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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Survey says: Farmer's Market is a Favorite

Margate, FL January 10, 2007 – In December 2006, the Margate Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) set up a Citizen Survey Line to obtain feedback from residents regarding the use of the Farmer's Market currently located at the Lakeshore Swap Shop, 1000 State Road 7. This came after the November 3, 2006 signing of a contract for the CRA to purchase the property known as the Margate Swap Shop.

This wasn't the first time that the community was involved in the process for redevelopment. In 2003, the CRA held a planning exercise involving residents, business people, and elected officials that proposed future plans for the Margate City Center. The result was the Charrette Master Plan. Regarding the Lakeshore Swap Shop property, it determined "...people liked the fact that the green market existed, and they generally enjoyed visiting [it]. A general consensus was that the market could be retained, but should be configured and designed as an appropriate center-piece to the City."

With the recent contract to acquire the Swap Shop property, the CRA Board wanted to provide another opportunity for residents to provide their input.

A phone survey was conducted from Nov. 16 – Dec. 20, 2006. The total number of calls received was 906. Part one of the survey was a series of three questions with the opportunity for "yes" or "no" answers.

- 1. Are you a Margate resident?** 653 said YES, 196 said NO.
- 2. Do you currently use the farmer's market at the Swap Shop?** 720 said YES, 98 said NO.
- 3. Would you like to see a farmer's market continue in the future?**
730 said YES, 76 said NO.

Part two offered an opportunity to leave a message. **244 participants left a message.** Some of the comments were:

- I applaud the efforts for redevelopment.
- Make it [the Farmer's Market] co-exist with the redevelopment plans.
- Use the space for an amphitheater.

- more -

- continued -

- Use the space for a fitness center.
- I don't appreciate it...the Farmer's Market will spoil redevelopment of Margate.
- Bring us back another open air market.
- I'd like to see it better organized, include baked goods too...I would like to see a full-fledged Farmers Market.
- If it had a shelter, I'd be a regular at the Farmers Market. It needs continuous coverage.
- It's a fun thing to have in the community - but upgrade it.

- I'll miss it, don't take it away.
- Relocate it elsewhere in the city.
- Don't add more housing, but use the space for a city park.
- Senior citizens use it for exercise. Keep it.
- It's something different about Margate, you should keep it.
- Keep it open as long as possible.
- There should be a plan for the vendors.
- Elderly use it for the reduced rate for veggies/fruit.
- As a resident of Margate, it's essential to us.

In the messages that were left, a pattern of three distinct categories developed. These categories fell into three types of answers. Participants either said to "Keep it," "Continue to have it, but change or upgrade it," or "get rid of it." In these categories: 140 said "keep it", 39 wanted to see "upgrades or changes", and 34 said to "get rid of it."

"A nice farmer's market with permanent shelters surrounded by a park was part of our original plan, but so many residents have not seen or heard about the idea, that the CRA Board thought it a good idea to get some feedback from our residents," Pam Donovan, Chair of the Margate CRA said. "I am so happy that we had such great response from our residents and they like the direction the CRA board is going."

The CRA plans to consider the input from Margate citizens as it moves forward with the Redevelopment Plans for the Margate City Center.

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