



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Contact: Shaun P. Merriman
941/306-0105

Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida Announces Plans to Relocate Downtown Banking Center

Community Bank Will Occupy Historic Jack West Designed Bank Building at Intersection of US 41 and Bahia Vista Street

April 23, 2009 – (Sarasota, Florida) – Shaun P. Merriman, President and CEO of Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida, announced today the independent community bank will relocate the downtown Sarasota headquarters to 1100 South Tamiami Trail in September 2009. This site, at the intersection of US 41 and Bahia Vista Street, is the site of the Jack West designed First Savings and Loan Association, which has recently drawn the attention of community historians.

In making the announcement Merriman stated, “On behalf of the board of directors, I want to express how pleased we are to have a role in retaining this very special piece of Sarasota architecture as a part of the business community.” He continued, “There has been a determined effort on the part of the community to retain this building as a bank and it is a privilege for Gateway Bank to help make this happen.”

The building will undergo a modest renovation prior to Gateway Bank taking occupancy. The building was formerly a BB&T banking location and has been vacant since 2006.

Merriman also commented on the benefits to Gateway Bank customers. “This new banking center provides considerable convenience for our customers. We will now have drive-thru banking, as well as a 24 hour ATM drive-thru and abundant parking.” Concurrent with the move to 1100 South Trail, the Gateway Bank location at 2033 Main Street in the Center Pointe Plaza will be closed. “This location has served us very well”,

stated Merriman, “however, we rapidly outgrew this space and felt it was important to offer more convenience to our customers.”

Gateway Bank will occupy the first two floors of the three story building – roughly 11,500 square feet. Third floor space will be available for lease through JWM Management, Inc.

About Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida: Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida is an independent community bank serving business and personal banking customers in Sarasota and Manatee counties.

Gateway Bank recently opened a full-service banking center near the intersection of University Parkway and Lockwood Ridge Road. The bank opened a banking location in downtown Bradenton on Manatee Avenue West in August 2008. The current downtown Sarasota banking center is located at 2033 Main Street, one block east of South Washington Boulevard.

The shareholders and directors of Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida are primarily residents of Sarasota and Manatee counties. The founding Board of Directors includes: Charles J. Bartlett - Icard, Merrill, Cullis, Timm, Furen and Ginsburg, PA; Dr. Gary K. Bockhold – Center for Sight; Dr. P.T. “Bud” Fleuchaus – Gateway Financial Holdings of Florida, Inc.; David J. Grain – Grain Communications Group, Inc.; David K. Maholias – Gateway Financial Holdings of Florida, Inc.; Shaun P. Merriman – Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida; Gavin W. Meshad – JWM Management, Inc.; Katherine K. Moulton – The Colony Beach & Tennis Resort; Wayne M. Ruben – Ruben-Holland Development, LLC; David E. Sessions, Willis A. Smith Construction, Inc. and Jan E. Smith, Jan Smith and Company.

Further information regarding Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida may be obtained by contacting Shaun P. Merriman, President and CEO at 941/306-0105.

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