

HAMPTON VA

NEWS RELEASE

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City to developers: Buckroe is a crown jewel

June 8, 2017 - Hampton Redevelopment and Housing Authority Chairman Steve Brown invited a tent full of developers to “use your creativity, your ingenuity, your vision and all of your experience to make this bayfront a jewel of not just Hampton, but the entire East Coast.”

Staff and board members of the housing authority, city, and Economic Development Authority pitched the opportunity Thursday for bids to be submitted to develop a 12-acre parcel of beachfront land in Buckroe.

Hampton Mayor Donnie Tuck praised Hampton’s 400-year-old history and said the nearly built-out city realized “the only way to grow and become more modern was to redevelop.” The city worked with residents to develop master plan areas and set a course for the future. Now, Tuck said, it’s time to act to bring that vision into reality.

The plan, noted City Manager Mary Bunting, describes a “family beachfront community.” And while the plan sets out some concepts, including “maintaining the authenticity of the Buckroe coastal character,” developers are encouraged to create specific proposals within those broad goals. Housing is a key component, with the potential for beach-oriented retail, restaurants and a small beachfront inn.

Housing Authority board member Steve Adams, a developer himself, spoke bluntly: “Properties like these do not come available very often. This is a unique opportunity that you really need to look at.”

Bunting noted that this proposal follows other Buckroe projects, with road and landscaping upgrades and a Housing Venture program that has already spurred more than \$1 million in homeowner reinvestment.

Other city efforts, including putting the public beach and park into a conservation easement, “ensures that every resident of Buckroe has the opportunity to have the beach as their back yard,” Bunting said. She added that many people are opting for smaller lots and yards in exchange for shared public spaces that provide a major amenity.

The land is owned by the Hampton Redevelopment and Housing authority, which issued a Request for Qualifications to be a master developer for the land. Bunting and housing authority executive Director Ron Jackson promised staff support for this strategic priority. Details are at: http://www.hamptonrha.com/rfp_ifb.

The proposal notes Buckroe's history: "More than just a beach, Buckroe is one of the oldest recreational areas in the nation, having been first designated as such by the Virginia Company of London in 1619."

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