

MORNINGSIDE NATURE CENTER

Preliminary Master Plan

City of Gainesville
Wild Spaces & Public Places

April 19, 2025
Public Meeting



CORE CLIENT TEAM:

Leslie Ladendorf, M.A., CPRP
Assistant Director
City of Gainesville
Department of Parks, Recreation
and Cultural Affairs

Betsy Waite, P.E., CPRP
Director
City of Gainesville
Wild Spaces & Public Places

Cherie A. Kelly, M.A.
Youth Services and Education Programs Manager
City of Gainesville
Department of Parks, Recreation
and Cultural Affairs



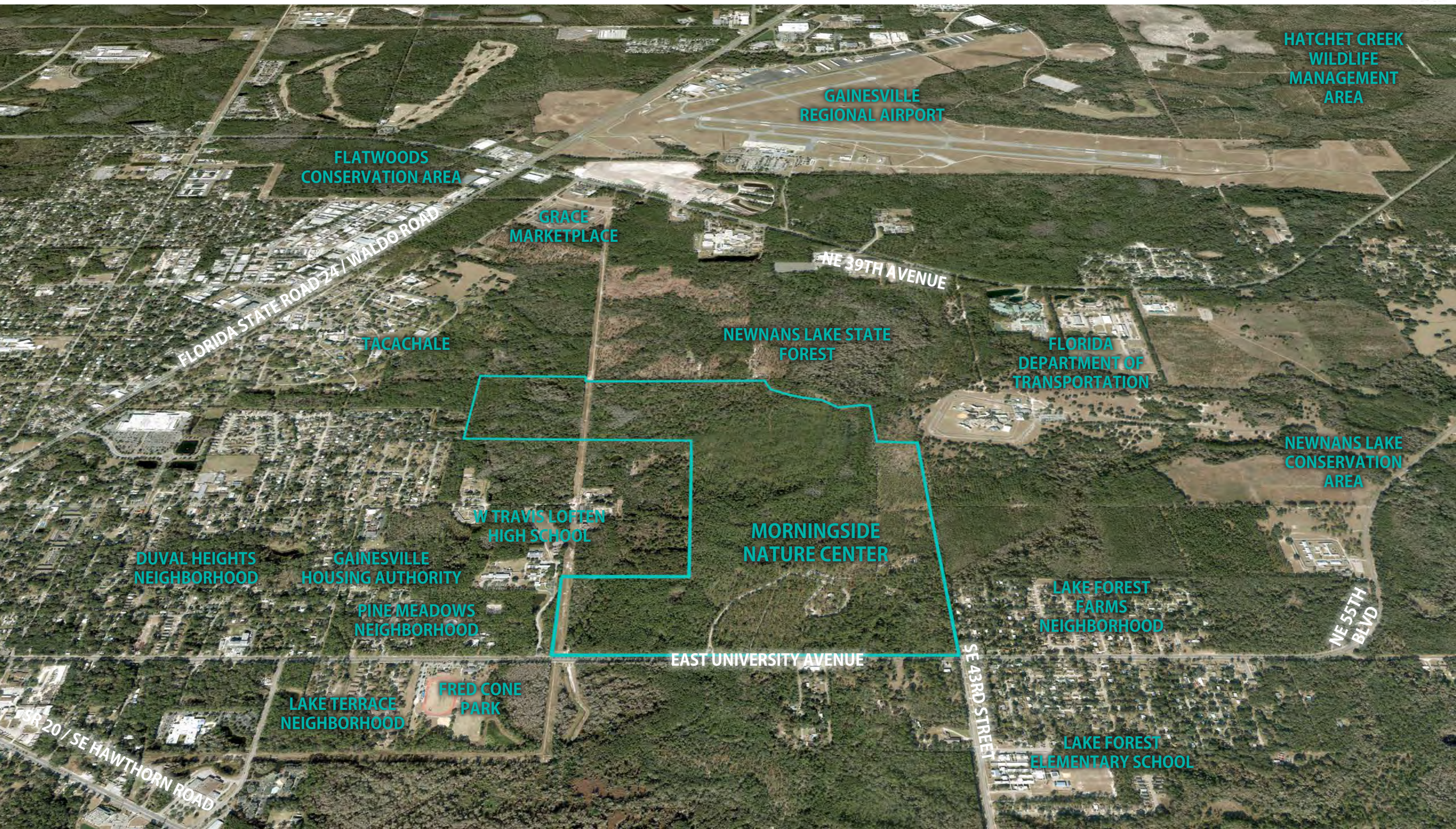
Kimley»»Horn



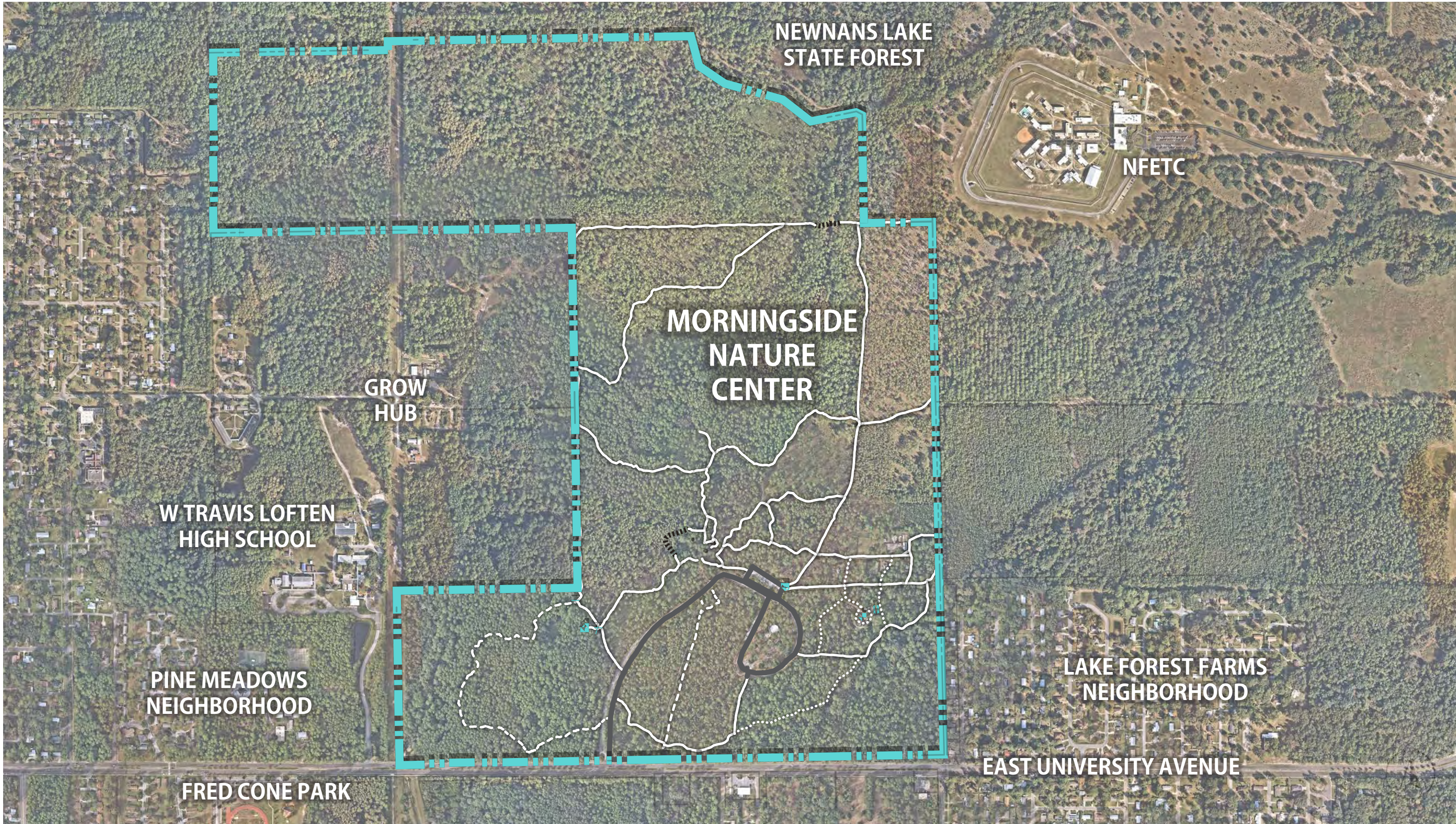
DESIGN TEAM:

Kimley-Horn and Associates
Studio MJG

CONTEXT MAP



OVERALL SITE MAP



MORNINGSIDE EXPERIENCE



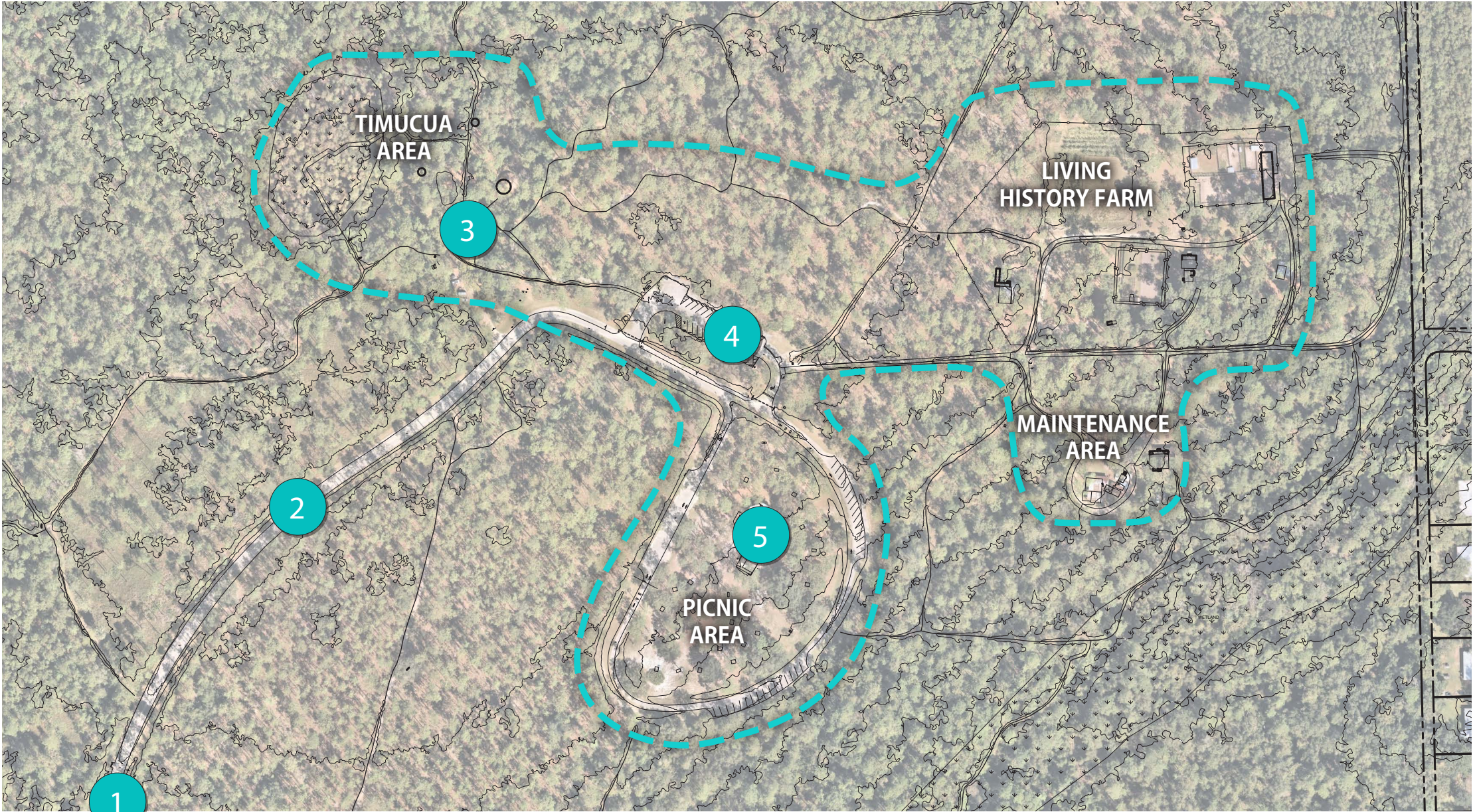
1 ENTRY



2 ENTRY DRIVE



3 EXISTING NATURE CENTER



4 PARKING



5 OUTDOOR CLASSROOM



MORNINGSIDE EXPERIENCE



6 FARM



7 TRAILS



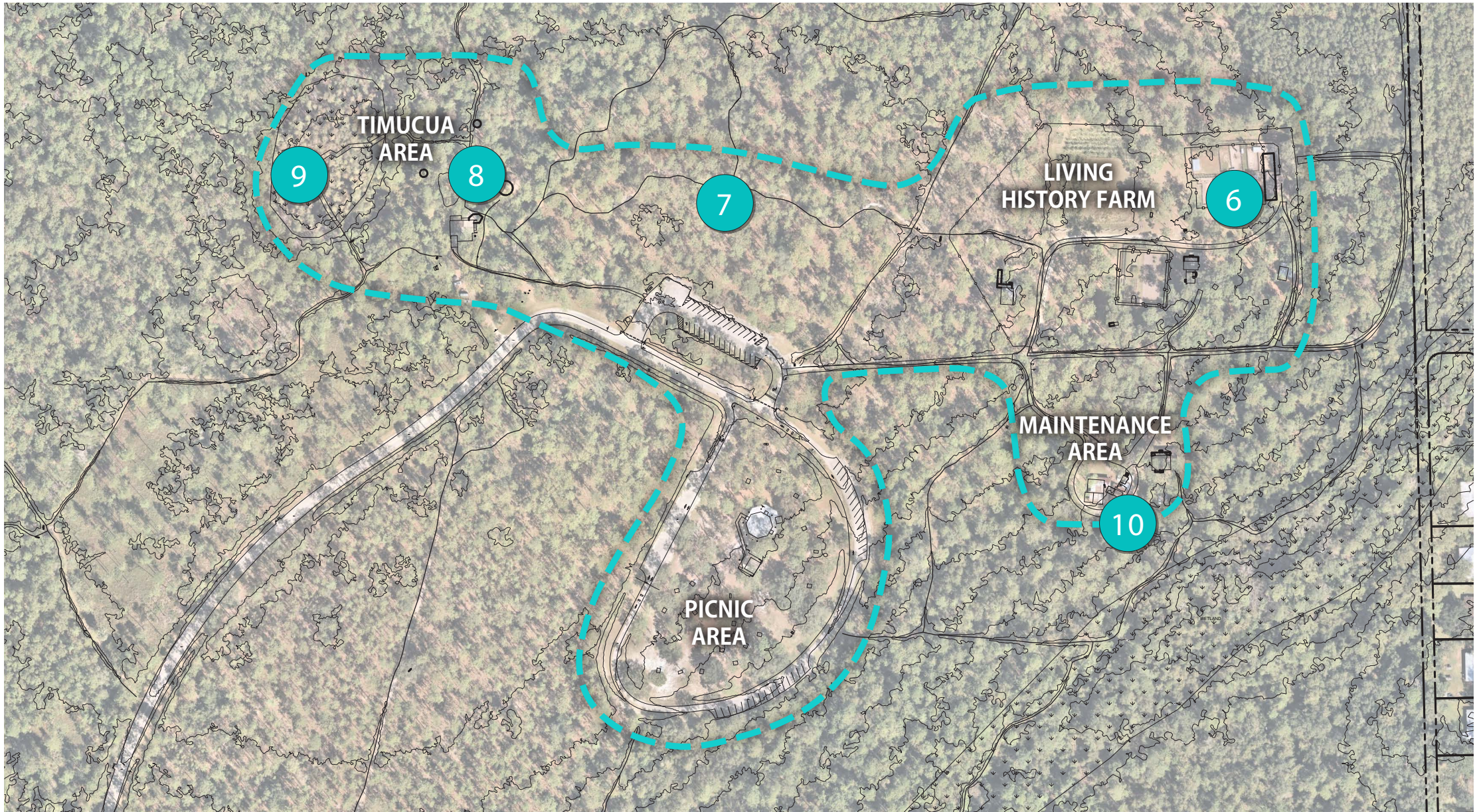
8 CHICKEES



9 BOARDWALK



10 MAINTENANCE AREA



A large teal leaf with a dark shadow is positioned in the top-left corner. Behind it and extending towards the center is a cluster of line-art foliage, including various leaves and berries.

Morningside's Mission

*To provide meaningful
experiences through education,
research, and conservation.*

Morningside's Vision

*A gateway for every generation
to connect to cultural history
and the natural world.*

A large teal leaf with a dark shadow is positioned in the bottom-right corner. Behind it and extending towards the center is a cluster of line-art foliage, including various leaves and berries.

MASTER PLAN GOALS

01

Protects, enhances, and educates
about its valuable natural and cultural resources

Resource-based improvements,
compatible with resource
protection and land
management

Minimal impacts

Restore and enhance
existing resources

Increase environmental,
cultural, and historical
education

Preserve opportunities for
‘instant wilderness’



MASTER PLAN GOALS

02

Celebrates its natural and historic character with contemporary updates

Morningside as an iconic and unique destination

Preserve natural and historic character

Freshen up ‘the look’ while maintaining what makes Morningside special

Balance appeal of nostalgia while accommodating needs



MASTER PLAN GOALS

03

Creates an inclusive, accessible, and welcoming experience for all visitors

Universal accessibility
that also minimizes
impacts

Diverse stories, ‘My story’

Make relevant to all
generations

Promote a sense of
adventure and wonder

Improve wayfinding and
trail organization

Environmental and
historical education starts
at the point of arrival



MASTER PLAN GOALS

04

Strengthens connections to the community, both adjacent neighborhoods and Gainesville at large

Provide diverse opportunities for personal connections to nature

Interactive and participatory activities

Broaden programming to appeal to more diverse audiences and inspire repeat visits

Increase opportunities for adjacent residents to better utilize Morningside

Increase opportunities for nearby school students and staff to better utilize Morningside

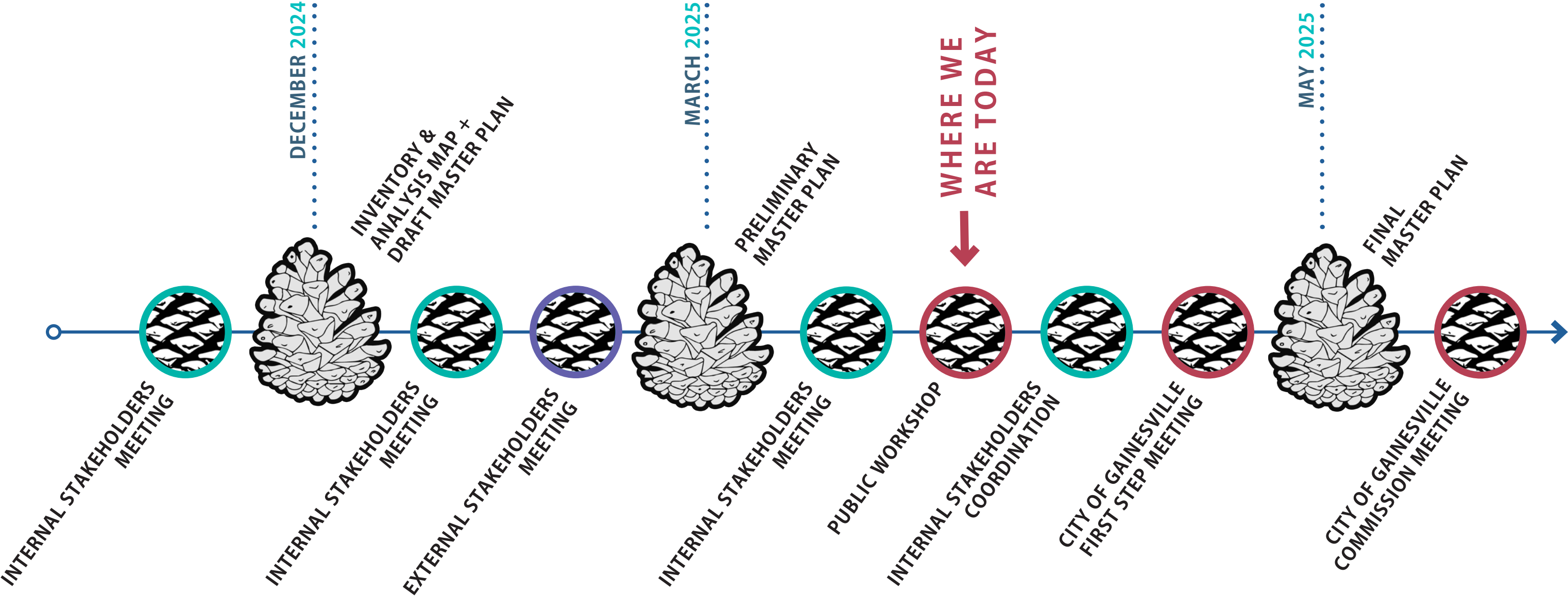
Make community more aware of Morningside



MASTER PLAN PROCESS

- INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS
- EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS
- PUBLIC

NEXT STEPS
GAIN INPUT
REVISE



MASTER PLAN ENGAGEMENT

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDER
MEETINGS

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER
MEETINGS

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS
COORDINATION

CITY OF GAINESVILLE FIRST STEP
MEETING

CITY OF GAINESVILLE
COMMISSION MEETING

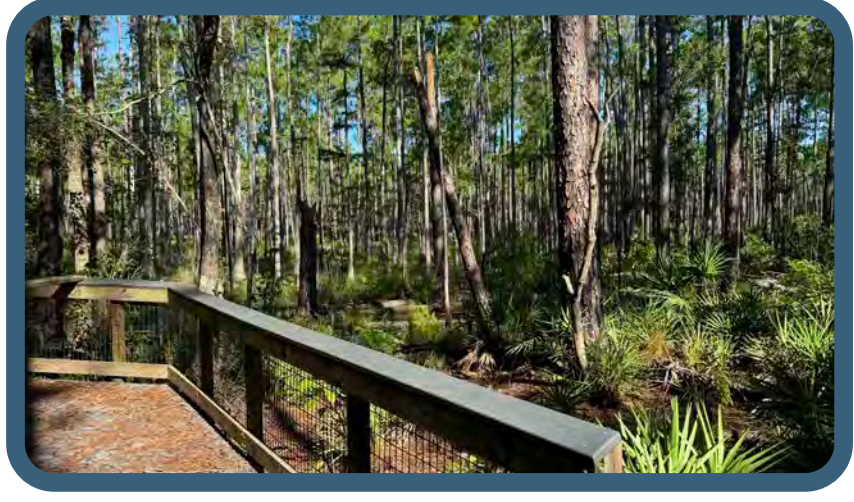
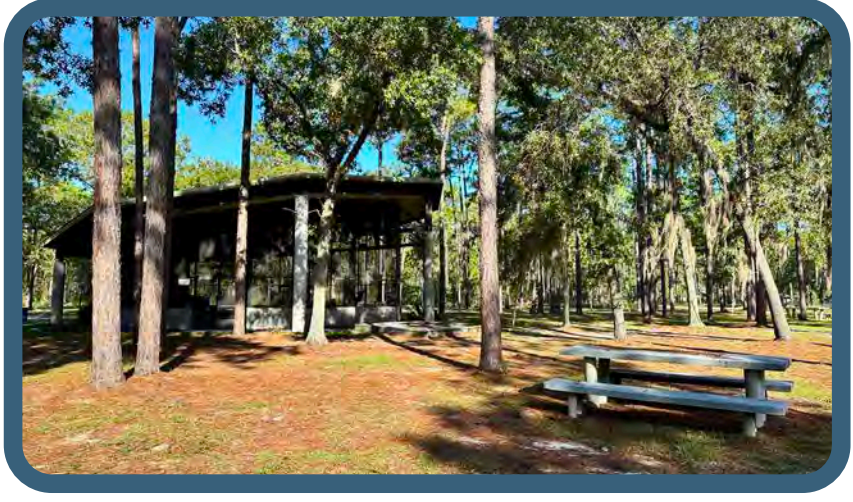


INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

CULTURAL & HISTORIC ELEMENTS

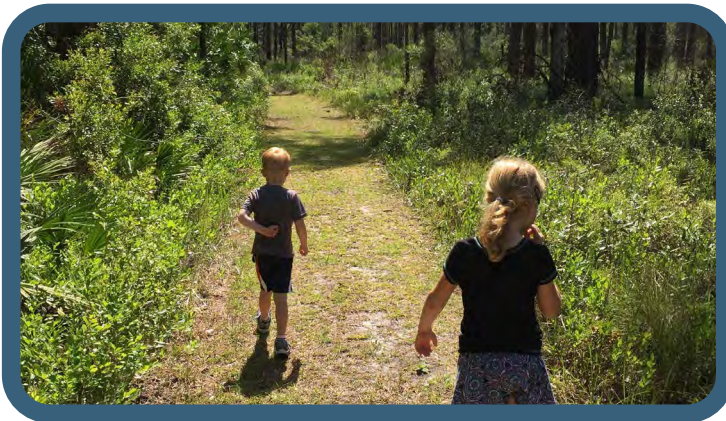
NATURAL RESOURCES

EDUCATIONAL ELEMENTS

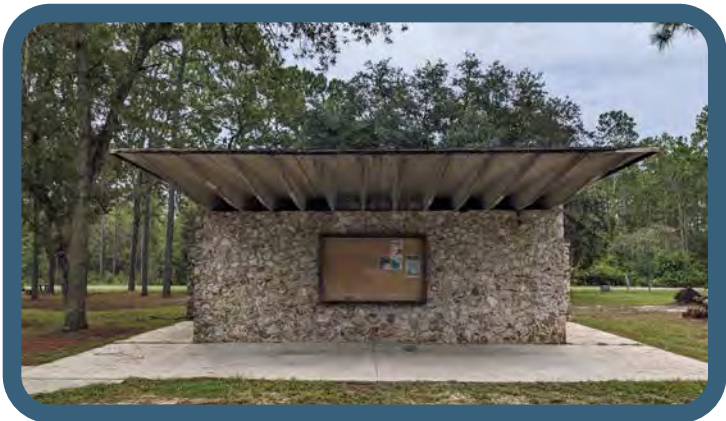


INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

NATURE BASED RECREATION



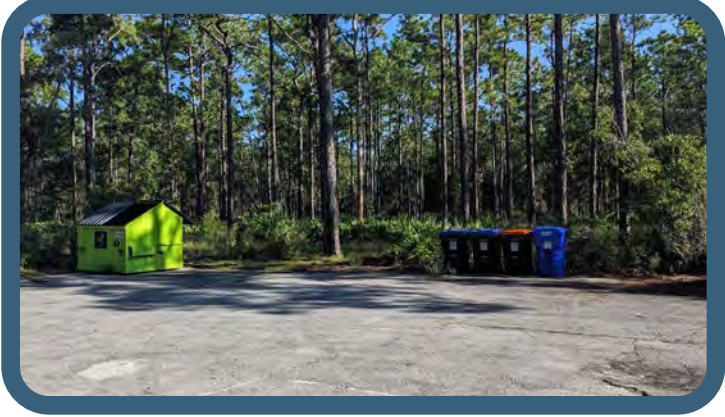
ARCHITECTURE



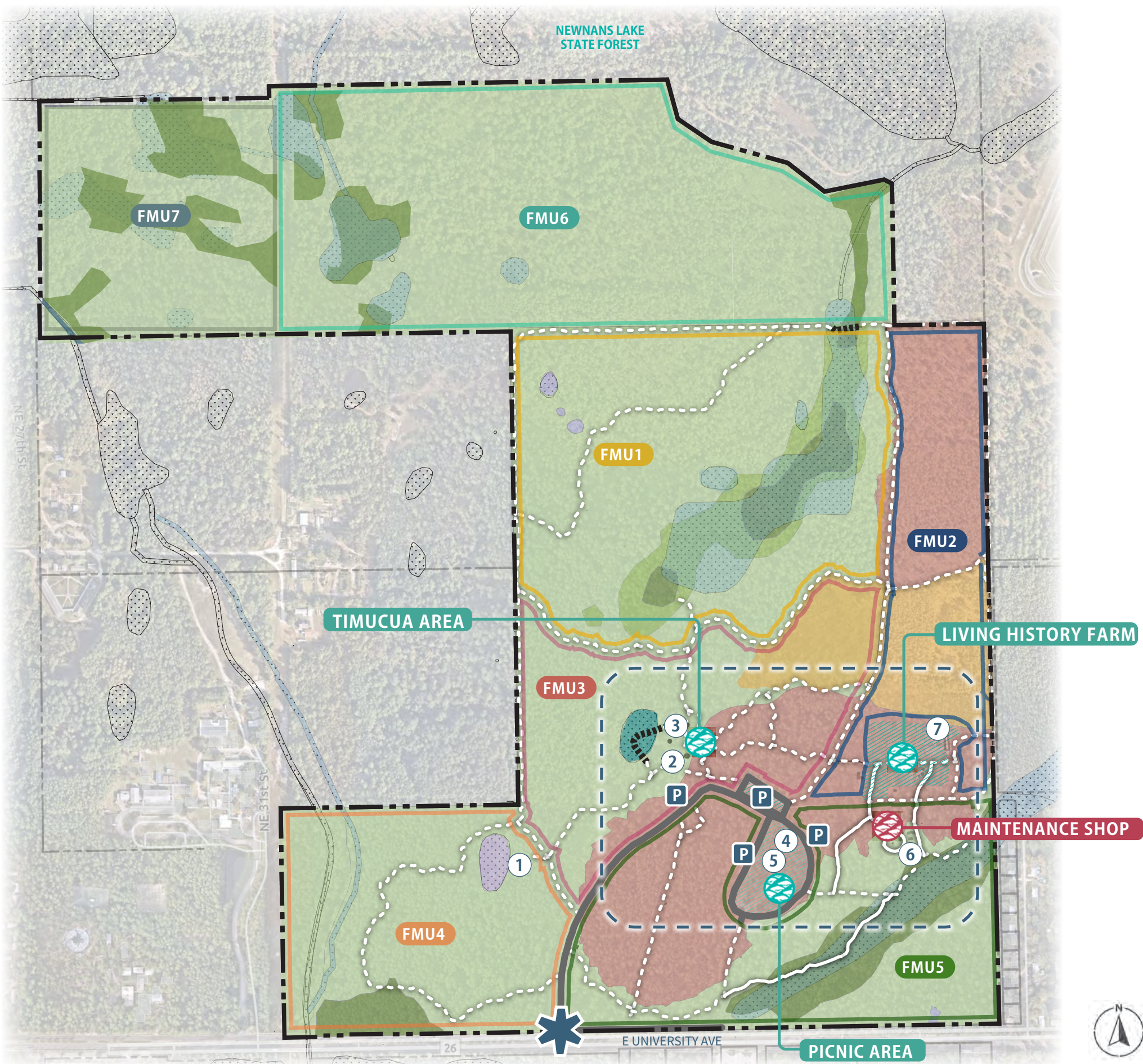
WAYFINDING & BRANDING



USE INFRASTRUCTURE



INVENTORY MAP OVERALL PARK



LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Core Area - See Enlarged Plan
- Access
 - Drives
 - Boardwalk
 - Trails
 - Staff Only Access
- Primary Entry
- Parking

Natural Communities

- Mesic Flatwoods
- Sandhill
- Wet Flatwoods
- Basin Swamp
- Depression Marsh
- Dome Swamp
- Creek
- Habitat Restoration Area
- Developed
- Wetlands

- Key Public Destination Areas
- Staff Only Areas

Site Elements

- Existing Bird Blind
- Existing Nature Center
- Existing Chickees
- Existing Outdoor Classroom
- Farm Structures
- Maintenance Shop & Farmstead Building
- Farm Structures

Fire Management Units

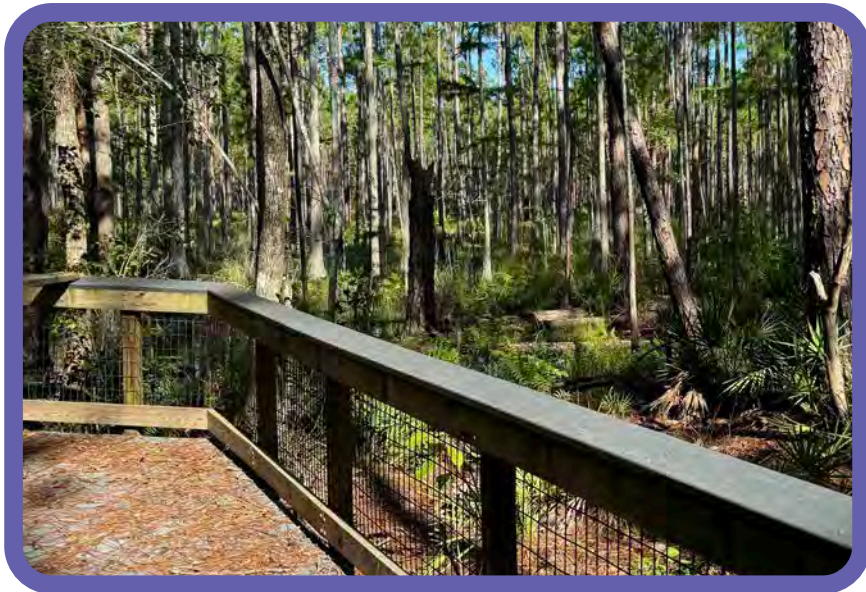
- FMU1
- FMU2
- FMU3
- FMU4
- FMU5
- FMU6
- FMU7



SCALE: 1"=300'-0"

PROGRAM ELEMENTS EXISTING TO REMAIN

TRAILS & BOARDWALKS



LIVING HISTORY FARM



TIMUCUA AREA



OUTDOOR CLASSROOM



BIRD BLIND



PROGRAM ELEMENTS PROPOSED

ENTRY EXPERIENCE



NEW NATURE CENTER



NATURAL RESOURCES
EDUCATION &
TRAINING CENTER



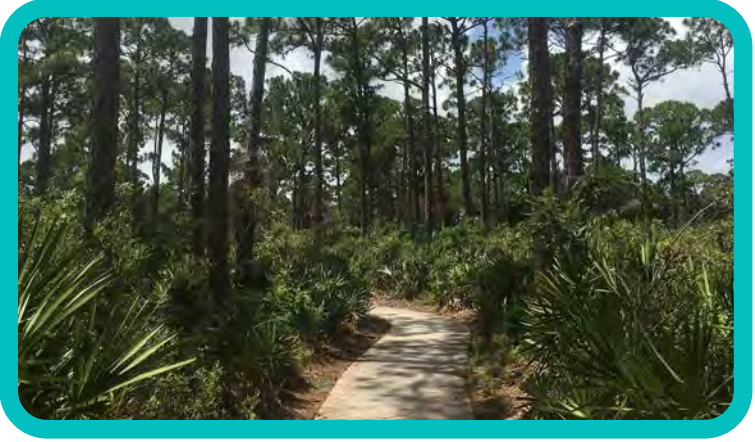
WAYFINDING & SITE
FURNISHINGS



ACCESSIBLE RESTROOMS



TRAILS



PICNIC AREAS



IMMERSIVE NATURE-
BASED ELEMENTS



PROGRAMMABLE PLAZA



PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN

LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Core Area - See Master Plan Core Area Plan

Access

- Drives
- Boardwalk
- 6' Wide Accessible Walk
- 8' Wide Improved Trail including 3-mile Primary Loop
- 12' Wide Land Management Path/Trail
- Future Multi-Modal Trail per City's Mobility Plan
- Entry
- Land Management Access
- Primary Trail Hub
- Secondary Trail Hub
- Parking
- Existing Bus Station

Natural Communities

- Mesic Flatwoods
- Sandhill
- Wet Flatwoods
- Basin Swamp
- Depression Marsh
- Dome Swamp
- Creek
- Habitat Restoration Area
- Wetlands

Fire Management Units

- FMU1
- FMU2
- FMU3
- FMU4
- FMU5
- FMU6
- FMU7

NOTES:

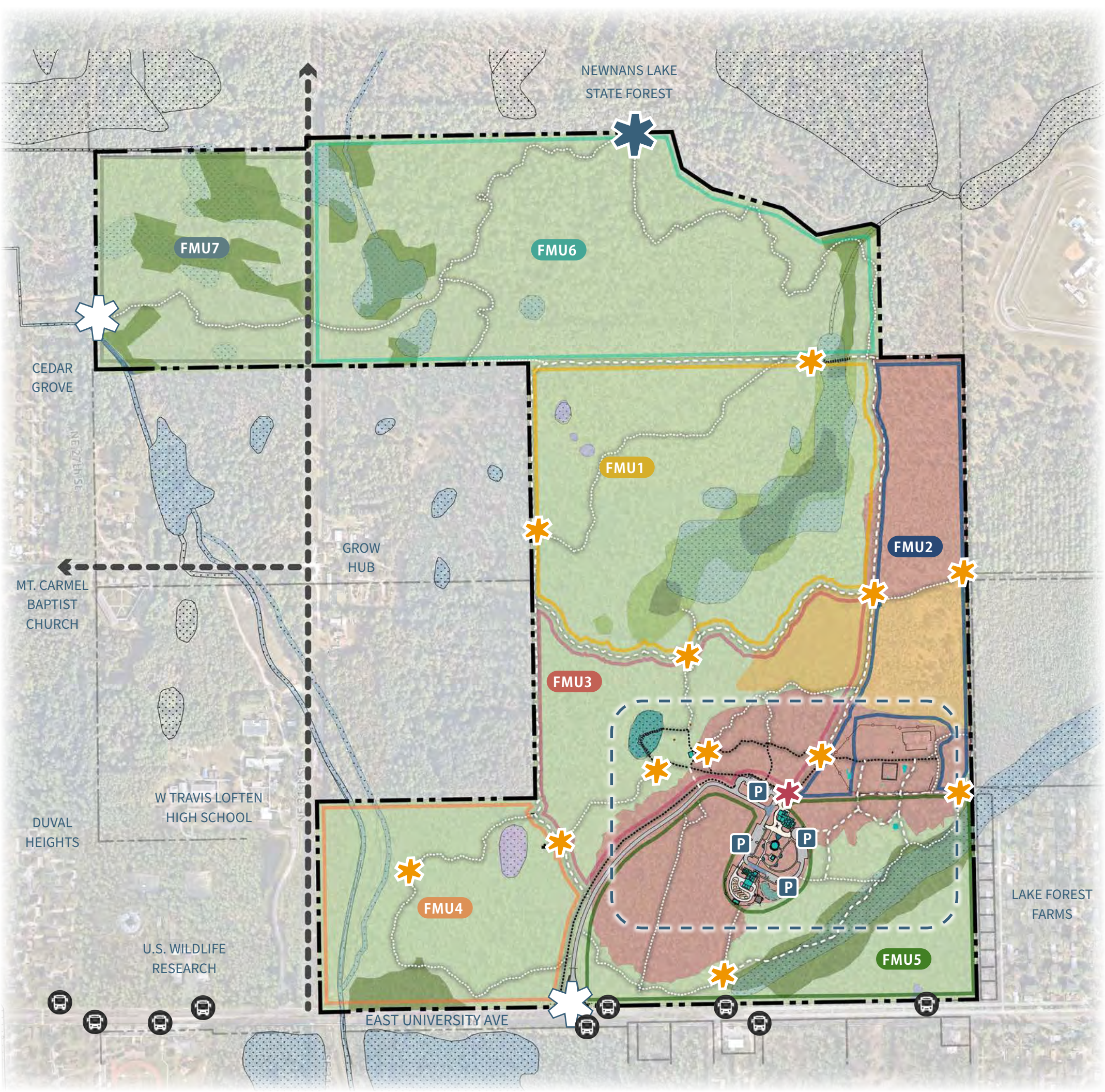
Site furnishing, wayfinding, landscape, environmental education, and art to be included throughout site.

Proposed new trails are shown graphically for the intent of master planning purposes and will be further identified in the field with the approval of Morningside's Land Management team prior to improvements.

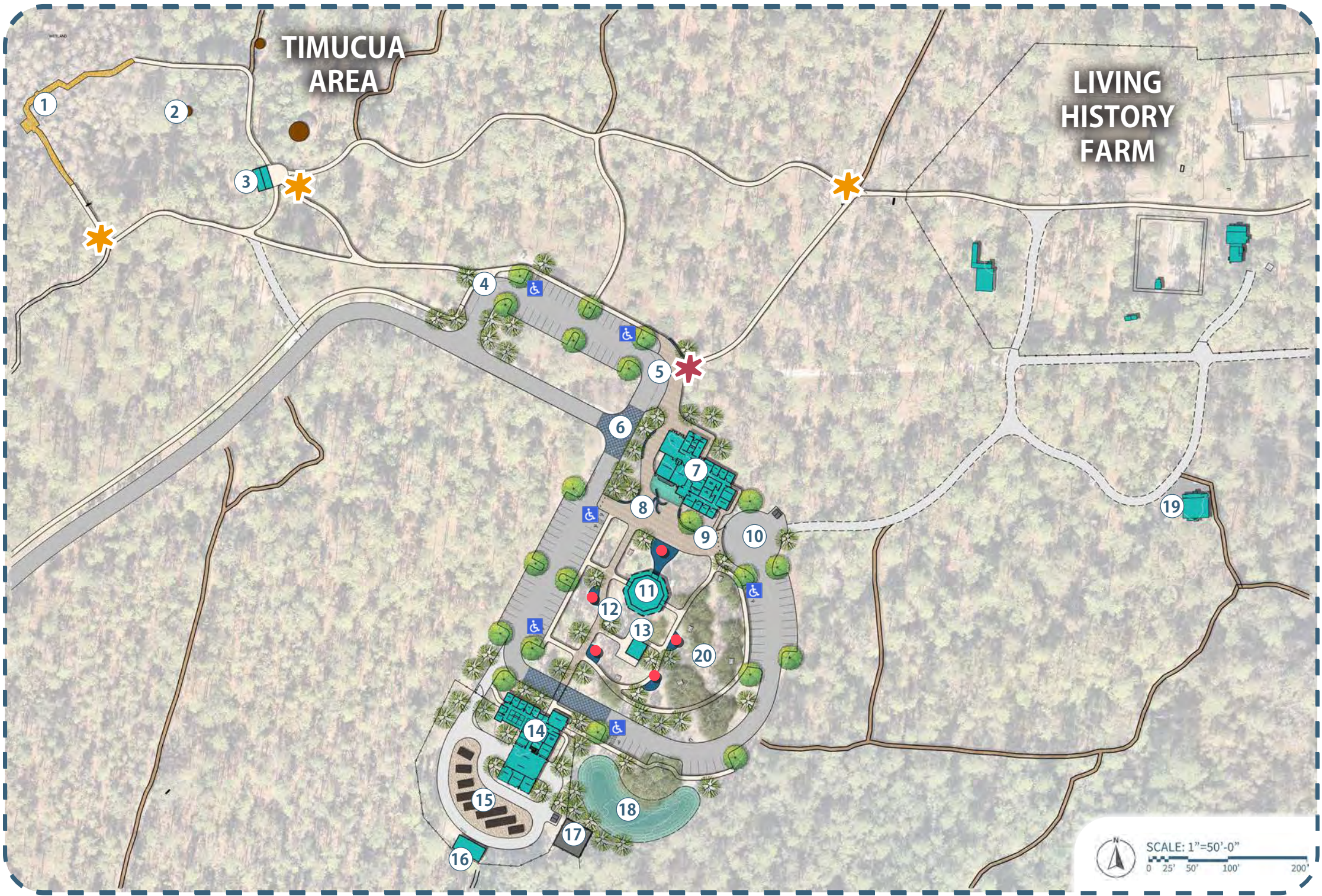


SCALE: 1"=300'-0"

0 37' 75' 150' 300'



PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN CORE AREA



LEGEND

- Trail Types**
- 6' Wide Accessible Walk (shell, gravel, or concrete)
 - 8' Wide Improved Trail
 - 12' Wide Maintenance Drive
- Hubs**
- Exploration Hubs
 - Primary Trail Hub
 - Secondary Trail Hub
- Site Elements**
- 1 Existing Boardwalk
 - 2 Existing Chickee Structures
 - 3 Proposed Cultural Education Pavilion and Restroom
 - 4 Proposed Bus Parking
 - 5 Proposed Drop-off
 - 6 Proposed Enhanced Entry Drive Intersection
 - 7 Proposed Nature Center
 - 8 Proposed Programmable Plaza with Seating
 - 9 Proposed Collapsible Bollards
 - 10 Proposed Drop-off Loop
 - 11 Existing Outdoor Classroom
 - 12 Proposed Exploration Zone & Interpretive Trail
 - 13 Existing Restroom
 - 14 Proposed Natural Resource Education & Training Center
 - 15 Proposed Maintenance Equipment Parking
 - 16 Proposed Maintenance Pole Barn
 - 17 Proposed Lift Station
 - 18 Proposed Dry Stormwater Retention Area
 - 19 Proposed Living History Farms Staging & Storage in Existing Building
 - 20 Picnic Area

NOTES:

Site furnishing, wayfinding, landscape, environmental education, and art to be included throughout site.

Proposed new trails are shown graphically for the intent of master planning purposes and will be further identified in the field with the approval of Morningside's Land Management team prior to improvements.

PROPOSED ENTRY EXPERIENCE

STRONGER CONNECTION



Chert rock sign walls with split rail fencing and small columns that frame entry.

Planting enhancements with an elongated central island.

New sidewalk connection to University Avenue.

A WELCOMING ENTRANCE



ENHANCED VISIBILITY

PROPOSED NATURE CENTER

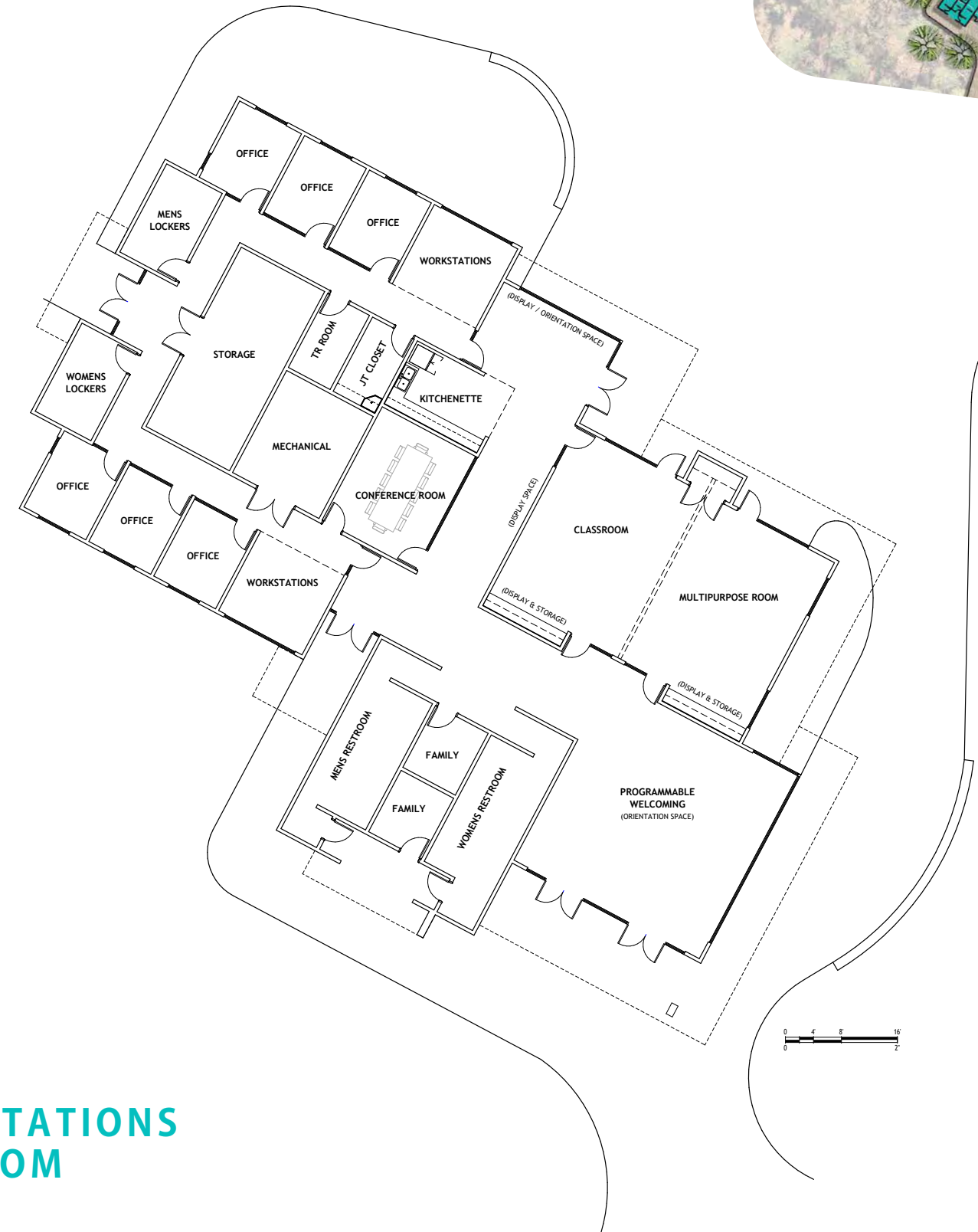
7,000 SF welcome center

Education & artifact display

Mix of public and staff spaces

Environmental Education Staff Office

Restrooms, locker rooms, & storage



PUBLIC SPACE

- PROGRAMMABLE WELCOMING (ORIENTATION SPACE)
- MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
- CLASSROOM
- RESTROOMS

STAFF SPACE

- 6 OFFICES
- 2 GROUP WORKSTATIONS
- CONFERENCE ROOM
- KITCHENETTE
- STORAGE
- LOCKERS

PROPOSED NATURAL RESOURCE EDUCATION & TRAINING CENTER



PUBLIC SPACE

- PROGRAMMABLE TRAINING ROOM
- RESTROOMS

STAFF SPACE

- 6 OFFICES
- 6 SHARED WORKSTATIONS
- 1 COLAB ROOM
- BREAK ROOM
- LOCKERS
- STORAGE
- WORKSHOP
- LOADING/EQUIPMENT BAY

6,700 SF

Education & artifact display
Mix of public and staff spaces
City's Maintenance Team Office
Secure Maintenance Shop
Restrooms, locker rooms, & storage



PROGRAMMABLE PLAZA

WELCOMING
COMMUNITY SPACE



ADAPTABLE FOR SMALL
AND LARGER EVENTS



SHADE, SITE
FURNISHINGS, POWER
RECEPTACLES, & LIGHTING



TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

TRAIL NODES WITH INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCES



DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL INTERPRETATION FOR WAYFINDING



PASSIVE & SENSITIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH NATURAL COMMUNITIES



PICNIC/OPEN SPACE AREAS

ACCESSIBLE & INVITING
SPACES FOR ALL LEVELS OF
COMFORT WITHIN NATURE

CONNECTIVITY TO
EDUCATIONAL CENTERS

NATURE-BASED ART ELEMENTS



CULTURAL RESOURCES AREA IMPROVEMENTS

Restrooms will be provided as part of proposed improvements.

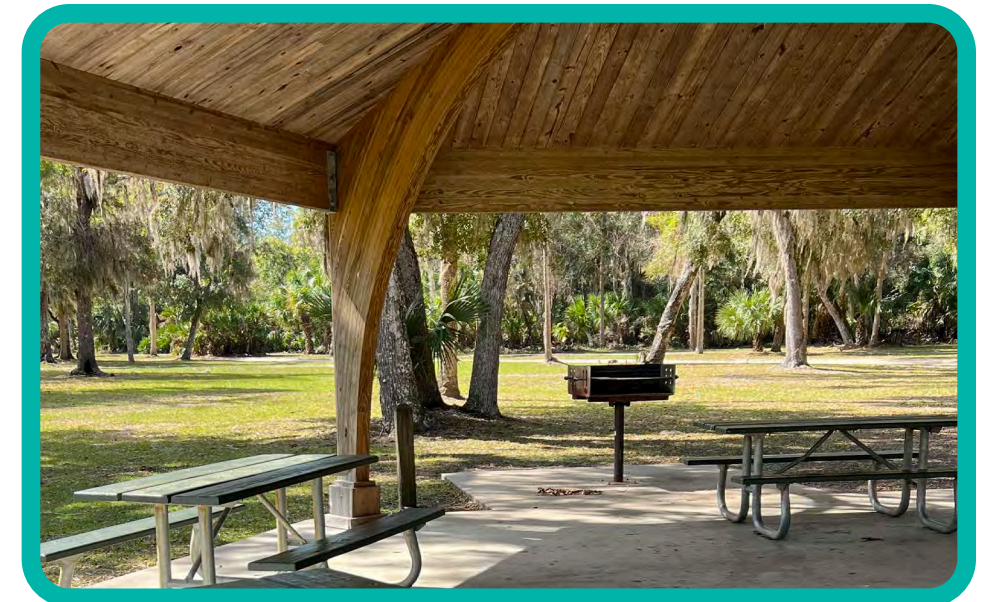
MORE WELCOMING ENTRY & NEW HUB FOR TIMUCUA AREA



SHELTER FROM RAIN AND SUN FOR EDUCATIONAL GROUPS



MORE VISIBILITY & CONNECTION



IMMERSIVE NATURE-BASED ELEMENTS

ACCESSIBLE LOOP WALK



DEMONSTRATION BURN AREAS



SEATING ALONG TRAILS



ENHANCED TRAIL WAYFINDING & INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE



LOW-IMPACT INTERACTIVE OPPORTUNITIES



EXPLORATION ZONE



WAYFINDING

INVITING & DISTINCTIVE MORNINGSIDE CHARACTER



CONSISTENT & CLEAR MESSAGING



**Primary
Signs**

Simple and directional
information for orientation

**Interpretive
Signs**

Detailed educational
information
with illustrative graphics



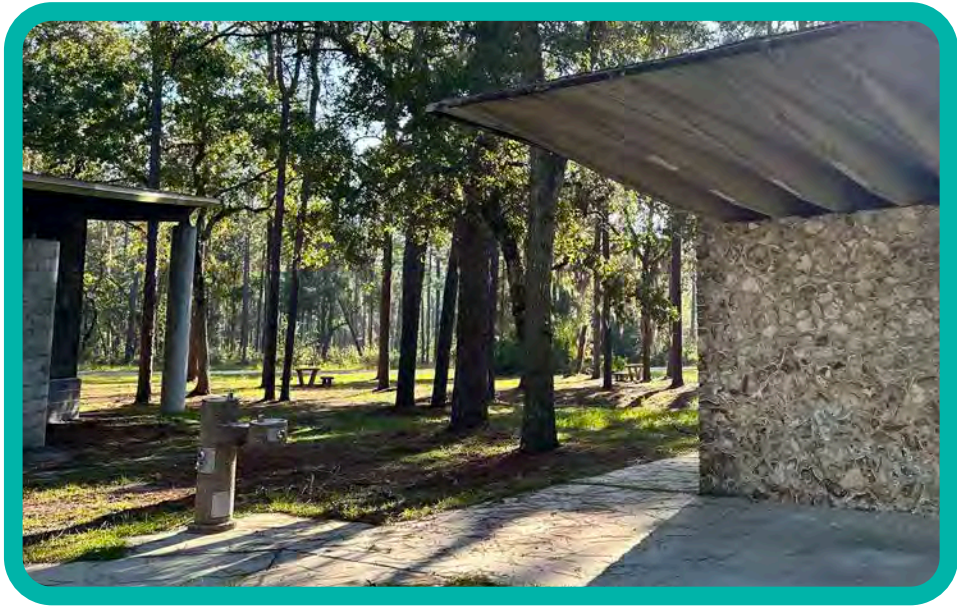
DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL INTERPRETATIONS

**Operational
Signs**

Information for staff,
land management, and
maintenance

ACCESSIBLE RESTROOMS & SITE FURNISHINGS

ACCESSIBLE



FRESH & NATURAL AESTHETIC



COMPATIBLE WITH LAND
MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES



MAINTAINABLE



THANK YOU

City of Gainesville
Wild Spaces & Public Places

For more information, please contact
Betsy Waite, Director
City of Gainesville's Wild Spaces & Public Places
waiteed@cityofgainesville.org

Please provide comments by April 30th, 2025.

