

Waterway Park



A major aesthetic improvement to the Island, this well-landscaped park is a Brevard County owned facility providing public access to the Indian River Lagoon. The Intracoastal Waterway Park is an attractive gateway into the Island from the mainland, providing enjoyment of the waterfront within the SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area.

- 8.5 acres with paved pathways and winding boardwalks
- Landscaped community park with native plants and trees
- Access walkways to Blue Crab Cove
- Future Plans: A concrete fishing pier with benches providing sunset views

Adjacent to Waterway Park is the newly acquired county-owned riverfront property, Griffis Landing, for which a master plan has been completed and infrastructure improvements are actively underway.

Cone Road Project



*A prime example of how multi-agency partnerships can benefit the community is this multi-faceted initiative on Merritt Island, called the **Cone Road Project**, utilizing financial resources from the **Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency, Brevard County Public Works, the St. Johns River Water Management District, Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Brevard County Save Our Lagoon Program** to manage storm water runoff, septic system effluent and storm-related sewage backups and help the Indian River and Banana River Lagoons.*

Combining funding and resources to improve local infrastructure, these five agencies are working to **improve safety, remove blight**, improve property values and **preserve the future health of the Lagoon**, benefiting the local economy, generating capital investment and strengthening the tax base.

Project costs of approx. \$3.6M in improvements include:

- Conversion of more than 80 commercial and residential properties from outdated septic systems to a new Brevard County sanitary sewer system
- Construction of storm water treatment infrastructure and water quality treatment system to divert untreated storm water to a treatment pond and denitrification bioreactor
- Sidewalk over Cone Road to improve vehicle and pedestrian safety and access
- A sanitary sewer main to serve more than 60 parcels in the Cone Road industrial area
- Prevent over 3000 lbs. of nitrogen and almost 200 lbs. of phosphorus from entering the Lagoons annually

520 Corridor Beautification

With both landscaped medians and perimeter landscaping, the 520 Corridor Beautification is an investment driver.



*State Road 520—the Merritt Island Causeway—is the primary west/east major arterial road, extending from Cocoa on the mainland through Merritt Island to Cocoa Beach. The **SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area** extends the entire length of SR 520 from the Indian River Lagoon on the west and to the Banana River Lagoon on the east, north to approximately Merritt Avenue and south to approximately Fortenberry Road.*

The **\$2.1 Million 520 Corridor Beautification Project** helped achieve a positive aesthetic image within the commercial core of Merritt Island. Significant portions of the SR 520 right-of-way now exhibit an elevated aesthetic, with both landscaped medians and perimeter landscaping which has been further enhanced by private property owners, who have landscaped the frontages of their properties.

In addition, **MIRA provided funding for SR 520 Intersection image enhancements**, such as powder coated mast arms, faux brick crosswalks, a powder coated, tri chord, 30 traffic signal truss, with a 260' span at the intersection of Sykes Creek Pkwy and SR 520

The 520 Corridor Beautification project, under the guidance of the Florida Department of Transportation, involved vehicular and pedestrian safety and major landscaping and paver infrastructure and including masthead repair and replacement.

The SR 520 Commercial Core Area is a diverse mix of regional and local commercial uses. The area includes Merritt Square Mall which was once one of the predominant regional shopping destinations for Brevard County. Griffis Landing is one of the key waterfront properties located within this sub-area. In addition, the area includes big box stores, smaller retail and service businesses, historic Merritt Park Place (the oldest residential subdivision on Merritt Island now transitioning to commercial use), the Merritt Island Baptist Church campus, and the proposed Health First Wellness Village.

Bus Shelter Program



A county-wide initiative to invest in and install new bus shelters, the **Merritt Island Bus Shelter Program completed Phase I**, installing solar lighted, multimodal bus shelters in Merritt Island through partnering with the **Space Coast Area Transit, Brevard County Facilities, and the FDOT.**

MIRA is responsible for, and under contract, to maintain the transit shelters and amenities

Contains solar-powered, self-compacting “big belly” trash bins, bike racks, interior and exterior solar-powered safety lighting, and bike repair stations for quick bike fixes.

Plans are underway to install four additional shelters on SR 520 to replace the deteriorating 20/20 media shelters

Veterans Memorial Park

An 82-acre park within a 165-acre stormwater basin, featuring beautiful lakes, trails and eventually an entertainment venue, this project is a perfect example of redevelopment.

*The ongoing effort is known as **Veterans Memorial Park**, the **Lakes at Veterans Memorial Park**, and the **Fortenberry Regional Stormwater Treatment Project**.*



*This is a **collaboration** between regional agencies and county departments including **Brevard County Parks, Brevard County Natural Resources, Brevard County Facilities, Brevard County Public Works, and St Johns River Water Management District.***

Recent and planned developments include:

- \$1.4M contribution from MIRA for sidewalks, boardwalks, environmentally friendly parking lot, and first stage landscaping
- Approximately \$2.5 Million as a MIRA Contribution in Aid for Land Acquisition
- A historical \$50,000 charitable gift from a donor was received by MIRA to create a special landscaping area and the bidding for installation is in process
- New playground equipment with shade canopies
- An exercise trail
- “Medal of Honor” Park, with dedicated walkway and landscaping, an area for quiet contemplation honoring veterans
- A large venue amphitheatre with grass seating for up to 5,000, and parking, infrastructure and concession amenities, developed in part with a contribution from the Brevard County Tourism Development Council

With 72,000 veterans residing in Brevard County, it is appropriate that this park is the largest Veterans Memorial Park in Florida. Creating a beautiful park with sparkling lakes, meandering trails and recreation opportunities is a wonderful result of the vision of the planners, **but another important aspect is the stormwater management.**

With the Stormwater Tie-In Credit, the developer can elect to handle stormwater mitigation off-site, using the **Fortenberry Regional Stormwater Treatment System**. Paying through stormwater credits eliminates the developer’s cost to build a pond, allows better utilization of the property, and eliminates permitting costs (which can take up to two years to get approved) and long-term maintenance fees.

The Stormwater Assessment Fee is calculated using a formula that includes gross area and impervious area measurements as recorded by the Brevard County Property Appraiser. **Eligibility is determined by Brevard County, and when granted, extends for the life of the development.**

The Amphitheatre at Veterans Memorial Park



The amphitheatre was conceived through a partnership in the late 2000s when **Brevard County Parks and Recreation** received an **\$800,000 grant from the State of Florida Communities Trust for Veterans Memorial Park Improvements**, and **MIRA contributed \$400,000 towards the expansion**.

Since 2017, MIRA has committed more than \$2.4 million dollars in funding for the enhancement opportunities and amphitheatre infrastructure. These enhancements are currently in the final design stages, then permitting review, bidding, and construction.

Most recently MIRA was successful in obtaining a \$1.3 Million Grant from the Brevard County Tourism Development Council, matched by a \$1 Million investment from MIRA to complete the Amphitheatre project.

The Amphitheatre outdoor event complex is located in Veterans Memorial Park on Merritt Island.

- Acoustically engineered with an estimated tiered lawn seating capacity of 5,000
- Amphitheatre performance stage, greenroom, vendor docking and storage facilities, electrical infrastructure and stage lighting and digital performance level sound production
- Concession facilities and picnic seating, parking, walkways and restrooms
- A well-designed park makes the venue perfect for spectators and vendors. The park is designed to handle inclement weather through a 24-acre master planned onsite stormwater lake.
- Handicapped accessible parking
- Landscaping, irrigation and sight utilities (power, water, sewer, data/communications)

A scheduled completion date in early-mid 2024.

Fortenberry Regional Stormwater Treatment System & Tie-in Credits



The Fortenberry Regional Stormwater Treatment System Project is an example of visionary redevelopment and the stormwater system and credits benefit our environment and provide opportunity for developers.

A MIRA collaborative project that includes many partners including the **Florida Department of Environmental Protection** and **multiple Brevard County departments**, including **Natural Resources Management, Facilities, Public Works** and **Parks & Recreation**, the Fortenberry Regional Stormwater Treatment System provides opportunities for commercial properties within the service area to purchase stormwater credits, offsetting costs to the developer and allowing for optimum use application within the property. **Stormwater credit eligibility is determined by Brevard County, and when granted, extends for the life of the development.**

Following an interlocal agreement in 2009, MIRA purchased land primarily to develop the stormwater system to catalyze smart redevelopment opportunities.

Construction began in 2011, with mitigation of decades of debris and wetland plant restoration, and has continued through multiple phases including piping improvements, an extensive path and bridge trail system, adding of benches and shade areas to create the Lakes at Veterans Memorial Park, and installation of Floating Vegetative Islands (also often called beemats) within the stormwater mitigation ponds for further effective filtering of chemicals that would be harmful to the Indian River and Banana River Lagoons.

Water testing of the system reveals dramatic improvements in water quality—the expected and desired result of the infrastructure development project plan.

This wetlands creation and eco restoration, along with a pedestrian-friendly trail around the perimeter, has created a welcome local nature destination for people and native wildlife.

Upcoming near-term plans to the amenity include canopies on the playground for year-round comfort and an exercise trail along its perimeter.

Griffis Landing / Blue Crab Cove

A 2.7 Acre Historic Working Waterfront, within the boundaries of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency, and managed by Brevard County Natural Resources, represents Brevard County's last working waterfront commercial fishery operation, taking local seafood straight from its docks. Located on the Indian River Lagoon, this historic property has seen many enterprises from boat haul-out and repair to net making and both commercial recreational fishing, with an active bait shop—Doc's Bait House—and a wholesale/retail seafood business— Ms. Apples Crab Shack.



The MIRA/Brevard County project known as Griffis Landing at Blue Crab Cove is a comprehensive improvement plan to preserve and enhance the historic value and provide a gathering place at the entrance to Merritt Island that is reminiscent of the best that working waterfronts and waterside family entertainment areas have to offer.

Priority objectives:

- Provide channel depth for access and docking for commercial fishing
- Area for unloading seafood
- Place to sell commercial seafood
- Storage of fishing gear
- Educate the public on heritage of Florida's traditional working waterfronts
- Boat fueling

The plan includes expanded commercial fishing, parking, dock and storage areas including boat storage, enhanced wholesale pickup and refrigeration, pump out facilities and recycling, maritime educational opportunities, and events to bring Brevard's history to life, as well as a welcoming waterfront with observation platforms and amenities, attracting public gatherings.

Significant improvements have already been made, as damage from hurricanes, such as storm damage to the boat ramp, shoreline loading dock, finger piers, and shoreline added to the issues of aging infrastructure. **Funding of more than \$500,000 of improvements to Historic Griffis Landing at Blue Crab Cove, in cooperation with Brevard County Natural Resources, Boating and Waterways division, the following was completed:**

- A **\$403,000** Land Acquisition Contribution
- Doc's Bait House – \$367,000 for “resiliency improvements” and replacement of a deteriorating flat roof with a pitch-roof structure
- Ms. Apples Crab Shack – Design charrette completed to create concept plans to improve resiliency and renovate the current site
- Boat Fuel Dock – Installation of a 1,000 gallon fuel tank with a **\$51,587 contribution commitment from MIRA**
- Channel Improvements – Completion of plans and permits for a \$353,542 channel dredging project and channel markers to improve navigable access

Blue Crab Cove is a recipient of a Florida Communities' Stan Mayfield Working Waterfronts Florida Forever Grant. Primary funding for this project is provided by MIRA and the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners.

The future is bright for this project. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) currently list more than 250 commercial licenses appropriate for use in Blue Crab Cove. The result of the planning and conversion of this site is expected to generate a large number of local users. Additionally, Indian River County to the south and Volusia County to the north, according to the FWC, add another 200+ commercial fishing licenses that could potentially access this area.

Health First Hospital & Wellness Village



The project is slated to break ground in 2023 with a projected opening of the facility by 2025.

This will be the largest capital project in the history of Central Merritt Island. The new facility will be designed to pivot the focus of health care by Health First from “sick care” to an era of wellness and includes the relocation of Cape Canaveral Hospital from its current site off State Road 520 in Cocoa Beach to a new site off State Road 520, across the road from Merritt Square mall.

The 15-Acre Wellness Village will have these features:

- New hospital with 120 beds, 30 emergency department bays and 6 operating suites
- A medical office building accommodating primary-care and specialty-care services
- Advanced imaging and diagnostic services
- Retail space accommodating wellness-focused services, fitness centers and healthy dining options
- Childcare facility
- Walking trails and bike paths
- An “experience center” that will house community meeting/event space, classrooms, virtual visit offices and administrative offices, as well as retail space
- Flexible classrooms and auditorium space, with indoor-outdoor capabilities, will enable educational programs, community events and wellness offerings
- Parking

