

# Petersburg's DOWNTOWN HARBOR INITIATIVE

## WHAT IS IT?

The Downtown Harbor Initiative is a citizen project focused on supporting the goals and objectives of the City of Petersburg's Comprehensive Plan and Agenda for Progress for the redevelopment of our lower downtown and historic harbor area. A steering committee has been working for 10 months organizing an approach to utilizing the American Institute of Architects' public planning program known as a R/UDAT (Regional Urban Design Assistance Team) towards this end.

## WHY IS A PLAN NEEDED NOW?

Our city is turning a corner. New businesses are here. More are coming. The Arts are bringing life back into our community. Seward and the South Street Lofts are coming on line and other developers are looking our way. BRAC will surely bring significant changes to Petersburg and the region. We want to ensure that we create a rich environment for development without displacing our own culture and residents. We want a downtown that is open, accessible, affordable, safe, fun, and inspiring; a downtown that strengthens our souls and serves our needs.

## WHAT IS A R/UDAT?

The R/UDAT is a public planning process used by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) for over 40 years to help support and strengthen the idea of citizens playing an active and integral role in planning for the future of their communities. The program was developed by architects and planners from across the country and has been utilized in about 140, towns, cities, and regions throughout the United States. The R/UDAT will bring a group of eight design and development professionals and eight architecture and planning students to Petersburg in early November 2006 to work with our community group on an intensive, week-long planning charrette that will produce a document outlining strategies for development of the harbor and the lower downtown.

## THE R/UDAT PRODUCT

At the end of the weeklong design charrette, a planning document is produced that defines both short and long term initiatives and the strategies for pursuing them. **This document represents a Shared Community Vision supported by all who have participated.** It is for this reason that we are working so hard to broaden representation from the entire community in the process.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Downtown Petersburg Incorporated (DPI) will act as the sponsoring organization for the R/UDAT and will work with the community and the city to see that the plan's recommendations are carried out after the plan is finished. DPI will work to see that the many planning initiatives underway in our city and downtown are coordinated and work together to compliment each other and to build the range of resources and people needed to keep Petersburg's redevelopment moving forward.

Our Downtown is the heart of our community. It belongs to everyone in the city. We want our families and our children to identify with our city, its architecture, institutions and culture. The shape of our downtown will shape our community, its neighborhoods, its streets, its parks, and its suburbs. The benefits of revitalizing our lower downtown and harbor will ripple outward through the region, bringing in new businesses, strengthening existing businesses, creating jobs, and building pride in the community as more and more citizens play an active role in its future. Through DPI Many people are already working hard to build on this vision but they need your support. DPI needs your time and your financial support to insure that the R/UDAT is a success. Please consider assisting in whatever way you are most comfortable.