



Zoo Miami Entertainment Area:

Revitalization Through User Experience

An Undergraduate Thesis
by Emilio R. Fuster

ZOO MIAMI ENTERTAINMENT AREA:
REVITALIZATION THROUGH USER EXPERIENCE

An Undergraduate Thesis in
Landscape Architecture
College of Design, Construction & Planning
The University of Florida

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SITE INTRODUCTION

PROJECT INTENT

“Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don’t matter and those who matter don’t mind.”

-Dr. Seuss

I have always had an eye for the whimsical and have always loved places that transport people to fantasy worlds. Amusement parks such as Disney World and Universal Studios have always been a mecca of mine. In this final project I am returning to my roots. I hope to transport people to another world outside of Miami when they enter the gates of a place that I have worked in and loved, Zoo Miami.



MIAMI TOURISM

Miami has always been known as a mecca for tourism and tourist attractions alike. Whether it be the beaches that it is known for, the trendy and exotic shops selling goods from all around, or the world renowned night life and entertainment, Miami has never lacked touristic appeal. The city has also never lacked variety in its available attractions and events and therefore always



seems to keep the general public busy and entertained. With Miami International Airport (a major international airport) acting as a “Gateway to the Americas” and flying in people from all over the world, Miami is as varied in its visitors as it is in its offerings to them. This fact alone has led tourism in Miami to be one of its most important industries. In 2010 alone, Miami was ranked as the 5th most visited city in the United States by Forbes magazine, with over 38, 100,000 visitors to the city.

Known primarily for its beaches the city is blessed with an amazing tropical climate that allows for this variety of activities and events. The tropical weather lasts year round, and aside from slight temperature drops, keeps the city pretty warm. The climate allows for a majority of the attractions in the city, such as museums and gardens, to take place outdoors rather than inside. The climate also allows for a great variety of tropical plant species. It is because of this climate, outdoor recreation, and tropical atmosphere that Miami is what it is today, attracting many of its visitors from the cold of their home cities and towns to the “Miami heat”.



Miami however does not just cater to those escaping the cold. As mentioned it is an international hub and serves as one of the primary gateways to the United States from the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. As a result the city is home to a large Latin American community that comprises the majority of the populous and grows more diverse every day. Coincidentally this community has also helped to make Miami a prime destination from the Caribbean and the Americas.



Much of the tourism in the city can also be accredited to the Port of Miami. The Port serves not only to bring in cargo from all over the world, but also as the biggest cruise ship port in the world. This has earned Miami the nickname “Cruise Ship Capital of the World”, playing host to over 4 million passengers per year. All of this together has earned Miami the title of “Magic City”.



MIAMI ATTRACTIONS

AQUARIUMS & ZOOS:

1. Zoo Miami

One of the first “cageless” zoos in the country, it is considered to be one of the nations best.

2. Parrot Jungle Island

Near South Beach, it is home to birds and various other animals in their natural habitats.

3. Miami Seaquarium

An outdoor aquarium, it benefits from year round tropical weather.

4. Monkey Jungle

A unique park where humans walk through cages as monkeys swing freely overhead.

BEACHES:

5. South Beach

The most recognized location in Miami, South Beach is not only as it’s namesake suggests, a beach. It is a trendy area filled with shops, dining and entertainment.

MUSEUMS & GARDENS:

6. Gold Coast Railroad Museum

One of three Official Railroad Museums in Florida it is home to several historic trains in its effort to teach railroad history to the public.

7. Miami Science Museum

Filled with exhibits for children and adults alike, including an observatory.

8. Vizcaya: Museum and Gardens

A historical 50-acre estate converted into a museum and open to the public.

9. Fairchild Tropical Botanic Gardens

A world reknowned botanical garden and research center known for rare and exotic flora.

10. Coral Castle

This resident created monument is a sculptural landscape made from over 1,100 tons of carved coral rock.

SPORTS FACILITIES:

11. American Airlines Arena

Home to the Miami Heat, the AAA is also the location of several events and concerts.

12. Marlins’ Ballpark

Home to the Miami Marlins, it is the new home to the franchise having moved from their stadium in North Miami.

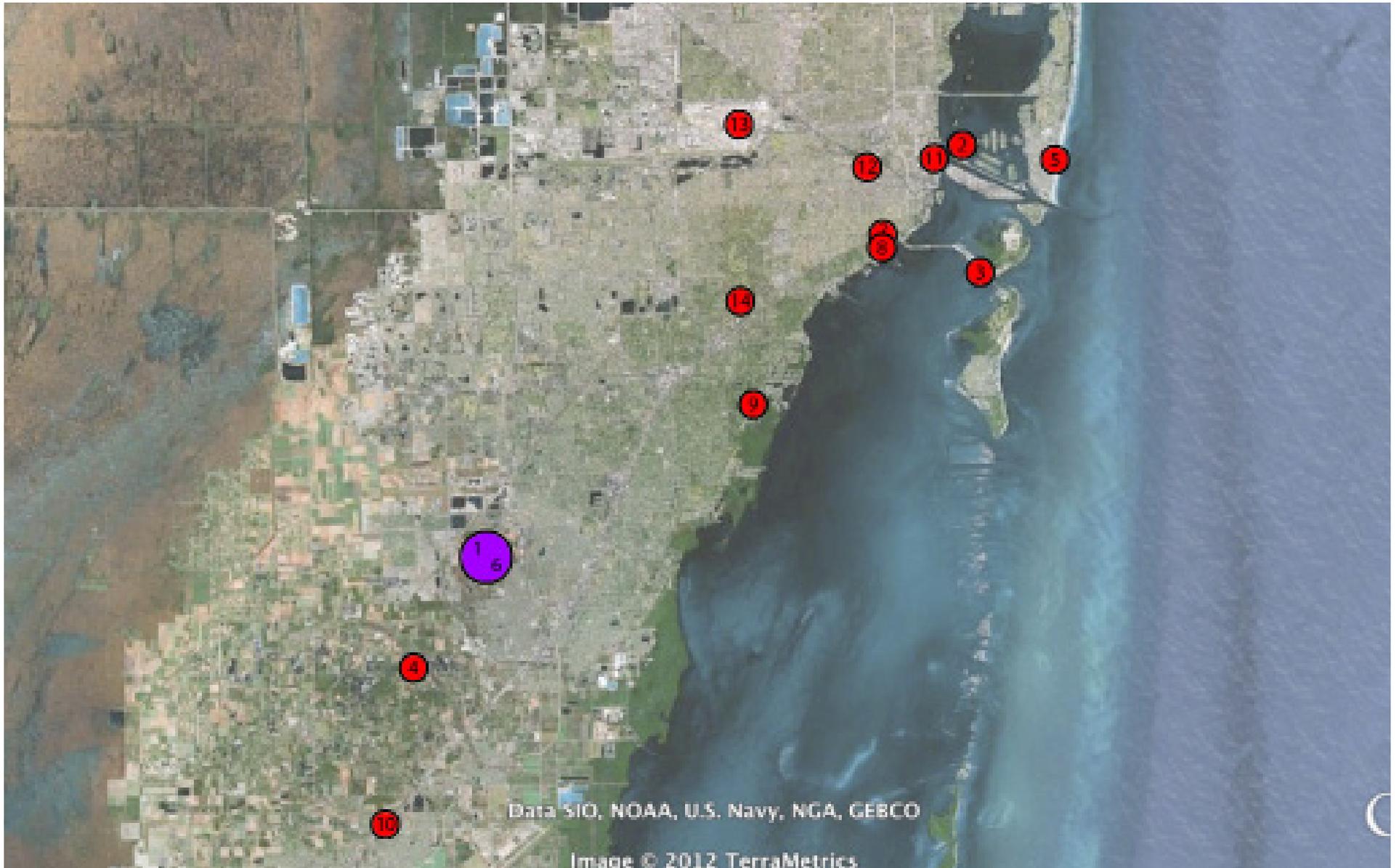
OTHER:

13. Miami International Airport

A major international airport, it services tourists from throughout the globe and is the main gateway to Miami.

14. University of Miami (Main)

Nationally recognized University with a beautiful campus.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Zoo Miami Entertainment Area is an entertainment and recreation oriented project in Miami, Florida. It is approximately 140 acres of land owned by the county. The site itself connects two very important educational and recreational institutions in Miami, Zoo Miami and the Gold Coast Railroad Museum. Zoo Miami is considered to be one of the best zoos in the country, while the Gold Coast Railroad Museum is considered the premiere railroad museum in Florida. Despite these facts, both institutions experience less than desired attendance, partly in fact because of their locations so far south.

The two locations share a common entry drive, Zoo Drive, but are otherwise very isolated entities. This was due to the fact that the GCRM was originally owned and operated by the University of Miami, a private institution, while the Zoo was publically owned. Now both sites are owned and operated by Miami-Dade County parks and recreation.

The site consists primarily of Zoo owned land. Much of the land in question is either large expanses of parking lot for the Zoo and Gold Coast Railroad Museum, or dilapidated asphalt remaining from an old Naval Air





Station. These areas are in such poor condition that grasses and weeds have taken them over. Just outside the site is a protected pine ecosystem.

The county desires to utilize this site to create an entertainment area of sorts in the fashion of Downtown Disney. It hopes to bring tourists to a Zoo that has never fully recovered

since Hurricane Andrew. The project is a huge undertaking for the county that will take years.

Current steps in progress begin and end with a Request For Proposal sent out by Parks and Recreation. Aside from this, there is no more available information. The RFP is very detailed and includes a desired program as well as other useful information. My approach to this project will be to first evaluate said program and decide the best course of action. I looked forward to working on this wonderful and opportunistic project. It is an exciting project because it is basically a clean slate for design.

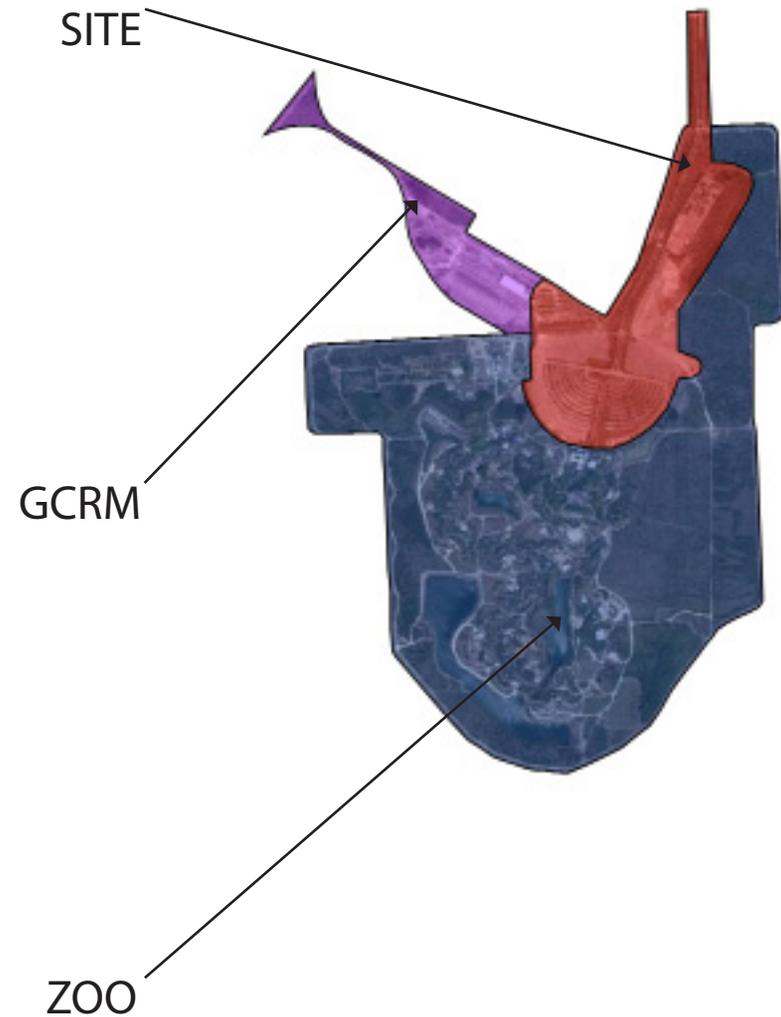


LOCATION

LOCATION:

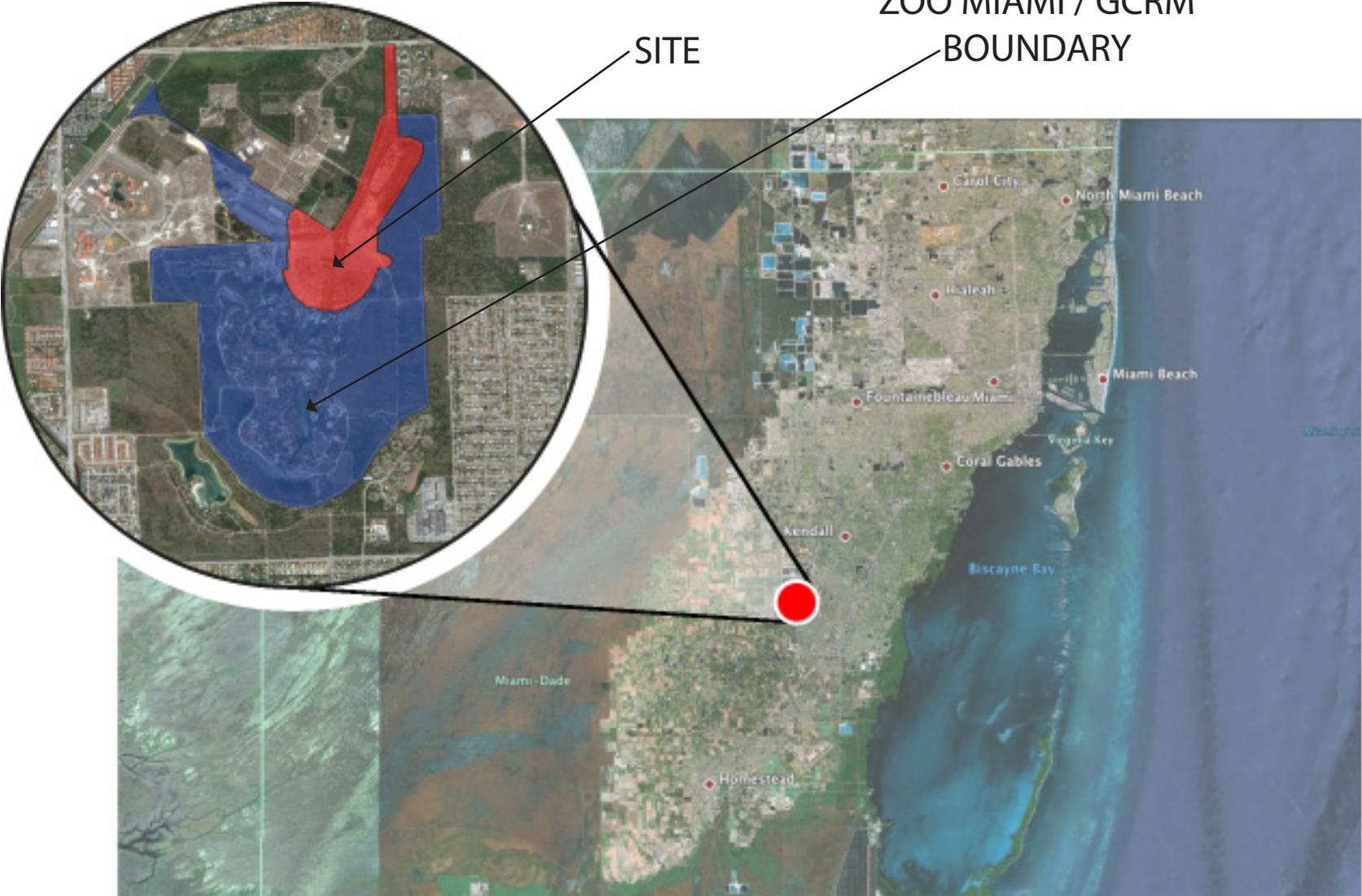
The project is located within Miami-Dade County boundary but is actually considered to be a part of Unincorporated Miami-Dade County. It is situated in the very southern part of Miami. The Miami Zoo property (along with the Gold Coast Railroad Museum) lies in between four areas of Miami with Three Lakes to the north, South Miami Heights to the south, Palmetto Estates to the east, and Richmond West to the west.

Despite its prestige, the site is not located in an ideal location for tourism. The main attractions of Miami (for the most part) all lie to the north, concentrated around Miami Beach. The immediate area is almost exclusively residential. Almost immediately surrounding the residential areas are large expanses of agricultural land with Homestead to the south being a large agricultural hub. This is very detrimental to attendance so alternative attractions would add to the areas draw.



ZOO MIAMI / GCRM
BOUNDARY

SITE



CONNECTIONS

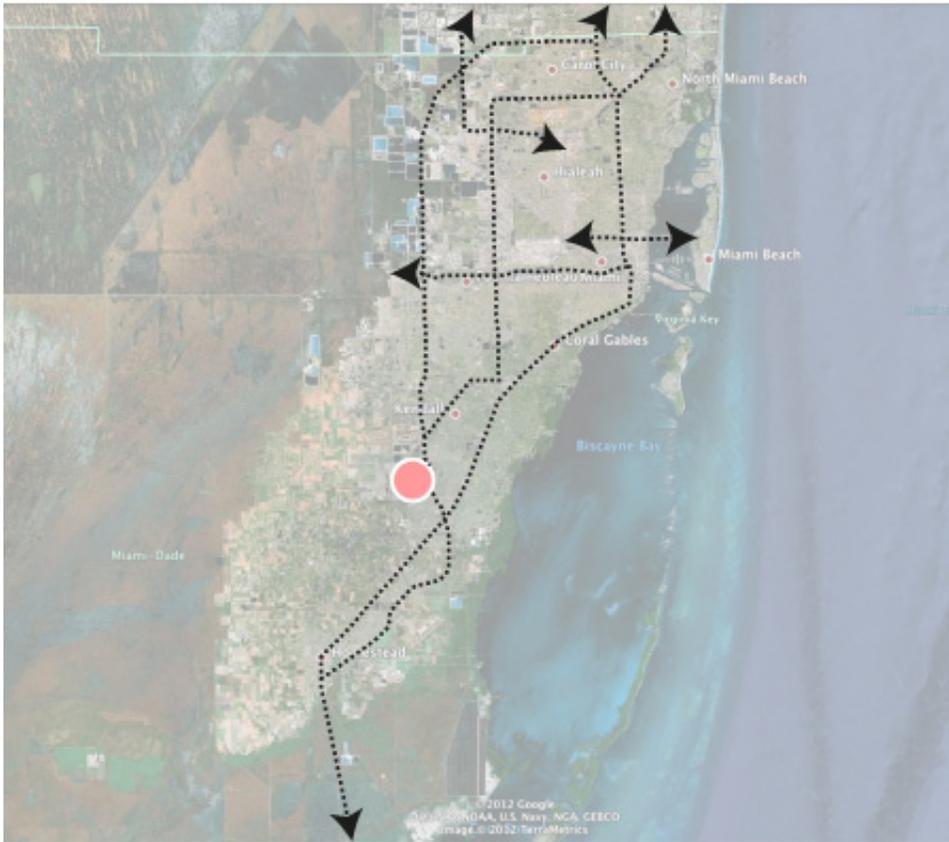
CONNECTIONS:

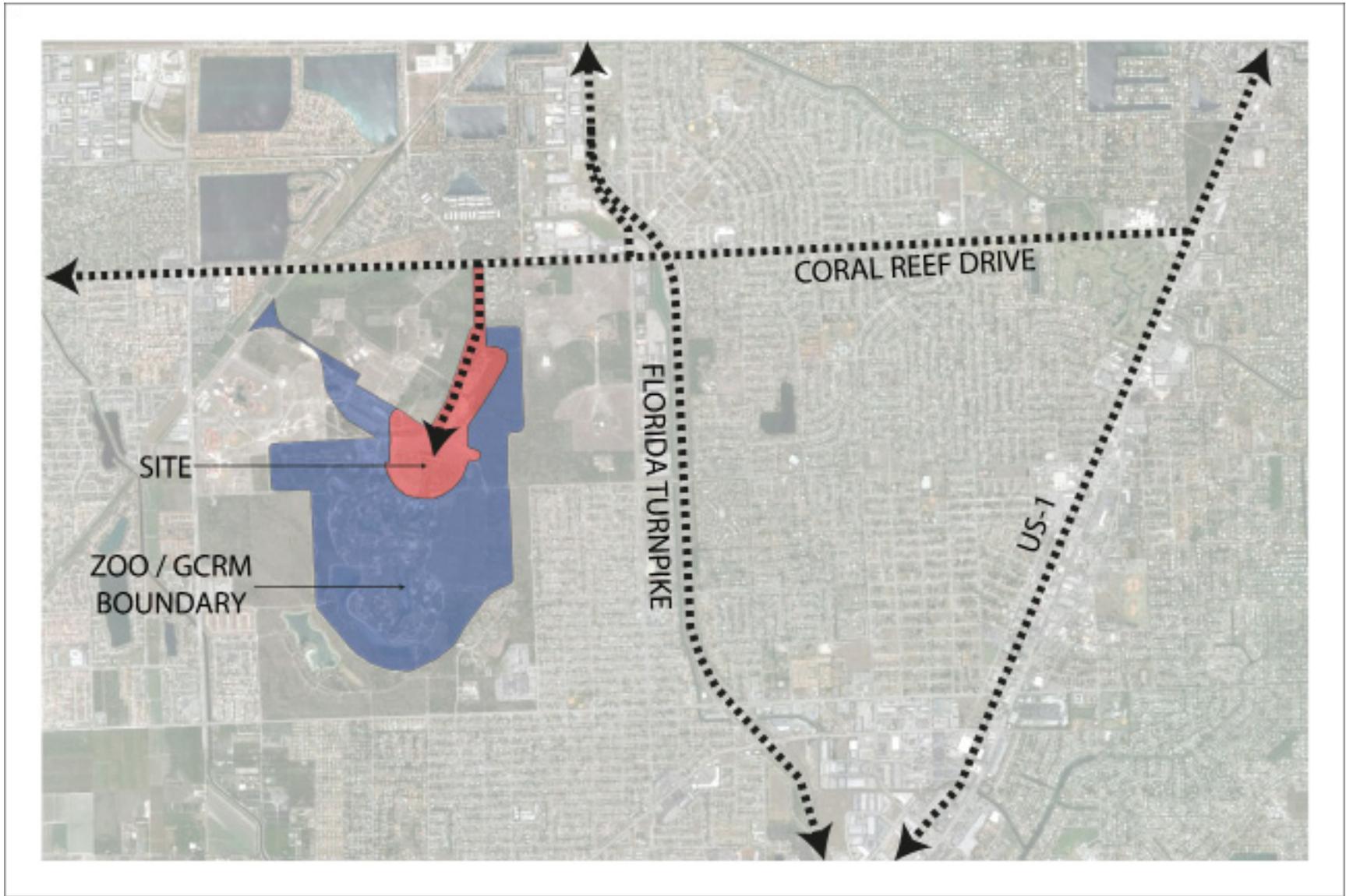
The Zoo Miami Property lies just to the east of the Florida Turnpike off of Coral Reef Drive (152nd Street). The main entrance off of Coral Reef Drive, is Zoo Drive (124 Avenue) and services both Zoo Miami and the Gold Coast Railroad museum.

The fastest and most common route to the property is the Florida Turnpike. Having such a prime location with relation to connections, it can be easily reached from many different locations within Miami via different expressways and major roads.

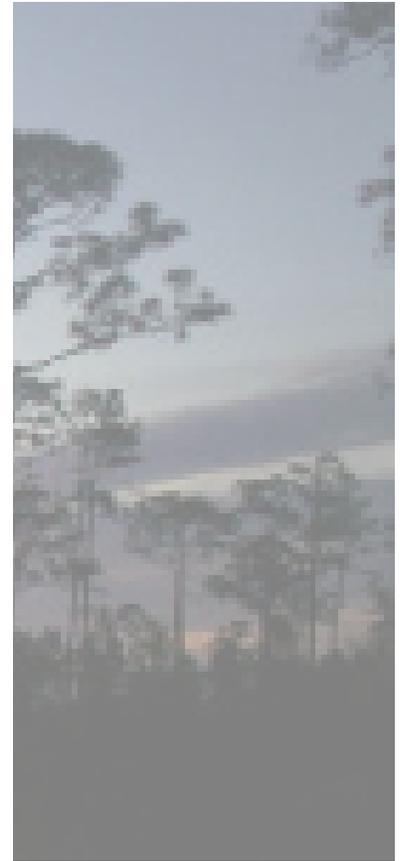
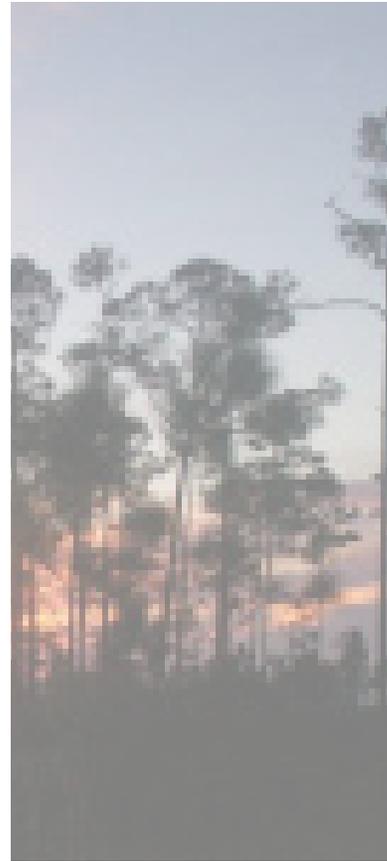
From many of the locations that lie in the northern part of Miami such as Miami International Airport and Miami Beach it connects via the Palmetto Expressway (826), the Dolphin Expressway (836), Interstate 95 (I95), Dixie Highway (US1), and various other connectors. From the South, Dixie Highway and the Florida Turnpike are the main routes.

Unfortunately the site is too far for the Metro Rail to reach, though future plans may change. Otherwise there are bus routes to and from the site, and stops within the property itself.





PAST & PRESENT



FLORIDA PINE

The site is home to one of the most endangered ecosystems in South Florida. It is one of the last stands of Pine Rockland left in the state. The ecosystem is typically located in high ground areas of Miami. The ecosystem is situated upon a limestone foundation.

It is characterized by its dominant species, South Florida Slash Pine or *Pinus elliotti* var. *densa*, while the understory is composed of many rare and tropical hardwood and herbaceous species. The ecosystem is fire dependent, relying on fire to eliminate invasive species and regenerate new plant life. Its conservation status in South Florida is protected and is therefore untouchable. The site provides a unique opportunity to work with and around this ecologically sensitive forest.



NAVAL AIR STATION RICHMOND

In the year 1941 the United States of America was thrust abruptly into a war overseas. The U.S. was now a part of World War II. In its preparations the United States began to ship supplies up and down the Atlantic and Pacific seaboards. In an attempt to halt these shipments and weaken the United States



defense, German and Japanese submarines were launched against these cargo ships. The best way for the the U.S. to defend against these attacks was in the form of airships, or dirigibles. The airships would scour the coast as giant patrollers. The airships were known as LTAs (Lighter Than Air). These giant airships needed bases, and so construction began on several bases, including Naval Air Station Richmond in 1942.

Just south of Miami, the airstation choose a secluded location and began construction in one of the last large stands of native South Florida/Dade County Pine. Naval Air Station Richmond took its name from the Richmond Lumber Company that had occupied the land around the turn of the century. The Richmond Lumber Company had previously used the land to harvest the valuable Dade County Pine. The lumber of the pine was known for repelling detrimental insects with its high sap content. The pine was also very strong once aged, and would be used in metal working tools. Even though the creation of the base meant a removal of large amounts of this pine, much of it went unused in its construction, favoring different types of lumber.

Naval Air Station Richmond itself covered an area of 2,107 acres, with a perimeter of over 8 miles in length. One of the larg-



est ever in Miami-Dade County history, the base was also considered the largest of all the coastline airship bases built for WWII. It consisted of over 7.3 miles of roads, 2.9 miles of sidewalk, and a landing mat over 2,000 feet across among other things. But the base is most known for its three massive airship hangars.

The airship hangars are considered to be the world's largest wooden structures, though the four pillars surrounding and supporting the hangars were instead made of concrete. The supports

alone were 148 feet high. To give a general idea of its size, the base could easily fit 1,200 parked cars or 4 Boeing 747's.

On September 15, 1945 a massive hurricane hit the Richmond Naval Air Station, which was exactly three years to

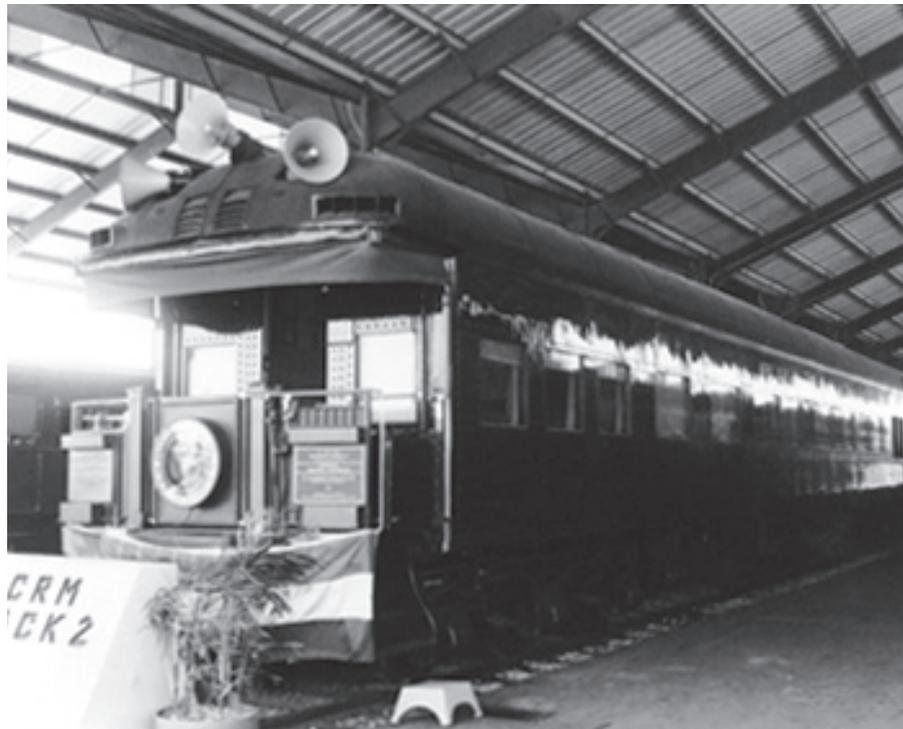
the day that the base was commissioned. Though the hurricane winds themselves did not irreparably harm the massive hangars, the storm cause fires to erupt in all three of the hangars. The fires grew enormous with the hangars filled with all sorts of equipment, including high-octane fuel. As a result all three hangars burned down along with over \$40,000,000 worth of equipment. It was, and still remains the largest structure fire in Dade County history. Since the war had ended, none of it was rebuilt and the base was decommissioned in 1946.

Remnants of the base can still be seen in the shape of the Zoo lot, as well as one remaining massive concrete pillar from the hangars.



GOLD COAST RAILROAD MUSEUM

Once the Richmond Naval Air Station was decommissioned the land was leased out to the University of Miami by the United States General Services Administration (GSA). The land was intended to be used for non-profit education and research. The site became an all male campus for returning GIs



who took residence in the abandoned Naval barracks. The old Naval Station was also the site of a new botanical research facility, the Tropical Food Research Laboratory.

Around that time a University of Miami Business Administration student named William J. Godfrey became to show great interest in the land. The intrigue stemmed from miles of unused railroad tracks on the located on the site. His passion for everything rail lead him to Dr. Jay F.W. Pearson, the President of the University of Miami and fellow railroad enthusiast. Godfrey argued that the location was an ideal opportunity for operating a steam engine on the over three miles of track that existed on site. The idea behind it all was to serve as an engineering, educational, and historical attraction. President Pearson was convinced and preparations commenced.

President Pearson became aware of steam engines that were to be retired by the United States Sugar Company. President Pearson, together with Executive Vice President Dr. James M. Godard, traveled to Clewiston, Florida to speak with Mr. R.M. Hare of the company.



The USSC agreed to donate a locomotive and President Pearson hand picked Florida East Coast Locomotive #153. In April of 1957 the locomotive arrived on the campus. A large ceremony was held to commemorate the occasion and coincidentally the Miami Railroad Historical Society was created. The MRHS would eventually grow to become the Gold Coast Railroad Museum.

Around the mid 1960's the Cuban Missile Crisis was captivating the nation. Subsequently the base, now the site of the museum, was taken over by the Central Intelligence Agency. The CIA was monitoring the situation in Cuba from the site under the name "Zenith Technol-



ogy Services". Over 400 agents and equipment had over run the site making it the largest CIA facility outside of Langley, Virginia.

As a result, the Museum had to moved to a location in Ft. Lauderdale in 1966. In 1983 the railroad museum was forced out of its new site in order to make room for a planned interstate highway. The CIA had subsequently moved out of the site of the old museum after the missile crisis. So in that same year the Gold Coast Railroad Museum returned to the old base, where it operates today.



ZOO MIAMI

In the year 1948 Miami-Dade County purchased three monkeys, one goat, and two black bears from a small traveling show. As a result of this \$270 purchase, Crandon park Zoo was born. The zoo, taking the name of the park itself, sat on approximately 54 acres of land inside of Crandon Park in Key



Biscayne. From there the zoo managed to grow into one of the major zoos in the United States in 1965. The zoo boasted over 1,000 residents representing over 380 different species. Unfortunately due to a major hurricane, Hurricane Betsy, the zoo was covered in over 3 feet of water. The flood was responsible for killing 250 animals. As a result, plans for a new location began.

The Crandon Park Zoo recovered and became one of the top 25 zoos in the country, but all the while the Zoological Society of Florida was working to change its location. In 1970, Dade County applies for 600 acres of land on the location of the old Richmond Naval Air Station. From here the ZSF commissioned T.A. Strawser to develop a master plan for a new zoo. Further progress came with the assistance of Dade County Manager Ray Goode, when the project is granted \$10 million as part of the Decade of Progress Bill. In the year 1975 construction on the new project begins.

Miami Metro Zoo opened its doors in December of 1980. The initial opening consisted of only 12 exhibits and was known as The Preview Center. From here the first major lobe , Asia, opened in 1981. Because of the Zoos new trademark



“cageless” design, pieces of the original cage bars were given out as symbols. From here the zoo grew rapidly into what is today. Features of the new zoo included an African lobe (1982), an Australian lobe (1988), and a 1.6 acre free-flight aviary known as Wings of Asia Aviary (1988). A monorail system was also constructed in 1984 to connect these different areas.

In August of 1992 the zoo is devastated by Hurricane Andrew. The hurricane did extensive amounts of damage killing over 5,000 trees and completely destroying the aviary and over 100 of its inhabitants. By December of 1992 the zoo reopens, and by July of the following year many of the animals that were temporarily relocated

to other zoos, return along with over 7,000 new trees.

The zoo recovered over the next decade, and in 2003 the biggest aviary in the western hemisphere was opened to replace the one lost to Hurricane Andrew. This new aviary was called the American Bankers Family Aviary - Wings of Asia. Expansion continued with the Amazon & Beyond exhibit in 2008 until 2010 when the zoo unveiled its new name and logo on its 30th anniversary, Zoo Miami.



RESEARCH

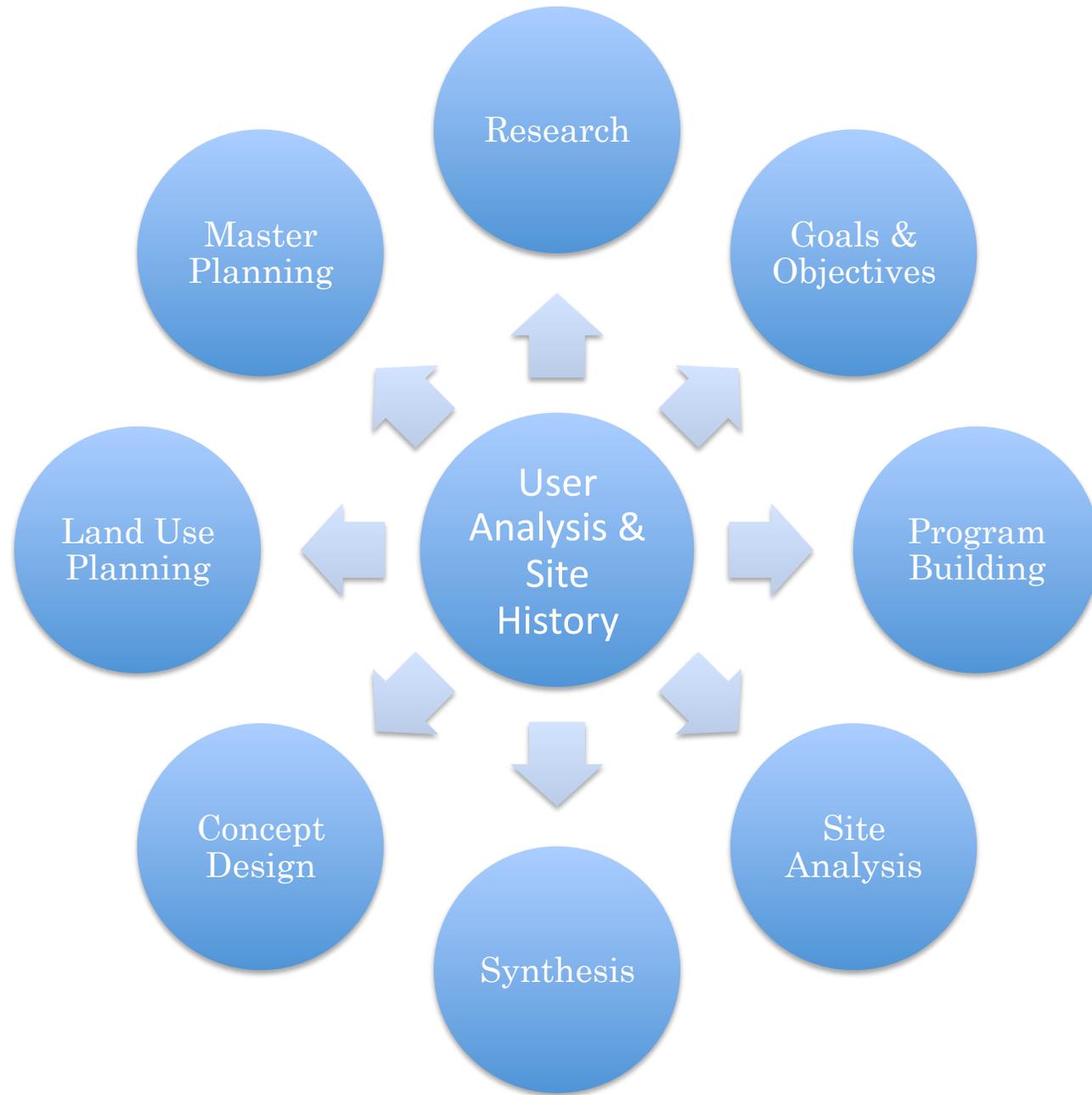
DESIGN PROCESS

With research, the design approach for the site became evident. To properly work with the site and encapsulate its essence in design, two major components need to be taken into account.

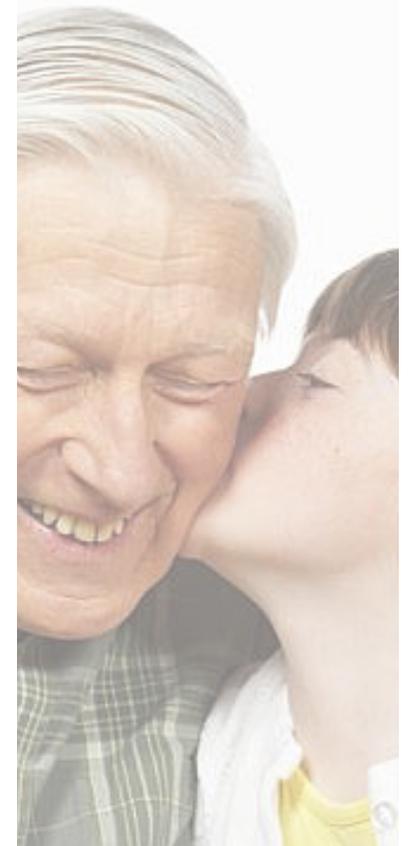
The first of these components is the sites rich history and ecology. The history not only shaped the site, but the whole region. The ecology of the site is also very unique and needs to be preserved. All of the different uses throughout the years contributed to it and therefore should not be overlooked.

The second major component is user experience. The site, acting as a public entity serving educational and recreational purposes should concentrate on what the users want, and how they want it. The success of the site is dependent on meeting user needs.





USERS



USER EXPERIENCE

In order to enhance user experience and bring visitors to the site the uses of the site need to be expanded. The site should provide a vast array of recreational, educational, and commercial amenities. The more things to do, the greater the variety of users to do them. Currently, the site is only used for activities during the day. The area around the site does not provide many, if any nighttime activities. To be successful, the site needs to attract users in both the day & night time. The primary objective with regards to users is to keep people on site and entertained in hopes that they will return in the future.

CURRENT USERS:

- Families with children
- School Groups
- Tourists

PROJECTED USERS:

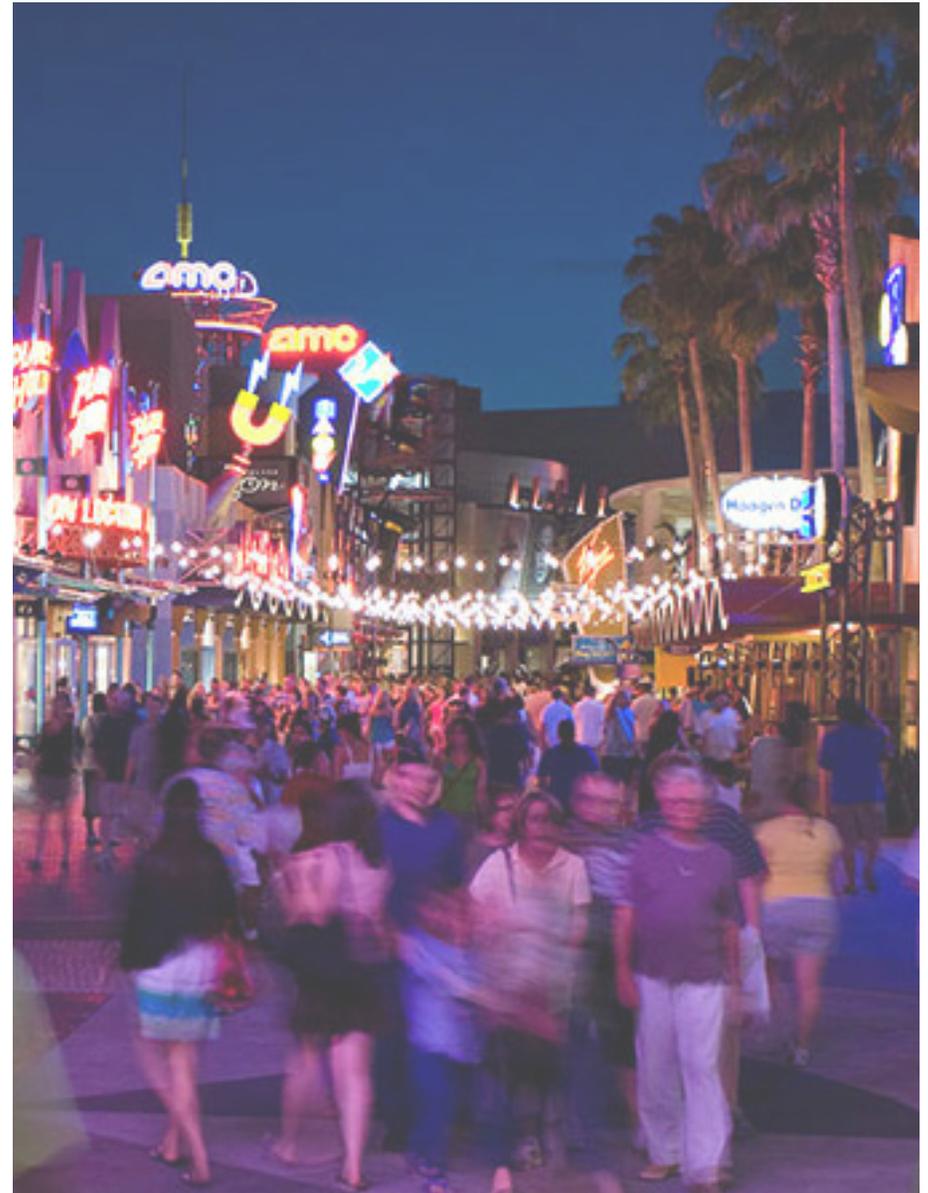
- Adults
- Young Adults
- Seniors

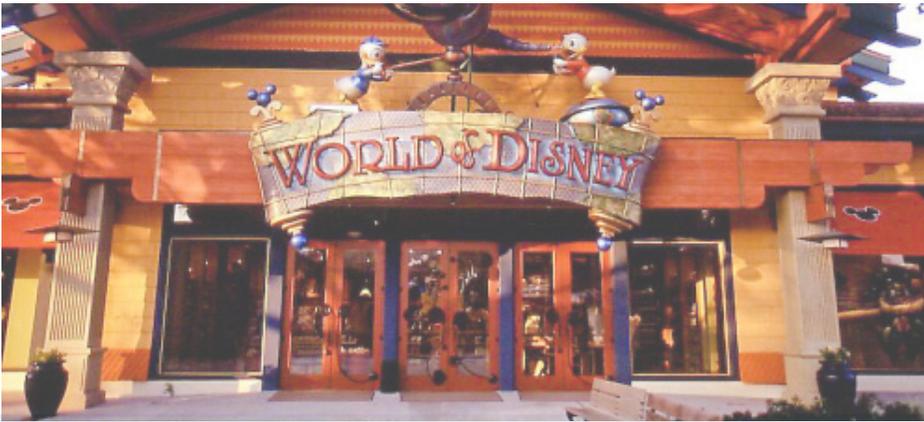
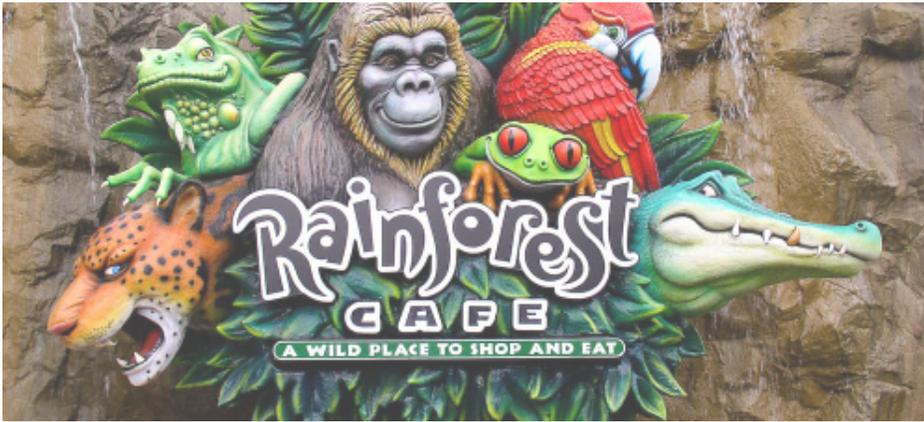


CASE STUDY: ENTERTAINMENT AREA

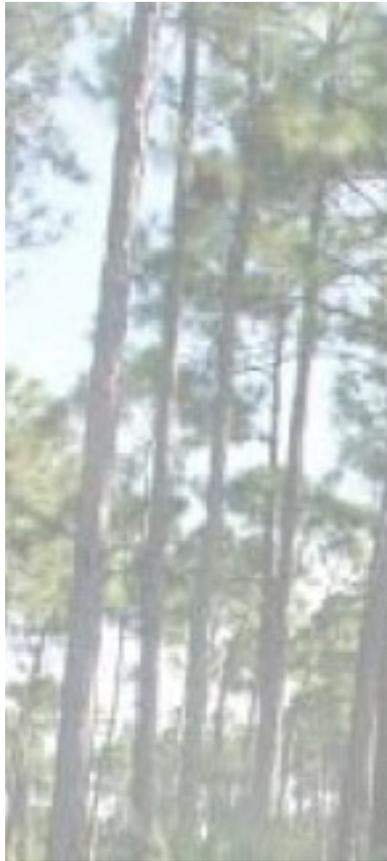
DOWNTOWN DISNEY:

- Destination for locals and tourists
- Complimentary to Disney Parks
- Visually captivating and engrossing
- Wide variety of uses and amenities
 - Daytime and nighttime amenities
 - AMC Theaters
 - House of Blues
 - Caters to all ages
 - Pleasure Island
- Themed retail
 - World of Disney
 - LEGO Imagination Center
 - Orlando Harley Davidson
- Themed dining
 - Rainforest Cafe
 - Bongos Cuban Cafe
- Lakeside
 - Shows





GOALS



THE MAIN GOAL IS TO BRING LIFE TO TWO IMPORTANT INSTITUTIONS IN MIAMI THAT ARE IN NEED OF REVITALIZATION.

- Create a space that unifies the existing and proposed uses of the site, allowing them to work together instead of separate.
- Create a space that works in conjunction with the existing fabric of Zoo Miami and the Gold Coast Railroad Museum, yet can stand alone as its own experience.
- Create a space that serves a variety of users, bringing in tourism while still serving the needs of the residents of Miami-Dade County.



OBJECTIVES

An emphasis for this project must be placed on user analysis for both the current and potential users of the site.

Analyze the existing suggested program elements in order to determine if those elements can indeed work in conjunction with the two existing institutions as well as serve the needs of different groups of users.

Design a program that brings locals in for shopping, festivals, markets, and other recreational activities.

Creating spaces that serve different user groups is integral to bringing a variety of users to the site.

Work with the existing entrance features of the Zoo and Gold Coast Railroad Museum to enhance them.

Create features that build up to the attractions giving them the feel of a grand entrance.

Utilize existing ecological context to both restore said context and create connections to the site itself.

Hide parking from view to allow for a more complete user experience as you enter the property.

Work with existing contours to create aesthetically beautiful stormwater treatment to an otherwise flat site.



PROGRAM

Richmond Traffic Circle

- A traffic circle shall be created to tie in the two Main Street Malls and hotel that will be created. The traffic circle should enhance the connections between all of the areas of the Entertainment Area.
- It should be a “feature traffic circle” as the visual element tying together the project.
- The circle should ease directionality to the different areas with significant signage.
- It is necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, service vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas.

Gold Coast Railroad Museum Main Street: Food and Retail Mall

- The site lies within the Gold Coast Railroad Museum Park property and is currently a parking lot.
- Themed food and retail shall be the predominant vendors for the area. It should thematically tie into the Gold Coast Railroad Museum.
- The proposed GCRM Main Street venue should be both complimentary and compatible with the Zoo Miami and adjacent Attraction, although it need not be animals or historic transportation. Food service and specialty themed retail, along with architectural amenities consistent with the attraction are required.
- It is necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, service vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas. Must provide for on-site parking within the Gold Coast Railroad Museum parcel, and may consider shared public parking on adjacent parking areas. The number and location of required spaces shall be determined by both provisions of the Code and departmental requirements. During peak use periods, parking may be allowed to overflow to additional parking areas.



Zoo Miami Main Street: Food and Retail Mall

- The site is currently a landscaped walkway leading to the entrance of the Zoo.
- Themed food and retail shall be the predominant vendors for the area. It should thematically tie into Zoo Miami.
- If located here, the proposed venue should be both complimentary and compatible with the Zoo Miami and any adjacent attraction. Food service, retail and the architectural amenities in support of these improvements must appeal to visitors of all ages.
- It is necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, service vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas. Parking relies on parking developed for Zoo Miami.

Active Use Retention Lake

- The proposed attraction should be interactive and complimentary to both Zoo Miami and the GCRM. Attractions and elements should appeal to visitors of all ages.
- Entrances necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas. Should utilize shared public parking on adjacent parking areas.



PROGRAM

Family Entertainment Center

- The proposed Family Entertainment Center should be both complimentary and compatible with Zoo Miami and the adjacent attraction, although it need not focus on animals. Attractions and elements must appeal to visitors of all ages and may include indoor arcades (electronic games, simulations, etc.), indoor challenge area (ice/roller skating, covered kart racing, laser tag, etc.), outdoor children's area (fee/free rides, games of skill and chance), performance space and dynamic audience participation areas.
- Entrances necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, service vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas. The Developer may provide for on-site parking, or may consider shared public parking on adjacent parking areas. The number and location of required spaces shall be determined by both provisions of the Code and departmental requirements. During peak use periods, parking may be allowed to overflow to additional parking areas.

Rockland Pine Restoration Area

- The area to the northwest of the front entrance of the Zoo will be restored to its original Rockland Pine ecosystem.
- An Environmental Education Center and subsequent signage should be included.
- Trails through the habitat will go through and even outside of the predicted sites boundary.

Vacation Hotel

- The Vacation Hotel shall lie to the northwest of the front gate of the Zoo within the restored Rockland Pine habitat.
- If located here, the Vacation Hotel may have 200 rooms and not exceed 70 feet tall. This low to mid-range hotel is designed to extend stay time for on-site visitors. It is more likely to include no restaurant and few resort amenities.



- Entrances necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, service vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas. The Developer must provide for on-site parking within the hotel, but may consider shared public parking. The number and location of required spaces shall be determined by both provisions of the Code and departmental requirements.

Banquet Hall

- The proposed Banquet Hall venue designed to both complimentary and compatible with the Zoo Miami and the adjacent Attraction, although it need not focus on animals. The Banquet Hall is intended to be a two story facility adjacent to the entrance of the Zoo. There is some expectation that the venue includes animal exhibits.

- It is necessary to provide seamless access for pedestrians between all attraction areas. The Developer may rely on existing parking within Zoo Miami for all restaurant and banquet functions.

Parking

- Designed to provide common and shared parking for the entire Entertainment Area. Depending on design, the property can support over 3000 parking spaces. The Developer may utilize this parcel for on-site and overflow parking. The number and location of required spaces shall be determined by both provisions of the Code and departmental requirements. During peak use periods, parking may be allowed to overflow to all parking areas within the Entertainment Area.



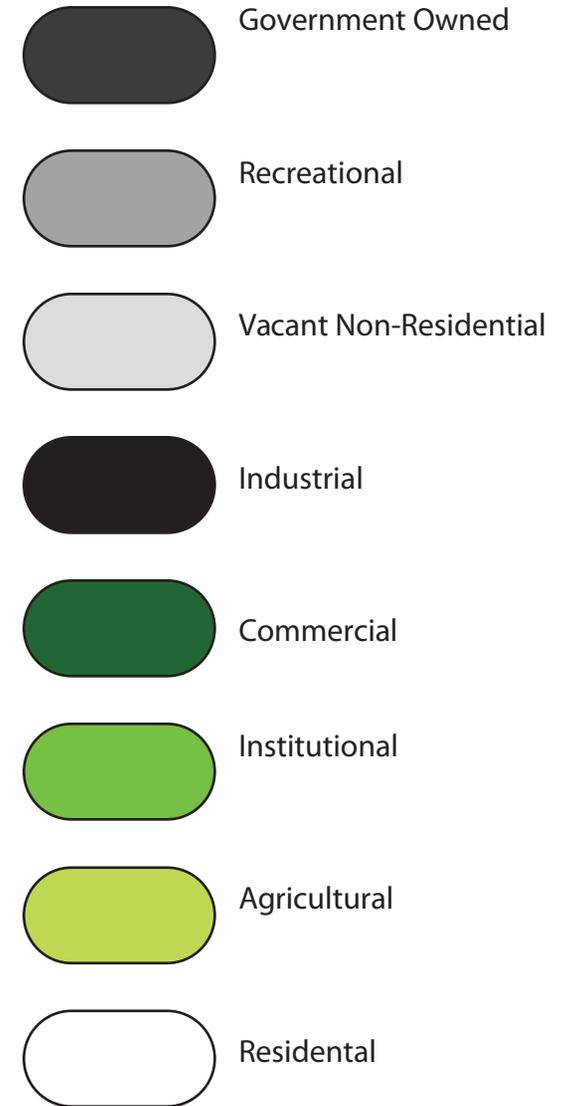


SITE PLANNING & ANALYSIS

CONTEXT: AT LARGE

The areas directly surrounding and encompassing the Zoo Miami and Gold Coast Railroad Museum property are Three Lakes to the north, South Miami Heights to the south, Palmetto Estates to the east, and Richmond West to the west. These four areas, along with the site are all a part of unincorporated Miami Dade County. These four areas serve primarily in a residential capacity. Included in and surrounding these four areas is a significant amount of agricultural land, with limited commercial properties as well.

Overall the Zoo is not in an ideal location for tourism. Its location in proximity to other prominent areas of Miami and other attractions is quite remote. The area is also not a typical urban/pedestrian friendly one. Connections to the site are almost primarily vehicular. This severely limits connectability. Adding to this, the land uses of the areas do not add to its draw. Primarily residential, there is nothing but the Zoo and GCRM attracting visitors to the region. Visitors need more reasons to come to the site.

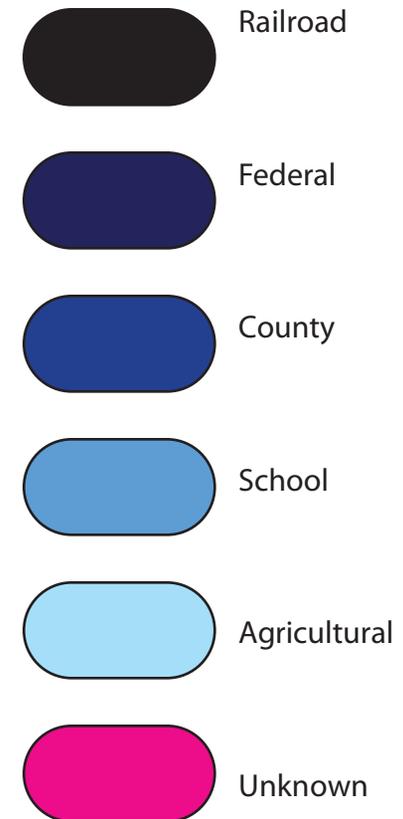


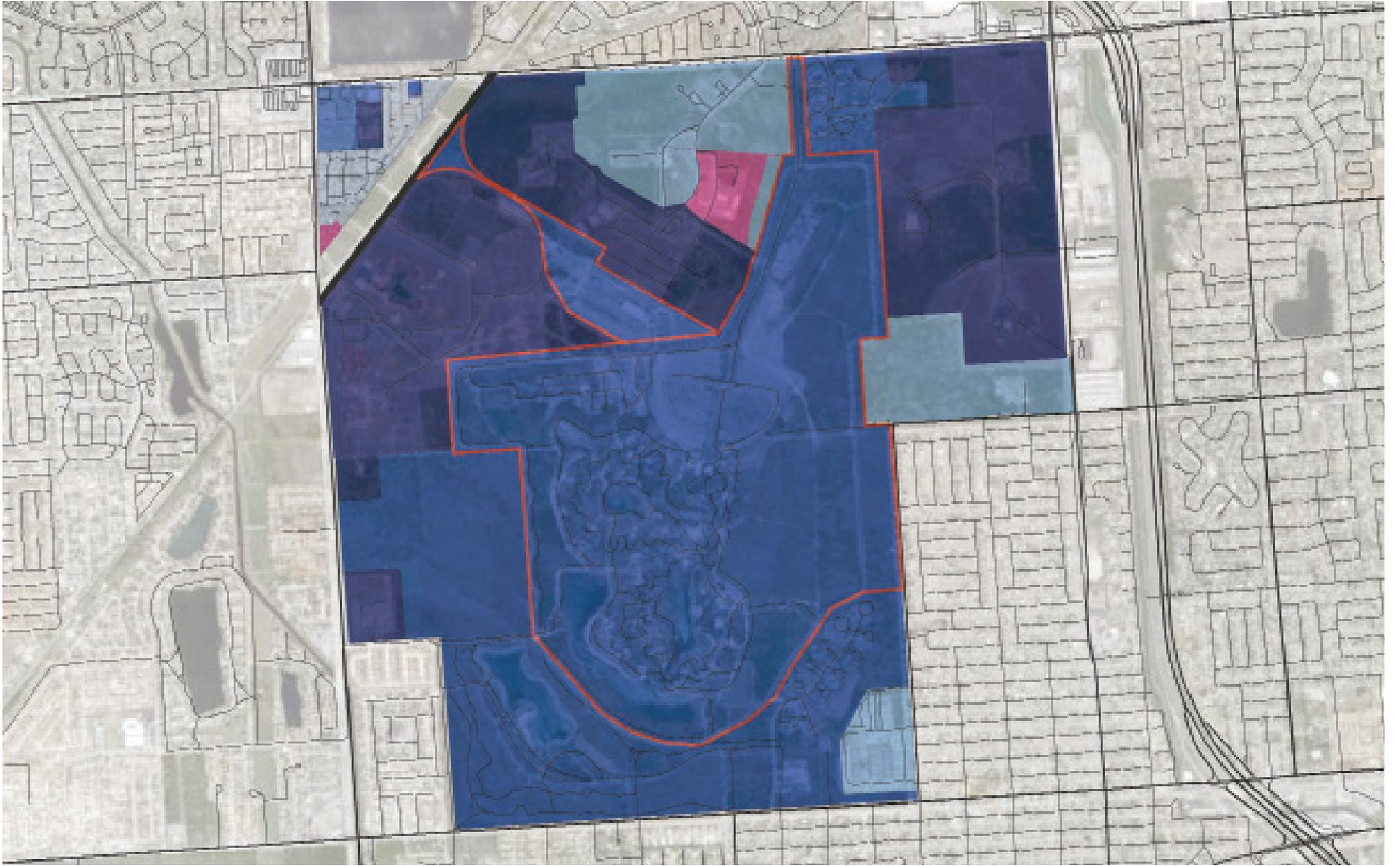


CONTEXT: AREA

The land directly surrounding the site using a much smaller scale, is almost exclusively government owned and operated with few exceptions. As can be seen the land represents different levels of government from the county to federal scale. The federal portion of the land hosts several different government organizations including the CIA, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and the U.S. Prison Bureau. The county portion includes Zoo Miami, the Gold Coast Railroad Museum, and the Larry and Penny Thompson Memorial Park.

Interspersed in the land are parcels of school property, two of which comprise the University of Miami South Campus. The third school parcel is the site of Robert Morgan Vocational Technical Institute. In the north west corner of the site, railroad owned property can be found set adjacent to the GCRM. Directly to the west of that is a singular parcel of agricultural land. Due to incomplete parcel data there is one unknown parcel of land believed to be owned by the CIA.





SITE INVENTORY

CONTOURS

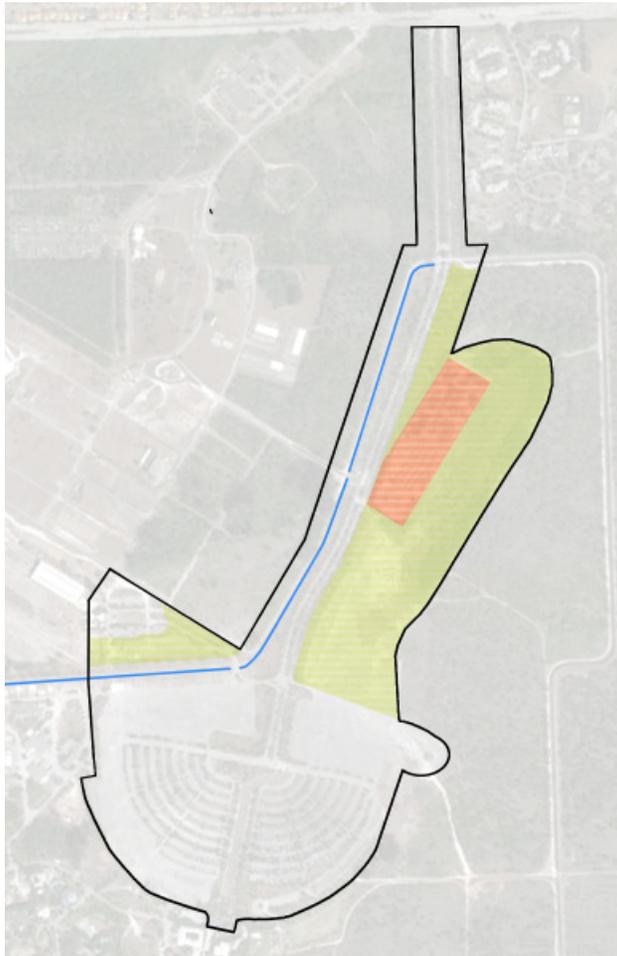
Shown here are 2 ft contour lines. As you can see the land is very flat and as a result it retains a lot of water. Also running around the Zoo Miami parcel is a 10 ft wide moat shown here.





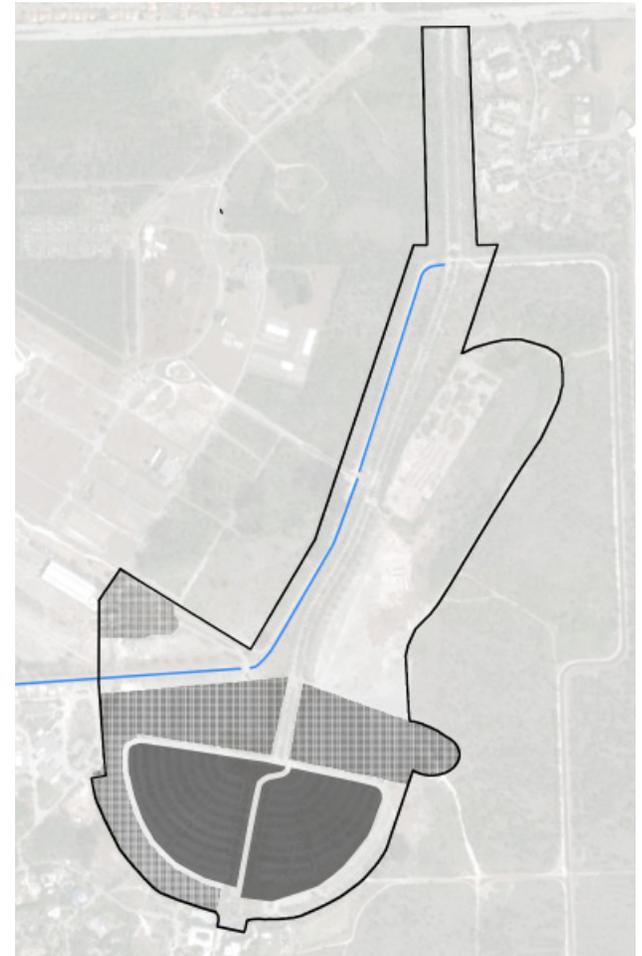
PROTECTED ROCKLAND PINE

One of the last of its habitat, the county makes continuous efforts to maintain it.



DISTURBED AND DILAPIDATED

Much of the asphalt from the original Naval Air Station remains, broken and weed infested.

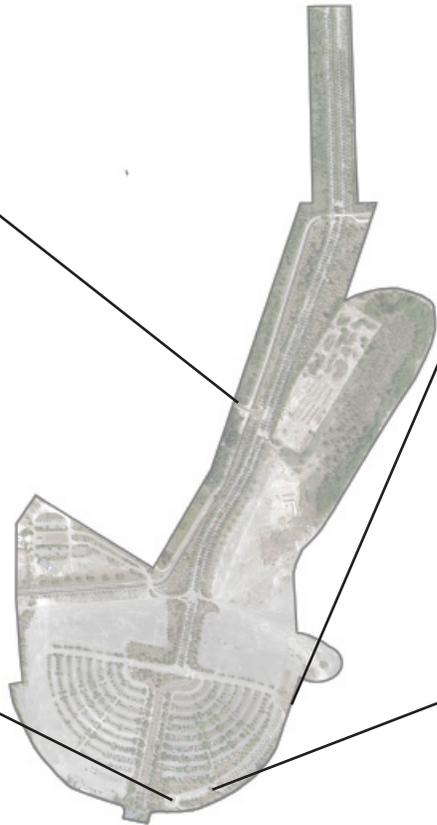


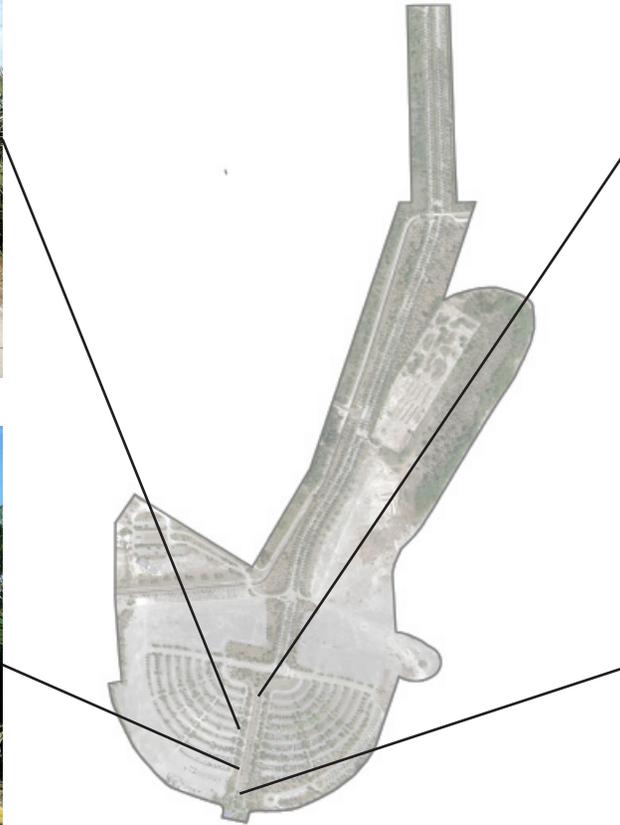
EXISTING PARKING

The excess asphalt from the base has developed in a huge sea of unnecessary parking.

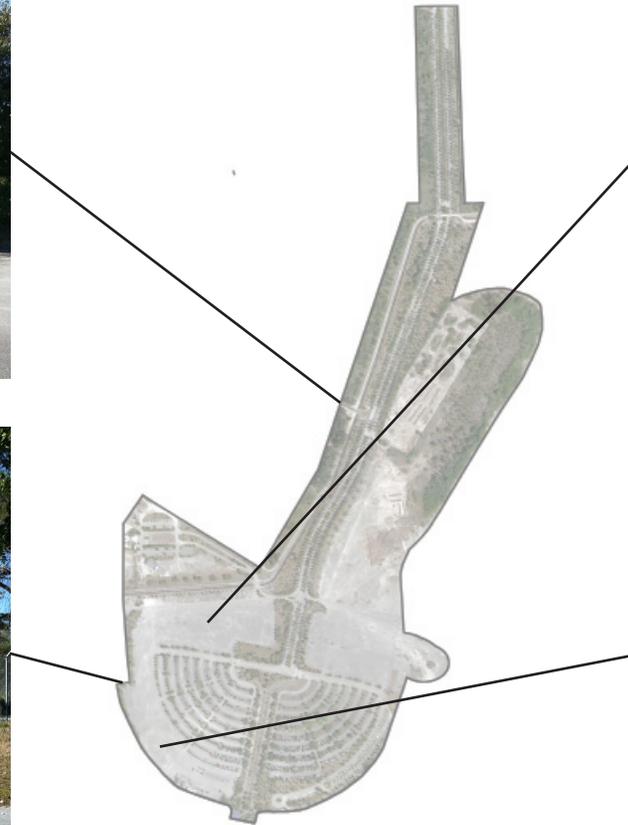


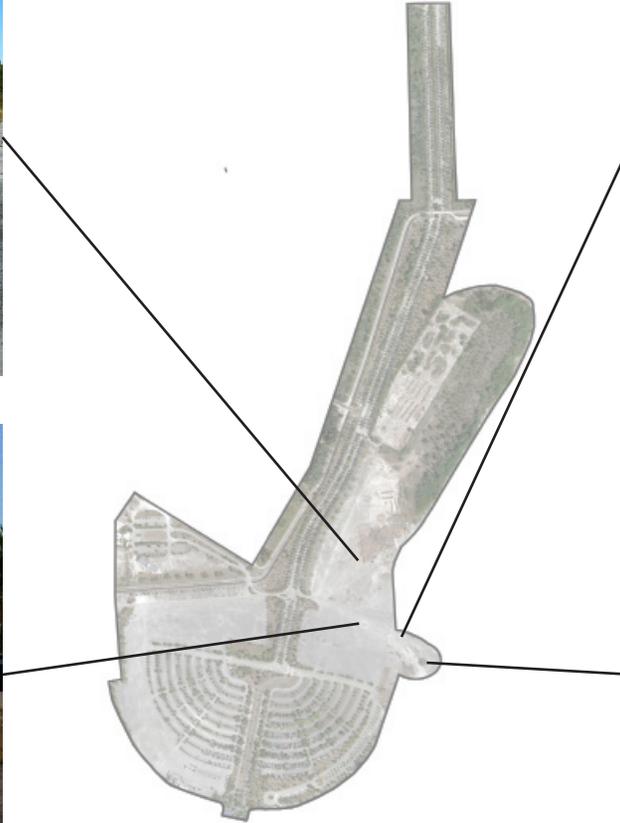
SITE PICTURES



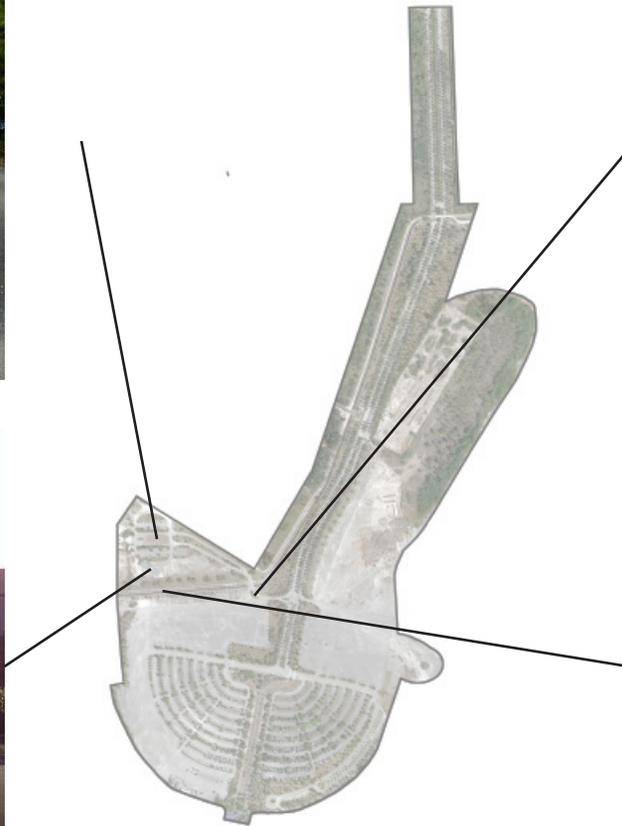


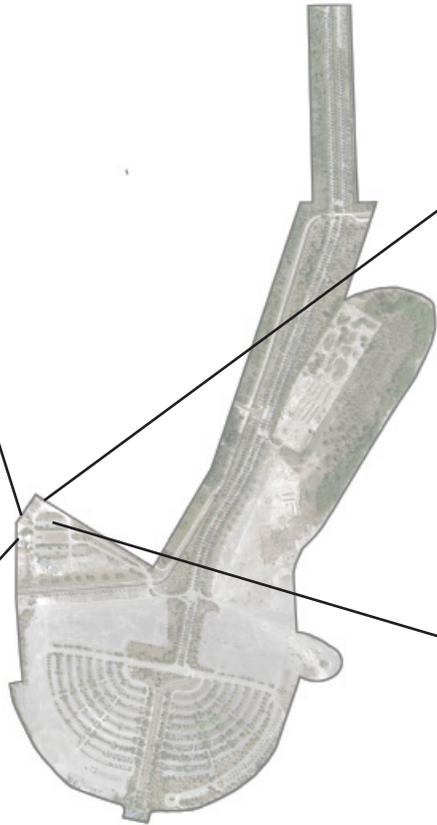
SITE PICTURES



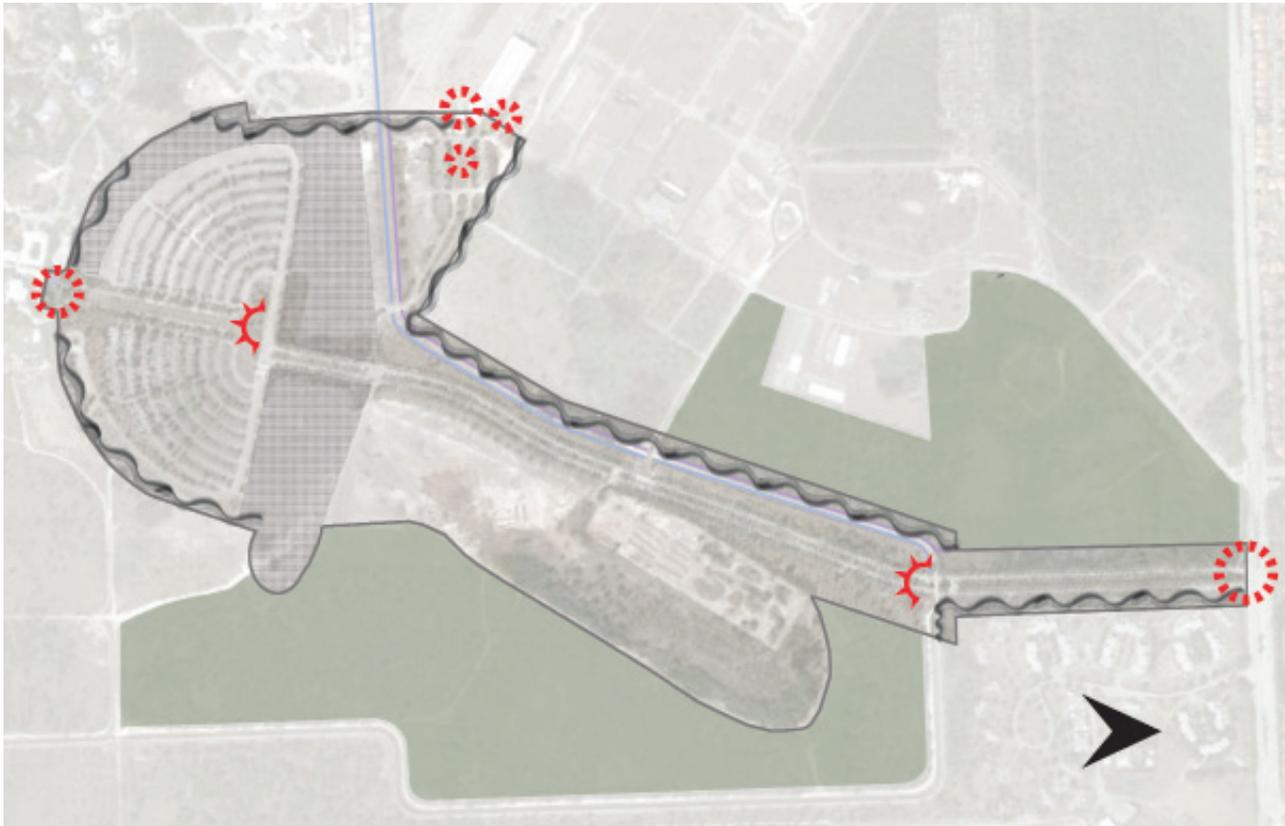


SITE PICTURES





SITE ANALYSIS



VIEWS & BUFFERS

The site has several point of interest. The three main ones are the entrance to the property, the entrance to the Zoo, and the entrance to the Gold Coast Railroad Museum.

There are several disruptive views out of the site that are not ideal, including but not limited to fencing that circles the length of the property and disturbed lands.

CIRCULATION

Vehicular circulation to and from the Zoo is straightforward, but is poorly conceived to the Gold Coast Railroad Museum. Bus circulation to the Zoo is also well designed, but again is lacking with regards to the GCRM. Pedestrian circulation on site is almost completely ignored, and connections do not even exist to the GCRM.

- VEHICULAR
- PEDESTRIAN
- BUS



SITE SYNTHESIS

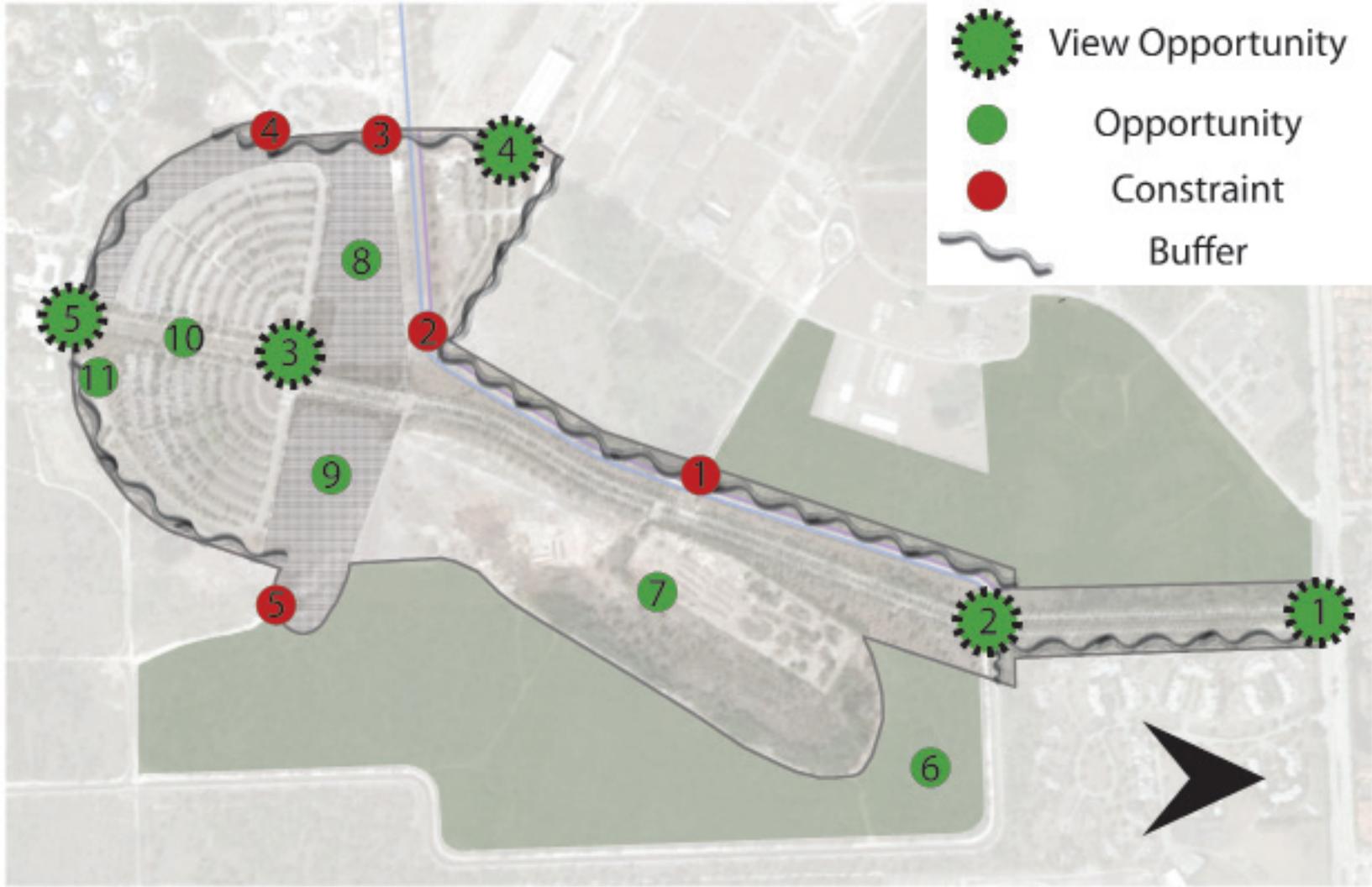
Opportunities

1. Opportunity to widen and enhance for grander entrance.
2. Opportunity to envelope users in the site, “transporting them into another world”.
3. Opportunity for grand unifying element to the site.
4. Opportunity to enhance existing Gold Coast Railroad Museum Entrance.
5. Opportunity to enhance Zoo Miami entrance.
6. Opportunity to connect to existing protected Rockland Pine habitat.
7. Opportunity to reestablish protected Rockland Pine habitat.
8. & 9. Opportunity to rethink vast expanses of underutilized asphalt.

10. Opportunity to utilize and enhance existing pedestrian circulation.
11. Opportunity to work with existing bus connections.

Constraints

1. Existing CIA entrance needs concealing.
2. Existing entrance only has one connection over perimeter moat.
3. Primary service entrance to zoo needs concealing.
4. Secondary service entrance to zoo needs concealing.
5. Tertiary service entrance to zoo needs concealing.



DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION

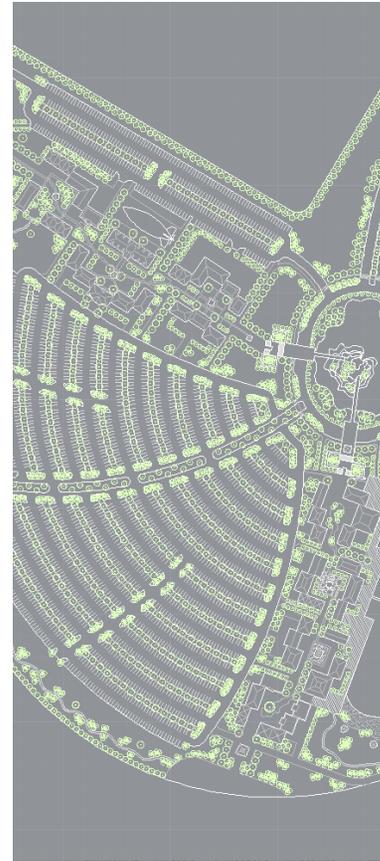
CONCEPTS: PRELIMINARY



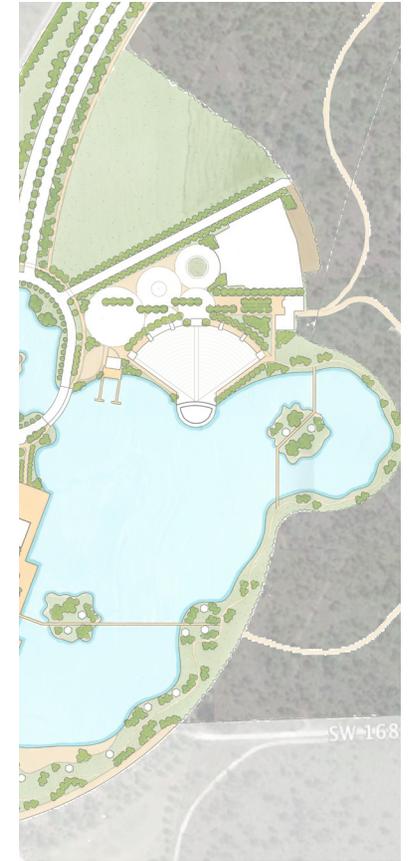
TRACE



SKETCHUP



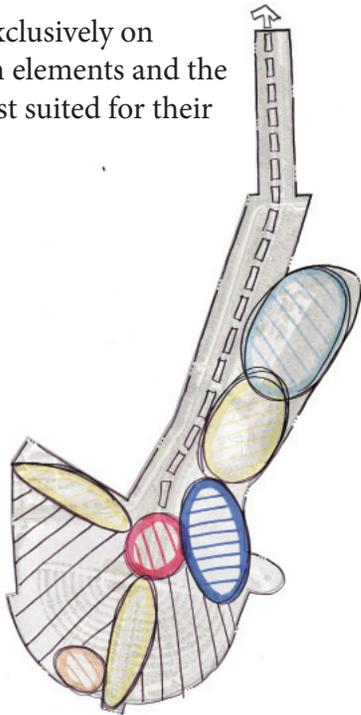
AUTOCAD



RENDER

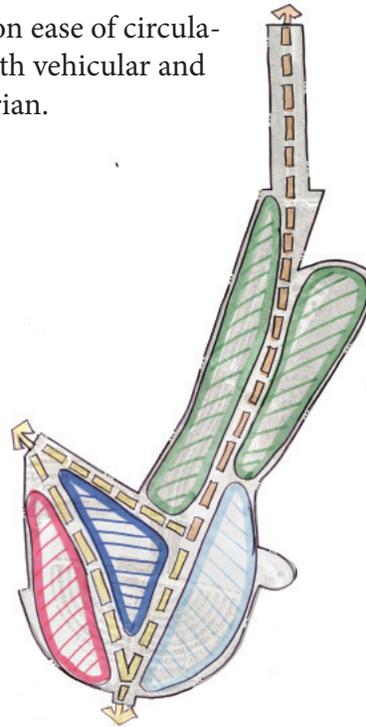
Program Based

Based exclusively on program elements and the areas best suited for their needs.



Circulation Based

Based on ease of circulation both vehicular and pedestrian.



User Experience Based

Based around a central focal point directing the other elements.

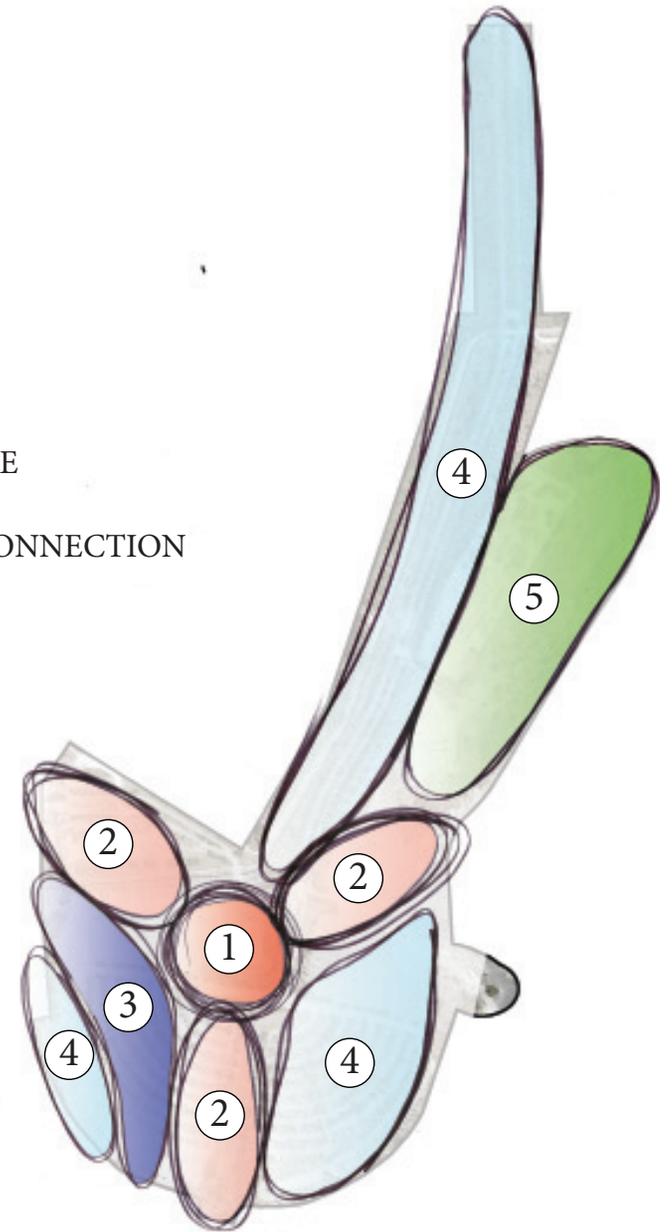


CONCEPTS: FINAL

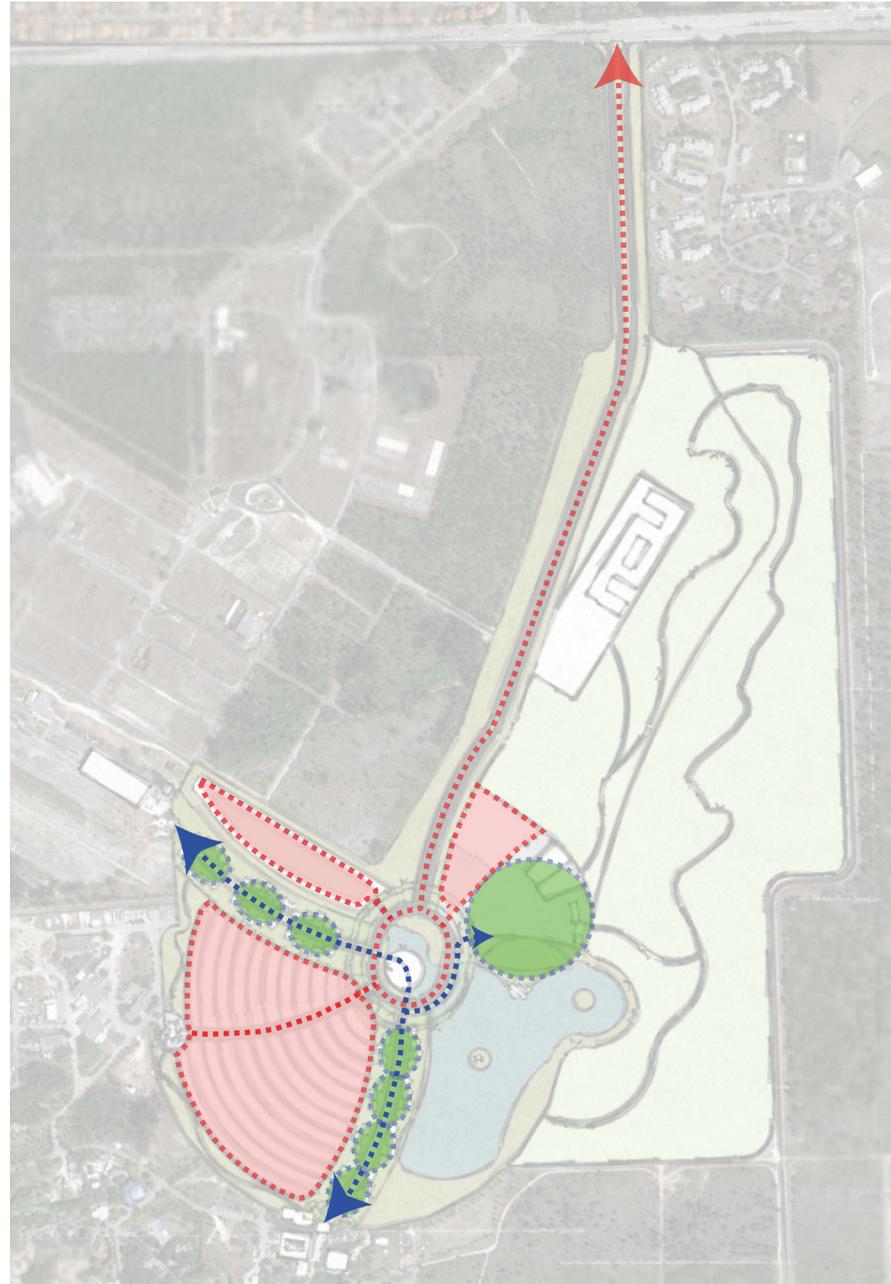
Based on a combination of the concepts, this one is dictating the major areas rather than flow. It is concentrated around a central focal point like the User Experience based concept, but has elements of the other two. The sites peculiar shape dictates exactly how it should be designed. Hence why many of the concepts are so similar.

The central focal point juts out into 3 areas of primary interest. The location of these is determined by the entrances to the Zoo and GCRM. There is a secondary area of interest between the two leading to the GCRM and Zoo respectively. The lighter areas should be treated as having the least interest, sites ideal for parking. Lastly the green is showing the possibility for ecological restoration and activity.

- ① CENTRAL FOCUS
- ② PRIMARY ACTIVE SPACE
- ③ SECONDARY SPACE / CONNECTION
- ④ PASSIVE SPACE
- ⑤ CONSERVATION SPACE



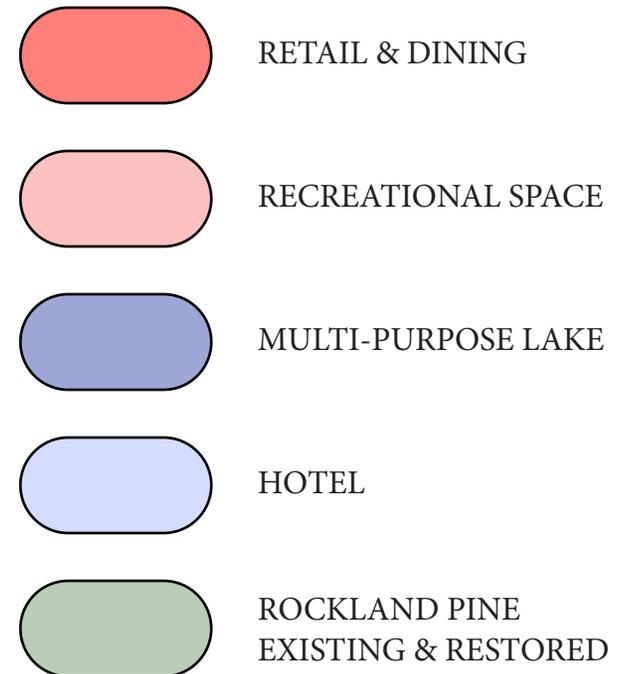
-  PEDESTRIAN NODE
-  PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION
-  VEHICLE CIRCULATION
-  ACTIVE FEATURE
-  ROCKLAND PINE EXISTING & RESTORED



LAND USE: PLAN

The Land use plan, in accordance with the program, provides for a variety of uses on site. Shown here (but not in the remaining plans) is the land allotted for the hotel. The hotel should be located amidst areas of the re-established Rockland Pine, keeping it secluded from the rest of the site. Trails should lead directly from the hotel to the rest of the site. The hotel should serve to keep tourists on site for multi-day excursions, but only if a variety of uses allows this.

At this scale, one can see that a majority of the site is dedicated to existing and proposed Rockland Pine habitat. It is indeed one of the last remaining stands of the endangered ecosystem and Miami Dade County already spends a great deal of time and energy to maintain it. Even with maintenance existing areas of Rockland Pine are non-accessible on site, and are therefore unutilized. With the knowledge of this care and maintenance for the ecosystem, and due to its relatively shallow grow medium, the Rockland Pine habitat should be easily re-establishable. Creating trails would bring an amenity that provides an educational and recreational service that makes use of land already maintained.



GOLD COAST RAILROAD MUSEUM

ZOO

ZOO DRIVE

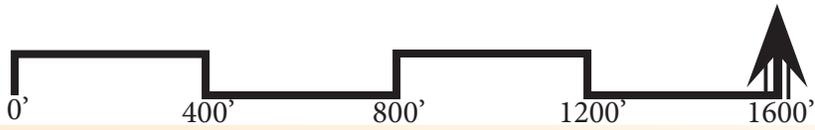


MASTER PLAN

The main vein of the site is Zoo Drive which allows the only access to all parts of the site. In order to relieve traffic to the different areas of the site, Zoo drive will dump off into a large traffic circle. The traffic circle will serve as a central feature, dictating all forms of circulation. The traffic circle accesses all of the major areas of the site. It does so without interruption allowing for a better overall user experience. Radiating from the traffic circle are the three major areas of the site.

These three areas are the Family Entertainment Area, the Zoo Market, and the Gold Coast Market. These three areas are in themselves entry ports to different areas surrounding the site. The Family Entertainment Area accesses the Rockland Pine Restoration Area, the Zoo Market accesses the Zoo, and the Gold Coast Market accesses the Gold Coast Railroad Museum. A secondary feature coming off of the traffic circle is the active use lake. The lake acts to complement the rest of the site, will maintaining its identity and uses. Altogether the variety of amenities will create a multitude of uses bringing and keeping visitors on-site.

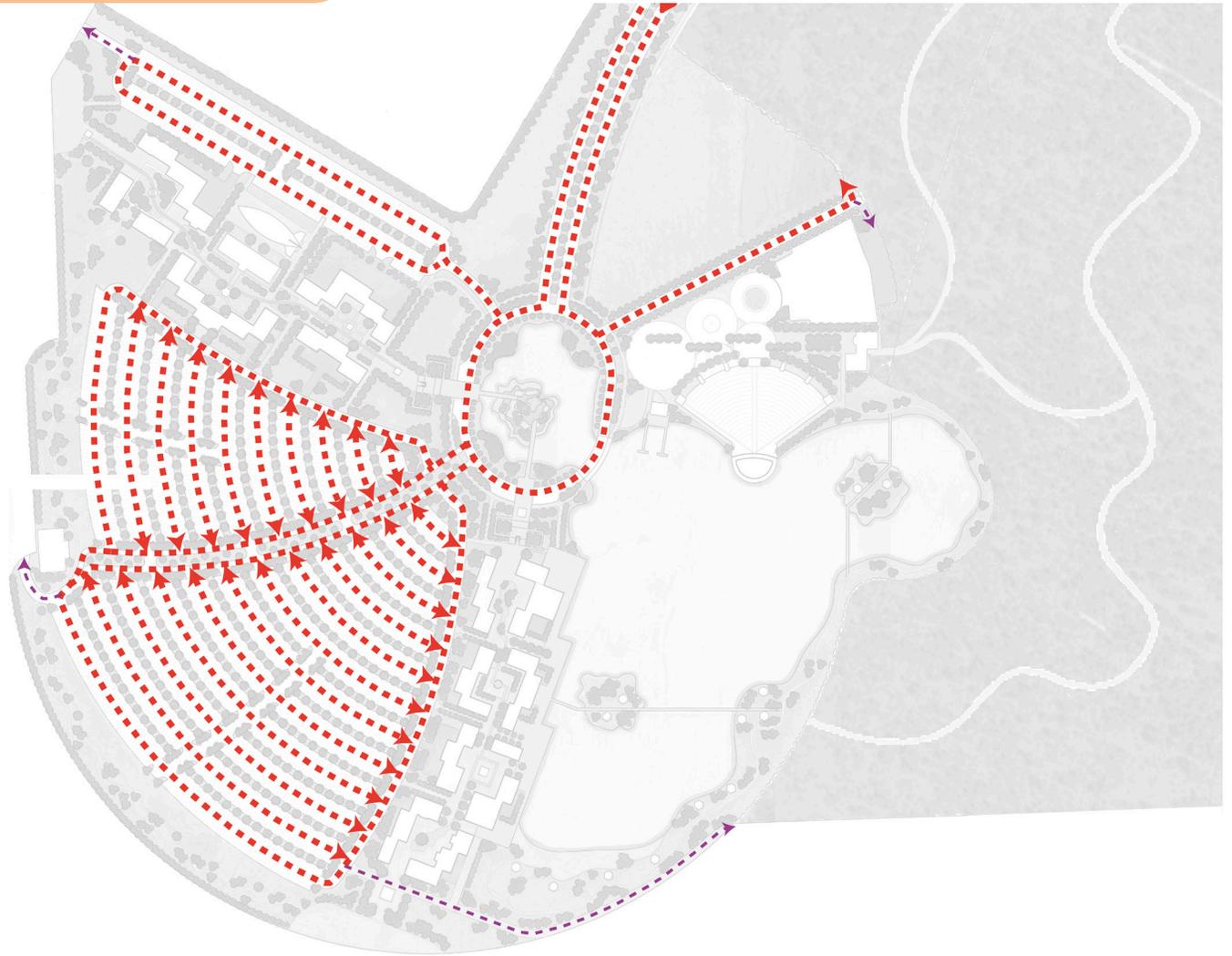
- ① TRAFFIC CIRCLE
- ② FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT AREA
- ③ ZOO MARKET
- ④ GOLD COAST MARKET
- ⑤ ACTIVE USE LAKE
- ⑥ ROCKLAND PINE CONSERVATION AREA
- ⑦ ZOO BANQUET HALL
- ⑧ BANQUET HALL TRAIL
- ⑨ LAKE TRAIL AND PICNIC GROUNDS
- ⑩ ZOO MIAMI PARKING
- ⑪ GOLD COAST MUSEUM PARKING
- ⑫ ZOO MIAMI ENTRANCE
- ⑬ GOLD COAST MUSEUM ENTRANCE



MASTER PLAN: DIAGRAMS

VEHICULAR CIRCULATION:

Vehicular circulation throughout the site is dictated by the central traffic circle while Zoo Drive remains unchanged. The circulation should remain uninterrupted through a series of bridges and underpasses. Service entrances are easily accessible in different areas of the site through both paved and unpaved roads.



PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION:

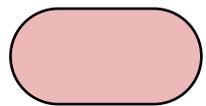
Pedestrian circulation throughout the site provides the users with different options and experiences throughout the site. The circulation should remain uninterrupted through a series of bridges, boardwalks, and trails. Circulation ranges from paved to unpaved.



MASTER PLAN: DIAGRAMS

PARKING AREAS:

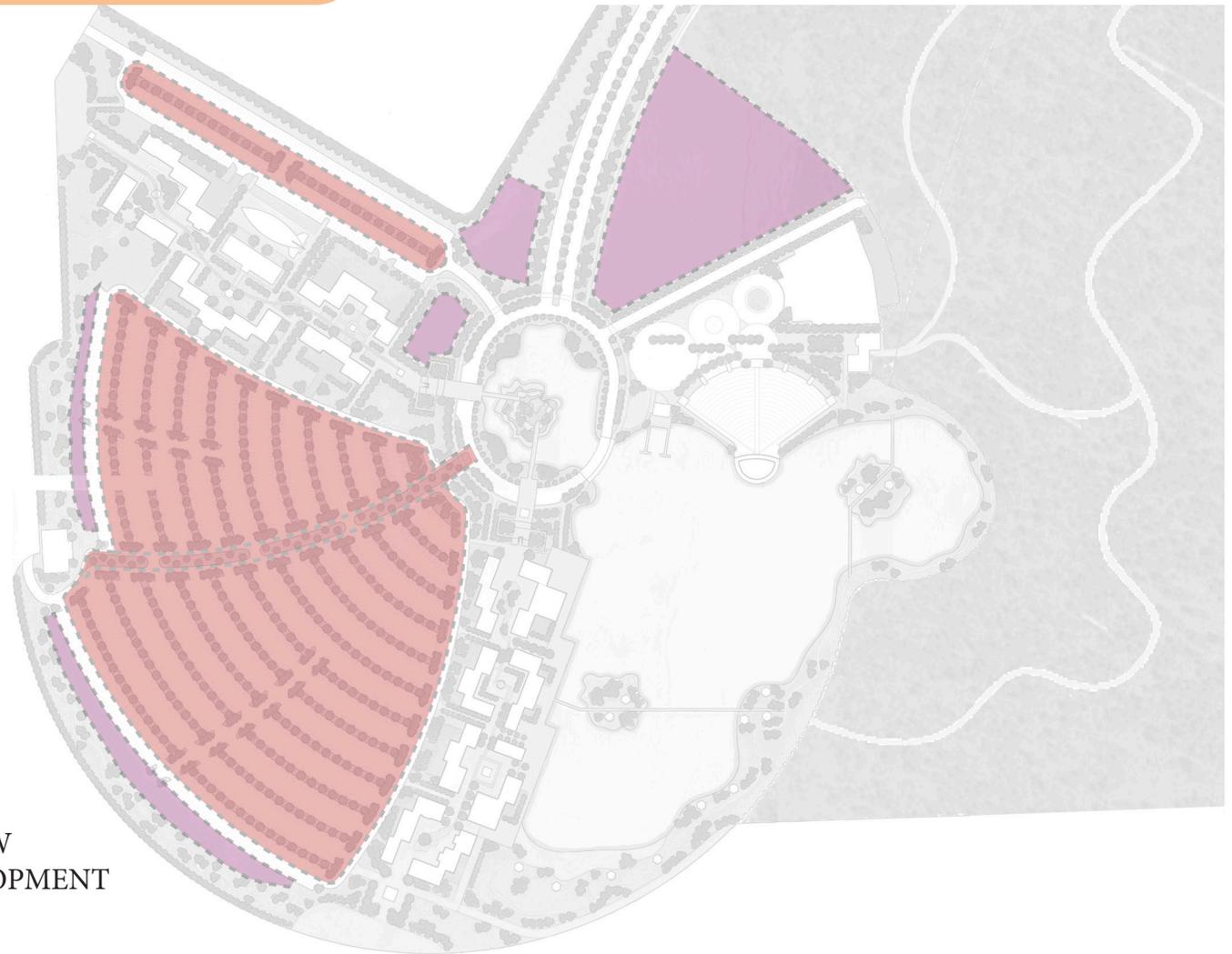
Parking has changed considerably, though the areas of parking remain relatively the same. The Zoo Miami parking shifted around, while the Gold Coast Railroad Museum parking increased. The areas of overflow parking are to be grassed open spaces that utilized during events or in future development.



PERMANENT

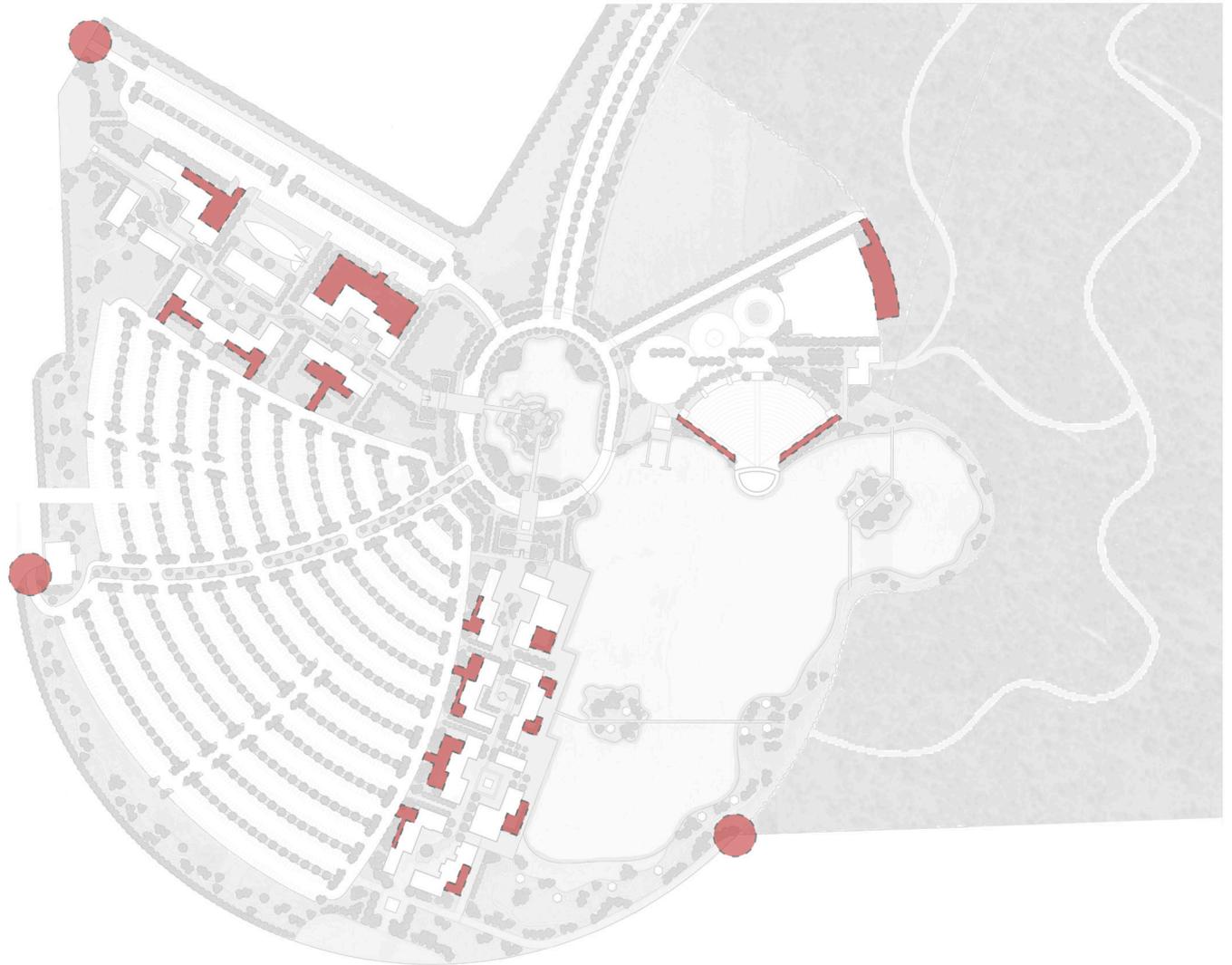


GRASS OVERFLOW
/ FUTURE DEVELOPMENT



SERVICE AREAS:

Service areas can be found throughout the site. These areas serve the different dining, retail, and entertainment facilities allowing for site specific maintenance. These can all be accessed via the regular circulation of the site. Service entrances to Zoo Miami and the Gold Coast Railroad Museum can each be found through eachs respective parking lot as well as surrounding the restored Rockland Pine habitat.



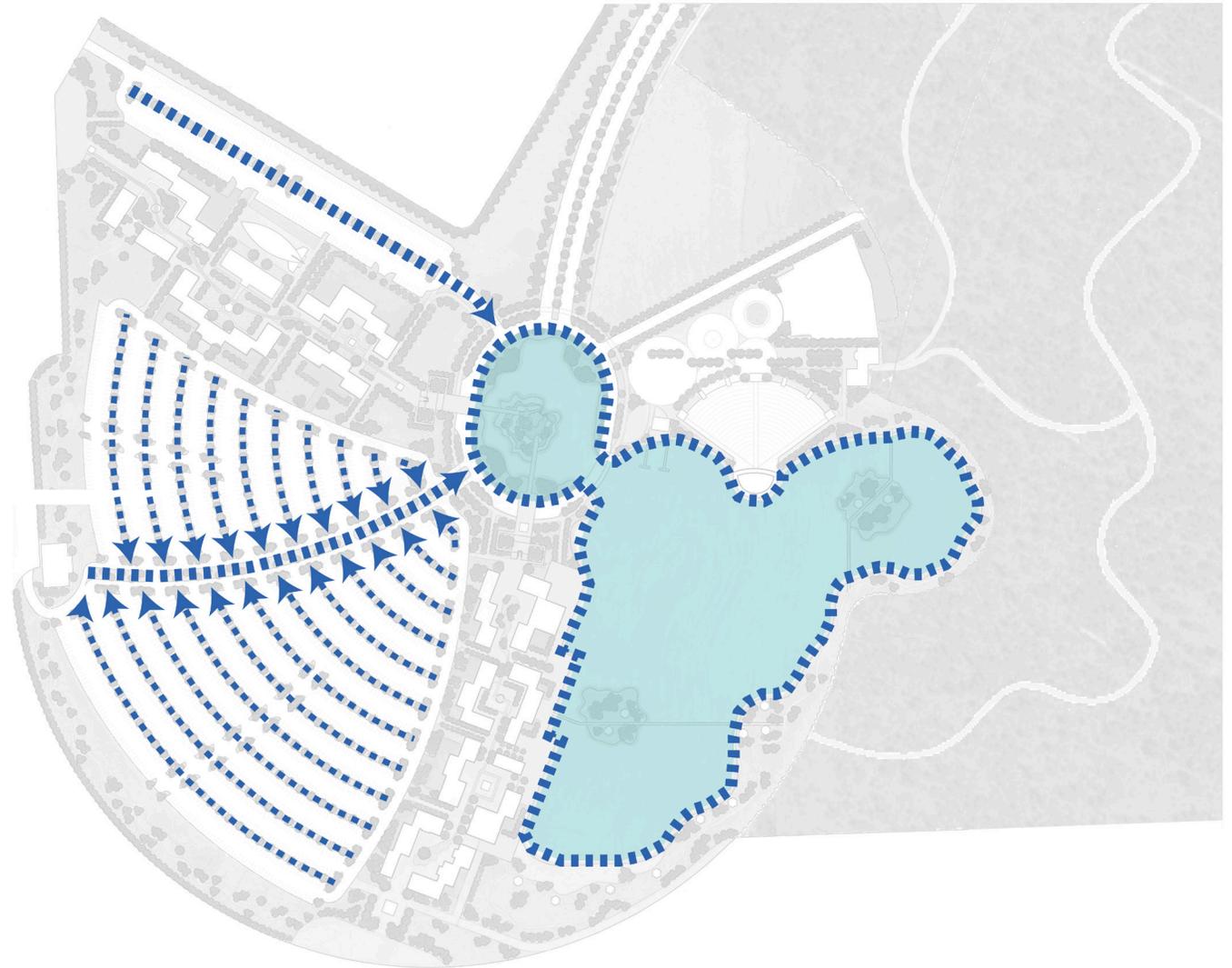
MASTER PLAN: DIAGRAMS

Sample Bioswale in Lot



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT:

One of the major problems associated with the site due to its lack of contours is stormwater. Though the sites soils are easily drained, the issue of on-site retention of water needs to be addressed. As seen, the individual parking lot islands act as swales. These mini-swales send water to the main swale / vein of the lot. This water then moves towards the traffic circle where the excess eventually makes its way to the lake. This tiered system helps treat water on site.

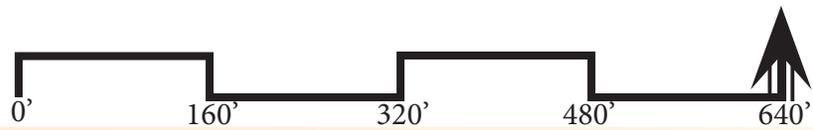


MASTER PLAN: TRAFFIC CIRCLE & F.E.A.

The traffic circle at the center of the site will serve as its heart. Everything emanates from the traffic circle making it a feature in itself. At the center of the traffic circle will be a large waterfall that acts a support for the pedestrian bridge that connects the two markets. This allows for the neither pedestrian, nor vehicular traffic to be impeded. The pedestrian bridge will go through and under the waterfall allowing for visitors to see through the back of the feature. The circle also serves as the beginning of the active use lake feature.

The Family Entertainment Area comes off of the circle. One of the main features of the site, it features a large vibrant pedestrian plaza. The plaza will feature a series of colorful tiled circular spaces in the style of Burle Marx. Coming off of this plaza is a series of amenities to enhance user experience. The idea behind these amenities and facilities is to create a space that users can visit both before and after Zoo Miami and the Gold Coast Railroad Museum, respectively. The Family Entertainment Area butts up against the active use lake, allowing users to use them both interchangeably or in conjunction.

- ① WALK-THROUGH WATERFALL / GROTTO
- ② ZOO MARKET PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE (14' CLEARANCE)
- ③ GOLD COAST PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE (14' CLEARANCE)
- ④ ZOO MARKET CLOCK TOWER
- ⑤ LARGE PAVED PLAZA
- ⑥ PLAYGROUND
- ⑦ KAYAK RENTALS
- ⑧ AMPHITHEATER
- ⑨ IMAX THEATERS
- ⑩ ROCKLAND PINE NATURE CENTER
- ⑪ ROCKLAND PINE TRAIL
- ⑫ BOARDWALK & PICNIC GROUNDS
- ⑬ INTERACTIVE FOUNTAIN JETS
- ⑭ EVENT / OVERFLOW PARKING



GUIDELINES: TRAFFIC CIRCLE & F.E.A.



The family entertainment area will be an open and vibrant multi-use space for people to gather in the day and night.

USES:

Traffic Circle

- Walk under waterfall
- Pedestrian Bridge
between markets

Plaza

- Festivals & Events
- Interactive Fountain
- Children's Playground

Amphitheater

- Concerts
- Plays
- Public Speakers
- Outdoor movies

IMAX Theater

- Nature based movies
- Family friendly movies
- Educational movies

Nature Center

- Nature based education
- Pine Rockland Trail

Lake

- Kayak rentals
- Boardwalks
- Islands
- Picnic Grounds
- Running / walking trails



TRAFFIC CIRCLE:

- Heavily planted interactive waterfall
- Feature clock tower
- Wooden pedestrian bridge



FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT PLAZA:

- Large plaza of circular spaces paved with colorful pavers
- Interactive fountain jets that can be controlled
- Large shade trees in planters such as Live Oaks



AMPHITHEATER AND THEATER:

- 2 large IMAX theaters (typical theater architecture)
- Tiered grass outdoor amphitheater
- Heavily planted entrances and exteriors



NATURE CENTER & LAKE:

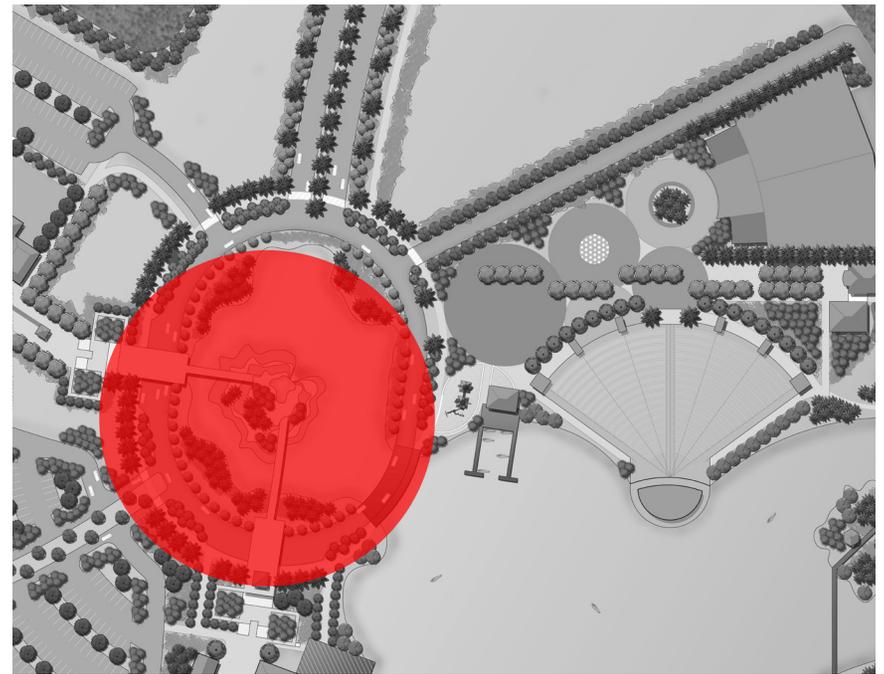
- Wooden outdoor nature center
- Wooden boardwalk
- Native Rockland Pine flora



PERSPECTIVE: TRAFFIC CIRCLE

TRAFFIC CIRCLE WITH BRIDGE:

In this perspective you can see the character of the waterfall as it would appear from the traffic circle. From here the Zoo Market Clock Tower is also visible along with the pedestrian bridge. As you can see the pedestrian bridge has a clearance of 14' allowing for a bus stop under it. The bridge then goes through the waterfall (under it) and to the other side allowing for seamless pedestrian access.



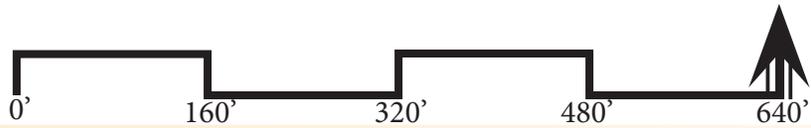


MASTER PLAN: ZOO MARKET

The Zoo Miami Market will take on the appearance of a world market. Just as the Zoo itself has four major lobes from around the world (the Amazon, Australia, Asia, and Africa) so to will the market have four nodes. Each individual node will transport you to these four different areas of the world respectively. The nodes will achieve this with a combination of the typical architecture of the region as well as the native flora. Joining the four nodes will be a “river” of sorts that transforms throughout each node, beginning with the Amazon River and ending with the Nile River.

Each node will have specialty themed retail and dining from each region. The retail and dining need not be limited to small food stands and shops, but may include larger more well known restaurants and stores. One such example would be an Outback Steakhouse in the Australia node. The idea is to create retail and dining that will bring Zoo visitors earlier and have them leaving later. These nodes, along with the accompanying boardwalk, will also bring non-Zoo patrons to the site to shop and dine. Thus the Zoo Market adds to the Zoo while maintaining its individuality.

- ① AMAZON MARKET NODE
- ② AUSTRALIA MARKET NODE
- ③ ASIA MARKET NODE
- ④ AFRICA MARKET NODE
- ⑤ INFORMATION KIOSK
- ⑥ RIVER FEATURE (4 SEGMENTS)
- ⑦ ZOO MARKET BOARDWALK
- ⑧ SANDY BEACH & PICNIC GROUNDS
- ⑨ INTERCHANGEABLE SERVICE ROAD / PATH
- ⑩ ZOO MIAMI ENTRY PLAZA



GUIDELINES: ZOO MARKET



The Zoo Market node will send the users travelling to different exotic locations throughout the world.

USES:

Amazon Market Node

- Themed Shopping
- Themed Dining
- Festivals & Events

Australia Market Node

- Themed Shopping
- Themed Dining
- Festivals & Events

Asia Market Node

- Themed Shopping
- Themed Dining
- Festivals & Events
- Zen Garden (Meditation)

Africa Market Node

- Themed Shopping
- Themed Dining
- Festivals & Events
- Outdoor market

Boardwalk

- Outdoor Dining
- Lakeside Shows (Fireworks)
- Running / walking trails

Beach

- NO swimming
- Picnics Grounds
- Running / walking trails

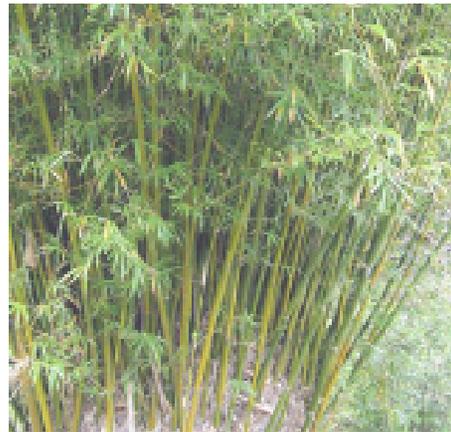


AMAZON MARKET NODE:

- Combination of Spanish colonial architecture with barrel shingle roofs & South America indigenous huts.
- Large leaf tropical flora found in the Amazon rainforest such as Philodendrons, Palms, Bromeliads, and Orchids

ASIA MARKET NODE:

- Pagoda style architecture with multi-tiered roofs
- Asian native flora such as Bamboo and Crepe Myrtles

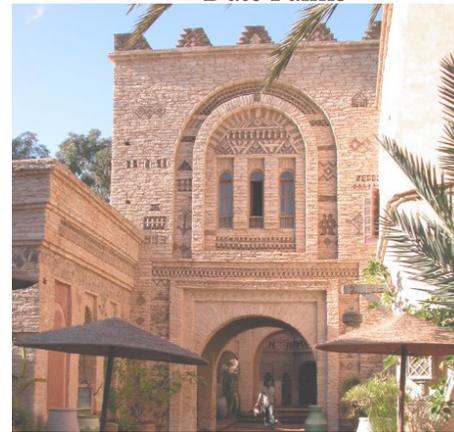


AUSTRALIA MARKET NODE:

- Ranch style Australian architecture with porches
- Australian native flora such as Foxtail Palms, Acacias, and Eucalyptus

AFRICA MARKET NODE:

- Combination of equatorial Africa thatched roof huts & north African moorish architecture
- African native flora such as Kapok trees, Savannah grasses, and Date Palms



PERSPECTIVE: ZOO MARKET

AFRICA MARKET NODE:

In this perspective you can see the character of the Africa Market Node. Aside from site furniture and railings, you can see how pedestrians move throughout the space. The central element of the space is the large Kapok tree alongside the “Nile River”. Different types of African architecture and flora are evident throughout the site to represent different regions of the continent. Shops and dining should fit these themes.



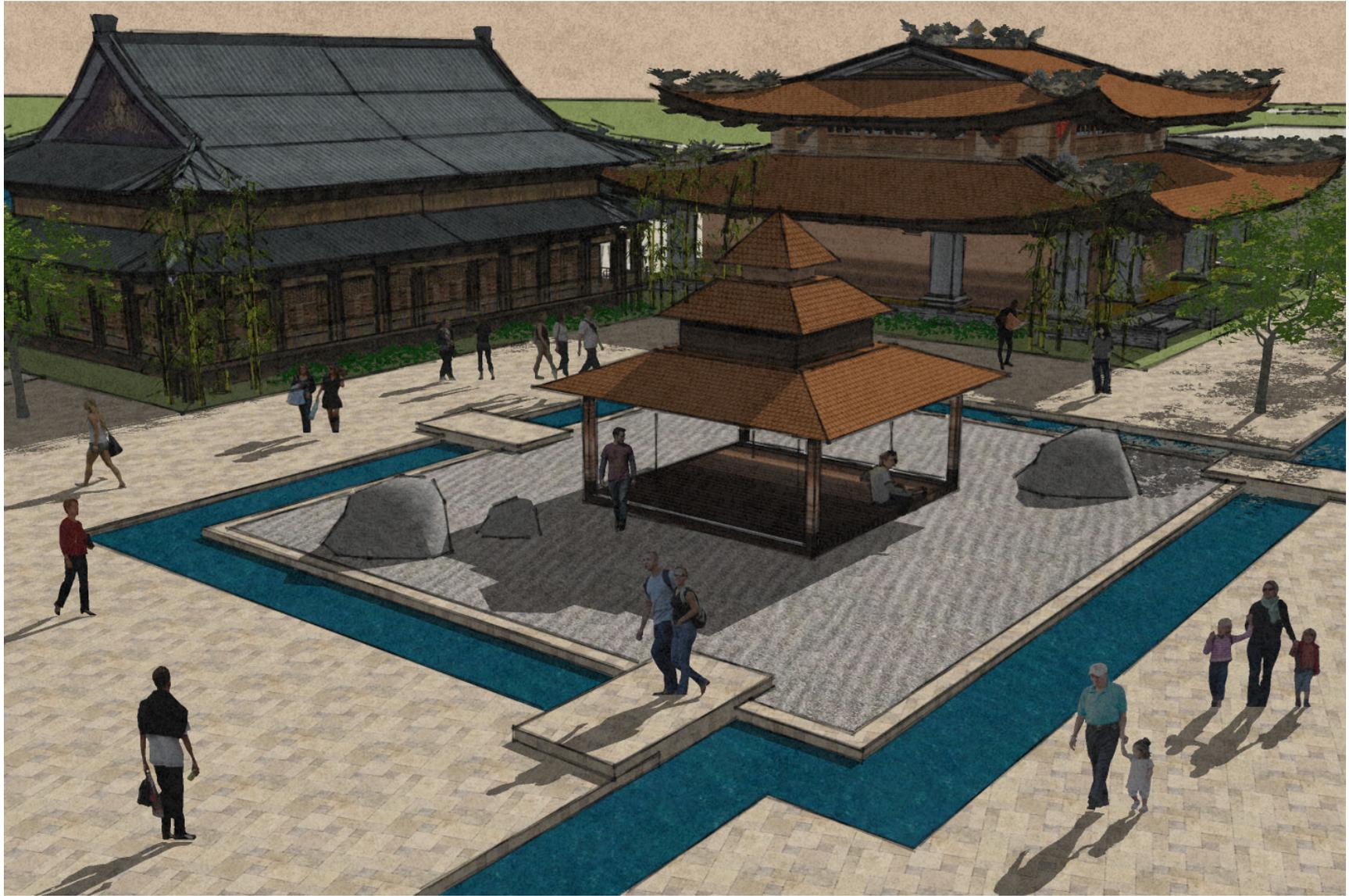


PERSPECTIVE: ZOO MARKET

ASIA MARKET NODE:

In this perspective you can see the character of the Asia Market Node. Aside from site furniture and railings, you can see how pedestrians move throughout the space. The central element of the space is a Zen gravel garden with a pagoda type gazebo, all surrounded by water. Different types of Asian architecture and flora are evident throughout the site to represent different regions of the continent. Shops and dining should fit these themes.



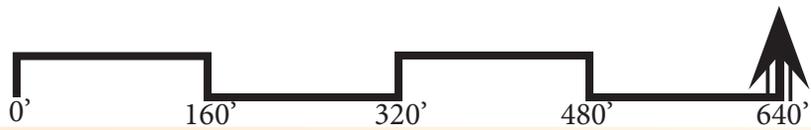


MASTER PLAN: G.C.R.M. MARKET

The Gold Coast Market will take on the appearance of historical Florida. History says Julia Tuttle sent Henry Flagler an Orange Blossom from Miami so inspiring a railroad extension down to the city, making Miami the city it is today. To honor this, along with some site specific history, the market will be broken up into three nodes all connected by an inset railroad track. The first node will be Flagler Village displaying an old Florida cracker town feel. The second node will be an old WWII town complete with bandstand to compliment the existing WWII Museum. In this node a decommissioned interactive WWII Airship will be present to assist the museum in sharing the history of the site. The last node will be Tuttle Town which will have the feel of old Miami.

Each node will have specialty themed retail and dining. The retail and dining need not be limited to small food stands and shops, but may include larger more well known restaurants and stores, such as Cracker Barrel. The idea is to create retail and dining that will bring museum visitors earlier and have them leaving later. Thus the Gold Coast Market adds to the GCRM while maintaining its individuality.

- ① HENRY FLAGLER VILLAGE NODE
- ② WWII MUSEUM NODE
- ③ JULIA TUTTLE TOWN NODE
- ④ WWII MUSEUM (EXISTING STRUCTURE)
- ⑤ DECOMISSIONED AIRSHIP (INTERATIVE)
- ⑥ CENTRAL BANDSTAND
- ⑦ KIOSK / PLANTED RAILWAY
- ⑧ FARMERS MARKET
- ⑨ GOLD COAST MUSEUM ENTRY PLAZA



GUIDELINES: G.C.R.M. MARKET



The Gold Coast Market will transport you through different eras of what Florida used to be, especially in its railroad towns.

USES:

Henry Flagler Village Node

- Themed shopping
- Themed dining
- Festivals & Events
- Picnics
- Farmer's Market

WWII Town Node

- World War II Museum
- Airship
 - Interactive ride
- Themed shopping
- Themed Dining

-Festivals & Events

-Picnics

-Bandstand

Small Shows

Public Speakers

Julia Tuttle Town Node

-Miami History Museum

-Themed shopping

-Themed dining

-Festivals & Events

-Picnics



HENRY FLAGLER VILLAGE NODE:

- Old Florida cracker style architecture with wood structures, porches and metal roofs
- Plants native to northern Florida such as Live Oaks and Sabal Palms



JULIA TUTTLE TOWN NODE:

- Beach bungalow style architecture
- Beach type flora native to Miami such as Citrus trees, Sea Grapes and Coconut Palms



WWII TOWN NODE:

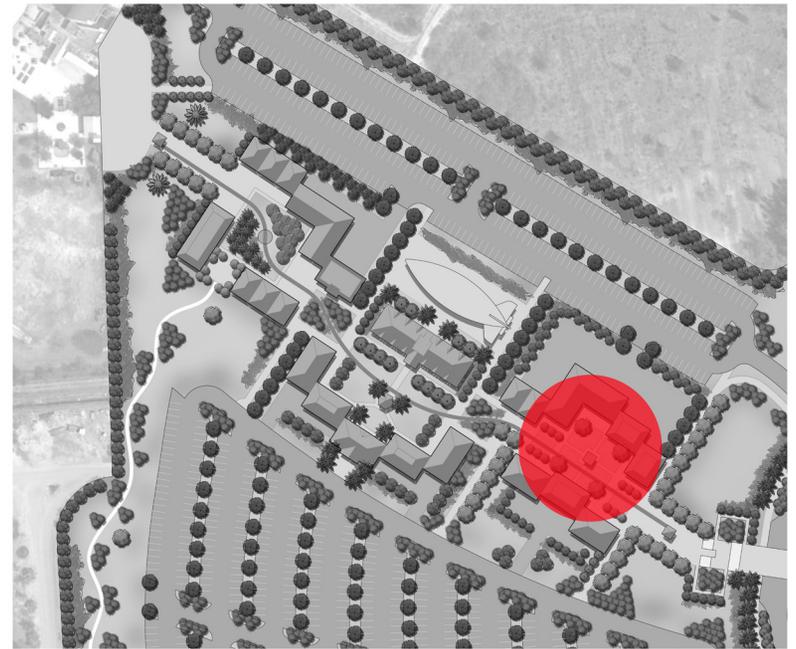
- Existing historic barracks building & typical Americana architecture with bandstand
- Florida native plants such as Florida Royals, Slash Pines and Saw Palmettos



PERSPECTIVE: G.C.R.M. MARKET

FLAGLER VILLAGE NODE:

In this perspective you can see the character of the Flagler Village Node. You can see how the railroad tracks move through the space. The central element of the space is a simple gazebo to relax under. Old Florida cracker style architecture and flora are evident throughout the site to represent what Henry Flagler's Florida may have resembled. Shops and dining should fit these themes, including an open air farmers market.

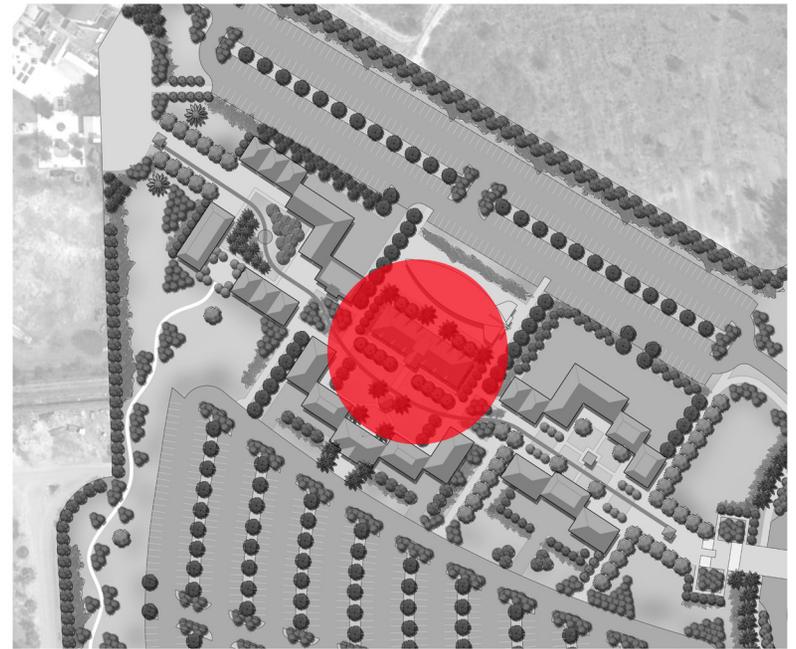




PERSPECTIVE: G.C.R.M. MARKET

WWII TOWN NODE:

In this perspective you can see the character of the WWII Town Node. You can see how the railroad tracks move through the space. The central element of the space is an old style band stand. The sites existing historic building (museum) will dictate the architecture and flora throughout the space. In the background the blimp is visible behind the museum. Shops and dining should fit these themes, including an open air farmers market.





CONCLUSION

In conclusion, to enhance user experience, one must create a variety of experiences for a variety of people to enjoy. With this in mind, Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation has a real opportunity to create a destination that will open up this southern part of Miami. The project could help Zoo Miami and the Gold Coast Railroad Museum to not only be revitalized, but to become premiere destinations rather than secondary ones.

THANK YOU

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October 7, 2011

Senior Capstone Project Proposal

GENERAL INFORMATION

Project Name: Zoo Miami Entertainment Area

Location: 12400 SW 152nd St,
Miami, FL 33177

Client: Miami-Dade County

Main Contacts: Chad Douglas
Construction Supervisor at Miami Zoo

Kevin Asher
Project Manager

Resources: Asher, Kevin. "Zoo Miami Entertainment Area:
Request For Information." Miami, Print.

ORCA and Forbes Architects. "Zoo Miami
Entertainment Area: On-Site Traffic
Study." Miami, 2009. Print.

Summary of Work:

The intent is the creation of a Zoo Miami Entertainment Area that will serve as an addition to the existing Miami Zoo fabric. The project is a mixture of resort and theme park design and should serve to revitalize Zoo Miami by bringing in an influx of tourism. In order to do this properly a revision of existing phases and parcels for development is in order. The project is in fact a real addition to the Zoo that has been planned for the future, and while not designed, already has a desired program. The project is currently on hold with a variety of other Miami Zoo additions currently in progress. Zoo Miami has sent out a Request for Information to a variety of firms and investors in order to gauge interest in the project. The desired program includes a Water Park and a Vacation Hotel, but I will concentrate on all the surrounding and connecting areas with a general land use plan for the remainder (all of which is detailed further in the proposal). This involves areas directly surrounding and connecting the Water Park and Hotel, the complete design of the Family Entertainment Center, Gulf Coast Railroad Museum Main Street, and Zoo Entrance Main Street (with building footprints and architectural style in place of actual building architecture).

My goal is to create a finalized master/land use plan for the entire Zoo Miami Entertainment Area with more emphasis on the connections, entrances, and pedestrian areas and less emphasis on both the hotel and water park design. The idea is to create a Downtown Disney feel to the area in order to bring in both tourists and locals alike. The area should also serve to become a "build up" and grand entrance to the zoo. While the main attraction of the site is indeed the Zoo and the Gold Coast Railroad Museum, the project should stand alone as its own entity with its own uses. The idea in connecting all of these sites is also to create a connection between the Gold Coast Railroad Museum and

the Zoo to bring more tourism to both.



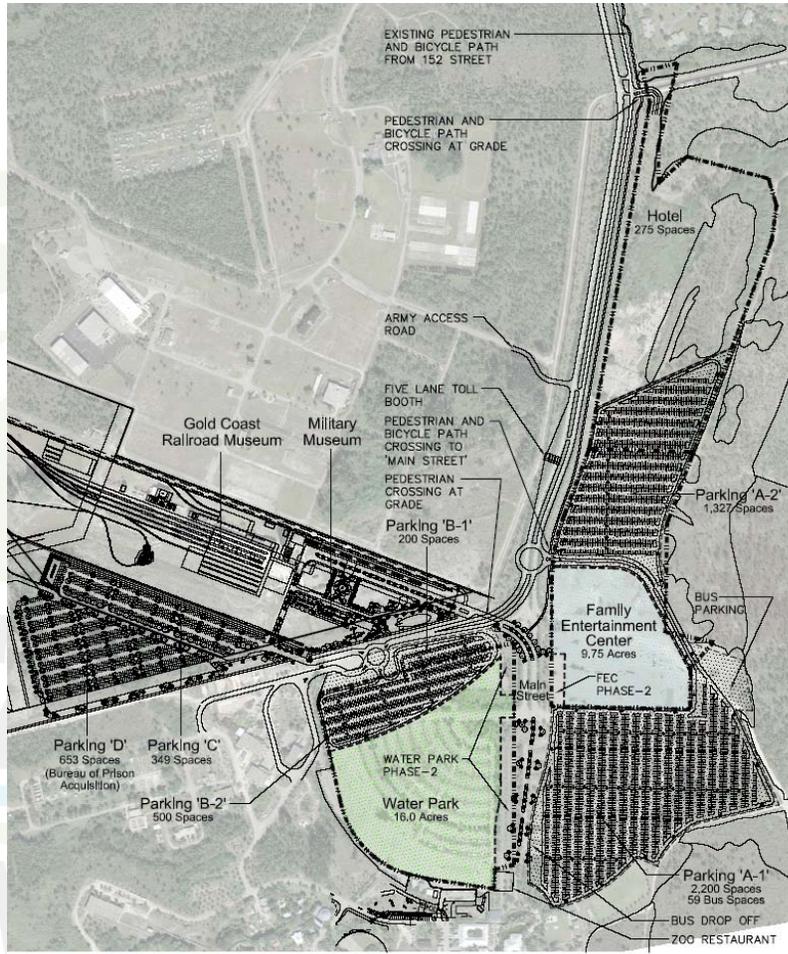
Site Context with proposed site highlighted in green and Zoo boundary in red

BACKGROUND

Previous Studies

Zoo Miami has gone through a variety of studies, but with regards to the site there are two that are of particular interest and relevance. There is the *Comprehensive Development Masterplan*, which was designed for the entirety of the Zoo in order to set a plan and land uses for a future cohesive development (shown below). The study is a very zoomed out plan for the different phases of development the Zoo wishes to go through. I was told this plan is outdated and that they are very open to new ideas and suggestions with regards to the Entertainment Area. The other is an *On-Site Traffic Study with Planning Assumptions, Layout, Parking, and On-Site Transportation* done for the entrance of the Zoo, which suggests the best locations for each of the elements of the program (shown below). Though the study is relatively new, I was also told that this is flexible. The information is as follows and copies of the studies can be provided upon request.

Miami Metrozoo Entertainment Area Overall Site Plan



Forbes Architects
 4295 Ponce de Leon Boulevard Suite 100
 Coral Gables, Florida 33146
 Florida Registration No. AA-P200104
 FAX 305.351.0409

Overall Site Plan
 Traffic Plan Study
 Miami Metro Zoo
 Miami, Florida

Site Plan nts

On-Site Traffic Study: Planning Assumptions, Layout, Parking, and On-Site Transportation

ORCA Consulting LLC and Forbes Architects

2009



Comprehensive Master Plan for different additions to Miami Zoo that will be built in phases.

This is a concept, nothing here is finalized or "designed".

Project Value

The project has various levels of value for me and for my professional future. The project involves a more commercial style of design that gears towards

that of resorts and amusement parks. This area of the profession is not only what I hope to concentrate on in my professional life, but these are also aspects of Landscape Architecture that are relatively unknown to me. I hope to use this project to gain a basal knowledge of these aspects so as to have them for my future.

The project is also an important project to me not only because I was born and raised in Miami, but also because I had volunteered at the Zoo for quite some time in my past. I have a lot of emotional stock in the zoo, and thus this project. I hope to create a product that could actually become reality and could help to revitalize Zoo Miami. The revitalization effort is not just to bring tourists into the site, but also to bring the residents back to Zoo Miami.

Major Issues

The Zoo Miami Entertainment Area site has a few potential issues. One such issue is that of stormwater management and grading. The site, like much of Miami and especially South Miami, is very flat. As a result of the site being flat and low-lying, it retains a lot of water during rain events. Finding ways to mediate this water and preventing flooding will prove to be a difficult task.

Another issue with the site is the lack of proposed architecture for the proposed program. One such element is the hotel, but also includes any buildings that are going to be located on the site. Without this information I will be forced to create very basic building footprints for the site. Lastly there is the issue of on-site parking. With the addition of new program elements on existing parking areas, much of the parking will have to be relocated. Also, parking will have to be added to the site to accommodate for its new uses. Due to this, creating connections

between the proposed non-parking program elements will be difficult to create without having these connections interrupted by parking. All these elements, though prevalent, are seemingly resolvable.

SITE CONTEXT

Physical Features

The site is currently a mix of undeveloped land and expanses of parking lot. There are various areas of parking, most of which need better connections between one another. Scattered throughout the parking lots are vegetated parking lot islands whose values need to be determined. As previously stated, the site is a low-lying flat area. The site also lacks contours and as a result it collects a significant amount of water during rain events. The removal and treatment of this stormwater will be a major factor in the design for the site. Further along in the analysis of the site, a soil survey is necessary in order to determine the permeability of the soils to see how well they drain stormwater. As far as current structures go, the only significant one on-site is the Gold Coast Railroad Museum. Just off-site are all of the Zoological Society of Florida buildings that need to be taken into account.

Surrounding Uses and Context

One of the major issues that Zoo Miami currently has is its proximity to different areas of Miami, especially the prominent tourist areas of Miami. While expectations that the project would take away tourism from Miami Beach are unreasonable, the area could become a daytime destination for families. The

immediate surrounding areas surrounding the Zoo have a variety of uses. Prior to entering into the Zoo is a major roadway that is surrounded by mostly residential properties with some commercial ones as well (in particular a shopping plaza to the Northeast of the entrance). Surrounding the Zoo on three sides (East, West, and South) are military bases and military housing, though the immediate area around is forested providing a buffer from these.

PROJECT DATA

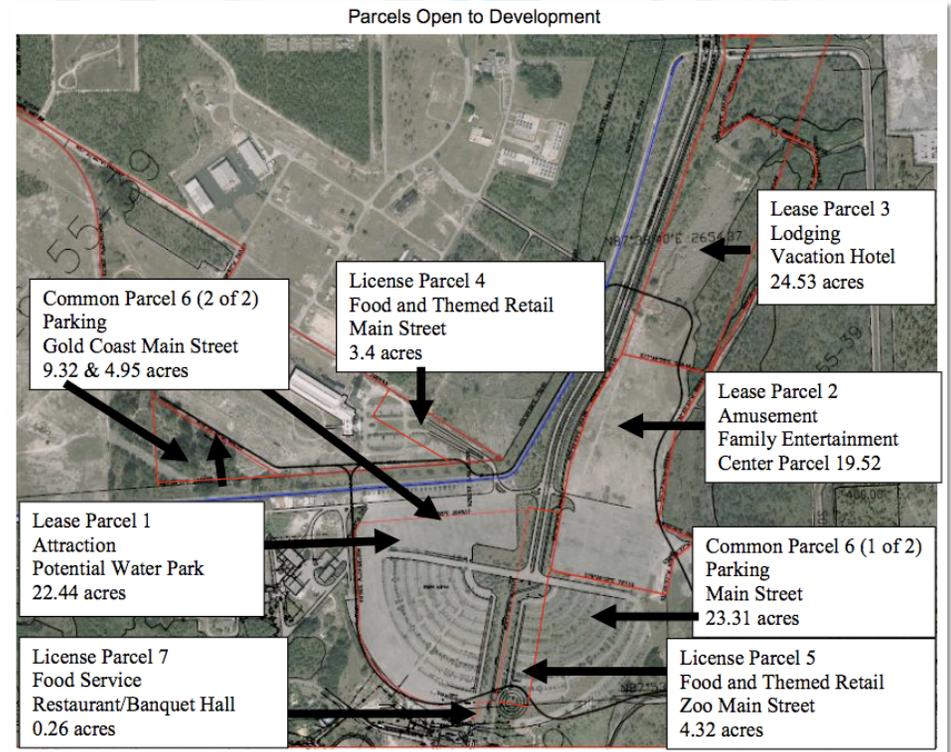
Existing Program

A revision of the desired program will most likely be in order, as well as a reorganization of the parcels of land that Miami-Dade County wishes to develop.

The program has been described as flexible, allowing for new suggestions for parcel uses (such as a different land use in place of a water park). Suggestions are open as long as they make sense and take into account existing utilities and infrastructure. As it is the program includes a water park, a family entertainment center, a vacation hotel, two areas of food service/specialty retail (main street themed), a banquet hall, and parking. What I intend to focus on is the overall connections between the elements with simple land use plans for many of the program elements (I will not be doing detailed designs for the individual areas). As for the two “Main Streets” and parking, I do intend to go into detail. A copy of the actual Request For Information’s program can be seen in the appendix.

All of the proposed elements are to be for people of all ages and should also relate to the existing Zoo fabric. The proposed attraction (water park) area is located on a 22-acre plot of land and has a maximum allowable height of 70 feet.

The proposed amusement (family entertainment center) area is located on a 19-acre plot of land. The proposed lodging (vacation hotel) area is located on a 24 acre plot of land. The proposed food service and specialty themed restaurant (main streets) areas are located on three acre (Gold Coast Railroad Museum main street) and four acre (Zoo Miami main street) plots of land. The parking area is located on 37 separate acres of land and can accommodate 3000 parking spaces. Lastly, the restaurant/banquet hall is located on a quarter acre of land. Below is a map of the existing program and each element’s designated parcels.



Proposed Land Use for Developable Parcels as per the traffic study done

Architecture and Structures

Currently the only structure the site has is the Gold Coast Railroad Museum, though the proposed designs must work with the existing buildings, architecture, and infrastructure of the entrance of Zoo Miami. Seeing as though the project is currently only in the Request For Information phase, the architecture of many of the program elements has not yet been designed. Thus I will be making simple building footprints and façade/building character suggestions in place of actual architecture.

Base Information

Currently have very limited base information, with most of it being presented in the pages of this proposal. The acreage for the site is in the existing traffic study shown in this packet. My contacts with the project have been incredibly helpful and have offered to provide me with any base information I need in the future. With future analysis, a better understanding of the site and more information will be provided.

Inventory Information

I currently do not have any inventory information. The goal for the remainder of the semester is to collect this information to have it available to start the spring semester.

Users

The site is primarily used by families with young children. The intent of the design is to bring more variety to the users of the site, while still maintaining the family oriented nature. The design of the site will also seek to increase

tourism, not only from out-of-towners but also from locals. A success would be a site that can attract some of the visitors that would otherwise be going to Miami Beach, while still creating an environment that locals can frequent.

PROPOSED RESULTS

Products

Products will be adjusted with more information and analysis.

Goals and Objectives

Case studies of projects with one or more similarities.

*I could not find any precedents to my project.

Analysis

*Vegetation, soils, topography, program, user, history, hydrology, etc.

Synthesis

Evaluation of Past Studies

*Based on both traffic study and comprehensive master plan.

Concept Plan

Land Use Plan

Master Plan

Phasing plan

Grading/Stormwater Management

Detail Plans

*Only for certain areas

Sections

SketchUp Model

*Possible

SCHEDULE

**Schedule is tentative.*

Fall Semester

- Further contact with clients
- Develop a plan for action
- Collect base information
- Goals and Objectives
- Case studies of projects with one or more similarities.
- Analysis

Spring Semester

- Week 1 – Synthesis / Book Layout
- Week 2 – Study Evaluation / Book Layout
- Week 3 - Concept Plan / Land Use Plan
- Week 4 – Land Use Plan / Master Plan
- Week 5 – **MID TERM REVIEWS** / Master Plan
- Week 6 – Post Review Corrections
- Week 7 – Post Review Corrections
- Week 8 – Phasing Plan
- Week 9 – Grading/Stormwater Management
- Week 10 – Detail Plans
- Week 11 – Detail Plans
- Week 12 - Sections

Week 13 – SketchUp Model

Week 14 – SketchUp Model / Finalize Book

Week 15 – Finalize Book

Week 16 – **FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

APPENDIX

The following is the program for the site as written in the Request For Information by Kevin Asher:

Attraction–

Approximately 22-acre parcel of land that is intended to be developed into a water park. The parcel lies to the northwest of the front gate of the zoo and is currently a parking lot. It has already been determined to be freely developable and free of environmental hazards.

If the WF is located here, the proposed venue should contain attractions and elements commonly found in contemporary and successful water parks. The WP may have rides and features that include, but are not limited to a lazy river, wave/surf pool, bowls, inner tube/mat racer slides, slide towers, flow riders, family raft rides, water coaster and interactive play areas. Attractions and elements should appeal to visitors of all ages.

The selected Proposer shall be responsible for all construction within and outside the WP area, inclusive of design and permitting, for all rides and attractions, support buildings, equipment areas, parking, access roads, traffic signalization and entrances necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas. There is a height limit of 70’ feet on this site. The Developer may provide for on-site parking within the WP parcel, or may consider shared public parking on adjacent parking areas under the exclusive control of Zoo Miami and possibly subject to a parking charge. The number and location of required spaces shall be determined by both provisions of the Code and departmental requirements. All parking revenues accrue solely to Miami-Dade County. During peak use periods, parking may be allowed to overflow to additional parking areas as determined by Miami Dade County. (Asher)

Amusement–

Approximately 19-acre parcel of land that is intended to be developed into a Family Entertainment Center. The parcel lies to the northwest of the front gate of the zoo and is currently a parking lot. It has already been determined to be freely developable and free of environmental hazards.

The proposed Family Entertainment Center should be both complimentary and compatible with the Zoo Miami and the adjacent Water Park, although it need not focus on animals. Attractions and elements must appeal to visitors of all ages

and may include indoor arcades (electronic games, simulations, etc.), indoor challenge area (ice/roller skating, covered kart racing, laser tag, etc.), outdoor children's area (fee/free rides, games of skill and chance), performance space and dynamic audience participation areas. Over 75,000 sf of specialty themed retail and food service area already approved for this area. No miniature golf attraction will be considered for inclusion in the project.

The selected Proposer shall be responsible for all construction within and outside the FEC area, inclusive of design and permitting, for all elements, support buildings, equipment areas, parking, access roads, traffic signalization and entrances necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, service vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas. The Developer may provide for on-site parking within the FEC parcel, or may consider shared public parking on adjacent parking areas under the exclusive control of Zoo Miami and possibly subject to a parking charge. The number and location of required spaces shall be determined by both provisions of the Code and departmental requirements. All parking revenues accrue solely to Miami-Dade County. During peak use periods, parking may be allowed to overflow to additional parking areas as determined by Miami Dade County. (Asher)

Lodging-

The Vacation Hotel (VH) attraction parcel is an approximately twenty-four-acre site (24.53 acres) and lies furthest northwest of the front gate of Zoo Miami (Map 3). The site, currently unimproved, is exempted from development restrictions, can be leased for private development and has already been determined to be freely developable and clear of environmental hazards.

If located here, the Vacation Hotel may have 200 rooms and not exceed 70 feet tall. This low to mid-range hotel is designed to extend stay time for on-site visitors. It is more likely to include no restaurant and few resort amenities.

The selected Proposer shall be responsible for all construction within and outside the VH area, inclusive of design and permitting, for all elements, support buildings, equipment areas, parking, access roads, traffic signalization and entrances necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, service vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas. The Developer must provide for on-site parking within the VH parcel, but may consider shared public parking on adjacent parking areas under the exclusive control of Miami Metrozoo and subject to a parking charge. The number and location of required spaces shall be determined by both provisions of the Code and departmental requirements. All parking revenues accrue solely to Miami-Dade County. (Asher)

Food Service and Specialty Themed Retail-

The Gold Coast Main Street (GCMS) parcel is an approximately three acre site and lies within the Gold Coast Railroad Museum Park property. The site, currently a parking lot, is exempted from development restrictions, can be licensed for private development and has already been determined to be freely developable and clear of environmental hazards.

The proposed GCMS venue should be both complimentary and compatible with the Zoo Miami and adjacent Water Park, although it need not be

animals or historic transportation. Food service and specialty themed retail, along with architectural amenities consistent with the attraction are required. Over 30,000 sf of food service area and 20,000 sf of specialty themed retail have already been approved for this area.

The selected Proposer shall be responsible for all construction within and outside the Gold Coast Main Street area, inclusive of design and permitting, for all elements, support buildings, equipment areas, parking, access roads, traffic signalization and entrances necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, service vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas. The Developer must provide for on-site parking within the Gold Coast Railroad Museum parcel, and may consider shared public parking on adjacent parking areas under the exclusive control of Miami Dade County and subject to a parking charge. The number and location of required spaces shall be determined by both provisions of the Code and departmental requirements. All parking revenues accrue solely to Miami-Dade County. During peak use periods, parking may be allowed to overflow to additional parking areas as determined by Miami Dade County. (Asher)

Food Service and Specialty Themed Retail-

The Zoo Miami Main Street (ZMMS) parcel is an approximately four acre site (4.32 acres) and lies within the Zoo Miami property (Map 3). The site, currently a landscaped walkway, is exempted from development restrictions, can be licensed for private development and has already been determined to be freely developable and clear of environmental hazards.

If located here, the proposed venue should be both complimentary and compatible with the Zoo Miami and any adjacent Water Park. Food service, retail and the architectural amenities in support of these improvements must appeal to visitors of all ages. Only semi-permanent sales areas along the Main Street are permissible.

The selected Proposer shall be responsible for all construction within and outside the ZMMS area, inclusive of design and permitting, for all elements, support buildings, parking, access roads, traffic signalization and entrances necessary to provide seamless access for patron vehicles, service vehicles, on-site trolley vehicles and pedestrians between all attraction areas. Parking relies on parking developed for Zoo Miami. (Asher)

Parking-

The Common Parking (CP) parcel is an approximately thirty-seven acre site, comprised of three separate areas (23 acres, 9 acres, and 5 acres) and located within Zoo Miami and Gold Coast Railroad Museum Park properties. The parcel, currently unimproved, is exempted from development restrictions, can be leased for private development and has already been determined to be freely developable and clear of environmental hazards.

The CP parcel is designed to provide common and shared parking for the entire Entertainment Area. Depending on design, the property can support over 3000 parking spaces. The Developer may utilize this parcel for on-site and overflow parking under the exclusive control of Zoo Miami and subject to a parking charge. The Developer would be responsible for upgrading and

constructing lighted parking to the requirements of current Code. The number and location of required spaces shall be determined by both provisions of the Code and departmental requirements. All parking revenues accrue solely to Miami-Dade County. During peak use periods, parking may be allowed to overflow to all parking areas within the Entertainment Area as determined by Miami Dade County. (Asher)

Food Service-

The Restaurant/Banquet Hall (RBH) parcel is an approximately one-quarter-acre site (0.26 acres) and located within the Zoo Miami. The site, currently supporting parking, can be licensed for private development and has already been determined to be freely developable and clear of environmental hazards.

The proposed RBH venue designed to both complimentary and compatible with the Zoo Miami and the adjacent Water Park, although it need not focus on animals. The RBH is approved for 19,000 sf, where the bottom 9,000 sf support a conventional restaurant at the front gate of Zoo Miami; and the second floor of the facility supports a 10,000 sf banquet hall for catered events. There is some expectation that the venue includes animal exhibits, and the County will commit to certain maintenance of these areas at its expense.

The selected Proposer shall be responsible for all construction within and outside the RBH area, inclusive of design and permitting, for all elements, equipment and exhibit areas necessary to provide seamless access for pedestrians between all attraction areas. The Developer may rely on existing parking within Zoo Miami for all restaurant and banquet functions. (Asher)

