

ST MARYS HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENT

THIS SUMMER THE HOWARD GILMAN WATERFRONT PARK WAS COMPLETED AND DEDICATED AFTER SOME FOUR YEARS OF PLANNING, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION EFFORT BY THE WATERFRONT PARK COMMITTEE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY COUNCIL AND STAFF. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THIS VERY SUCCESSFUL EFFORT, THE CITY COUNCIL RENAMED THE PARK COMMITTEE TO THE HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE AND EXPANDED THE COMMITTEES CHARTER TO IDENTIFY AND PURSUE OTHER DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENTS.

A PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED PRESENTATION WAS MADE TO THE ST. MARYS COMMUNITY AUGUST 24, TO DISCUSS AND ILLUSTRATE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE THE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE, MITIGATE THE VISUAL AND PHYSICAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH VEHICLES AND REINFORCE THE CHARACTER OF THE HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN. BASED ON THIS PRESENTATION, THE HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE IDENTIFIED ST. MARYS STREET AS THE FIRST PRIORITY TO EXPAND THE PLEASING PARK GREEN SPACE INTO THE STREETSCAPE FROM WHEELER STREET, PAST OSBORNE STREET, AND ALSO ALONG OSBORNE STREET INITIALLY TO STABLE ALLEY.

GENESIS GROUP, THE PARK CONSULTING FIRM, PROVIDED A \$20,900 PROPOSAL BY LETTER OF NOVEMBER 28 TO DEVELOP THE ASSOCIATED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE. THE PROPOSAL PROVIDES FOR PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS AT 30 PERCENT AND PRE-FINAL DESIGN.

IT HAS BEEN PROVEN BY THE SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN PARK AND WALKWAY PROJECTS THAT CONSTRUCTION FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PLANNED, DESIGNED AND COSTED PROJECTS, ESPECIALLY IN HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN AREAS.

ACCORDINGLY, THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF THE GENESIS PROPOSAL AS THE NEXT STEP IN DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENT. THE COMMITTEE ALSO RECOGNIZES THAT THIS RECOMMENDED COST IS NOT PRESENTLY BUDGETED AND MUST BE CONSIDERED, BUDGETED AND FUNDED BY THE NEW COUNCIL NEXT YEAR. HOWEVER, CONSIDERING THE SUCCESSFUL WORKING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMITTEE AND THE CURRENT COUNCIL OVER THE PAST YEARS, IT WOULD SEEM APPROPRIATE FOR THE COUNCIL TO FAVORABLY ENDORSE FOR EARLY ACTION THIS RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP IN HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENT TO THE NEW COUNCIL.

THE HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN IS THE HEART OF ST. MARYS, PROVIDING AN INVALUABLE ASSET TO ST. MARYS CITIZENS, VISITORS AND POTENTIAL NEW BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS. THE NEW HOWARD GILMAN MEMORIAL PARK AND WATERFRONT WALKWAYS PROVIDE IMPRESSIVE ENHANCEMENTS TO THE DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT TO ANCHOR FUTURE DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENTS. WE HAVE ACHIEVED A LOT BUT MORE REMAINS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED. LET US CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE OUR BEAUTIFUL, UNIQUE HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN EVEN BETTER.

REGALY TRADER