

## TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. (“Triumph Gulf Coast”) has created a pre-application process to provide initial consideration of potential ideas for projects or programs that may seek an award of funding. Applicants are required to participate in the pre-application process. Notwithstanding the response from Triumph Gulf Coast on the pre-application form, an Applicant may still elect to submit an Application.

### **APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

Name of Individual/Entity/Organization: North Port St. Joe Project Area Coalition (NPSJ-PAC)

#### **Brief Description of Background of Individual/Entity/Organization:**

The NPSJPAC was formed in 2015 by a group of concerned North Port St Joe residents to address the neighborhood blight that has been eroding local property values for several decades. It has produced an illustrated master plan and implementation plan for North Port St. Joe that has been adopted by the Port St Joe Redevelopment Agency and City Commissioners. It is currently preparing a detailed plan for the mixed-use redevelopment of Martin Luther King Boulevard. It is also forming a 501(c) 3 Community Development Corporation to manage the redevelopment process.

#### **Contact Information:**

Primary Contact Information: Pastor Chester Davis

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Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program: City of Port St. Joe (Mayor Bo Patterson), Gulf County Commission (Commissioner Quinn), Port St Joe Redevelopment Agency (Commissioner Buzzett). We will also intend to liaise with: Port St. Joe Port Authority, Gulf County Economic Development Corporation, the St Joe Company and Sacred Heart Hospital

**REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** In a maximum of three (3) pages, please describe the proposed project or program, including (i) the amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast; (ii) the amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program; (iii) the location of the project or program; (iv) summary description of the proposed program, including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, and (v) a summary timeline for the proposed project or program.

## Executive Summary

North Port St. Joe is a historic African-American neighborhood in Gulf County. In 2008, a Finding of Necessity Study Report identified clearly the impact of chronic blight on this community which, by 2010, numbered 928 residents. This represented 27% of the population of Port St Joe and 6% of Gulf County.

The consequent inclusion of the community in Port St Joe's Downtown Redevelopment area has failed to improve the neighborhood through lack of any but modest financial support. Therefore the community must look beyond Gulf County for the assistance it needs to restore itself. The Triumph Gulf Coast fund provides the hope that North Port St. Joe's residents can at last address the local blight and poverty that has depressed it for decades. **To that end, it seeks the financial support necessary to replace and augment the Martin Luther Boulevard corridor's inadequate infrastructure and by so doing, attract the investment necessary to provide homes, create jobs and rebuild this proud community's wealth, health and true potential as a vibrant neighborhood in Port St Joe and Gulf County.**

### FUNDING BEING SOUGHT

**The community of North Port St. Joe is seeking \$5,750,000 to renew the inadequate and outdated infrastructure of the 18.5 acre Martin Luther King Boulevard mixed-use corridor.**

In late 2016, the community of North Port St Joe held three public meetings that culminated in *Redeveloping North Port St Joe*, a redevelopment vision and plan for the neighborhood, and its accompanying document *Implementing the Community's Plan*. Both documents were presented to and endorsed by the local Redevelopment Agency and The City of Port St. Joe Commission. Subsequently, funds were released by the Redevelopment Agency for the community of North Port St Joe to produce a detailed plan for the redevelopment and restoration of Martin Luther King Boulevard, North Port St. Joe's former Main Street.

**The Martin Luther King Boulevard plan will be presented to the Redevelopment Agency on 5th December 2017. It will include an important infrastructure element that in turn will be the basis for refining the cost of its restoration and renewal.**

The redevelopment of Martin Luther King Boulevard will be a major catalyst for change. Its detailed proposals and costings with respect to its infrastructure needs will be the benchmark for extending infrastructure and upgrades and renewal into the wider neighborhood, thereby addressing other blighted areas in North Port St. Joe

### AMOUNT AND IDENTITY OF OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDS

**This project has, in effect, been underway in North Port St. Joe since at least February 2016. That's when the Project Area Committee embarked, at its own volition, on a community vision and illustrated planning process for the neighborhood.**

The work that followed, and which is outlined above, was completed with the aid of two grants: the first, by the Port St. Joe Redevelopment Agency, of \$15,000. To be clear, this was an out-and-out grant and not a contribution from the Port St. Joe Redevelopment Trust Fund which was revised in 2010 to generate tax increment funding for the North Port St. Joe neighborhood and which has yet to receive a single dollar in tax increment due to the falling tax base in this specific community.

The Redevelopment Agency's funding was matched by the Jesse Ball DuPont Fund which contributed \$35,000 for a total of \$50,000. In 2017, the Jesse Ball DuPont Fund has donated a further \$49,525 to two elements of the redevelopment *Implementation Plan*. The Port St Joe Redevelopment Agency has also donated \$20,000 for the detailed planning of Martin Luther King Boulevard, the *Implementation Plan's* highest priority.

**Almost \$120,000 has been raised in the last 21 months to establish and implement the community's redevelopment program.**

## PROJECT LOCATION

**The 18.5 acre Martin Luther King Boulevard mixed-use corridor was formerly named Main Street and is located in North Port St. Joe, a historic African-American community in Gulf County.**

North Port St. Joe has a population of almost a thousand people and is immediately adjacent to the proposed Port of Port St Joe at the gateway to the City of Port St Joe. North Port St Joe comprises almost 400 acres of land and is bounded by the railroad tracks and the former paper mill site that are now designated as Port land and Highway 98.

## SUMMARY DESCRIPTION AND PROGRAM

### *A transformational program*

**The restoration of Martin Luther King Boulevard is the the community redevelopment plan's highest priority.**

The Boulevard corridor was formally the beating heart of a vibrant community that helped provide the workforce for the adjacent paper mill and other industrial concerns in Port St Joe and Gulf County. The paper mill closed in the late 1990s, followed by the decline of other local employers during the most recent recession. The new port facility that surrounds the community of North Port St. Joe will offer an enormous opportunity to build, once again, a vibrant commercial street based on the best practices of mixed use development. The community's 2016 vision is to once again attract economic development to the Boulevard corridor where there was once over thirty-five named enterprises and where there is now just one. The community's plan for the Boulevard's walkable corridor also includes various forms of new mixed-income multi-generational housing, as well as a children's daycare center and an adjacent seniors center, grouped on a single parcel. The Port, within walking distance, however, will further reinforce the program with its needs: for workforce housing and neighborhood facilities and services for its employees and those of the enterprises and services that will be spawned by it.

The infrastructure in the Martin Luther King Boulevard corridor is outmoded and in such a poor condition that it undermines the confidence of the existing property owners, lenders, developers and other potential investors. This application seeks the support of Triumph Gulf Coast Inc. in rebuilding the infrastructure of the Martin Luther King Boulevard corridor so that it becomes a viable and attractive investment opportunity and once gain takes on the role of the beating heart of the vibrant neighborhood of North Port St Joe.

## *Promoting economic recovery and diversification*

**North Port St. Joe's community - and Martin Luther King Boulevard, in particular - is hampered by blight. Empty and abandoned lots depress the value of neighboring properties and wipe out any equity that their owners may have accumulated over the years.**

Crumbling, outmoded and inadequate infrastructure compounds the downward spiral and sends a very clear, negative signal to even the most broad-minded of potential investors. All of the health metrics for North Port St. Joe compare poorly with the neighborhoods that surround it.

Investment in infrastructure is the first step in eliminating blight, restoring hope and signalling economic recovery. The redevelopment plan for the Martin Luther King Boulevard corridor engages the support of the City of Port St. Joe through rezoning that will allow increased density, encourage groups of existing property owners to consolidate their lots to create large infill opportunities and attract investors from outside the community.

The new Port of Port St. Joe will help establish diversity and create opportunities for retailing and service businesses. In addition, recent tourism trends in the community have highlighted a growing number of visitors interested in making Port St. Joe their vacation center because it is compact, has bike paths, a walkable 'downtown' with places to eat and shop and a growing range of places to stay. Martin Luther King Boulevard's residential area will be walkable and compact. Its infrastructure will provide the framework for creating this experience. A third element of economic diversity will be the increased need in the community for personal services such as nursing for the proposed senior housing center and childcare for the new daycare facility both of which will be located in the Martin Luther King Boulevard corridor.

## *Promoting enhancement of disproportionately affected counties*

**Removing the blight that envelops North Port St. Joe will have a positive effect on all of Gulf County, whether in visual terms or as a result of raising land values and, therefore, tax revenues or through the increased health of a significant proportion of its residents.**

Gulf County has few gateways. North Port St. Joe is clearly visible from one of them, thereby providing an extremely poor message to all that travel along Highway 98. Blight also has a significant negative impact on property values. The cost of allowing blight to continue can be measured in foregone property tax. Martin Luther King corridor alone accounts for \$80,000 per year in foregone property tax revenues for the County due to its disproportionately low tax base. Furthermore, static or declining annual tax revenue prevents the designated redevelopment area of North Port St. Joe benefitting from the tax increment financing that it so badly needs to help renew its infrastructure, improve neighborhood security, seed economic development and address the health and welfare of its citizens.

## *Timeline*

This project will be defined sufficiently by the end of 2017 so that an Application to Triumph Gulf Coast Inc. may be made. The infrastructure work that forms the heart of our application is estimated to require 24-36 months from detailed design to completion.