

Why are We Here?

Because if nothing changes,
EVERYTHING could change.

How You Can Help – Petitions

- ❑ **Sign it to secure your right to vote on the creation of our Town.**
 - Signing the petitions doesn't say you will vote "Yes" on incorporation.
 - It says you want to opportunity to vote on it in August 2017.
- ❑ **This will take all of us working together.**
- ❑ **What you can do**
 - Sign a petition now at www.abettersouthwalton.org/petition/.
 - Contact us at info@abettersouthwalton.org to join the Petition Team now.
 - Take petitions with you everywhere you go.
 - Get your friends, neighbors and family to sign.
 - Ask your friends to get their friends to sign.



Timeline

Spring - Fall 2016	Feasibility Study and Draft Charter completed and shared with citizens
September 2016	Feasibility Study presented to State of Florida
Summer/Fall 2016	Petition drive
October 2016	Draft Charter submitted to the state
December 2016	Petition signatures submitted to Local Representative
Spring 2017	Local bill goes to Florida Legislature and then Governor; if passed, the question of incorporation goes to the citizens
Summer 2017	Community debates the pros and cons of incorporation
August 29, 2017	Incorporation referendum; if passed area becomes a municipality
November 7, 2017	Council elections held, first council meeting shortly thereafter

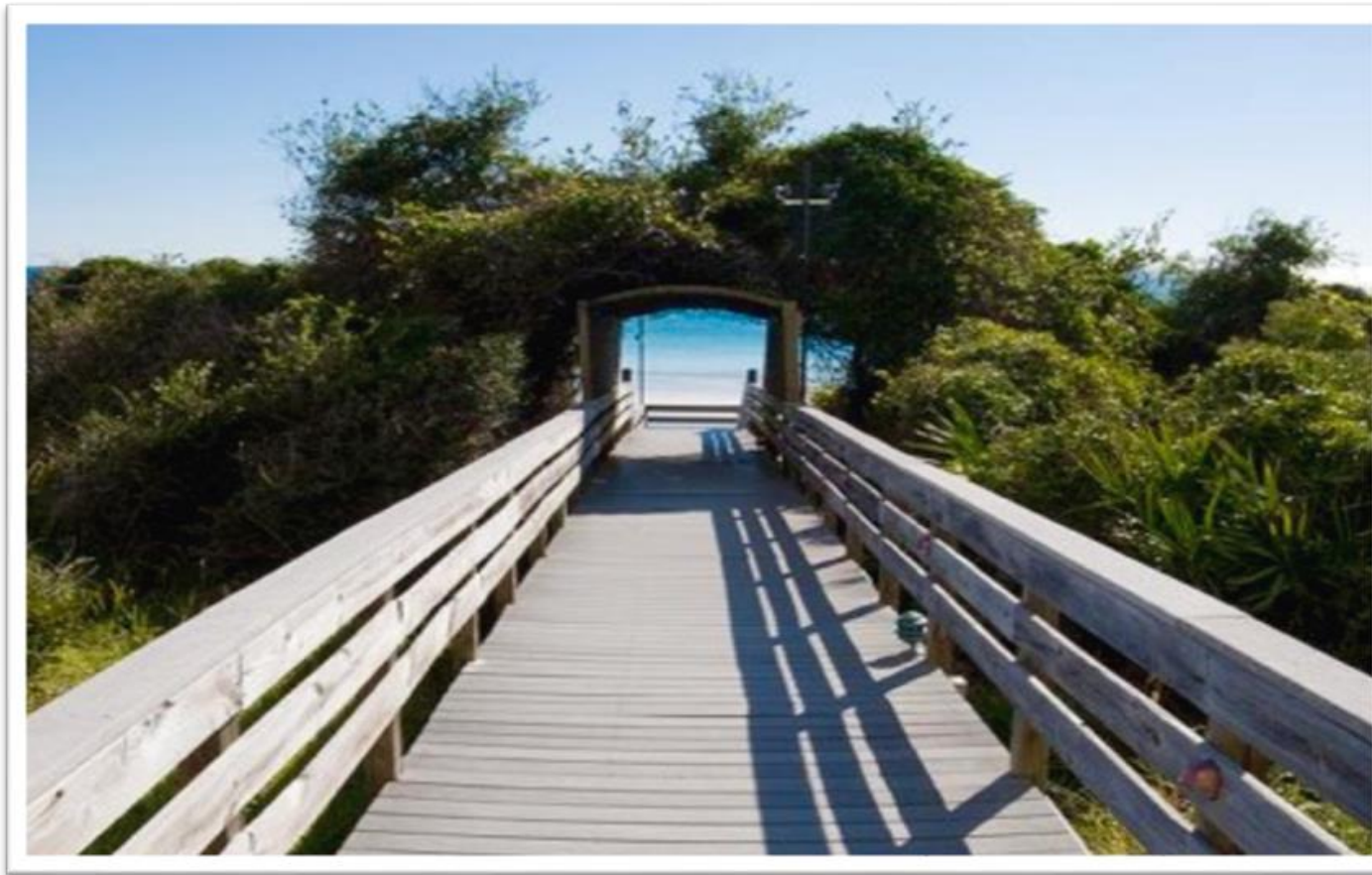


Presentation Agenda

- ☐ Area History & Data
- ☐ The Concern & the Opportunity
- ☐ Next Steps
- ☐ Draft Charter
- ☐ Feasibility Study
- ☐ Q & A

Becoming a Town

We Deserve
the Right to
Vote on it!



Area History & Data



Walton County

- ❑ **Total area of 1,240 square miles**
 - 202 square miles (16.3%) is water.
- ❑ **One of the largest counties (in geographic area) in the state**
 - Stretches from the Alabama state line to the Emerald Coast
- ❑ **2015 estimated population 63,508**
 - Grown from 14,725 in 1950



South Walton History

- ❑ As the area began to urbanize in the late 1970's and early 1980's, a variety of neighborhood characters were already emerging.
 - Sandestin and Miramar Beach with suburban patterns
 - 30A with traditional neighborhood developments
 - Neighborhoods north of 98 still more rural
- ❑ From 1990 to 2010, the population of Walton County doubled, largely driven by growth in South Walton.
- ❑ A combination of things helped South Walton not only survive this rapid growth but become one of the most desirable places to live and vacation in the world.
 - The State's interventions to set aside unique lands for preservation and establish land development regulations
 - Significant commitment to self-regulation and a high quality of design and construction by local developers
 - Respect for the natural environment



Walton Municipalities

	Founded	Incorporation Date	Estimated 2014 Population	Area (Square Miles)
Existing				
DeFuniak Springs*	1880	1901	5,601	11.3
Freeport	1830	1963	1,985	10.8
Paxton	Unknown	1952	725	4.0
Proposed				
South Walton	2017	2017	20,300	76.0

* County Seat



South Walton Today

- ❑ Considered by many to be the most beautiful and desirable place to live or visit on the Gulf Coast
- ❑ 2016 estimated population - 23,685
 - 38% of the population of Walton County with substantial growth predicted
- ❑ Much of the development in South Walton has occurred in the past 30 years.
 - Those 30 years alone don't define Walton County or South Walton.
- ❑ County government is structured to govern rural areas.
 - **Municipal government is structured to govern urbanizing or urbanized areas.**
 - **We must continue to evolve in order to protect and enhance all that is special about this place.**



We are Urbanizing



Sandestin



Miramar Beach



Seaside





A BETTER
**SOUTH
WALTON**

The Concern & the Opportunity



Why We are Doing This

❑ The Concern

- If we stay on the current course, our community will rapidly lose what has made it a special and unique place.

❑ The opportunity exists to correct the course if we can achieve

- Increased local representation with South Walton perspective and stewardship as a prime motivator
- Better planning, growth management and enforcement
- More resources available for additional investment in local infrastructure
- More balanced allocation of tax revenues generated by South Walton



How We Got Here

- ❑ Over the last 18 months we evaluated the problems and several potential solutions.
- ❑ Incorporation rose to the top as the best way to address multiple issues.
- ❑ **We are currently**
 - Sharing the information and thought process we discovered
 - Soliciting community input and feedback
 - Pursuing the opportunity for citizens to vote on incorporation



Benefits of Incorporation

❑ Achievable: No or Minimal New Ad Valorem Taxes

- Assumes the citizens are satisfied with current levels of service and proposed infrastructure augmentation
- **Additional revenue is required, most likely from taxes and fees, only if the citizens desire higher levels of service or more infrastructure spending than the feasibility study describes,.**

❑ More Local Tax Dollars Spent Locally

- Local fees/taxes form the base of a municipality's revenue structure; those dollars are spent locally for municipal services.
- Funds would be available to augment county and TDC spending on infrastructure improvements.

❑ Self-determination with Local Representatives

- Elected officials and staff focused exclusively on our challenges and opportunities
- Our local leadership will set and address those priorities most important to our residents, business owners and visitors.



Benefits of Incorporation (Continued)

❑ **Control Our Community's Destiny**

- We adopt our own comprehensive plan and land use codes.
- Planning decisions are made by people who live and work in the community.
- Our Planning and Code Enforcement Director will focus on proactive long-range planning.

❑ **Access to and Focus on Grants and Technical Assistance for Our Community**

- Grants are available only to municipalities which could significantly enhance the ability to make much needed improvements to infrastructure.
- While the county might include our area in a grant request, if the municipality applies for a grant or technical assistance program, that grant money or assistance will come directly to our community and serve our needs.



Benefits of Incorporation (Continued)

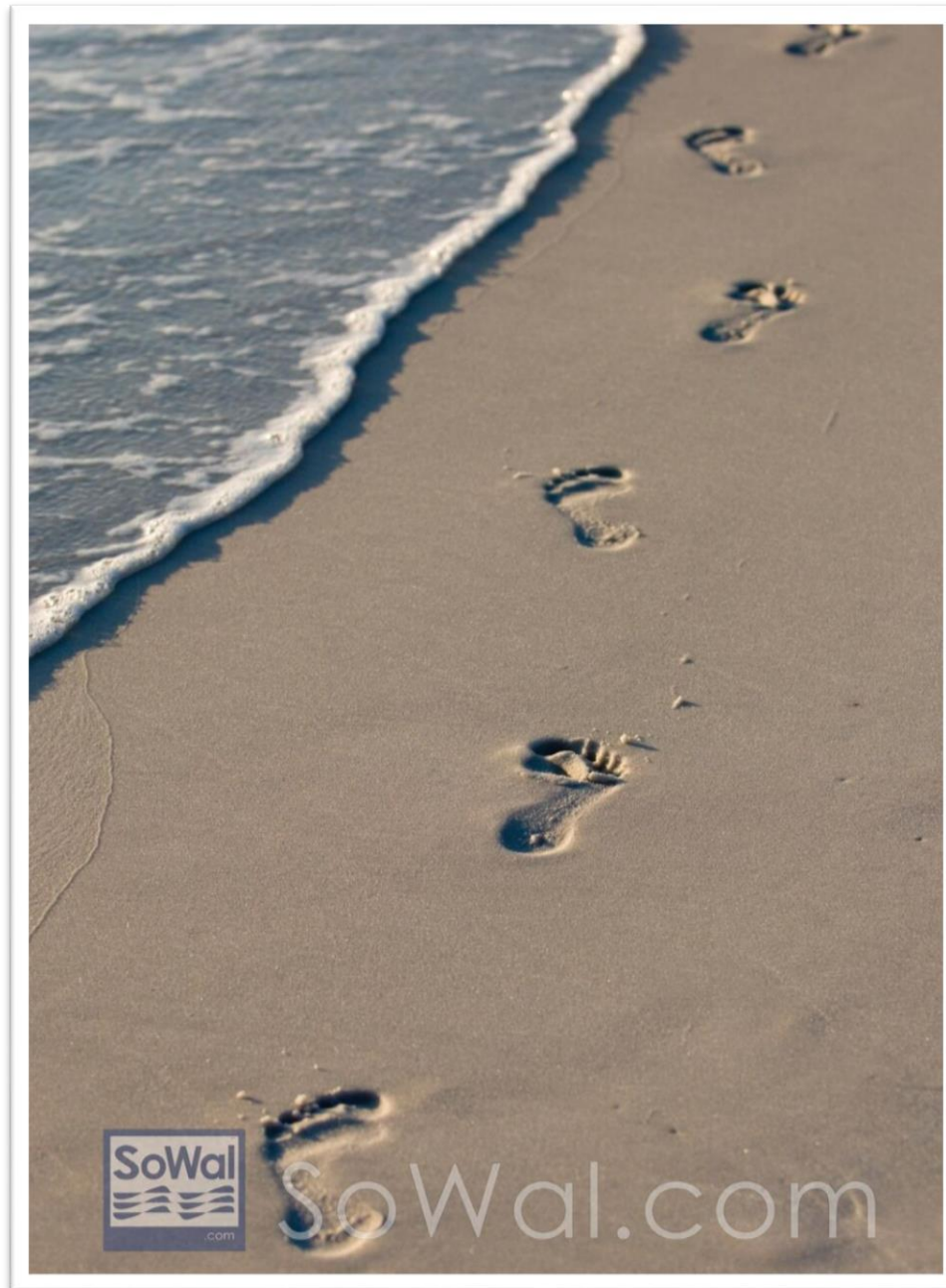
Unite the Area

Today we are just loosely formed groups of citizens with no unified voice. As a municipality, South Walton could have significantly more influence on various issues with the county, regional planning, the state and the federal government (a seat at the table). Some examples:

	Today	Town of South Walton
Walton County BCC	Various citizens approach BCC	Municipal Officials Also Represent Us
Walton County School Board	Various citizens approach Board	Municipal Officials Also Represent Us
Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization	No specific representation	At Least One Elected Municipal Official Seat on Board
South Walton Tourist Development Council	No specific representation	At Least One Elected Municipal Official Seat on Advisory Council
Walton County Economic Development Alliance	Mayors of all Walton Municipalities on Board	Mayor of South Walton Would have Seat on Board



Next Steps



What's Next?

- ❑ **Collect petition signatures from two groups of stakeholders in South Walton to show local delegates our citizens want the opportunity to vote.**
 - Registered voters
 - Non-voting property owners
- ❑ **Continue to hold meetings to educate citizens, answer questions and receive input.**
 - HOA's, POA's, Neighborhood Associations
 - Clubs
 - Businesses
 - Nonprofit organizations
 - Churches
 - Individuals
- ❑ **Continue to raise money to fund the effort.**



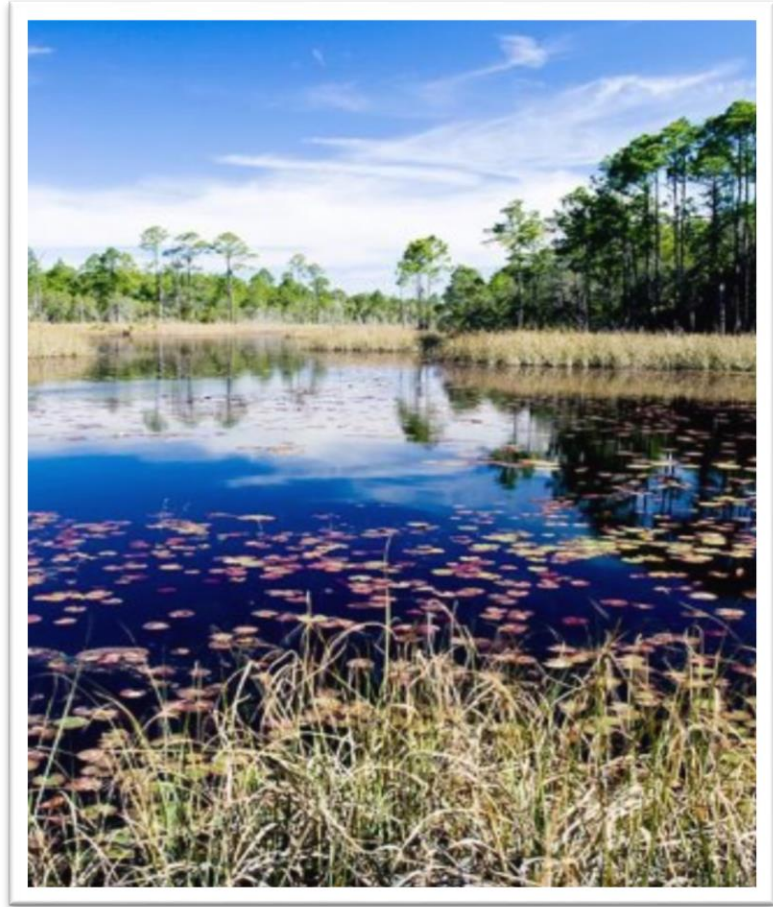
Donations Needed

- ❑ Click on the Donate button on our website.
 - www.ABetterSouthWalton.org
- ❑ Mail a check made out to A Better South Walton, Inc.
 - PO Box 1942, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

Encourage friends to donate!



Draft Charter



What is a *Municipal Charter*?

A basic legal document that defines the key aspects of a municipal government (like a constitution or by-laws)

- Boundaries
- Form of government and roles
- Powers and duties (council, mayor, city manager and city attorney)
- Processes (budget, appropriations, ordinances, meetings, etc.)
- Elections
- Transition schedule and provisions
- General provisions



Legal Name of Municipality

The Town of South Walton

- ❑ Came in second in survey after The Villages of South Walton
- ❑ Discovered there is a neighborhood called The Village of South Walton
 - Want to avoid conflict



Mayor

- ❑ Ceremonial Mayor
- ❑ No strong Mayor or executive above the Council
- ❑ Elected at-large
 - Serves as one of the voting Council members
- ❑ Annual salary \$15,000



Town Council

Six elected Council members

- ❑ Three districts with two members in each district.
- ❑ Both of the members representing a district must live in that district.
- ❑ Within the districts:
 - One member elected only by the district's registered voters
 - One member elected at-large by all South Walton voters
- ❑ Initial districts to be based on current voting precincts
 - Districts to be redrawn and equalized after 2020 Census

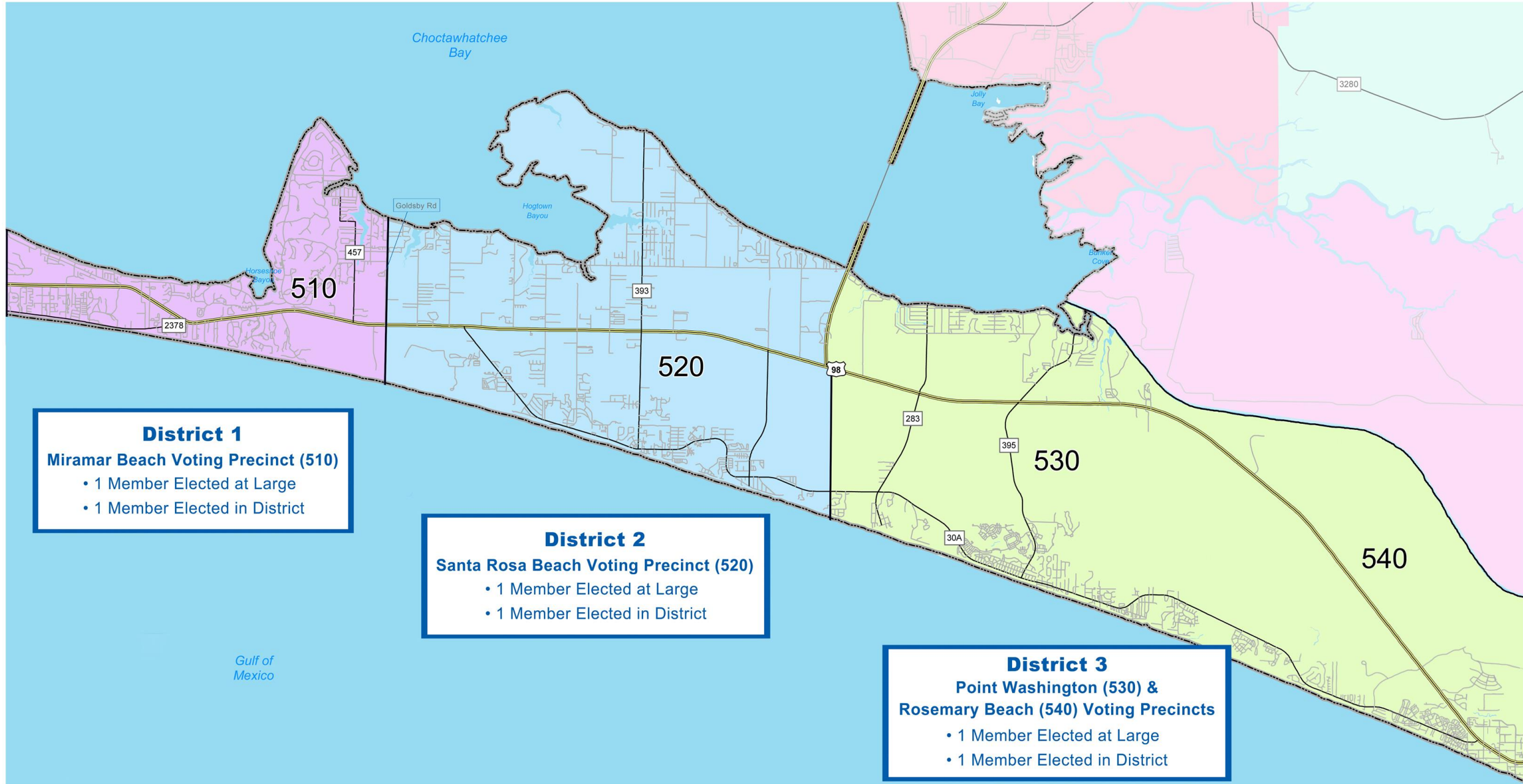


Town Council (Continued)

- ❑ Four-year staggered terms
- ❑ Term limits of two consecutive terms
- ❑ Nonpartisan elections
- ❑ Requires a run-off election if no council candidate receives a majority vote for a particular seat during regular elections
- ❑ Annual salary \$12,000
 - Allows council members to increase their salaries, but the increase takes effect two years after the next council election



Proposed Districts



Election Schedule

- ❑ Initial Election: November 2017
- ❑ First Regular Election: April 2020
- ❑ Next Elections: Every two years (even numbered years) in April
- ❑ Seat 1 (Mayor) and Seats 3, 5, 7 (One from each district)
 - Elected Nov 2017; Next election April 2022
- ❑ Seats 2, 4, and 6 (One from each district)
 - Elected Nov 2017; Next election April 2020



Staff Structure and Code Transition

- ❑ Council-Manager form of government
 - Manager hired and supervised by the Council
- ❑ Ability to utilize in-house staff and/or contract services to administer and provide services
- ❑ New municipality to adopt county's codes and ordinances until the Council chooses to modify or replace them



Levying Taxes and Changing Charter

- ❑ Any levying or increasing the amount of municipal ad valorem taxes requires supermajority vote of the Council
 - Supermajority vote is five of the seven Council members.
- ❑ Limits maximum municipal ad valorem taxes to 2.5 mills
- ❑ Charter can be amended
 - Proposed by the Council or petitioned by the electorate
 - Approved by citizens in ballot initiative by a majority vote



Feasibility Study



What It Is

- ❑ When a new municipality is being proposed, Florida Statutes require a study be submitted to the Legislature for consideration along with the proposed Charter and associated Local Bill.
 - Shows that incorporation would be feasible
 - Not intended to show exactly what will happen
 - A good attempt by us and experts to show what could be done
 - **What actually happens will be determined by the elected officials with community input.**
- ❑ An important resource that can also be used to educate citizens about potential incorporation



The Feasibility Study Process

- ❑ **Commissioned by A Better South Walton**
 - Key findings of study included here
- ❑ **Multiple local government experts performed analysis and developed findings.**
- ❑ **Conversations with/data from multiple Walton County and state staff**
- ❑ **Reviewed by:**
 - Florida League of Cities
 - University of Central Florida Institute of Government



Key Findings

- ❑ **Incorporation of South Walton into a new municipality IS feasible.**
 - Offers the best solution for addressing the concerns of the local citizens, property owners and businesses
- ❑ **Significant benefits are provided by a new South Walton municipality.**
- ❑ **Potential financial impact on South Walton property owners and local businesses would depend on which of two revenue assumptions comes true.**
 - Most Likely Case - no additional ad valorem taxes required
 - Possible Case - starting Year Four, 0.2950 mill property tax required



Five-Year Operating Plan Key Revenue Assumptions

❑ State Shared Revenues are the primary revenue source.

- Primarily sales taxes, a portion of which are distributed back to counties and municipalities (shares based on population) by the state

❑ Municipalities must qualify to receive State Shared Revenues.

- New municipalities must generate a dollar equivalent of 3 mills of certain types of taxes within the municipality (State Statute 218.23).
- The Florida Legislature generally exempts new municipalities for the first three to four years.
- As South Walton pays almost 90% of the property taxes for the entire county we would ask the legislature to allow us to count forms of revenue levied in South Walton toward qualification for State Shared Revenues other than what is generally allowed by statute.
 - The state has recently approved similar exceptions.

❑ If South Walton receives the State Shared Revenue exception, this would be a permanent exception and no municipal property tax would be required to fund operations proposed in the study scenario.

- We will know if our exception is approved when our Bill is approved by the legislature and has the governor's signature (approximately May 2017).
- This will be before the referendum vote in late August 2017.



Two Potential Scenarios Considered

- ❑ If exceptions for permanent qualification for State Shared Revenues are approved by the state legislature, no municipal property taxes in study scenario
- ❑ If State Shared Revenue exceptions are not approved, 0.2950 municipal property tax millage needed beginning in Year Four

<u>Property Taxable Value</u>	<u>Yearly Tax Increase</u>	<u>Monthly Tax Increase</u>
\$ 100,000	\$ 30	\$ 2
200,000	59	5
400,000	118	10
600,000	177	15
800,000	236	20
1,000,000	295	25



Services Contracted with Walton County

- ❑ South Walton citizens will continue to pay county property taxes.
- ❑ Currently 89% of the property taxes in Walton County are generated in South Walton.
- ❑ The municipality could pursue agreements with the county to **keep the current level of services or enhance services, including:**
 - Law Enforcement / Animal Control
 - Fire and EMS (Special District)
 - Mosquito Control (Special District)
 - Building Department - permits, inspections
 - Public Works - streets, sidewalks, street lighting, etc.
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Other – I.e. Library, GIS



Planning and Code Enforcement

Develop our own Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code as soon as possible.

- ❑ Contract with Walton County for planning services until new codes and processes are ready.
- ❑ Immediately establish municipal boards and commissions for the approval of development projects.
- ❑ \$1,000,000 of cost to develop new plans and codes is included in Planning Services expense line item in Years 1 and 2 combined.



Planning and Code Enforcement (Cont'd)

Bring Planning and Code Enforcement functions into the municipality when codes are completed.

- ❑ We believe it can be done at the same or a lower cost than the county currently does it and achieve a better outcome for developers (faster process; more consistency) and for the community.
 - Local resources focused on local concerns
 - Amount budgeted calculated by combining the amounts in *Planning Services* and *Planning Services (Recoverable)* line items each year
- ❑ Recommend considering contracting with outside firm to reduce potential for outside influence and potentially decrease costs.



Augment County Infrastructure Spending

- ❑ This proposed plan assumes that any available funds after funding operations would be directed to infrastructure improvements.
 - Augment what county Public Works, county Parks and Recreation and the TDC is doing regarding infrastructure investment and destination improvements.
 - Roadway improvements
 - Pedestrian and cyclist facilities
 - Public park and recreation facilities
 - Landscape and streetscape improvements
 - Beach access facilities
 - Parking improvements, etc.
- ❑ **Municipal staff can focus on seeking grant opportunities.**
 - Operating revenues can provide matching funds for grants.
 - State and federal grants are available to municipalities that can provide the opportunity to leverage municipal funds up to several times over.



Summary Five-Year Operating Plan – 0.2950 Mills Not Required

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Revenue					
Prior Year Fund Balance Carryover	\$ -	\$ 480,394	\$ 108,515	\$ 91,449	\$ 77,570
Ad Valorem Taxes	-	-	-	-	-
State Shared Revenue	8,687,144	8,817,451	8,949,713	9,083,959	9,220,218
Charges for Services (Recoverable)	-	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	5,000	5,075	5,151	5,228	5,307
Total	\$ 8,692,144	\$ 11,002,920	\$ 10,763,379	\$ 10,880,635	\$ 11,003,095
Expenses					
Council Expenses	\$ 93,000	\$ 94,860	\$ 96,757	\$ 98,692	\$ 100,666
Administrative Staff	627,750	640,305	653,111	716,124	777,695
Contract Services	5,410,000	6,398,200	5,956,164	6,016,287	6,088,613
Office, Administrative and Technology	281,000	161,040	165,898	171,962	179,586
Planning Services (Recoverable)	-	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000
Infrastructure Improvements	1,550,000	1,650,000	1,850,000	1,850,000	1,850,000
Contingency	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Reserve Contribution	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Total	\$ 8,211,750	\$ 10,894,405	\$ 10,671,930	\$ 10,803,065	\$ 10,946,561
Excess Revenue Over/(Under) Expenses	\$ 480,394	\$ 108,515	\$ 91,449	\$ 77,570	\$ 56,535

Five-Year Revenue Projection – 0.2950 Mills Not Required

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Prior Year Fund Balance Carryover	\$ -	\$ 480,394	\$ 108,515	\$ 91,449	\$ 77,570
Ad Valorem Taxes	-	-	-	-	-
State Shared Revenue ¹					
Revenue Sharing Sales Tax Portion	414,727	420,948	427,262	433,671	440,176
Revenue Sharing Fuel Tax Portion ²	128,821	130,753	132,715	134,705	136,726
1/2 Cent Sales Tax	2,923,905	2,967,764	3,012,280	3,057,464	3,103,326
Discretionary Surtax 1%	5,219,691	5,297,986	5,377,456	5,458,118	5,539,990
Charges for Services (Recoverable)	-	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	5,000	5,075	5,151	5,228	5,307
Total	\$ 8,692,144	\$ 11,002,920	\$ 10,763,379	\$ 10,880,635	\$ 11,003,095

Five-Year Expense Projection – 0.2950 Mills Not Required

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Council Expenses ³	\$ 93,000	\$ 94,860	\$ 96,757	\$ 98,692	\$ 100,666
Administrative Staff					
Municipal Manager ⁴	145,000	147,900	150,858	153,875	156,953
Finance Director ⁵	95,000	96,900	98,838	137,815	140,571
Clerk ⁶	65,000	66,300	67,626	68,979	105,358
Planning & Code Enforcement Director ⁷	125,000	127,500	130,050	132,651	135,304
Admin Assistant ⁷	35,000	35,700	36,414	37,142	37,885
Employee Benefits (35%)	162,750	166,005	169,325	185,662	201,625
Contract Services					
Legal ⁸	500,000	500,000	450,000	400,000	400,000
Garbage/Solid Waste and Landfill ⁹	4,410,000	4,498,200	4,588,164	4,679,927	4,733,526
Planning Services ¹⁰	500,000	1,400,000	918,000	936,360	955,087
Office, Administrative and Technology					
Rent for Offices ¹¹	64,000	64,960	64,317	63,680	63,050
Utilities	12,000	12,180	12,363	12,548	12,736
Communications (phone/Internet)	12,000	12,240	12,485	12,734	12,989
IT Services	10,000	13,000	16,900	21,970	28,561
Office Equipment	150,000	25,000	25,500	26,010	26,530
Office Supplies	15,000	15,300	15,606	15,918	16,236
Insurance ¹²	18,000	18,360	18,727	19,102	19,484
Planning Services (Recoverable)	-	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000
Infrastructure Improvements ¹³	1,550,000	1,650,000	1,850,000	1,850,000	1,850,000
Contingency	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Reserve Contribution	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Total ¹⁴	\$ 8,211,750	\$ 10,894,405	\$ 10,671,930	\$ 10,803,065	\$ 10,946,561

Summary Five-Year Operating Plan – 0.2950 Mills if Required

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Revenue					
Prior Year Fund Balance Carryover	\$ -	\$ 480,394	\$ 108,515	\$ 91,449	\$ 52,479
Ad Valorem Taxes	-	-	-	3,978,940	4,018,729
State Shared Revenue	8,687,144	8,817,451	8,949,713	-	-
Charges for Services (Recoverable)	-	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	5,000	5,075	5,151	5,228	5,307
Total	\$ 8,692,144	\$ 11,002,920	\$ 10,763,379	\$ 5,775,617	\$ 5,776,515
Expenses					
Council Expenses	\$ 93,000	\$ 94,860	\$ 96,757	\$ 98,692	\$ 100,666
Administrative Staff	627,750	640,305	653,111	716,124	777,695
Contract Services	5,410,000	6,398,200	5,956,164	1,336,360	1,355,087
Office, Administrative and Technology	281,000	161,040	165,898	171,962	179,586
Planning Services (Recoverable)	-	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000
Infrastructure Improvements	1,550,000	1,650,000	1,850,000	1,450,000	1,350,000
Contingency	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Reserve Contribution	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Total	\$ 8,211,750	\$ 10,894,405	\$ 10,671,930	\$ 5,723,138	\$ 5,713,035
Excess Revenue Over/(Under) Expenses	\$ 480,394	\$ 108,515	\$ 91,449	\$ 52,479	\$ 63,480

Let's Save the Soul of South Walton!



How You Can Help Now

SIGN THE
PETITION

MAKE A
DONATION

HOST A
MEETING

SIGN UP FOR
NEWSLETTER

