

Town of Jupiter Inlet Colony  
Neighborhood Rehabilitation Project

by Dr. Daniel J. Comerford III, Mayor  
Town of Jupiter Inlet Colony

Jupiter Inlet Colony, “Greenest Municipality in the State of Florida!” This was the goal in mind as the Colony entered into their \$9.5 million-dollar neighborhood rehabilitation project. The 138-acre Town of Jupiter Inlet Colony strongly believes in protecting and preserving the environment around them. Following this belief, the goal was set to significantly reduce nutrient discharges and increase water quality in the receiving waters of the Indian River Lagoon at the confluence of the Jupiter Inlet and Loxahatchee River. To achieve this, the Town entered into an Interlocal Agreement with the Loxahatchee River District (for sanitary sewers) and the Village of Tequesta (for water main replacement).

The Colony converted their existing 241 septic tank systems to a central gravity sanitary sewer system, that will be operated by the Loxahatchee River District. This elimination of individual septic tank systems leads to significant reductions in nutrient loading entering both groundwater and surface water bodies, providing for a substantial reduction in total nitrogen and total phosphorus. This conversion results in a 100% reduction in nitrogen and phosphorus loads from the septic tank systems.

The Colony also focused on their internal storm-water management system to reduce nutrient loadings into the Indian River and to provide for better drainage within the Colony. This entailed the adjustment to roadway profiles, valley gutters, and approximately 5,000 feet of exfiltration trenches with associated storm drainage inlets. These improvements provide a yearly reduction of 460 pounds of total nitrogen and 100 pounds of total phosphorus, a 68% and 71% reduction in these nutrient loadings, respectively. The exfiltration trenches also allow for an 80% reduction in water volume being discharged through existing outfalls into the adjacent impaired waterways. And lastly, the Colony had their 60-year-old plus asbestos cement water distribution system replaced with new pipes sized to handle the Colony’s system water demands and fire flows.

The project was daunting, but something that the Colony believed was necessary to protect their surrounding waterways now, and in the future. Through the hard work of everyone involved and the cooperation and determination of the Town’s Mayor, Commissioners and residents, the construction project was completed ahead of schedule and under budget by \$690,000. The project was substantially completed in November of 2017

This project was assisted financially by three grants to offset some of the overall costs that were directly assessed to the residents. The grants included \$600,000 from the Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative, funded by the State Legislature in 2014, a \$750,000 FDEP TMDL Grant in 2015 and a \$75,000 grant from the SFWMD’s Cooperative Funding Program in 2016.

With the entire Colony being comprised of 239 residential properties, their Town Hall and a Beach Club, keeping the residents informed and their opinions heard was vital to the success of the project. The Mayor and Commissioners, along with the Loxahatchee River District, the Village of Tequesta and the Project Engineer, held multiple meetings before and during the construction of the project to keep the residents informed. They explained all options and why they recommended certain improvements along with providing updates as to what has happened since the last meeting and what to expect in the coming weeks. These communications were instrumental in the success of the project.

The residents, Commissioners and Mayor of Jupiter Inlet Colony celebrated their monumental step in improving the surrounding waters not only for the residents of today, but also the residents of the future. While they are proud of the progress they've made, they continue to look for new ways and innovations to work toward their goal of remaining as the "Greenest Municipality in Florida!"