



OFFICE OF MAYOR

P.O. Box 1780
Gulfport, MS 39502
Phone: 228-868-5700
Fax: 228-868-5800

City Hall
2309 15th St.
Gulfport, MS 39501

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Gulfport
P. O. Box 1780
Gulfport, MS 39502
Contact: Chris Vignes
(228) 234-8590
cvignes@gulfport-ms.gov

Today, the City of Gulfport, along with the Gulfport Redevelopment Commission (GRC), has made a substantial investment in the future of our community. In a unanimous vote cast by the Gulfport City Council, the council approved the acquisition and financing of an extraordinarily unique site. This lays the foundation for a major development overlooking our historic harbor and Jones Park.

“The GRC has done a monumental job in bringing together ten different properties to create a single campus that will afford us the opportunity to work toward development of a world-class aquarium complex, including hotel and retail amenities,” said Mayor Billy Hewes. “We have the support of state and local officials and are in discussions with prospective developers for this project.”

“The acquisition of this downtown property will be of historic significance in the development of Gulfport and the Mississippi Gulf Coast for generations to come. What could be more appropriate than the Mississippi Aquarium overlooking the magnificent harbor. The ‘front door’ of Mississippi is getting better and better,” said Carole Lynn Meadows, Chairperson of the GRC.

“In keeping with Governor Bryant’s strong initiative on tourism, today’s vote by the city council is a great opportunity for economic growth for our city and will provide another venue to draw visitors to Gulfport. It’s a great day for our city,” said Councilwoman Cara Pucheu, Ward 7.

The GRC has contracted with David Kimmel, former CEO of the Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta, to serve as a consultant on the project. Ed Holland, President of Mississippi Power and a former board member of the Georgia Aquarium, introduced Mr. Kimmel to the city and GRC. “With an Aquarium at its

heart, the continued re-development of Gulfport will occur as hundreds of thousands of visitors will come to the area each year. What makes this project so exciting for me, is that the location is ideal, overlooking the Gulf and more important, the leadership wants to do it right," said Kimmel. "Their focus and determination to create Gulfport as a family destination should be applauded!"