



Institute for Senior Professionals

## MEMORANDUM

TO: ISP Members  
FROM: *DH*  
Doug Harvell, DeFuniak Springs Enterprise Zone Task Force  
DATE: May 26, 1995  
SUBJECT: Enterprise Zone Application

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For your information, attached is a copy of the final version of the "Strategic Plan" prepared by the ISP Task Force working with DeFuniak Springs' Enterprise Zone application. This plan was submitted as part of the complete application to the Florida Department of Commerce in Tallahassee on May 5, 1995.

There were three applications from cities in the same population category, one of which was "grandfathered" in.

According to Mr. Tom Powell, Director, Walton County Economic Development Council, state officials stated the DeFuniak Springs application was complete and a good presentation and should be competitive.

DH:bt

attachment

**Tab 8**

**Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**

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## **Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**

### **Executive Summary**

This plan describes the community's vision for improving the quality of life of the residents of the nominated area. It describes the goals supporting that vision and the strategies that will make it possible to reach those goals. Those strategies reflect strong commitment from the city government, other local government agencies, local business and civic groups, and individual local businesses.

The primary thrust of this plan is to improve the situation of the residents of the nominated area by increasing job opportunities in the zone. But, the strategic planning process made it clear that this is best accomplished within the context of an overall community vision. The vision embraced by the people of DeFuniak Springs is of a community known for civic pride that enjoys steady economic growth in a way that enhances its small town quality of life.

The goals supporting this vision have been grouped according to those related to civic pride, economics, and quality of life. For each goal, strategies identify specific actions to be taken, parties tasked with those actions, and timetables for completion.

Implementation of this plan is the responsibility of the Enterprise Zone Development Agency and the City of DeFuniak Springs. However, much of the work will be done by the nearly twenty civic groups and government agencies identified herein. Their commitment to and support of this plan is essential.

The plan represents the combined efforts of about 100 individual citizens, the City government and numerous civic groups. All major elements of the plan came from a series of public meetings and reflect the consensus opinion of the participants.

**Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**  
**Description of the Community's Goals**

The people of DeFuniak Springs have established the following vision for their community:

**DeFuniak Springs is a community known for civic pride that enjoys steady economic growth in a way that enhances its small town quality of life.**

Consequently, its goals are grouped into those intended to raise the economic standard of living, those intended to preserve the current small town quality of life, and those intended to increase civic pride and involvement. These goals reflect the community's belief that economic growth is essential, but it must be managed in a way that does not detract from the overall quality of life. They also reflect the belief that civic involvement is the key to achieving all the goals.

Because DeFuniak Springs is a small town and the nominated area covers over one third of it, the goals that follow apply to both the community as a whole and the nominated area.

**ECONOMIC GOALS**

The two major economic goals are to recruit non-polluting, export industries, and to capitalize on existing natural and historic features to increase the volume of tourism. An "export industry" is defined as a business that sells most of its goods and services outside the local area; thus it exports its product and imports new money into the local economy. The specific goal statements that support this economic strategy follow:

1. Increase job opportunities by recruiting diverse, non-polluting, export industry.
2. Improve the availability of infrastructure to support businesses that require new and improved technology including telecommunications.
3. Maintain, enhance and capitalize on unique features of the community, such as the lake, Victorian architecture, and cultural heritage to make DeFuniak Springs a destination for visitors.
4. Encourage downtown as a specialty shopping district

5. Seek opportunities for improvement in utilities, parking and streets.

### QUALITY OF LIFE GOALS

The main quality of life goals are to expand crime prevention and recreation programs while seeking opportunities to improve health care and transportation systems. The specific goal statements for this section follow:

1. Maintain small town quality of life including low crime, few traffic problems and a clean environment.
2. Provide amenities to support a quality community and lifestyle, such as cultural opportunities, health care, affordable restaurants and entertainment.
3. Develop new recreational and cultural facilities and events.
4. Develop a plan for the lake area and the surrounding historic district to determine its role and function, and how best to use it to the community's advantage.
5. Seek opportunities for improvement in health care.
6. Seek opportunities for improvement in transportation facilities.

### CIVIC PRIDE GOALS

The two major civic pride goals are to develop a comprehensive, city wide strategic plan, and to increase the level of communication and cooperation between civic groups, educational institutions, churches and the government. These goals grew out of citizen's experience in developing the strategic plan for the Enterprise Zone application. That process served to whet resident's appetite for involvement in community improvement projects and made it apparent that the city would benefit from a major, long term strategic planning effort. This planning effort will not target the Enterprise Zone alone, but the zone's residents will benefit from general improvements in city services and growth in the entire community's economy. Specific goals statements for this section follow:

1. Bring together the entire community, including civic groups, educational institutions, churches and government, to improve the quality of life in DeFuniak Springs.

2. Improve the cooperative spirit between government and the community.
3. Develop a strategic plan for the City, using a facilitated process.
4. Implement a beautification program based on a long term, professional plan.
5. Promote pride in the appearance of neighborhoods.

**Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**  
**Description of the Coordinated Efforts for Revitalization**

It was apparent early in the planning process that successful revitalization of the nominated area would require far more than just the business tax credits available to state approved Enterprise Zones. This became even more obvious when citizens formulating the plan went beyond economic issues to include matters of civic pride and quality of life. Consequently, this plan calls for a coordinated effort involving four elements of the city government, five other local government agencies, eleven business and civic groups, and four local businesses. Their involvement is detailed in the strategies and taskings listed for each of the following goals:

**ECONOMIC GOALS**

1. *Increase job opportunities by recruiting diverse, non-polluting industry.*
  - a. Identify appropriate sized, non-polluting, export industries.  
Complete By: January 1996.  
Action By: Enterprise Zone Development Agency (EZDA) with assistance from the Walton County Economic Development Council (WCEDC).
  - b. Develop and implement a comprehensive, long-term marketing plan that takes advantage of existing economic development programs in the region and the availability of Enterprise Zone incentives.  
Complete By: July 1995 (submit budget for FY 1996)  
March 1996 (plan development).  
Action By: EZDA with direct support from the DeFuniak Springs City staff and assistance from the WCEDC.

- c. Develop a program to train Enterprise Zone residents in literacy and specific job skills needed by targeted industries.

Complete By: March 1996.

Action By: Okaloosa Walton Community College and the Walton Vocational-Technical Center with support from the Private Industry Council.

2. *Improve the availability of infrastructure to support new and improved technology including telecommunications.*

- a. Determine the level of telecommunications technology projected to be available over the next ten years.

Complete By: September 1995.

Action By: EZDA with assistance from Sprint-Centel.

- b. Determine the kinds of telecommunications technology required by targeted businesses.

Complete By: December 1995.

Action By: EZDA with assistance from Sprint-Centel.

- c. Develop and implement a long-term plan to influence the acquisition of needed technology.

Complete By: March 1996.

Action By: EZDA with direct support of the DeFuniak Springs City staff.

3. *Maintain, enhance and capitalize on unique features of the community, such as the lake, Victorian architecture, and cultural heritage to make DeFuniak Springs a destination for visitors.*

- a. Identify an existing organization or create a new organization whose primary purpose is to promote DeFuniak Springs as a tourist destination.

Complete By: July 1995.

Action By: EZDA.



- b. Develop and implement a marketing plan based on the types of attractions available.

Complete By: December 1995.

Action By: DeFuniak Springs tourism organization.

4. *Encourage downtown as a specialty shopping district*

- a. Form a committee of the DeFuniak Springs Business and Professionals' Association (DBPA) dedicated exclusively to increasing retail sales in the central business district.

Complete By: July 1995.

Action By: DBPA.

- b. Study comparable towns that have effectively employed specialty shopping strategies.

Complete By: December 1995.

Action By: DBPA Downtown Retail Committee.

- c. Perform a market study to determine specific specialty products and services that could work well in downtown DeFuniak Springs.

Complete By: July 1996.

Action By: DBPA Downtown Retail Committee.

- d. Seek downtown redevelopment grants to upgrade public physical structures.

Complete By: December 1997.

Action By: Citizens Advisory Committee with assistance from the DeFuniak Springs City staff.

- e. Investigate the feasibility of having the central business district participate in the "Main Street" program.

Complete By: December 1996.

Action By: DBPA Downtown Retail Committee.

5. *Seek opportunities for improvement in utilities, parking and streets.*

Pursue new grants to enhance public utilities.

Complete By: December 1996.

Action By: DeFuniak Springs City Council.

## QUALITY OF LIFE GOALS

1. *Maintain small town quality of life including low crime, few traffic problems and a clean environment.*

- a. Expand existing early childhood family crime prevention and intervention programs throughout the city.

Complete By: 2000

Action By: Interagency Council for Early Childhood Services with support from public and private health, education and welfare agencies and organizations.

- b. Expand existing juvenile crime intervention programs throughout the city.

Complete By: 2000.

Action By: Walton County Sheriff's Department, Walton County School Board, and DeFuniak Springs Police Department with support from the Juvenile Justice Committee.

- c. Expand the "Crime Watch" neighborhood crime prevention program to every interested neighborhood in DeFuniak Springs.

Complete By: December 1997.

Action By: DeFuniak Springs Police Department and the Walton County Sheriff's Department.

- d. Aggressively anticipate and identify potential traffic problems and solutions to the Florida Department of Transportation.

Complete By: Annually starting in 1996.

Action By: DeFuniak Springs City staff.

2. *Provide amenities to support a quality community and lifestyle, such as cultural opportunities, health care, affordable restaurants and entertainment.*

Identify and coordinate cultural events, educational programs and community activities on a continuous basis.

Complete By: Procedures in place by July 1995.

Action By: Walton County Chamber of Commerce (Interclub Council).
  
3. *Develop new recreational and cultural facilities and events.*
  - a. Construct a YMCA facility.

Complete By: 2000.

Action By: North Walton YMCA.
  - b. Repair and upgrade the Chautauqua Building.

Complete By: Budget by October 1995.

Action By: DeFuniak Springs City Council.
  - c. Expand and enhance the Ritz Theater.

Complete By: 2000.

Action By: The Florida Chautauqua.
  - d. Upgrade and enhance the Concerned Community Fathers' Tivoli facility.

Complete By: 1997.

Action By: Concerned Community Fathers.
  
4. *Develop a plan for the lake area and the surrounding historic district to determine its role and function, and how best to use it to the community's advantage.*
  - a. Develop and implement a specific "downtown and historic district" strategic plan within the city's overall strategic plan.

Complete By: Completion of overall strategic plan.

Action By: To Be Determined.

- b. Investigate innovative ways to obtain the funds and manpower needed to maintain the environmental health and physical appearance of Lake DeFuniak and the area inside Circle Drive.

Complete By: December 1996.

Action By: DeFuniak Springs City Council.

5. *Seek opportunities for improvement in health care.*

Determine health care services and needs for the next 10 years.

Completed By: 1996.

Action By: Walton Regional Hospital Advisory Board.

6. *Seek opportunities for improvement in transportation facilities.*

Extend the runway length and aircraft parking space at the municipal airport.

Completed By: 2005.

Action By: DeFuniak Springs City Council.

#### CIVIC PRIDE GOALS

1. *Bring together the entire community, including civic groups, educational institutions, churches and government, to improve the quality of life in DeFuniak Springs.*

- a. Organize, publicize and hold a forum to describe the benefits of civic groups, educational institutions, churches and the city government working together on specific projects to improve the quality of life.

Completed By: October 1995.

Action By: EZDA and the Walton County Chamber of Commerce.

- b. Create a Civic Pride Committee to facilitate communications between interested organizations and coordinate specific projects.

Completed By: December 1995.

Action By: EZDA and the Walton County Chamber of Commerce.

2. *Improve the cooperative spirit between government and the community.*

Establish a schedule whereby representatives of civic groups attend city council meetings and members of the city council attend civic group meetings.

Completed By: Civic Pride Committee and the DeFuniak Springs City Council.

Action By: February 1996.

3. *Develop a strategic plan for the City, using a facilitated process.*

Plan for a facilitated, comprehensive strategic planning process.

Completed By: December 1996.

Action By: DeFuniak Springs City Council.

4. *Implement a beautification program based on a long term, professional plan.*

Expand and enhance the current city beautification plan with particular emphasis on involving civic groups, rewarding beautification efforts, and addressing high traffic "gateways."

Completed By: June 1996.

Action By: DeFuniak Springs City Council and the DeFuniak Springs Garden Club.

5. *Promote pride in the appearance of neighborhoods.*

Develop a system to coordinate public/private initiatives to clean up and restore neighborhoods (e.g., designated clean up days, paint days, and civic groups put in contact with needy residents).

Completed By: March 1996.

Action By: Civic Pride Committee.

All of the organizations tasked above have been asked to sign letters committing to accomplish their tasks. Due to the late date at which the wording for the taskings was finalized, not all organization had formally replied as of the printing of this document. However, no organization has declined and all are expected to participate. Letters of commitment returned as of May 1, 1995 follow:

DEFUNIAK SPRINGS STRATEGIC PLAN  
COMMITMENT STATEMENT

We agree to perform the following task(s) as part of the effort to implement the DeFuniak Spring strategic plan:

Increase job opportunities by recruiting diverse, non-polluting industry.

- a. Identify appropriate sized, non-polluting, export industries.

Complete By: January 1996.

Action By: Enterprise Zone Development Agency (EZDA) with assistance from the Walton County Economic Development Council (WCEDC).

- b. Develop and implement a comprehensive, long-term marketing plan that takes advantage of existing economic development programs in the region and the availability of Enterprise Zone incentives.

Complete By: July 1995 (submit budget for FY 1996)

March 1996 (plan development).

Action By: EZDA with direct support from the DeFuniak Springs City staff and assistance from the WCEDC.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

Thomas L. Powell, EXEC. DIRECTOR  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name & Title)

Walton County Economic Dev. Council  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Organization)

904-892-0555  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Telephone)

DEFUNIAK SPRINGS STRATEGIC PLAN  
COMMITMENT STATEMENT

We agree to perform the following task(s) as part of the effort to implement the DeFuniak Spring strategic plan:

Increase job opportunities by recruiting diverse, non-polluting industry.

Develop a program to train Enterprise Zone residents in literacy and specific job skills needed by targeted industries.

Complete By: March 1996.

Action By: **Okaloosa-Walton Community College** and the Walton Vocational-Technical Center with support from the Private Industry Council.

*Barbara Jones*

(Signature)

Barbara Jones Director owcc Chautauqua Center.

(Printed Name & Title)

Okaloosa-Walton Community College

(Organization)

(904) 892-8100

(Telephone)



DEFUNIAK SPRINGS STRATEGIC PLAN  
COMMITMENT STATEMENT

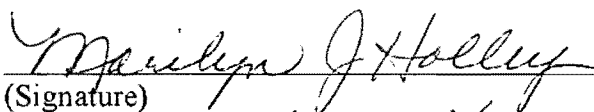
We agree to perform the following task(s) as part of the effort to implement the DeFuniak Spring strategic plan:

Increase job opportunities by recruiting diverse, non-polluting industry.

Develop a program to train Enterprise Zone residents in literacy and specific job skills needed by targeted industries.

Complete By: March 1996.

Action By: Okaloosa Walton Community College and the **Walton Vocational-Technical Center** with support from the Private Industry Council.



(Signature)

MARILYN J. HOLLEY - VOCATIONAL DIRECTOR

(Printed Name & Title)

WALTON School District + Walton Co. Vo-tech.

(Organization)

(904) 892-8240-8242

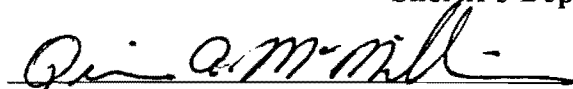
(Telephone)

DEFUNIAK SPRINGS STRATEGIC PLAN  
COMMITMENT STATEMENT

We agree to perform the following task(s) as part of the effort to implement the DeFuniak Spring strategic plan:

Maintain small town quality of life including low crime, few traffic problems and a clean environment.

- a. Expand existing juvenile crime intervention programs throughout the city.  
Complete By: 2000.  
Action By: **Walton County Sheriff's Department, Walton County School Board, and DeFuniak Springs Police Department with support from the Juvenile Justice Committee.**
- b. Expand the "Crime Watch" neighborhood crime prevention program to every interested neighborhood in DeFuniak Springs.  
Complete By: December 1997.  
Action By: DeFuniak Springs Police Department and the **Walton County Sheriff's Department.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

Quinn A. McMillian, Sheriff  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Printed Name & Title)

Walton County Sheriff's Department  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Organization)

904-892-8111  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Telephone)

DEFUNIAK SPRINGS STRATEGIC PLAN  
COMMITMENT STATEMENT

We agree to perform the following task(s) as part of the effort to implement the DeFuniak Spring strategic plan:

Develop new recreational and cultural facilities and events.

Construct a YMCA facility.

Complete By: 2000, Dec. 31, 2000 -

Action By: North Walton YMCA.

*Sonny Gates*

(Signature)

SONNY GATES, President

(Printed Name & Title)

NORTH WALTON YMCA

(Organization)

892-3435

(Telephone)

DEFUNIAK SPRINGS STRATEGIC PLAN  
COMMITMENT STATEMENT

We agree to perform the following task(s) as part of the effort to implement the DeFuniak Spring strategic plan:

Develop new recreational and cultural facilities and events.

Expand and enhance the Ritz Theater.

Complete By: 1997. 2000

Action By: The Florida Chautauqua.

*Cindy Roehm*

(Signature)

*President*

(Printed Name & Title)

*Florida Chautauqua*

(Organization)

*(904) 892-9494*

(Telephone)

**Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**  
**Description of Poverty and General Distress**

DeFuniak Springs is a small, rural town that has experienced a prolonged period of economic decline. Once a cultural center and an economic power in northwest Florida, DeFuniak Springs was once home to a four year college and a booming timber industry. The Great Depression of the 1930's started a period of economic decline that was slowed only by the construction of a nearby interstate highway near the middle of the century. As job opportunities have diminished, the City's population has decreased steadily over the years. For example, data from the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research show that the City's population decreased by over 13% in the six year period from 1986 until 1992.

The economic distress endured by the residents of the nominated area is only slightly worse than that endured by many other residents of the City of DeFuniak Springs. For example, approximately 80% of the city exceeded the 20% poverty rate criteria required for consideration as an Enterprise Zone. The area nominated was selected because it combined the two census areas with the highest poverty levels and the greatest potential for improvement through business growth. They also provided an area closely matched to the three square mile limit allowed for a community of this size.

The two areas chosen include the central business district with its adjoining low income residential neighborhood, and a strangely shaped census area composed of low income neighborhoods, commercial properties, and the city's industrial park. The indications of economic distress in this combined area is compelling, even though they include data on an affluent residential neighborhood that was excluded from the nominated area but included in the census data.

The overall poverty rate was 32.8%. This relates directly to the low number of persons in the work force and low per capita income. According to 1990 census data, less

than 42% of persons 16 years and older worked or even sought to work. And at \$10,881 the per capita income was 39% below the state average! Another factor which may partly explain the pervasive poverty is the low high school graduation rate. 44% of adults over age 25 were not high school graduates.

The effect of widespread poverty is apparent in the neighborhoods within the nominated area. According to census data, 46% of the housing units are over 40 years old and 20% of all the housing units were vacant or abandoned. Businesses suffered similarly as city planning officials estimate that 14% of all commercial buildings in the nominated area are vacant or abandoned. This is especially evident in the central business district.

In the census area that includes the central business district, the poverty rate is over 40%! Only 36.5% of the residents seek employment and of them, 11.9% were unemployed. The per capita income was \$5,446. This is only 30% of the statewide per capita income. By any definition, this is an area of extreme poverty and economic distress.

## **Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**

### **Verification that the Contributing Organizations Participated in the Planning Process**

It was recognized early on that public participation was essential to the planning process. For that reason, the community vision, goals and strategies were developed at a series of professionally facilitated public meetings. The meeting facilitators assured that every participant had the opportunity to provide input, and they helped achieve the consensus that was the objective of every meeting. The local business community was so committed to this process that they raised \$4,000 to add to the city's funds to pay for the facilitators.

The public meetings were heavily advertised and well attended. A summary of those who signed attendance sheets for the meetings, and copies of those attendance sheets follow. It should be noted that even though a good many people who attended the meetings did not sign in, at least 66 different people representing a variety of organizations did sign in as participants. Copies of the local media coverage announcing the meetings and reporting on their outcomes is also attached.

## Enterprise Zone Meeting Attendance List

### General Information Meeting - March 16, 1995

Tom Powell - Director, WCEDC	Willy D. Anderson, Sr. - Resident
Janet Campbell - OWCC Trustee	Richard Whitaker - Retired engineer
Dennis F. Ray - Business owner	Norm Davis - TV 24
Frank Maska - Resident	Alva O. Campbell - City Councilman
Rodney J. Ryals - City employee	George Ward - ISP
Sara Commander - Chamber President	Ronnie Bell - County Administrator
Flemming Ward - Attorney	Don Cloer - Resident
Harley Henderson - Mayor	Rachel Thomas - Barnett Bank
Mike Standley - City Manager	Bob Fleet - ISP

### Facilitated Visioning Meeting - March 23, 1995

Tom Powell - Director, WCEDC	F. Diane Pickett - Business owner
David Carson - Florida HRS	Richard Whitaker - Retired engineer
Larry Laird - City Planner	John C. Sanders - Resident
Barbara Dykman - City Councilwoman	Brian Szilvasy - Resident
Linda Burkett - Burger King	Mary Rae Harrison - Resident
Ron Kelly - WZEP Radio	Charles H. King, Jr. - Business owner
George H. Montgomery - Wal-Mart	Wayne Linke - News reporter
Sara Commander - Chamber President	Robert Dobson - Gulf Power Co.
Sally Merrifield - Abbott-Andrews Realty	Byrdie Mitchell - Bed/Breakfast owner
Cindy Woodham - Business owner	Greg Lathinghouse - Automobile dealer
Marvin Campbell - Resident	Dennis Ray - Restaurant owner
Eva Campbell - Resident	Howard Taylor - Resident
Hazel Daughette - Resident	Chuck Lawson - Insurance agent
Mr. Russell Cook - Resident	Cindy Lofton - Real estate agent



## Enterprise Zone Meeting Attendance List

### Facilitated Goal Setting Meeting - March 29, 1995

Tom Powell - WCEDC	Dorothy Donald - City clerk
Marcus Johnson - Concrd. Comm. Fathers	Al Donaldson - ISP
Hazel Daughette - Resident	Mike Standley - City Manager
Dennis Ray - Restaurant owner	Sue Ellen Colin - Private Industry Council
David D. Johnson - Business owner	Opal Davidson - City Councilwoman
Luther Ates - Regions Bank	Harley Henderson - Mayor
Bob Fleet - ISP	Rachel Thomas - Barnett Bank
John R. Saltzman - Insurance agent	Robert Dobson - Gulf Power Co.
George Hogans - Concrd. Comm. Fathers	Barbara Jones - OWCC
Mike Richards - CHELCO	Craig Robinson - Accountant
George Ward - ISP	Barbara Dykman - City Councilwoman
Jack Huggins - Realty business owner	Charles King - Resident
Chuck Lawson - Insurance agent	F. Diane Pickett - Business owner
Wayne Linke - Newspaper reporter	

### Initial Strategies and Objectives Meeting - April 7, 1995

Tom Powell - WCEDC	Henry Louwerens - Business owner
Mike Standley - City Manager	Marie Lathinghouse - Business owner
Alva O. Campbell - City Councilman	Ben Totten - Resident
Chuck Lawson - Insurance agent	Ginny Cook - Resident
Frank Maska - Resident	Russ Cook - Resident
Paul Cate - Heritage Assn; Kiwanis	John R. Saltzman - Insurance agent
F. Diane Pickett - Business owner	Barbara Jones - OWCC
James C. Thomas - Hospital Administrator	Harley Henderson - Mayor
Marilyn Louwerens - Business owner	

## Enterprise Zone Meeting Attendance List

Final Strategies and Objectives Meeting - April 13, 1995

Tom Powell - WCEDC	Barbara Jones - OWCC
Larry Laird - City Planner	Harley Henderson - Mayor
Dennis Ward - Police Department	Dorothy Donald - City clerk
Alva O. Campbell - City Councilman	Rachel Thomas - Barnett Bank
Chuck Lawson - Insurance agent	Viola Yaur - Resident
Paul Cate - Heritage Assn; Kiwanis	Roland Yaur - Resident
Marie Lathinghouse - Business owner	J.W. Adkison - Business owner
Ben Totten - Resident	Sally Merrifield - Abbott-Andrews Realty
Ginny Cook - Resident	Charles King - Business owner
Russ Cook - Resident	Janet Campbell - OWCC Trustee

Visioning and Goal Setting Session with Students at Walton High School - April 24, 1995

Brianna Ball	Stephanie Milber
Barrett Bannister	Jason Robertson
Chet Batson	Rita Schofield
Amoricus Bunkley	Amy Stone
Joan Dee	Sara Thomas
Jason Duncan	Shelby Truett
Jeromey Gillispie	Lisa Vo
Jackie Grice	Rande Evans
Christy Jimmerson	Heather Earley
Sheldon Manning	Zane Sunday, Teacher

3-16-95

NAME	Phone #	FAX #
Willy D Anderson	892-7185	
Richard Whitaker	892-2553	
Tom Davis Turz	892-4038	
Alva O. Campbell	892-7448	
George Ward	837-2718	
Rennie Belle	892-8156	892-8162
Don Coker	581-1822	
James Thomas	892-3231	892-7115
Bob Fleet	267-2200	

3-16-95

NAME

Phone #

FAX #

Janet Campbell

(904) 892-9696

Dennis F. RAY

(904) 892-2566

892

Frank Maska

(904) 892-0203

Rodney J. Ryals

904 - 892 - 2562

Jana Comander

892 - 2821

2835

Glenn Ward

892 - 3822

Harley Henderson

892 - 8500

8506

Mike Standley

904 - 892 - 8500

8506

# PLEASE SIGN IN

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone #</u>
DAVID CARSON	HRS	892 4108
LARRY LAIRD	CITY OF DE FURIAK	892-8500
Barbara Dykupa	" " "	892-7568
Quada Burtot	Burysa King	892-2423
John Kelly	WEP	892-3158
George H. Holcomb	Wal-Mart	892-6929
Sara Combs	-	892-2821
Jelly Mungie	Abball + Andrews Realty	892-9657
Cindy Woodhams	A Ticket A Ticket	892-9666
Marvin Campbell	940 E. Nelson Ave	892-2689
Eva Campbell	" " "	" " "
Barry Dugnette	P.O. Box 289 Aet Spr	892-3228
Mrs. R. Cobb	15 Circle Dr. D.F.S.	892-9955
F. Diane Pickett	2760 Freedom Rd. DFS	892-4300

3-23-95

# PLEASE SIGN IN

Name	Address	Phone #
Richard Whitaker	DeFurrik Springs	892-2553
Samuel C. Sanders	DFS	892-7034
Brian Szilvassy	DFS	859-2549
Man Ray Harrison	DTS	892-9063
Charles H. King Jr.	DFS	892-2305
Wayne Luntz	DFS	892-3232
Robert Dobson	DFS	892-3996
Burdie Mitchell	DFS	892-0652
Greg Lathrop	"	892-2151
Klaus R. Ray	DFS	892-2566

3-23-95

# PLEASE SIGN IN

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone #</u>
Howard Taylor	Box 124 N 3rd	892-4704
CHUCK LAWSON	PO BOX 547 DFS	892-6111
Cindy Lofton	200 Fredrick Dr.	892-7848

3-23-95

PLEASE SIGN IN

	Name	Address	Phone #
ISP	Bob Fleet	71 1st Ct. Sta Rosa Bch	267 2200
ISP	Leggett Ward	P.O. Box 163 Destin	837-2718
	Newsman	P.O. Box 168 Destin	892-7391
	Harold Stanchette	Box 782 Dest	892-3228
	Blair Kay	262 Circle Dr.	892-2566
OL	David D Johnson		892-7718
ISP	Bob Powell		654-0905
	John Otto	P.O. Box 610 DFS, FL	892-3161
	John R Saltman	P.O. Box 336 DFS 71	892-6636
	George Hogans	RT 1 Box N-121 DFS, FL	892-2345
	Mike Richards	P.O. Box 512 DFS, FL	892-3001
	JACK HUGGINS		892-9424
	CHUCK LAWSON	P.O. Box 547 DFS	892-6111
	Wayne Lwike	1387 Trout Dr. DFS	892-4466

3-29-95



PLEASE SIGN IN

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone #</u>
	Dorothy Donald	403 North 10th St	892-6793
I.S.P.	Al Raulden	181 DOLAN DR. SRB	267-2345
	Mike Lindley	City of DFS	892-8500
	Sue Ellen Cour	11 E. Nelson Ave. (P.R.)	892-5805
	Paul Jackson	PO Box 672 DFS	892-2164
	HARLEY HENDERSON	504 CIRCLE DR. DFS	892-5610
	Rachel Thomas	627 Pleasant Ridge Rd <sup>DFS</sup>	892-5067
	Robert Johnson	248 B.S. Sikes Rd DFS	892-2154
	<del>Andrew</del>	750 State Church <sup>DFS</sup>	892-0966
	Craig Robinson	PO Box 1257 DFS	892-0884
	Barbara Dufman	503 Day Ave DFS	892-7568
	Charles King	PO Box 549 DFS	892-2305
	J. Diane Pickett	500 Fremont Rd S, DFS	892-4300

3-29-95

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORG</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Tom Powell	WCEDC	892-0555
MIKE Standley	City of DFS	892-8500
Alva O CAMPBELL	City of DFS.	892-7448
<del>CITUC</del>		
CITUC LAWSON	PO BOX 547 DFS	892-6111
Frank Maske		892-0203 or 892-0132
Paul Cate	WCHA.	892-9295
F. Marie Ockelt	individual	892-4300
James C. Thomas		892-5171
Marilyn Lowrens	individual	892-8119
Deirdre Lowrens	"	
Marie [unclear]	"	892-3314
Ben Tatter	"	892-5932
Giving + Russ Cook	"	892-9955
Shirley Lyttom	"	892-6636
[unclear]	OWCC	892-8100
Harley Henderson	city	892-8500

4.7-95

4-13-95

NAME	ORGANIZATION	PHONE
Tom Powell	WCEDC	892-0555
LARRY LAIRD	CITY OF DEFUNIAK	892-8500
Dennis Ward	DeFunia's Sys Police Dept	892-8513
Ben Totten	"	892-9955
Jimmy Cook	"	"
Russ "		
Harley Henderson	city	892-8500
Abe O. Campbell	city	892-7448
Dorothy Donald	city	892-6793
Rachel Thomas	Sarnett Bank	892-0213
Vjola & Roland Yaw	citizens	892-7409
Jim Collins	city	892-7693
Arlene Mungie Abbott Andrews Leath		892-9654
Buckner	OWCC	892-0966
Charles H. King Jr.	King & Co.	892-2305
Janet Campbell	citizen	892-9696
Paul Cate	WCHA	892-9295
David Lightow	Partner / Project	892-3314

# Enterprise Zone public meeting set

DeFuniak Springs Mayor Harley Henderson has announced the City of DeFuniak Springs will hold a series of public meetings beginning March 16 to prepare an application to designate a portion of the city as an Enterprise Zone. An Enterprise Zone is an economically distressed area recognized by the state where businesses can earn extra tax credits for certain actions which benefit local residents. For example, a business in an Enterprise Zone can deduct from its corporate taxes a portion of the first year wages it pays any new employee who also resides in the zone.

The state will select areas to be designated as Enterprise Zones in a competition that begins May 5. Applications will be judged on the degree of economic distress in the area, prospects for investments and economic development, and the content of a strategic plan describing what the community plans to do to improve the area. The content of the strategic plan will be determined at the series of meetings announced by Mayor Henderson.

The first meeting will be from 4-6 p.m. at the DeFuniak Springs Community Center. The purpose of the meeting will be to inform citizens of the benefits and costs of having an Enterprise Zone, and to explain the criteria used by the state in making its selection. The timetable for future meetings will also be presented.

"It's important that everyone with an interest in improving the economic health of DeFuniak Springs attend this meeting," said Tom Powell, executive director of the Walton County Economic Development Council. Powell, who first brought the idea of applying for an Enterprise Zone to the DeFuniak Springs City Council, sees this as the first of a series

of very influential meetings. "A strategic plan is nothing more than a description of what we want the town to become and how we intend to get there. We

need the participation of as many different people as possible to assure that the plan we develop accurately reflects the aspirations of all our citizens."

# 'Enterprise Zone' for DFS discussed

BY WAYNE LINKE

Walton County Economic Development Coordinator Tom Powell lead a discussion on an Enterprise Zone For DeFuniak Springs with the city council Feb. 13.

In addition to media representatives and the city council, about 15 residents attended. Mayor Harley Henderson, City Manager Mike Standley, City Clerk Dorothy Donald and City Attorney Clayton Adkinson

also attended.

An Enterprise Zone (EZ), is intended to create the proper environment, both economically and socially, to induce investment of private resources in job-producing businesses in severely economically distressed areas.

Several steps are necessary to qualify for an EZ.

- Must be nominated by a government entity.
- Cities with a population of

less than 20,000 qualify for a 3-square-mile EZ.

- The poverty rate must be between 20 and 30 percent, depending on the size of the EZ.

- There must be a development agency.

- There must be a strategic plan. As an EZ is developed, implementation must be reported, tax incentive certificates must be filed, a promotional effort to develop the EZ must be carried on, grants must be applied for and managed, as

must all EZ finances.

Powell said that the deadline for applying is May 5. Applications will be rated by an EZ coordinating council. Up to \$2 million can be applied for as a matching loan. Powell suggested that the best place for an EZ is in highest poverty area within the city limits.

The city council, 5-0, directed City Manager Mike Standley to review the EZ program requirements and report findings to the city council.

# Enterprise Zone discussed

By WAYNE LINKE

Economic Development Coordinator Tom Powell, assisted by DeFuniak Springs City Manager Mike Standley, conducted a discussion on the

hoped-for Enterprise Zone (EZ) for DeFuniak Springs. The meeting was held Mar. 16 at the Civic Center, before a sparse audience of 12 people.

Walton County Administra-

tor Ronnie Bell attended, as did Sara Comander, president of the Walton County Chamber of Commerce; DeFuniak Springs Mayor Harley Henderson, and City Councilman A.O. Campbell.

Both Powell and Standley expressed disappointment at the seeming disinterest in the project, which could give a substantial boost to the local economy, if the city wins it. The EZ application is due May 5, and EZs will be awarded to only 20 Florida cities. Standley feels that this will be a highly competitive project.

The meat of the application, according to Standley, is the Strategic Plan. This tells the officials making the decision to where the EZs will go, just how the city plans to use the matching grant funds and tax breaks to assist the poverty-level city's residents.

Powell and Standley agree if more city residents get involved, more and better ideas will be introduced towards development of the Strategic Plan. "It is very important to every citizen here to get involved. We need your support

and your ideas," Standley said. By definition, an EZ will create a "proper economic and social environment to induce investment of private resources in productive business enterprises located in severely (economic) distressed areas, and to provide jobs for residents of such areas." In other words, "do something good for residents that are hard-hit economically," Powell said.

If the city wins the EZ, possibilities of substantial sales, corporate and ad valorem tax breaks, up to 15 percent, become possible. Also, if a business in the EZ expands, or increases the number of employees, between \$25,000 and \$50,000, payroll credits can be obtained.

There are many details involved in this complex process, and if the city is to receive the benefits of an EZ, it will require a lot of cooperation from a lot of residents, according to both Powell and Standley. It is their hope that people will respond to what could be a real opportunity to help those in financial adversity.



*MIKE STANDLEY (seated) and Tom Powell held a meeting explaining benefits of obtaining an Enterprise Zone for the city.*

# Economic incentive application firms up



PLANNER Analee Moore (L) and assistant Susanna McLlwaine conducted group "idea" sessions in the EZ planning process.

By WAYNE LINKE

The Enterprise Zone (EZ) which DeFuniak Springs is courting moved through most of the planning stage in a meeting at the Civic Center March 29.

The 20 or so people in attendance were divided into groups to talk about the things most important to the strategic plan for the EZ. Group discussions were led by Analee Moore and assistant, Susanna McLlwaine.

For the most part, economic development ideas which had been introduced during a March 22 meeting were discussed, amended, and edited into a strategic plan.

Moore said she is very pleased with the ideas the group produced. It is her job now, to develop the strategic plan for the competition to establish an EZ in DeFuniak Springs.

Tom Powell, Walton County economic development coordinator, came up with the idea of the city competing for the EZ, as an economic benefit to the city. The basics of the EZ are to provide economic growth through tax breaks and wage participation for industries and businesses within the EZ. The basis is to put people to work in jobs developed through the EZ. It is highly competitive, and only 20 Florida cities will be awarded an EZ. Competition opens every ten years.

The meeting was attended by a cross section of civic and

CHARLES KING JR.



saying that where there are tax benefits to people who hire five new employees, I do not expect my business to expand to where I would hire five new employees to get a tax break, but I'm saying that if someone down the street opens a new business because of the enticements, and that promotes more business downtown, I would benefit. It's encouraging to see so many people here, so many city officials here, and all working in harmony for the better of the community."

MAYOR HARLEY HENDERSON



•Mayor Harley Henderson, "In the long run, it will be very beneficial to DeFuniak. One of the problems that we've had for years, is our ability to attract businesses, and to keep existing business. The Enterprise Zone, if we were to be selected, it would help us do that. I think about our heritage; we are largely Scottish, therefore we are reluctant to change. But once we see good change, we become very positive. Once we get over the top, and people see the good, they will support the Enterprise Zone. With this workshop, we have a good segment of our community, and they give good input. In the end, it becomes a group decision, made of all segments of DeFuniak Springs."

•Charles King, owner of King's Hardware Store; "I think it encourages the strategic planning process in the city, and if nothing but that happens, it will be worthwhile. I don't think it would affect my business directly, but I think it

DENNIS RAY



•Dennis Ray, owner of the Busy Bee restaurant: "I think the Enterprise Zone will affect my business, but it will affect other people more. The number of employees has a lot to do with the benefits, and mine is a small business. However, if we can develop and increase in economic activity, I will benefit. While many businesses, like mine, do benefit directly, indirectly, the other new businesses, and the whole community will gain."

JACK HUGGINS



•Jack Huggins, owner of ERA Great South Realty Co., "I see a lot of benefits other than in the form of good services. I

tremendous if we can obtain the Enterprise Zone. It offers great organized growth for the future. I certainly hope we're one of the cities selected. I think the group of people we've got here tonight indicates we've got a lot of interest here."

BARBARA JONES



•Barbara Jones, director of Okaloosa-Walton Community College, DeFuniak Springs; "I think it's important that we plan for the future in DeFuniak Springs, to plan for the growth that we're now seeing in DeFuniak Springs. We need a proper plan to accommodate this growth. All age groups can benefit from the Enterprise Zone."

RACHEL THOMAS



•Rachel Thomas, manager of the local Barnett Bank: "I think one of the things the Enterprise Zone will do is enhance the economic development, and a rejuvenation of the downtown district of the city. I think that is something that business owners will be very excited about. And local people will be hired to work in the new businesses within the Enterprise Zone. From the banking perspective, my main interest in the Enterprise Zone is to see how we can support it and those people interested in developing it."

•Opal Davidson, owner, Nation-Wide Insurance Agency; "It will be a boost to our city. By providing financial assistance to existing and new businesses, the residents of these zones, in cooperation with their employees, will be able to develop new and improved

OPAL DAVIDSON



employee and employer, alike. It will provide broader services to our community and better quality of life to those within and without the selected zone."

At the March 24 city council meeting, the following people were appointed to serve on the Enterprise Zone committee: Tom Powell, chairman; David Johnson, Dennis Ray, J.W. Adkison, Rachel Thomas, Mike Richards, Chuck Lawson, Luther Ates, Charles King, Jr., George Hogan and Harley Henderson, as an ex-officio member.



TOM POWELL, Walton County Economic Development Coordinator, is working towards an Enterprise Zone for DeFuniak Springs. He is being assisted by many city residents.

## Last Enterprise Zone meeting set for April 13

The public is invited to the last in a series of workshops aimed at developing a strategic plan for an Enterprise Zone in the City of DeFuniak Springs. The workshop meeting will begin at 6 p.m. April 13 at the OWCC Chautauqua Center in DeFuniak Springs. The purpose of this meeting is to summarize the vision, goals and strategies developed at previous meetings.

Thus far, participants have

agreed on 22 specific goals relating to the economy, the quality of life and civic pride in DeFuniak Springs. Last week, in three separate working groups, they added about 50 specific strategies (plans of action) needed to accomplish those goals. Those strategies will be presented at the April 13 meeting and the public will be afforded a final chance to comment on them.



## **Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**

### **Commitments from the Governing Body to Enact Local Fiscal and Regulatory Incentives**

The City of DeFuniak Springs provided business incentives in Resolution 95-10, titled "A Resolution Setting Forth Incentives for Businesses In An Enterprise Zone Should The City of DeFuniak Springs Receive Such Designation under F.S. 290.0065," enacted on April 10, 1995. It also enacted Resolution 95-7 defining the boundaries of the nominated area, and Ordinance Number 629 creating an Enterprise Zone Development Agency. Copies of those documents follow.

RESOLUTION 95-10

A RESOLUTION SETTING FORTH INCENTIVES FOR BUSINESSES IN AN ENTERPRISE ZONE SHOULD THE CITY OF DEFUNIAK SPRINGS RECEIVE SUCH DESIGNATION UNDER F.S. 290.0065.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of DeFuniak Springs is seeking Enterprise Zone designation for an area within the corporate limits under authority of Florida Statutes 290.0065 and,

WHEREAS, the City Council believes with the designation of an Enterprise Zone it will greatly benefit the development of the community and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with Florida Statute 290.0057 Enterprise Zone Develop Plan the City Council can commit to local and regulatory incentives and,

WHEREAS, in the event the City of DeFuniak Springs receives an Enterprise Zone designation, the City Council sets for the following incentives and,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of DeFuniak Springs if it receives an Enterprise Zone designation under F.S. 290.0065 the following list will be offered:

1. Municipal Service tax exemption provided by F.S. 166.231.
2. The economic development ad valorem tax exemption provided by F.S. 196.1995.
3. The occupational license tax exemption provided by F. S. 205.054.
4. Local impact fee abatement or reduction.
5. Low-interest or interest-free loans or grants to businesses to encourage the revitalization of the nominated area.

ADOPTED THIS 10th DAY OF April, 1995.

CITY OF DEFUNIAK SPRINGS

*Harley L. Henderson*  
MAYOR HARLEY L. HENDERSON

ATTEST:

*Dorothy Donald*  
DOROTHY DONALD, CITY CLERK

RESOLUTION 95-7

A RESOLUTION TO PRIORITIZE AND TO ESTABLISH AN ENTERPRISE ZONE WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF DEFUNIAK SPRINGS.

WHEREAS, the state of Florida has provided legislation for the development of Enterprise Zones throughout the state, and

WHEREAS, there are considerable benefits to businesses that exist and choose to locate in an Enterprise Zone, and

WHEREAS, the general economic development of the area established as the enterprise zone will be greatly improved as well as the entire area of the City of DeFuniak Springs, and

WHEREAS, there are several areas that meet the criteria established by the state that could be designated as Enterprise Zones along U. S. Highway 90 East and West, North U. S. Highway 83, and along the East side of U. S. 331 South including a portion of East U. S. Highway 90, and

WHEREAS, in viewing the area of U. S. 331 South and U. S. 90 East which includes the DeFuniak Springs Industrial Park by the City Staff, Institute of Senior Professionals and the Walton County Economic Development Council Director, it was determined this area would be the number one (1) area to seek Enterprise Zone designation, and


NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of DeFuniak Springs the area on the Eastern side of U. S. Highway 331 South and including a portion of U. S. Highway 90 East that are designated by Census tract numbers 9502-200 and 9502-500 that are situated within the corporate limits of the City of DeFuniak Springs be the number one (1) area to seek Enterprise Zone designation.

ADOPTED THIS 13TH DAY OF MARCH, 1995 BY THE DEFUNIAK SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL IN REGULAR SESSION.

CITY OF DEFUNIAK SPRINGS

  
HARLEY L. HENDERSON, MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
DOROTHY DONALD, CITY CLERK

AN ORDINANCE CREATING AN ENTERPRISE ZONE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY: MAKING APPOINTMENTS, SETTING FORTH TERMS OF MEMBERS, APPOINTING A CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN, AMENDING THE DEFUNIAK SPRINGS MUNICIPAL CODE BY THE CREATION OF A NEW SECTION ENTITLED ENTERPRISE ZONE AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

SECTION 1. The Enterprise Development Agency

- (a) The Enterprise Development Agency shall consist of not fewer than eight (8) or more than thirteen (13) members.
- (b) The Enterprise Development Agency shall have a Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
- (c) The DeFuniak Springs Enterprise Development Agency will consist of the following members representing particular organizations as provided for in F.S. 290.0056.

1. Tom Powell - Walton County Economic Development Council  
Four (4) year term - Chairman
2. Rachel Thomas - Local Financial Institution  
Four (4) year term - Vice-Chairman
3. David Johnson - Resident Within Nominated Area  
Four (4) year term
4. Dennis Ray - Business Within Nominated Area  
Four (4) year term
5. George Hogans - Non-Profit Based Community Organization  
Four (4) year term
6. Larry Laird - Local Code Enforcement  
Four (4) year term
7. Dennis Ward - Local Law Enforcement  
Four (4) year term
8. Sue Ellen Colen - Private Industry Council  
Four (4) year term
9. J. W. Adkinson - Business Within Nominated Area  
Three (3) year term
10. Mike Richards - Walton County Chamber of Commerce  
Three (3) year term
11. Chuck Lawson - Insurance Industry  
Two (2) year term
12. Charles King Jr. - Business Within Nominated Area  
Two (2) year term
13. Luther Ates - Local Financial Institution  
One (1) year term

(d) The Enterprise Zone Agency will serve at the Pleasure of the City Council and will operate and conduct business in accordance with F. S. 290.0056.

(e) In the event, the City of DeFuniak Springs does not receive Enterprise Zone designation, this ordinance shall be repealed by the DeFuniak Springs City Council in the appropriate manner.

This Ordinance shall take effect upon adoption by the DeFuniak Springs City Council.

ADOPTED THIS 24th DAY OF April, 1995.

CITY OF DEFUNIAK SPRINGS

*Harley L. Henderson*  
MAYOR HARLEY L. HENDERSON

ATTEST:

*Dorothy Donald*  
DOROTHY DONALD, CITY CLERK

## **Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**

### **Identification of the Local and Private Resources Available in the Nominated Area**

Being entirely within the City of DeFuniak Springs, residents of the nominated area are provided essential infrastructure and city services such as roads, utilities, fire protection and police protection. In addition they have easy access to public schools and the county's only major hospital which abut the nominated area. They also have access to some state services and the county court house complex which are located in the zone.

Businesses in the nominated area have easy access to assistance from government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other businesses. For example, the Private Industry Council and the county code enforcement office are both in the nominated area. The Walton County Chamber of Commerce and the Walton County Economic Development Council are both located only ¼ mile from the zone. And all three banks serving the nominated area are either in the zone or very nearby. The banks have also joined together to offer a special array of incentives to businesses in the nominated area (see letter on next page).

Both businesses and individuals also have easy access to the DeFuniak Springs branch of Okaloosa-Walton Community College. In addition to customary programs to prepare students for associate and bachelor degrees, OWCC also offers adult literacy programs. It also provides custom tailored employee training for local businesses.

Like businesses throughout the county, businesses in the nominated area also have support of the Walton County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The BOCC has long supported business development through incentives such as tax abatements, and has indicated its strong support of the city's effort to acquire an Enterprise Zone (Resolution attached).

Finally, both businesses and residents in the nominated area have the support of the many business and civic groups that support this plan.



**Barnett Bank of  
Northwest Florida**

April 24, 1995

401 West Nelson Avenue  
Post Office Box 586  
DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32433-0586  
904/892-3231

Mr. Tom Powell, Chairman  
DeFuniak Springs Enterprise Zone  
Development Agency  
P.O. Box 158  
DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32433

Dear Tom:

We, the senior executives of the three banks located in and serving the City of DeFuniak Springs, wholeheartedly support the ongoing community-wide effort to obtain an Enterprise Zone. We believe that an Enterprise Zone is the key to stimulating the business growth needed to jump start the city's economy and provide good jobs for the city's economically disadvantaged. For this reason, we have joined together to develop a range of financial programs intended to further increase the attractiveness of the DeFuniak Springs Enterprise Zone.

If DeFuniak Springs is awarded an Enterprise Zone, we will offer the following to persons who operate or would operate businesses located in the zone beginning July 1, 1995:

1. We will waive or discount loan documentation fees.
2. We will provide extended terms when possible.
3. We will participate loans among local banks when warranted to secure larger loans.
4. We will provide reduced interest rates on business loans.
5. We will jointly develop workshops to show business people how to prepare successful business loan applications.

We are strongly committed to making DeFuniak Springs Enterprise Zone a success. We look forward to working with the Enterprise Zone Development Agency on this very worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

Rachel C. Thomas  
Vice President  
Barnett Bank of  
Northwest Florida

Luther Ates  
CEO & President  
Regions Bank

Kenneth M. Jackson  
Vice President  
Sun Bank

**Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**  
**Indications of How the Tax Incentives and Local, State and**  
**Federal Resources Will Be Utilized in the Nominated Area**

This plan envision three basic ways local, state and federal resources will be used within the nominated area. First, there will be a straight forward effort to attract new businesses to the area using all existing programs such as Community Development Block Grants for economic development, plus the added bonus of Enterprise Zone tax credits. Industrial clients will be targeted for the industrial park area, and retail clients will be encouraged to locate in the central business district.

Second, there will be a concerted effort to capitalize on the central business district's status as both a federally recognized historic district and an Enterprise Zone to acquire grants to maintain essential infrastructure, restore historically significant buildings, and market the area as a tourist destination. This is essential to the tourism element of the overall economic strategy.

Third, we will seek public and private resources to raise the general quality of life for residents through programs such as renovation of low income housing and expansion of recreational programs and facilities. We expect the community contribution element of the Enterprise Zone legislation to generate significant funds for this purpose.

**Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**  
**Funding Requested Under State or Federal Programs**  
**For the Proposed Revitalization Effort**

The city currently has pending a Community Development Block Grant for Neighborhood Revitalization for \$700,000. A portion of those funds will be used in the nominated area. No other specific grants are currently pending.

It is anticipated that the city will pursue additional grants for housing, neighborhood revitalization, transportation (roads), and economic development within the nominated area. We expect to be successful particularly with grants for the area that is within the central business district and the Historic District and the Enterprise Zone.



## **Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan**

### **Baseline Data and Benchmarks for Measuring the Success of the Strategic Plan**

The primary objective of this plan is to improve economic conditions and the overall quality of life for residents of the nominated area. There are many steps to be taken, and many potential ways to measure progress. However, it all boils down to this. More jobs must be made available for residents by recruiting industrial businesses and by growing the community's tourism industry. Simultaneously, neighborhoods must be kept safe through crime prevention programs such as juvenile recreation. Consequently, the following measures and baseline data will be used:

#### Economic Measures

- % of Employable EZ Residents in Census Block 2 With Jobs (Baseline: 88%)
- Annual Tourism Revenue (Baseline: To be determined 1996)

#### Quality of Life Measures

- Serious Crimes per 100,000 Population (Baseline: 2,000)
- % of Residents Served by Recreational Programs (Baseline: To be determined 1996)

The chart on the following page shows the benchmark goals for each of the measures through the year 2005.

### Benchmark Goals

	Baseline	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>% of Employable Residents in Census Block 2 Who Have Jobs</b>	88%					93%					93%
<b>% of Revenue from Tourism</b>	To Be Determined					135% of Baseline					300% of Baseline
<b>Serious Crimes per 100,000 Population*</b>	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>% of Residents Served by Recreational Programs and Facilities</b>	To Be Determined					110% of Baseline					130% of Baseline

\* Note that without this plan, this rate may increase.

## **Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan Implementation Strategy**

In general, the implementation strategy calls for the Enterprise Zone Development Agency (EZDA) to oversee existing organizations as they voluntarily perform specific, measurable tasks that they are already equipped to perform. For example, the Walton County Economic Development Council (WCEDC) has volunteered to help the EZDA identify target industries and develop a comprehensive marketing plan by March 1996. The WCEDC has already done this for the county, so it is clearly capable of doing this for the City of DeFuniak Springs. A complete list of the organizations tasked in this plan is on the following page.

The EZDA will meet frequently, providing quarterly progress reports to the City Council. The City Council will annually evaluate the performance of the EZDA in implementing this plan, and make whatever changes it deems necessary if progress is not satisfactory.

Implementation will also require the city staff to provide some support to the EZDA and businesses requesting tax incentives. The EZDA will monitor that support to assure that requests for incentives are handled promptly with no unnecessary burdens placed on businesses requesting incentives.

## TASKED ORGANIZATIONS

### City of DeFuniak Springs

City Council  
City Staff  
Police Department  
E.Z.D.A.

### Government Entities

Walton County Sheriff  
Walton County School Board  
Okaloosa-Walton Community College  
Walton County Vocational-Technical Center

### Other Existing Organizations

Walton County Economic Development Council  
Sprint-CENDEL  
DeFuniak Business & Professionals Association  
Citizens Advisory Council  
Interagency Council for Early Childhood Services  
Juvenile Justice Committee  
North Walton Y.M.C.A.  
Florida Chautauqua  
Concerned Community Fathers  
Walton Regional Hospital Advisory Board  
Walton County Chamber of Commerce  
DeFuniak Springs Garden Club

## **Tab 9**

### **General Distress of the Nominated Area**

DeFuniak Springs is a small, rural town that has experienced a prolonged period of economic decline. Once a cultural center and an economic power in northwest Florida, DeFuniak Springs was once home to a four year college and a booming timber industry. The Great Depression of the 1930's started a period of economic decline that was slowed only by the construction of a nearby interstate highway near the middle of the century. As job opportunities have diminished, the City's population has decreased steadily over the years. For example, data from the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research show that the City's population decreased by over 13% in the six year period from 1986 until 1992.

The economic distress endured by the residents of the nominated area is only slightly worse than that endured by many other residents of the City of DeFuniak Springs. For example, approximately 80% of the city exceeded the 20% poverty rate criteria required for consideration as an Enterprise Zone. The area nominated was selected because it combined the two census areas with the highest poverty levels and the greatest potential for improvement through business growth. They also provided an area closely matched to the three square mile limit allowed for a community of this size.

The two areas chosen include the central business district with its adjoining low income residential neighborhood, and a strangely shaped census area composed of low income neighborhoods, commercial properties, and the city's industrial park. The indications of economic distress in this combined area is compelling, even though they include data on an affluent residential neighborhood that was excluded from the nominated area but included in the census data.

The overall poverty rate was 32.8%. This relates directly to the low number of persons in the work force and low per capita income. According to 1990 census data, less than 42% of persons 16 years and older worked or even sought to work. And at \$10,881 the per capita income was 39% below the state average! Another factor which may partly explain the pervasive poverty is the low high school graduation rate. 44% of adults over age 25 were not high school graduates.

The effect of widespread poverty is apparent in the neighborhoods within the nominated area. According to census data, 46% of the housing units are over 40 years old and 20% of all the housing units were vacant or abandoned. Businesses suffered similarly as city planning officials estimate that 14% of all commercial buildings in the nominated area are vacant or abandoned. This is especially evident in the central business district.

In the census area that includes the central business district, the poverty rate is over 40%! Only 36.5% of the residents seek employment and of them, 11.9% were unemployed. The per capita income was \$5,446. This is only 30% of the statewide per capita income. By any definition, this is an area of extreme poverty and economic distress.

## **Tab 10**

### **Prospects for New Investment in the Nominated Area**

#### The Vision

The future envisioned by the people of DeFuniak Springs is of a community known for civic pride that enjoys steady economic growth in a way that enhances its small town quality of life. This vision applies to the entire city, but it is especially applicable to the area nominated as the Enterprise Zone. We believe that by choosing our Enterprise Zone area wisely and by bringing civic groups, non-profit organizations, and individual citizens together with the city government to pursue this vision, we can provide Enterprise Zone residents with the job opportunities and quality of life improvements envisioned in the State in the Florida Enterprise Zone Act of 1994.

The area nominated as the Enterprise Zone was chosen because its residents suffer from a very high poverty rate, yet there is tremendous potential to provide relief through business growth. Although other areas of the city are also economically distressed, we believe the area selected is the one where there is both the greatest human need and the greatest capacity to meet that need through business investment and growth.

#### The Goals

The goals supporting the City's vision relate primarily to economic issues, quality of life issues, and civic pride issues. The following review of the major goals in each category will show that they are both appropriate for the Enterprise Zone and attainable.

The two major economic goals are to recruit non-polluting, export industries, and to capitalize on existing natural and historic features to increase the volume of tourism. These goals are appropriate because they will diversify the community's economy and capitalize on existing assets such as a unique historical district near the central business district. These

goals are attainable within the Enterprise Zone because the nominated area includes the city's industrial park and the central business district.

The two main quality of life goals are to expand recreational facilities and to keep crime under control. That each of these is an appropriate goal for the Enterprise Zone area is self evident. They are attainable primarily because of incentives associated with Enterprise Zones. For example, the community contribution tax credit will likely provide funding for improvements in some recreational facilities in the zone. One facility targeted for support is the Tivoli neighborhood recreational facility operated by the Concerned Community Fathers. This facility in the Enterprise Zone is heavily used by members of an ethnic minority. Improvements in youth recreation programs should go a long way toward preventing crime in the area.

The two major civic pride goals are to develop a comprehensive, city wide strategic plan, and to increase the level of communication and cooperation between civic groups, educational institutions, churches and the government. These goals grew out of citizen's experience in developing the strategic plan for the Enterprise Zone application. These goals are appropriate because the zone's residents will benefit from general improvements in city services and growth in the community's economy. They are attainable because of the growing level community involvement spurred by the Enterprise Zone planning process.

### The Objectives

There are many objectives supporting the major goals described above. Some, such as accelerating the completion of the Tivoli recreational facility, involve only enhancing ongoing community programs. Others, such as creating a group dedicated to promoting retail sales in the central business district, involve starting a program from scratch. But, the prevailing sentiment of those involved in developing the strategic plan was to use existing organizations



as much as possible. For that reason, the vast majority of the objectives identified in the Enterprise Zone strategic plan will be undertaken by local government agencies and existing civic groups.

### The People

It is reasonable to ask if there is sufficient public support to enact the changes advocated in the strategic plan. The best way to answer that question is to note the number of letters of support and commitment attached to this application. Over a dozen civic groups have agreed to perform the actions needed to achieve our goals. Also, all three of the banks serving the community have agreed to offer special incentives ranging from reduced loan interest rates to waiver of fees to encourage business growth in the Enterprise Zone (letter attached). Considering the size of this community, this is a tremendous response. Some older residents have described this as the greatest outpouring of cooperative spirit for a community project in memory.

### Prospects For New Investment

The greatest potential for new investment in business growth in the nominated area is in the central business district and in the industrial park. The central business district is an essential element of the city's tourism strategy, and the industrial park offers attractive sites for the non-polluting, export industries the city is seeking. There are clear indications that investments in both would rise if the city's Enterprise Zone application is approved.

The strong point in the city's tourism strategy is its rich heritage of cultural events and its stunning Victorian era homes surrounding Lake DeFuniak. Both are the result of the city's early involvement with the Chautauqua educational and arts cultural movement. While the Lake DeFuniak area is not part of the area nominated as an Enterprise Zone, it is within easy walking distance of the central business district that is in the nominated area. Both are also

within the DeFuniak Springs Historic District which is included on the National Register of Historic Places.

The weak point in the existing tourism market is that there are very few places for tourists to spend their money in the central business district. We believe that Enterprise Zone incentives and other projects put in motion by the Enterprise Zone strategic planning effort, will cause private investors to strongly consider opening retail specialty stores that appeal to tourists in the central business district.

The DeFuniak Springs Industrial Park is only ¼ mile from Interstate 10 and is centrally located along the northern gulf coast. Unfortunately, it is also 75 miles and three small towns away from the dominant metropolitan area in the region, Pensacola. Consequently, no new business has opened in the industrial park since 1986. But we believe that will change if this Enterprise Zone application is approved.

The city has been negotiating with a businessman who would like to open a furniture manufacturing and distribution business in northwest Florida. He has included the DeFuniak Springs Industrial Park in his short list of finalists, but he is looking for something to make the final choice a clear winner. In a letter to the city, he indicated that if DeFuniak Springs gets an Enterprise Zone, he will likely bring his business there (letter attached). That would bring 45 jobs and a half million dollar investment to the city within a few months.

#### Summary

The vision, goals and objectives embraced by the people of DeFuniak Springs are appropriate, attainable and supported by the most active groups and individuals in the community. When added to the state incentives available in an Enterprise Zone, they will encourage private investment in business growth and community improvement projects. Several businesses have already expressed their desire to participate if this application is approved. These actions will help provide jobs and improve the quality of life for residents of the nominated area.



**Barnett Bank of  
Northwest Florida**

April 24, 1995

401 West Nelson Avenue  
Post Office Box 586  
DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32433-0586  
904/892-3231

Mr. Tom Powell, Chairman  
DeFuniak Springs Enterprise Zone  
Development Agency  
P.O. Box 158  
DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32433

Dear Tom:

We, the senior executives of the three banks located in and serving the City of DeFuniak Springs, wholeheartedly support the ongoing community-wide effort to obtain an Enterprise Zone. We believe that an Enterprise Zone is the key to stimulating the business growth needed to jump start the city's economy and provide good jobs for the city's economically disadvantaged. For this reason, we have joined together to develop a range of financial programs intended to further increase the attractiveness of the DeFuniak Springs Enterprise Zone.

If DeFuniak Springs is awarded an Enterprise Zone, we will offer the following to persons who operate or would operate businesses located in the zone beginning July 1, 1995:

1. We will waive or discount loan documentation fees.
2. We will provide extended terms when possible.
3. We will participate loans among local banks when warranted to secure larger loans.
4. We will provide reduced interest rates on business loans.
5. We will jointly develop workshops to show business people how to prepare successful business loan applications.

We are strongly committed to making DeFuniak Springs Enterprise Zone a success. We look forward to working with the Enterprise Zone Development Agency on this very worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

Rachel C. Thomas  
Vice President  
Barnett Bank of  
Northwest Florida

Luther Ates  
CEO & President  
Regions Bank

Kenneth Jackson  
Vice President  
Sun Bank

25 Apr 95

Michael Stanley  
DeFuniak Springs City Manager  
DeFuniak Springs, Fl 32433

Re: Enterprise Zone

Dear Mr. Stanley:

In a recent conversation with Mr. Tom Powell of the Walton County Economic Development Council, I was pleased to hear of the prospects of part of the city being designated an enterprise zone. An enterprise zone will enhance the marketability of the area and greatly increases my interest in locating my business in your city.

As you know, I am currently looking for a location to build a furniture manufacturing facility. It is anticipated that within three years this new facility will employ at least 45 people. With the potential tax savings from an enterprise zone, I will be able to focus more of my resources on building up the company and possibly achieve this employee goal in a shorter time. Please keep me informed of any further development. Let me know if there is anything I can do to assist the city in establishing the enterprise zone.

Sincerely,



Bobby W. Marshall