

The St. Joe Company

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

BY MIKE KERRIGAN, THE ST. JOE COMPANY

What has been used primarily as a convenient route to get to the beach by vacationers exiting I-10 or residents of Vernon and Bonifay, is in the early stages of transforming into a hub of year-round activity in Bay County. State Road 79, the mostly four-lane roadway that deposits southbound motorists into the center of Panama City Beach, will soon be home to residential communities, businesses, and service providers. Evidence of this evolution is visible to those who have used the roadway over the past several months.

Work on the Latitude Margaritaville Watersound community is nearly impossible to miss on the west side of the road at the future intersection of the realigned State Road 388 leading to Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport. A 10,000 square foot sales center and 13 model homes have been available for tours to prospective buyers in this 55-and-better, Jimmy Buffett-inspired residential community since early April. The St. Joe Company, along with partner Minto Communities, are developing the community to include an initial phase of approximately 3,500 island-inspired





residences with the possibility of future phases to follow. The companies anticipate that the first residents will move into the community later in 2021.

Fronting State Road 79, The St. Joe Company has plans for a commercial town center just outside the main entrance to the Latitude Margaritaville community that includes plans for shops, restaurants, and office space. Providing a great off-the-beach shopping destination, the company anticipates that the town center will attract shoppers from not only the Latitude Margaritaville Watersound community but also residents and visitors from all over Bay County.

South of the Intracoastal Waterway, at the southeast corner of State Road 79 and Phillip Griffiths Sr. Parkway, referred to by locals as "Back Back Beach Road," plans are taking shape for a health care campus that includes plans for Panama City Beach's first hospital. The proposed project was announced in early April by The St. Joe Company who is working with Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare and the Florida State University College of Medicine. Together, these organizations plan to develop a health care campus that would include an urgent care center, a 100-bed hospital as well as facilities for

research and educational opportunities. The planned campus will grow over time on the 87-acre parcel that is conveniently located within just minutes of the Latitude Margaritaville Watersound community and just a few miles from the beach.

The St. Joe Company has plans for more shopping and residential projects along State Road 79 that are sure to take shape over time as the local community grows and evolves. With landscaped medians and a paved bike path already in place, this stretch of roadway that was often considered just a pass-through is positioned to become a bustling destination for residents and visitors alike. The services that are planned can enhance the quality of life for local residents, and the new residential projects can provide unique housing opportunities for the growing number of people looking to call Northwest Florida home.

Growth is evident throughout Panama City Beach and all of Bay County. Over the next several years, both sides of State Road 79 will see several new projects that will provide the facilities and services that growth depends on.

Photos provided by The St. Joe Company