

GULF COUNTY RESTORE ACT PROJECT PRE-PROPOSAL FORM

Project Name: Acquisition and Renovation of the Historic Port Theatre

Submitting Entity: Port St. Joe Redevelopment Agency

I. Please select one or more eligible activity that the project is classified under:

- Restoration and protection of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region.
- Mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife and natural resources.
- Implementation of a federally approved marine, coastal or comprehensive conservation management plan, including fisheries monitoring.
- Workforce development and job creation.
- Improvements to or on State parks located in coastal areas affected by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
- Infrastructure projects benefitting the economy or ecological resources, including port infrastructure.
- Coastal flood protection and related infrastructure.
- Planning assistance.
- Promotion of tourism and seafood in the Gulf Coast region.

II. Please provide an executive summary of the project. Describe/quantify the economic (jobs, infrastructure, tourism, etc.) and environmental benefits (habitat, quality, knowledge, long-term sustainability, etc.).

The Historic Port Theatre has lain dormant for many years, yet the community need for theatre remains unfulfilled. A revitalized theatre will provide a tremendous asset to the community and region through the benefits (1) inherent in the arts themselves, (2) that strengthen the civic fabric of the community, and (3) that contribute additional dollars to the local economy through outside investment, new business, and increased tourism revenue. It is well recognized that the arts inspire creativity, celebrate a habit of curiosity and lifelong learning, provide a strong foundation for community health and development, and foster an energetic discipline toward civic engagement and leadership. The long-term benefits of art and culture define us as people, as distinct communities, and are a civic necessity. The industry of art and culture is not limited to the activities and performances; art and culture mean business. The economic benefits are well documented, with a return on investment up to seven times each dollar invested. What is less well recognized is the degree that arts and culture incubate, sustain, and generate ever greater

economic activity and vitality, *especially* during periods of market turmoil and financial hardship. Contrary to the popular misconception that the arts and culture are supported at the expense of local economic development, they instead are effective and powerful investments in supporting jobs, generating government revenue, *and are a cornerstone of tourism.*

III. Please provide a cost summary/budget. Detail any matching/cooperative funds available for use, and any cooperative support from governmental or other agencies.

To purchase, renovate and open the theatre, the projected total budget is \$3.5 million. This includes the purchase, renovation, and furniture, fixtures, and equipment, including digital projection system, lifts, and lighting/controls. This cost also includes consulting fees for specialists in lighting, sound, and acoustics. Cooperative support is anticipated through private donations as well as grant awards from government entities (e.g. National Endowment for the Arts) and private foundations.

IV. Please provide a timeline for project completion. Explain the technical and environmental feasibility (including any permitting considerations) of the project.

With funding in place, the project can be completed in three years. The project has been phased such that portions can be renovated and open to the public (revenue stream) while other areas are receiving funding. Permitting includes ordinary construction permits and coordination relative to its historic designation.

V. Please provide the qualifications of the Submitting Entity, the financial feasibility/sustainability and the economic feasibility and sustainability of the project (probability of success, etc.).

The Port St. Joe Redevelopment Agency has a proven record of success in redevelopment, development, and fund raising. The executive director of the agency holds certificates in both project management (San Diego State University) and fund raising (Indiana University). The Board of Directors includes the skill sets required to properly vet and approve progress: general contractor, financial planner, accountant, business, marketing, and a member of the St. Joseph Historical Society. Gulf County is home to a vibrant arts and culture community: chefs, writers, photographers, musicians, preachers, craftsmen, jewelers, painters, sculptors, playwrights, and actors. The missing component is a PLACE for our arts and our culture to gather and for us to share our arts, our heritage, and our unique character with locals, visitors, and tourists. An arts and culture center—a centrally located, affordable, easily visible, and consistently accessible home for the artists and historians of Gulf County—will build community cohesion, add jobs, support development, and spin off additional tourist moneys to nearby retail stores, hotels and restaurants. It also provides a

venue to host national or international entertainment and events to further enrich the lives of residents and visitors. It will provide tourists with:

- a reason to stop: a destination in and of itself.
- a reason to stay longer: discovery of additional intrigue to explore while they are here.
- a reason to spend more: longer stays equal more meals, more nights, more fun.

A regional destination— an art and cultural CENTER—will not only capture more existing tourism but will generate and develop a wholly new market with brand-new demand that creates new business, new jobs, and new government revenues. According to Dr. Ron Cheung, Professor of Economics at FSU, *Arts and culture have helped cities boost property values, reduce crime and stabilize public budgets. In addition, given Florida's dependence on tourist revenues, a vibrant arts and culture sector is vital to attracting out-of-state visitors, encouraging them to stay longer and providing them with opportunities to make the best use out of their vacation dollars.* US Senator George LeMieux states, *The statistics don't lie. With nearly 75% of visitors to the Sunshine State participating in cultural activities and spending twice as much as local attendees while they visit, it is clear that if we want Florida to remain a premiere tourist destination, we must continue to invest in the arts.* Regardless of economic, political or other conditions, the experience and value of the art and culture of our region cannot be transferred, outsourced or exported. The Port Theatre will bring cultural tourism money here, keep it here longer, and capture more of it. It will attract, educate, celebrate, and sell. It will be the market center for regional art and culture from which tourists are inspired and guided to explore more of Gulf County.

VI. Please provide the anticipated results of the project, and whether it is included in a City of Port St. Joe, City of Wewahitchka or Gulf County Comprehensive and Mitigation Plan?

The Port Theatre will create a hub for exchange of history, culture, camaraderie, entertainment, and education for visitors and residents through a variety of vibrant community and regional programs to engage and enhance the lives of a diverse regional population. Understanding and acknowledging the incredible economic impact of the nonprofit arts and culture industry, we must always remember their fundamental value. They foster beauty, creativity, originality, and vitality. The arts inspire us, soothe us, provoke us, involve us, and connect us. But they also create jobs and contribute to the economy. A strong cultural presence fosters employee innovation, enhancing business and marketing opportunities, while creating a rich social fabric when interwoven with other community activities. Investment in the revitalization of the Port Theatre is an investment in the community that promises a long-term return on investment culturally, socially, educationally, historically, artistically, and financially.

Submitted By: Gail Alsobrook



Signature

1/15/2013

Date

PORT ST. JOE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Company Name

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
GULF COUNTY, FLORIDA
RESTORE ACT COMMITTEE (R.A.C.)

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**PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY AND PUBLIC ACCESS ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR
GULF COUNTY RESTORE ACT APPLICANTS**

I, GAIL ALSOBROOK the undersigned authority and/or representative of the entity RST Redevelopment Agency and or the individual who has submitted the Gulf County RESTORE Act Proposal/Pre-Proposal titled BayPark + Port Theatre hereby acknowledge, consent and accept the following representations that coincide with my/our submission for consideration, evaluation and possible recommendation and approval by the Gulf County Board of County Commissioners for funding from the RESTORE Act distribution that strictly complies with the guidelines and regulations set forth under the Restoration and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012:

1. I/We am the authorized representative of the application/pre-proposal referenced above.
2. I/We have thoroughly reviewed and familiarized myself and/or my entity on which I have submitted the application/pre-proposal on behalf of with the entirety of the Gulf County Public Records policy.
3. I/We have thoroughly reviewed and familiarized myself and/or my entity on which I have submitted the application/pre-proposal on behalf of with the entirety of the Florida Statute Chapter 119 which controls and permits public access to information.
4. I/We hereby acknowledge, consent and agree to the controlling policies and statutes above as well as the free and open exchange of any and all submissions provided hereunder this application/pre-proposal and all information exchanged hereafter including but not limited to further amendments to these proposals as well as surveys, studies, research, data production, books, drawings, property records, work papers, county owner lists, files, forms, reports, accounts, documents, manuals, handbooks, instructions, printouts relating in any manner for the production of the application. In addition, all papers, notes, data, reference material, documentation, programs, printouts, and all other media and forms of expression that in any way include, incorporate or reflect any confidential information of what ultimately shall become the Gulf County plans for use and application of the RESTORE Act funding.
5. I/We acknowledge, agree and fully consent to cooperate with the appointed Gulf County RESTORE ACT committee, county officials and staff as a continuing obligation and condition of final review for this RESTORE Act application/pre-proposal.
6. I/We have submitted this acknowledgment to Gulf County RESTORE Act Committee and the Gulf County Board of County Commissioners for the purpose and intent of receiving an evaluation, review and possible recommendations for anticipated funding from the Restoration and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012.


Signature of RESTORE Act Applicant

Date: 1/16/2013

GAIL ALSOBROOK
Printed Name

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