



Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan

Formally Received by the
Palm Beach County
Board of County Commissioners
on Tuesday, June 4, 1996
as a Statement of Community Sentiment

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose and intent of the Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan is to provide a decision assisting guide for elected officials and policy makers to inform them of the goals and visions for the future of Loxahatchee Groves and maintain a strategic neighborhood plan that educates as well as reflects the needs, concerns and aspirations of the Loxahatchee Groves Community.

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THE LOXAHATCHEE GROVES NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

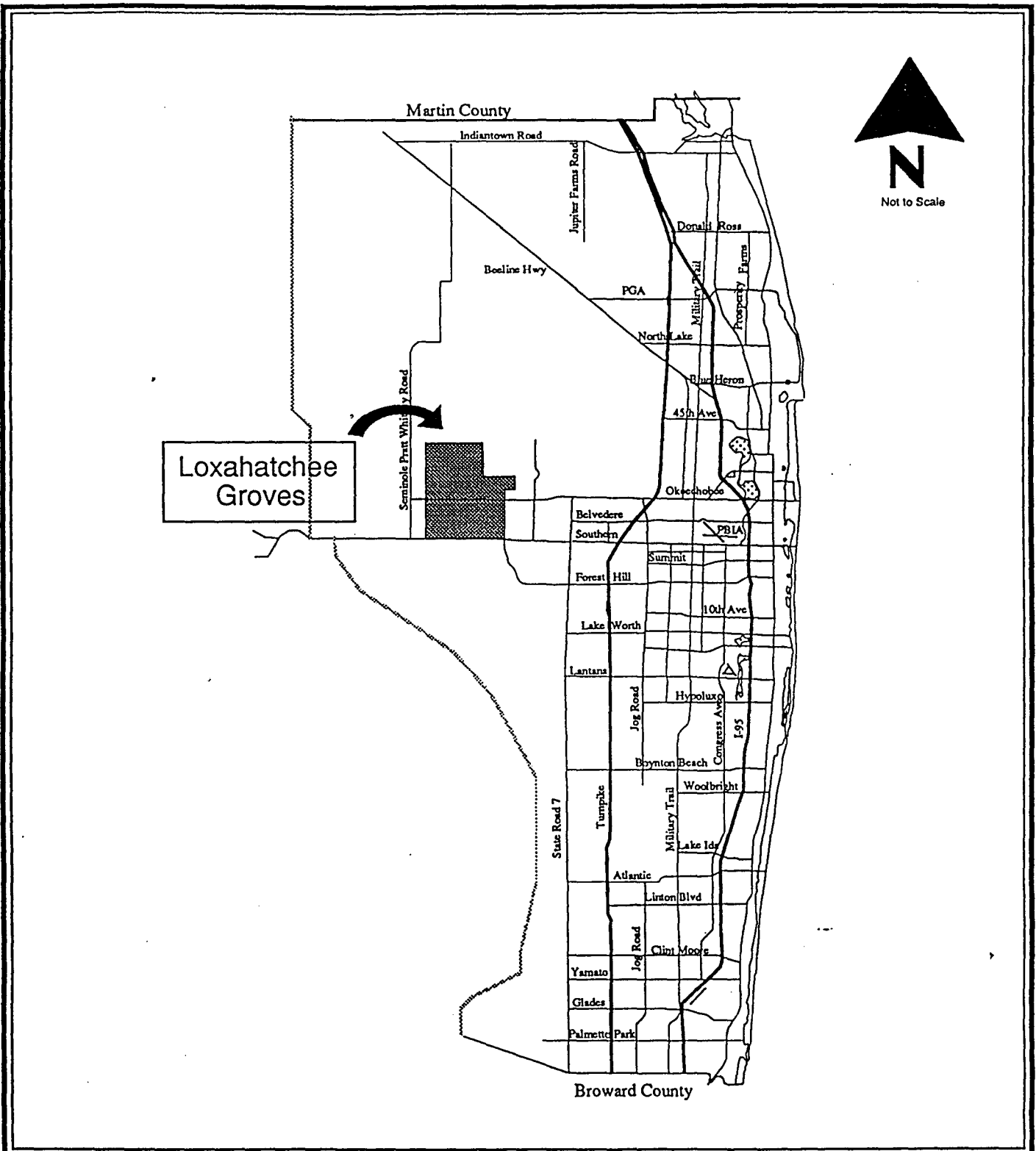
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Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan Planning Area General Location



Palm Beach County Planning Division 1995

REPLAT OF
LOXAHATCHEE DISTRICT SUBDIVISION.
LOXAHATCHEE GROVES

PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA.
PALM BEACH LOXAHATCHEE COMPANY,
WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA.

A SUBDIVISION OF SECTIONS 17-18-19-20-21, THE N.W. 1/4 AND
W. 1/2 OF S.W. 1/4 OF SECTION 22, THE W. 1/2 OF N.W. 1/4 AND W. 1/2 OF
S.W. 1/4 OF SECTION 23, SECTIONS 24-25-26, ALL OF SECTIONS 27-
28 & 29 NORTH OF WEST PALM BEACH CANAL, THE W. 1/2 OF
N.W. 1/4 AND ALL OF W. 1/2 OF S.W. 1/4 OF SECTION 34 NORTH OF
WEST PALM BEACH CANAL ALL IN T. 33 S. R. 12 E.

Scale 1 in. = 1000 ft.

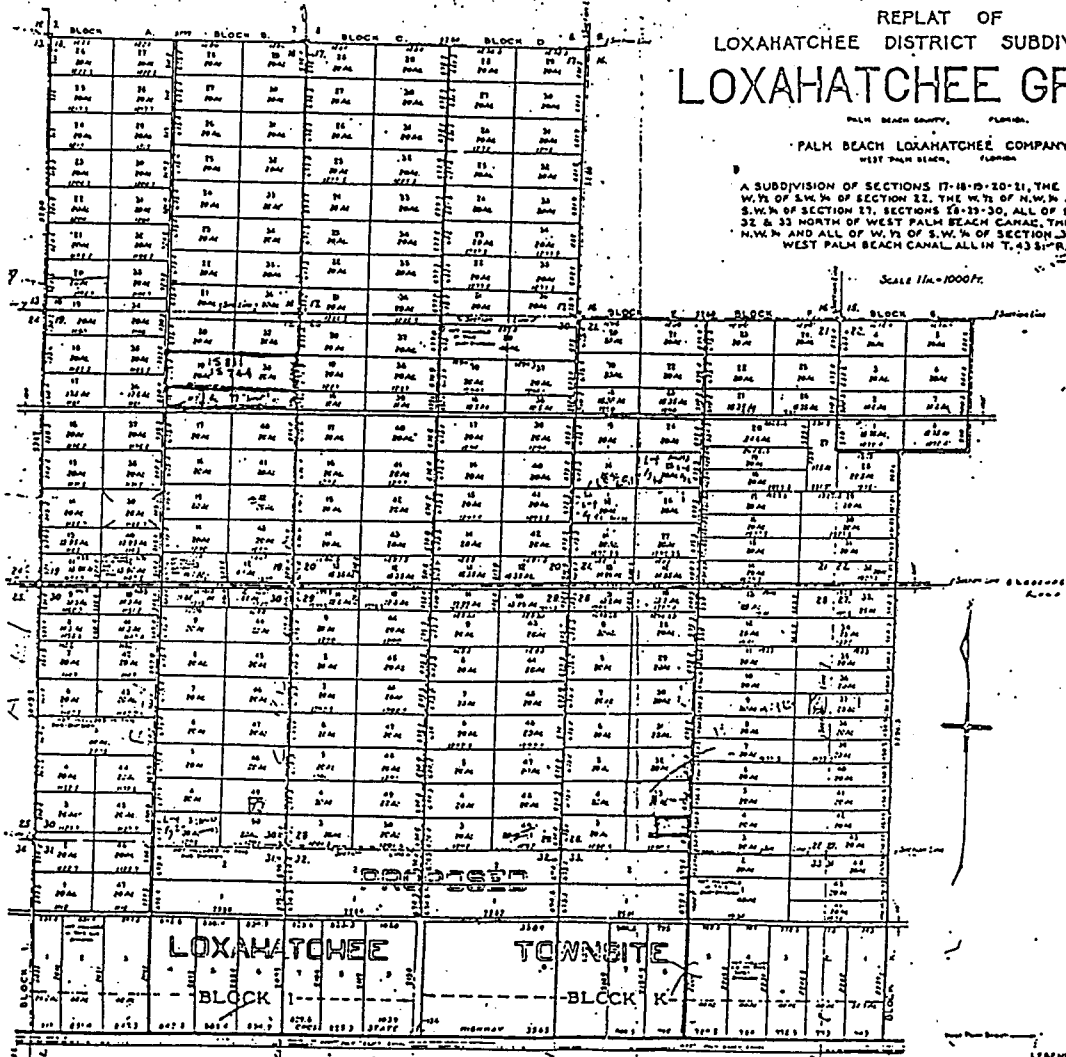
DEDICATION -

State of Florida
County of Palm Beach) ss
I, the undersigned, an officer duly authorized to do
and have acknowledged, as hereby certified, that on the
25th day of August 1925, the above described land was
dedicated to the public as public highways and as
parking, recreational, and other public uses, by the
representatives and petitioners or persons
whom they represented, by the public or disinterested
persons, in witness whereof, I have caused these plat
signed by its President and attested by its Secretary
this 25th day of August, A.D. 1925.
Palm Beach, Fla.
Secretary

Attest: *[Signature]*
Secretary

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT -
State of Florida
County of Palm Beach) ss
I, the undersigned, an officer duly authorized to do
and have acknowledged, as hereby certified, that on the
25th day of August 1925, the above described land was
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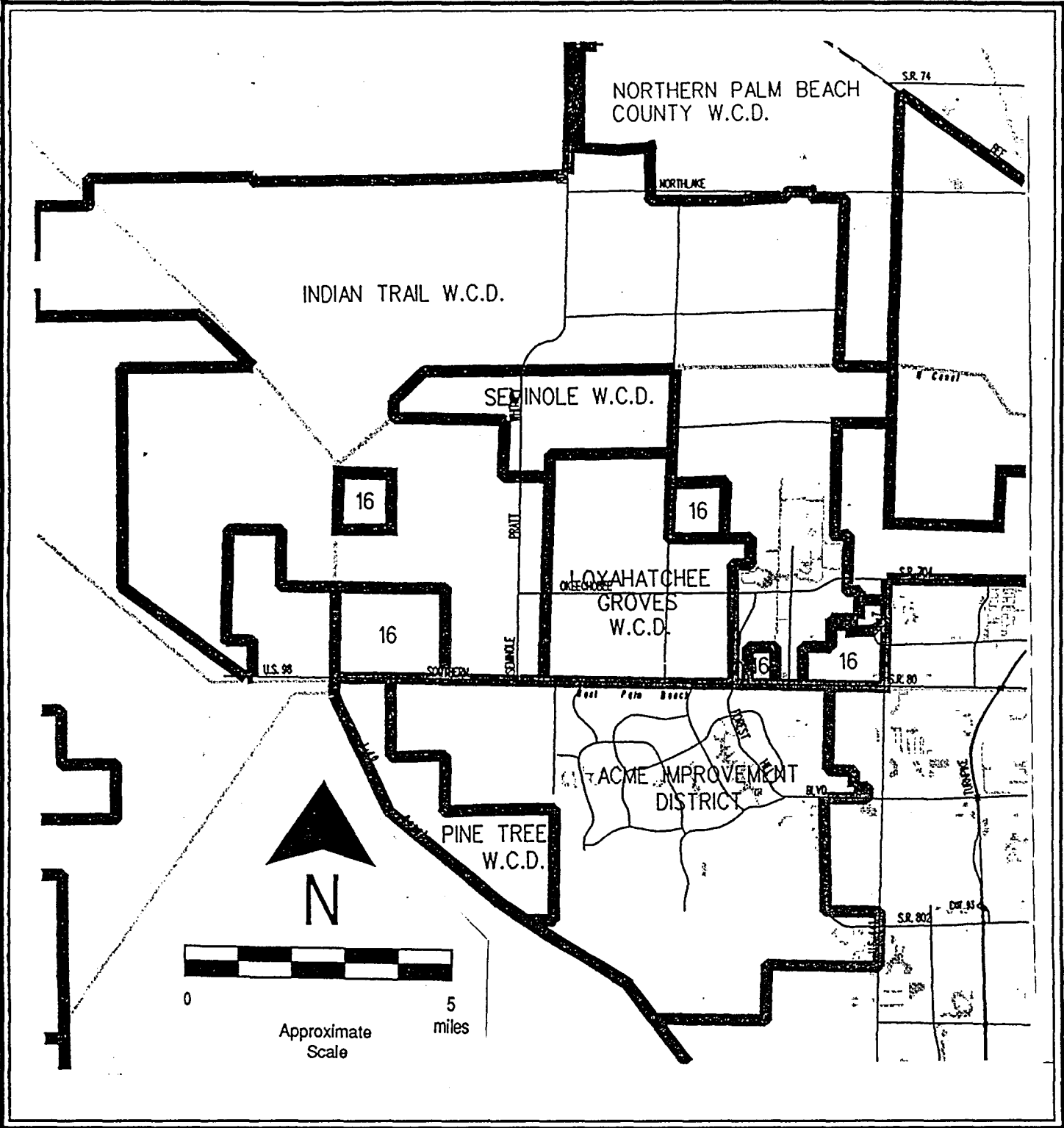
AFFIDAVIT -
State of Florida
County of Palm Beach) ss
I, the undersigned, an officer duly authorized to do
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Secretary



**Loxahatchee Groves
Neighborhood Plan**
Original Platt Map - 1925



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Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan

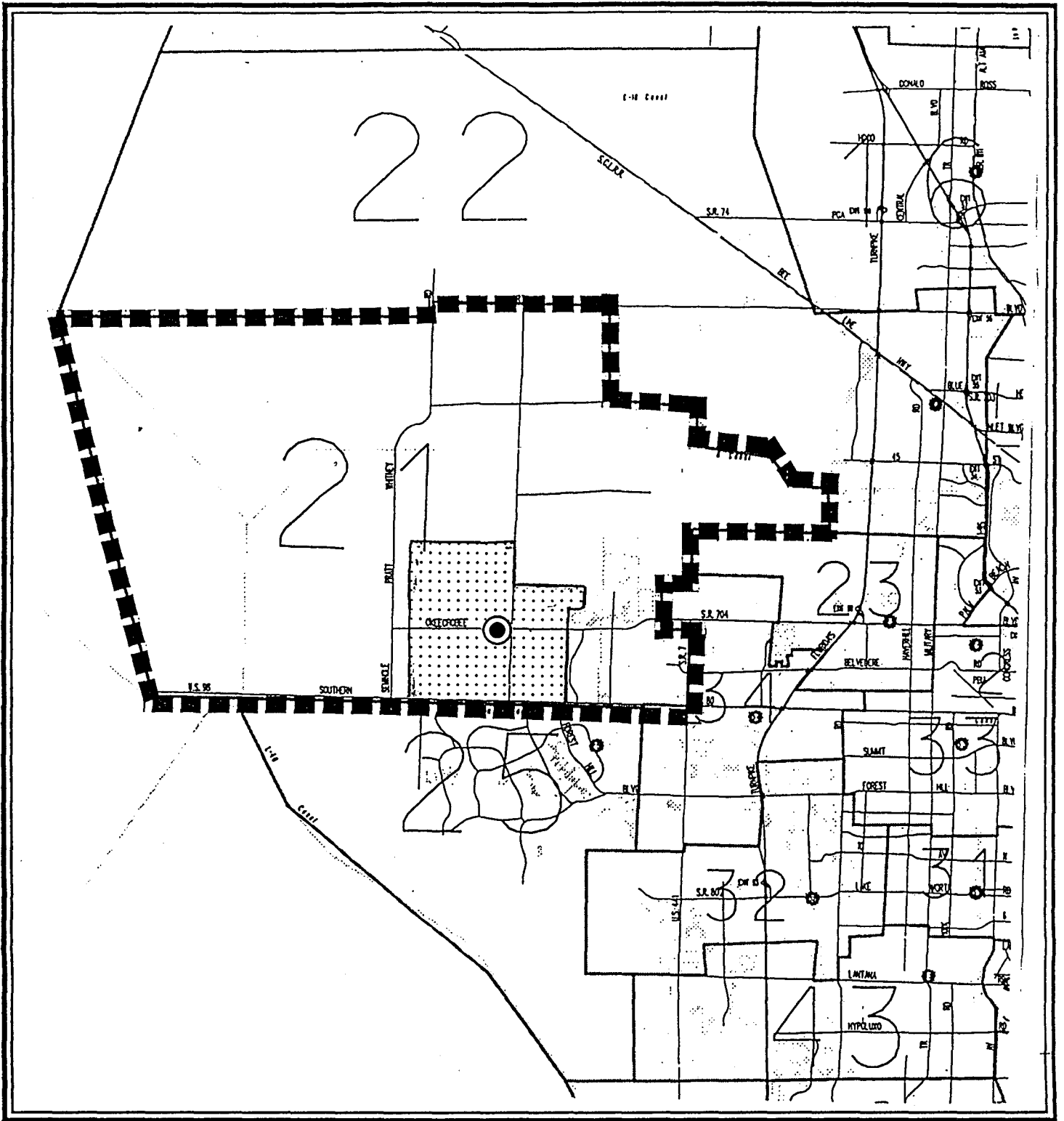
Area Water Control Districts

Legend

16 = Northern Palm Beach
Water Control District



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Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan

Fire Rescue Station 21



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Legend

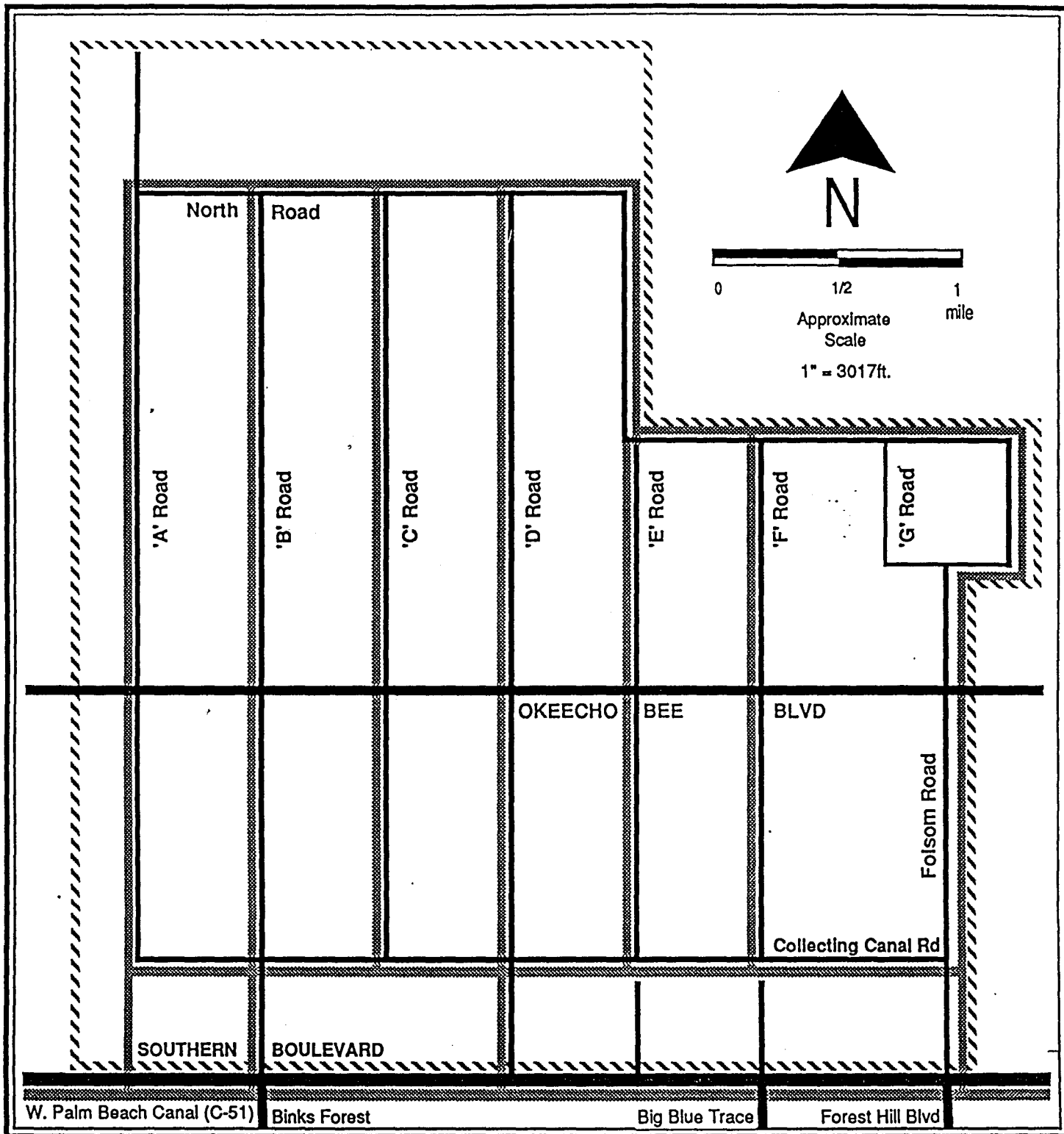


Station 21

Station 21 Service Area



Loxahatchee Groves







Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan

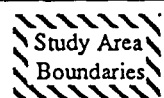
Loxahatchee Water Control District Roads and Canals

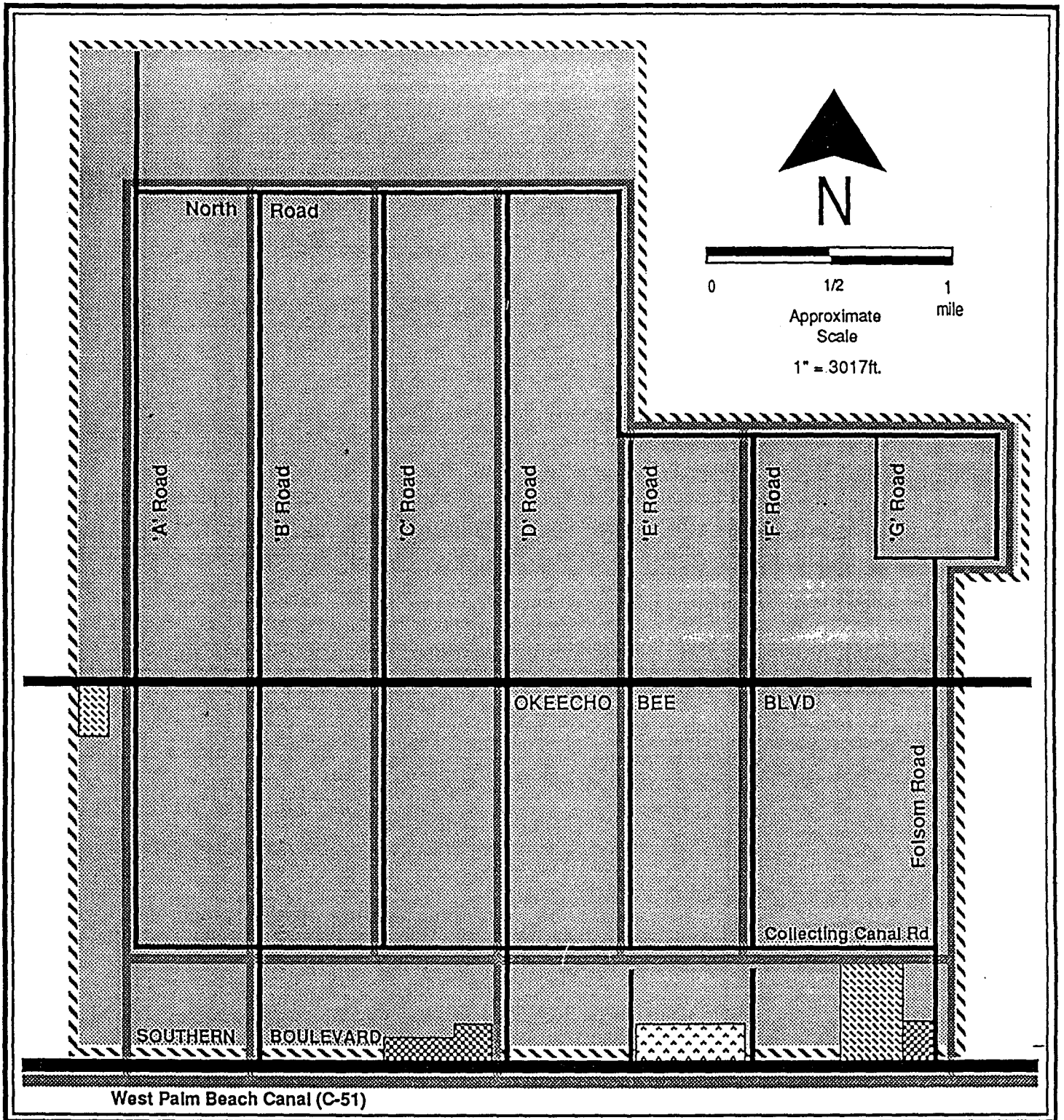


Palm Beach County Planning Division 1995

Legend

-  District Roads
-  District Canals
-  County Roads
-  County Canals






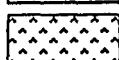
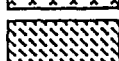

Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan

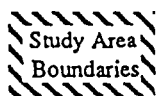
Future Land Use Atlas
1989 Comprehensive Plan





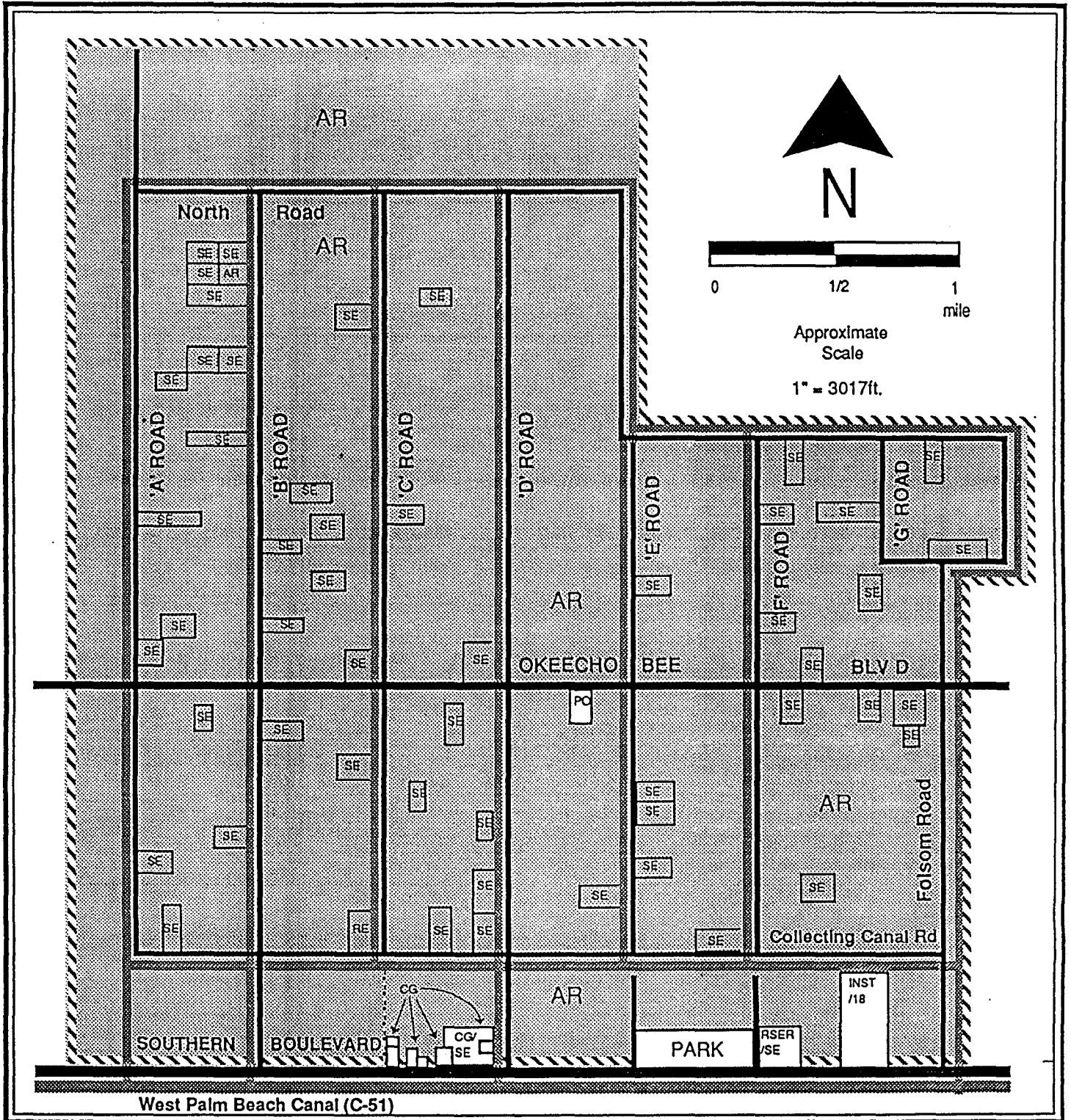
Palm Beach County Planning Division 1995

Legend

-  Rural Residential 10
-  Park
-  Institutional
-  Commercial Low

 Study Area Boundaries

 Roads
 Canals

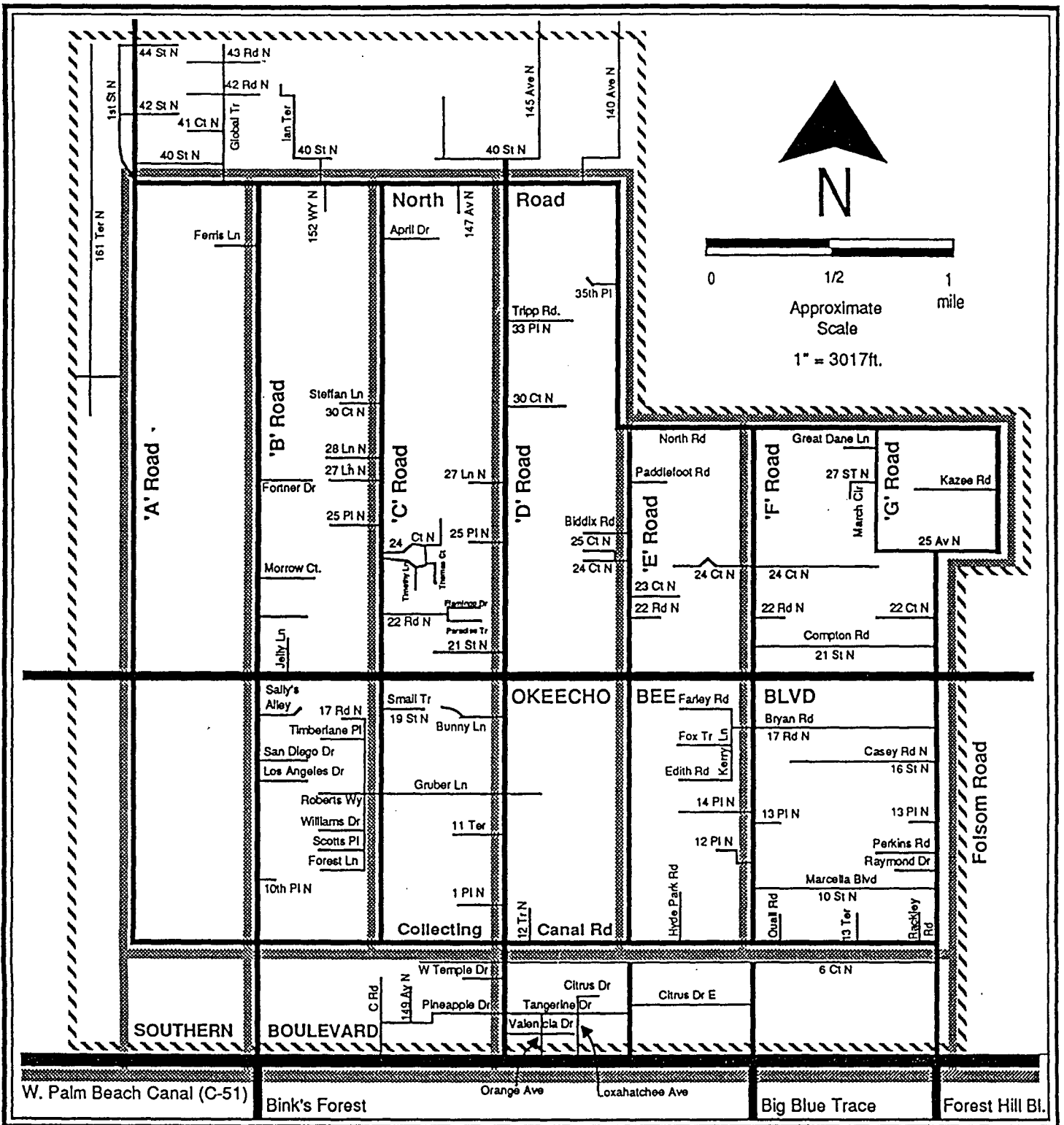


Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan Zoning Districts Map



Palm Beach County Planning Division 1995

Legend		Study Area Boundaries
AR	Agricultural Residential	Roads
RS	Single Family Residential	Canals
INST	Institutional	
CG	General Commercial	
CC	Community Commercial	
RSR	Rural Services District	
PO	Public Ownership	
SE	AR with Special Exception	








Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan

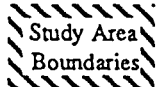
Roadways



Palm Beach County Planning Division 1995

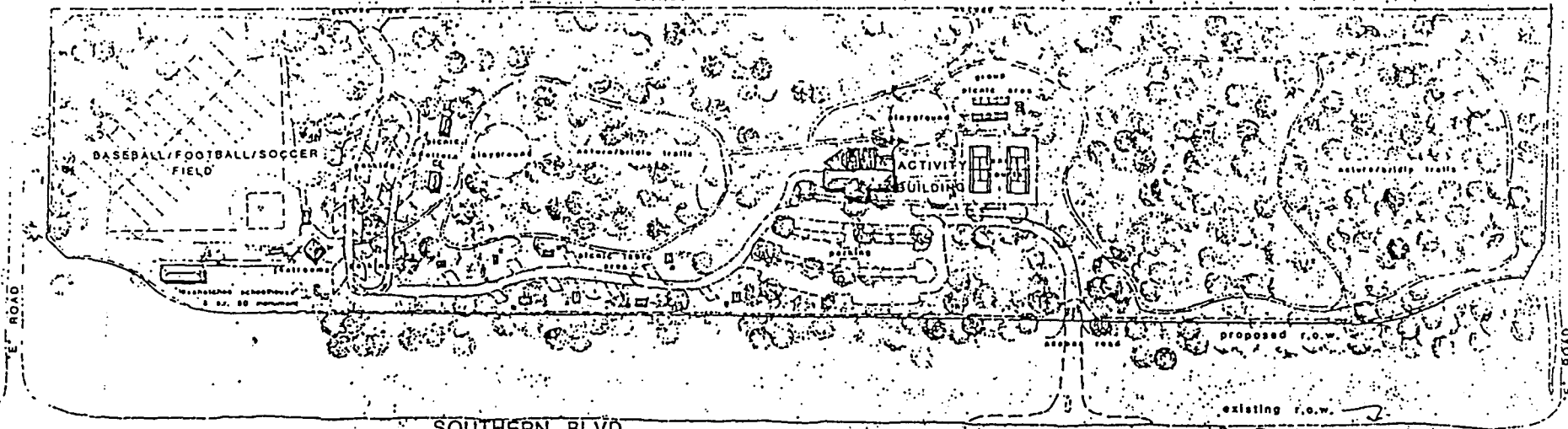
Legend

-  Private Roads
-  District Roads
-  District Canals
-  County Roads
-  County Canals

 Study Area Boundaries

LOXAHATCHEE GROVES

CITRUS ROAD



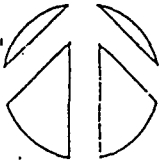
SOUTHERN BLVD.

S. R. 80

C - 5 1

CANAL

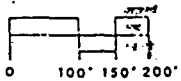
WELLINGTON



MASTER PLAN

for

LOXAHATCHEE GROVES PARK



Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan

Master Plan for Loxahatchee Groves Park



Palm Beach County Planning Division 1995

**MISSION
AND
PLANNING PROCESS**

MISSION AND PLANNING PROCESS

MISSION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

The mission of the Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan ("Plan") is to preserve the existing unique qualities of the community, yet to improve the quality of life for the residents. The Plan identifies issues facing the community, and offers solutions to those problems. The plan also states goals which it strives to achieve.

HISTORY OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROCESS

The idea to create a neighborhood plan for Loxahatchee Groves was first conceived in early 1992. Residents of the community sought the assistance of Palm Beach County's Planning Division shortly afterwards. In 1992, the Planning Division helped guide the planning process through the steps detailed on the chart on the following page. The Plan however, was facilitated and written by members of the community, collectively known as the Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Planning Committee.

Since 1992, the Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Planning Committee has held community meetings to gather the input of the Loxahatchee Groves community. At those meetings, the community formed the base of the Plan by identifying the following items:

- * Issues facing the community
- * Positive attributes of the community
- * Vision of the future: Loxahatchee Groves in the year 2003
- * Goals of the neighborhood plan

The following offers a detailed discussion of this information gathered at this pivotal stage of the planning process.

Identification of Issues

Several issues were raised by citizens during the community discussions as a starting point for the Plan:

- * Unrestricted commercial uses
- * Undesirable land uses
- * Need for greater control of the community's future
- * Image issue (becoming a cohesive community)
- * Preserving rural way of life which appears to be eroding

- * Growth is forcing some residents to leave
- * Liability issue of canals and roads (safety)
- * One (1) unit per ten (10) acres - land density designation is a problem: would like to see one (1) unit per five (5) acres. One (1) unit per ten (10) acres is financially out of reach to homeowner (price is too high - then only businesses can afford it)
- * Speeding on roads is a problem
- * Hospital (existing) is on the edge of the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District and could be annexed by neighboring communities. Annexation is seen as a threat...since it could be a catalyst for development - medical and residential
- * Road alignments do not always follow Right of Way
- * County failed to protect Right of Way when they allowed permits 20-30 years ago
- * Many homes flood
- * Some homes are below grade
- * Surveys are wrong/conflicting in areas (property lines)
- * Lack of response or poor response time from Palm Beach County's Sheriff Department
- * Crime is increasing, although it is not high
- * Canals are not aligned within designated rights-of-way
- * Destruction of private property within the county right-of-way
- * Consistent architectural design for non-residential land use
- * Imbalance between property owner's interest and land use
- * Objectionable noise

Identification of Positive Attributes of the Community

At subsequent community meetings, local residents identified the positive qualities of Loxahatchee Groves.

- * Community is tight knit
- * Residents are bonded
- * Loxahatchee Groves is a good/old fashioned neighborhood
- * Loxahatchee Groves is a good values that cross socio-economic lines
- * People can live their entire life here - all phases can be lived out here
- * Community is a refuge from the hectic urban east
- * Loxahatchee Groves is a good place for children to grow up
- * The community has flexibility in land uses that allow families to slowly build their homes
- * The community takes care of itself well
- * Local citizens have good integrity
- * Rural down-home atmosphere prevails
- * Community works together to improve area, i.e., clean canals, dumping - pride in area
- * Community governs itself well

Identification of a Vision: Loxahatchee Groves in the Year 2003

The community identified a vision of the future; what Loxahatchee Groves should to be in ten years:

- * Area remains independent-minded and unregulated (minimum restrictions)
- * Area has a live-and-let-live attitude
- * Animal husbandry still thrives
- * Area is still predominantly rural
- * Area continues to govern itself
- * Land uses remain agricultural/residential
- * Community has a density of one unit per five acres
- * Community serves as a preserve for the "Old Florida". An example: Field trips from the east could visit to see the Florida of the past
- * The area retains its two lane dirt roads
- * The area possesses a heavy tree cover - (reversing a trend)
- * The community continues to provide ideal places where children can play
- * Canals are stocked with fish
- * The area contains a nature park (similar to Pine Jog)
- * People will continue to build their homes with community pride and spirit
- * Loxahatchee Groves will have a county-wide image of desirable for rural living and could be considered a "last frontier" of rural land use

Identification of the Neighborhood Plan Goals

The community set forth goals they wanted the Plan to achieve:

Maintain the Existing Quality of Life

- * Preserve the natural environment and rural atmosphere for residents
- * Provide a balance between property owners' interests and land use

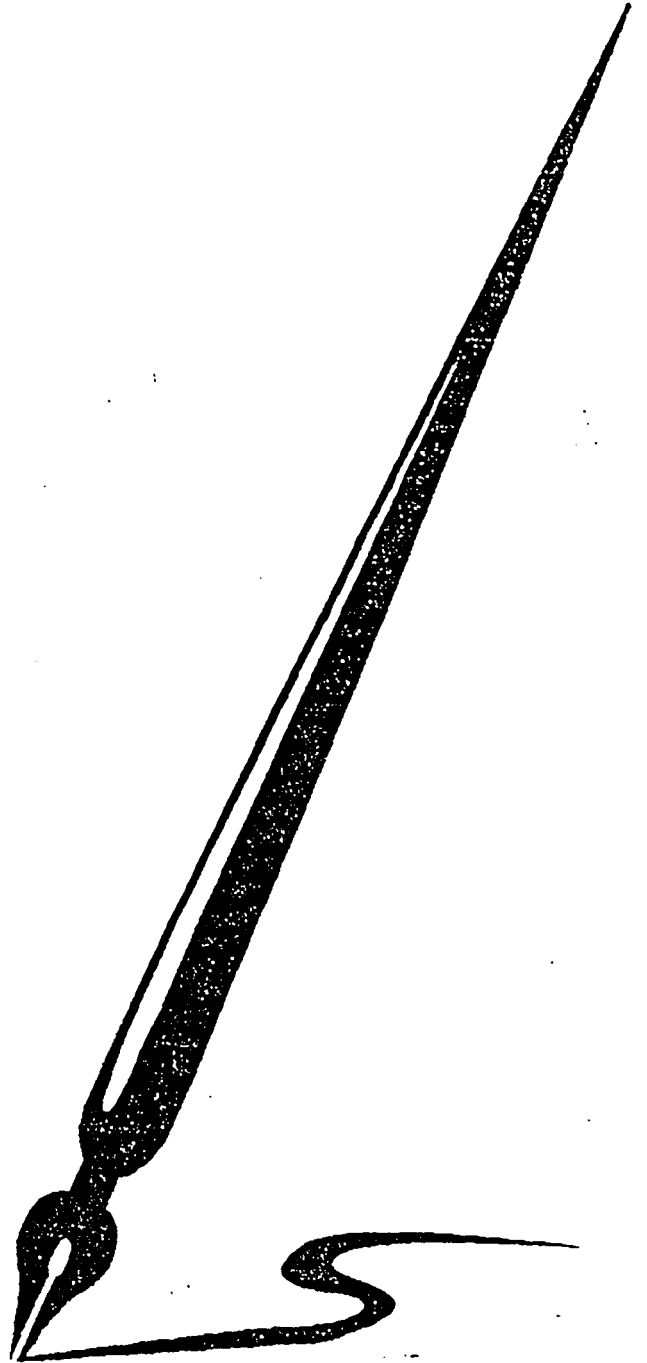
- * For non-residential use, encourage consistency of architectural design and use of native plant buffers
- * Prevent obnoxious noise
- * Promote responsible code enforcement

Guide the Future of Loxahatchee Groves

- * Promote recreational opportunities
- * Settle land use conflicts
- * Maintain low-impact non-residential and residential land uses on Okeechobee Boulevard and State Road 80 (Southern Boulevard)

Foundation of the Plan

The process outlined above formed the basis for the Neighborhood Plan presented in the following pages. The identification of issues and attributes helped crystallize the community's concerns, the vision helped focus discussions, and the goals served as parameters for the recommendations presented in this plan.



Community Proclamation

COMMUNITY PROCLAMATION

COMMUNITY PROCLAMATION

At the conclusion of the planning process the Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Planning Committee prepared the following proclamation outlining fundamental tenets underlying the vision of the community.

It might be said, in idealistic fashion, that government should be all good things to all good people. In the quest to achieve this most noble goal, the forefathers of this nation, listed certain "unalienable rights" in their Declaration of Independence. These included the rights of "LIFE, LIBERTY and the pursuit of HAPPINESS". These rights are considered by those of wisdom, to be one of the main foundation blocks of our society.

It was also decided, that in certain circumstances, our individual rights must be curtailed when they unduly infringe upon the rights of others. For better or worse, it has been the trend in modern times, to define when, how and to what extent our individual rights should be curtailed in order to keep us from "infringing" on the rights of others.

As our society grows more complex and congested, regulations restricting personal freedoms continue to grow. We have now reached a point in time when those who wish to enjoy the freedoms of our forefathers must find special places to go to if they are to enjoy these rights. Historically, in Palm Beach County, those who found the need or had the desire to live with these freedoms have found such a special place in Loxahatchee Groves.

In this rare and endangered place known as Loxahatchee Groves, we are free to pursue our dreams without worry that our actions will infringe upon our neighbors' rights. In this odd and precious niche, we pass the days with our doors unlocked, our keys in our cars and our children playing and fishing on our road sides. If due to an unexpected rainstorm, you must roll up your car windows in the middle of the night, you can run outside as you are without an intolerant neighbor reporting you for lewd and lascivious behavior.

Most of us have raised families here, without ever giving a thought to the cautions that come hand in hand with urban sprawl. In these modern times, this is a condition that should be guarded; protected like any good thing that is in danger of extinction. Freedom is the heartbeat of our community. This is a heritage that should be protected for future generations.

Unfortunately, highly developed surrounding communities do not enjoy the same status. They, for better or worse, are headed in the direction of becoming "mega-suburbias". Although they have the land mass that is necessary to support this, they do not have the road systems that would permit the hordes of people to enter and exit their development. In order to alleviate this problem, they demand that highways be carved through the heart of our community. They have no consideration for the fact that our dirt roads are what

preserve our communities unique lifestyle. Destroying this community would destroy one of the lifestyles that Palm Beach County and the State of Florida were founded upon.

Whether it is our children or yours who choose to enjoy these freedoms, we must protect this last community that affords them. Historical significance should be considered in striving to protect the last "Florida Frontier Community". The old one-room school house that educated the children of the pioneers of this community has been moved to the Fair Grounds and turned into an exhibit. An exhibit that is intended to show future generations what life was like in "Old Florida". It is a remembrance of an extinct way of life. We pray that the wisdom of the Board of County Commissioners do not allow those who would over run us seal a similar fate for our community.

LOXAHATCHEE GROVES

PAST AND PRESENT

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY

HISTORY OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES

Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District is by far the oldest Western Community, and has the quaintest history. Past years' happenings have shaped Loxahatchee Groves' present and will influence the future for which residents are planning.

When white men arrived in the 1500s, western Palm Beach County was wild, lush, treacherous and wet. This hauntingly primeval land belonged to birds, beasts, bugs and a scattering of Indians.

Starting about the time of the Civil War, great chunks of South Florida were bought, sold and re-sold by speculators. However, the area was not easy to settled, nor to put to "profitable" use. In 1899, New Orleans-based Southern States Land and Timber Company paid \$.25 per acre for more that three thousand square miles including what is now the Western Communities. Southern States intended to take advantage of the state's efforts, assisted by the U.S. Government, to tame Florida's interior. It sent George Bensel to West Palm Beach to manage its investments.

Palm Beach County (C-51) Canal from Lake Okeechobee to the coast was one of the U.S. Corps of Engineers' projects. The canal was opened for travel and land draining in February 1917. Surveying for canals on 6400 +/- acres of early Loxahatchee (Turtle Creek in Indian dialect) began in May. In July, dredging for D Canal started. Primitive D Road was formed along the east side, using excavated soils. Soon there were thirty miles of canals with paralleling roads, which followed section lines, and eventually could link up with roads outside. (E.g. E Road/140th Ave; Folsom/Forest Hill; B/Bink's Forest).

Southern State's first project was a dairy on D Road south of Collecting Canal. The first settlers were the engineer and dairyman, their families and workers, who arrived in August 1917 to mid-1918. Wives of the engineer and dairyman started a school with eight pupils in a building provided by Southern States. Sunday school also soon met there.

Most east-west travel was on the canal. In 1924, future State Road 80 was completed, bordering the canal.

George Bensel organized Palm Beach-Loxahatchee Company, bought Loxahatchee and replatted it as Loxahatchee District Subdivision. In 1925, Loxahatchee Sub-Drainage District was chartered under Florida Statute 298. Its boundaries were A Road on the west, and North Road from A to E Road on the north, rather than the present 62nd and Callery Judge. The plat dedicated the roads as public highways, which has caused problems. A combined grocery store/post office/gas station opened on State Road 80 near D Road in 1925.

Florida land sales were booming, and selling land was George Bensel's intent. Loxahatchee north of Collecting Canal was platted in ten and twenty acre tracts, each with three acres of citrus as a sales gimmick. George's brother, Tom K. Bensel, managed the five year task of planting 56,000 trees. The land boom fizzled but the trees thrived. In 1931, a fruit packing house with Loxahatchee's first telephone was built on State Road 80, west of D Road. 20,000 boxes were filled that year, with the eventual annual output being 100,000 boxes. In 1934, tomatoes were planted west of the district and a second packing house was built beside the first.

Canals had been dug to let water out, however, dry spells necessitated installing a back pump at Stat Road 80 and D Road in 1935.

The next year, the Old School House, now in the Fairgrounds Yesteryear Village, was built. One large room could be divided by folding doors. Plumbing was out back. The first season had one teacher, six grades and thirteen children. A school for black pupils was out back.

Loxahatchee grew slowly. By the 190's, huge cattle ranches were developed to the west, and some of their employees lived in the tiny town. Electricity arrived in the late 1940's.

Southwest Volunteer Fire Department, began serving Loxahatchee in 1949. A Glades fire-fighting unit was the official department serving the area, but it never came east of 20-Mile Bend. Southwest's men and equipment helped, but equally important was the concern for the area by Southwest's leaders. It was partly through their pressure that the Folsom Road Bridge across Collecting Canal was constructed in the late 1960's.

By 1950, a modest commercial strip with a grocery store, post office, restaurant and the packing houses had established itself from D Road westward several hundred feet. Soon after 1950, Loxahatchee offered two distinct life styles.

South of Collecting Canal were city-sized lots. Neighbors could chat from their porches, the post office and grocery store were within easy walking distance. A cow, pony and a few chickens would be kept in the yard, however, there was no way that a herd of cattle or a stable of horses could be accommodated. Although there are a few small lots on short streets north of Collecting Canal, multi-acre homesites had privacy and opportunities for farming and nature all around. Even with the risks from ferocious weather, brush fires and medial and law enforcement emergencies, the boondocks environment appealed strongly to many people. A few individuals choose Loxahatchee because their activities were not suited to city neighborhoods.

North-enders have always gone almost daily to downtown Loxahatchee, but until Okeechobee was paved in 1983, south-enders avoided going north. Apparently, they feared bad roads, bad snakes and maybe bad guys lurking in the underbrush.

By 1950, perhaps thirty to thirty-five families lived north of Collecting Canal. Oldtimes called on newcomers. When people met on the roads, they waved, or stopped and chatted. There was a feeling of kinship.

Roads bordered by oleanders and hibiscus roller-coastered through deep muck sinks that filed with water when it rained. Vines of tiny blue grapes spread over the ground, festooned bushes and waged tree-climbing contest with poison ivy. Water-adapted vegetation and wildlife flourished in the bark-dark marshes.

Brazilian peppers were in their first states of their takeover. Australian Pines had come on the scene. Melaleucas were rare or absent until seed-stuffed fluff was blown in by Hurricanes Cleo and Isabel in 1964 or 1965.

In late 1961 or early 1962, George Bensel died. Palm Beach-Loxahatchee Company holdings were sold to Royal Palm Beach Colony, who sold them to Lefcort. Lecorf's sales efforts concentrated on B Road. A B Road entrance was opened and a concrete bridge was constructed across Collecting Canal. Until then, D Road was the only bridge across Collecting Canal and due to its limited access, had helped to keep thefts down. Lefcort's sales pitches were to county gentry types, and there were few sales.

The properties went back to Royal Palm Beach Colony under the name Loxahatchee Investments. District supervisors were Colony officials from Miami. The district's office work was done in Royal Palm Beach, and maintenance was by Village crews. District taxes were low.

Loxahatchee Investments aimed advertising at not necessarily affluent county enthusiasts. Five acre tracts without citrus ranged from \$3,750 in the north end to \$4,340 on Collecting Canal Road. That established the pattern of five acre tracts and was moderately successful. New arrivals typically removed the trees and converted the marshes to ponds.

In June 1965, the Old School House was closed. Loxahatchee youngsters were to be bused to elementary schools elsewhere for the first time.

Rickety wooden bridges crossed the canals and each bridge had an "unsafe bridge" sign, which scared off visitors. Now and then, a heavy truck crashed through.

Loxahatchee Landowners Association was organized in 1969 by a woman who talked with residents as she gathered signatures requesting rural mail delivery. In that year, Palm Beach-Broward Soil Conservation District determined that 3,700 acres were owned by 250 private parties whose holdings averaged 15 acres. An estimated 200 people lived in 50 houses or trailers. Presumably, Loxahatchee Investments owned the balance.

1970 was a busy year. Rural mail delivery came to Loxahatchee. Irene Burg opened the first commercial landscape nursery, on D Road. A Bensel-originated groves management company had gone out of business. Young groves were doing well, but the original trees were old and had been neglected. The old packing house had served briefly as a hardware store, and a feed store, and sometimes a polling place. Essentially, their time was over. In 1970, one was torn down, and the other burned down a year later. Loxahatchee Landowners Association leased the Old School House, which became a community center. The State Division of Forestry erected a watch tower and building at D Road and Collecting Canal. The specially trained personnel and special equipment were most welcome. With more people, there were more careless fires. A year later, Loxahatchee Volunteer Fire Department was organized and chartered. They kept a number of small fires from going out of control.

By the sub-drainage's 1972 election, quite a few families had bought land and moved to the area. Loxahatchee Investments sold most of its buildings north of Collecting Canal to a week-end resident. Company representatives resigned from the board, and local men were elected.

Late in 1972, County zoning came to Loxahatchee with a Residential Estates category specifying 2 1/2 acres per unit and no farm critters, although existing situations were grandfathered in until sold. In 1974 or 1975, the old church building was sold to Military park Fire Rescue District and became it Substation #3.

The District Manager was asked to extend Okeechobee Boulevard through the swampy missing link between D and E Roads. (By that time, its early name of Middle Road had been dropped). The community was no longer split down the middle.

In the mid 70's Loxahatchee Landowner's Association decided it did not like Residential Estate zoning because of the restrictions on livestock and the threat of too many people. Members convinced the Board of County Commissioners that it would be better to have agricultural, with five acres per dwelling unit, and livestock welcome.

When the 1978 Comprehensive Zoning plans were drawn up, the Planning Division added Agricultural-Residential, supposedly with Loxahatchee especially in mind. In 1978, a drastic change in Loxahatchee's transportation system was made when a culvert bridge crossed Folsom Canal to connect with Royal Palm Beach. This was a county project. With Military Park Fire Rescue's substation #3 in operation, the local volunteer firemen disbanded.

Probably a year later, Loxahatchee Town Center Investors bought 11 acres at the corner of State Road 80 and West D Road. The District was able to buy the acre where its headquarters had stood for years. At the District's request, the state legally changed its name to Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District.

In June 1982, the Board of County Commissioners bought a 30 acre tract for a county park between E and F Roads on State Road 80. Loxahatchee Landowners Association, who had urged the purchase, had envisioned a ball field, horse trail, picnic area, pavilion and mostly woody terrain. However, the Parks Department worked up an elaborate plan.

Palm Beach County's Fire-Rescue Station 21 opened in 1985. Okeechobee Boulevard was black topped between Folsom and A Roads in late 1983 and between Folsom and Seminole Prate Whitney Road in April of 1984. Palms West Hospital and its first office building opened their doors in 1986. Loxahatchee Groves Elementary School welcomed pupils in 1986 or 1987.

In August 1989, Palm Beach County adopted a new Comprehensive Plan. Due to the urban sprawl concerns raised by the State Department of Community Affairs, the former one unit per five acre density was decreased to one unit per ten acre density. The revision created a significant number of non-conforming land uses, since some tracts were previously divided into parcels five acres or less.

LOXAHATCHEE GROVES TODAY

- A Snapshot of the Community -

Character and Land Use

Loxahatchee Groves consists primarily of rural residential and agricultural related land uses. Residents of this quiet, forested community are proud of the rural, "country" character created by rural residences, farmland, and rustic dirt roads. Rural residences have added to this character by retaining most of their existing native vegetation. Much of Loxahatchee Groves remains covered by a canopy of native Florida slash pines, contrasting with other areas of Palm Beach County that have been clear-cut and urbanized. Various agricultural uses, including farmland, nurseries, aviaries, and equestrian facilities continue to enhance the rural character as well.

Location and Statistics

Loxahatchee Groves encompasses 12.5 square miles (8000 acres) and has an estimated population of 2500. The boundaries of Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan are contiguous with those of the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District and is located immediately to the west of the incorporated (1959) Village of Royal Palm Beach, to the east and south of the Acreage, and to the north of Wellington.

Role of the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District

In 1925, Florida Statute 298 established the Loxahatchee Groves Sub-Drainage District (LGWCD) as a single purpose water control district with limited authorities related to canals and roads. The Statute authorizes water control districts to "build, construct, excavate, and complete works and improvements necessary to carry out, maintain, and protect" reclamation of land. In addition, LGWCD has the authority to build and maintain district roads and rights-of-way. Florida Statute 298 authorizes the District to "implement works and improvements of waterways, canals, bridges, and roadways". Although the LGWCD is the only local civil authority in Loxahatchee Groves, it does not have the authority to regulate land use nor establish public facilities and services.

Landowners elect a five-member Board of Supervisors to govern the District, each of which serves a three-year term of office. Each acre of land equals one vote in the election process, which allows large property owners to have more influence in an election than smaller property owners.

Role of the Landowner's Association

The Loxahatchee Groves Landowner's Association (originally called the Loxahatchee Landowner's Association) was formed in 1969 and incorporated on July 20, 1971. It is a non-profit, chartered organization made up of property owners dedicated to the well being of Loxahatchee Groves. The Association holds an annual election of officers. Open

monthly meetings allow all persons concerned with Loxahatchee Groves to express their opinions. This association is dedicated to preserving and protecting the rural atmosphere of Loxahatchee Groves, as well as keeping aware of the necessity to plan and prepare for the future.

Role of Palm Beach County

Palm Beach County governs the education, fire services, sheriff's department, zoning and land uses for the community. Loxahatchee Groves lies in the unincorporated area of Palm Beach County in what is called the Rural Service Area. The Rural Service Area does not receive as high an intensity of services as the Urban Service Area. However, land owners in the Rural Service Area have the freedom to pursue agricultural uses on their land.

Role of the South Florida Water Management District

LGWCD falls under jurisdiction of the South Florida Water Management District. The Water Resources Act, (Chapter 373 of the Florida Statutes), created regional water management districts to oversee and regulate water production, consumptive use of water, wells, and the management and storage of surface waters. The LGWCD must obtain a permit from the SFWMD prior to "construction or alteration of ditches, dams, and culverts".

**THE LOXAHATCHEE GROVES
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

PLANNING ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS

- * **Background/Current Conditions**
- * **Analysis**
- * **Identified Issues**
- * **Recommendations**



Land Use

LAND USE

Background/Current Conditions

In the early 1900's, Loxahatchee Groves was plotted into 10 acre tracts and sold in 1925 with three acres of citrus groves on each tract. Beginning in the 1950's, developers purchased some of these tracts and further subdivided them to parcels as small as one acre. In 1972, Palm Beach County established a density of one unit per two and a half acres in Loxahatchee Groves. The adoption of subsequent County Comprehensive Plans and zoning codes decreased the density to one unit per five in 1980 and, finally, one unit per ten acres in 1989. Regardless of this density change, parcels of five acres predominate in Loxahatchee Groves.

Current Residential Land Use

Residential land uses predominate in Loxahatchee Groves. Most of the residences are single family homes located on five acre lots. Loxahatchee Groves has maintained a long standing tradition of small agricultural practices on many residential properties.

Current Agricultural Land Use

Agriculture continues to be the predominant non-residential land use in Loxahatchee Groves. There are many different types of large and small scale production farms. These farms produce a variety of products. Vegetables grown in the area include tomatoes, pepper, eggplant, squash, cucumbers, beans, watercress and herbs. Some farms raise livestock such as horses, cattle, and goats, as well. Other types of agriculture in Loxahatchee Groves include aviaries, tree farms, wholesale nurseries, and fish farms.

Current Non-Residential/Non Agricultural Land Use

Limited non-residential/non-agricultural land uses exist in Loxahatchee Groves. In addition, a small area of commercial development exists along Southern Boulevard which was established prior to the adoption of the 1989 Comprehensive Plan.

Agricultural Residential (AR) zoning limits the types of land uses permitted in Loxahatchee Groves. The Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) permits several types of non-residential development in AR districts. Examples of non-residential uses allowed include: churches, schools or meeting halls. However, AR zoning does not allow general commercial development.

Future Land Use Designations

Palm Beach County created parameters to protect and preserve rural areas in the 1989 Comprehensive Plan. Objective 6 of the Comprehensive Plan states that "Palm Beach County shall adopt amendments to its land development regulation for the purpose of protecting and enhancing the rural lifestyle and quality of life of residents in the areas

designated as Rural Residential." To accomplish this, the County retained the Rural Residential 5 category in the Comprehensive Plan. However, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in Tallahassee declared that a density of one unit per five acres constituted urban sprawl. In response, the County eliminated the RR5 category by redesignating all such areas as RR10. The DCA ruling did not address existing conditions where communities were developed at one unit per five acres. Consequently, the Rural Residential 10 category replaced Rural Residential 5 on Palm Beach County's Future Land Use Atlas. The attached Future Land Use Atlas details the Future Land Use designations for Loxahatchee Groves.

Existing Zoning

Section 6 of the ULDC created zoning districts and other regulations in order to implement the Comprehensive Plan. This Section designates Loxahatchee Groves as an Agricultural Residential District.

Section 6.2, C.

- 1. AR, Agricultural Residential District.** The purpose and intent of the AR district is to protect and enhance the rural lifestyle and quality of life of residents in areas designated rural residential, to protect watersheds and water supplies, wilderness and scenic areas, conservation and wildlife areas, and to permit a variety of uses that require non-urban locations but do not operate to the detriment of adjoining lands devoted to rural and residential purposes. The AR district corresponds with the Rural Residential 10 (RR10) and Rural Residential 20 (RR20) land use designations in the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Midlands Study

Palm Beach County commissioned a private company to complete a study of the western communities to assist in its long range comprehensive planning effort. The Midlands Study, completed in 1989, examines the portion of the County called the Rural Service Area which is designated RR10 or RR20 in the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Atlas. The purpose of the Midlands Study was to determine "the extent to which identified sub-areas may require special treatment, through either the extension of public facilities or through the adoption of minimum standards to assure that the health and safety of area residents is protected". The Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan does not endorse the conclusions and recommendations of the Midlands Study. The majority of the recommendations were either not well received or strongly opposed by the residents of Loxahatchee Groves.

Analysis

Density

Whereas the existing AR zoning guidelines encourage the preservation of the rural residential character of Loxahatchee Groves, RR10 Future Land Use designation does not. The RR10 density of one unit per ten acres encourages non-residential development. The price of a ten acre parcel of land, approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000 per acre at the time of this writing, is too expensive for the average home buyer. The RR 10 density was established to "protect and enhance the rural lifestyle and quality of life of residents" in rural areas. By encouraging non-residential uses, the RR 10 density is not accomplishing what it was created to do in the Comprehensive Plan.

Compatibility of Agricultural and Residential Land Use

Since, Loxahatchee Groves consists of a balance of residential and agricultural land uses, potential problems with conflicting land use could occur with the increase of residential development in close proximity to agriculture. Conflicting land use concerns include:

- * preservation of wildlife habitats
- * noise levels from farm equipment
- * noxious smell from animals
- * water and air quality
- * pesticide drift from farms and nurseries

However, agriculture and residences can co-exist when adequate edge relationships (buffer zones) are maintained. Agricultural operations can exist in Loxahatchee Groves if buffering and other methods ensure compatibility with existing adjacent residences. Buffering with existing native vegetation and tree canopy would not only protect residences, but help preserve the environment as well. Preservation of agriculture is essential as farm land enhances the rural character of the community and serves important economic and production roles.

Land Use and Zoning

The existing AR district guidelines encourage the preservation of the agricultural/rural residential character of Loxahatchee Groves. However, to preserve this character in the future, a balance of agricultural and rural residential development is essential.

As stated previously, Loxahatchee Groves consists primarily of agricultural and residential land use. Other types of land uses, including commercial and industrial, are incompatible with the rural character of the community. The Neighborhood Plan recommends that non agricultural and non residential development be limited to what is permitted in AR zoning.

All new development in Palm Beach County must comply with the 1989 Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Land Development Code. Through existing Future Land Use and zoning designations, RR10 and AR, neither document permits general commercial nor industrial development in Loxahatchee Groves.

At the present time, in order to develop a parcel of land as either commercial or industrial land uses, a property owner is required to apply for an amendment to the Future Land Use Atlas and/or a change in zoning district designation. Several government agencies are responsible for approving such applications. The Planning Division, Land Use Advisory Board, Board of County Commissioners, and the State of Florida Department of Community Affairs each play a role in the Comprehensive Plan amendment process. The Zoning Division, Zoning Commission, and Board of County Commissioners play roles in the zoning designation process. Public hearings and the recommendations of applicable neighborhood plans are also important factors.

Identified issues:

- Loss of preservation of the natural environment and rural atmosphere for residents
- Inconsistent architectural design for non-residential land use
- Unrestricted high activity commercial mixed in with residential

The Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Planning Committee was unable to determine appropriate solutions to all the problems or issues identified at the community meetings, due to the costs involved or other prohibitive factors. The following issues were not discussed in the context of the Land Use section since viable solutions could not be reached:

- Destruction of private property within the county right of way
- Imbalance between property owner's interest and land use
- Objectionable noise

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- * If petitioned by a landowner, Palm Beach County should consider low impact non-residential land uses, in addition to residential use, on Okeechobee Boulevard and State Road 80 (Southern Boulevard) in accordance with the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan and the Palm Beach County Land Use Code and the following standards:
 1. As to Okeechobee Boulevard only, the depth of such uses shall not exceed 660 feet from Okeechobee Boulevard,
 2. the rear fifty feet shall be landscaped and fenced or walled to provide a 100% opaque barrier,
 3. access to the site shall be limited to Okeechobee Boulevard or Southern Boulevard,
 4. architectural elevations will be submitted at time of land use amendment indicating a single story rural architectural style consistent with the residential style of the community.
- * The zoning category of the Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area should remain Agricultural Residential, with those regulations as described in Palm Beach County's Unified Land Development Code, except as otherwise directed by land use changes consistent with this document.
- * Palm Beach County should consider notifying the Loxahatchee Groves Landowners Association of any non-residential land use permit applications within the Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area.
- * Due to the large lot size in Loxahatchee Groves, Palm Beach County should consider expanding the notification radius for landowners applying for permits/zoning changes outside the Urban Service Area to 1,200'.
- * Palm Beach County should consider notifying the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District of any reclassification of zoning due to road and/or drainage issues within the Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area.
- * Palm Beach County should explore the possibility of amending the 1989 Comprehensive Plan to recreate a one unit per five acres land use category, as stated in the 1980 Comprehensive Plan, for the Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area.
- * Palm Beach County should consider restricting the sale of any petroleum product within the Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area.

- * Any new commercial building architecture should reflect the rural nature of the community.



Home Based Business



HOME BASED BUSINESS

Background/Current Conditions

Home based businesses in Loxahatchee Groves, and the surrounding County, have existed as far back as the 1920's, when dairy and produce farms, citrus groves, and lumber companies kept offices on site. As time went on, other agricultural businesses, such as nurseries, tree farms, aviaries, and horse farms, have kept on site offices, as well.

Current Home Based Businesses

Present day home based businesses in Loxahatchee Groves include agricultural and non agricultural related businesses. Agricultural business such as nurseries, tree farms, small aviaries, vegetable growers, and horse farms remain common today, yet are not considered home based businesses within this plan. Non-agricultural home based business such as bookkeeping and small arts and crafts businesses also exist in Loxahatchee Groves.

Analysis

Future Growth of Home Based Business

Home based businesses are a necessary and growing industry in Loxahatchee Groves. Many households need the financial support of two incomes in today's economy. Home based businesses offer a unique opportunity for a member of a family to earn an income while remaining at home. As the "information age" reaches individual homes through computer access, more people will work from their own homes. The National Chamber of Commerce cites that home based businesses are one of the fastest growing industries in the country and will become a major industry in the future.

Home Based Business and the County Rule for Occupational Licenses

Many home based businesses require more space than the zoning code for Occupational Licenses allows. The ULDC limits the space used by a home based business to 10 percent of the total square footage of the dwelling unit. Business is not allowed to be conducted within an accessory building or structure. Many residents in Loxahatchee Groves stress that these limitations are far too restrictive and have forced some businesses to move to office space, with expenses that reduce the profit.

Many non-licensed businesses could become legitimate if space and employee limitations of the Zoning Code were revised. The space limits of a home based business could be raised and the number of employees increased to accommodate new and existing businesses.

Identified issues:

- Lack of definition of "home occupation"

RECOMMENDATION:

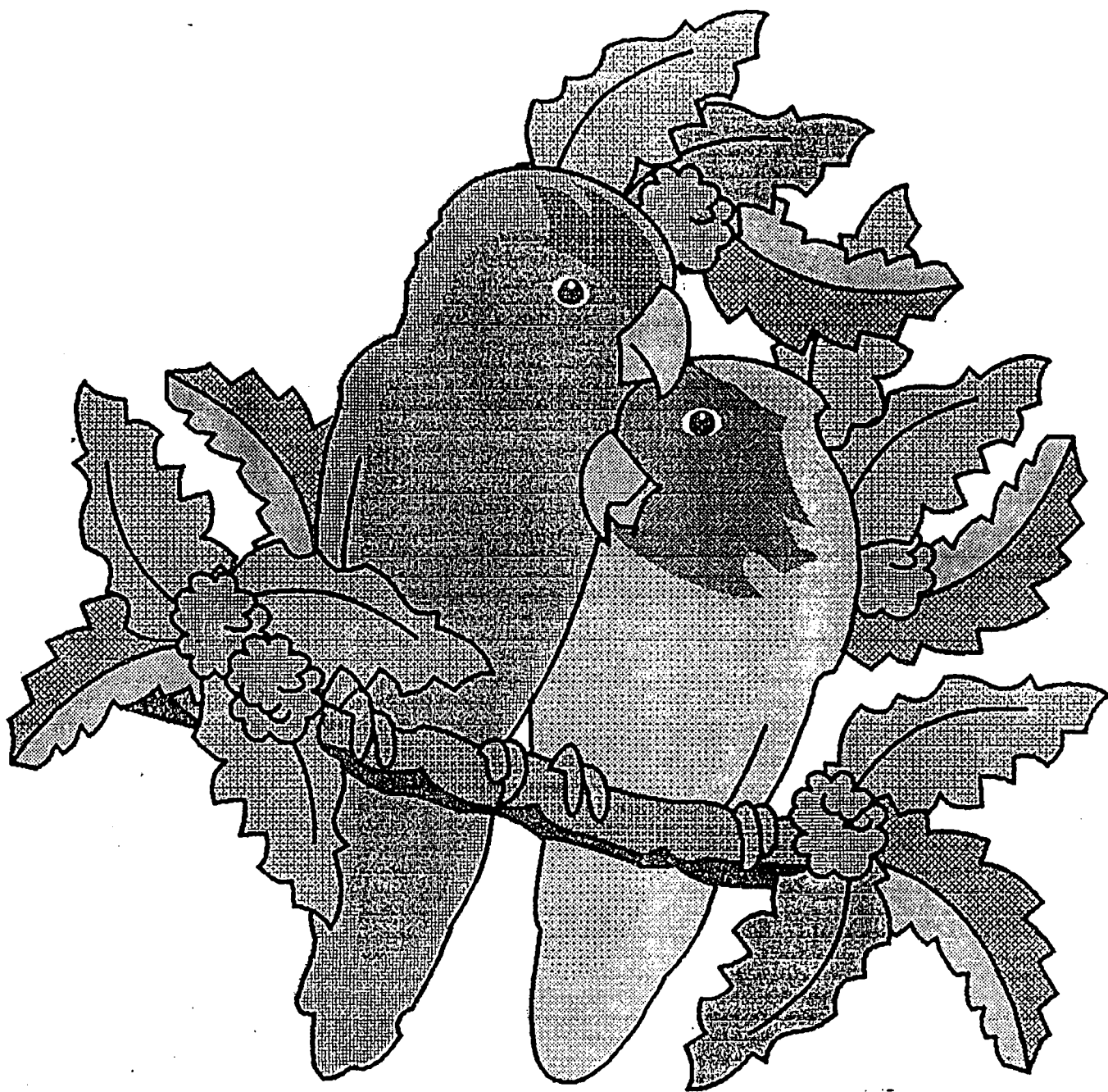
The Loxahatchee Groves community requests that Palm Beach County consider incorporating the changes in **bold type** when the Land Development regulations are rewritten. Specifically, consider enhancing and modifying home occupation regulations for landowners and Palm Beach County, per the Unified Land Development Code, Section 6.4 D, Note 50 to incorporate the following concepts:

- a. Incidental Nature. The home occupation(s) shall be clearly incidental and secondary to the residential use of the building and shall be confined to not more than **thirty (30)** percent of the total floor area of the **principal** dwelling, **not to exceed 600 square feet unless approved by a Special Use Permit**.
- b. Location. A home occupation shall be conducted within the principal dwelling **or an accessory building or structure**. **The accessory building cannot be** an open porch or carport visible from any property boundary. **Accessory building location and size will be governed by existing Land Development guidelines**.
- c. No change to the character of the dwelling. The home occupation shall not change the essential residential character of the dwelling in terms of exterior appearance and interior space.
- d. Employees. A home occupation use shall be conducted by a member of the immediate family residing in the dwelling unit. A maximum of **two (2)** persons who **are** not members of the immediate family may assist in the operation of the home occupation. **Special permits will be required for any additional employees on-site**.
- e. Occupational license. A home occupation shall be operated pursuant to a valid occupational license for the use held by the resident of the dwelling.
- f. No advertising. No external evidence or sign shall advertise, display or otherwise indicate the presence of the home occupation, nor shall the street address of the home occupation be advertised through signs, billboards, television, radio or newspapers. Advertising on vehicles shall be limited to the minimum necessary to meet code requirements as mandated by PBC Contractors Certification Division Chapter 67-1876, or Florida Statutes 489.

- g. No on-premises sales. A home occupation shall not involve the sale of any stock in trade, supplies, products or services on the premises.
- h. No outside storage. No equipment or materials used in the home occupation shall be stored or displayed outside of the dwelling including driveways.
- i. Nuisances prohibited. No home occupation shall involve the use of any mechanical, electrical or other equipment, materials or items which produce noise, electrical or magnetic interference, vibration, heat, glare, smoke, dust, odor or other nuisance outside the residential building. There shall be no storage of hazardous or noxious materials on the site of the home occupation.
- j. Violations or hazard. If any of the above requirements are violated, or if the use, or any part thereof, is determined by the Zoning Director to create a health or safety hazard, then the occupational license may be revoked.
- k. Number. Only **two (2)** home occupations shall be permitted on any lot. **Any additional home occupational licenses requested would be governed by the Zoning Division and would be obtained through special permit and clearance.**
- l. Community Impact. **Businesses should create a minimum impact on the local traffic.**

* Agricultural related businesses such as, but not limited to, nurseries, fisheries or aviaries, should not be considered home occupations (cottage industries) in conjunction with this plan.





Aviculture

AVICULTURE

Background/Current Conditions

Loxahatchee Groves has historically been an ideal location for small and large aviaries which house and breed caged birds for the pet trade. The number of aviaries in Loxahatchee Groves has grown from four in 1978 to approximately forty in 1994. At the present time, one quarter of these aviaries are considered commercial farms and keep over 200 birds.

Factors Contributing to the Growth of Aviculture

Several factors have contributed to the increase in the number of aviaries in Loxahatchee Groves. These factors include:

1. A major increase in demand for pet birds
2. Sub-tropical climate allows for outdoor facilities
3. Relatively reasonable land prices for an aviary
4. Favorable zoning codes for agricultural related businesses
5. Security and privacy afforded by rural areas with low traffic dirt roads
6. An industry shift from reliance on imports to domestic production
7. Closing of the United States to the import of birds for the pet trade

Palm Beach County and Aviculture

Due to the rapid growth of aviculture, Palm Beach County has recently taken steps to define aviculture. Palm Beach County's Zoning Department has determined that aviculture meets the criteria described in the Unified Land Development Code as a bona fide agricultural land use. Aviaries, in fact, can attain "green belt" status for tax purposes. At the time of this writing, an ordinance detailing parameters for aviculture is being proposed in Palm Beach County. The ordinance includes the following regulations, both of which are for AR zoning:

1. Operations consisting of 50 to 200 birds will be considered as small commercial aviaries. Minimal lot size required is two acres
2. Operations consisting of over 200 birds will be considered as large commercial aviaries. Minimal lot size required is five acres

Analysis

Concerns with Aviculture in Loxahatchee Groves

Concerns about the impact of increased aviculture in Loxahatchee Groves have grown in recent years. However, the consensus of the community is that aviaries have a negligible negative impact on their rural lifestyle. Major concerns have included the potential increase in traffic and obnoxious noise. The majority of aviaries are wholesale and minimally increase in local traffic. The majority of birds housed at aviaries remain silent at night and do not pose a noise problem. In fact, by retaining the native tree canopy for shade, aviaries enhance the rural atmosphere of Loxahatchee Groves.

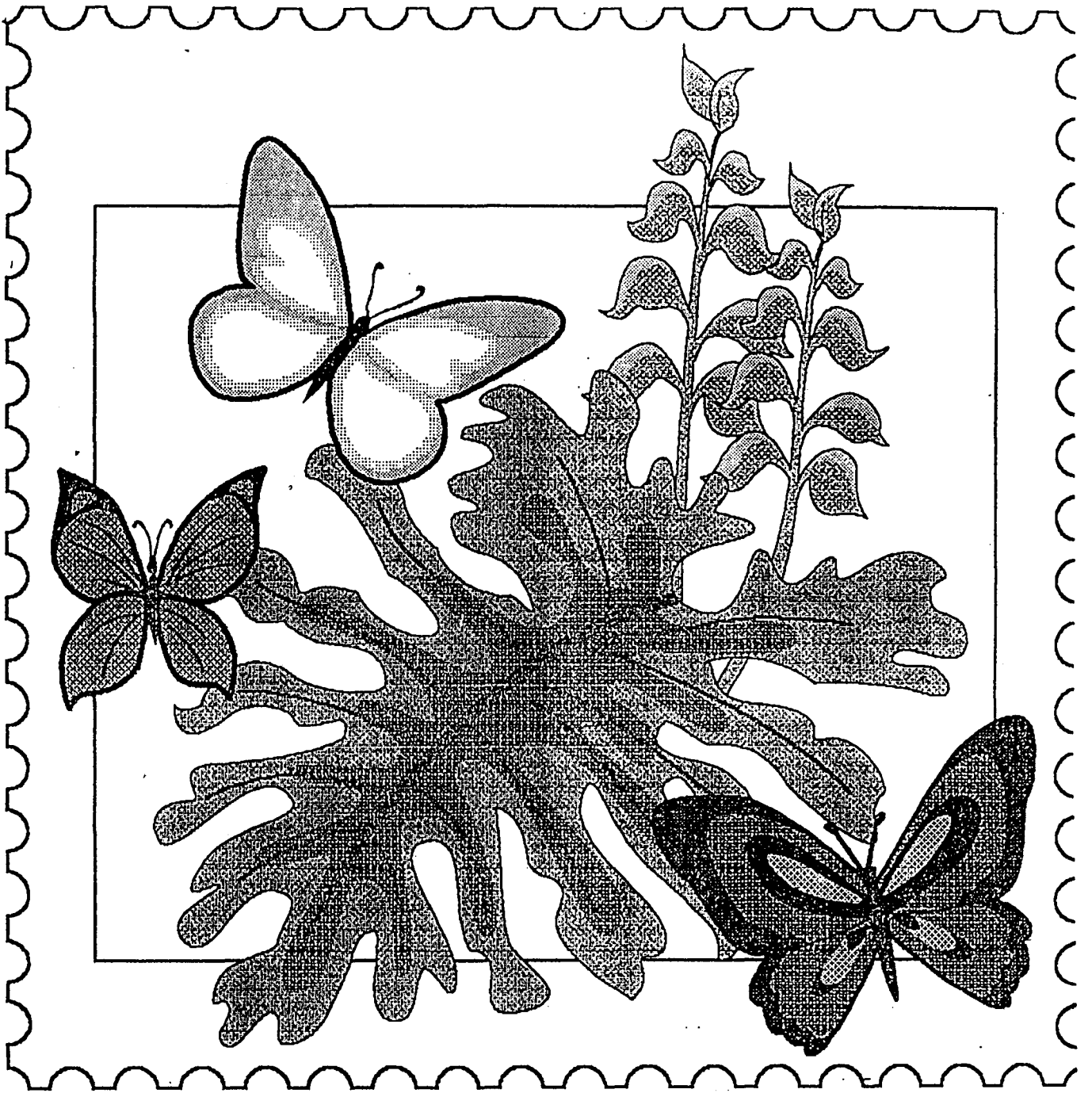
A meeting of the Citizen's Task Force and Palm Beach County Zoning Division determined that caged birds should not be considered as, nor fall under regulations of, exotic animals and, therefore, setback requirements should be minimal.

Identified issue:

- No zoning guidelines for aviculture

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- * Palm Beach County should consider incorporating additional language into the ULDC that addresses aviculture as listed below:
 - * Operations consisting of fifty (50) to two hundred (200) birds should be considered as small commercial aviaries. Minimal lot size required should be two (2) acres. Zoning should be AR, SA or AGR.
 - * Operations consisting of over two hundred (200) birds should be considered as large commercial aviaries. Minimal lot size required should be five (5) acres. Zoning should be AR, SA or AGR.
- * Aviaries established prior to adoption of this plan should be "grandfathered" in.



Parks & Recreation



PARKS AND RECREATION

Lack of Ability to Create Parks

The Loxahatchee Groves community has access to Palm Beach County's parks and recreation facilities and those of neighboring municipalities. However, the LGWCD does not have the ability or authority as detailed by Florida Statute 298 to raise funds and purchase lands in order to establish parks and other recreational facilities on its own. Currently, the children in Loxahatchee Groves spill over into adjacent recreation facilities and neighboring communities have begun charging for this.

District-Wide Recreation

Many residents within Loxahatchee Groves enjoy horseback riding along our dirt-surfaced road system and also leisure time fishing within 38 miles on canals located here. The issue of horse related activities impinges upon the thoroughfare issue and is covered elsewhere in text. County residents, other than Loxahatchee Groves landowners, visit and enjoy fishing in the canal system. Presently, the LGWCD has undertaken a long term canal desiltation and deepening project. As this project progresses, our canals will become even more amenable to fishing. Present fish stocks are dwindling and those remaining include many exotic species. Restocking of these canals with native fishes would go far towards establishing a regenerative resource and would give native species (e.g. blue-gill, black bass, red ear sunfish, crappie, channel catfish, etc.) a chance to establish themselves here.

LOXAHATCHEE GROVES COUNTY PARK

Background/Current Conditions

Conception through Master Plan

Loxahatchee Groves County Park was originally conceived in the late 1970's to preserve a portion of land from encroaching development. Loxahatchee Groves County Park is bounded by Citrus Drive to the north, "F" Road to the east, State Road 80 (Southern Boulevard) to the south, and "E" Road to the west. The original Master Plan for the park, reveals a mixture of preserved land and recreational facilities. Approximately half of the total acreage was to be passive and was to contain at least three (3) large nature trail loops. In addition, there was to be a ball field, three separate picnic areas, two playgrounds, a site for the historic Loxahatchee Groves schoolhouse, tennis courts and an activity building.

Currently, the park contains a single ball field, an open shelter, a bar-b-que, and several picnic benches. The grounds are rather overgrown with both exotic and native vegetation. In addition, the park has a fenced children's playground which was funded and built by the Loxahatchee Groves Landowner's Association.

Current Revision of the Loxahatchee Groves Community Park Plan

The current revision of the Park plan, dated January 1991, reveals a group picnic/play area, nature trails, exercise trails, tennis courts, added parking and a community center. Since the 1991 revision, no additional progress has been made towards the completion of the park, despite a relatively vigorous parks program within the County. Although the revised plan contains somewhat fewer facilities than originally proposed, completion of these facilities would be a great asset to our community.

Not only have the plans for the park not been carried out, but the original size of the park has diminished. The expansion of Southern Boulevard (SR 80), reduced the size of the park from 40 acres to 28.8 acres, or 72 percent of the original area. In addition, 1.2 acres of park lands were leased to Palms West Chamber of Commerce. Granted, this is an excellent location for the Chamber, but it does, however, further diminish the overall size of the park. Thus remaining are but 27.6 acres, a mere 69%, or approximately two-thirds of the originally scheduled park. Future planned expansion of State Road 80 will again further decrease the size of this needed park.

Analysis

Additional Park Lands and Completion of Facilities

The purchase of additional contiguous lands could go far towards restoring this county park to its originally planned size. As an example, at this writing, a nine (9) acre parcel of land immediately to the west of the park is for sale. The addition of that land, or a similar adjacent parcel, to the park would create a total of 36.6 acres, or about 91.5% of the original park size. This figures are, however, prior to additional reductions by the expansion of Southern Boulevard. The addition of adjacent contiguous lands would allow for the construction of much needed open space, (ball fields, etc), **without** sacrificing a single tree from the current park lands.

This park, if built to current plans, could fulfill most of the recreational needs of Loxahatchee Groves. The Neighborhood Plan is recommending the development, and expansion of the Loxahatchee Groves Community Park.

ROYAL PALM BEACH PINES NATURAL AREA

Background/Current Conditions

Location and Description

The Royal Palm Beach Pines Natural Area is located within unincorporated Palm Beach County and the Village of Royal Palm Beach. The natural area falls at the junction of Royal Palm Beach, the Acreage and Loxahatchee Groves. Loxahatchee Groves borders the natural area along E Road between North Road (aligned with N. 40th Street) and North

Road (aligned with N. 30th Court) and North Road (aka N. 30th Court) between E and G Roads. While no part of the natural area lies within Loxahatchee Groves, we abut 50% of its boundaries.

Analysis

Restoration and Preservation of Natural Area

The Natural Area is planned for passive preservation, following a period of restoration to a pristine pine flatwood-wetland mosaic. Restoration, in this case, includes primarily the removal of invasive exotic species. Currently, the Natural Area is planned to be partially restored and open to the public by the end of 1995.

Use and Access of Natural Area

The Royal Palm Beach Pines Natural Area Steering Committee was formed in 1994 in order to provide the Natural Areas Management Advisory Committee with local input on the future use and access of the Natural Area. The Steering Committee was designed to gather members of diverse interests (environmentalists, educators, elected government officials, etc) to discuss the possible expansion or curtailment of park access and the number, type and location of public entrances (i.e., pedestrian, equestrian and vehicular). The Committee consists of three members from each neighboring community: Royal Palm Beach, The Acreage and Loxahatchee Groves.

Identified issues:

Loxahatchee Groves Community Park

- No equestrian facilities at existing passive park
- No family/community oriented park for various recreational activities
- No recreational center

Within Loxahatchee Groves

- LGWCD lacks recreational/park powers
- Canals are depleted of wildlife/fish

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should explore the possibility of obtaining recreational powers as allowed for under Florida Statutes 298.

SUGGESTION ONLY:

- * Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission should consider restocking the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District's canals with native fish.

NOTE: DURING THE COUNTY'S INTERDEPARTMENTAL REVIEW OF THIS PLAN, THE FOLLOWING THREE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE CONSIDERED UNFEASIBLE. THEY WERE RETAINED BY THE LGNPC TO INDICATE THE COMMUNITY'S DESIRES.)

- * Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department should consider completing Loxahatchee Groves County Park as specified in the original park master plan.
- * Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department should consider expanding Loxahatchee Groves County Park to the original forty acres, and thereby generating space for the construction of more general purpose athletic fields for ball sports. Given that the future expansion of State Road 80 (Southern Boulevard) is inevitable, Palm Beach County should consider acquiring this additional property as soon as possible.
- * The Loxahatchee Groves County Park, when originally planned, addressed equine trails. Palm Beach County's Park and Recreation Department should consider re-addressing this and if feasible, plan to include a riding ring into any future plans for the park. (Also in Equine Path System)



Equine

EQUINE PATH SYSTEM

Background/Current Conditions

From the 1950's to the present, Loxahatchee Groves has held much appeal for the horse-oriented person. With 37 miles of dirt roads and large acreage sites, one could build a country home and have the best of two worlds. After working in the surrounding cities or counties, one returns to the peace and quiet of the country life in the evening. The horse population has grown from 200 in the 1960's, to nearly 500 today, the second largest population of horses in Palm Beach County. These horses are kept for a variety of different purposes, including pleasure, show, competition, polo, breeding, and racing.

Current Equine Trails and Facilities

Loxahatchee Groves has no public equine facilities, but does possess a few designated equine trails in Loxahatchee Groves Community Park. Outside of using the park trails, riders currently use roadways for lack of other facilities.

Analysis

Equestrians and Safety

Equestrians often find it difficult to traverse roads in Loxahatchee Groves safely. In recent years, traffic passing through the community has increased. These drivers can create dangerous situations, as they are often unfamiliar with sharing the roads with horses. Automobiles often continue to speed by horses and riders, despite signs warning drivers to be cautious. Equestrian traffic does have the right of way.

Lack of Equine Trails and Facilities

Designated equine trails throughout the community would be a great asset to area equestrians. Many equestrians in Loxahatchee Groves would like trails created on the west side of canals. These trails could offer better access to future equine facilities by linking riders with the Loxahatchee Groves Community Park and the Royal Palm Beach Pines Natural Area. In addition, Loxahatchee Groves trails could help link trails from Wellington up to the Martin County line.

The Economic Impact of the Palm Beach County Equine Industry report recommends the increase in equine trails for the safety of both horse and rider. The report sites that additional trails and facilities may help maintain existing equine populations. The report also notes that funding for trails may be available through the U.S. Department of Transportation ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) program.

A riding ring at the Loxahatchee Groves Community Park would further benefit equestrians.

Identified issues:

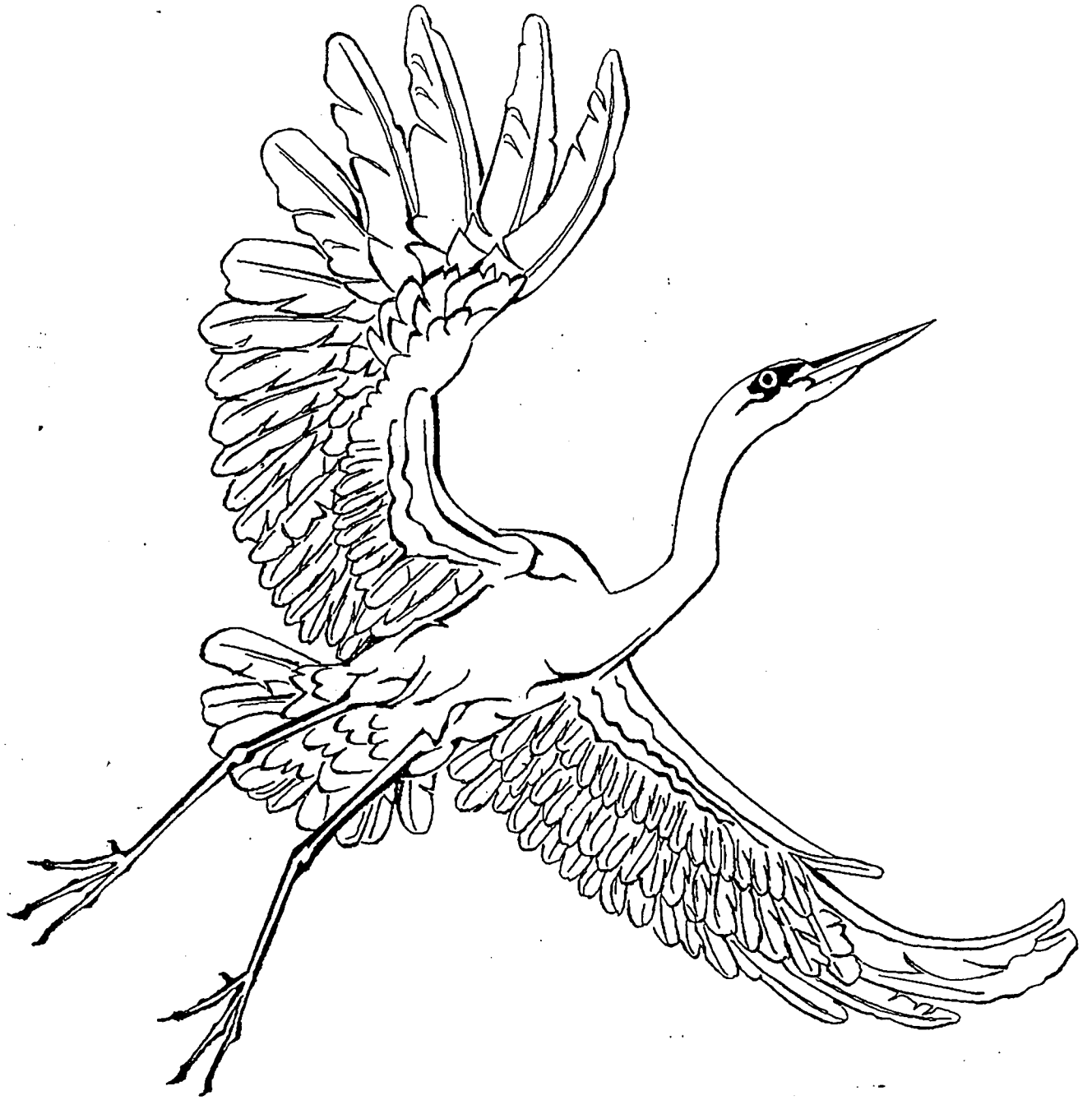
- No existing equestrian facilities

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- * The Loxahatchee Groves Landowners Association should coordinate equestrian planning with the Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department and all other public and private agencies and apply for grant funds that will promote equestrian activities.

(NOTE: DURING THE COUNTY'S INTERDEPARTMENTAL REVIEW OF THIS PLAN, THE FOLLOWING THREE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE CONSIDERED UNFEASIBLE. THEY WERE RETAINED BY THE LGNPC TO INDICATE THE COMMUNITY'S DESIRES.)

- * The Loxahatchee Groves County Park, when originally planned, addressed equine trails. The Palm Beach County Park and Recreation Department should consider re-addressing this plan and, if feasible, include a riding ring into any future plans for the park. (Also in Parks and Recreation)
- * Palm Beach County should consider assisting the community in its efforts to finance, locate, and build multi-purpose trails for passive, non-motorized use (i.e., horses, hiking), within Loxahatchee Groves to reach safe riding areas. All trails would connect to the planned trails located at 140th and 40th Streets.
- * Palm Beach County should consider assisting the community in its efforts to finance, locate and build safe trails from within Loxahatchee Groves to reach the Royal Palm Beach Pine Natural Area, which has designated trails, as an asset to the horse owners.



Conservation

CONSERVATION

Background/Current Conditions

Loxahatchee Groves Natural Environment

No natural drainage systems remain in Loxahatchee Groves, as they have been replaced by canals. Although this manmade drainage has permanently altered the native environment, several ecosystems have adapted and are still present today.

Loxahatchee Groves lies east of the original Everglades ecosystem, within a wide transitional zone which separates coastal rim vegetation and soils from Everglades vegetation and soils. Along the ocean lies the coastal hardwood forests and, just inland, the pine-flatwood ecosystem. The soil types overlaying the large limestone formations dictate the types of vegetation found in these ecosystems. The area surrounding and within Loxahatchee Groves contains the following ecosystems;

- * Coastal Hardwood - salt and drought tolerant in a low to moderate elevation with excellent drainage. Soil is sand and shell with moderate plant and animal diversity.
- * Pine Flatwood - less tolerant to salt, but drought tolerant in a high elevation with good to mixed drainage. Soil is sand, shell and some marl with a good plant and animal diversity.
- * Transitional Zone - lower salt tolerance with a mixed tolerance to drought. It is on a lower elevation with a soil comprised of mixed sand, shell, marl and muck. The transitional zone has the greatest plant and animal diversity.
- * Everglades - limited salt tolerance, with a low tolerance to drought. It is on a low elevation with a soil mixture of which is mainly muck, except for limestone outcroppings. It has the lowest plant and animal diversity, but supports the largest populations. The everglades system cannot physically support wood type flora.

As part of the transitional zone between the coastal plant and the Everglades ecosystems, the plant and animal diversity within Loxahatchee Groves is great. Transition zones typically incorporate the features of both communities, allowing species of both ecosystems to be present, but in smaller quantities.

Ecosystems most notable within the district include:

- * Open wetlands (sand ponds, saw grasses, submerged prairies);
- * Cypress domes;
- * Pine and palmetto flatwoods;
- * Savannahs;
- * Transition zones (red maple, pond apple, myrtle forests -- very limited today).

Many native species of animals are no longer found in the community due to loss of habitat, hunting and development. Native species originally associated with these ecosystems include;

- * Mammals - bear, panther, hog, wildcat, otter, raccoons, rabbits, opossum, foxes, and squirrels
- * Fish
- * Reptiles - turtles, snakes, frogs, lizards
- * Birds - water fowl, song birds, wading birds
- * Insects - pollinators, food chain insects and both beneficial and pest insects
- * Soil builders - annelids and micro-organisms

Analysis

Land Uses and Ecosystems

All types of land uses affect the natural environment and ecosystems to varying degrees. These include; farms, nurseries, animal husbandry, trucking and construction, commercial business, and residential development. In addition, introduced exotic species, such as Brazilian Pepper, Australian Pine and Melaleuca, can severely affect the natural environment. Land uses can affect the environment in the following manner:

- * animal husbandry (horses, cattle, birds, pigs, goats, etc) generates some clear cutting, fencing, animal waste and noise
- * trucking and construction affect it by mining, use of solvents and fuels, road destruction, dust noise and construction debris
- * commercial business (shopping centers, stores, etc) cause clear cutting and large paved surfaces
- * residential uses require some clear cutting, fencing, produce sewage, and use of pesticides and solvents

Elements with Great Environmental Impact

Elements introduced into the community which have the greatest effect on the environment include:

- * clear cutting - causes habitat loss, increased soil temperatures and evaporation, increases water usage, allows exotic species invasion, reduces pollination by removing insect communities
- * fencing - chain link and other close knit fencing restricts the movement of native animals from one area to another
- * pesticides - contaminates ground and surface water, and may also be airborne causing insect mortality and reduced pollination
- * mining - results in clear cutting, ground water contamination by exposing aquifers and also these mines provide a dumping area for non-biodegradable and bio-hazardous wastes
- * commercial centers - development results in clear cutting and large paved areas which restrict ground water recharge. These paved areas increase evaporation from nearby areas through increases in convection currents and surface runoff is contaminated from leaks and spills for automobiles.
- * exotic plant infestation - causes native habitat loss, increased water usage and soil contamination

Conservation Easement

Under Section 193.501, Florida Statutes, lands placed in a conservation easement may receive a reduced tax assessment. Any lands condemned pursuant to the Vegetation Preservation and Protection Section and the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Section of the UDLC should qualify for this reduced tax assessment.

Identified issue:

- Loss of local wildlife and ecosystems

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- * Palm Beach County should encourage preservation of natural and pristine areas. Native planting and environmental awareness should be done through community education.

- * Palm Beach County should consider promoting voluntary participation in the Florida Wildlife Habitat Program sponsored by Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. This would involve retaining applications and literature about the program and could be provided by the Palm Beach County Cooperative Extension Services. This literature would be available at local businesses, (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, real estate offices, etc.). Palm Beach County should consider offering property owners participating in this program a tax break incentive.

- * Palm Beach County should encourage landowners to apply for the existing tax credit available under the Vegetation Preservation and Protection Section and the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Section of the UDLC.



Code Enforcement

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Background/Current Conditions

In the past, Loxahatchee Groves was sparsely populated by individuals who lived, worked, and played according to their backgrounds, temperaments, tastes and finances. Historically, residents have not wanted a dictated uniformity of house or lifestyles. However, code violations and water pollution concerns have increased as the population has grown.

The rural lifestyles of residents in Loxahatchee Groves often makes code enforcement difficult. Code violations on a property are usually discovered by a neighbor. Often the neighbor may report the code violation to the County Code Enforcement Division or to other County, State, or Federal agencies responsible. These agencies include; the Department of Environmental Resource Management, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Natural Resources, the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, the Sheriff's Department, the Solid Waste Authority, and the County Health Department.

Analysis

It is the responsibility of the Code Enforcement Division to respond to a complaint within five days. Often, however, weeks may pass before an officer visits Loxahatchee Groves to investigate a code violation. This is due to limited staff resources that must enforce hundreds of codes in Florida's largest county.

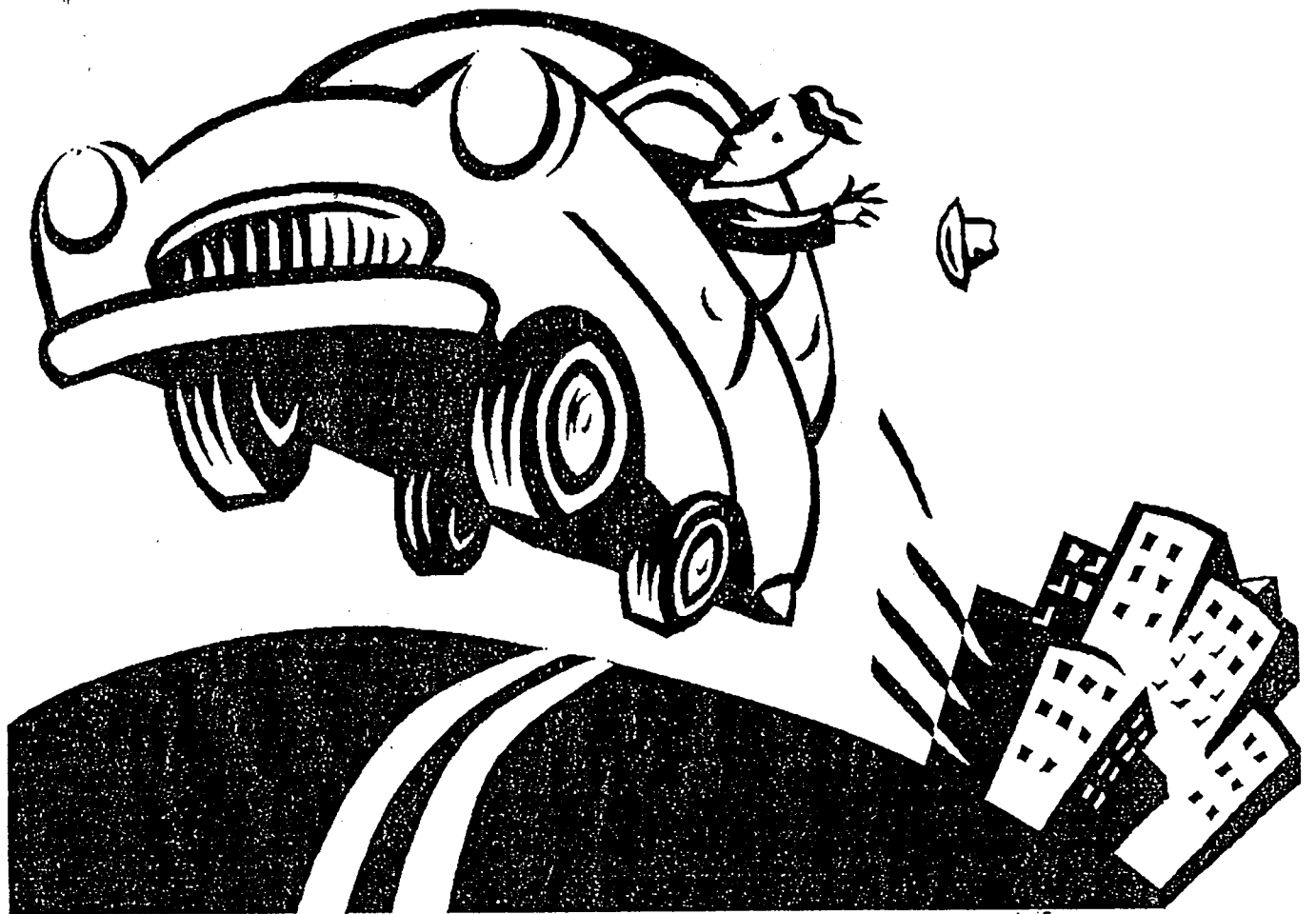
Although many residents stress that dumping, mining and other property abuse code violations are often reported to the County Code Enforcement Department, records were unavailable to provide detailed statistics. The Code Enforcement Department keeps records by street, not neighborhood, which makes targeting problem areas not only difficult for this plan, but for the entire County, as well. For this reason, the Plan is recommending that the Code Enforcement Division create a more sophisticated system to log complaints and code violations.

Identified issues:

- Lack of code enforcement
- Long response time to code violation reports

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- * Local citizens are encouraged to resolve any disputes or perceived incompatibilities directly with their neighbor.
- * Since code enforcement is the county's responsibility, Palm Beach County, the Solid Waste Authority, and other responsible agencies should respond in a timely manner to complaints.
- * The Palm Beach County Code Enforcement Division should consider a tracking system to record and follow-up on code violations.
- * The Palm Beach County Code Enforcement Division should consider keeping statistics on a neighborhood basis by census tracts and/or Traffic Analysis Zones.



District Roads

LOXAHATCHEE GROVES WATER CONTROL DISTRICT ROADS

Background

Activity began on Loxahatchee Groves District roads and canals around 1917. The completion of the Palm Beach Canal (C-51), from Lake Okeechobee to the Atlantic Ocean, in February 1917 provided extensive drainage and water travel to the area. Surveying for the canals and road surfaces began in May of 1917. Construction of D Canal began in July. D road was formed with the spoil or excavated material from the canal. Most of the roads in Loxahatchee Groves seem to have been constructed as natural by-products of the canal and drainage system.

By 1919, a horse and buggy trail was in use along the north bank of the Palm Beach Canal. The present State Road 80 was opened from Loxahatchee Groves to West Palm Beach in 1925, using a consistent base of sand and crushed rock. The roads were first used to service and maintain the canals for drainage.

In June, 1925, Loxahatchee Subdrainage District was chartered under Florida Statute Section 298. A three member board was elected to supervise maintenance of the canals and roads.

Around 1962, a concentrated effort in land sales on the block between "A" Road and "B" Road prompted another entrance at "B" Road at State Road 80. "B" Road received a concrete bridge over Collecting Canal in 1963.

The Okeechobee section between "D" and "E" Road was constructed in late 1976. A new entrance from the east was completed in June of 1978, with a culvert at Folsom canal.

Current Conditions

Relationship Between Roads and Canals

Many roads in Loxahatchee Groves run parallel to an adjacent canal, as they were originally created to access and maintain the canal system. The major north south roads in Loxahatchee Groves, named from "A" to "G" and Folsom, are each adjacent to a canal by the same name. Any widening, expansion, or relocation of these roads directly affects its adjacent canal due to their close proximity and alignment.

General Condition and Maintenance

The majority of roads in Loxahatchee Groves are unpaved, one lane easements. The LGWCD has the authority to maintain the roadways and roads, in addition to the canal system. Florida Statute Section 298 states: "The LGWCD may construct, improve, pave

and maintain streets, roadways, and roads as necessary to provide access to areas for cultivation, agricultural development, and settlement".

Road Composition and Aligned Berms

Roads in Loxahatchee Groves were constructed when the canal system was initially excavated in the 1920s. Since the fill from the dredging process was used to create the roads, the base and surface is inconsistent, with varying degrees of sand, clay, shell and/or muck. Logs, stumps, or large boulders often can be found just below the driving surface. The LGWCD maintains berms along the canal bank for safety and erosion control.

Roadway Signs and Maps

Several aspects of Loxahatchee Groves' roadway system are inadequate. Loxahatchee Groves is lacking adequate street, speed limit, and "dead-end" signs. Although, each street in Loxahatchee Groves has a name, not every street is identified with the standardized green reflector sign. Few signs state the district-wide speed limit of 30 miles per hour. Roads often terminate at a canal or private drive without alerting drivers of the "dead-end".

Loxahatchee Groves lacks an adequate house numbering system, as many houses are not marked with their street number. A number may be posted on a mailbox, but often the mailbox is grouped with others at the end of a street.

Maps of Loxahatchee Groves are often inaccurate, as well. Roads may actually end and continue elsewhere, although this is not shown on area maps. A road on a map may appear to traverse a canal, when in fact it does not.

The area's inadequate roadways, house numbering system, and maps can create problems for County Departments attempting to access area homes. The County's Fire Rescue and Sheriff Departments have frequent difficulty responding to calls.

Analysis

Roads and Safety

During all types of weather and traffic conditions, the LGWCD strives to maintain safe driving surfaces and a consistent road surface. The maintenance of dirt road surfaces and narrow lanes, however, present a challenge. By continuing testing combinations of road materials and frequency of material application, the district could improve driving surfaces. For the safety of the community, the LGWCD could consider acquiring additional right-of-way or easements to increase road width to two lanes and continue to manage the berms along canal banks.

Several aspects of the roadway system in Loxahatchee Groves need immediate attention in Loxahatchee Groves. If these aspects were improved, the access of homes by county services would be greatly enhanced. Improvement of road signs and house numbering would substantially reduce the response times of County Fire Rescue and Sheriff Departments.

District Roads and Outside Traffic

Loxahatchee Groves is under constant threat of non resident traffic passing through the community, due to the close proximity to Okeechobee Road and Southern Boulevard. The amount of outside traffic, however, can be limited by restricting traffic flow as much as possible. The addition of a culvert to link 140th and "E" Road would further increase non resident traffic by creating a 'short-cut' for other communities and should not be considered by the LGWCD.

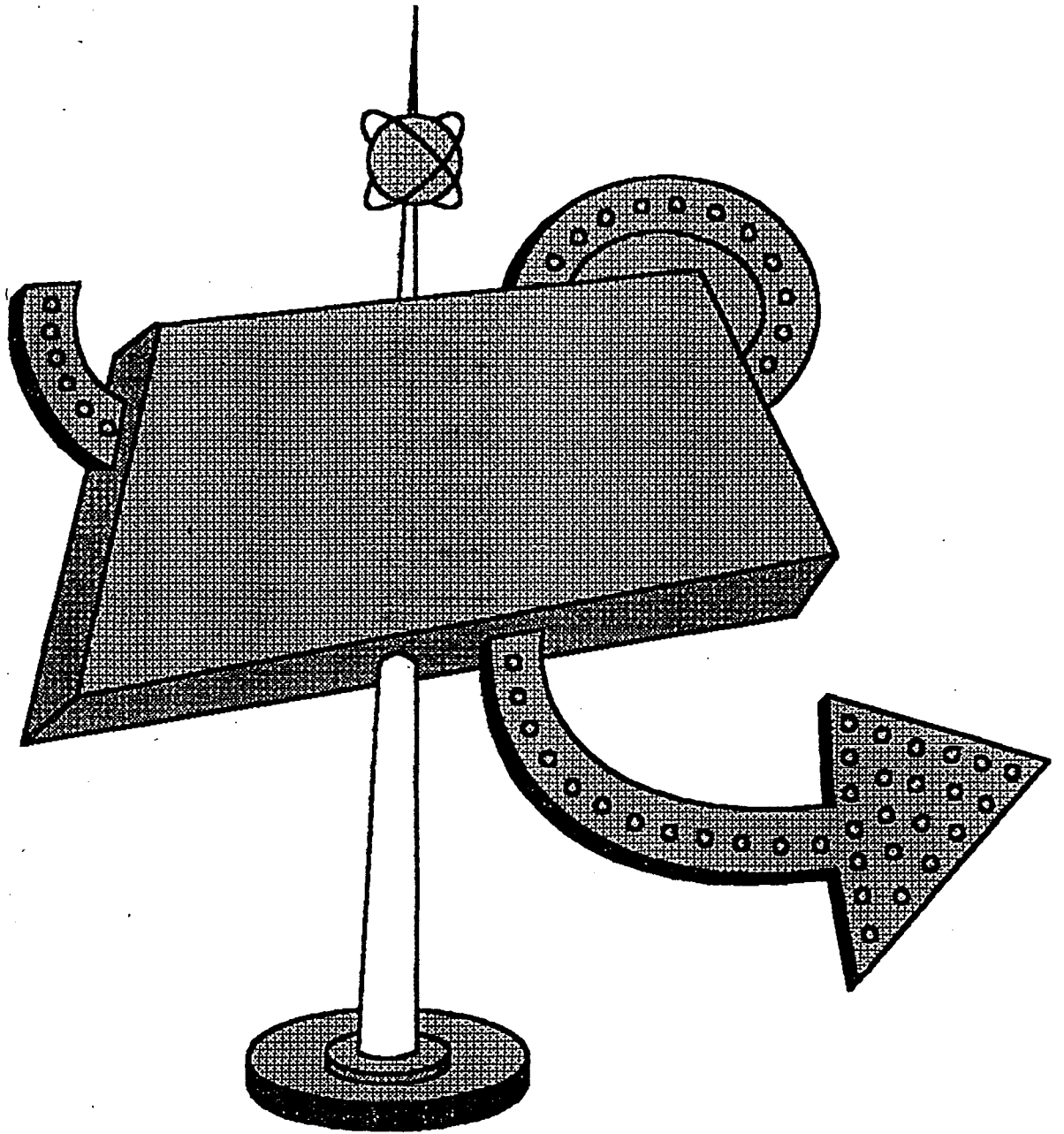
Identified issues:

- Rough driving surface
- Roads too narrow/no shoulders
- Non resident traffic passing through the community

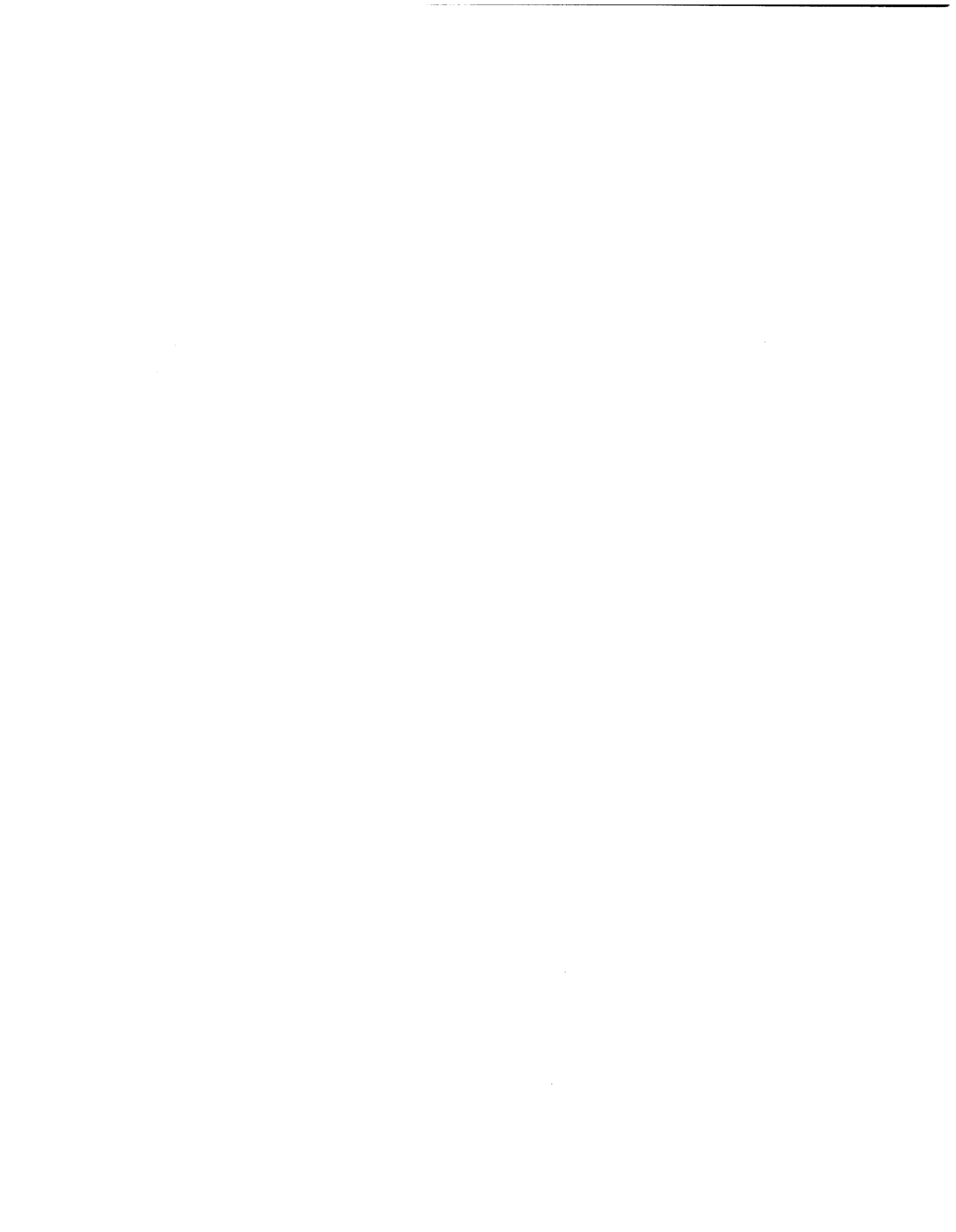
RECOMMENDATIONS:

(THIS PLAN RECOGNIZES THAT THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND THE LOXAHATCHEE GROVE WATER CONTROL DISTRICT ARE INDEPENDENT OF EACH OTHER'S JURISDICTION)

- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should consider continuing to improve driving surfaces with better road materials.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should consider continuing to acquire sufficient right-of-way and/or easements for two lane roads with shoulders and berms.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should consider continuing to manage the berms along canal banks throughout the District for safety and erosion control.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should consider not connecting "E" Road with 140th Avenue.



Thoroughfare



COUNTY THOROUGHFARE PLANS

Background/Current Conditions

Okeechobee Boulevard

Currenty Okeechobee Boulevard is the only paved roadway within Loxahatchee Groves. Palm Beach County paved Okeechobee Boulevard from Seminole Pratt Whitney Road to "A" Road in April of 1983. The extension and paving of Okeechobee Boulevard from Folsom to "A" Road was completed in late 1983. That project connected the Village of Royal Palm Beach to the Acreage west of Loxahatchee Groves. Many residents feel that the paving and extension of Okeechobee Boulevard has already bisected the community.

Okeechobee Boulevard is designated as a Thoroughfare on the Palm Beach County Right of Way Identification Map. The 2010 Interim Transportation Map depicts Okeechobee Boulevard extending out to Lion Country Safari Road and becoming the major route to this tourist attraction. The County Engineering Division has stated that this extension is expected to be started around 2005.

Folsom Road/Crestwood Boulevard

The Folsom Road/Crestwood Boulevard alignment has been approved, surveyed and will soon be paved. This design will maintain the 4-laned natyure of Crestwood Boulevard and continue same from the Crestwood section of the Vollage of Royal Palm Beach in an arc southwest to link with Folsom Road on the eastern periphery of Loxahatchee Groves. The Crestwood Boulevard section of this alignment will be 4-lanes and will terminate at Southern Boulevard in direct linkage to Forest Hill Boulevard. THE 4-laned portion of this boulevard will penetrate Loxahatchee Groves for approximately one-half mile. At the point where Crestwood Boulevard swings northeast in the Village, Folsom Road will be paved as a 2-laned road running northward and connecting with Okeechobee Boulevard.

Southern Boulevard

Southern Boulevard, State Road 80, and including State Road 98 plus US-441, along the southern border of the community, is also paved and is designated as an Throughfare with a planned 220 foot right of way width on the Palm Beach County Right of Way Identification Map. Further, Southern Boulevard is designated as a Controlled Access Highway within the Florida Intrastate Highway System. This means that the State of Florida places a higher priority in the improvement of this highway. State Road 80 and State Road 710 (Beeline) are the only two intrastate highways in Palm Beach County.

"E" Road

"E" Road is designated as a planned throughfare on the Palm Beach County Right of Way Identification Map. "E" Road is designated as a paved collector roadway, extending from Southern Boulevard, through Loxahatchee Groves, to Northlake Boulevard on the County's 2010 Interim Transportation Plan. The planned 80 foot right-of-way width designated for the E Road/140 Avenue thoroughfare allows for five lanes of traffic.

Analysis

The "E" Road Thoroughfare

Several of the recommendations, and resulting implementations, of the Midlands Study were not well received by the residents of Loxahatchee Groves. In particular, many residents have been against the County's plans to widen and pave "E" Road, as this will further subdivide the community and may alter long established, efficient drainage patterns. The majority of responding residents in Loxahatchee Groves, including >85% of the resident landowners along and immediately adjacent to E Road would like to see E Road permanently removed from the Right-of-Way Identification Map.

Original Plans for "E" Road as a Collector Road

The original plans, according to the Palm Beach County Department of Engineering and Public Works (letters of Deputy County Engineer 6/16/93 and 9/9/93), describe "E" Road as a "collector" roadway. To quote the Deputy County Engineer "... a 'collector' would be typically up to five lanes with an 80 ft. right-of-way ...". Currently the County does not own any right-of-way along "E" Road, the only right-of-way is owned by the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District and consists of "E" Canal and a bit for maintenance vehicle access to its side. The expansion and widening of "E" Road would require the purchase of extensive amounts of land, including the existing road, as even that is private property. Thus, the development of "E" Road would entail the acquisition of much more private lands than is immediately apparent in the plan.

Residents with property along "E" Road, the Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Planning Chair and members of the Board of Supervisors of the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District met with representatives of the County's Engineering and Public Works, Planning, and Zoning Departments on May 13, 1994. At that public meeting, the question as to whether or not "E" Canal would be part of the currently identified "80 foot right-of-way plan" was asked. The answer was "no". Along with with the "no" answer, came the explanation that once the road was developed, swales and culverts would handle drainage from the road. The County then calculated that the development of "E" Road with retention of the "E" Canal would require approximately 145 ± feet of combined right-of-way. That is, 80 feet for the county's thoroughfare and about 65 ± for the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District Canal plus maintenance access.

Objections to paving district roads

At this time, the further development, expansion and paving of the roads in Loxahatchee Groves is not desired by the community. The development according to the Midlands Study Plan of "E" Road has been and is objected to by numerous active citizens and a number of citizens groups. It is noteworthy that the vast majority of resident landowners along and immediately adjacent to "E" Road vehemently oppose the paved thoroughfare concept. The history of this movement against the development of "E" Road stretches back to the inception of that proposal. Indeed, residents along "E" Road, as well as much of the community in general, oppose the proposal and have repeatedly petitioned the County and the Board of County Commissioners against same.

Reasons for Objecting to the Plan

Many residents oppose the development of "E" Road as a "thoroughfare" for several reasons, including:

- * **Hidden Costs** - aside from the purchase of land by the County, associated costs to the citizens of Loxahatchee Groves would be incurred. These will include all costs for the repair of "E" Canal and establishment of maintenance right-of-way to the west of same, as well as drastic increases in property taxes dictated by live on a paved thoroughfare. Many residents will be forced out economically.
- * **Damage to the community** - a high speed north/south thoroughfare would bisect an long established rural community and generate noise, pollution, crime and traffic related injuries to both people and animals.
- * **Traffic congestion** - the proposed thoroughfare ends at Southern Boulevard, forcing travelers to detour either west or east. That is, it is a thoroughfare to nowhere and would require yet another traffic light along Southern Boulevard/State Road 80.
- * **Duplicity of routes is not needed** - the existence of an E Road/140 Avenue thoroughfare would save only two to two and one-half minutes of travel time to long established north/south routes located to both the east (e.g. Royal Palm Beach Boulevard, Crestwood-Forest Hill Boulevards, State Road 7) and the west (i.e. Seminole Pratt-Whitney Road). Additionally, traffic then must go either east or west to reach one of those routes for continued travel. Destinations are the same!
- * **Rural demise** - the change of Folsom Road to a paved surface is already removing 14.3% of Loxahatchee Groves north/south dirt surfaced roads. These dirt roads are shared by the horse community for riding both on horses and in horse-drawn carriages, and for exercising stabled stock. Alteration of "E" Road

to paved status would remove an additional 14.3%, making a cumulative loss of 28.6% nearly one-third. Further, a paved "E" Road would quarter the community and force horse riders to contend with a slippery dangerous crossing.

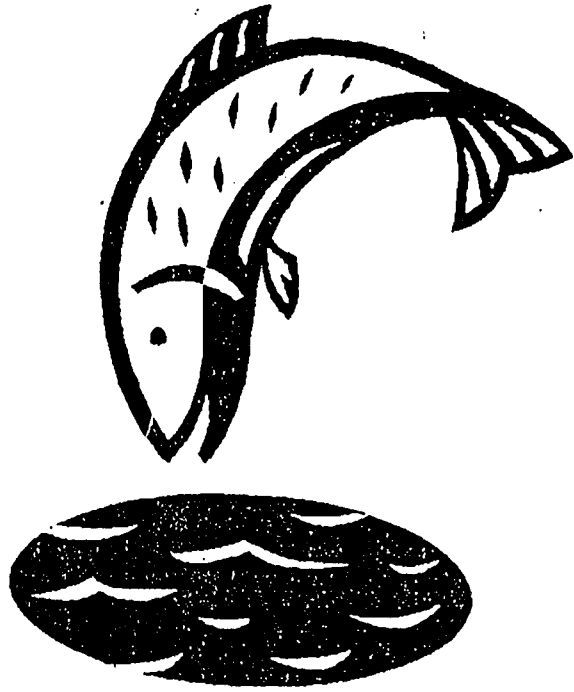
- * **Decreased water drainage efficiencies** - despite assurances by the County, there remains a real fear that any alteration to the long-established drainage pattern along "E" Road will also drastically change the efficiency of that system.
- * **Crime** - a high-speed route through any community invites criminal activity. the criminal would then be able to be 'lost in the crowd'.

Identified issues:

- Bisection of community by thoroughfares
- Increase in crime
- Increase in non-residential traffic

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- * The residents of Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area are against any major or minor north/south collector through the community.
- * Palm Beach County should consider the wishes of the Loxahatchee Groves community by removing "E" Road from present and future Right-of-Way Identification Maps.
- * At the time that a need for a thoroughfare is identified in the Loxahatchee Groves Area, the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District, Indian Trails Water Control District, and Loxahatchee Groves Landowners Association, in conjunction with Palm Beach County, should consider conducting studies specific to that proposed thoroughfare.



District Canals

LOXAHATCHEE GROVES WATER CONTROL DISTRICT CANALS

Background

Land in Palm Beach County originally consisted of wet lands and scattered lakes and ponds. The Army Corps of Engineers and the State of Florida replaced these natural drainage features with canals to drain the land for agriculture and settlement. The drainage system has been designed for the long-term drainage of surface and groundwater and now consists of hundreds of canals. The drainage system performs a variety of functions, including:

- * Flood protection
- * Land drainage for agricultural and urban development
- * Regulation of groundwater elevation
- * Prevention of saltwater intrusion
- * Water supply for irrigation
- * Recharge of wellfields

Current Conditions

Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District Canals

The Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District controls 8000 acres of land located in the center of the C-51 canal basin. Loxahatchee Groves has approximately thirty miles of canals, most of which are connected through a continuous loop system. The LGWCD drainage system includes seven north-south canals spaced every half mile. These canals flow into a collector canal, which discharges into the C-51 canal through 3 control structures. The control structures are located along State Road 80 and "A" Road canal, State Road 80 and "D" Road canal, and State Road 80 and Folsom Road canal.

The South Florida Water Management District regulates the flow of water in the canals by discharging excess water during wet weather and maintaining minimum water levels in the canals during drought periods. LGWCD currently pumps water through the District from a single pump located at "D" Road canal and the C-51 Canal.

Role of Canals

The primary functions of the canal system in Loxahatchee Groves include:

(a) Drainage and Flood Protection

Canal drainage systems are superior to swale systems found in the western wetlands. Loxahatchee Groves often is drained effectively while nearby communities, lacking this extensive canal system, flood.

(b) Water Retention and Irrigation

Agricultural businesses in Loxahatchee Groves rely upon the water retention capabilities of canals to irrigate their land.

The secondary functions of the canal system in Loxahatchee Groves include:

(a) Recreational Uses

Canals provide a valuable recreational asset to the entire area. Residents from surrounding communities, as well as Loxahatchee Groves, frequent these canals for various forms of recreation.

(b) Aquatic Natural Habitat

Canals provide aquatic habitat to a wide variety of fish, reptiles and water fowl. Florida's only native amphibious mammal, the river otter (Lutra canadensis), is found in these canals.

Analysis

Canals and Water Quality Concerns

Maintaining water quality is a concern in Loxahatchee Groves. The residents of the community draw their drinking water from private wells. As Loxahatchee Groves becomes more developed, the possibility for contamination of the water increases.

Efficiency and Maintenance of Canals

Growth of vegetation, fallen trees, and debris can restrict the efficiency of canal systems. The Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should consider controlling noxious and excessive vegetative growth along the banks and in the canals.

An inactive pump at "D" Road and Okeechobee Boulevard, if re-established, could prevent stagnation of water within the north part of the canal system.

The Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District currently has a plan to desilt all of the district canals. The desilting process would be most effective if continued as an ongoing project. Through desilting, Loxahatchee Groves' canals would be more receptive to fish, water fowl and animal life.

Identified issues:

- Protected water quality and quantity in canals
- Canal banks are unsafe
- Lack of system for containing spills in canals

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should continue to clean the District canals of all debris and vegetation.
- * Loxahatchee Grove Water Control District should continue to desilt the canals to increase the water holding capacity.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should continue to redesign the weir system for District canals.
- * Residents should report to Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department and Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District any vehicle seen in the canal.
- * Residents should report berm and canal bank damage to the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should continue to manage the berms along canal banks throughout the District for safety and erosion control.

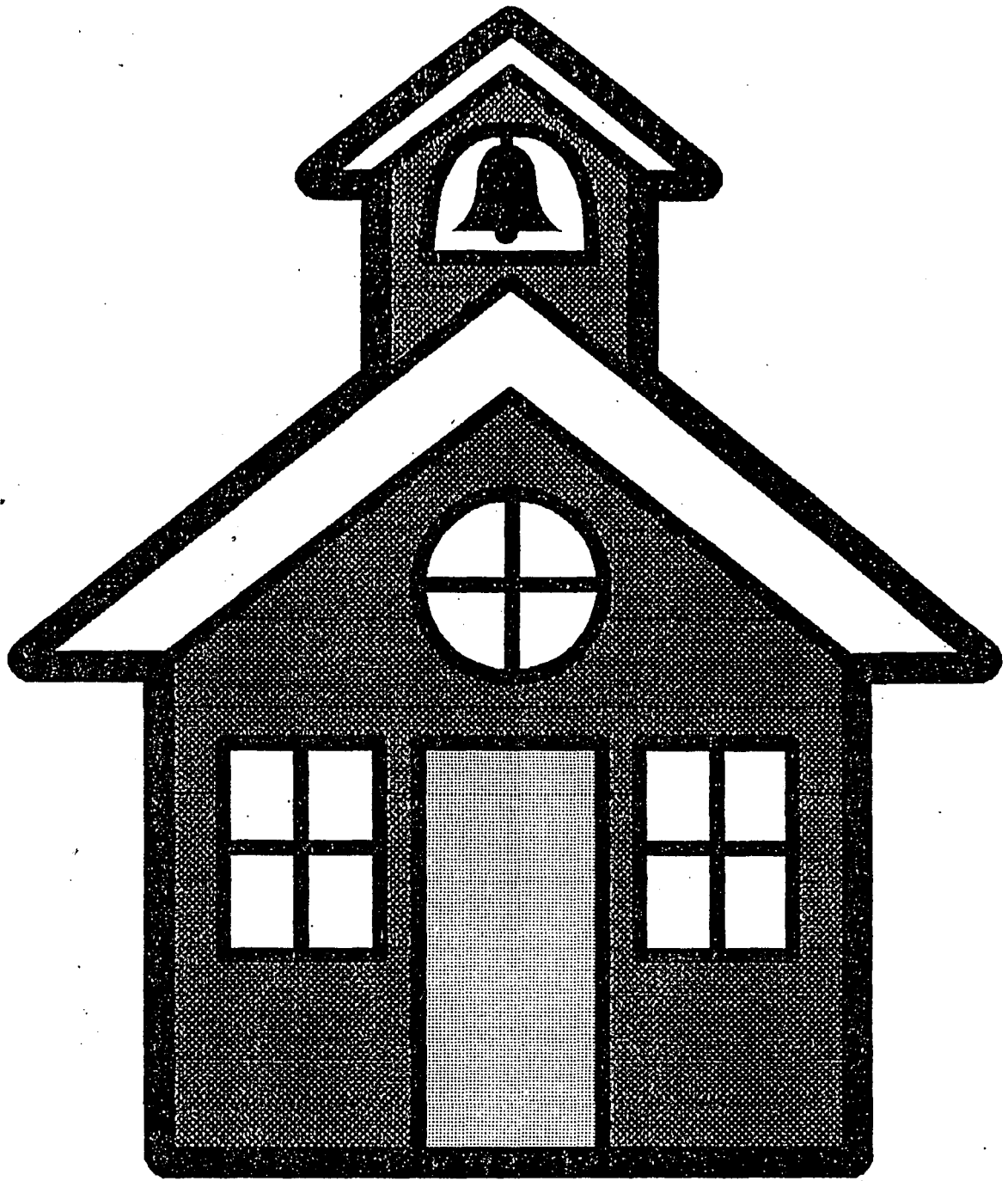
SUGGESTION:

- * Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission should stock the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District's canals with fish.

SUGGESTION:

- * The South Florida Water Management District should consider drafting a plan to assist Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District in properly recirculate canal water during drought periods to prevent stagnation.





Schools & Busing

SCHOOLS

Background/Current Conditions

Background

The School Board of Palm Beach County started serving the children in Loxahatchee Groves in 1936. The students attended a one-room school house up until 1965 when they started attending school in Royal Palm Beach. In 1986, Loxahatchee Groves Community Elementary School was planned. The students assigned to this school started out in portables until the permanent and present structure was completed in 1987. At present, the students from Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District boundaries number 116 on the elementary school level.

Student Population and Schools Attended

Approximately 580 children live in Loxahatchee Groves and attend public schools. These children attend Loxahatchee Groves Community Elementary School, Royal Pines School (6th Grade Center), Crestwood Community Middle School, and Wellington Community High School.

With the exception of Loxahatchee Groves Elementary, no Palm Beach County schools exist within walking distance for Loxahatchee Groves public school students. The majority of students rely on school buses for transportation to and from schools.

School Bus Transportation

Approximately six years ago, Palm Beach County School Bus Transportation Department changed the bus routes to limit which roads school buses would travel. The Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District maintains the roads and roadways of the district with a degree of uniformity. Up until the late 1980's, Palm Beach County school buses traveled all District roads for student pick-up and return. In 1989, however, the Department determined that it was hazardous for buses to travel on the canal side of the road. The new bus routes requires many children, some as young as five years old, to walk long distances to their assigned bus stop.

Analysis

School Bus Transportation and Student Safety

In Loxahatchee Groves, all of the District roads are a minimum of one lane in width and extend parallel and adjacent to canals. With a District-wide speed limit of 30 mph and all District roads maintained the same, why are some roads acceptable for use and not all?

Not all driveways can be student bus stops, but to have students from long distances converge along the busiest main intersections is in itself extremely hazardous. The temptation for children to cross the road even after being told not to is too great. The safety factor in this arrangement is non-existent.

The Loxahatchee Groves Community Elementary School is located just south of Okeechobee Boulevard. The school grounds start just south of a large preserved cypress head and just west of a large pepper farm. The building itself cannot be readily seen by fast approaching traffic. Drivers not familiar to the area pose a great safety hazard to children who are walking or riding their bicycles. The present signage and flashing lights that make drivers aware of approaching a school only addresses the area directly at the intersection of 162nd Avenue and Okeechobee Boulevard. The safety of the children is a great concern. The Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Planning Committee would like to see this forewarning School Safety Zone extended.

Identified issues:

- Children wait for school buses at congested intersections

SCHOOL RECOMMENDATIONS (NON-BINDING SUGGESTIONS ONLY):

(THIS PLAN RECOGNIZES THAT THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND THE PALM BEACH COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD ARE INDEPENDENT OF EACH OTHER'S JURISDICTION)

- * The School Board of Palm Beach County should allow school buses to traverse any District road to pick up and drop off children.
- * The School Board of Palm Beach County should consider expanding the Loxahatchee Groves Elementary School "School Safety Zone".



Fire Department

FIRE RESCUE

Background

Beginning in 1949, Loxahatchee Groves was served by Military Park Fire District which began as a volunteer fire department. In 1975, Military Park merged with the Loxahatchee Groves Volunteer Fire Department, and Military Park Station #3 was opened in an old church off of Southern Boulevard, just east of "D" Road. This station served Loxahatchee Groves until 1985, when Palm Beach County Fire and Rescue opened Station 21, located on Okeechobee Boulevard (between "D" and "E" Roads).

Current Conditions

Station 21

Station 21, located at 14200 Okeechobee Boulevard, between "D" and "E" Roads, serves as the primary fire rescue response center for Loxahatchee Groves. The Station has one pumper, one rescue truck, one tanker and one brush truck.

Response Time

Response statistics show an overall good record for Fire Rescue service in the Loxahatchee Groves. During a twelve month period, from September 1, 1993 to August 31, 1994, Station 21 handled 683 calls, of which 177 were for Loxahatchee Groves. Forty eight of the calls were fire related, 90 were medical emergencies, and 39 were vehicle accidents. The travel time in Loxahatchee Groves averages 5 minutes, 49 seconds, and extends slightly over the Department's goal of five minutes. Response time remains critical for medical emergencies, fire suppression, and local fire insurance rates.

Analysis

Difficulty Responding to Calls

Fire rescue crews have difficulty responding to calls in Loxahatchee Groves because of a lack of adequate street signs and house numbers. Access to many of these properties does not correlate with the property address. Several properties may be accessed from the same private road. In some cases, all the mailboxes are located on the public road, and the entrance to each property is not identified.

Disposal of Hazardous Materials

Clean ground water is essential to all residential and non-residential landowners in Loxahatchee Groves. All landowners should properly dispose of all hazardous materials

to avoid contamination of ground water. Under current collection guidelines, a Loxahatchee Groves resident must travel long distances to properly dispose of hazardous materials. A designated holding site at Fire Station 21 for periodic local collection of hazardous materials by the Solid Waste Authority, would be provide easier hazardous materials disposal for the residents of the community.

Canals and Water Quality Concerns

Maintaining water quality is a concern in Loxahatchee Groves. Residents of the community draw their drinking water from private wells. As Loxahatchee Groves becomes more developed, the possibility of water contamination increases. Although the Department of Environmental Protection already contracts with a hazardous materials collection and disposal company, Palm Beach County Fire and Rescue Station 21 and Special Operations Unit #16 or #31 should continue to respond to emergency situations to mitigate the circumstances and/or contain the containment to ensure the protection of water quality.

Burn Permits

As stated previously, Loxahatchee Groves is a rural community with a very low residential density. Most residences are on lots of five acres or larger. Residential landowners with large lots often find it difficult to manage the vast amounts of yard debris associated with the size of their lot. Each piece of debris must be cut to size, bundled, and hauled to the point where it will be picked up by the County refuse truck.

Availability/Accessibility of Burn Permits

Florida Administrative Code 62-256.700 allows issuance of burn permits only for land clearing. However, residential burn permits would be an incentive to help eradicate Brazilian Pepper, Melaleuca and Australian Pine. Currently, Palm Beach County Health Department approves all residential burn permits applications prior to issuance by the Palm Beach County Fire Department. These application are approved only to burn debris associated with land clearing. Fire Station 21 issues agricultural burn permits to bona fide agri-farmers. Many residents would like to see burn permits available to them at Fire Station 21 for maintenance as well as land clearing.

Identified issues:

- Poor response time
- Availability of burn permits
- Illegal burning by residents
- County mows over property signs

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- * In order to aid travel time, the Fire Rescue Department should consider coordinating with the community so that Fire Station No. 21 works with the Loxahatchee Groves planning area landowners to identify home sites on maps at the fire station, and indicates the access to their properties.
- * Property owners within the Loxahatchee Groves planning area should clearly show their names and/or street address numbers at the access to their property, to aid law enforcement and fire/rescue efforts.
(Also in Law Enforcement)
- * At the request of any community organization within the Loxahatchee Groves planning area, Palm Beach County Fire Department should provide community education on fire safety and awareness.
- * Any owner of property in Loxahatchee Groves whose property abuts County right-of-way should maintain property signs out of the County right-of-way.
- * Palm Beach County should consider streamlining the process a landowner outside the Urban Service Area must follow to obtain a permit to burn vegetation. Palm Beach County could allow such burn permits to be issued at each community's local fire station.

(NOTE: DURING THE COUNTY'S INTERDEPARTMENTAL REVIEW OF THIS PLAN, THE FOLLOWING TWO RECOMMENDATIONS WERE CONSIDERED UNFEASIBLE. THEY WERE RETAINED BY THE LGNPC TO INDICATE THE COMMUNITY'S DESIRES.)

- * Palm Beach County Solid Waste Authority should consider establishing a designated Western Communities site for collection of hazardous materials, possibly at a community fire station.
- * Palm Beach County Fire and Rescue Station 21 and Special Operations Unit #16 or #31 should continue to respond to emergency situations to mitigate the circumstances and/or contain the containment to ensure the protection of water quality.





Sheriff Department



LAW ENFORCEMENT

Background/Current Conditions

Originally, the only responding law enforcement agency in Loxahatchee Groves was the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office. With the additional services added by the County, responding agencies are now Palm Beach County Code Enforcement Division, Department of Environmental Resources Management, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Natural Resources, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department, Solid Waste Authority and Palm Beach County Health Department.

Palm Beach County's Sheriff Department

Two substations of the Palm Beach County's Sheriff Department serve Loxahatchee Groves. These substations are located at 3188 PGA Boulevard and at 3228 Gun Club Road. There is also a mini-substation located in the Wellington Market Place. The Sheriff's Office automatically forwards calls received to the nearest substation. The substation dispatcher routes the call to the nearest car patrol. Each call receives priority based on the severity of the crime or emergency.

Analysis

Difficulty Responding to Calls

The Sheriff's Department has had difficulty responding to calls in Loxahatchee Groves because of a lack of adequate street signs and house numbers. Access to many of these properties does not agree with the property address. Often several properties are often accessed from the same private road. In some cases, all the mailboxes are located on the public road, and the entrance to each property is not identified.

Sheriff Patrols and Unsafe Speeding

Speeding traffic creates dangerous situations in Loxahatchee Groves, and is increasing as roads are improved and widened. Dirt roads become dangerous when traveled at high speeds. School-aged children are threatened by speeding vehicles as they commute to and from bus stops.

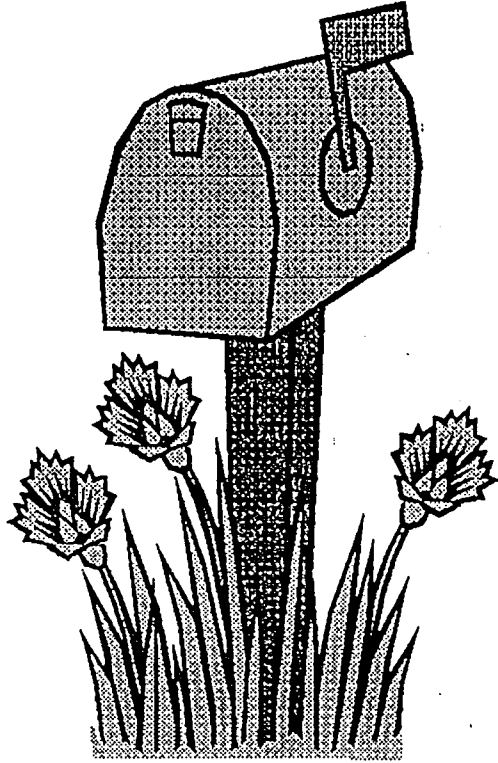
An increase in the number of Sheriff patrols would enhance the safety and protection of the community. Loxahatchee Groves is routinely patrolled once a day, with patrols more often as the workload of the Sheriff's Department allows. These patrols are currently deployed from the mini-substation located in the Wellington Market Place. More frequent sheriff's patrols, particularly during the hours of 6:00 - 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 - 6:00 p.m., would provide greater protection for residents of the community.

Identified issues:

- Lack of sheriff's patrols
- Excessive speeding within community
- Poor response time

LAW ENFORCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS (NON-BINDING SUGGESTIONS ONLY):
(THIS PLAN RECOGNIZES THAT THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT ARE INDEPENDENT OF EACH OTHER'S JURISDICTION)

- * The Palm Beach County Sheriff Department should establish a sheriff's substation at Fire Station 21. In addition, a public service officer could be stationed there.
- * The Palm Beach County Sheriff Department should consider increasing the visibility by increasing the number of sheriff's patrols in Loxahatchee Groves during the hours of 6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. for the greater protection of school children.
- * At the request of any community organization within the Loxahatchee Groves planning area, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department should provide community education on crime safety and awareness.
- * Property owners within the Loxahatchee Groves planning area should clearly show their name and/or street address number at the access to their property, so as to aid law enforcement and fire/rescue efforts. (Also in Fire Rescue)



Annexation

ANNEXATION

Background/Current Conditions

Loxahatchee Groves is located in unincorporated Palm Beach County, immediately to the west of the incorporated (1959) Village of Royal Palm Beach, to the east and south of the Acreage, and to the north of Wellington, which is currently seeking incorporation. The community of Loxahatchee Groves encompasses 12.5 square miles (8000 acres) and is within the boundaries of the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District (LGWCD).

Certain aspects of growth, development, and reapportionment of areas within the County can lead to consideration of additional land being annexed into existing incorporated areas. This may be done for added tax base, location, or relocation of objectional, yet required, facilities.

Analysis

Neighboring communities have unsuccessfully lobbied for annexation of LGWCD land. Residents of Loxahatchee Groves have opposed each annexation attempt. New developments, or expansion of existing developments, in these communities could create intensified annexation pressure.

Any annexation of Loxahatchee Groves land would destroy the unity and rural integrity of the community. Preservation of the existing boundaries of Loxahatchee Groves is essential to the residents of the community.

Identified issues:

- No annexation into adjacent communities

RECOMMENDATION:

- * The community of Loxahatchee Groves, in order to preserve its unity and uniqueness, discourages any fragmentation of the Loxahatchee Groves planning area by annexation into any adjacent incorporated community.

REVISION OF THE PLAN

Background/Current Conditions

The Loxahatchee Groves Neighborhood Plan has been designed to preserve the integrity of the community and to guide future development. The Neighborhood Plan reflects the consensus of the community as a guide for Palm Beach County's Board of Commissioners.

Analysis

In the future, however, the needs and desires of the community may change. The Neighborhood Plan may be modified as necessary to best serve the community. As Loxahatchee Groves grows and changes, the community will periodically review the Neighborhood Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

- * At the time Loxahatchee Groves identifies the need, the community should form a representative citizen's group to create amendments and revisions to accommodate future needs. This planning committee should be made up of resident landowners who represent the varied lifestyles, businesses, and interests contained within Loxahatchee Groves.

ACTIONS

Organized by Implementing Authority

ACTIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STATE OF FLORIDA

SUGGESTION ONLY:

- * Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission should consider restocking the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District's canals with native fish.

SUGGESTION ONLY:

- * The South Florida Water Management District should consider drafting a plan to assist Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District in properly recirculate canal water during drought periods to prevent stagnation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY

- * If petitioned by a landowner, Palm Beach County should consider low impact non-residential land uses, in addition to residential use, on Okeechobee Boulevard and State Road 80 (Southern Boulevard) in accordance with the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan and the Palm Beach County Land Use Code and the following standards:
 1. As to Okeechobee Boulevard only, the depth of such uses shall not exceed 660 feet from Okeechobee Boulevard,
 2. the rear fifty feet shall be landscaped and fenced or walled to provide a 100% opaque barrier,
 3. access to the site shall be limited to Okeechobee Boulevard or Southern Boulevard,
 4. architectural elevations will be submitted at time of land use amendment indicating a single story rural architectural style consistent with the residential style of the community.
- * The zoning category of the Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area should remain Agricultural Residential, with those regulations as described in Palm Beach County's Unified Land Development Code, except as otherwise directed by land use changes consistent with this document.

- * Palm Beach County should consider notifying the Loxahatchee Groves Landowners Association of any non-residential land use permit applications within the Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area.
- * Due to the large lot size in Loxahatchee Groves, Palm Beach County should consider expanding the notification radius for landowners applying for permits/zoning changes outside the Urban Service Area to 1,200'.
- * Palm Beach County should consider notifying the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District of any reclassification of zoning due to road and/or drainage issues within the Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area.
- * Palm Beach County should explore the possibility of amending the 1989 Comprehensive Plan to recreate a one unit per five acres land use category, as stated in the 1980 Comprehensive Plan, for the Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area.
- * Palm Beach County should consider restricting the sale of any petroleum product within the Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area.
- * Any new commercial building architecture should reflect the rural nature of the community.
- * The Loxahatchee Groves community requests that Palm Beach County consider incorporating the changes in **bold type** when the Land Development regulations are rewritten. Specifically, consider enhancing and modifying home occupation regulations for landowners and Palm Beach County, per the Unified Land Development Code, Section 6.4 D, Note 50 to incorporate the following concepts:
 - a. Incidental Nature. The home occupation(s) shall be clearly incidental and secondary to the residential use of the building and shall be confined to not more than **thirty (30)** percent of the total floor area of the **principal dwelling, not to exceed 600 square feet unless approved by a Special Use Permit.**
 - b. Location. A home occupation shall be conducted within the principal dwelling **or an accessory building or structure. The accessory building cannot be** an open porch or carport visible from any property boundary. **Accessory building location and size will be governed by existing Land Development guidelines.**
 - c. No change to the character of the dwelling. The home occupation shall not change the essential residential character of the dwelling in terms of exterior appearance and interior space.

- d. Employees. A home occupation use shall be conducted by a member of the immediate family residing in the dwelling unit. A maximum of **two (2)** persons who **are not members** of the immediate family may assist in the operation of the home occupation. **Special permits will be required for any additional employees on-site.**
- e. Occupational license. A home occupation shall be operated pursuant to a valid occupational license for the use held by the resident of the dwelling.
- f. No advertising. No external evidence or sign shall advertise, display or otherwise indicate the presence of the home occupation, nor shall the street address of the home occupation be advertised through signs, billboards, television, radio or newspapers. Advertising on vehicles shall be limited to the minimum necessary to meet code requirements as mandated by PBC Contractors Certification Division Chapter 67-1876, or Florida Statutes 489.
- g. No on-premises sales. A home occupation shall not involve the sale of any stock in trade, supplies, products or services on the premises.
- h. No outside storage. No equipment or materials used in the home occupation shall be stored or displayed outside of the dwelling including driveways.
- i. Nuisances prohibited. No home occupation shall involve the use of any mechanical, electrical or other equipment, materials or items which produce noise, electrical or magnetic interference, vibration, heat, glare, smoke, dust, odor or other nuisance outside the residential building. There shall be no storage of hazardous or noxious materials on the site of the home occupation.
- j. Violations or hazard. If any of the above requirements are violated, or if the use, or any part thereof, is determined by the Zoning Director to create a health or safety hazard, then the occupational license may be revoked.
- k. Number. Only **two (2)** home occupations shall be permitted on any lot. **Any additional home occupational licenses requested would be governed by the Zoning Division and would be obtained through special permit and clearance.**
- l. Community Impact. **Businesses should create a minimum impact on the local traffic.**

* Agricultural related businesses such as, but not limited to, nurseries, fisheries or aviaries, should not be considered home occupations (cottage industries) in conjunction with this plan.

- * Palm Beach County should consider incorporating additional language into the ULDC that addresses aviiculture as listed below:
 - * Operations consisting of fifty (50) to two hundred (200) birds should be considered as small commercial aviaries. Minimal lot size required should be two (2) acres. Zoning should be AR, SA or AGR.
 - * Operations consisting of over two hundred (200) birds should be considered as large commercial aviaries. Minimal lot size required should be five (5) acres. Zoning should be AR, SA or AGR.
- * Aviaries established prior to adoption of this plan should be "grandfathered" in.
- * Palm Beach County should encourage preservation of natural and pristine areas. Native planting and environmental awareness should be done through community education.
- * Palm Beach County should consider promoting voluntary participation in the Florida Wildlife Habitat Program sponsored by Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. This would involve retaining applications and literature about the program and could be provided by the Palm Beach County Cooperative Extension Services. This literature would be available at local businesses, (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, real estate offices, etc.). Palm Beach County should consider offering property owners participating in this program a tax break incentive.
- * Palm Beach County should encourage landowners to apply for the existing tax credit available under the Vegetation Preservation and Protection Section and the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Section of the UDLC.
- * The community of Loxahatchee Groves, in order to preserve its unity and uniqueness, discourages any fragmentation of the Loxahatchee Groves planning area by annexation into any adjacent incorporated community.

Parks and Recreation/Equine Path System

NOTE: DURING THE COUNTY'S INTERDEPARTMENTAL REVIEW OF THIS PLAN, THE FOLLOWING FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE CONSIDERED UNFEASIBLE. THEY WERE RETAINED BY THE LGNPC TO INDICATE THE COMMUNITY'S DESIRES.)

- * Palm Beach County should consider assisting the community in its efforts to finance, locate and build safe trails from within Loxahatchee Groves to reach the Royal Palm Beach Pine Natural Area, which has designated trails, as an asset to the horse owners. (Equine Path)

- * Palm Beach County should consider assisting the community in its efforts to finance, locate, and build multi-purpose trails for passive, non-motorized use (i.e., horses, hiking), within Loxahatchee Groves to reach safe riding areas. All trails would connect to the planned trails located at 140th and 40th Streets. (Equine Path)
- * Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department should consider completing Loxahatchee Groves County Park as specified in the original park master plan. (Parks & Rec.)
- * Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department should consider expanding Loxahatchee Groves County Park to the original forty acres, and thereby generating space for the construction of more general purpose athletic fields for ball sports. Given that the future expansion of State Road 80 (Southern Boulevard) is inevitable, Palm Beach County should consider acquiring this additional property as soon as possible. (Parks & Rec.)
- * The Loxahatchee Groves County Park, when originally planned, addressed equine trails. Palm Beach County's Park and Recreation Department should consider re-addressing this and if feasible, plan to include a riding ring into any future plans for the park. (Parks & Rec. and Equine Path System.)

Solid Waste Authority

- * Palm Beach County Solid Waste Authority should consider establishing a designated Western Communities site for collection of hazardous materials, possibly at a community fire station.
- * Since code enforcement is the county's responsibility, Palm Beach County, the Solid Waste Authority, and other responsible agencies should respond in a timely manner to complaints.

Code Enforcement

- * Since code enforcement is the county's responsibility, Palm Beach County, the Solid Waste Authority, and other responsible agencies should respond in a timely manner to complaints.
- * The Palm Beach County Code Enforcement Division should consider a tracking system to record and follow-up on code violations.
- * The Palm Beach County Code Enforcement Division should consider keeping statistics on a neighborhood basis by census tracts and/or Traffic Analysis Zones.

Transportation

- * The residents of Loxahatchee Groves Planning Area are against any major or minor north/south collector through the community.
- * Palm Beach County should consider the wishes of the Loxahatchee Groves community by removing "E" Road from present and future Right-of-Way Identification Maps.
- * At the time that a need for a thoroughfare is identified in the Loxahatchee Groves Area, the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District, Indian Trails Water Control District, and Loxahatchee Groves Landowners Association, in conjunction with Palm Beach County, should consider conducting studies specific to that proposed thoroughfare.

Fire Rescue

- * In order to aid travel time, the Fire Rescue Department should consider coordinating with the community so that Fire Station No. 21 works with the Loxahatchee Groves planning area landowners to identify home sites on maps at the fire station, and indicates the access to their properties.
- * At the request of any community organization within the Loxahatchee Groves planning area, Palm Beach County Fire Department should provide community education on fire safety and awareness.
- * Palm Beach County Fire and Rescue Station 21 and Special Operations Unit #16 or #31 should continue to respond to emergency situations to mitigate the circumstances and/or contain the containment to ensure the protection of water quality.
- * Palm Beach County should consider streamlining the process a landowner outside the Urban Service Area must follow to obtain a permit to burn vegetation. Palm Beach County could allow such burn permits to be issued at each community's local fire station.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL BOARD OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

(THIS PLAN RECOGNIZES THAT THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND THE PALM BEACH COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD ARE INDEPENDENT OF EACH OTHER'S JURISDICTION)

- * The School Board of Palm Beach County should allow school buses to traverse any District road to pick up and drop off children.
- * The School Board of Palm Beach County should consider expanding the Loxahatchee Groves Elementary School "School Safety Zone".

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PALM BEACH COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

(THIS PLAN RECOGNIZES THAT THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT ARE INDEPENDENT OF EACH OTHER'S JURISDICTION)

- * The Palm Beach County Sheriff Department should establish a sheriff's substation at Fire Station 21. In addition, a public service officer could be stationed there.
- * The Palm Beach County Sheriff Department should consider increasing the visibility by increasing the number of sheriff's patrols in Loxahatchee Groves during the hours of 6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. for the greater protection of school children.
- * At the request of any community organization within the Loxahatchee Groves planning area, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department should provide community education on crime safety and awareness.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOXAHATCHEE GROVE WATER CONTROL DISTRICT

(THIS PLAN RECOGNIZES THAT THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND THE LOXAHATCHEE GROVE WATER CONTROL DISTRICT ARE INDEPENDENT OF EACH OTHER'S JURISDICTION)

- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should consider continuing to improve driving surfaces with better road materials.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should consider continuing to acquire sufficient right-of-way and/or easements for two lane roads with shoulders berms.

- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should consider continuing to manage the berms along canal banks throughout the District for safety and erosion control.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should consider not connecting "E" Road with 140th Avenue.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should continue to clean the District canals of all debris and vegetation.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should continue to desilt the canals to increase the water holding capacity.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should continue to redesign the weir system for District canals.
- * Residents should report to Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department and Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District any vehicle seen in the canal.
- * Residents should report berm and canal bank damage to the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should continue to manage the berms along canal banks throughout the District for safety and erosion control.
- * Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District should explore the possibility of obtaining recreational powers as allowed for under Florida Statute 298.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOXAHATCHEE GROVES LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION

- * The Loxahatchee Groves Landowners Association should coordinate equestrian planning with the Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department and all other public and private agencies and apply for grant funds that will promote equestrian activities.