environmental education.

VISION STATEMENT: NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

WHAT:

We envision the City of Fernandina Beach as a city where all persons enjoy a sense of neighborhood and community pride. The city, community and private groups encourage the diversity and physical balance of affordable housing, green space and community recreation in a safe and crime free environment.

WHY:

To ensure affordable housing.(rental and sales)

To rehabilitate and clean up derelict properties.

To encourage facilities that service the needs of neighborhoods and residents.

To minimize crime, drug usage and violence in our neighborhoods.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

City and County Governments

FHA

HUD

Habitat for Humanity

Church Groups

Chamber of Commerce

Economic Development Agencies

Businesses

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Community

City

Citizens

County

HOW:

1. Establish a central facilitating/coordinating information office to promote the above listed objectives.
2. Hire and use professional grant writers for affordable housing, beautifying neighborhoods and recreational/community programs.
3. Provide drug prevention programs and education to establish crime free areas.
4. Promote volunteerism by rewarding community groups, homeowner associations for tree planting, community beautification and recreational programs.
5. Have government (city planning department) evaluate and plan lighting, bicycle paths, road paving and green areas as well as growth limitations.
6. Develop a plan to clean up derelict properties, including strict code enforcement. Institute a program that accepts inputs from all city employees (police, fire, sanitation, etc.) and tracks violations until resolved.

VISION STATEMENT: COMMUNITY HARMONY AND UNITY

WHAT:

To ensure that Fernandina Beach is a community where people of different color, ethnic background, religious choice, financial status, length of time in the community, chosen lifestyle, who are physically or mentally challenged can live and work harmoniously. The efforts of volunteer, service, civic, educational, religious organizations as well as government agencies and private industry are coordinated to ensure that the basic needs of all our citizens are met and the general welfare promoted.

WHY:

To change the attitudes that keep alive the prejudices and injustices in human relationships.

To unite the community.

To provide channels of communication and action whereby the legitimate concerns of all citizens can be given proper attention.

To help create an atmosphere whereby there is a sense of trust between the various segments of society.

To ensure that the basic needs and welfare of our people are met. These include:

- A. Increase services for the needy.
- B. Increase programs for retirees.
- C. Increase educational programs within the community.
- D. Ensure services and shelter for the elderly, abused spouses/children, mentally ill.
- E. Address drug problems.
- F. Proactive programs and extracurricular activities for troubled youth.
- G. More family oriented programs.
- H. Improve vocational training.
- I. Encourage volunteerism.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

Church Groups	Community
City Government	Citizens
Businesses	Police
NAACP	Civic Groups

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Community	City
Citizens	

HOW:

1. Expand the scope, ensure multicultural participation, and publicize the proceedings of the community relations board.

2. Promote better racial harmony/involvement by creating multicultural groups (action groups) or have facilitated town meetings of public forums to address "hot" issues.
3. Proactively integrate minorities in to the decision-making processes by programs to increase voter turnout, appointments to public committees, and communication with organized minority groups.
4. Ensure that no one community/neighborhood receives preferential treatment.
5. Encourage participation by all citizens.
6. Create neighborhood watch programs, drug prevention/recovery programs, and other programs that require neighbor attention.
7. Unify by creating events that celebrate our differences and educate others about different cultures. Begin the process with children and youths.
8. Seek neighborhood cleanup block grants. The people who need them most require the most education about their existence, who to contact in the city, procedures to apply/qualify, what is covered, etc.
9. Create a city department to coordinate the efforts of volunteer, service, civic, education and religious organizations as well as government agencies and private industry.
10. Establish a stabilizing unit/detox center at our local hospital for the mentally ill and drug dependent.
11. Establish a PACT program (Program for Adult Community Treatment) to provide housing and total welfare of the mentally ill community. The state of Florida has monies allocated for this program which includes a psychiatrist, nurse, and social worker for each home of 12 mentally ill patients.

VISION STATEMENT: EDUCATION

WHAT:

Fernandina Beach is a city committed to providing quality educational opportunities that will inspire its citizenry to acquire and use the knowledge and skills needed as lifelong learners. This will enable them to succeed in a culturally diverse and technologically sophisticated world with the strength of character and basic skills to serve as productive members of society.

WHY:

To improve life long learning opportunities for all citizens.

To create a better prepared workforce.

To provide students with adequate, state-of-the-art educational technology.

To promote quality learning experiences for everyone seeking to learn.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

City Government

Citizens

School Board

County Government

FCCJ

Schools

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Students

Communities

City

Teachers

Businesses

County

HOW:

1. Will seek to enhance learning opportunities for citizens of all ages.

Strategy:

- A. Encourage higher education and academic enhancement programs.
- B. Support a senior university program for retirees at FCCJ that would be self-supporting.
- C. Attract private colleges and trade schools.
- D. Revitalize continuing education opportunities.
- E. Assist in developing a full range of community college programs for Nassau County.
- F. Provide for a life-long learning institute.

G. Encourage Nassau County School System to include basic life skills into curriculum such as balancing a checkbook, telephone skills and entry level employment skills such as job interviews and resume writing.

2. Will cooperate with and support the Nassau County School Board in its endeavors to bring quality educational programs and facilities to our citizens.

Strategy:

- A. Support a school board appointed school superintendent.
- B. Encourage more volunteerism in the school system.
- C. Support a school board that is non-partisan and serves without pay.
- D. Support Nassau County School Board's Objectives.
- E. Understand and cooperate with the School Board's Mission Statement.

3. Will coordinate and help Nassau County School Board plan for the development and funding of educationally related capital improvements.

Strategy:

- A. Encourage the development of a vocational training center in Nassau County.
- B. Help build or enlarge a more modern public library.
- C. Help attract a Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University branch in Nassau County.
- D. Encourage the development of specialized education facilities within existing school buildings and/or allocate land for new construction.

4. Will provide educational equipment, support school related organizations and encourages local businesses to support our youth.

Strategy:

- A. Develop fund raising opportunities for educational equipment and supplies.
- B. Develop public/private partnerships within the business community to provide on-site learning opportunities for our youth and city employees.
- C. Provide equitable distribution of budgeted funds for various school organizations and groups.

D. Encourage local businesses and professional people to provide several opportunities for students to have exposure in many career areas to increase their understanding of future employment choices.

VISION STATEMENT: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WHAT:

Fernandina Beach is a thriving business and residential city with a healthy business base that proactively and cooperatively contributes to its economic and social progress. The business community focuses on a balanced approach emphasizing the establishment of new leading edge industries. Required training will be provided to maintain and improve existing businesses and simultaneously contribute in a positive way to the quality of life in the city and its surroundings.

WHY:

To encourage economic growth.

To increase the tax base.

To promote light industrial development.

To preserve and improve existing assets that lead to a high quality of life.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

Chamber of Commerce

Economic Development Committee

Businesses

City Government

County Government

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Citizens

Future Generations

City

Merchants

Businesses

County

HOW:

1. Will promote a climate, which will advance the economic well being of the city.

Strategy:

- A. City should be proactive in managing finances to avoid deficits.
- B. Help establish entrepreneurial funds for minority/women owned businesses and establish a minority opportunity council.
- C. Encourage existing business expansion and retention through local, state, and federal incentives.
- D. Establish impact fees to support the increasing demand on our education, fire, police, and infrastructure system.

2. Will create and enhance a healthy and attractive environment.

Strategy:

- A. Develop a program to rehab derelict properties to encourage growth and development opportunities.
- B. Help protect environmentally sensitive areas from progressive encroachment.
- C. Support the county to protect and preserve the American Beach Historic Area.
- D. Protect and preserve our beach with renourishment programs.

3. Will maximize the value and the beauty of our waterfront for our citizens and industry.

Strategy:

- A. Develop a plan for the City's waterfront to provide economic opportunities and attract tourism.
- B. Consider building a maritime park with museum.
- C. Explore partnerships to develop a marine terminal for a port of call destination for the smaller cruise ship industry.
- D. Help existing waterfront industries with infrastructure needs and recognize their economic contributions.

4. Will place a high priority on the retention and expansion of existing businesses while attracting desirable new industry.

Strategy:

- A. Support the Nassau County Economic Development Board and Chamber of Commerce activities.
- B. Encourage additional light industrial development at the airport industrial park.
- C. Attract new businesses that include research and development, light industry, small professional, high-tech and support services for existing manufacturers and target specific locations for industries that add value to the community.
- D. Implement a long-term odor reduction plan for the local paper industry to ensure the economic viability of the paper industry.
- E. Support existing industry and businesses, in particular the shrimping and fishing industry, the local paper mills, the Port of Fernandina, and the tourism industry.

F. Continue to support the Tourist Development Council and develop a positive tourism marketing plan.

G. Develop a process that serves the needs of new industries by utilizing the available skills of local and regional military personnel.

H. Continue to support industry appreciation activities.

5. Will maintain and improve the economic environment for tourism, retail, and professional businesses in the downtown area.

Strategy:

A. Develop a long-range plan for growth in the downtown business district.

B. Recognize the importance of 8th street's impact on the City's overall potential, offering business start-up incentives as well as developing appearance standards.

C. Provide adequate parking with lighting and security in the downtown business area

D. Implement a strong law enforcement presence in the downtown area.

6. Will commit to policies that place a high priority on preservation and improvement of our existing assets, which lead to a high quality of life for its citizens.

Strategy:

A. Help preserve the balance of industry, tourism, and residential neighborhoods.

B. Maintain a sound local economy, which attracts investments, increases the tax base, creates job opportunities and generate revenue sources.

C. Maintain and improve programs to ensure a high quality of life through recreation, education, environment, employment, and transportation improvements.

D. Support plans to provide current and future needs in the areas of drinking water, drainage, sewer and solid waste disposal.

VISION STATEMENT: RECREATION AND LEISURE/ARTS AND CULTURE

WHAT:

The city of Fernandina Beach is on a beautiful barrier island which has unlimited recreation, leisure and cultural opportunities. It is a community with a strong commitment to the arts that offers a variety of activities to residents and visitors of all ages.

WHY:

To provide increased entertainment opportunities for all age groups.
To increase and improve recreational alternatives.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

Citizens	Chamber of Commerce
City Government	Businesses
Historical Groups	Artists
Tourist Development Groups	

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Citizens	Tourists
Community	Businesses
Artists	Youths

HOW:

1. Develop a Marine Park at and near the pogy plant area.

Strategy:

Encourage and implement an acceptable plan for the development of a marine park including a double wide boat launching ramp, expanded parking, picnic/recreation area, rest rooms, boardwalk and marine learning center. Should be a joint venture (county and city) with either party assuming managerial responsibilities. Several leasehold opportunities could help defray maintenance costs. Seek state/federal funding to assist with waterway cleanup/sunken boat removal.

2. Improve middle school auditorium and allow its use for community functions. It is the only fixed seat auditorium in Nassau County.

Strategy:

This project had an initial price tag of \$750,000. Improvements to date include a refinished stage area, some painting, and 500 theater-type seats have been recovered. Approved for June 2000 is the replacement of air handler units, new ductwork, and sound walls. This is being paid for from county school budgeted funds, and a \$25,000 contribution from the Arts Alliance of Nassau County. Continue the work already begun to improve this facility by expanding the present lobby to include rest rooms. Add dressing and theater related rooms at the rear of

the stage, and include loading ramps and handicap access to both stage and front of auditorium. When completed this facility would increase the cultural entertainment opportunities for all our citizens. City and county could contribute further to these improvements because, although this is a school building and its primary use is school related, the facility is available and much used by many other organizations in city and county.

3. Improve and add recreation facilities and programs.

Strategy:

- A. We have a very active recreation department, but underfunding in one specific area holds the community back from the fullest use of the already existing facilities and programs, and holds the department back from doing low/no cost additions to them. We must provide an adequate budget for advertising the recreation department events, programs and classes. This should include money for a quarterly mailout activity guide for 32034/5 residents, and for distribution through public channels.
- B. Fund improvements in our existing two pool facilities, and fund additional personnel to increase public use hours.
- C. Increase the number of Little League practice fields, and increase their availability for public use.
- D. Add an additional park, complete with children's recreational facilities and equipment, centrally located on the island and funded by city and county.
- E. Fund a new indoor Olympic pool complex for year round use. At this time the Stingrays (the only recreational swim team in the county), the high school swim team, senior citizens, special needs/rehab patients, lifesaving/life guarding classes as well as the public, have no public pool available 7 months a year. Model other successful complexes. Pursue funding through park district, city, county, state, and other interested groups.
- F. Since recreation department figures show (1998) that facility usage breaks down along 40% city/ 60% county usage of sports and facilities, we should seek additional county funding for recreation dept. support.

4. Improve and expand library facility and services.

Strategy:

- A. Possible expansion or downtown relocation of present facility to provide room for more volumes, services and meeting spaces. Help fund increased book purchase budget.

- B. Possible location of an additional branch in Yulee. This would provide better access for off island citizens, and help alleviate some of our library overcrowding.
 - C. Encourage school libraries to expand hours to include summer use, and create a program to promote this use. This will reduce stress on the public library, and encourage fuller use of our island's other libraries as a year round resource.
5. Provide a full range of arts and cultural education and experience for residents and visitors of all ages.

Strategy:

- A. Offer and promote low cost/ free summer community classes in the arts for children in music, dance, theater, visual arts, crafts and writing. This can be done through the recreation center (and when it is completed, through the arts center). Add evening and weekend adult classes in the arts. The initial costs would be very low: primarily for scheduling and promotion and for facility cleanup.
- B. Provide an outdoor non-seated performance facility/amphitheater for year-round community use.
- C. Initiate a "1% for arts program" that mandates a percentage of any new municipal building or construction budget to use 1% of its funds to purchase/commission art from local/regional artists for the public space. Encourage "purchase awards" from businesses for art prizes at shows and festivals. Sponsor a yearly municipal arts project (murals, billboard arts, etc.)
- D. Create a Saturday Market (produce, art/crafts) or First Saturday program. Program is funded by selling limited booth space and commission fees and located on an empty downtown lot/parking lot. Brings locals as well as tourists to the downtown area.
- E. Seek funding/donations/grants to create and maintain an Arts and Cultural Center as a year round indoor facility to house an auditorium, gallery, classroom and meeting space for visual arts, crafts, dance, theater, writing and music. Purchase and retrofit an existing downtown building such as a church or the old post office for the purpose.
- F. Seek grants/matching funds and subsidize and co-facilitate bringing visiting cultural attractions and an artist in residence program to the city. Continue to increase support for the cultural facilities and attractions that we have.

6. Improve and increase sidewalks, trails and city /island bike paths.

Strategy:

- A. City/county lobbying efforts could continue the presently approved bike trail (from Hanna Park to the Nassau Bridge) from the south end of our island to Ft. Clinch State Park. Federal funds participation possible.
- B. Mandate all new road construction and improvements to include sidewalks and/or multipurpose bike paths. Funds are set aside by DOT to help, work with local groups to obtain local and state help. Provide signage to show shared areas of use.
- C. Fund better existing boardwalk maintenance.

VISION STATEMENT: TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC/PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

WHAT:

To ensure Fernandina Beach takes a systematic, balanced approach to the transportation/traffic/public infrastructure needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

WHY:

To proactively plan for transportation needs.

To manage traffic to the benefit of all users.

To enhance the attractiveness roadways.

To promote alternative means of transportation.

To ensure needs are balanced with historic and environmental needs.

To ensure adequate facilities for sewerage and water.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED:

Citizens

City Government

Historical Groups

County Government

Chamber of Commerce

Businesses

Tourist Development Groups

Local Mills

WHO WILL BENEFIT:

Citizens

Community

Tourists

Businesses

HOW:

1. Improve traffic flow at key points.

A. Seek alternative routes to free up main corridors. (8th Street, 14th Street, etc.)

B. Expand and widen 14th Street.

C. Complete Sadler Rd.

D. Improve traffic flow at Fletcher Ave. and Sadler Rd.

E. Develop 5 year plan for improvement of traffic flow, lights and routes.

F. Control growth on A1A and protect corridor.

G. Develop comprehensive evacuation plan.

2. Improve appearances.

A. Beautify city entrance.

B. Prohibit metal buildings on main roads.

- C. Beautify medians.
3. Investigate expansion of airport services.
 4. Sewerage and water.
 - A. Plan for future needs.
 - B. Investigate feasibility of island wide sewer system and elimination of septic tanks.
 - C. Clean retention ponds.
 - D. Eliminate flooding problems.
 5. Waste management.
 - A. Improve recycling to include plastic and paper.
 - B. Pick up dead animals expeditiously.
 - C. Empty downtown dumpsters.
 6. Public transportation.
 - A. Investigate feasibility of commuter service to surrounding areas. (for students, commuters, shoppers, tourists, etc.)
 - B. Look at possible use of railroad for transport and novelty rides.
 - C. Subsidized transport for senior citizens and low income people.
 7. Increase the number of jogging and bicycle paths.
 - A. Connected paths island wide.
 - B. Education on laws for use of paths.
 8. Parks and boardwalks.
 - A. Clean up waterfront areas.
 - B. Expand downtown along the waterfront and add boardwalks.
 - C. Finish Main Beach in accordance with committee plans.
 - D. Look into downtown pedestrian streets. (walking malls)
 - E. Add more sidewalks. (i.e. Sadler Rd.)
 9. Ferry to St. Marys and Cumberland.

APPENDIX A – THE IDEAS

This appendix contains the raw data that was gathered from the three public forums. This is the material that was given to the individual workgroups at the beginning of the workgroup process.

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This appendix contains the raw data that was gathered from the three public forums. This is the material that was given to the individual workgroups at the beginning of the workgroup process. These ideas were eventually processed into the workgroup reports.

1 - Downtown/Historic Resources

1. Keep courthouse downtown
2. Preserve historic district
3. Phone in town meeting
4. United island
5. Maintain & expand Centre St. to 8th Street
6. Continue preservation of historic district
7. Continue building city marina with boat ramp
8. Develop downtown boardwalk
9. Dredge city marina
10. Parking garage downtown
11. More mixed use property development-especially in downtown area
12. 2010 bustling activity because of courthouse or local serving business
13. Downtown sidewalks, curbs in historic district
14. Expansion of downtown
15. Develop more parking downtown
16. Fix up "Old Town"
17. Better long range plan for growth – downtown business district

2 – Public Health, Safety & Security

1. Marine patrol
2. A.C.T. program (mental health supervision & treatment with commission support)
3. Remedy flooding problems – N. Fletcher & 9th streets
4. Cohesive evacuation plan
5. Commission support of sufficient public safety personnel/equipment/facilities
6. Mental crisis capability at hospital
7. Women's crisis center
8. Fire rescue facility for training
9. Local transportation to entire landing
10. Adequate water supply
11. Larger facility for community theatre
12. Adequate personnel & equipment in public safety
13. Strict code enforcement on derelict properties
14. Address drug problems
15. Consolidate city & county police & fire
16. Coast Guard unit here
17. Improve conditions for mentally ill
18. Eliminate drug problem
19. More law enforcement in drug traffic areas
20. Authorities crack down on violations of trucks coming to mills and clean up 8th Street
21. Public transportation system – limited, e.g. beach or 8th Street
22. New modern police station with central location
23. Competitive salaries for police
24. Workable island evacuation plan
25. Ask state to look at Lofton creek – 1st flood plain
26. Detox center at the hospital
27. Overnight holding area for the mentally ill
28. Uniform treatment of people and property

3 - Trans./Traffic/Public Transportation

1. Eliminate dead animals from beach and road kill
2. Manage traffic
3. Ferry to Kingsland & Cumberland
4. Public transportation
5. Plan for future garbage
6. Recycle plastic
7. Develop entrance to city
8. Landscape medians
9. Reduce crossovers on AIA
10. Protect airport from impinging buildings
11. Protect AIA access from congested traffic (a la Beach Blvd.)
12. Replace aging water, sewer, streets infrastructure
13. Manage airport better
14. Ban metal buildings on high traffic streets
15. Upgrade 8th street (especially AIA entrance)
16. Intelligent management of growth
17. Encourage walk/bike vs. drive
18. Electric cars
19. Pedestrian streets
20. Remedy flooding problems – N. Fletcher & 9th streets
21. Expand water and sewer facilities
22. Air ferry to St. Mary's
23. Airport shuttle
24. Light rail to Jacksonville
25. Develop downtown boardwalk
26. Adequate water supply
27. City & industry come up with truck/traffic flow times
28. Parking garage downtown
29. More mixed use property development-especially in downtown area
30. Develop a plan to clean up contaminated properties
31. Traffic
32. Alternatives to trucks to mills
33. City teaming with county on I-95 widening and AIA corridor
34. Downtown sidewalks, curbs in historic district
35. Better code and law enforcement – it will help prevent urban sprawl
36. Improve turn signals & lanes (arrows)
37. Waterfront park areas for residents
38. Finish main beach
39. Complete Sadler road
40. Re-evaluate entire road system for sidewalks & bicycle paths
41. Protect AIA corridor
42. Clean up inter-coastal/Amelia River side
43. Expansion of downtown

3 - Trans./Traffic/Public Transportation

44. Use rail line for public transportation
45. Solid waste management
46. Reroute AIA
47. Commercial impact of AIA traffic
48. Air carrier to Hilton Head, Savannah, St. Augustine, etc.
49. Cleaner 8th Street traffic
50. Increase pedestrian walkways, bike paths (like Bradenton)
51. Remove garbage cans on Fletcher
52. Utility lines underground, use fiber optical
53. Long range industrial replacement plan
54. Clean up downtown garbage dumpsters
55. No super Wal-Mart
56. Extend and widen N. 14th St. – turn signal Lime to hospital
57. Off-island transfer point for logs to mills to reduce traffic on 8th St.
58. Maintain sense of “community” in our cable service
59. Make airport become self-sufficient
60. Clean retention pond at Food Lion/clean all retention ponds
61. Develop residential alternative streets to free up main corridors
62. Designation on all streets where county/city line is
63. Improved appearance of 8th Street
64. No more high rise buildings
65. Put a toll on bridge a la St. Simons
66. Authorities crack down on violations of trucks coming to mills and clean up 8th Street
67. Develop more parking downtown
68. Fix up “Old Town”
69. Remote visitor center with shuttle to downtown
70. Public transportation system – limited, e.g. beach or 8th Street
71. Rotary traffic Fletcher at Sadler
72. Better traffic patterns
73. Get rid of signs/develop sign ordinance
74. Extend restrictions of the historic district out Atlantic to the beaches
75. Mail delivery on both sides of Fletcher
76. Better garbage disposal at the beach
77. Island wide sewer – no septic tanks
78. Workable island evacuation plan
79. Ask state to look at Lofton creek – 1st flood plain
80. Look at traffic patterns at major intersections
81. Study traffic lights and traffic flow on 14th Street
82. AIA needs service access roads
83. Public transportation – trolley
84. Scrutinize & manage development of island

4 - Environmental Resources

1. Eliminate dead animals from beach and road kill
2. Marine learning activities
3. Plan for future garbage
4. Recycle plastic
5. Restrict clear cutting
6. Better code and law enforcement
7. Save trees
8. Eco-tourism
9. Marine biology station here
10. Retain natural beauty of island
11. Nature Center & stories (interactive)
12. Identify unique barrier island habitat & establish structures to preserve
13. Enforce laws to protect dunes & natural areas in hammock
14. Maintain open spaces/conduct a land assessment
15. Eliminate pulp odor
16. Develop a plan to clean up contaminated properties
17. Preserve beach - improve & expand
18. Tree replacement program
19. Preserve/protect American Beach
20. Clean up inter-coastal/Amelia River side
21. Buy poogie plant and make into marine park
22. Remove garbage cans on Fletcher
23. Plant trees destroyed during development
24. Clean retention pond at Food Lion/clean all retention ponds
25. Federal funding for cleaning up inter-coastal waterway
26. Get Fed. and state help to buy available green space
27. Clean up Eagan's creek corridor for boating, biking
28. Clean up waterfront – convert to world class tourist attraction
29. Protect/develop Amelia River waterfront as user friendly maritime park from Centre St. to mill
30. Encourage maintaining green space
31. Prevent dune destruction

5 - Neighborhood & Housing

1. Integrate town & Plantation
2. Affordable housing
3. Maintain affordable housing (purchase under 100K) & rentals
4. Maintain open spaces/conduct a land assessment
5. Strict code enforcement on derelict properties
6. More mixed use property development-especially in downtown area
7. Assess developer impact fees and give to school system
8. Develop a plan to clean up contaminated properties
9. Better code and law enforcement – it will help prevent urban sprawl
10. Establish grant program to rehab derelict properties
11. Re-evaluate entire road system for sidewalks & bicycle paths
12. Downtown grocery store
13. Neighborhood clean up block grants
14. Diverse housing
15. Renovation/restoration
16. Bike paths/sidewalks
17. Lighting
18. Open space
19. Parks
20. Greenery
21. Tree planting
22. Safe
23. Apartments/condos
24. Pride
25. Community associations/organizations
26. Beautification
27. Infrastructure (adequate sewer, water, light, etc.)
28. Growth limitations
29. Mixed residential/commercial, e.g. Seaside, Amelia Park
30. Plant trees destroyed during development
31. Consolidation of social programs/offices/etc.
32. Promote volunteerism
33. Clean retention pond at Food Lion/clean all retention ponds
34. Improved appearance of 8th Street
35. No more high rise buildings
36. Fix up "Old Town"
37. Extend restrictions of the historic district out Atlantic to the beaches

6 – Education

1. Higher education students
2. Marine learning activities
3. Vocational training for non-college
4. College fair
5. Scholarships available
6. Self-supporting senior university for retirees at FCCJ
7. Appointed school superintendent
8. Computer for every school child
9. Promote technology
10. Enlarge library – Newer & bigger
11. Smaller classrooms
12. Middle schools need work
13. Have Board of Education non-partisan. Have them serve for free
14. Public internet access in library (more/faster)
15. Replace school facilities
16. Attract private college
17. FAMU branch in Nassau County
18. Marine biology station here
19. Encourage more voluntarism especially in elementary schools
20. Institute life-long learning institute
21. Assess developer impact fees and give to school system
22. Address drug problems
23. Leadership Nassau
24. More educational programs in the community (library, rec. center)
25. Better use of public programming to inform on city happenings
26. Apprenticeship program for high school
27. Build relationship to bring UNF classes
28. Improve educational system ASAP
29. Eliminate drug problem
30. Workable day treatment for mentally ill
31. Temporary facility for abused spouses/children
32. Excellence in education
33. Attract marine research facility (academic presence)
34. Full range of community college programs
35. Contest in schools to develop good citizens