



**GULFPORT MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION**  
*Awarded Grant from the Knight Foundation*  
**Master Plan Phase II**

**For Immediate Release, January 30, 2018**

**Historic Downtown Gulfport, MS - *Gulfport Main Street Association*** has been awarded a Grant from the **Knight Foundation** through the **Gulf Coast Community Foundation**, to prepare Phase II of the Master Plan. Phase II Planning includes a focus group session, interviews with stakeholders, building and business owners, and ends with a public presentation of recommendations, under the direction of SouthCoast Consulting.

Phase I originated in 2006 and was the catalyst for the Façade Grant and Streetscape Programs that transformed downtown Gulfport.

Areas to be included in the Program of Work for Phase II will include:

- Prepare a new Façade Grant Program for the gateway to the downtown district, creating connectivity between the traditional downtown, Jones Park and the Mississippi Aquarium.
- An Upper Floor/Downtown Housing initiative.
- Update zip code and market analysis, collateral materials, and branding.
- Expansion of the City of Gulfport brand created by the initial team (2006).
- Infill development with pop-up retail opportunities.
- Public Art programs and the creation of pocket spaces for people to work and congregate that encourages creativity, collaboration and productivity.
- Placemaking projects that can be implemented over a 12 month period. Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Capitalizing on our community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of promoting people's health, happiness, and well-being.

“This type of revitalization of the downtown area will have a large positive impact on all of Gulfport. We are thrilled to be recognized by the Knight Foundation and the Gulf Coast Community Foundation as a community that accomplishes outstanding work,” says Laurie Toups, Director of Gulfport Main Street Assoc. “We are experiencing an exciting growth in Gulfport that can be directly attributed to our distinctive character, engaged residents, and sense of place.”

The Gulf Coast Community Foundation is a non-profit public charity that has been serving the people of South Mississippi since 1989 when a group of concerned citizens saw the need for a public education foundation. The Foundation's primary mission is to increase philanthropy by making grants to worthy causes, providing donor services and promoting and providing leadership in response to the community's changing needs.

Gulfport Main Street Association is a nonprofit organization that has been instrumental in the rebuilding and revitalization of Downtown Gulfport. The district is dedicated to redeveloping in a sensible manner that ensures long-term viability. Our Four-Point Approach simultaneously focuses on organization, design, economic vitality and promotions, supporting a mixed-use environment, and particularly, housing in the district.

For more information, please contact:

**Laurie Toups, Director**  
**Gulfport Main Street Association, P.O. Box 1780, Gulfport, MS 39502**  
**228.236.6724 or email [ltoups@gulfport-ms.gov](mailto:ltoups@gulfport-ms.gov)**