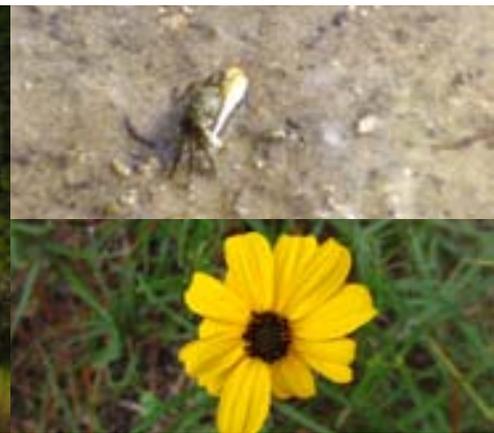




The Fiddler Festival Park &
River of Man RV Resort
Bringing Tourism Back to the Big Bend

Joshua D. Roedell



Acknowledgements

Many people donated their time and knowledge to helping me do the best I could on this endeavor, and I would like to take a moment to offer my appreciation for their services.

First, I'd like to thank Dean Fowler for offering me the opportunity to participate in this project. His hospitality, enthusiasm, and support made the experience fun and educational.

Next I would like to thank all of the contacts who helped me gain a better understanding of the project. Without their knowledge and experience, I would not have been able to complete the project as I have. Special thanks to: Bob Grist, Meg Infiorati-Fleming, Danny Griner, Mark Reblin, William Ball, Brian Kauffman, Dennis Smith, and Tim Deputy.

And finally, I would like to thank my family for their unwavering support. I would not be here at the University of Florida if it were not for their generosity, love, and belief in my ability to achieve. I would especially like to thank my loving fiancée, Hillary, who was understanding, supporting, and comforting through all the late nights, long weekends, and stressful moments. Thanks to all my family for your love... I could not have made it without you.



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Project Impetus

The Deepwater Horizon Oil spill, the Taylor County Restore Act, and Dean Fowler

“What would you do with \$12 million dollars?” This was the question the Taylor County Restore Act Committee offered to the public in a newspaper article. The committee has a specific purpose. To invest this grant money into regenerating damages caused by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. Coastal communities along the gulf suffered both environmentally and economically from the spill. Taylor County is one of the affected coastal communities and a local business owner named Dean Fowler has a plan to bring tourism to a small town, but it will be coming in some large vehicles.

Mr. Fowler proposes that the Restore Act funding be used to build a festival park and RV resort on a Taylor County owned parcel of unused land on the edge of his hometown, Steinhatchee. The RV resort is proposed to generate tourist dollars in the area while the festival park is proposed to accommodate some of the local festivals which are growing both in popularity and size.



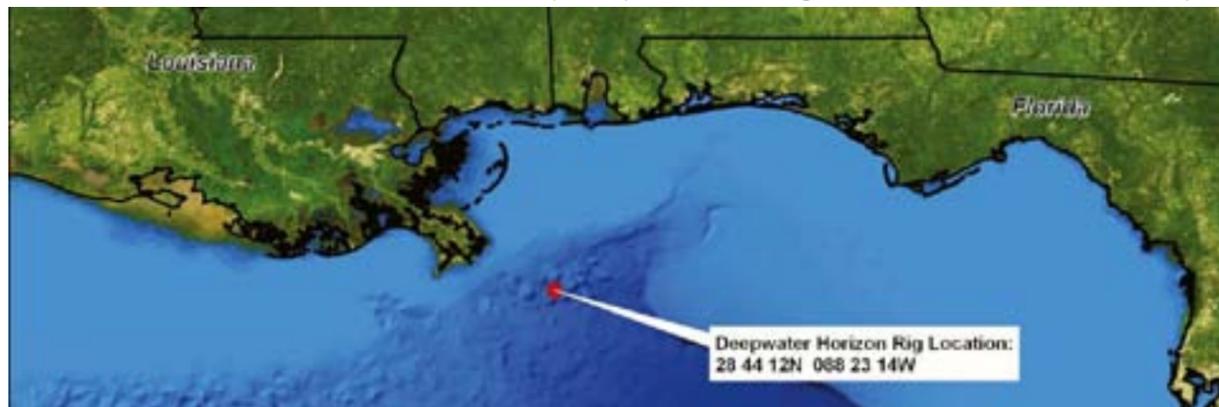
The Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill



<http://www.palmbeachpost.com/news/state-regional/hope-that-oil-spill-effects-already-waning-causes-/nL9Bz/>



<http://sites.psu.edu/climatechangeconomics/2014/03/26/economics-and-oil-spills/>



<http://www.pnas.org/content/109/50/20260/F1.expansion.html>

In April of 2010 an estimated 4.9 million barrels of oil (210 million gallons) was released into the Gulf of Mexico after the Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded and sank into the sea near the location of the Mississippi River Delta.

Due to oil covered beaches and the fear of contaminated waters and seafood, tourism along the gulf coast has been impacted by the environmental disaster.

Estimated losses to Florida tourism industry:

- 50% - 195,000 jobs and \$10.9 billion in spending.
- 10% loss - 39,000 jobs and \$2.2 billion in spending.

http://money.cnn.com/2010/06/08/news/economy/bp_oil_spill_florida/

THE TAYLOR COUNTY RESTORE ACT



The Taylor County Restore Act is responsible for handling the funds dispersed by the federal government by the Clean Water Act. The Clean Water Act enabled BP to be found liable for 4\$ billion dollars in damages due to the oil spill. The Restore Act will receive 80% of these monies to disperse throughout the coastal states and counties affected by the spill. The Taylor County Board of County Commissioners are responsible for the use of the money provided by the Taylor County Restore Act, and they have asked the public to bring forward proposals for how to best use the funds to better Taylor County. There are specific criteria for using the funds, as stated below.

Eligibility Criteria for Funding, per Restore Act Legislation

- o **Restoration and protection of natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region.**
- o **Mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife, and natural resources**
- o Implementation of a federally approved marine, coastal or comprehensive conservation management plan, including fisheries monitoring
- o **Workforce development and job creation**
- o Improvements to state parks in coastal areas affected by Deepwater Horizon spill
- o **Infrastructure projects benefitting economy or ecological resources, including ports**
- o **Coastal flood protection and related infrastructure**
- o Planning assistance
- o **Promotion of tourism, including recreational fishing**
- o **Promotion of consumption of seafood harvested from the Gulf Coast region**

Distribution of Clean Water Act Penalties to Gulf Recovery per the Restore Act

- o Depending on the settlement, Taylor County will be receiving between \$3 million and \$12 million dollars.
- o Local funds will come to the county.
- o Funds awarded based upon consistency with Eligibility Criteria.
- o Taylor County Board of County Commissioners are given sole authority over distribution over local funds.

Dean Fowler and the Festival Park Proposal



Dean Fowler on the left, examines a drain pipe during a site visit.

Dean Fowler

Dean Fowler is a resident of Steinhatchee and a local business owner. He is the owner of the Steinhatchee Landing Resort and he hopes that the Taylor County Restore Act funding can be used to boost the local economy. While there are certainly some attractions that make Steinhatchee a seasonal destination, Dean feels that there needs to be something to activate a year-round industry in Steinhatchee. He believes that an RV park can help provide this year-round economy.

Mr. Fowler has a very interesting history as an entrepreneur. As a young man in 1962, Dean made a living selling medical supplies. Nursing homes were widely needed and Dean supplied them with the furniture and furnishings. He got the idea of converting old abandoned school house buildings into nursing homes, and he quickly renovated many of them due to the increasing demand. Before he retired from the nursing home business, Dean had designed and leased over fifty nursing homes, twenty of which he personally owned.

Eventually Dean ended up with a mobile home manufacturing plant, and became interested in the mobile home industry. He does not own any mobile home parks, but he has many years experience in the hospitality industry and he sees a lot of potential for mobile home parks in Steinhatchee.

Dean is a member of the Steinhatchee River Chamber of Commerce and he wishes to see the town capture a more steady, year-round clientele for the tourism industry. Tourism in the area is limited to the summer scalloping season, though there is much to do in the area throughout the year. The annual Fiddler Crab Festival has become highly successful, so much that it has outgrown its boundaries in the little town. Dean's proposal for the Taylor County Restore Act provides a designated space for future festivals as well as an RV park which would act as the economic driver for the area.

The Proposal

Dean's proposal suggests using a Taylor County owned parcel of land to develop a large-scale RV resort and a designated park area for festivals in the town. The festival park is proposed to provide a better space for the several festivals which already take place in town, as well as any future festivals which are likely to come to fruition in the near future. The current festivals have continued to grow, especially the Fiddler Crab Festival and as of right now the town has very little space to accommodate them. Without a designated park space of appropriate size, these festivals are currently taking place in the Taylor County owned right-of-ways which causes traffic issues and is annoying to residents who have to deal with festival goers essentially parking in their front yards. Therefore, this proposal will provide a park of ample space for festival activities and parking.

The RV park is the economic part of the proposal. An RV park will be designed to provide funding for the maintenance of the park, as well as a place for visitors to stay. This park will be classified as a destination park, which means people will be coming to the area for a specific purpose such as a festival or paddling or other recreational activities. Festival goers, fishing enthusiasts, hunters, bird watchers, paddling enthusiasts, snowbirds, and many more people of different recreational passions will find Steinhatchee a great place to visit. Not only will the park provide accommodations for temporary users, but there is the potential to attract the long-term user as well. Thousands of snowbirds flock to Florida in rumbly RVs every year to ride out the winter. The Florida Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds (FARVC) claims that this migratory population is expected to increase in the future, and Steinhatchee is in the position to capture that clientele.

The RV park and festival park are to be developed by using the funds provided to Taylor County via the Restore Act. The county should use the grant money to develop the park and its infrastructure. The park property would then be leased out to an RV Park Management Company who would be responsible for the operation and maintenance of both the RV park and the festival park.

Intro to the Area



Regional Location

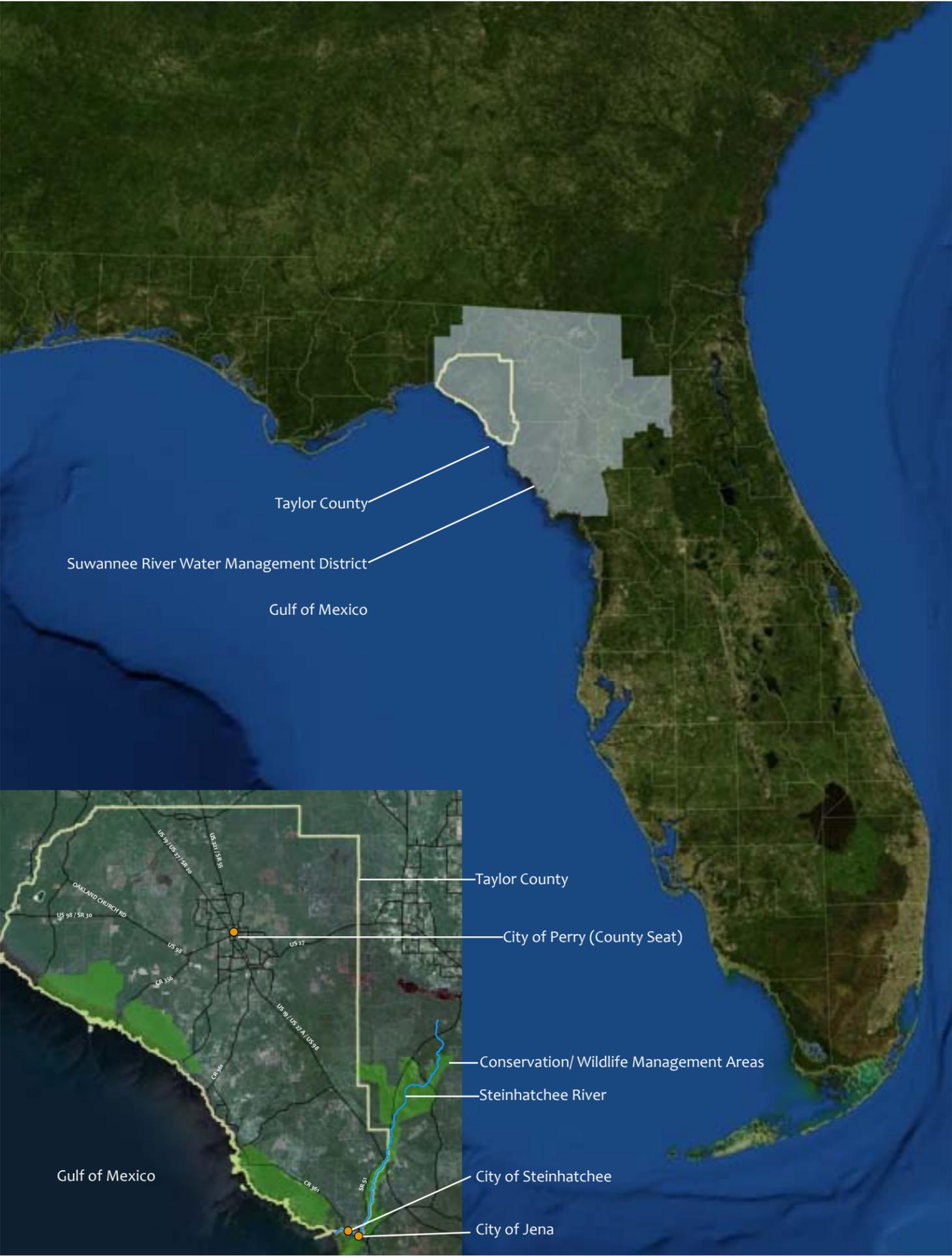
Taylor County

The project site is located in Taylor County along Florida’s Nature Coast. Perry is the county seat and as of the 2010 census, the population was 22,570. The main industries in the area are timber, cattle, and tourism. Commercial fishing was once a large part of the coastal economy, but fishing regulations have caused the rapid demise of the industry.

Florida’s Nature Coast and the Big Bend

As stated on the Nature Coast Coalition website, Florida’s Nature Coast has been known by boaters and travelers as “the lonely leg” of Florida. Highly natural and rugged, much of the original character of the county has been preserved over the years of Florida’s population growth. John Muir once described the area as, “A string of counties studded with emerald-like gulf waters, deep springs and rivers, stretching along the same Florida coast.” Still highly rural, the area is a great destination for tourist wanting to experience Florida in its natural beauty. The Big Bend boasts many recreational opportunities including hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, paddling, boating, swimming, and much more!

With all these natural attractions around, we believe that the RV park aspect of the project could be highly successful, especially in Steinhatchee due to its location on both the Gulf of Mexico and the Steinhatchee River. The rural, natural character of the land is its greatest asset, and we also believe that RV parks can help provide visitors a place to stay while also helping to conserve land. RV parks are high density compared to typical housing, therefore allowing more visitors to stay in the area with a lower impact on the land.

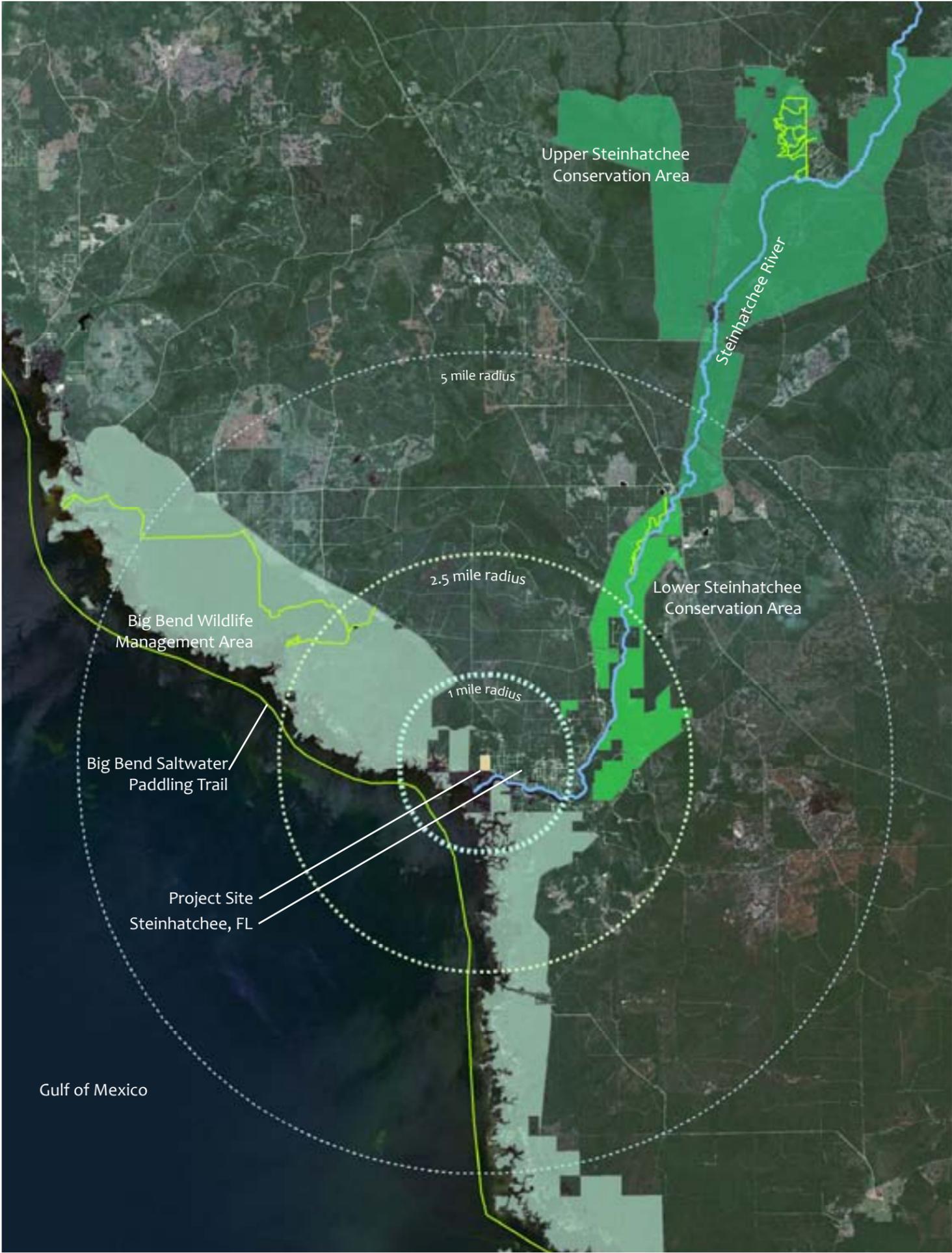


Context and Recreation Opportunities

The map to the left shows the close proximity of Steinhatchee to the many recreational opportunities around it. Wildlife management areas border the town on all sides. The Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail snakes by through the gulf within a mile of the town and the Steinhatchee River borders the site to the south. All sorts of recreational opportunities exist within ten miles of the town.

The Big Bend Wildlife Management Area and the Steinhatchee Conservation Areas offer all sorts of activities for the outdoor enthusiast. These areas are managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and are being utilized to offer more wildlife viewing opportunities to Florida tourists. Historically, wildlife management areas have been used for hunting and fishing, however the state's dramatic growth has steadily increased the need for additional recreation opportunities on FWC-managed lands.

In 2003 the FWC commissioned a Master Plan for the areas it manages to look at the potential of increasing recreational opportunities in the management areas. They found that due to a growing, vacationing population, that there is a high demand for better access to these areas for more than just hunting and fishing opportunities. In a world where natural areas are being eaten up by development, providing access to nature will become more important. Taylor County has an abundance of natural areas, and this project recognizes the unique opportunities provided by the close proximity of Steinhatchee to these recreation areas.



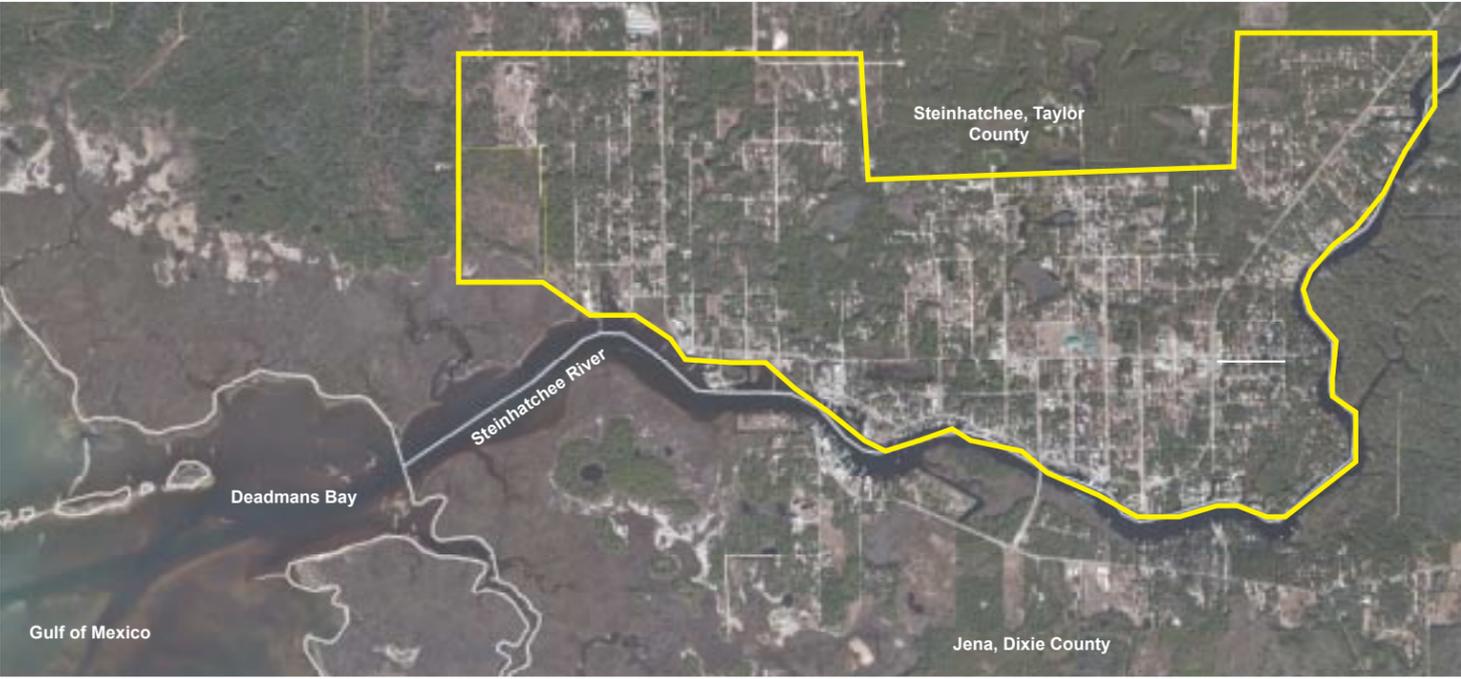
Steinhatchee, Florida



http://www.menupix.com/town_img/SteinhatcheeFLHP.jpg



https://images.marinas.com/med_res_id/61461



Steinhatchee, Florida is a small, unincorporated, fishing village which lies at the mouth of the Steinhatchee River where it empties into the Gulf of Mexico. Once an area run by the commercial fishing industry, Steinhatchee these days has more stake in the hospitality industry. Since the town is unincorporated it has no government to manage it and all the land is privately owned except for that which is owned by the county or corporations.

The word Steinhatchee is a derivative of the Native American “esteen hatchee” which means river (hatchee) of man (esteen). The town area has a long history of human habitation. From prehistoric man to pirates to the modern angler, the Steinhatchee area has had something to offer settlers throughout time. During the Civil War the Confederacy had “salt works” in the area to provide salt for the army. Commercial fishing of mullet, trout, blue crabs, scallops and sponges were harvested for markets around the country for many years before the decline of sea life caused the need for stricter regulations and net bans which decimated the industry.

Despite the devastation of the commercial fishing industry, the hospitality industry in Steinhatchee continues to grow. Resorts, hotels/motels, condos, fishing charters, boat rentals, restaurants, and festivals have begun to grow in the town and are providing an economy for the area.



<http://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/79656>



<http://static.panoramio.com/photos/large/10370977.jpg>



<http://www.beachguide.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/John-scalloping1.jpg>



<http://www.naturalnorthflorida.com/img/4656412112025/sea-hag-marina.jpg>

Case Studies



Williston Crossings RV Resort

Williston, Florida

135 acres

400 spaces

Contact: Dennis Smith, Maintenance Supervisor

Amenities offered:

- Pool
- Fitness Center
- Restrooms/showers
- Laundry
- Clubhouse with kitchen
- Large pavilion
- Gazebo/fire pit
- Viewing Deck
- Shuffleboard
- Tennis
- Horseshoes
- Shop
- Back-in and Pull-through sites
- 30/50 amp electric hookups
- Sewage and Water hookups
- Cable TV and Wifi
- Dog Park



Williston Crossings RV Resort is the first RV park we visited on our trip. While there we were shown around by Dennis, the resort maintenance supervisor. Dennis is an RV enthusiast himself and he has many insights about the wants and needs of the RV crowd and he was willing to share his knowledge with us.

First off, he explained that RVers are a sociable people. They like to gather and have fun, so spaces where they can mingle are of utmost importance. Also, first impressions are very important, so keeping a good looking park is important. RVers also want all the conveniences of regular life. Wifi is a must and cable television is a good thing to offer as well. Having laundry facilities and shower rooms are important.



Winter Quarters RV Resort

Williston, Florida

135 acres

410 spaces

Amenities offered:

- Clubhouse
- Shuffleboard
- Pool
- Whirlpool/Spa/Hot Tub
- Fishing Lake/River/Ocean Frontage
- Fitness Center
- RV Storage
- Pets Welcome
- Nature/Hiking Trails
- Restroom/Shower Facilities
- Laundry Facilities
- Back-in and Pull-through sites
- 30/50 amp electric hookups
- Sewage and Water hookups
- Cable TV and Wifi



This resort had a particularly nice clubhouse and pool area and we were able to examine the RV spaces for spatial dimensions. Many of the sites in Winter Quarters were situated quite closely together (15' from space to space) and had very little buffering between neighbors. There was also little canopy for shade, and the utilities were not mounted in sturdy pedestals.



Sun n' Fun RV Resort

Sarasota, Florida

177 acres

1500 spaces

Contact: Tim Deputy, General Manager, ARVC member

Amenities offered:

- Clubhouse
- Shuffleboard
- Bocci ball
- Horseshoes
- Outdoor and Indoor pools
- Splash park
- Whirlpool/Spa/Hot Tub
- Sports Pavilion (tennis, pickleball, etc.)
- Lawn bowling area
- Sailing/Fishing Lake
- Fitness Center
- Arts and Crafts Rooms
- Shop
- RV Storage
- Dog Park
- Nature/Hiking Trails
- Restroom/Shower Facilities
- Laundry Facilities
- Back-in and Pull-through sites
- 30/50 amp electric hookups
- Sewage and Water hookups
- Cable TV and Wifi
- and much more....



<http://static.panoramio.com/photos/large/101703155.jpg>



<http://blog.goodsamclub.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Sun-n-Fun-pool-Sarasota-FL.jpg>



<http://www.sunnfunfl.com/sarasota-rv-resorts/gallery.cfm?albid=7&page=1>

We received a wealth of information while visiting the Sun n' Fun RV Resort. This resort is a far greater scale than what is available in Steinhatchee, but it was a great place to see the potential of the RV industry. We were escorted around by the general manager Tim Deputy. Tim gave us a wealth of information based on his 30 years of experience in the hospitality industry.

Tim explained that there is big business to be had in capturing the snowbird market. He also stressed that RVers are social people and need spaces to gather, and that spaces should be safe and accessible. Grass and space are desired, and social sports like pickle ball and petanque are very popular.

Tips for RV space design - Tim suggested that all the utility hookups should be mounted on a sturdy pedestal and that they be centrally located in the site. Patios should be long enough so that doors will open onto the patio.



The Program

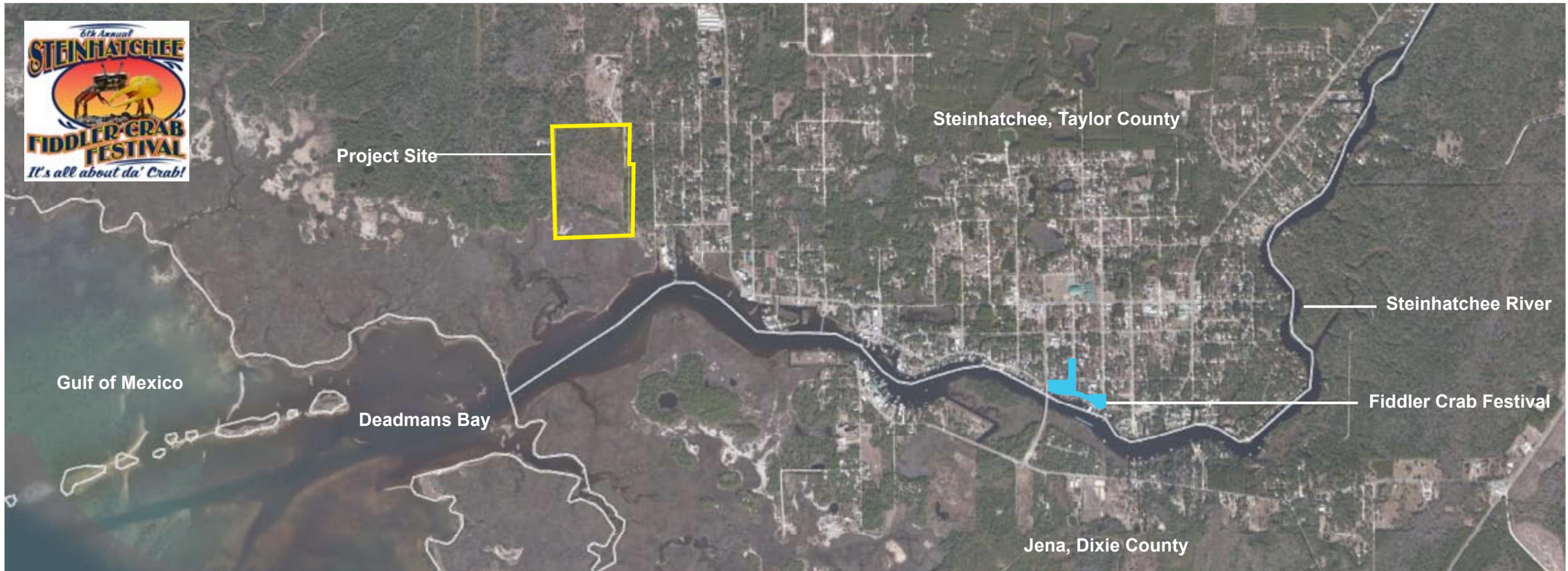
After visiting several RV parks and getting input from the park managers we redefined the program to include the basic amenities and services needed to attract RV enthusiasts to our the park. Our experiences touring different RV facilities not only helped us narrow down the program, but also gave us important insight into design considerations for the function of the RV park. The revised program is as follows:

- Festival park space (including pavilion and restrooms)**
- Full site hookups (sewage, water, electric)**
- Pull-through and Back-in sites**
- Clubhouse and pool**
- Management office**
- Recreation room**
- Public restrooms**
- Laundry**
- Hiking trails**
- Maintenance facility/ dumpsters**
- Sports facilities (pickleball, bocci, lawn bowling, tennis, shuffleboard, horseshoes)**
- Regenerated Wetlands/ Stormwater Feature**



The Fiddler Crab Festival





Date: February 14-16, 2014

Contacts: Meg Inforati-Fleming, former president - Steinhatchee River Chamber of Commerce
Dean Fowler, member - Steinhatchee River Chamber of Commerce

This past February I had the pleasure of visiting Steinhatchee for the 6th Annual Fiddler Crab Festival. The festival is put on by the Steinhatchee River Chamber of Commerce and increases in size every year. The festival offers an arts festival feel with the air of a county fair. The program includes art and food vendors, rides, games, activities, cook offs, fishing competitions, art competitions, live musical performances and much more.

As the Fiddler Festival expands, it continues to run out of space for its increasing needs. Originally beginning at the town Community Center with a few booths and activities, the current Festival spills out into the county owned roads. Parking is handled informally for the event, wherever an open patch of grass in the ROW exists, a vehicle is soon to park.

Meg has been the driving force for the Fiddler Crab Festival throughout its history. This year, she is happy to report, the festival made more money than it ever has in its history. The Steinhatchee River Chamber managed to earn \$19,000 dollars from the festival in 2014, up from \$1,700 in the previous year. It also has become so popular with vendors that she has had to turn people away because there is not enough space in the current area to accommodate more vendors.

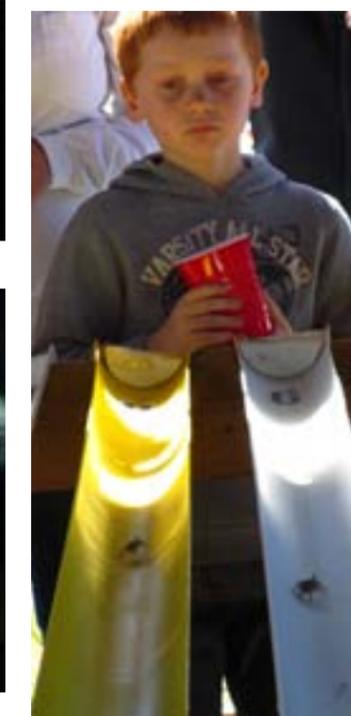
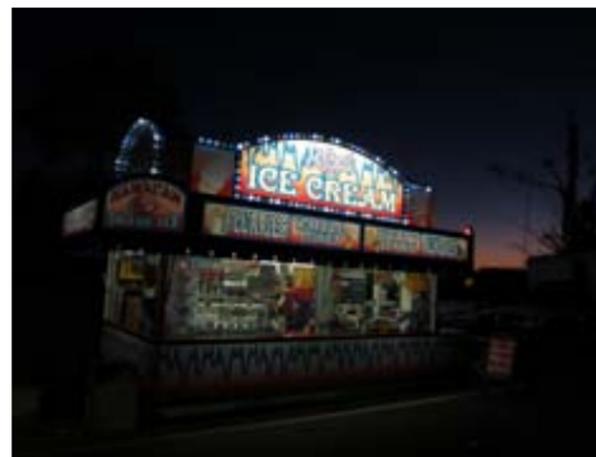
Meg notes that there is a lot more opportunity for festivals and activities in Steinhatchee aside from the Fiddler Crab Festival, and having a designated space to do so would be helpful. One day Meg and a fellow chamber member sat down to brainstorm the opportunities for more festivals in the area, and they came up with a list a mile long. She said some festival opportunities, such as traveling festivals, have been missed due to the fact that they have no place to hold the event.

Some other events already occurring in the area are numerous fishing tournaments, the Big Bend Canoe and Kayak Race, the Hidden Coast Paddling Festival, and the Hatchtoberfest. As of right now, many of these events occur at the town community center, but space is very limited. With only a half an acre of land, this space is soon overflowing into the Taylor County owned road right-of-ways where the majority of the Fiddler Crab festival is now held.

This limitation of space is the biggest issue facing the town and its festivals. Hundreds of vehicles filled the shoulders of the road during the festival, and disgruntled neighbors have begun to put out “no parking” signs out of frustration from people parking in their front yards. Traffic through the town is disturbed and finding a place to park is the most frequent complaint among festival goers. Providing a new space for the festivals of Steinhatchee will allow the chamber of commerce to take on more ambitious projects in the future.

Fiddler Festival Areas and Program

The image below describes the general layout of the most recent Fiddler Festival. It's location in the heart of the town near the iconic Steinhatchee Bridge, the river, and the community center give visitors an opportunity to see some of the nicer qualities of Steinhatchee, but the spatial arrangement is inefficient and crowded. Up from sixty the previous year, this year's 144 vendors are beginning to push the extents of the space available at the current downtown site.



Area Analysis of Festival Space

1. Community Center Area: Information and announcements, Captain’s breakfast, raffles, Swampwater Cook off, Rubber Duck River Race, photo contest, boot art contest, restrooms, arts & crafts booths

2. Playground Areas: Fiddler crab races, playground, petting zoo, carnival rides, portalets (3), library

3. Vendor Areas: Arts & Crafts vendors (123), food vendors (21), pedestrian circulation, picnic benches, car show, portalets (3)

4. Stage/Performance Area: Suwannee River Jam Auditions, beer garden, ATM, portalets (12)

5. Parking Area: Estimated 500+ cars at peak festival hours parked throughout ROWs



Parking Area
 Estimated 500 - 700 cars parked

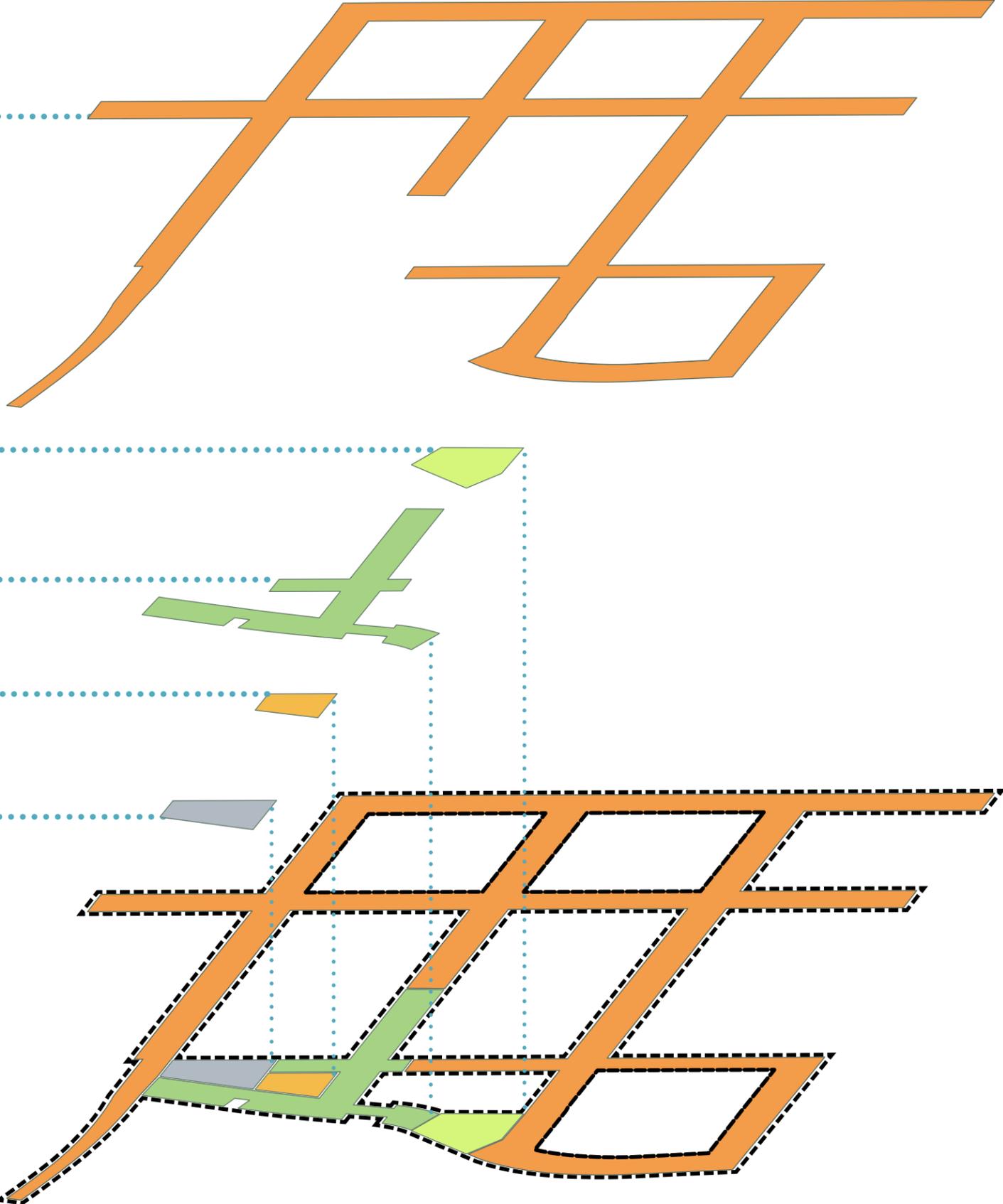
Stage/ Performance Area
 0.8 acres (36,743 square feet)

Vendor Area
 4.3 acres (185,780 square feet)

Community Center Area
 0.5 acres (20,090 square feet)

Playground Area
 0.8 acres (33,533 square feet)

Total Estimated Area needed
 11.4 acres



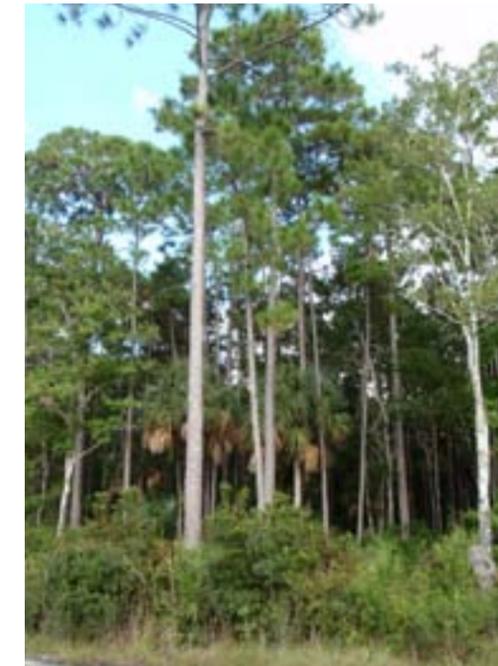
The Site





The project site is a parcel owned by Taylor County and is located to the north of the Steinhatree River and east of the Gulf of Mexico. It sits on the western edge of town and is completely undeveloped. It is heavily vegetated and is in the process of regeneration after a previous owner attempted to develop the land.

The previous owner purchased the land in 2004 and despite the property being completely covered by wetlands, the owner attempted to develop the land without acquiring the appropriate permits. The EPA discovered what was happening on site and put a halt to the destruction, but it was too late. The majority of the site had been cleared out and the drainage disturbed. The official penalties faced by the owner are unknown, but the land was turned over to Taylor County in 2010 and has been in a process of regeneration ever since. All the exact methods of regeneration used on the land are unknown, but some replanting was done and the site has become vigorously overgrown except for a few trails traversing the property.



Site Analysis



Wetlands

Wetlands Contact: Brian Kauffman, Suwannee River Water Management District

Past owner of site attempted to develop without permit, disturbed large amounts of wetlands. Wetland delineation shown below is questionable (data provided by FGDL).

It is very costly to impact wetlands by development:

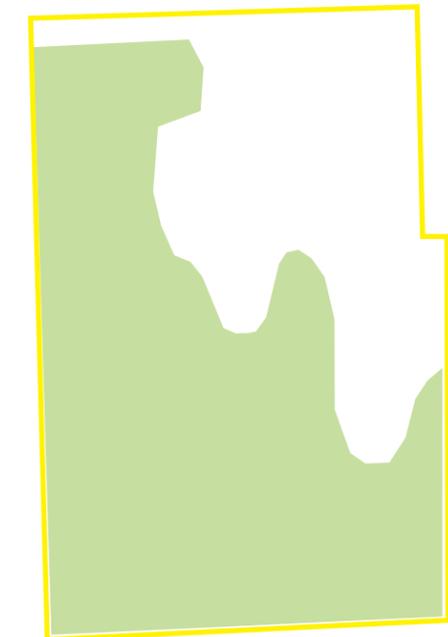
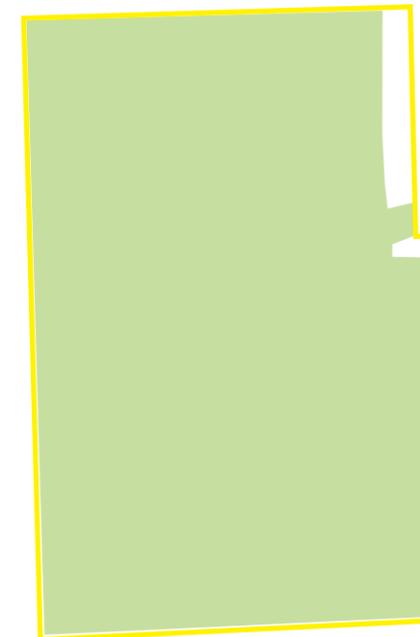
- Must get development permitted
- Decide whether to mitigate on site or buy credits from a mitigation bank.
- Approximately \$50,000 per acre.

Opportunities:

- Site is already disturbed, which will perhaps allow new development on site.
- Ecosystem restoration is on list of Taylor County Restore Act. Allowing some reclamation could be an opportunity to secure funding from Restore Act.

Constraints:

- Wetlands are costly to impact.
- Delineation shown below places wetlands in area for prime site access, as well as the majority of the site.



Aerial Image - 2004

- Site is untouched by development.
- Site is almost entirely covered by vegetation/canopy.
- Site is almost entirely covered by wetlands.

Aerial Image - current

- Site is heavily impacted by development.
- Wetlands delineation is questionable due to visual appearance of site damage.
- Wetlands remaining are shown as still covering most of the site.



Sewage Analysis

Waste Treatment Contact: **Mark Reblin, Big Bend Water Authority**
 William Ball, Campground Engineers.

Currently, the Big Bend Water Authority handles the wastewater facility in Steinhatchee. Many of the buildings in town are using septic systems for sewage treatment, which have been identified as a potential hazard considering the proximity to the water. The Big Bend is trying to put all of Steinhatchee on their waste water system, and they have infrastructure located very close to the site.

- Sewage system must be water tight in flood zones.
- Wetlands may pose an issue for running sewer lines.
- Can hook up to BBWA system - cost depends on RV Park density.
- New lift station will be required to pump sewage to existing lift station. Should be centralized to make shorter distances for waste travel from RVs.



Proximity Analysis

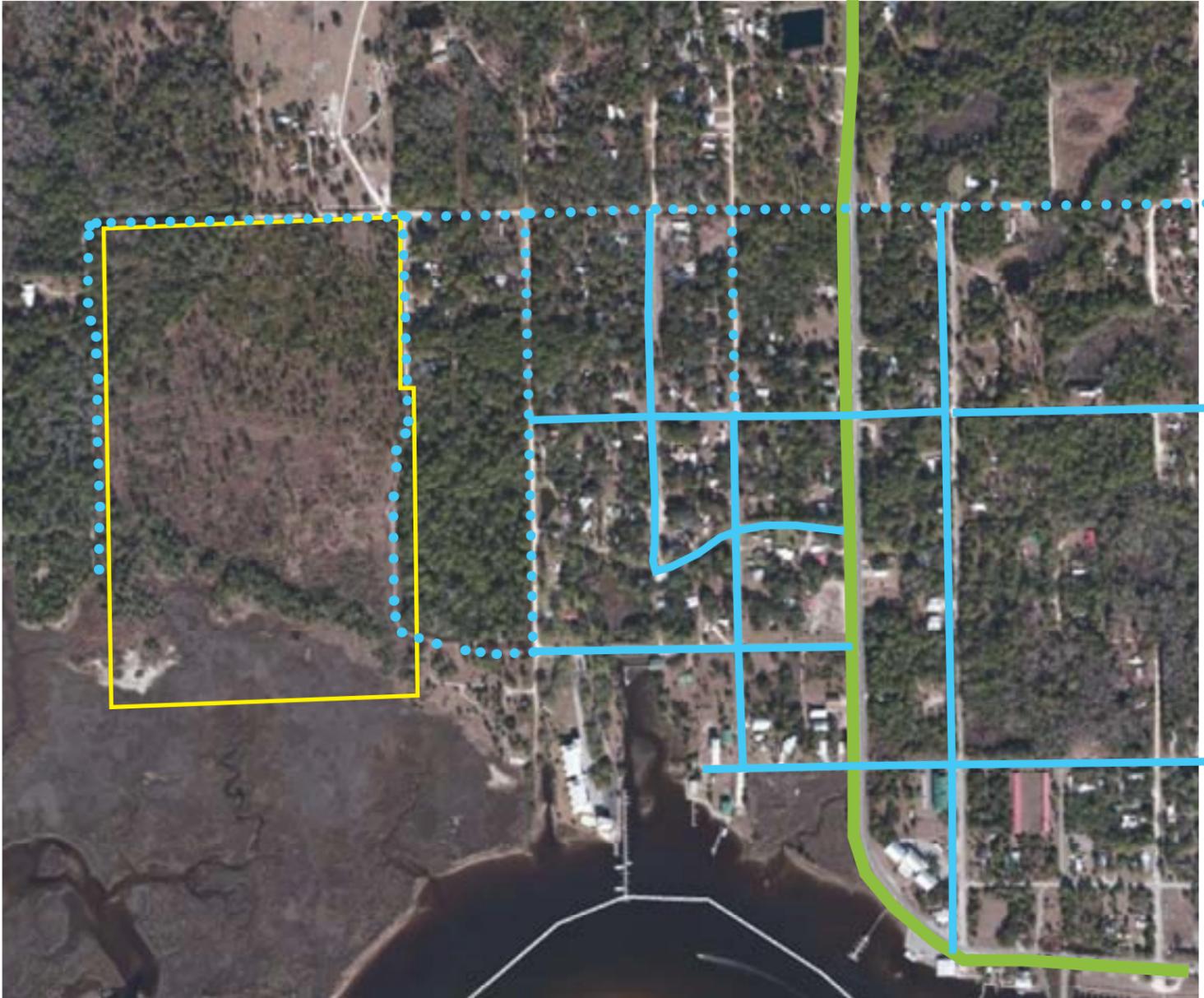
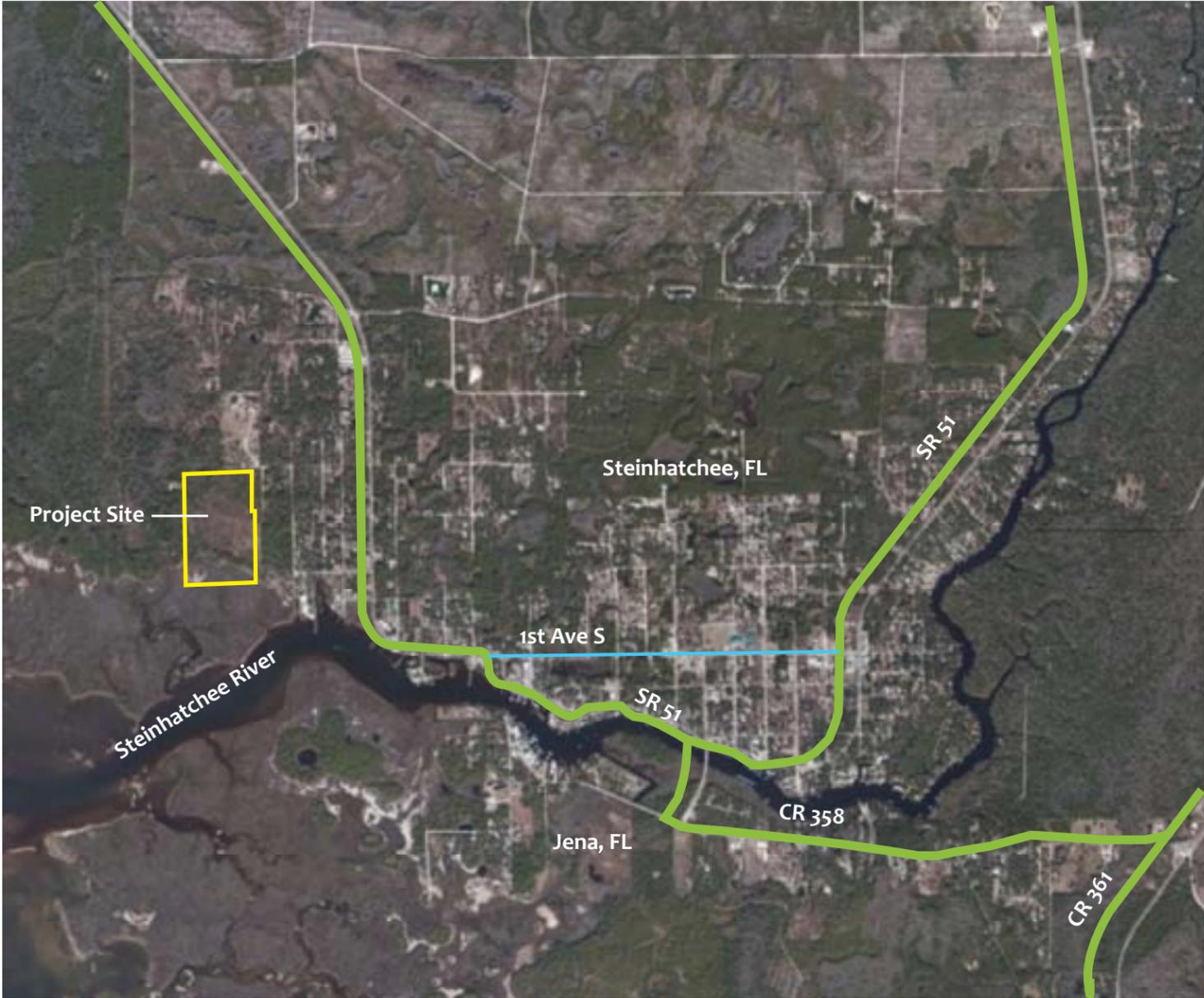
The pink highlighted areas are parcels and lands owned by Taylor County. The road right-of-ways are all owned by the county and this provides an opportunity to propose better connections between the site and the surrounding wildlife management areas.

Opportunities:

- Direct Connection to Big Bend Wildlife Management Area.
- Direct connection to Steinhatchee River through other county owned parcels.



Circulation



Taylor County Land Development Codes - Transportation Systems

- The street hierarchy shall be local, collector, arterial and freeway.
- Access to the recreational vehicle park shall be from a collector or arterial roadway.
- Any fraction of an acre shall be apportioned its pro data share of the allowable number of new trips per acre.

Roads Legend

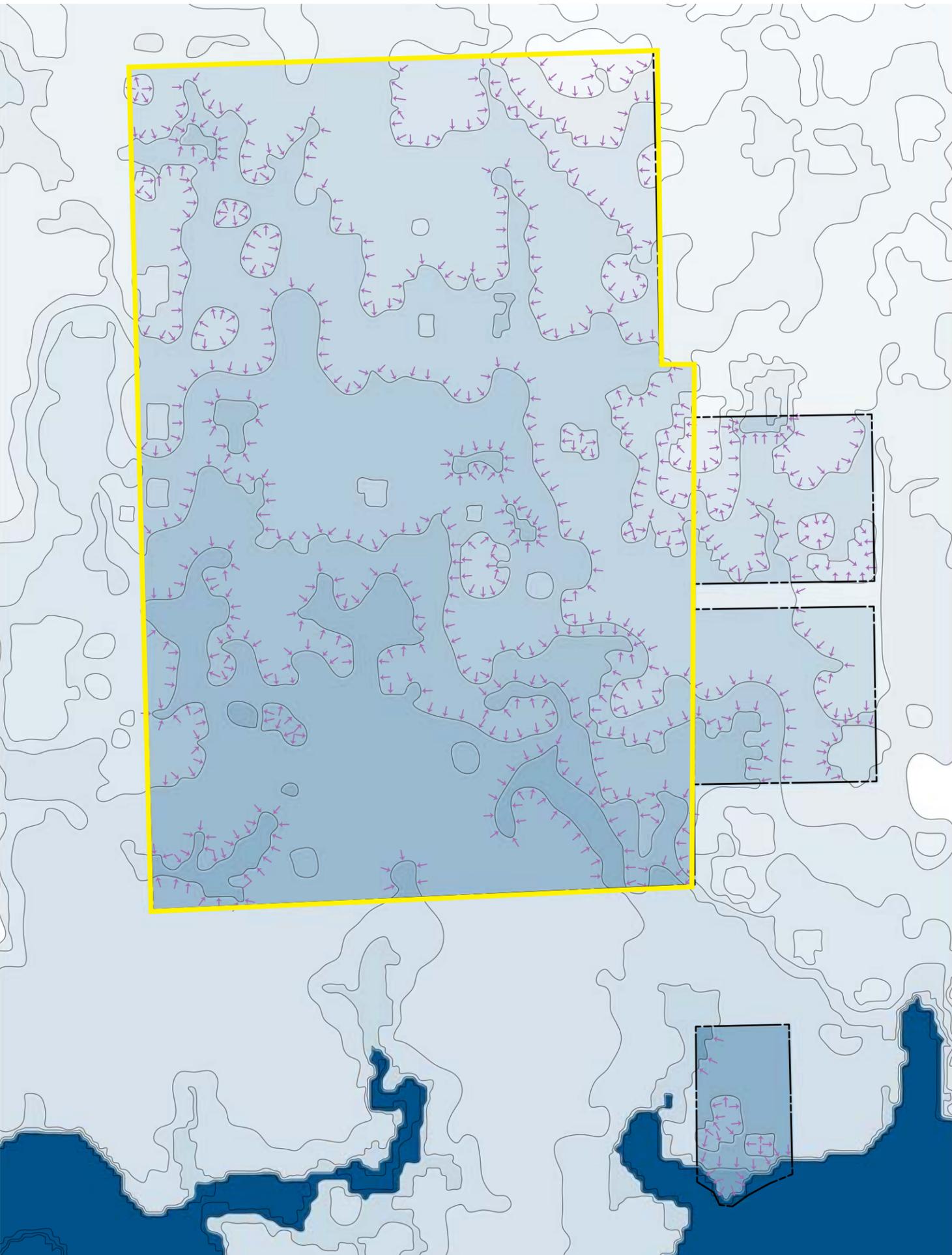
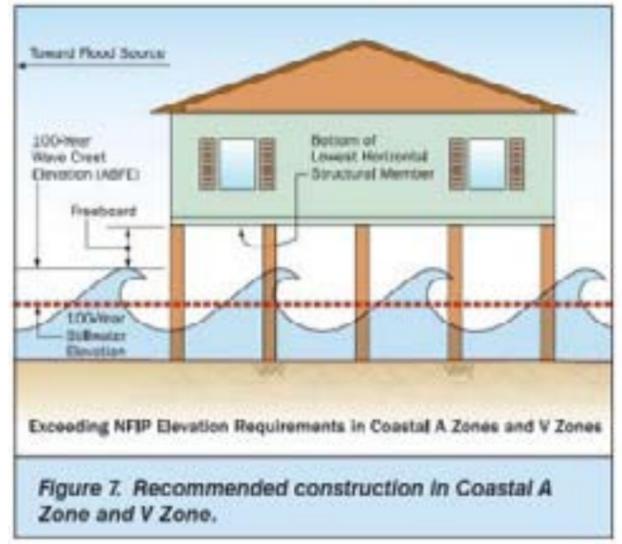
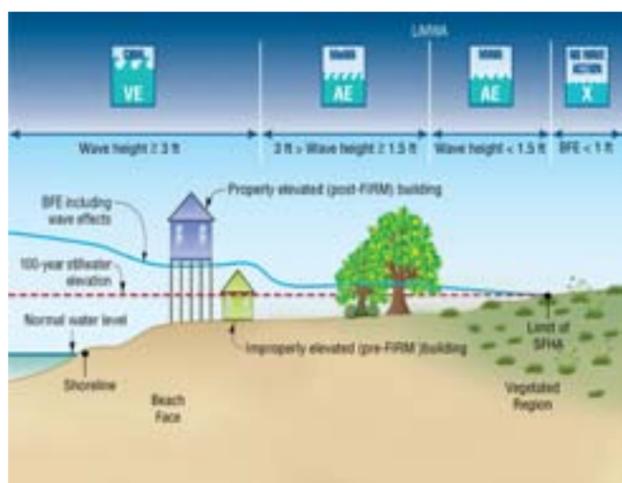
Class 2 Rural/Major Collector	
Class 3 Road or Street, Local	
Graded Dirt Road, Local	

Hydrology Analysis

**Hydrology Analysis Contacts: Danny Griner, Taylor County Building Inspector
William Ball, Campground Engineer.**

- Coastal Hazard Zones do not strictly prohibit RV Parks. Must have evacuation route.
- Difference in insurance costs between VE/AE designations.
- Habitable structures must be raised so floor joists are 1 foot above BFE.
- Non-habitable structures may be located at ground level if given a variance.
- **Steepest slope on site - less than 3%. Avg. slope - 0.2%**

FEMA Flood Zones



Soils and Plant Communities

Soil Types	Ecological Communities
 MEADOWBROOK-TOOLES-CLARA, DEPRESSIONAL, COMPLEX	North Florida Flatwoods
 STEINHATCHEE FINE SAND	Wetland Hardwood Hammock
 CLARA AND BODIFORD SOILS, FREQUENTLY FLOODED	Wetland Hardwood Hammock
 WEKIVA-TOOLES, DEPRESSIONAL-TENNILLE COMPLEX, RARELY FLOODED	Wetland Hardwood Hammock
 BAYVI MUCK, FREQUENTLY FLOODED	Salt Marsh

Noth Florida Flatwoods

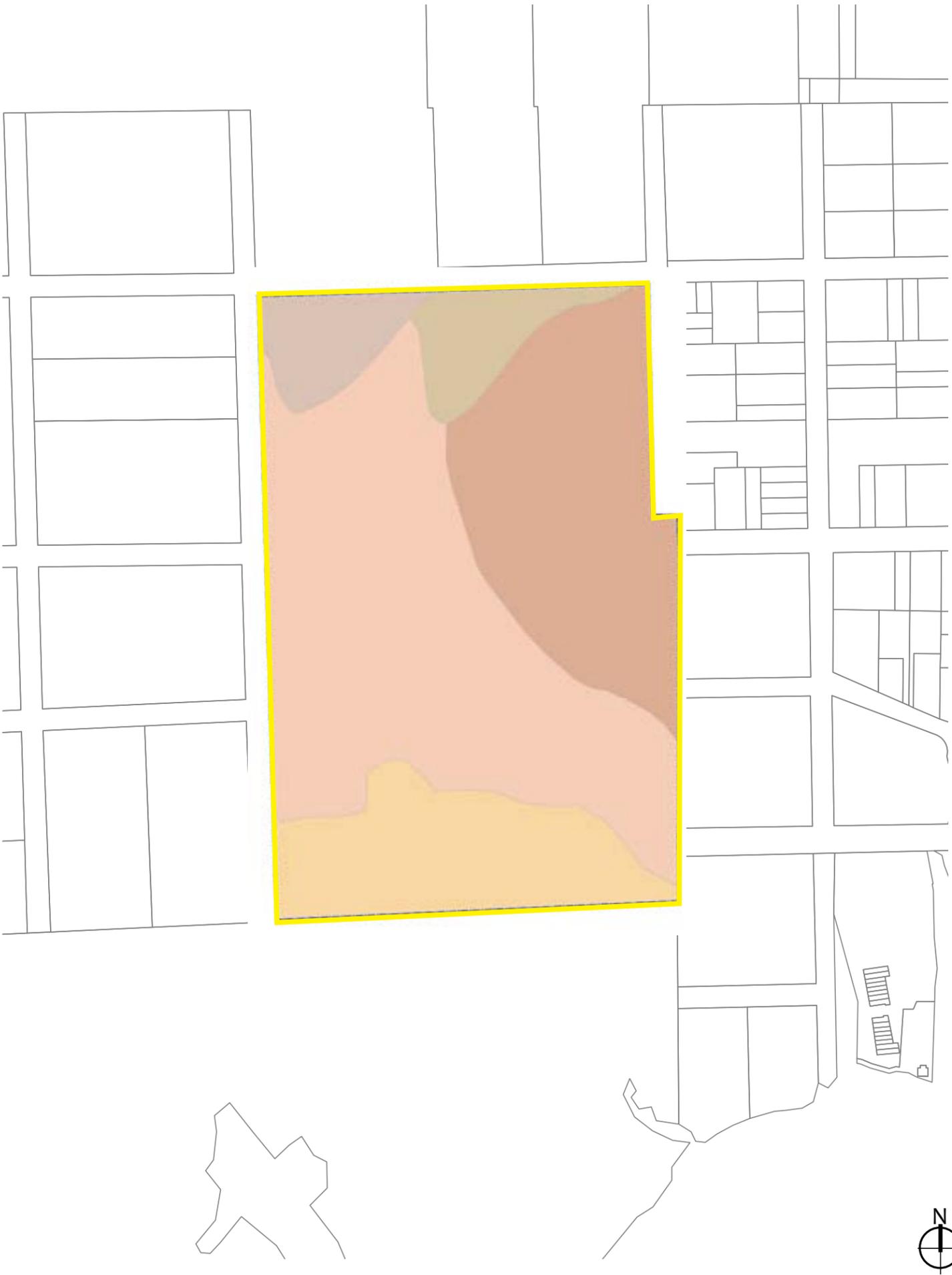
- Trees:** Live oak, Slash pine
- Shrubs:** Ground blueberry, Gallberry, Saw palmetto, Shining sumac, Tarflower, Waxmyrtle
- Herbaceous Plants and Vines:** Blackberry, Bracken fern, Creeping beggarweed, Deer tongue, Dog fennel, Gayfeather, Greenbriar, Milkwort
- Grasses:** Chalky bluestem, Broomsedge bluestem, Yellow indiagrass, Low panicum, Pineland threawn, Sedges

Wetland Hardwood Hammock

- Trees:** Sweetgum, Redcedar, Cabbage palm, Hawthorns, Laurel oak, Live oak, Red bay, Red maple, Sweetbay, Water Oak, Magnolia
- Shrubs:** Waxmyrtle, Witchhazel, Saw palmetto
- Herbaceous Plants and Vines:** Cinnamon fern, Royal fern, Crossvine, Poison ivy, Virginia creeper, Wild grape, Yellow jessamine
- Grasses:** Beaked panicum, Chalky bluestem, Eastern gamagrass, Longleaf uniola, Maidencane

Salt Marsh

- Herbaceous Plants and Vines:** Sea blite, Sea purslane
- Grasses:** Big cordgrass, Black needlerush, Gulf cordgrass, Marshhay cordgrass, Olney bulrush, Seashore dropseed, Seashore paspalum, Seashore saltgrass, shoregrass, smooth cordgrass



Zoning

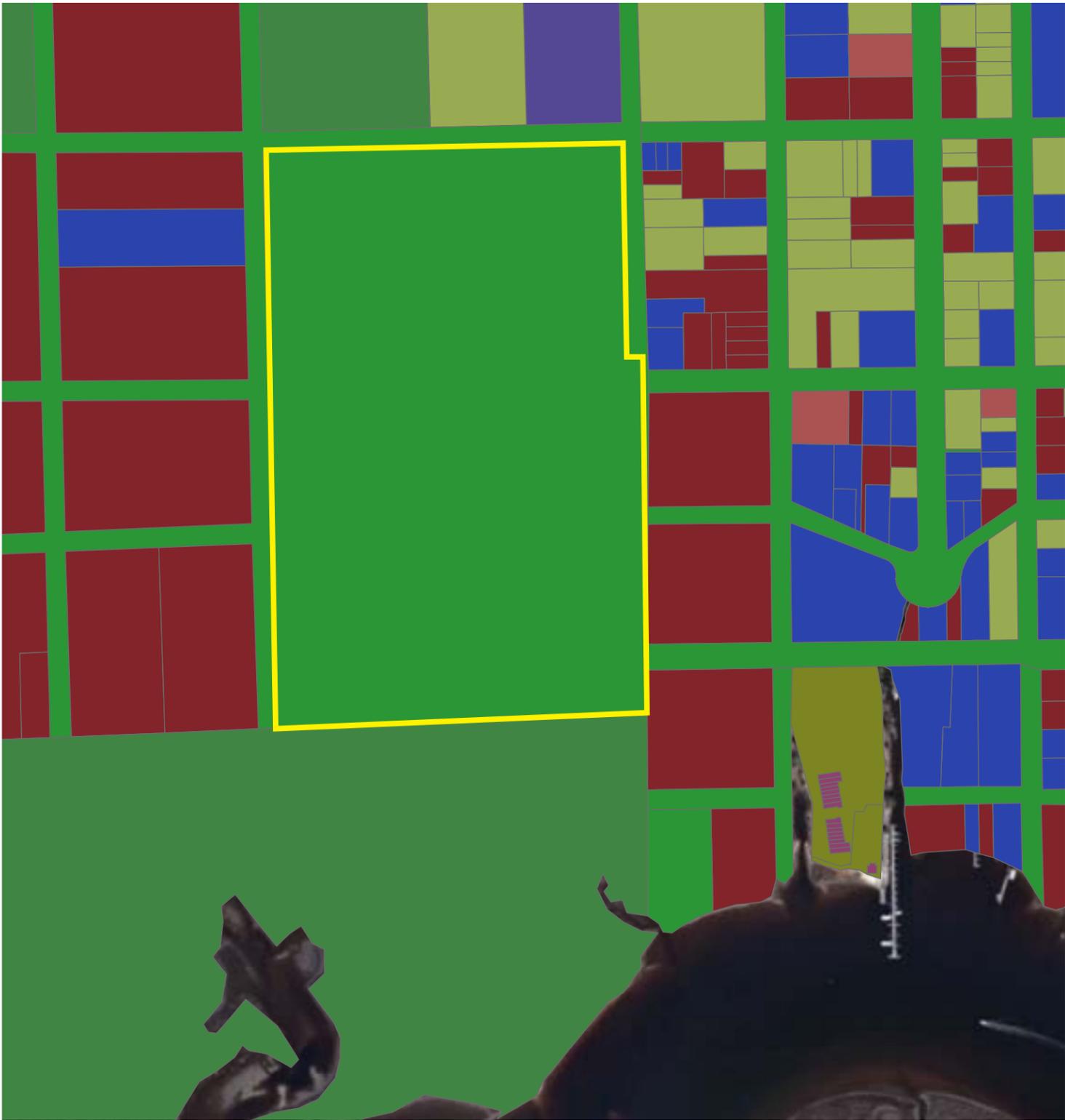
The site is surrounded by vacant residential, single-family housing, and mobile homes.

Opportunities:

- Adjacent parcels surrounding the site may provide opportunity for project expansion.
- Nearby condos and a former RV Park suggest that high density and RV uses may be welcomed.

Constraints:

- Adjacent Single Family and Mobile Home parcels may be disturbed by higher traffic in area due to RV Park.
- Proposed RV Park may conflict with current residential character of the area.



Legend

parcel_steinhatchee1

DESCRPT	Color
ACREAGE NOT ZONED FOR AGRICULTURAL	Light Green
CONDOMINIA	Purple
IMPROVED AGRICULTURE	Dark Blue
MOBILE HOMES	Light Green
MULTI-FAMILY LESS THAN 10 UNITS	Red
OTHER COUNTIES	Green
RIGHTS-OF-WAY STREETS, ROADS, AND CANALS	Olive Green
SINGLE FAMILY	Blue
VACANT RESIDENTIAL	Dark Red



Land use

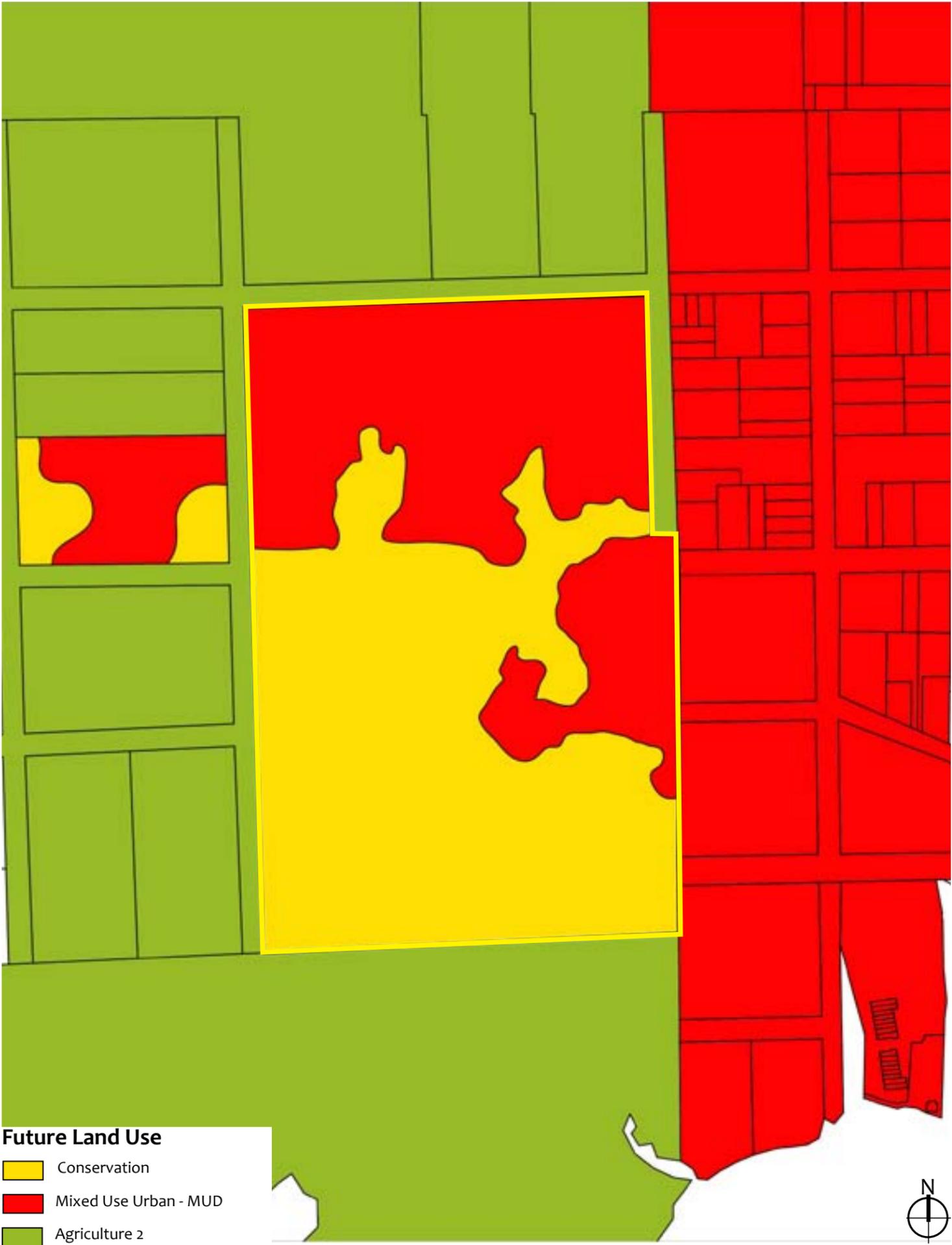
The Mixed Use Urban land use allows for the development of RV parks, but the conservation areas allow only park spaces and low density residential.

Opportunities:

- Recreational Vehicle Parks are classified as *high intensity commercial*, an allowed use in MUD.
- Adjacent MUD parcels suggest RV Park will not be unwelcome by neighbors.

Constraints:

- Conservation lands on site will inhibit development of site to limited areas.
- May need to change conservation lands on site to allow project development.



Goals and Objectives

Goal 1. Design a RV park to provide tourists a destination to go in Steinhatchee.

Objective 1. Provide enough spaces so that the park has the carrying capacity to succeed.

Objective 2. Provide amenity to attract users.

Goal 2. Design a park space for hosting local festivals.

Objective 1. Provide enough space for current needs and future growth.

Goal 3. Promote the regeneration of native plant communities.

Objective 1. Propose plantings which are representative of pre existing plant communities.



Concepts

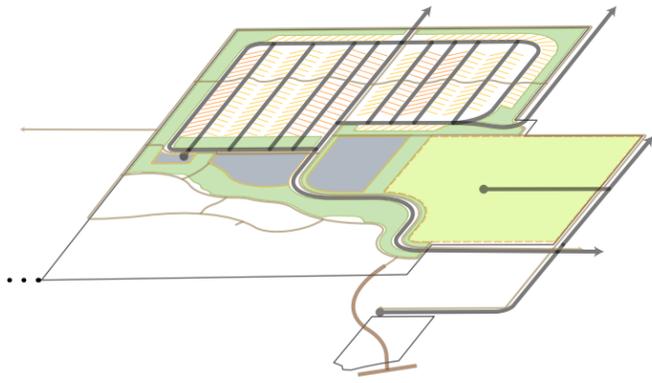


Concept Diagrams

The concepts have been developed in a manner so that they could be implemented individually or successively as a phased development. Phasing can be a good way of breaking a complicated project into manageable pieces, so I designed the concepts to build on one another until the completed project in concept 3.

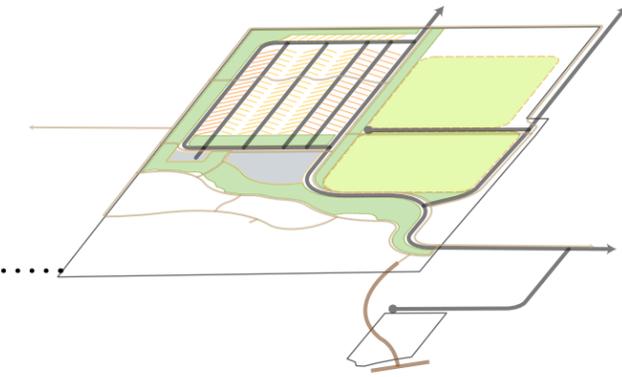
Concept 3: Max Build out

Concept 3 proposes a high impact development on the site. The site is expanded by acquiring neighboring parcels to allow more room for RV development



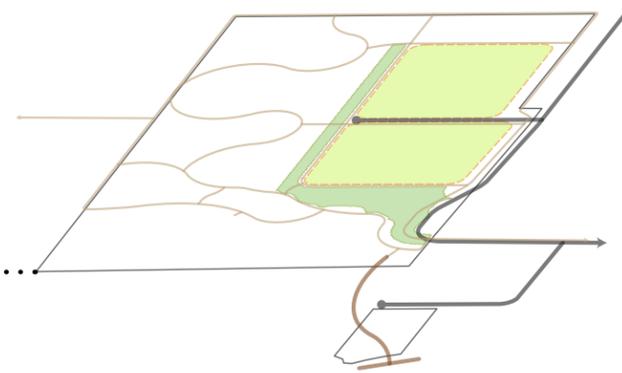
Concept 2: Medium Build out

Concept 2 adds RV accommodations to the site. This concept is developed with the thought of maximizing the site development without using funds to acquire extra lands.



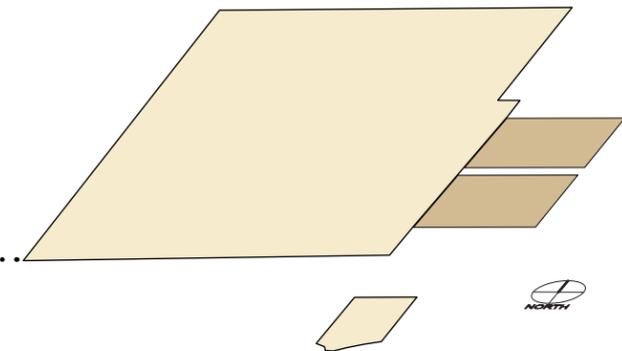
Concept 1: Minimal Site Build out

Concept 1 is the most conservative, with site development being limited to the festival park, hiking trails, boardwalk/pier, and stormwater system.



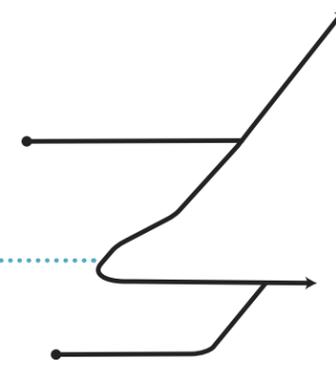
Site Areas

- Original site areas (Taylor owned parcels)
60.2 acres (2,620,160 square feet)
- Additional areas (privately owned, vacant)
8.2 acres (355,142 square feet)



Vehicular Circulation

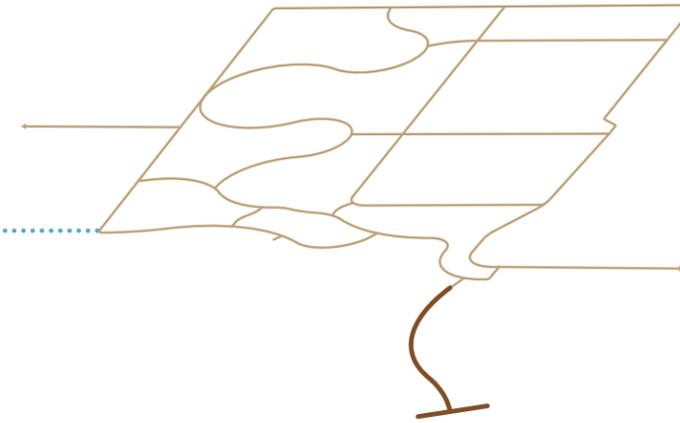
4,105 linear feet of roadways (compacted gravel, double lane, 24' wide)



Trails and Boardwalk

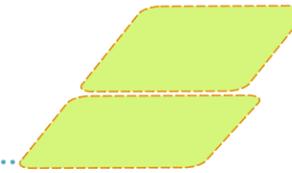
14,996 linear feet of trail (compact gravel, 6' wide)

947 linear feet of boardwalk (wood construction, 10' wide)



Festival Park Space

13.3 acres (579,289 square feet)



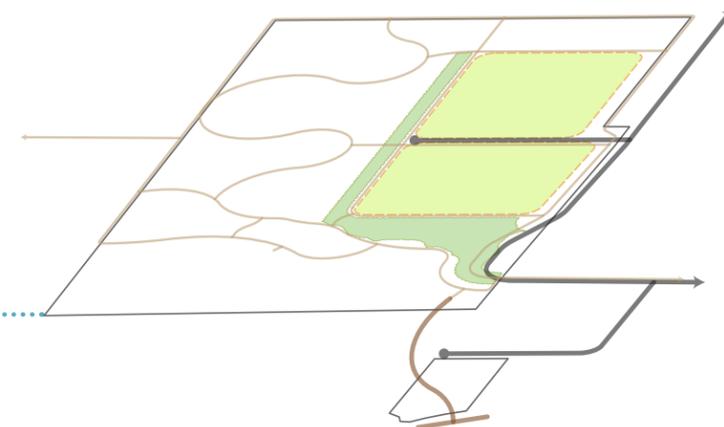
Wetlands Regeneration and Stormwater Management

3.9 acres (169,460 square feet)



Concept 1

The first concept presents a conservative plan. Development is limited to trails, boardwalk/pier, and the needed festival space. A stormwater wetland is prescribed to handle runoff from the park and regenerate plant natural communities.



Back-In RV Sites

86 count

Pull-through RV Sites

53 count

Amenity Space

1.9 acres (83,320 square feet)

Vehicle Circulation

11,417 linear feet of roadways
(compacted gravel, double lane, 24' wide)

Trails and Boardwalk

12,803 linear feet of trails (compacted gravel, 6' wide)
947 linear feet of boardwalk (wood construction, 10' wide)

Festival Park Space

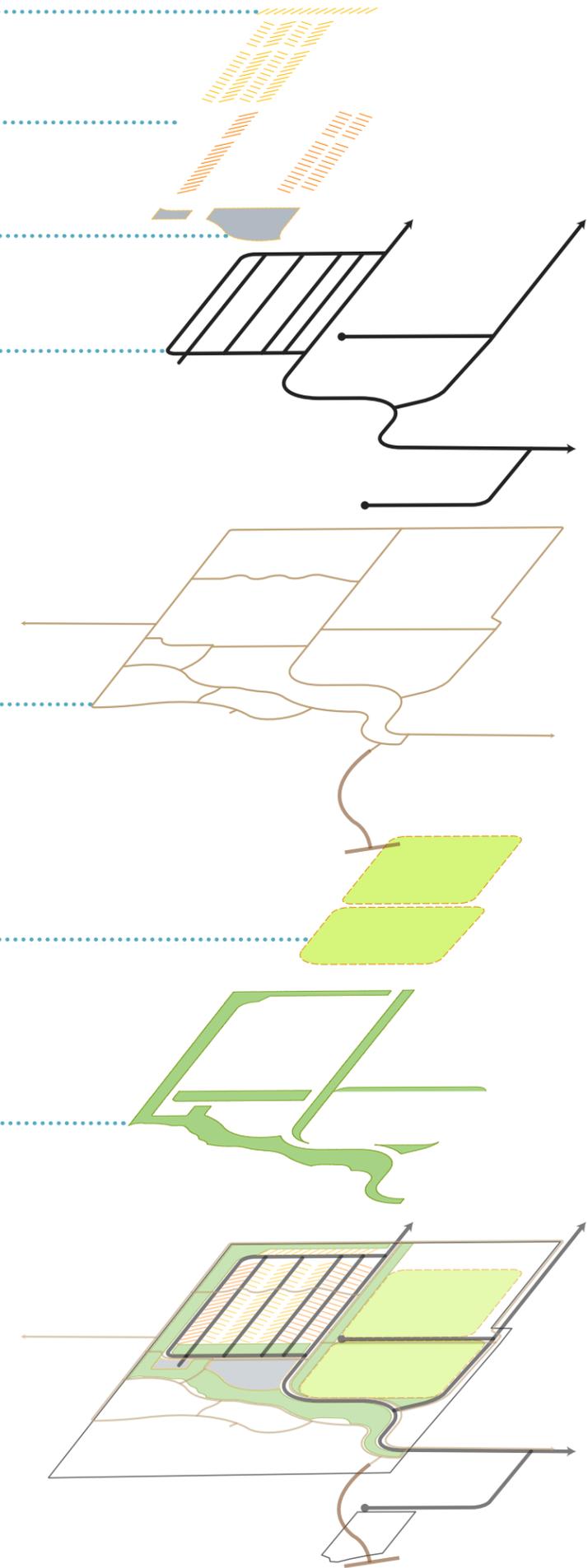
13.2 acres (576,473 sq ft)

Wetland Regeneration and Stormwater Management

7.8 acres (337,645 sq ft)

Concept 2

Concept 2 pursues the development of RV spaces where site conditions are appropriate while maintaining park space. Concept 2 remains within the boundaries of the original site, which limits its capacity for RV space.



Back-In RV Sites

176 count

Pull-through RV Sites

79 count

RV Community Center and Amenity Space

4.5 acres (83,320)

Vehicle Circulation

18,314 linear feet of roadways
(compacted gravel, double lane, 24' wide)

Trails and Boardwalk

19,323 linear feet of trails (compacted gravel, 6' wide)
947 linear feet of boardwalk (wood construction, 10' wide)

Festival Park Space

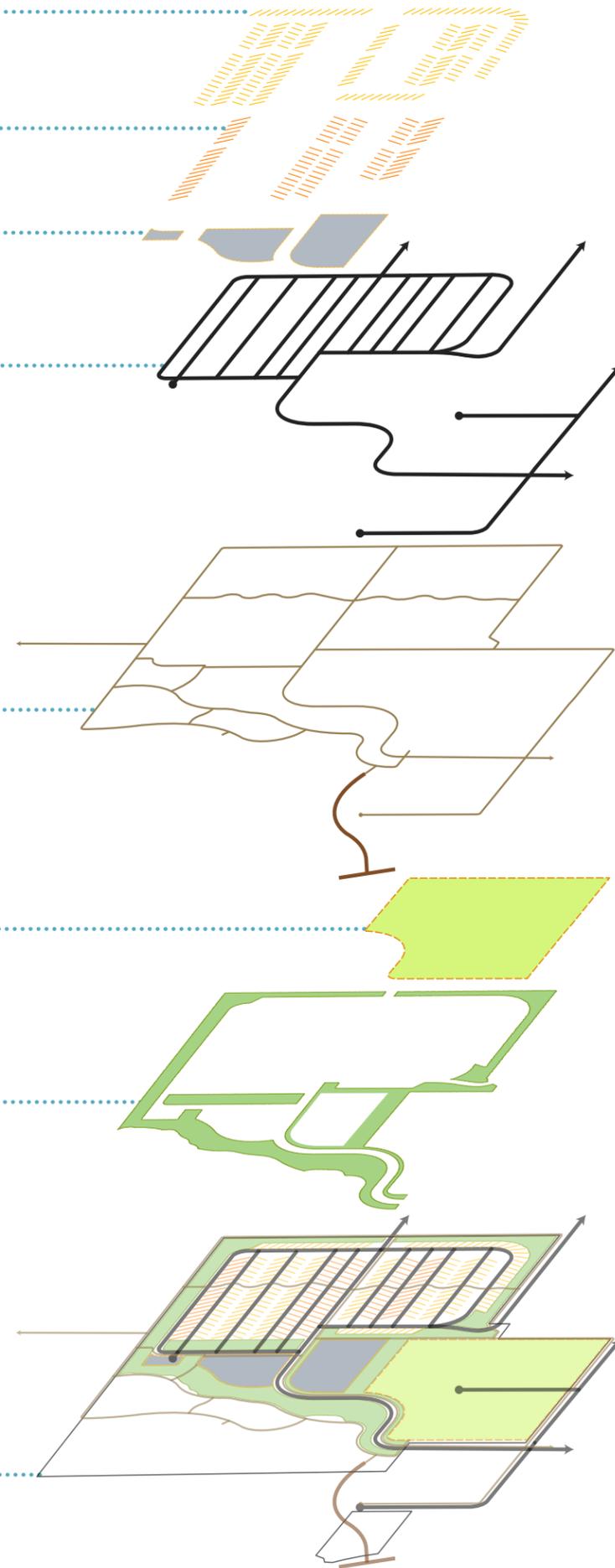
13.1 acres (572,395 sq ft)

Wetlands Regeneration and Stormwater Management

9.7 acres (424,161 sq ft)

Concept 3

Concept 3 is more ambitious, proposing the acquisition of new properties and providing more space for RV sites. It is important to achieve as many sites as possible for the issues of carrying capacity. This program allows for about 250 RV spaces, amenity, stormwater systems, and ample park space.



The River of Man Campground and Fiddler Festival Park



Master Plan

The Master Plan includes the River of Man RV Park, all its amenities, and the Fiddler Festival Park. The design of the RV park and festival grounds responds to the needs of the program. The festival space is based off of the acreage currently needed for the Fiddler Crab Festival. The RV park is designed to maximize RV sites while maintaining drainage.

- ① The Fiddler Festival Park
- ② RV Park Recreation Area
- ③ River of Man RV Park
- ④ Clubhouse and Pool
- ⑤ Constructed Wetlands/ Stormwater
- ⑥ Boardwalk/ Pier
- ⑦ Existing Salt Marsh
- ⑧ Trail Connection to Big Bend Wildlife Management Area
- ⑨ Lookout Tower



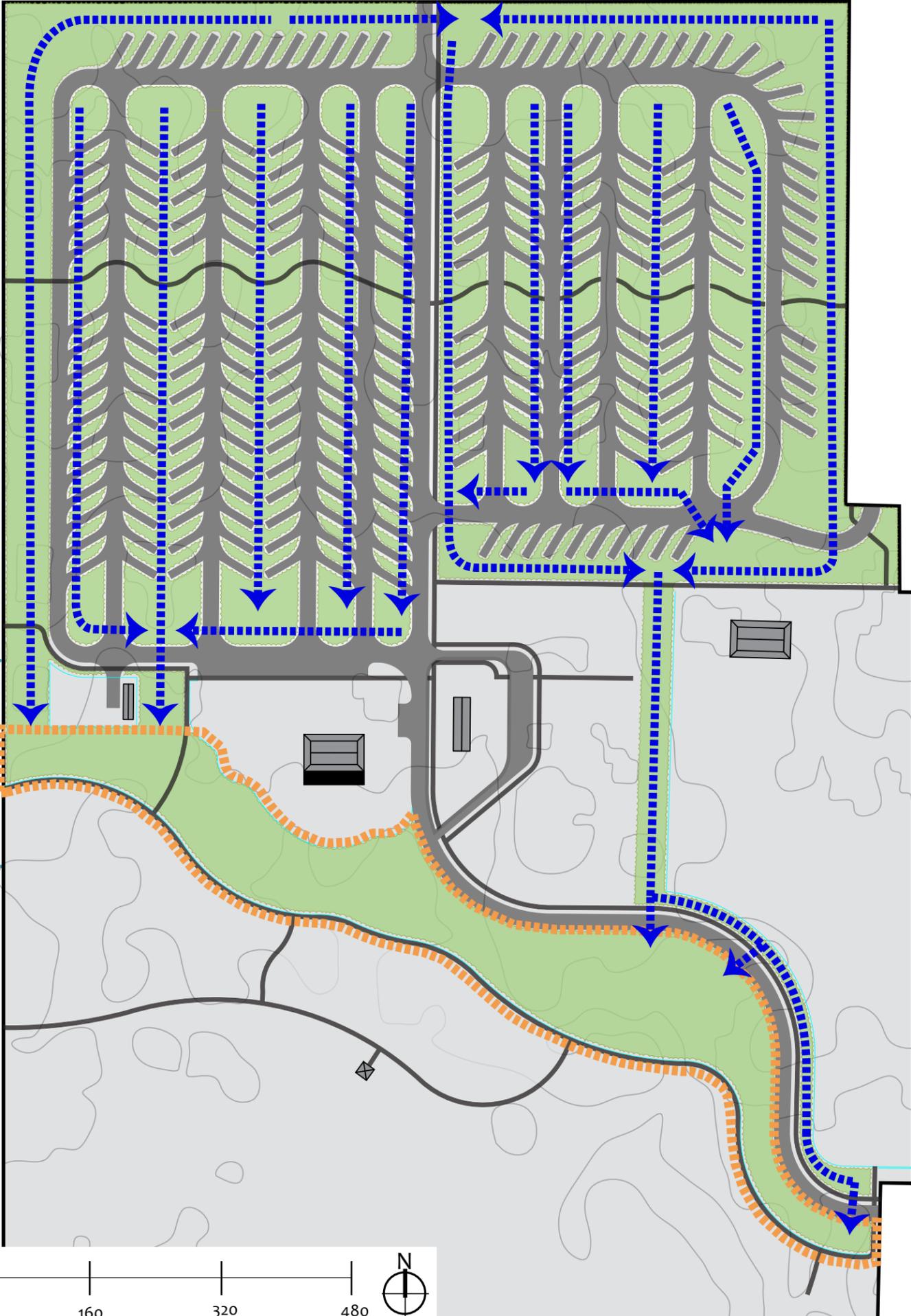
Stormwater Concept Plan

The stormwater concept was developed during the design of the RV park to work with the natural drainage on the site. Most water will flow slowly to the south across the site. The roads, built up over the ground plane due to the soggy soils, have been aligned to work with the topography and minimize the obstruction of flow across the site. Where roads act as dams, pipes or culverts shall be installed to allow stormwater to continue its journey. The final destination for stormwater on site is a constructed retention basin which spans the width of the site. All the areas between RV spaces and roadways are to convey stormwater and regenerate native plant communities.

Stormwater Detention/
Conveyance Swails

Flow path of stormwater

Retention Area



Clubhouse, Pool, and Recreation Area Plan

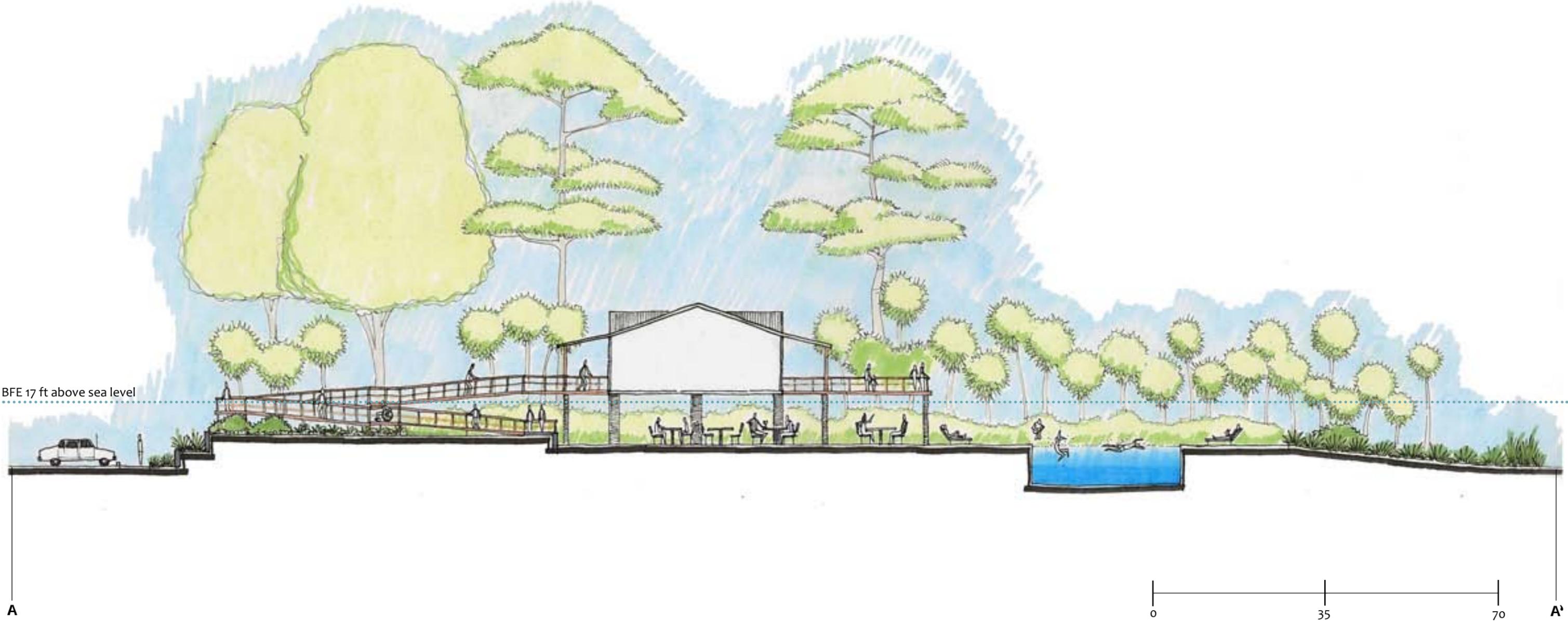
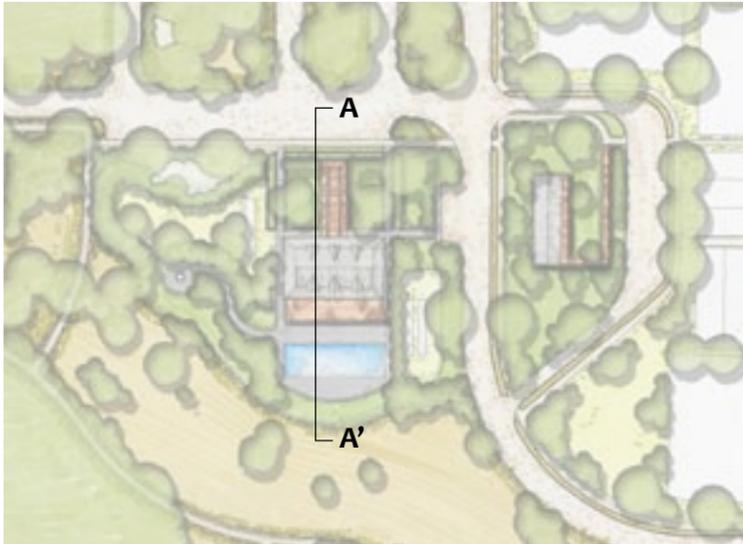
This plan shows the main amenities for the RV patrons

- ① Clubhouse/pool
- ② Clubhouse parking
- ③ Firepit
- ④ Office, laundry, public restrooms, rec room
- ⑤ Office RV parking
- ⑥ Dog park
- ⑦ Tennis courts
- ⑧ Pickleball courts
- ⑨ Shuffleboard
- ⑩ Bocci ball courts
- ⑪ Lawn bowling green
- ⑫ Maintenance facility/ dumpsters



Clubhouse Section

The section illustrates how the clubhouse is built on piers due to the flood zone. The clubhouse is located in the VE - 17 Flood Zone, which places the base flood elevation at 17 feet above sea level. A combination of fill and piers lifts the building above the BFE and an ADA accessible ramp provides access. The raised structure offers shaded space under the building for relaxing, and the elevated height will provide good views towards the water from the deck.



RV Types

There is a great variety of RV types out there which are appropriate for different kinds of users. These examples are provided to give an idea of the different vehicle types which will be seen in the park. The park was designed to the standards of the largest vessel, the Type A Motorhome.

Type A Motorhome

- Roomiest of all RVs
- Luxurious amenities
- Sleep up to six
- 35 - 45' in length



Type B Motorhome

- Van campers
- Drive like the family van
- Sleep up to four



Type C Motorhome

- Luxurious amenities
- Sleeping space over cab
- Sleeps up to eight



Sport Utility RVs

- Built in "garage" for hauling cycles, ATVs, etc.
- Sleeps up to eight



Conventional Travel Trailer

- Wide range of floor plans and sizes
- Affordable, homelike amenities
- Sleep up to 10



Fifth-Wheel Travel Trailers

- Spacious two-level floor plans
- Towed with a pickup truck
- Sleep up to 6



Expandable Travel Trailers

- Ends pull out for roomy sleeping
- Lightweight towing
- Sleep up to 8



Folding Camping Trailers

- Lightweight
- Fresh-air experience with RV comfort
- Sleep up to 8



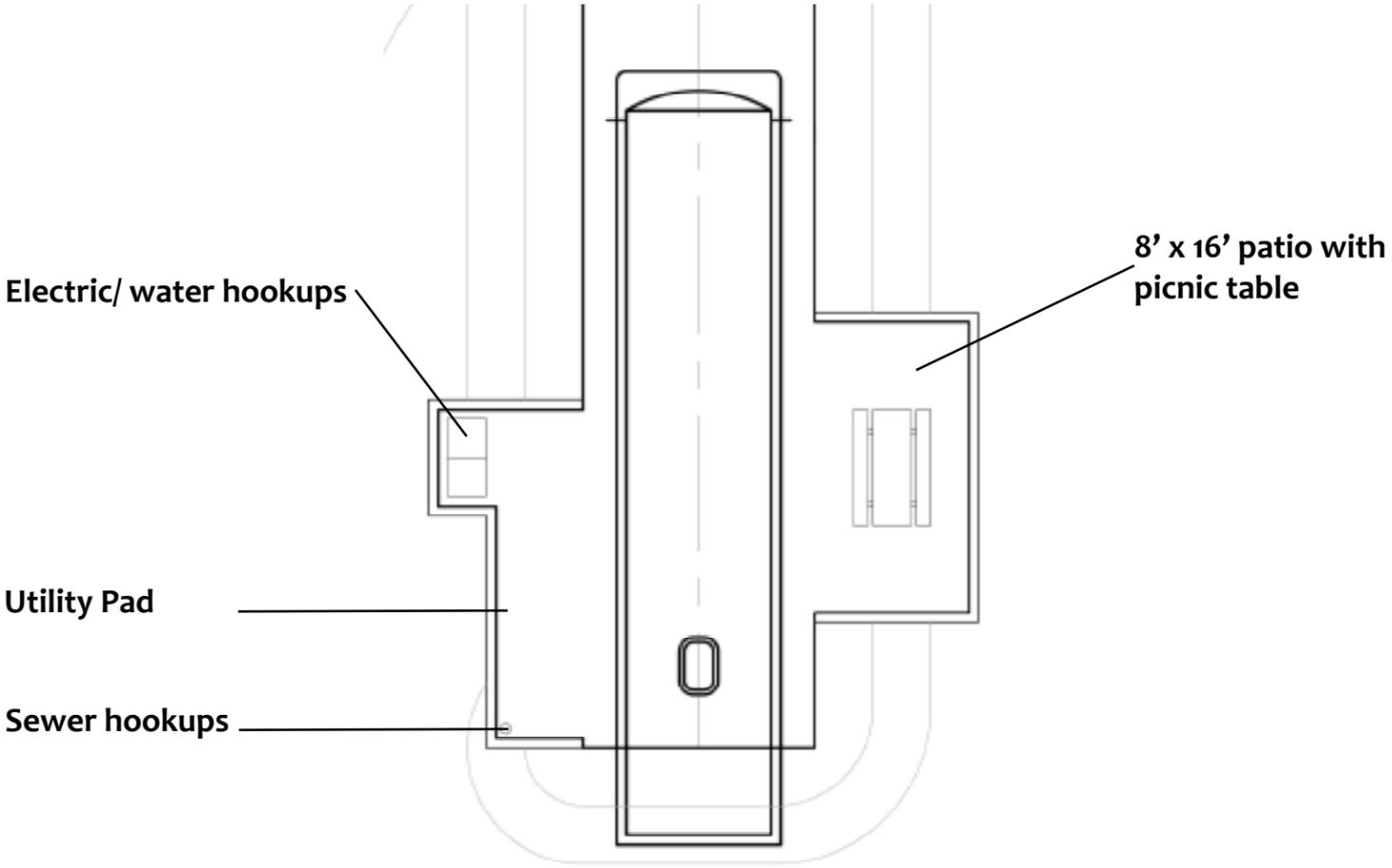
Truck Campers

- Mount on pickup bed or chassis
- Go wherever your truck can go
- Sleep up to 6



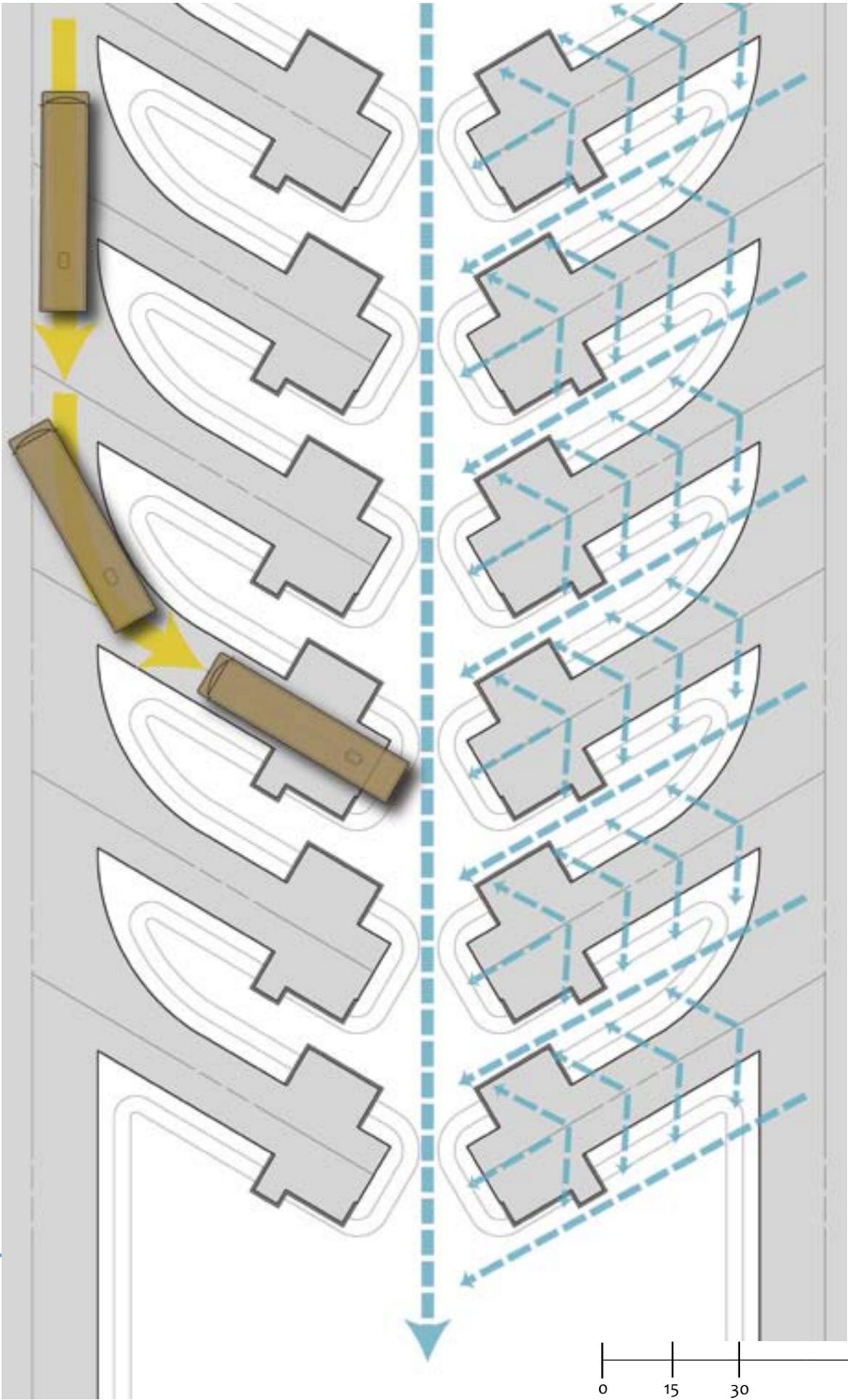
Circulation and Stormwater Concepts - Back-in sites

It is important that the RV sites have good drainage, so they have been designed to be built up over the existing soils of the site. This will allow positive drainage from the RV pads and will help channelize stormwater and move it towards the retention area.



Elevation contours

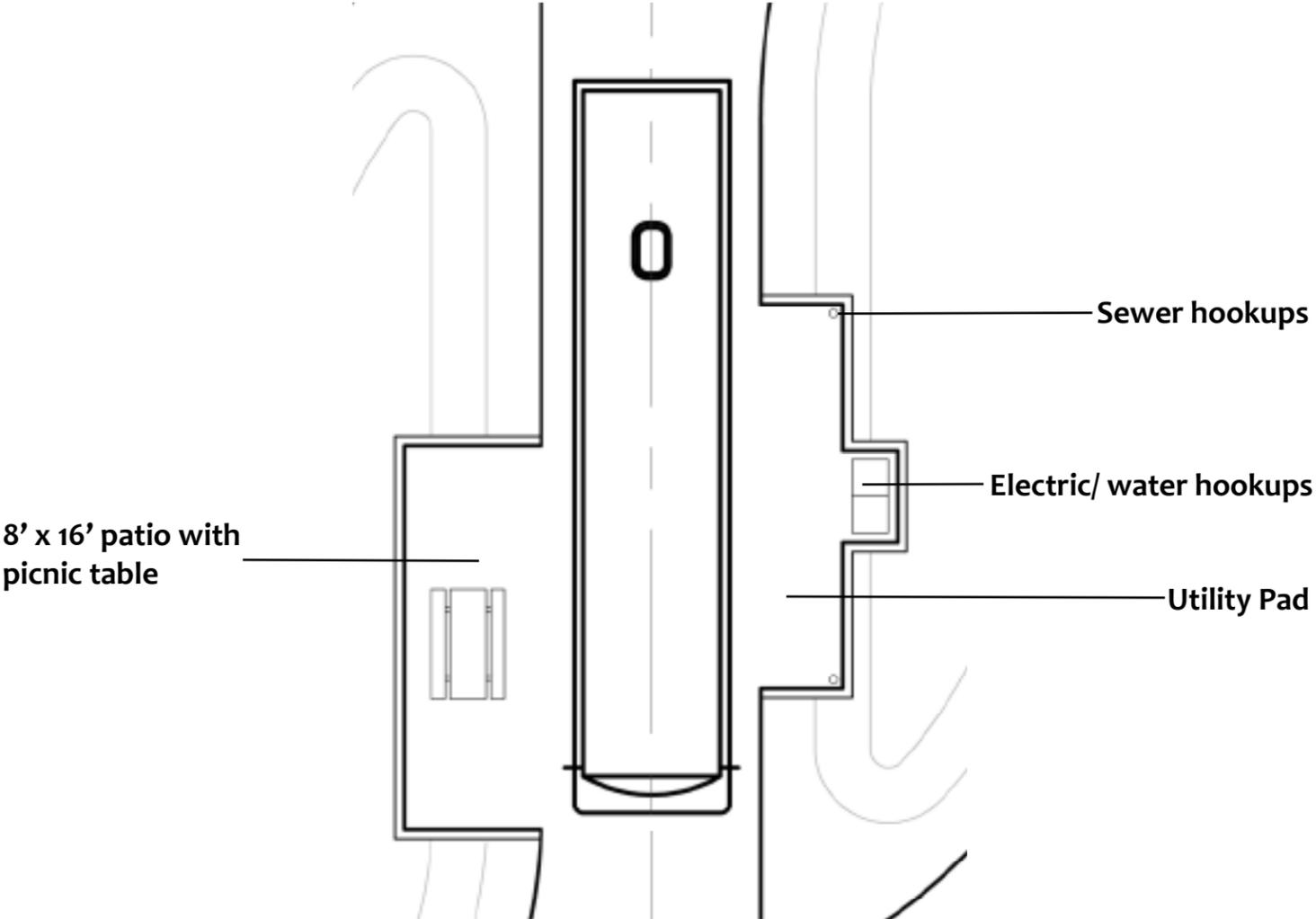
Flow of water across site



Circulation and Stormwater Concepts -

Pull-through sites

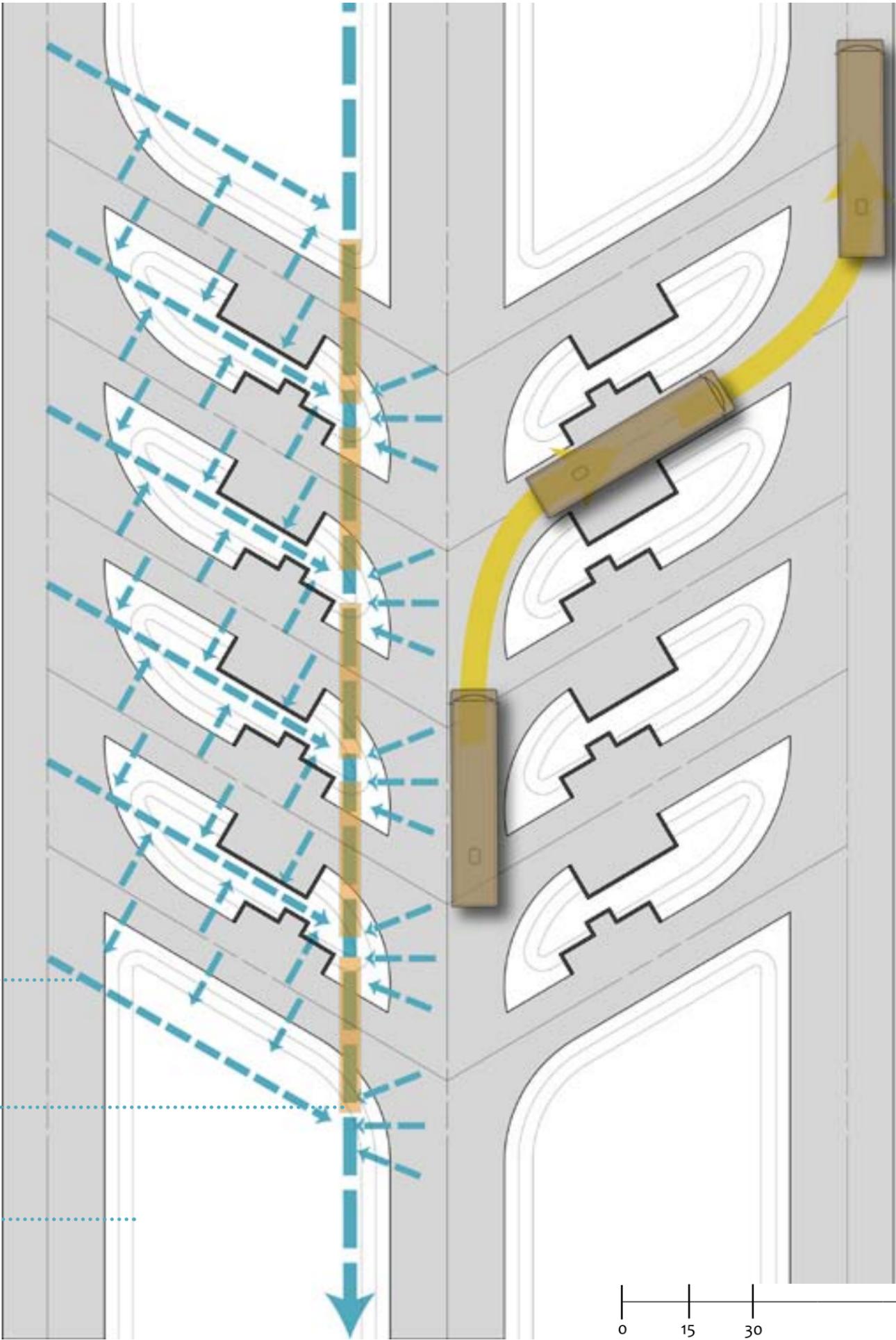
The pull-through sites pose a greater challenge for drainage. Since the sites are fully connected by roads, fragmented spaces remain in between. These low points will hold water unless some form of conduit is placed below the road surface to provide water passage.



Stormwater flow direction

Conduit for water passage under roads/ RV parking

Elevation contours



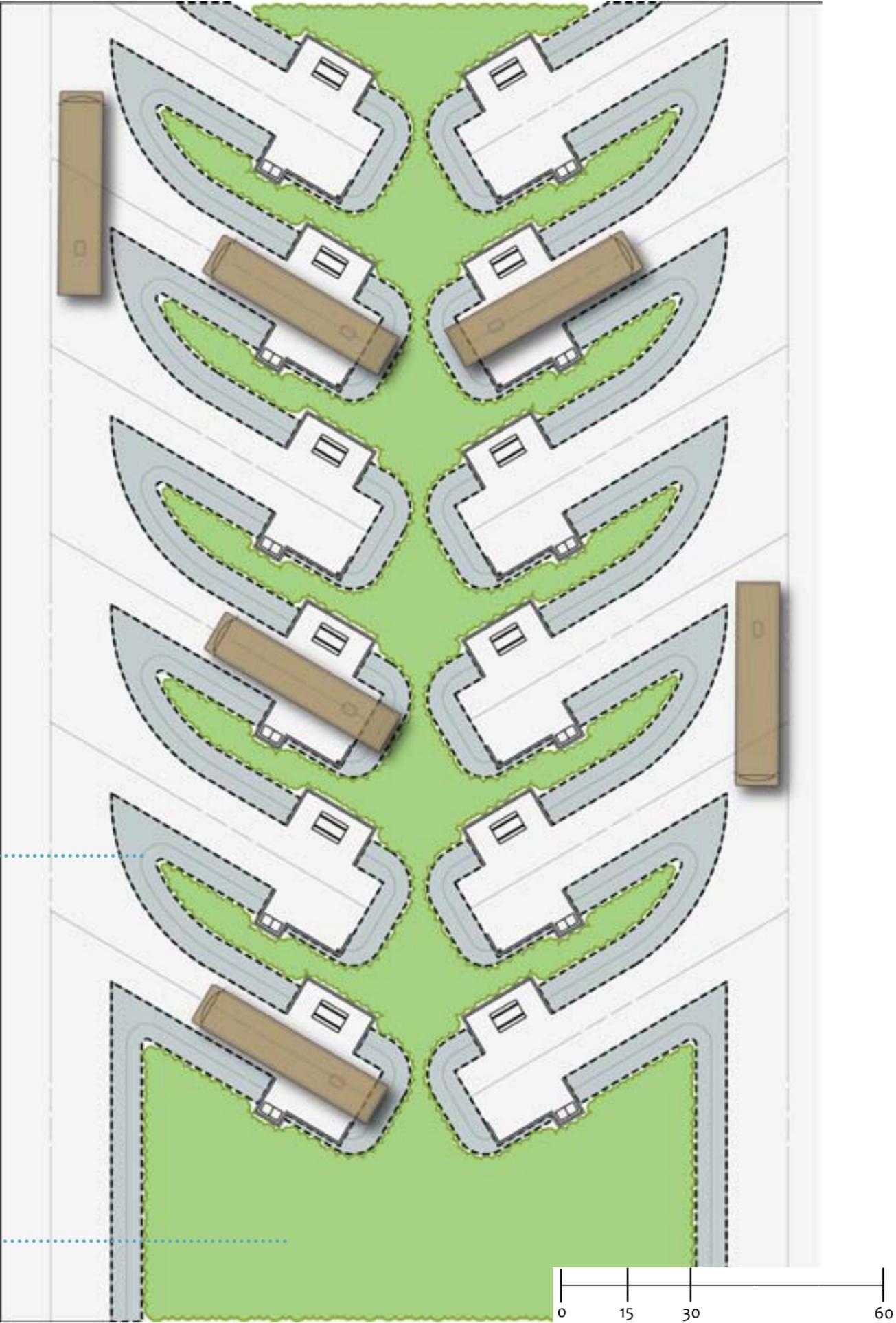
Road Construction and Planting Considerations -

Back-in Sites

It is important that we maintain as much existing vegetation and tree canopy as possible on site. Care should be taken to minimize the impact of road construction on the existing ecology. Not only is the preservation of plants important, but the lush aesthetic of a thickly grown forest is desired for the site.

Areas highlighted in gray define where fill for road construction will smother the existing vegetation. These areas are to be replanted with species from the natural communities identified in soils analysis.

Areas highlighted in green are to be avoided when building roads/ parking. The attempt should be made to maintain pre existing vegetation, especially large trees.



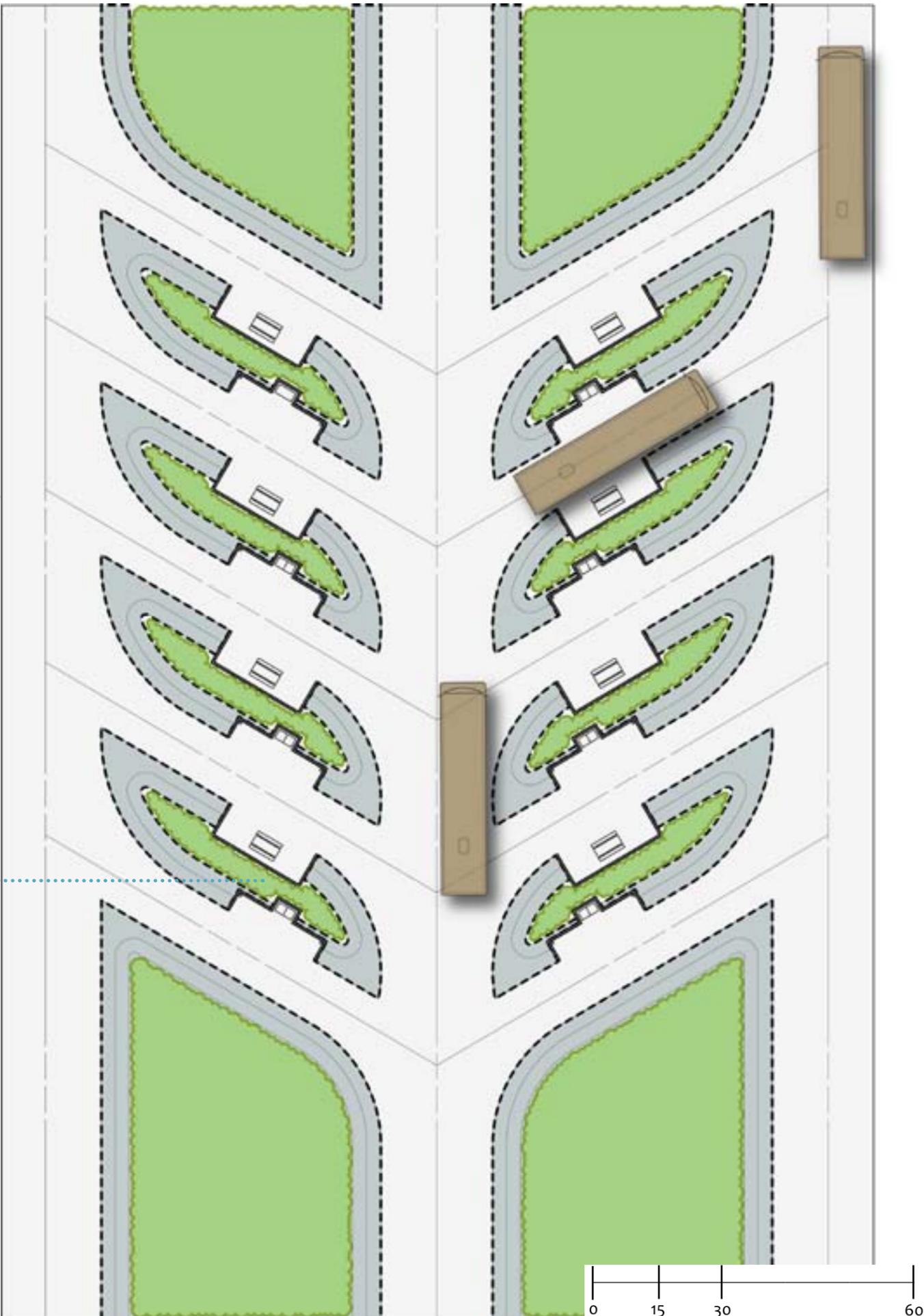
Road Construction and Planting Considerations -

Pull-through Sites

As with drainage, maintaining existing vegetation poses a greater challenge with the Pull-through sites. Pull-throughs require more road, which means less vegetation preservation. Emphasis is placed on the preservation of any large trees which may provide shade for the sites.

Areas highlighted in gray define where fill for road construction will smother the existing vegetation. These areas are to be replanted with species from the natural communities identified in soils analysis.

Areas highlighted in green are to be avoided when building roads/ parking. The attempt should be made to maintain pre existing vegetation, especially large trees.



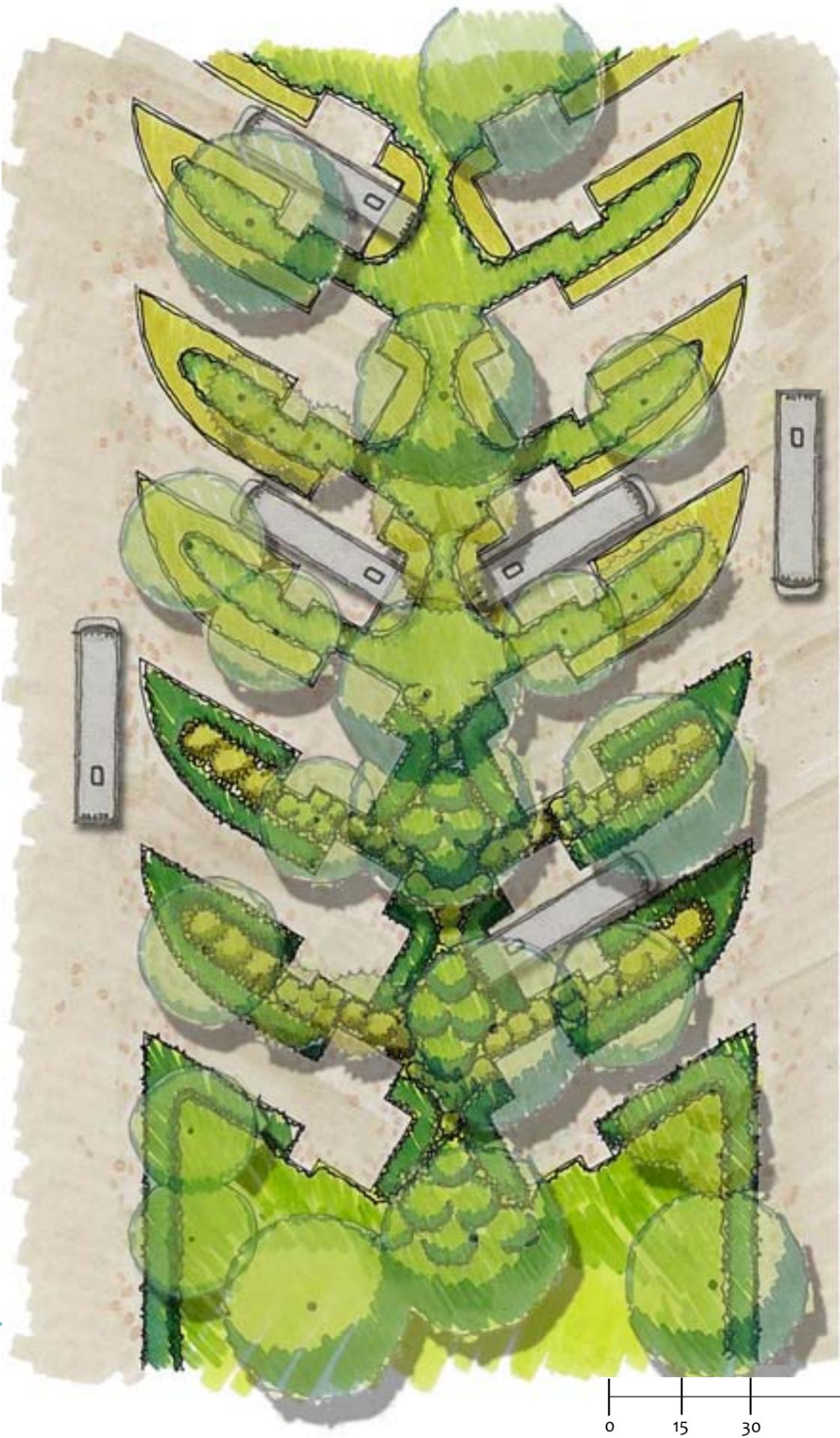
Planting Concept Plan - Back-in Sites

Large trees to be maintained/planted in between RV sites

Groundcover/ small shrubs, typical

Medium/ large shrubs

Groundcover/ small shrubs, typical



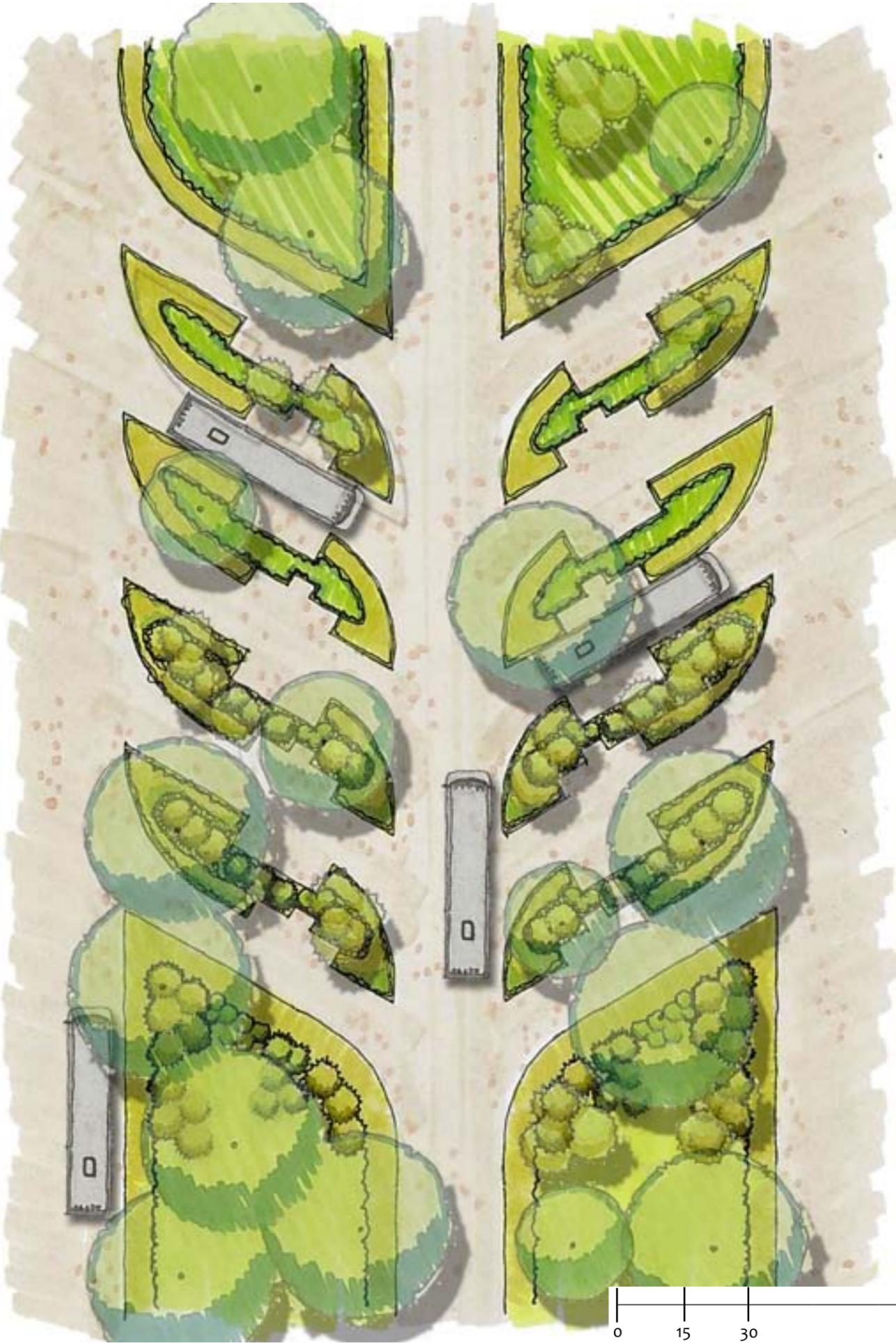
Planting Concept Plan - Pull-through Sites

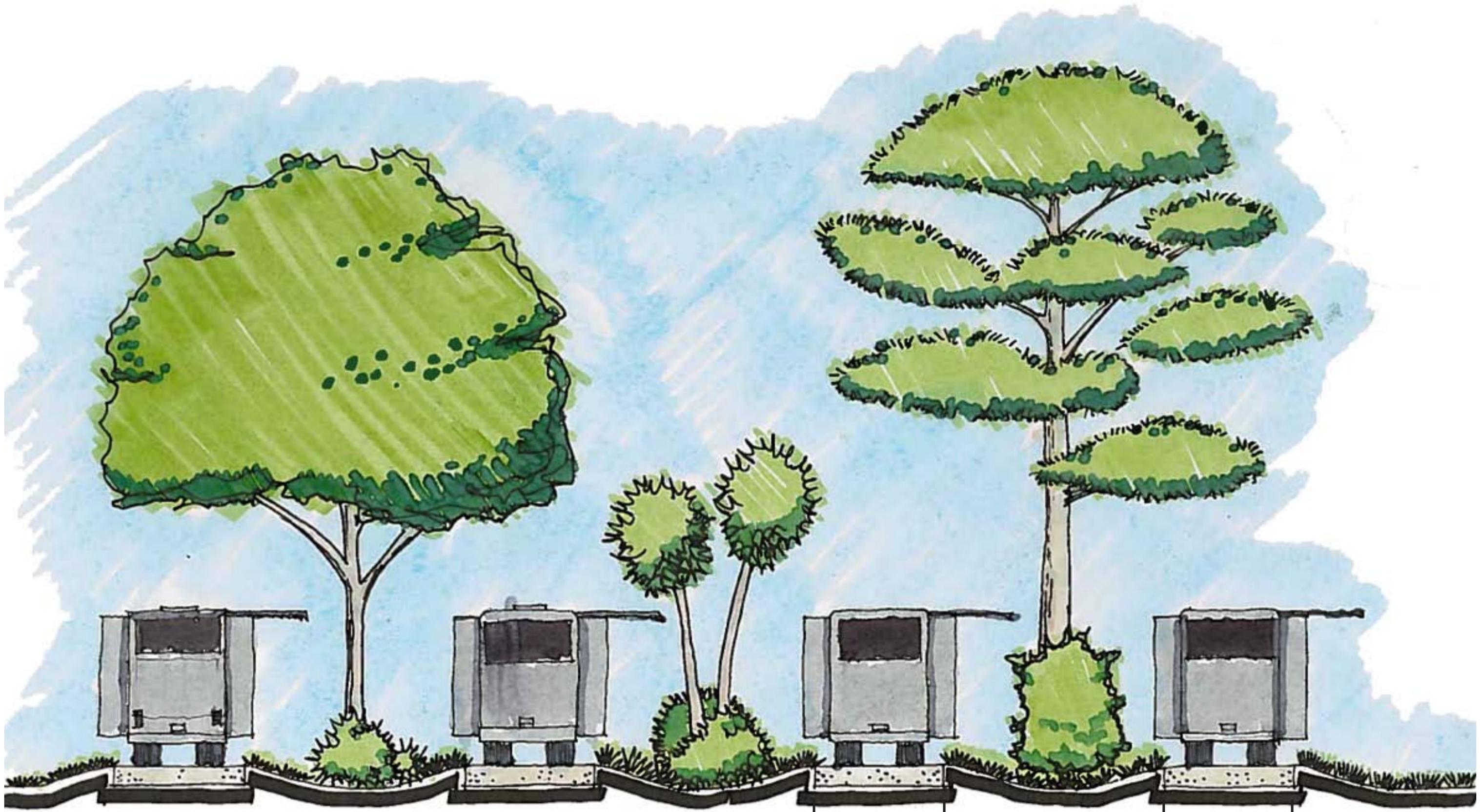
Large trees to be maintained/planted in between RV sites

Groundcover/ small shrubs, typical

Medium/ large shrubs

Groundcover/ small shrubs, typical





12' parking pad

20' planted area

12' parking pad

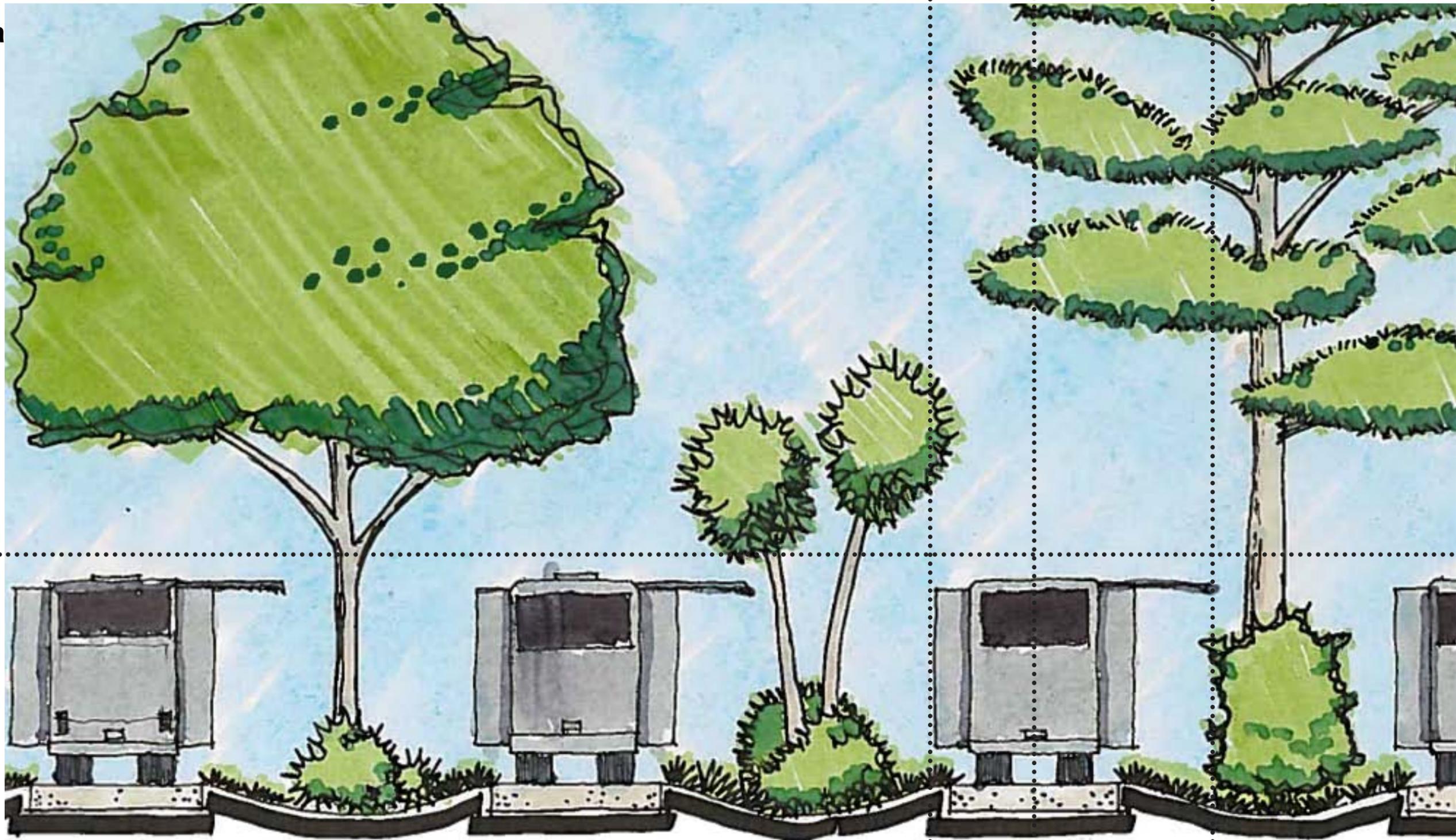
12' parking pad

20' planted area

12' parking pad



Landscape Maintenance



Tree canopy to be maintained above RV roofline (14' above parking service)

Small shrubs, groundcover

Large/medium shrubs, trees

Small shrubs, groundcover

Keep plants clear of pop-out sides

Center of RV

Keep plants clear of awnings

7 ft min.

12 ft min.

Landscape Concept - Suggested Species

When preparing to replant the RV site after development a selection of native species should be used to help regenerate the damaged ecosystems of the site. Not only does this benefit the environment, it will also produce a lush aesthetic and promote wildlife diversity on site.

Trees: Live oak, Slash pine, Sweetgum, Redcedar, Cabbage palm, Hawthorns, Laurel oak, Red bay, Red maple, Sweetbay, Water Oak, Magnolia

Shrubs: Ground blueberry, Gallberry, Saw palmetto, Shining sumac, Tarflower, Waxmyrtle, Witchhazel

Herbaceous Plants and Vines: Blackberry, Bracken fern, Creeping beggarweed, Deer tongue, Dog fennel, Gayfeather, Greenbriar, Milkwort, Cinnamon fern, Royal fern, Crossvine, Poison ivy, Virginia creeper, Wild grape, Yellow jessamine

Grasses: Chalky bluestem, Broomsedge bluestem, Yellow indiagrass, Low panicum, Pineland threeawn, Sedges, Eastern gamagrass, Beaked panicum, Big cordgrass, Black needlerush, Gulf cordgrass, Marshhay cordgrass, Olney bulrush, Seashore dropseed, Seashore paspalum, Seashore saltgrass, shoregrass, smooth cordgrass



Conclusions

I believe that the RV park and festival grounds would be a beneficial addition to the town of Steinhatchee.

As the Florida population increases, more people will begin seeking out nature based recreation as a respite from our developed societies where nature has often been lost to concrete and human commotion. I believe the RV park offers a valuable opportunity for highly concentrated occupancy on a site with little impact compared to standard development procedures.

The new festival grounds will allow the Steinhatchee River Chamber and other organizations to pursue more festival opportunities without concern for spatial constraints. There are numerous opportunities for the town of Steinhatchee to attract more opportunities like the Fiddler Crab Festival. By providing a designated and ample space, these opportunities are more likely to become realities.



Bibliography and Contacts

Contacts

Dean Fowler, Project Client, Resort Owner, Member - Steinhatchee River Chamber of Commerce

Meg Inforati-Fleming, Former President - Steinhatchee River Chamber of Commerce,
Event Manager - Fiddler Crab Festival

Danny Griner - Taylor County Building Official

Mark Reblin, Big Bend Water Authority

William Ball, Campground Engineers

Brian Kauffman, Suwannee River Water Management District

Dennis Smith, Maintenance Supervisor - Williston Crossings RV Resort

Tim Deputy, General Manager, ARVC member

Resources

RV Types - (http://www.texasgulfcoastonline.comPortalsoRV_Types.gif)

Nature Coast Coalition - (<http://www.naturecoastcoalition.com/nchistory.htm>).

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission - Nature-Based Recreation Master Plan, Big Bend Wildlife Management Area, 2003.

Taylor County Board of County Commissioners - Taylor County Restore Act.

NFPA 1194 Standard for Recreational Vehicle Parks and Campgrounds. 2011 Edition.

Florida Statute Chapter 513 - Mobile Home and Recreational Vehicle Parks.

Ch. 64E-15 - Florida Administrative Code - Mobile Home, Lodging, and Recreational Vehicle Parks and Recreational Camps.

National Electric Code - Article 551 - Recreational Vehicles and Recreational Vehicle Parks. 2008 Edition.

2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

Coastal Construction Manual - Principles and Practices of Planning, Siting, Designing, Constructing, and Maintaining Residential Buildings in Coastal Areas (Fourth Edition) FEMA P-55 / Volume I, II / August 2011

USDA/ NRCS Soil Survey of Taylor County, Florida

Soil Water and Conservation Society - "Twenty-six Ecological Communities of Florida". 1989.

Taylor County, Florida, Code of Ordinances - Land Development Code

