The Urban Redevelopment Advisory Committee’s recommendations to Mayor Ashton Hayward cover seven different areas:

I. Creating New Developments
II. Tourism and Related Activities
III. Housing and Neighborhoods
IV. Central Palafox Commercial Core
V. Mobility
VI. Creating New Jobs
VII. Organization and Funding

Scattered throughout the report are action items providing stand-alone opportunities for improving downtown.

We do not expect that our leaders will implement each and every one of the following recommendations in the next three to five years. The Report provides a wide assortment of recommendations so that our leaders may pick and choose as if ordering from a menu.

In any event, it will take a concerted effort on many fronts to improve downtown. Many individuals, groups, and organizations must work together to make this plan a reality, requiring cooperation, organization, planning, and cooperation.

The recommendations of the committee are as follows:
I. Creating New Development

Recommendation

Assemble a working task force with representatives from the City, ECUA, CRA, County, School Board, CMPA, State, and private interests from within the redevelopment area to develop a specific plan for the redevelopment of this area. The task force should appoint a technical advisory committee to develop this plan and report back to the full task force with their findings within six months.

Recommendation

Develop the Bruce Beach property as a public space and bay access point with a building that supports public beach programming (with bathrooms, vendor sites, and so forth). This investment will attract potential private developers, provide an amenity to home buyers and renters, and will bring people downtown. Additionally, the Bruce Beach property functions as an important link in our waterfront trail system, and gives the public a spot to enjoy one of Pensacola’s greatest assets. Indeed, numerous studies cite the importance of green space in urban areas. Progressive cities that attract people of all ages have recreational opportunities to walk, run, fish, swim, and boat. Expanding recreational opportunity downtown increases Pensacola’s quality of life quotient. Relatedly, the City should make leases available for concessions.
and other uses—boat rentals, kayaking, paddle boarding, sailing lessons, and so forth. Other potential programming for the Beach Bruce property includes marine conservation and education, or City Summer Marine Biology Camps in conjunction with UWF.

**Recommendation**

Focus this redevelopment effort on the following specific parcels and insist that ownership of the parcels listed below remain with current owners until sold to private developers. From this, the net proceeds—after repaying development costs—should remit to the current owner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECUA Property</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private improvement parcels in CMP</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrine Jones Park Property</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Board Property</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-owned parking lots</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private parcels (by owner request)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommendation**

Ask the City Council to establish a pool of working capital to fund necessary planning, engineering, and marketing efforts for these West End properties. Adopt a conservative pro-rata formula governing the distribution of these funds.

Use a transparent formal solicitation process to hire a consulting, planning, design, engineering, and marketing team to assist with the above West End redevelopment effort. Require that any comprehensive plan include the following:

- as-is survey and topographical information;
- accurate, independent appraisals;
- market research on users, financing realities, and developer potential;
- a storm water study;
- a flood study;
- a review and cost analysis of all relevant utility and infrastructure needs;
- an environmental review;
- a use-and-capacity study;
- parking and traffic studies; and
- a legal analysis of ownership and title issues.
Recommendation

Redefine the City’s land development code (“LDC”) to complement the above West End redevelopment plan.

Recommendation

Appoint an individual to research potential state, federal, and other funding sources—including RESTORE Act funds—for pre-development costs.

Recommendation

Solicit developer proposals and input during any West End redevelopment planning process.

Recommendation

Use a transparent formal solicitation process to select and administer individual parcels with the net proceeds returning to individual stakeholders.

Recommendation

Encourage the marketing and development of the above named sites—beginning with blighted properties like Cap’n Fun—surrounding Aragon along Tarragona Street, Garden Street, Gregory Street, and Ninth Avenue.

Recommendation

Work with the Pensacola-Escambia Development Commission (“PEDC”)—the quasi-governmental board that controls the Tech Park—to manage expectations regarding the future of this property. Specifically, encourage the PEDC to put aside previous expectations regarding the potential value of this property—as well as unrealistic development objectives and constraints—and issue a formal solicitation for its development. The PEDC could adjust points and pricing for proposals that bring significant new jobs or housing to the area. In fact, the Tech Park could be better used for residential development at subsidized prices. But find out what private developers want and seek an accommodation.

Recommendation

Initiate a publicized campaign of aggressive code enforcement to make property owners accountable for dilapidated structures. Require that such structures be repaired, demolished, or sold in a timely manner. Providing small-business loans
and better funding for owner-occupied development will help create new business and spur the redevelopment of infill property. The proposed infill housing program may stimulate the development of vacant residential lots.

**Recommendation**

Encourage the marketing and development of the smaller sites scattered throughout this area and the adaptive redevelopment of vacant buildings and upper floors throughout downtown.

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**II. Tourism & Related Activities**

Recommendation: Encourage the development of the City-owned property surrounding Commendencia Slip. One possible development model is the East Waterfront Development Plan that is attached. Aspirationally, components could include the following, or similar elements:

- a 200-350 room, mid-rise hotel and conference center;
- a redeveloped warehouse number 4 with a new, adjacent second building as a public market with open air stalls, shops, restaurants, and exhibits lining a public pedestrian mall along the east side of the hotel;
- a structured public-parking facility on the current site of New World Landing, lined with shopping space along south Palafox;
- historic ships berthed in Commendencia Slip, which in tandem with other exhibit areas will create an open-space Maritime Museum;
- infill mixed-use development of other scattered sites as shown along Main, Cedar, south Palafox and south Jefferson streets.
Renew the City’s lease for Seville Harbor Marina. Then use the tenant’s current plans to submit to the proposed new City grant writer to get an ADA accessible breakwater built.

Coordinate with, support, aid, and assist—as appropriate—UWF as it engages in efforts to increase Pensacola’s cultural tourism.

Secure funding to enhance tourist activities in the historic district and to develop a maritime history experience along the waterfront in this area.

Incentivize the private development of inns and bed-and-breakfast venues in and around the historic district.

Support the development of diverse activities emanating from downtown. To cite but a few examples—support cultural tours through surrounding neighborhoods, showcase the arts, entertainment, and music scenes, and expand entertainment offerings and activities at the Community Maritime Park.

We recommend that the Mayor, as Pensacola’s brand-manager-in-chief, lead a united marketing campaign—coordinating with the Chamber, the Blue Wahoos, and other private-sector interests—and take point on a City-controlled central event calendar for all area festivals, events, and activities in and around downtown.
III. Housing & Neighborhoods

**Recommendation**

Adopt a policy supporting the expansion of unique, safe, family-friendly walkable areas downtown.

**Recommendation**

Fund a housing market study that could be the basis for anyone wanting to develop housing in the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

**Recommendation**

Designate certain public properties for housing development and provide the necessary pricing and incentives to encourage housing development, using a transparent formal solicitation process to select qualified developers.

**Recommendation**

Create an infill housing program for the City to be administered by a non-profit organization. The organization would identify suitable properties, secure them at below-market rates, create a financing mechanism, and fund the construction of low and moderate income housing that fits the needs of the community. A job-training program that provides training in construction trades could also be included as part of the program. The City could provide seed funding to start such an organization, after which it could become self-sufficient.
through state and federal grants. Consider supporting other financing models such as a loan pool. While such a program would operate City-wide, the emphasis should be on neighborhoods such as Belmont-DeVilliers that have the greatest need for infill housing.

Recommendation

Oversee the creation of new design standards and R-NC Zoning for the Belmont-DeVilliers neighborhood. As one of the only areas within the CRA where development projects do not receive an additional level of design review by the City, Belmont-DeVilliers offers many opportunities for development. We recommend that the City code establish a set of simple design standards for homes and buildings. This will help to guarantee that the character of the neighborhood is respected as new development takes place. Relatedly, we recommend that design standards include elements such as shallow-front setbacks, parking hidden in back or to the side, and houses constructed off-grade with front porches—all of which mirror the traditional patterns of the neighborhood. In fact, one of the active members of the neighborhood association is an architect who has already created a set of design guidelines that could help form the basis for a more formal set of standards. These simple standards could be reviewed at the staff level to simplify the approval process and minimize additional review fees.

Recommendation

Provide incentives and encourage the further redevelopment of the neighborhood commercial center in Belmont-DeVilliers.

Recommendation

Keep sidewalks accessible through increased code enforcement. Property owners have an obligation under City code to keep sidewalks adjoining their property free and clear of obstructions such as tree limbs. We recommend an enhanced effort by City Code Enforcement to ensure that the sidewalks funded by residents’ tax dollars are safe and accessible. This simple, low-cost effort aligns perfectly with the City’s recent emphasis on code enforcement as a strategy for neighborhood improvement.
Recommendation

Create a more accessible connection between downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Specifically, we recommend prioritizing projects for better pedestrian and bicycle connections between East Hill and Old East Hill and downtown Pensacola—and surrounding neighborhoods. By making it safer and easier to walk and cycle, residents in these neighborhoods would be better able to access businesses and events throughout the urban core. One specific need is to provide safe access to the waterfront for residents hemmed-in by the CSX railroad trestle at 17th Avenue. The existing City park and stormwater pond and its wooden boardwalk could perhaps be extended south beneath the railroad trestle to allow pedestrians from East Hill to safely access the waterfront south of the rail trestle. The City’s new Complete Streets Program could help to make this and other neighborhood connections needed in these areas.
IV. Central Palafox Commercial Core

Recommendation

Prioritize Tarragona Street for improvements that will make it a pleasant corridor that encourages pedestrian traffic, especially along the east-west corridor between the Seville neighborhood and Palafox Street. Improvements should include paved crosswalks, shade trees, and additional landscaping.

Recommendation

Expand the commercial core in a size, scale, and character in keeping with existing development. Through the Land Development Code (“LDC”) and design-review processes, encourage significant new commercial development within the CRA, clustered near the existing core or within specified neighborhood centers, such as Belmont-DeVilliers.

Recommendation

Encourage—through pro-active marketing efforts—a mix of compatible uses that will maintain a vibrant, safe environment for all ages to live, work, gather, and play downtown.

Recommendation

Enhance pedestrian activity by discouraging ground-floor uses incompatible with a vibrant sidewalk presence.
Recommendation

Monitor and solicit policy input from those occupying the area to mitigate and resolve the unavoidable conflicts.

Recommendation

Update and utilize the Downtown Retail Strategy for relevant policy guidance.

Recommendation

Merge the downtown marketing efforts of the City, DIB, Chamber of Commerce, CMPA, and others into a consistent brand and cohesive program aimed at soliciting new development, creating and attracting new businesses, and increasing traffic for existing enterprises.

Recommendation

Employ aggressive code enforcement—along with appropriate economic incentives—to promote the redevelopment of vacant or underdeveloped properties within the core. Where necessary, work toward strengthening, streamlining, simplifying, and clarifying local codes and ordinances.

Recommendation

Create design guidelines for the central core with mandatory review and voluntary compliance.

Recommendation

Develop and fund a streetscape program for the central core.

Recommendation

Encourage the DIB Board to voluntarily downsize the DIB staff to one coordinating clerical position, a primary liaison organizationally housed within the Mayor’s office. The DIB Board’s primary responsibility would then be to make recommendations to the Mayor for the disbursement of DIB revenues. Since the Mayor appoints the Board, he can work with the DIB Board to strategically achieve the very best results for those residents and business owners within the DIB District—and he will do so within the context of greater City development goals. In sum, the DIB Board can be an excellent conduit for communicating the needs of the DIB District to the Mayor without wasting scant resources on a bureaucracy that has caused
such controversy.

Parking is a perennial problem for municipalities. We recommend that the City assume those responsibilities because parking should have a city-wide cohesion that balances the various interests discussed above. It makes little sense to have the same company handling parking at the airport and downtown yet separately contracted to do so by both the City and the DIB. Such needless duplication wastes taxpayers dollars. The DIB may well have solved a parking policy problem in the past, but circumstances have changed. The City can decide to contract out parking contracts.

If the DIB reduces its staff to one clerical position, over $350,000 becomes available for directly improving downtown. The DIB Board would remain as it currently is, recommending various uses of the funds to directly improve downtown within the greater plan of improving the City. All of this is fairly easy to accomplish under the leadership of the Mayor, and indeed is now possible because of the strong mayor form of government.

**Recommendation**

In any event, we recommend that the Mayor withdraw any oversight for parking from the DIB, charge market prices for curb parking, and consider following the Pasadena, California downtown model by earmarking all parking revenue for public improvements and beautification in the metered neighborhoods. The meter revenue must be utilized to pay for improving downtown streetscapes. This expenditure will provide a safer, cleaner, and more attractive environment for customers, residents, and businesses. Further, these public improvements will increase private investment, property values, and tax revenues.

**Recommendation**

Focus on City-controlled streetscape elements and let the market respond with improvements to existing privately-owned structures.

**Recommendation**

Direct the Public Works department to install holes for bollards at the intersection of Garden and Palafox and along all East and West side streets (including turn lanes...
into Palafox from Garden and main Street). This will eliminate the need to hire police officers to direct traffic during Gallery Nights and other special events and significantly reduce the cost of these events. What is more, this initiative comports with the Committee’s overarching recommendation that the Mayor focus on basic, cost-effective downtown policy goals, like competently providing mandated services at a reasonable cost, keeping the streets safe and clean, and not taxing and regulating away downtown businesses and residents.

**Recommendation**

Review the role, scope, organization, and resources of the DIB and other entities involved in the redevelopment of downtown to improve efficiency, expand effectiveness, and better use available public resources. Consider realigning the DIB District boundaries to an area more compatible with new developments within the CRA, such as completion of the Maritime Park.
V. Mobility

Recommendation

Designate Cervantes, Garden, Gregory, Chase, Bayfront Parkway, Main, Ninth Avenue, Tarragona, Government, and A Streets as thoroughfares. Design them to move traffic efficiently yet maintain controlled pedestrian traffic and sidewalks or bike lanes that provide separation from vehicular traffic.

Recommendation

Create a parking-enterprise fund sufficient to fund more structured parking.

Recommendation

Centralize all downtown parking under a single management system funded through the parking enterprise fund.

Recommendation

Support the adoption of a Complete Streets Program for downtown.

Recommendation

Prepare a streetscape plan that prioritizes streetscape and pedestrian improvements downtown.

Recommendation

Ensure that any changes or modifications to streets and sidewalks are fully ADA compliant.
Recommendation

Complete, designate, and brand the Bayfront loop. Relatedly, work toward making Pensacola a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly city by developing pathways and providing for appropriate bicycle parking downtown. In particular, develop pedestrian and bicycle pathways that connect downtown to the rest of Pensacola. Undertake this effort incrementally as funding and opportunities arise. For instance, one can envision a pedestrian and bicycle pathway running from downtown along Scenic Highway.

Recommendation

Provide better connectivity from neighborhoods and existing greenways to downtown and the waterfront.

Recommendation

Provide incentives for a privately-operated downtown shuttle service.

Creating New Jobs

VI. Creating New Jobs

Recommendation

Adopt a goal to increase the number of people working downtown by 25-30 percent, or by 2,400-2,800 jobs, in the next five years.

Recommendation

Target quality, high end jobs that will significantly increase the median income of the region.

Work with the County, Chamber, UWF, and other economic development entities to tie downtown redevelopment to Pensacola’s brand identity.

Recommendation

Contribute significant new funding to marketing this new image and promoting identifiable sites downtown as locations for new businesses.
Recommendation

Work with existing entities to increase funding and training support for new small businesses and micro enterprises, and support the existing businesses in retention and improvement.

VII. Organization & Funding

Recommendation

Define which properties are to be declared surplus and time their release. The City should prioritize, first releasing shovel-ready sites. Ensure that relevant code allows for a full range of uses.

Recommendation

For each property sold or leased, maximize the development created and ensure compliance with approved plans. For instance, establish minimum densities, specific design criteria, and preferred uses for each surplus parcel. Make acceptance a prerequisite for sale or lease.

Recommendation

Ensure that guarantees are in place with each sale to ensure follow-through after the sale. For each parcel, draft a Memorandum of Understanding—with appropriate covenants—specifying the sale’s or lease’s terms. Before executing any agreement
ensure that the buyer has the capacity and resources to follow through. Manage expectations and ensure compliance by requiring realistic and economically sound proposals.

**Recommendation**

Provide pricing incentives for projects that increase housing or create jobs. Reduce the price of properties below the appraised value—or offer other incentives—if the proposed development meets the CRA plans goals and objectives allow potential long-term gains to outweigh certain short-term income.

**Recommendation**

Don’t give away the farm, but don’t overvalue the properties. Take into consideration not only the appraised value of the underlying land but also required site costs. To attract private development, price the properties in accordance with market realities and aim to compete with other cities. In short, take steps to understand market constraints and price the property accordingly.

**Recommendation**

Evaluate flood elevations, storm water requirements, and infrastructure needs for each property. Too often, a potential client will be lost if they must wait months for analysis, design and construction to be done. With advanced work, it is possible to set up multiple parcels at once as was done with the storm water at Admiral Mason Park. In addition, through advanced planning it is possible to bring grant funds to the project up front which can increase the net sale return to the City.

**Recommendation**

Using a transparent formal solicitation process, be strategic about marketing each property. Seek professional guidance to identify developers, and through the selection process reach agreement on the lot’s sale or lease. Don’t count on—but be open to—unsolicited offers. In these instances, a transparent negotiation can replace a more lengthy solicitation process.

**Recommendation**

Use the money from the sale or lease of each parcel to provide for necessary public improvements, incentives, marketing, and new infrastructure. Establish a development
fund to market the initial properties. Then, replenish the fund from sale proceeds. Consider hiring a sophisticated real estate broker or development company to take point.

**Recommendation**

Incentivize private development. Remove impediments, streamline procedures and bring certainty to the development process. Simplify policies, ordinances and procedures.

**Recommendation**

Offer investors and developers a one-stop shop. Require all projects of a certain size to go before the preconstruction committee, in the style of the County’s development board. This must be mandatory. Just as the County has a mandatory review process whereby any project of a certain size must appear before the Development Review Committee—
institute a similar requirement for the City. This has the advantage of bringing forth all issues up front without the developer having to go department by department to get all the answers. With all departments participating, the City needs to speak with one voice to speed up the process and eliminate conflicts.

**Recommendation**

Streamline and simplify the LDC.

**Recommendation**

Coordinate to speak with one voice to present a consistent message that does not duplicate or overlap with other programs in place. Currently, the Mayor’s office, DIB, the County, UWF, the Chamber, and others are focusing significant resources on marketing Pensacola. Each has a different brand identity, a different target audience, and a different focus. To be effective, the downtown image and opportunities set forth in this strategy needs to be an integral part of a regional marketing strategy.

**Recommendation**

To achieve optimal results in a consistent manner over a long period of time requires policy decision makers and technical staff to move it forward and keep it on track. They must be able to evaluate proposals to ensure that they are not in conflict and must prioritize resources for set goals. This ongoing organization can be established in a number of different ways as follows:

- hire additional economic development
staff in the Mayor’s office; or

• expand current CRA staff under
direction of CRA Board.

**Recommendation**

Identify and tap multiple funding sources, including:

• selling or leasing public land;
• increasing the ad valorem tax base to replenish CRA funding to previous levels;
• establishing a parking-enterprise fund;
• soliciting RESTORE Act funding for priority downtown projects;
• hiring a full-time grant writer to pursue state, federal, and philanthropic funds;
• encouraging philanthropic funding for key initiatives.

**Recommendation**

Prioritize public expenditures by establishing a three-year capital budget with priorities for various initiatives.
Brian Hooper

Brian Hooper is an attorney with Emmanuel Sheppard & Condon, based in Pensacola. Mr. Hooper is a graduate of Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia, and Harvard Law School. Prior to joining Emmanuel Sheppard & Condon, Mr. Hooper served as Associate Director for the U.S. State Department’s Office of Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism. Brian and his lovely wife Kimberly live in Pensacola where they are raising their first child. Like other local residents, they are active in the community and are committed to keeping Pensacola a thriving, fun, and attractive place to live.

“Pensacola has a rich history of strong community leaders going back nearly a century. Following in their footsteps, the URAC Committee partnered with planning experts, neighborhood associations, government agencies, and others while researching our recommendations. Our report provides not one answer, but a multi-faceted plan identifying several key avenues and action steps that will strengthen downtown Pensacola. We are grateful that so many citizens, business owners, and government representatives have voiced their support and contributed to our proposed initiatives.”

-John Myslak

John Myslak

John Myslak is the managing member of West Coast Metal Roofing and Construction, based in Milton. Mr. Myslak lives in Pensacola and currently serves as a member of the Parks and Recreation Citizen Advisory Board.

“Since moving to Pensacola from Houston, TX in 2000, I have been witness to many significant events. The amazing efforts of all involved in the completion of the Community Maritime Park, the redevelopment of downtown and the relocation of the waste water treatment plant have been huge contributors to a more development and citizen friendly downtown. There is still work to be done however, and as a committee we have met with development professionals, heard from neighborhood groups, studied previous plans and had many spirited debates. The result of our efforts will hopefully be a roadmap that can assist Pensacola in realizing the Mayor’s vision for the revitalization of the city with more people living, working and playing in our beautiful city.”

-John Myslak
Christan Wagley

**Sustainable Town Concepts**

Christan Wagley is the founder and principal of Sustainable Town Concepts, an environmentally-sound building and design consultancy based in Pensacola. He is a graduated of Townson University in Maryland and holds a master’s degree in biology and coastal zone studies from the University of West Florida.

“It’s been a tremendous honor to serve with a committee of such talented and hard-working people. This is an incredibly exciting time for Pensacola, as in so many ways we’re shaking-off the old, stagnant ways and raising expectations for a better future. I hope our work will be embraced by the community, City Council and Mayor, and will help to create a City that is healthy, vibrant and sustainable.”

-Christan Wagley

Stephanie Powell

**Pensacola Apothecary**

Stephanie Powell is the marketing coordinator for Pensacola Apothecary. Ms. Powell is a graduate of Pensacola Junior College, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and Full Sail University. She also serves as the media manager at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church.

“**Downtown Pensacola has great potential. Revitalizing and finding a way to sustain growth in this area is not only an obtainable goal, but one that will prove to be beneficial for the entire county. It has been my pleasure to serve on a committee with such dedicated and knowledgeable people who exhibit the spirit of Pensacola in their dedication to serving our community. Let’s life, work and play together…downtown!**”

-Stephanie Powell
Shana Neuhaus

**LEED-Certified Architect**

**Shana Neuhaus** is a LEED-certified (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) architect and a graduate of the Tulane School of Architecture in Louisiana. She serves on the board of Creative Learning Academy and Pensacola Mess Hall Science Museum.

“The city leadership has taken a proactive step by forming the URAC, making downtown redevelopment a priority.

Recent efforts to beautify Main Street, along with the success of the ballpark have contributed to downtown vitality and walkability while bringing development westward. We need to continue this investment momentum in order to attract business and population.

For me, being part of the URAC was a unique opportunity to learn more about Pensacola, its constituent parts and their perspectives, and to research what makes other cities successful.”

-Shana Neuhaus

Dr. Ken Ford

**Institute for Human and Machine Cognition (IHMC)**

**Dr. Ken Ford** is co-founder and CEO of the Institute for Human and Machine Cognition (IHMC), a not-for-profit research institute based in Pensacola. He has authored/edited six books and hundreds of scientific papers. Dr. Ford has served on the National Science Board, the Air Force Science Advisory Board, the Defense Science Board, and the NASA Advisory Council which he chaired from 2008-2010.

“As cities compete to attract a talented workforce, it’s important that Pensacola continues its progress. I joined the URAC Committee and its diverse group of professionals to engage in an open dialogue regarding how to build a community that is competitive in today’s economy. Pensacola, especially downtown and some of the older neighborhoods, has an authenticity that helps attract creative people. A vibrant arts community, restaurant scene and affordable housing are each important components for a city that wants to continue to thrive. Our interest is in fostering the success of downtown and developing a positive spirit of cooperation.”

-Ken Ford
Executive Summary

Teresa Dos Santos

Teresa Dos Santos is the president of Contract Resources, a full-service dealer of office furniture based in Pensacola. She is a graduate of the Parsons School of Design and also serves on the board of the Pensacola Museum of Art.

“Pensacola is experiencing an invigorating and forward moving renaissance with tremendous hope for what we can accomplish now and in the near future.

We have the potential to become one of America’s great cities! A place where people not only want to visit, a place where people would like to live while having the opportunity for great careers and a cultural rich environment to raise their families. It’s the vision of this committee to bring the community ‘together’ and to invest in a foundational infrastructure that creates a vibrant city environment.”

-Chuck Tessier

Chuck Tessier

Chuck Tessier is a development consultant and was very involved in the redevelopment of downtown Asheville. He holds an undergraduate degree in Engineering and a Masters of Urban Design from NC State University. He is President of Tessier Associates, Inc. and has spent his career working with both public and private sectors in development and urban place making. He has worked part time in Pensacola for the past three years on Maritime Park and downtown redevelopment.

“It has been a true honor to work with the Mayor and this committee to help plan a direction for downtown Pensacola. Its authentic character, leadership and a true desire on the part of the community to make it a better place set it apart from many cities across the south east. Building a great city requires a good plan, capital, organization and a consistent dedication on the part of many people. Now is the time. Let’s work together to make it happen.”

-Chuck Tessier
Ryan Winterberg-Lipp works for the City of Pensacola and oversees the day to day operations of the 256-block redevelopment district. Ryan is a Pensacola native, and was an urban planner with the City of Pensacola’s Community Development Department prior to returning to the CRA. Ryan first joined the City in 2006 as an intern with the CRA.

After interning with the CRA, she received her Master’s degree in City and Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with dual specializations in Housing/Community Development/Real Estate and Design/Historic Preservation. While in North Carolina, Ryan worked with the City of Durham, Town of Hillsborough, and Inter-Faith Council for Social Service on various redevelopment and community planning projects. Ryan was also a Teaching Assistant for a graduate-level course in Development Dispute Resolution and developed a case study to assist the Town of Chapel Hill with a controversial redevelopment project.

Prior to rejoining the City of Pensacola, Ryan was an urban policy Research Associate with the Center for Sustainable Community Design at the University of North Carolina. Ryan graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor’s degree in International Affairs and a Certificate in Urban Planning from Florida State University and studied urban redevelopment in Curitiba, Brazil and Berlin, Germany.

“It’s been a pleasure to support the Mayor’s Urban Redevelopment Advisory Committee in their important work. The Committee members have shown great dedication and passion for downtown Pensacola, and along with our City’s leadership, I’m confident that our urban core and neighborhoods will continue to thrive. So many groups and individuals from the Pensacola community have provided input and guidance during the Committee’s work— it’s truly been a collaborative process.”

-Ryan Winterberg-Lipp
URAC Committee Members

Brian Hooper  
Chairman

John Myslak  
Christian Wagley

Stephanie Powell  
Shana Neuhaus

Teresa Dos Santos  
Dr. Ken Ford