



**National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
St. Petersburg, Florida Branch Unit #5130**

March 12, 2025

Tampa Bay Rays
Attn: Brian Auld & Matt Silverman

City of St. Petersburg
Attn: Mayor Kenneth T Welch

County Commission
Attn: Commissioner Brian Scott - Chair

To: Tampa Bay Rays Leadership, Mayor Welch, and Chair Scott

The NAACP remains steadfast in advocating for transparency, accountability, and the fulfillment of the restoration of the Gas Plant Redevelopment. While we understand the legally binding agreements on the Gas Plant redevelopment project. We also strongly encourage you to view the human element as it relates to the completion of the Gas Plant Redevelopment project, This project represents a critical opportunity to rectify past injustices and deliver economic prosperity to a historically displaced community.

While we acknowledge necessary adjustments after two hurricanes, please understand that the Rays were not and are not the only affected parties. The commitments made to this community are not up for debate. For too long, communities like the Gas Plant District have been promised prosperity, only to be met with delays and broken commitments. It is our desire to remain in fruitful partnership with the Rays, the City, the County, and the **COMMUNITY!** We refuse to allow history to repeat itself.

As such, we demand the following immediate actions:

- Full Transparency & Communication – A public update on any plan adjustments, ensuring all commitments remain intact.
- Adherence to the Legally Binding Agreement – A reaffirmation from all stakeholders that the signed agreement will be fully honored.
- Concrete Action & Timeline – A definitive schedule for workforce engagement, women, minority, and veteran business inclusion, and project milestones.
- Clear Financial Roadmap – The Rays must provide a finite dollar amount required for completion, accounting for inflation and any other relevant factors, while the city must engage in open, solution-focused discussions.
- Equitable Deadline Adjustment – Due to a seven-week delay from the County Commission and City, the Rays should be granted an equivalent seven-week extension beyond the March 31st deadline to finalize their commitments.

Most importantly, we expect shovels in the ground and community businesses engaged by the end of Summer 2025. Failure to meet these obligations will not go unanswered. The NAACP and the community are prepared to take all necessary steps including public advocacy, and mobilization to hold all parties accountable.

All parties must get back in the room—this is not a request, but an expectation for fairness, integrity, and immediate action.

We expect a response outlining next steps and remain open to meeting to ensure this project moves forward without further delay.

Esther Matthews, MSW, MLC
President

Esther Matthews
President

Harry Harvey
1st Vice President

Trenia Cox
2nd Vice President

Dashon Mims
Secretary

William "Bill" Puller
Treasurer

MISSION

To ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination.

VISION

To ensure a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race.