

'I Just Need A Break'

By JOYCE McKENZIE, The Tampa Tribune

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TEMPLE TERRACE - For nearly five years, Ralph Bosek has devoted most of his waking hours to the betterment of Temple Terrace.

Since 2003, he has served as both its redevelopment and community services director.

However, Bosek's official efforts to enhance the community in which he also has lived for more than 25 years soon will come to an end. Last week, he submitted his intention to retire June 1.

"I've put the rest of my life on hold for the last four years, and I need a change," the 58-year-old Bosek said. "It's been an intense job. I've put in a lot of extra time, and I just need a break."

As its redevelopment director, he has been charged with the planning and execution of the largest undertaking in the city's history, the multimillion-dollar downtown redevelopment project.

Three years ago, when the city combined the redevelopment and community development departments to form the community services department, Bosek was appointed its director. With a staff of four planners, he oversees all rezoning requests, site plan reviews and building permits.

City Manager Kim Leinbach, the recipient of Bosek's resignation request, has worked closely with him.

"He's been a great employee, and I very much appreciate his dedication and hard work. But I understand the reasoning behind his decision," Leinbach said. "The redevelopment effort has been an emotionally charged, very fast-paced, stressful project."

Bosek was instrumental in acquiring \$20 million in federal, state and county grants for the redevelopment project. He also has been a major player in negotiations leading to a pending purchase and sales agreement with development partners Ram Development Co. and Pinnacle Realty Advisors.

"I'll work as a solid team member until June 1st, and I will still be in Temple Terrace, so I can help train the new redevelopment director," said Bosek, whose title recently was changed to director of redevelopment when the community services department was divided into the redevelopment and community development departments. "It's not like I'm taking on another job."

Bosek holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of South Florida. Before being hired by the city, for 10 years he ran his own development consulting firm, a business he sold to TECO Energy in 1996.