

Mayor's Report to the Citizens 10-16-15

Dear Citizens,

I'm very happy to report to you that the Town Council has made a decision that will bring enormous benefits to the Town. At the Council meeting Monday, October 12th, the Council approved a grant from the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to complete an engineered storm water management plan for the Town.

This opportunity is the culmination of many hours of hard work by many people. In 2012, your participation and ideas along with the work of the Planning Commission and the Town's contractors led to the adoption of Master Plan 2030 by the Planning Commission, establishing a projected path forward for the Town.

A storm water management plan promotes the mission statement of Master Plan 2030, which is "To embrace and enhance the coastal, historic and rural nature of Perdido Beach while ensuring the highest quality of life for each resident, preserving and protecting small town family values and protecting the natural resources, historical environments and scenic beauty".

It also establishes a path for the fulfillment of various recommendations in Master Plan 2030, including long-term stewardship of natural resources, drainage system maintenance, projects for critically eroding areas, storm water management and improvement to the drainage of the area to prevent flooding of properties and detrimental effects to the environment.

In December, 2012 the Town of Perdido Beach was selected as one of six Gulf Coast Communities to participate in the Gulf Coast Resilience Program sponsored by the Institute for Sustainable Communities. During that yearlong program the Perdido Beach Team worked together in conjunction with program directors to develop a resilience plan for the Town that includes three major components; (1) Communication (2) Natural Resource Management and (3) Funding. The first component was set into motion by the establishment of a Communication Committee consisting of five members tasked with developing a Communication Plan for the Town. The second and third components were set into motion when the Council voted unanimously to accept the grant awarded by the Alabama Coastal Area Management Program (ACAMP) for an engineered storm water management plan for the Town, its purpose and scope as follows:

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to produce a comprehensive storm water management plan for implementation within the Town's Corporate Limits. The plan is intended to reduce hazards, to improve resilience and to protect the health of local waterways. The need for such a comprehensive plan is evident in the current condition of the Town's drainage system. The drainage infrastructure in the Town was constructed piece meal over a period of many decades. It is mostly outdated and inadequate to handle storm water runoff in the amount generated by typical or severe

rain events. Costly damage to streets and property is seen on a continuing basis. Numerous homes were flooded and three streets were rendered impassable during the April 2014 Flood Event, stranding residents in their homes until emergency repairs could be made. During that same event, every street in Town was damaged to some extent. Many of the drainage pipes within the Town lack sufficient capacity to carry runoff from annual severe thunderstorms and many of the pipes and ditches are undersized, damaged or filled with sediment. In addition, storm water runoff is resulting in shoreline erosion and nonpoint pollution to the water bodies and in degradation to the environment in the form of siltation into the water bodies that surround the town on three sides.

Scope of Work: Activities included in the proposed storm water management plan are designed to identify drainage problems and to recommended remedies and policies that will reduce negative effects of storm water as the Town develops and grows. In addition, the plan will identify actions to improve communication with residents and other groups and agencies that can assist the Town in addressing storm water problems. Specific actions include a study of the existing drainage system in the Town that identifies and prioritizes immediate, short term and long term repairs or improvements. The study will show flows developed from existing drainage courses, while including proposed drainage courses with determined drainage basins and sub-basins. Characteristics within each major basin will be described along with the study's findings and suggested improvements to be made. Such a study to address storm water runoff is essential in order for the Town to move forward with action that will result in a safer, healthier community and will add economic and environmental benefits to the Town, its Citizens, the coastal waters surrounding the Town and the other communities that surround the affected coastal waters. The plan will include recommendations and model policies, based on low impact development, that affect community-wide issues related to storm water management. It will summarize relevant information to be used as a resource for the Town in forming decisions to determine the most appropriate and effective ways to implement the storm water management plan to the benefit of the community.

I sincerely thank everyone who has participated along the way. The path has been rocky and rough at times but the end result will bring tremendous benefits to the community in the future. The process will be ongoing through September, 2016 and you will be asked to participate and offer your ideas during the development of the plan. I look forward to us working together on this most needed project.

Always in Your Service,
Patsy