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Tourism advertising lags

Orlando spending less than competitors

By MELISSA STOKER KENDALL
Staff Writer

Orlando's continuing tourism slump has led many in the industry to question the way the Orlando/Orange County Convention & Visitors Bureau markets the city.

The bureau has focused more on luring convention business than the leisure traveler.

Some tourism industry leaders suggest the bureau should consider shifting resources from other areas to tourism advertising.

"We have a concern that we're not spending enough money on tourism advertising," says Dianna Morgan, senior vice president of human resources, government relations and community relations for Walt Disney World.

Morgan, a member of the Orange County Tourist Development Council, has suggested the TDC commission a study to look at how Orlando is spending its tourism marketing dollars, how it should spend that money, how the city's marketing efforts compare with other competitive destinations and how Orlando could best use a fifth cent in resort tax, which is expected to pass this year.

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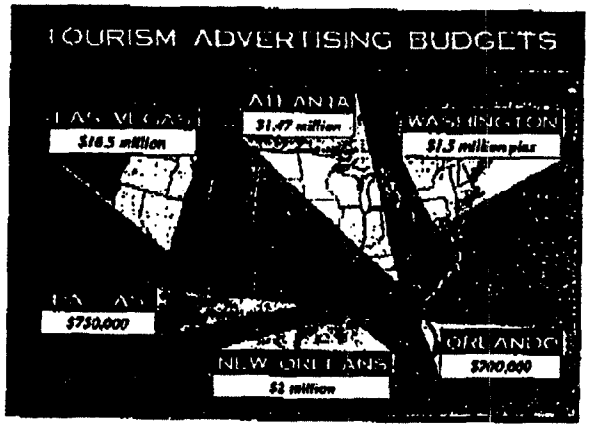

Transportation agency seeks added powers

By ALAN BYRD
Staff Writer

The Metropolitan Planning Organization proposes to reorganize itself as the dominant regional transportation planning agency for Central Florida."

The reorganization plan calls for the MPO to become a "free-standing organization with its own staff," ranging in size from 10 to 25 people. Representatives from the private sector would serve on the MPO's board in addition to the government officials now serving on it.

The plan would give the MPO the re-

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Photo by Bethany Taylor-Myers

Bank President Martin Hartmann visits branch at Lake Mary Gooding's.

Supermarket branches produce for Longwood's First National

By DANIALLE WEAVER
Staff Writer

Two years ago, the board of directors at Longwood's First National Bank of Central Florida surveyed its growth options and found them lacking.

Asset growth had stagnated at the $30 million mark. The bank had only one branch and a mere 2,300 customer accounts. Stock offerings by other community banks had depleted the ranks of ready investors.

Enter Martin Hartmann, who oversaw the operation of nine supermarket branches for Southeast Bank, which was closed by federal regulators in 1991. Hartmann was hired as First National's president and CEO in 1992.

"When the board looked at its growth options, it recognized it was somewhat behind the eight ball," Hartmann says. "The board recognized there isn't an endless supply of business here, so they wondered how to slug it out with the independents in a market they all were focusing on. We couldn't

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Contamination at NTC worse than expected

By DANIALLE WEAVER
Staff Writer

A draft baseline environmental survey conducted for the Orlando Naval Training Center has uncovered more areas of potential environmental concern than previously anticipated, including areas where low-level radioactive waste, medical waste, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and the dry cleaning fluid perchloroethylene were disposed of or stored.

The Navy has not begun taking soil samples or sinking monitor wells to determine if the contamination has migrated off Navy property.

The environmental baseline report, completed in January but not yet released to the public, shows at least a dozen "hot" sites on the main base property where chemicals or petroleum products have been stored, released or disposed of, but which have not yet been cleaned up, Navy officials say.

At least two dozen other hot spots have been identified at the NTC's Herndon and McCoy annexes, and in Area C, a 46-acre storage facility southwest of the main base property.

The Navy also suspects there is another large landfill site located under the 18-hole Crows Nest Golf Course on the main base property.

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Around Orlando

News, talk and speculation

Chapin widens lead in money

Checks totaling more than $80,000 flew into the campaign coffers of three contenders for Orange County chairman in July.

Incumbent Linda Chapin outstripped her fund-raising competition with an extra $65,400 in contributions. Chapin's total contributions

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THE LIST: CENTRAL FLORIDA'S LARGEST BUSINESS SCHOOLS

NTC

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"We don't know whether it extends nder the Winter Pines Golf Course," lo- ated to the east of the Crows Nest course, ays Lt. Commander Catherine Ballinger, e Navy's public works officer.

Two filled-in waste water treatment lant lagoons are located on base property ast of the Crows Nest course.

"The lagoons, measuring approximately ,000 square feet in area and 4 to 8 feet eep," were "reportedly filled with waste- vater treatment plant sludge, yard waste, oil, sand, asphalt, empty unmarked 1-gal- n containers, building demolition debris, nd a large stainless-steel mixing tank rom the U.S. Air Force photograph quadron," the draft report says.

The Navy is responsible for cleaning up ny contamination before the property can e transferred to other entities. The Navy oes not, however, intend to remediate any undfill areas that already have been lined nd capped, or to remediate non-friable as- estos in the older buildings, Ballinger says.

While Navy officials have known for ome time that there are contaminated reas at the NTC, they initially believed ost of the contamination was related to nderground storage tanks containing pe- oleum.

The draft environmental baseline sur- ey identified the following "hot" areas:

■ A 99-acre landfill at the south end of e McCoy Annex site, located to the west f the Orlando International Airport. That ndfill was capped in 1982, and a nine- ole golf course covers much of the site.

The survey discovered that there may be portions of the landfill to the south and west of the golf course area that have not been capped, says Herbert Smetheram, executive director of the Orlando Base Re-Use Commission.

"They dumped some rather nasty stuff in there," Smetheram says.

Wastes reportedly disposed of include low-level radioactive waste, medical waste, waste oil, transformers, batteries, paint thinner and automobile batteries, the draft report says.

The western part of the landfill was used by the Air Force from 1960 to 1972, while the eastern part was used by the Air Force and the Navy from 1972 to 1978.

■ The "north grinder landfill site," a 15-acre landfill extending just east of the the Recruit Training Command area. The landfill was operated by the Air Force from 1958 to 1967.

"However," the draft report says, "aerial photographs obtained during the environmental baseline survey indicate that landfilling started much earlier, sometime after 1939 and before 1947."

While Ballinger says the Navy believes most of the landfill is construction debris, the draft report says wastes could include "film, photochemicals, paint thinner, garbage from the mess halls, biological and medical wastes from the hospital, perchloroethylene (PCE) still bottoms from the dry cleaner's solvent-contaminated filter media, and construction debris." PCE is chemically similar to trichloroethene (TCE).

■ An old laundry boiler site at Area C also housed the Navy's dry cleaning operation, so that site must also be checked for PCE, the draft report says. About 700 cubic yards of friable asbestos also must be removed from the boiler, the draft report says.

■ The Defense Property Disposal Office, a 30-foot by 6-foot site used to store chemical wastes prior to 1984.

"Reportedly, the contents of 75 drums, containing used motor oil, antifreeze and hydraulic oil (possibly containing PCBs), were spilled in this area during and prior to 1984, resulting in soil staining and contamination," the report says. Polychlorinated biphenyl is a poisonous compound that tends to accumulate in animal tissue.

■ Lake Baldwin.

"From the early 1950s through 1978," photographic-developing chemicals from the Air Force Photographic Squadron building "drained ... through a storm sewer to a point on the southwestern shore of Lake Baldwin," located on the main base property, the report says.

Silver compounds also were discharged to the lake with the rest of the chemicals before 1965.

In addition to the potential hot sites, there are about 134 underground petroleum storage tanks and 94 above-ground storage tanks on-site, the draft report says. Some or all of those tanks may have to be remediated to meet state underground storage tank standards, the draft report says.

The baseline study, conducted by ABB Environmental Services and CDM Federal Programs Corp., will be released along with the Navy's preliminary cleanup plan later this year.

The Navy is forming a Restoration Advisory Board to monitor environmental remediation at the NTC. The group held its first meeting Aug. 2. The board "will serve as a link between the community and the Navy for an exchange of ideas on environmental cleanup issues," the Navy says.

MPO

Continued from Page 10

tive director would make between $60,000 and $90,000. There would be 10 staff members. This plan could be funded with current monies.

In the second alternative, the executive director would be paid between $70,000 and $100,000. The director would have a staff of 15, and total staff salaries would run between $505,000 and $775,000. This plan would be funded with the 50 cents per capita charge in FY 1995-1996.

In the third alternative, the executive director would be paid the same salary, but the staff would be expanded to 22 people. Total salaries would run between $655,000 and $1.03 million. It would be funded through the 75 cents per capita charge recommended for FY 1996-1997.

Most people who have seen the proposal think highly of it.

"I think it is a good proposal," Skoutelas says. "As we evolve as a region, we need a strong MPO."

Orange County Commissioner Fran Pignone, an MPO board member, says she couldn't find anything to change.

"It's bold where it needs to be bold and politically savvy where it needs to be," she says. "I really like it."

"I want us to take action," Bates says. "I am concerned about this being another study to hold down the corner of a shelf in somebody's office.

"No longer can we sit with our hand out waiting for uncle sugar to fill it up. We have to come to grips with this ourselves. We can't hide from it."

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