

# THE BRUNSWICK NEWS

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## Downtown on the Move

The Emerald Princess has been docked at the Brunswick Landing Marina for more than two months. In its first 36 days of operation, the gambling/cruise boat carried 6,200 passengers in its nightly and sometimes daily trips to sea.

The number is almost twice the amount of people the boat carried out from Fernandina during its initial 40 days of operation there.

Response from tourists and residents in the Golden Isles has been terrific and the cruise lines marketing director believes the attendance will stay up in the fall and winter with special promotions that are planned.

The impact on downtown has been great. The Ritz Theater has opened up an information center to help visitors become more aware of other downtown businesses and happenings. Businesses say the number of tourists walking downtown streets is also up, which pays off in higher sales tax and

more revenue for the city and county.

That success is also tied into the future development of the marina. Owner Bob Torras said the "fun" has just started. Torras is working with architects to finish up design plans for a restaurant and bar, hotel and a shopping area which will be located near the marina.

Those plans are joined by the waterfront development which is ready to start soon. The city has plans to beautify Mary Ross Park with pavilions, an amphitheater and other amenities. All three projects are joined together to further the enhancement of downtown Brunswick.

We commend the Downtown Development Authority, city leaders, Torras and others involved in the push to revitalize downtown Brunswick. It has taken some time, but the payoff is great and we will continue to see the benefits as improvements continue.