

Question: These piers that we're going to build, are they designed so that in case of a hurricane they would be totally destroyed and have to be replaced, or are they built of a material that would withstand a hurricane?
Answer: Like the standards for the new Lighthouse Pier, these piers are designed to sustain limited hurricane damage. It's much stronger engineering than the traditional private piers and we would build them to have minimum storm damage. We are not talking about losing our investment in any appreciable amount.

Question: Will the marina by the International Plaza cause a problem with the bridge opening and closing? Will the parking be adequate?
Answer: The harbor there will be designed for smaller vessels and should not cause a problem for the bridge to be opened. The parking layout is a design problem that we will have to deal with but there is a lot of potential parking at this location. We hope all those visitors will not be coming entirely in cars. People from hotels will probably come in vans or buses and other forms of mass transportation. Some, we hope, will come by boat.

Question: Do these waterfront proposals not make basic public improvements like streets and drainage a lower priority when they really should come first?
Answer: Well, they already do come first. The city's public works ledger is now about \$9 million this year, and it was about \$11 million last year. We have had an on-going public works program that has been more extensive in a shorter period of time than it has ever been in our entire history. But of course, we all pay for those kinds of things like streets, and drainage and water and sewer. You've got to have a growth in your private sector and in your tax base and overall economic development of the community to be able to continue to sustain those kind of things, particularly on such a massive scale. So my answer is yes, they do come first. They are coming first. And they're underway to a very extensive degree. We think the kind of things that we are talking about here tonight, by way of better and higher use of waterfront property--by both the public and private sectors--will have a number of related beneficial results. One of the most important is the expansion of the tax base so we can better provide the basic utilities that you're talking about. Another is jobs for people in the community and especially our young people that are graduating from our schools and colleges. We need new industry and new jobs and our two strongest industries are seafood and tourism. And it makes common sense to play to the strength in what's already here and try to really encourage and upgrade them so that more jobs can give higher pay and thus, better productivity. The third benefit for everyone is with those two industries combined in a unique waterfront area a lot of recreational cultural and educational opportunities and the fun of "just being there" will result. And it's a community asset that has a special kind of value far beyond recreation. So we think that we have a golden opportunity to do all these things as well as further the ability of the City of Biloxi to pay for better streets and drainage, water, sewer, recreation and police and fire protection and all of the basic things that government has to do. If you wait until all the

streets are perfect, it'll be a ghost town. If you wait until all the drainage is perfect, no one could afford to do it because we wouldn't have any jobs. We must progress on many levels at the same time.

Question: I keep hearing the term economic development, but I keep driving up and down the Coast seeing vacant industrial sites. And I see properties that we have spent money on in recent years, ski lifts, the Vieux Marche, many of these things. Do we really need this right now? Have we completed the market studies before we have invested this money? Perhaps this is a cynical question, but, New Orleans has just gone through the experience with the various expensive market studies that showed that the World's Fair was going to be a huge success. How do we go about protecting ourselves from someone who conducts a market survey that is already bent toward producing the answers that you would want to hear?
Answer: We do know that the port commission did a market study on berthing spaces needed. Both commercial and recreational slips are very much in demand. Over 1,000 slips are in demand and we're not coming anywhere near meeting that market demand even with what is proposed here. So what you're seeing in this proposal is primarily oriented toward the seafood industry and recreational berthing spaces for which we know there is a demand in existence. Now the Clay Point industrial area, frankly I think it is a marketing problem. It is a lack of aggressive marketing. Parcels need to be reacquired and put back on the market for industrial use. We do know that there has been a great demand for jobs in this area from the standpoint of unemployment so we feel that it's important to orient some of the projects towards industrial development. It's obvious that the people that did the market study for the New Orleans World's Fair did not have their track records checked out thoroughly. I think you asked a tough question because we cannot guarantee how the end is going to come out. Unlike the World's Fair, we handle seafood and tourism here and the people are saying that boat slips are needed, that ice is needed, that places for boat building and repair are needed and so forth. I think the market study quality depends on the quality of the firm you select. Our intention is to select somebody who clearly understands that we don't want to be told what we want to hear. But we want to know what the market really is. We recently requested qualification statements from over twenty well-known consultants throughout the country. The main criteria we've looked at in reviewing each firm's qualifications was not necessarily how many studies they have done. Of course, we are interested in some of these studies. But, the key criteria was how many studies they have done for successful projects. This is what we're looking at, their track record for actually getting the right information to the decision makers--people like investment bankers in New York that can trust their recommendations.

Question: Would it be possible for a referendum on this issue before we get too heavily involved in it?
Answer: It has been the city's policy to provide for a public vote whenever a tax increase is required. And I expect we will continue that policy as far as

the city is concerned. We're not looking to the city for all of the public portion. The port commission is an independent agency which makes its own decisions. So far, we have not proposed any tax increases, I expect that if there were any requests for increases in revenue that would be an added burden upon the taxpayers, that our general policy regarding referendums would continue.

Comment: I'm delighted at the support from the laymen. Because the laymen have been in charge of this process since the beginning and their input has been utilized and transferred on. I think we're moving in the right direction.

Question: This is just a thought, in reference to the Rhodes Point development, has any feedback from the commercial fishermen as far as that being inconveniently located for their working habits, having to go all the way around the point to the Gulf?
Answer: Well, you get some mixed opinions. As you know quite a few boats are already docked near there, and have traditionally done so for many years. Some want to and some don't. There is enough demand that we're planning docking facilities on the front side at Point Cadet as well. These alternate locations should provide a reasonable mix of convenience and choice for our commercial fishermen.

Comment: I'm on the technical advisory committee but I am also a citizen that is concerned with the future of the town so I am speaking from both perspectives at the same time. I was thinking of earlier comments that will this be another Clay Point or downtown. The reason I am thinking about it is because were I not on the committee and had I not been going through the plan in detail I would probably be thinking the same thing. In downtown we had a canned plan that was used all over the country. Here it is not the same thing. Local people are having the chance to give input. Local people are thinking through all the possible problems. So this cannot be a repeat of what happened before.

Comment: I've waited fifty years for something like this to happen at Point Cadet. When do we get started?

Comment: The waterfront on East Beach around Point Cadet has been neglected as far as planning is concerned...it would be great for recreation, park areas, etc.

Comment: Cleanliness of the Biloxi waterfront is my major concern.

Comment: We need carefully planned areas for commercial boats, unloading and for canneries. I like the view and access to the fishing community.

Comment: Point Cadet should be cleaned up and kept clean. This is the first introduction to Biloxi from the east. First impressions are lasting.

Comment: Rhodes Point is the ideal spot for the 'Seafood Capital' of the United States.

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Comment: Rhodes Point has become the worst-looking place in this city. This goes back to 'poor prior planning' in its development.

Comment: I realize that Biloxi must grow and progress. With this realization, I also can foresee growth without destruction, and progress without ruining aesthetics. But, the total beauty of this area, once destroyed, will never be replaced. I have traveled most coasts and have spoken to countless people who come here, and my feelings and the feelings of most people who visit here is that this area is beautiful because of the things nature has given us. Please don't screw it up.

Public Opinion Summary:

A public opinion survey was conducted at the fifth public forum on December 5, 1984. The purpose of this survey was to "feel the pulse" of the public concerning waterfront plans presented thus far. About 140 persons responded to the survey. The following comments are edited from cultural anthropologist Paige Gutierrez's preliminary conclusions about the survey responses:

1. The responses show an overall favorable attitude toward the plans. Most people indicate that they would like the projects to go forward. (They indicate this either directly or indirectly.)
2. Those people who were specific in their responses tended to echo the attitudes reflected in the original perception survey: they call for cleaning up the waterfront, for increasing public access through boat launches, piers, restrooms, etc., and for protecting the waterfront from high-rises, and from environmentally damaging practices.
3. The attitude toward redeveloping the Point Cadet waterfront per se, is positive. Only two responses reflected the attitude that developing Point Cadet would hurt tourism in West Biloxi.
4. The public response indicates a desire for quality, for doing it right.
5. Negative remarks were varied, with small clusters centering on the following: the boardwalk, the original Rhodes Point concept, the large ship hotel, the wavepool, and potential "pie-in-the-sky" or "too big to ever do right" aspects of the plan.
6. Most people learned about the plan from a minimum of three sources, often more. (These sources included: television, newspaper articles, public forums and meetings, visits to the waterfront office and word-of-mouth.)

APPENDIX E:

Bibliography

Sources and References