

# Cambridge Basin



## Data Gram #4 Jan. 11, 2005

Published by the Port Orange City Council. The purpose of the Data Gram is to keep residents impacted by the 2004 Hurricanes informed on what is taking place to resolve citizen concerns.

### Update on City Activities:

As discussed at the Special Meetings held in October 2004, the City Council agreed to seek grant funds to acquire homes in the Cambridge Basin Area that have received damage. Since then, the City has identified local and state grant programs that would assist in this effort. The City contacted property owners in and around Dawnview Square, Brittany Ave., Brighton Drive, and Dover and Kent Court about being willing partners to submit applications. On December 29, 2004, the City submitted a Volusia Forever application for 15 homes on Dawnview Square and Merrimac. The project presented in the application was to acquire the 15 homes and remove them in order to prevent or reduce flood damage and protect natural flood plain functions, which are Volusia Forever acquisition goals. Moreover, the project meets other program goals: restoration of open space and preservation of habitat and the formation of recreation space in an urban area, by expanding Spruce Creek Road Park north into the project area.

The Volusia Forever program reviews applications through a 2-step process. The first step is a public meeting to be held on January 19 at 3:00 p.m. in the Voltran offices on Big Tree Road where the Volusia Forever Advisory Board meets to consider if the project fulfills program goals. If the board feels the City's application qualifies and garners 5 votes, the board will convene in late March to consider the project for placing on their A or B list for acquisition. "A" listed projects receive the highest priority from the Forever staff and "B" projects are placed on a slower track for acquisition.

In addition to the Volusia Forever application, Port Orange is also working to complete a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) application. Administered by the Florida Department of Community Affairs, the HMGP program assists governments in acquiring hazard prone properties to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural hazards and their effects. Those same 15 homes included in the Volusia Forever application will be submitted along with 110 Dover Court, 246 Brittany Avenue, and 200 Brighton Drive.

It must be noted that, at anytime, these property owners partnering in the Volusia Forever or HMGP applications can decide not to participate with the City in the grant process. Further, they are under no obligation to sell their property.

As the 2005 Legislative Session nears, the City would like to inform Cambridge Basin residents Port Orange has already submitted to Senator Evelyn Lynn and Representative Dorothy L. Hukill Port Orange's Community Budget Issue Request (CBIR) forms seeking funding assistance from the Florida Legislature for many projects, including the acquisition of the homes in Dawnview Square, Dover, Brittany, and Brighton. Also included in the CBIR requests was funding for the stormwater and drainage improvements in the basin and piping in the Hamlet/Central Park area. On January 6, City Manager Ken Parker presented before the Volusia Legislative Delegation these same projects in a public meeting held in the Ormond Beach City Hall.

Finally, in June and August Port Orange plans to submit a Florida Communities Trust (FCT) grant application for the properties in and around Dawnview Square and a St. Johns River Water Management District Cost-Share application for stormwater improvements, respectively. FCT applications will be reviewed in September 2005 and St. Johns reviews their applications in September as well.

## **Volusia County Property Tax Relief**

Volusia County Property Appraiser's office is offering Hurricane Tax Relief(s) for Homesteaded Single Family and Mobile Home properties owners who were affected by the 2004 Hurricanes. The property tax exemptions are partial and only available to homesteaded and mobile home property owners. In addition to the property tax exemption, a partial sales tax exemption is also available for those who were affected by the 2004 hurricanes. The partial tax reimbursement is open to those individuals who purchased replacement mobile homes to replace the mobile homes destroyed as a result of the 2004 Hurricanes. You may qualify if you can answer "yes" to one of these questions:

- Did you have a homestead exemption in 2004 and did your residential building sustain hurricane damage to the extent that it was uninhabitable for 60 days or more?
- Did your mobile home sustain hurricane damage and did you purchase a replacement mobile home? If so, you may be eligible for partial sales tax reimbursement.

### **You may only apply for one of the above reimbursements.**

The Volusia County Property Appraiser asks that you send a letter explaining your situation. Upon receipt of the letter, the property appraiser will send you an application. An application must be filed at one of Volusia County Property Appraiser's offices by March 1, 2005, for property tax refunds and by May 1, 2005, for sales tax refunds. You can also complete an application at any of the four County offices or telephone the Property Appraiser department and they will mail you an application. For those who have access to the Internet, you can download the application from <http://webserver.vcgov.org/pdflib.htm>.

Be sure to include supporting documentation such as hotel bills, insurance estimates, repair estimates, bills related to work completed and any other information you have to support your claim. For sales tax reimbursement, please submit a copy of the invoice reflecting sales tax paid in addition to the other supporting documentation.

If you are unsure of your options or have any questions, please feel free to contact the Volusia County Property Appraiser's office at 386-736-5901 (West Volusia) or 254-4601 (Daytona Beach)

### **Other Activities:**

- The Port Orange City Council enacted the Drainage Bond Ordinance at their December 14 meeting. The City will now seek a bond rating review in February by the main bond rating agencies. It is anticipated the City will sell the bonds in late March or early April.
- Ombudsman Carol Allen has completed her citizen insurance and flood information assistance.
- There were 191 homes surveyed to determine the Finished Floor Elevation (FFE) at the main entry, and 22 of these homes were identified to have an entry elevation below the BFE of 7 ft. Of the 147 homes with verified reported flooding, 19 of these homes were located below the BFE of 7 ft. Looking back historically, of the 147 homes flooded during Hurricane Frances, 27 homes flooded during Tropical Storm Gordon in 1994 and 24 homes were reported to have flooded in all other storms going back to 1976 (as per the data reported to FEMA as being flooded and had a FEMA insurance claim paid).
- REMTECH, Inc., the Holly Hill based environmental consultant, has submitted their report of last month's testing. Copies of the report are available to the public by calling 386-506-5501. Individual results have already been sent to homeowners of the 99 properties tested. If any additional testing is needed, the City will contact the individual homeowners soon. Only a very small number of the properties (less than 10% of the total sample) tested positive for fecal coliform containments inside affected residences.

For questions about information contained in this Data Gram, please contact the Mayor's office or the City Manager at 386-506-5501.