



**AGENDA
PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
MEETING
CITY HALL BOARDROOM
TUESDAY, MAY 27, 2025**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ATTENDANCE AND INSTRUCTIONS**
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A) April 22, 2025 Minutes**
- 4. NEW BUSINESS**
 - A) Artificial Turf Options for Nancy Weidenhamer Dog Park**
 - B) John Stephens- Work Plan-Breakwater Snorkeling/Oyster Gardening**
 - C) John Stephens-Work Plan-Christmas Decorations**
 - D) Morgan's Childrens Park Ribbon Cutting**
- 5. OLD BUSINESS**
 - A) Park Inspection Assignments**
- 6. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**
 - A) Autumn Weidenhamer**
 - Little Free Library Work Plan**
 - Grand opening pickleball tournament for pickleball courts**
 - Beach volleyball net at Tarpon Beach**
 - B) Bryan Otto**
 - C) Ali Stephens**
 - D) Jessica Julian**
 - E) Jan McGraw**
 - F) Aubrey Santucci**
 - E-Bike Locations**
- 7. STAFF REPORTS**
 - A) Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update**
 - B) July- Parks and Recreation Month Proclamation**
- 8. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE**
- 9. NEXT MEETING DATE: TBD**
- 10. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Council, committee, board, panel, or agency with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he or she will may need to ensure that a record of the verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon the appeal is to be based.

"Persons with disabilities who require assistance to participate in this meeting are requested to notify the Public Services Office 850/837-4242 at least 48 hours in advance".

**MINUTES OF THE
PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
MEETING DESTIN CITY HALL BOARDROOM
APRIL 22, 2025, - 4:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairwoman Weidenhamer called the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22, 2025, in the Destin City Hall Boardroom.

2. ROLL CALL:

Members Present

Autumn Weidenhamer
Aubrey Santucci
Jessica Julian
Jan McGraw

Members Absent

Allison Stephens
Bryan Otto

Staff Present

Ryan Reed P&R Deputy Director
Bryan Kellar Recreation Supervisor
Sharon Gardner Records Mgmt. Specialist

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A.) March 25, 2025, Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by Chairwoman Weidenhamer and seconded by Committee member Jessica Julian to approve the minutes from March 25, 2025. The motion passed 4-0.

Chairwoman Weidenhamer announced the new member of the committee, Aubrey Santucci, and made a motion to add the introduction to the Agenda. Committee member Jessica Jullian provided the second. The motion passed 4-0.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A.) Norriego Point Entrance Sign

Parks & Recreation Deputy Director Ryan Reed directed the committee members to the photo in their packet showing the new sign to be erected at the entrance to Norriego Point Recreation area. Members and staff all agreed that the rendition of the sign looked very nice, and all were excited to see it installed.

B.) Morgan Sport Center-Information only

Deputy Director Reed gave the following update on the status of the Morgan Sports Center Project.

- A new three-bay maintenance building will replace the existing shed.
- A new bathroom facility will be built, featuring additional space for indoor equipment storage and use as a fieldhouse.
- Batting cage renovation is included, with updated nets, lighting, and power.
- The project plans were included in a 160-page packet and were previously discussed about a year ago.
- The development order was recently approved by the city council, and this update was for informational purposes only.
- Final decisions on details such as colors and internal layouts are still pending and will be brought back for review.

Discussion between committee members and Deputy Director Reed continued regarding the length of the lease between the city and Destin Water Users and the timeline for how long before the project was completed. Deputy Director Reed explained that the timeline will become clearer once the project is put out for public bidding.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A.) Park Inspection Assignments

Deputy Director Reed explained that each committee member will be assigned to specific parks to evaluate using a standard form. It was mentioned that parks haven't been assigned yet due to turnover and delays. Previously, members of the committee took 4-5 parks based on preferences (sports vs trails, etc.). Evaluation submissions are expected twice a year-spring and fall- with summer being optional due to high activity. Deputy Director Reed offered to help any committee member unfamiliar with park locations, referencing the map that was included in their packet.

Chairwoman Weidenhamer reminded members about the committee's dog park adoption effort, explaining that each month a different member visits the dog park to inspect, clean, and report issues. It was noted that the plan is to send forms and finalize assignments before the next meeting and to accommodate changes if needed.

B.) Arbor Day 04/25/2025

Deputy Director Reed introduced the upcoming event: April 25th at Kell-Air Nature Walk Park where they will plant a Bald Cypress Tree. He noted that the start time is 10AM, with staff arriving earlier to prepare, and he invited members to attend if available. Discussion ensued regarding the tree grant that the city received which included 12 trees to be planted at various parks.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Chairwoman Weidenhamer mentioned that they didn't make a motion regarding approving the Norriego Point Entrance Sign.

Committee member Jessica Julian made the motion to approve the sign, second was provided by Jan McGraw. Motion passed 4-0.

Chairwoman Weidenhamer brought up an issue related to park inspection assignments. She noted that Councilwoman Trammell had previously raised concerns that while committee recommendations were being implemented, there was no formal record linking those actions to the committee. The importance of documentation was emphasized, particularly for accountability and to demonstrate to the City Council that the committee is making tangible contributions. Suggestions were made that committee members should submit recommendations in writing to city staff and to ensure that staff provide follow-up once actions are completed. It was stressed that this is the way to track progress and validate the committee's impact.

Chairwoman Weidenhamer then shifted the conversation to a new member introduction that she had forgotten to cover earlier in the agenda. Committee member Aubrey Santucci introduced herself as a long-term Destin resident of 37-38 years, mentioning her previous service as a past chairperson for the Parks & Recreation Committee. Having more time in her schedule due to changes in family and work commitments, she expressed enthusiasm to return and contribute to the committee again.

A.) Chairwoman Weidenhamer

Pooch Palooza Recap-

Chairwoman Weidenhamer provided a recap of the pooch palooza and announced how successful the event was. The event more than doubled its fundraising goal and saw more than double or triple the expected attendance. Appreciation was expressed for the committee's support, with a desire to continue growing the event annually. Discussion followed regarding the potential to establish the first Saturday in April as the recurring date for the Pooch Palooza. Several committee members raised awareness that Easter may fall on the first weekend of some years, potentially conflicting with event planning. Deputy Director Reed added that with proper advanced notice and coordination with the scheduling team, including Recreation Supervisor Bryan Kellar, who oversees tournaments, the committee should be able to reserve the preserved weekend when possible.

Chairwoman Weidenhamer continued the discussion by informing the committee members that over \$1000 was raised from the recent event, emphasizing the importance of using the funds in a way that results in visible improvements to the park. Suggestions included upgrading drinking fountains, with Committee member Jessica Julian raising the idea of a dog shampoo/washing station. Chairwoman Weidenhamer invited committee members to reflect on alternative ideas and suggested visiting the topic at the next meeting, clarifying that since funds were raised through the Parks Foundation, they should go toward "Wish List" items- enhancements beyond routine maintenance that aren't covered under the general Parks and Recreation budget. Various committee members supported taking more time to evaluate and brainstorm ideas with several of

DRAFT

the members expressing gathering input from park visitors and revisiting the discussion at the next meeting.

Artificial Turf

Chairwoman Weidenhamer initiated the discussion on artificial turf as a potential improvement to the dog park, referencing a vendor, Forever Lawn Emerald Coast, who showed interest during Pooch Palooza. It was noted that the vendor's quote was prohibitively expensive, and the suggestion from Chairwoman Weidenhamer was perhaps installing artificial turf in smaller sections as a possible solution and offered to invite the vendor to present to the committee at a future meeting. Committee member Jessica Julian compared the issue to the earlier discussion on dog wash stations- highlighting that artificial turf has both advocates and critics. She supported the idea of learning more and suggested that having an expert speak to the group could help the committee make a more informed and balanced decision. Committee member Jan McGraw supported bringing in a knowledgeable vendor, emphasizing that expert insight could benefit the entire community and help in weighing the pros and cons effectively. Committee member Aubrey Santucci who works in landscaping, cautioned against artificial turf, citing experience with odor and sanitation issues in both commercial and residential settings. Deputy Director Reed, from a maintenance and operations perspective, offered extensive insight. He noted that the city has re-sodded the dog park multiple times, even using high-grade Bermuda grass for durability. Deputy Director Reed supported the idea of sectional artificial turf to help preserve park conditions while still maintaining a blend of grass and other surfaces like sand. Chairwoman Weidenhamer concluded the discussion by reiterating that artificial turf technology has evolved, with some versions allowing better drainage and odor control. She offered to follow up with the vendor to see if they are still interested in presenting to the committee.

Little Free Library Work Plan

Chairwoman Weidenhamer reintroduced the idea of installing Little Free Libraries in public parks, an initiative that had been previously discussed but was delayed due to Pooch Palooza and other events. The proposal was a phased implementation, beginning with one park per year, with the goal of promoting literacy and community engagement through book exchanges. Chairwoman Weidenhamer mentioned that they already have boxes available in storage and suggested seeking sponsorship to cover installation costs, which could also offer a small advertising opportunity for donors. Committee member Santucci asked for clarification on how existing Little Free Libraries around town are maintained, wondering whether they were managed by individuals or through a formal organization. Chairwoman Weidenhamer confirmed that many are on private property, often maintained by homeowners. Deputy Director Reed contributed that the Boy Scouts were responsible for the ones at beach access points, and there was potential to engage the Girl Scouts for similar projects, which could even qualify as a badge-earning activity. Bryan Kellar, Recreation Supervisor, mentioned expanding the Little Free Library concept to the dog park, by installing small boxes filled with dog toys, tennis balls, frisbees, and other pet-friendly items for public use and exchange. Chairwoman Weidenhamer concluded the discussion by promising to draft a work plan

DRAFT

and asked for feedback or additional ideas emphasizing the visibility and accessibility benefits of placing these libraires in public areas, especially given the city's tourist traffic. It was also noted that by partnering with the official Little Free Library organization, the locations can be registered on a national map, which appeals to people who enjoy tracking or visiting these installations.

Children's Park Grand Re-Opening/Ribbon Cutting

Chairwoman Weidenhamer initiated the conversation by asking if the committee should be responsible for planning a grand re-opening for the Children's Park, or if the city staff handle that. Deputy Director Reed responded, explaining that the park is nearing completion, with only fencing and final site work left to be completed. He confirmed the city had not yet made any event plans but welcomed the idea of the committee taking charge stating that the completion date is by the end of May, and once the final construction timeline is clearer, they can coordinate on a grand re-opening date. He acknowledged the tight timeframe especially with the next official meeting not scheduled until May 27th but expressed confidence that collaboration through email could keep things on track, emphasizing the importance of planning now due to the short window before the park opens.

B.) Jessica Julian

Mentioned how she had contacted Deputy Director Reed regarding nets at Buck Destin park, and some other things that people in the community had brought to her attention. Commented how fun it was to volunteer at the Easter Egg hunt at Morgan Sport Center and how excited the parents and kids were.

C.) Jan Mc Graw

Expressed concerns about specific sidewalk areas at Dalton Threadgill park that needed addressing as there were safety issues with people tripping and falling.

D.) Aubrey Santucci

Expressed a desire to bring up a topic for the next meeting-the need for a safe place for e-bike riders, particularly for youth. Local chatter in the community had increasingly focused on how unsafe the current situation is for young e-bike riders. She concluded by reiterating that the current lack of space leads to conflict and community friction, and that a city-led solution could both mitigate danger and restore a sense of order and inclusion for local families.

7. STAFF REPORTS

A.) Park Updates

Deputy Director Reed revisited the topic of the Master Plan. He emphasized that this will be a major upcoming focus, mentioning that he will keep everyone updated as small meetings occur and outreach efforts ramp up that would involve surveys, both mailed and online. He encouraged the team to spread the word to friends and families, underlining that community feedback will be essential for assessing existing conditions and identifying areas for improvement. He elaborated that the master plan would help guide decisions about underutilized spaces, like pocket parks, referencing Jewel Melvin Park specifically.

8. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE -None

9. CLOSING REMARKS & ADJOURNMENT

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS- None

11. NEXT MEETING DATE:

Chairwoman Weidenhamer announced the next meeting will be May 27th.

ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further discussions, the meeting adjourned at 4:57 PM

Adopted and approved this _____ day of _____ 2025.

Autumn Weidenhamer, Chairwoman

Sharon Gardner Records Mgmt. Specialist

K9Grass by ForeverLawn Chosen to Create Largest Synthetic Grass Dog Park in America

Dogs in Fremont, Calif., have spent the past few months exercising, playing, and socializing at a new 40,000 square foot dog park that the city installed this past summer. While Central Park Dog Park is significantly larger than most city dog parks, that's not the most unique thing about it. When other dog parks are closing down during the winter months for maintenance, or sending dogs back to their cars covered in dirt and mud, Central Park Dog Park will remain open, and mud-free, regardless of the weather.



K9Grass by ForeverLawn - The artificial grass designed specifically for dogs.

The reason the new park is immune to weather closures and muddy conditions is due to the unique surface called K9Grass that was chosen by associate landscape architect Mark Mennucci. "We did extensive research into the best surface for the Central Park Dog Park, including site visits to other dog parks in the Bay Area, to see how other synthetic turf products were performing,"

said Mennucci. "We wanted to avoid muddy, unsanitary conditions, improve permeability, reduce heavy odors, and maximize the time that the park would be open to the community. We felt K9Grass allowed us to meet our goals, and cut down on costly maintenance. We have received excellent feedback from park users about the K9Grass."

K9Grass is an artificial grass designed specifically for dogs by ForeverLawn, the leading synthetic grass company. ForeverLawn developed the specifically-engineered grass to solve the many problems that dog use brings to common pet surfaces such as natural grass and gravel. "Dogs are hard on grass," said

K9Grass brand manager Ken Karmie. "Running, playing, digging, and doing their business on natural grass often results in dead spots in the grass, holes in the ground, and other problems. When you multiply this by hundreds of dogs in a dog park setting, you end up with a dusty mess that turns to mud as soon as it rains or snows."

K9Grass by ForeverLawn provides a clean, safe, durable solution for dog park developers that allows

Central Park Dog Park in Fremont, Calif., is the largest synthetic grass dog park in the nation.





Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park in downtown Tampa, Florida.

the parks to stay open year round, in all types of weather. Several key features are responsible for the durability and weather resistance of K9Grass that address drainage, waste management, and cleanliness. These features offer superior alternatives to other surfacing options such as natural grass, concrete, or gravel. And unlike these common park surfaces, K9Grass can be installed both indoors and out.

Immediate and effective drainage is critical in areas where many dogs are depositing liquid waste. K9Grass offers an exclusive knitted flow-through backing for immediate drainage. This unique backing allows liquid waste, as well as rain, to drain through effectively, maximizing cleanliness and weather resistance.

Managing solid dog waste effectively is also key to keeping a dog park clean, sanitary, and inviting for park users. K9Grass has been specifically engineered with a short, dense blade structure that simplifies the identification and removal of solid waste. K9Grass also provides an infill-free system to avoid trapping waste in the grass. Most artificial grass products require infill material such as sand or rubber to support the blades, which may lead to odor and unsanitary conditions. Not K9Grass. The dog-focused design of K9Grass features a short, dense blade structure with a textured thatch zone that requires no infill, greatly improving the cleanliness of the park.

For added protection, K9Grass provides antimicrobial agents built into the blades.

While more and more dog park developers are choosing K9Grass for their projects, the product is also available for veterinary facilities, backyard dog runs, dog boarding facilities, and even indoor dog facilities. The K9Grass patent-pending indoor flushing system provides an effective way to create an indoor area for dogs with soft, attractive K9Grass.

In addition to the Fremont Central Park Dog Park, many dog parks across the country are choosing K9Grass for its weather resistance, cleanliness, durability, and beauty. Los Gatos Creek Dog Park in Campbell, Calif., took an uninviting grassless area and replaced it with K9Grass, making it a beautiful, fully-functional dog park. Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park in downtown Tampa, Fla., is a new development that is considered the crown jewel of the city's urban parks. The dog park features K9Grass, which integrates perfectly with the riverwalk, the Glazer Children's Museum, the Tampa Museum of Art and downtown, giving dogs a safe, green place to exercise and play. For details about these and other dog parks utilizing K9Grass, visit www.K9Grass.com/parks.

About ForeverLawn

ForeverLawn provides innovative synthetic grass products to create better landscapes worldwide. In areas where real grass is difficult to grow or maintain—due to high traffic or poor conditions—ForeverLawn offers a natural-looking alternative that is beautiful, functional, and durable. In addition to its landscape lines, ForeverLawn also offers specialty products including SplashGrass, K9Grass, SportsGrass, Playground Grass, and GolfGreens. ForeverLawn—Grass without limits. foreverlawn.com.



City of Destin Breakwater/Snorkeling location & Oyster Gardening FY-2025 Work Plan

Strategic Focus:

II. Enhanced quality of life and safety for families
VI. A green and sustainable environment

Organizational Goal:

Enhancing marine and coastal ecosystems through the development of oyster gardening, artificial reefs, breakwaters, and living shorelines. This will improve water quality and provide resiliency, erosion control measures to protect our shorelines. This will promote marine biodiversity and provide a habitat for fisheries.

Improve Clement Taylor Park's safety at the swim area & provide a safe beginner snorkeling area that is easily accessible for locals and tourists.

Establish a comprehensive marine habitat restoration initiative starting with Clement Taylor Park. If this project is successful, then expand to other bayfront parks in Destin.

Performance Objective:

- Implement oyster gardens, in conjunction with Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance with educational signage at all city docks/piers.
- Encourage participation from local waterfront businesses and waterfront private/commercial property owners with docks to participate in the Oyster Gardening program.
- Develop a breakwater/living shoreline with modular units or limestone boulder clusters & mature oysters to enhance marine biodiversity and protect the shoreline, starting with Clement Taylor Park. This will provide a safe protected barrier to the current swim area.
- Once oysters are matured (in 1 year), relocate these oysters to breakwaters/ living shorelines of our choosing, with the recommendation being Clement Taylor Park.
 - If the Clement Taylor Park project is not ready, then recommend relocating the oysters to Mattie Kelly Outfall.
 - Then the following year, relocate the next batch to Clement Taylor Park
- Establish a snorkeling area at these breakwater/living shorelines along city-owned waterfront parks, starting with Clement Taylor Park, to support safe areas to learn to snorkel and conservation awareness.

PRIORITY: CRITICAL IMPORTANT DESIRABLE

Measurable Outcome(s):

Outcomes	Fiscal Year			
	2025	2026	2027	2028
Installation of oyster farms at city-owned docks and piers	N/A	1 location	2 locations	More than 3 locations
Participation of local businesses/ private/ commercial property owners in the oyster farming program	N/A	2 private/ commercial properties	5 private/ commercial properties	At least 10 private/ commercial property
Creation of a pilot living shoreline/ breakwater project using limestone boulder clusters at Clement Taylor.	Discussion/ Planning	Design/ Permitting	Development	start process for a new location
Establishment of an official snorkeling area at a coastal park, such as Clement Taylor Park).	Discussion/ Planning	Design/ Permitting	Development	N/A

Action Plan:

Task	Resource Needs (persons/organization)	Target Completion Date	Done
Develop concept educational signage for oyster gardens at City Properties	John Stephens	2025	X
Design concept drawings for living shoreline/breakwater project	John Stephens	2025	X
Develop concept signage for snorkeling area	John Stephens	2025	X
Present Idea to Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance	John Stephens	2025	X
Present CBA's Oyster Gardening Program & Breakwater/ Living Shoreline Idea to the Harbor & Waterways Board committee and seek approval	John Stephens	April 2025	X
Present CBA's Oyster Gardening Program & Breakwater/ Living Shoreline Idea to Okaloosa County Coastal Resources	John Stephens	May 2025	X
Present CBA's Oyster Gardening Program & Breakwater/ Living Shoreline Idea to Harbor CRA Committee and seek approval	John Stephens	May 2025	X
Introduce Parks & Rec committee to CBA's Oyster Gardening Program & Breakwater/ Living Shoreline Idea and seek approval	John Stephens	May 2025	
Department of Environmental Protection Pre-application Meeting to confirm permit type for Clement Taylor Park.	John Stephens, CBA, DEP, Destin staff, Okaloosa County Coastal Resources	2025	
Army Corp of Engineers Pre-application Meeting for Clement Taylor Park	John Stephens, CBA, ACE, Destin staff, Okaloosa County Coastal Resources	2025	
Okaloosa County Pre-application Meeting for Clement Taylor Park	John Stephens, CBA, Okaloosa	2025	

	County Coastal Resources, Destin staff		
Site visit & combined Seagrass Survey during the growing season	John Stephens, CBA, DEP, ACE, Destin staff, Okaloosa County Coastal Resources	2025	
Identify city docks/piers for oyster farms	Harbor & Waterways Board	2025	
Identify current Oyster Gardeners with CBA that are in Destin.	John Stephens/ CBA	2025	
Recommend if using Modular Units or Limestone Rocks	??	2025	
Present concept design/plan to Destin Council & seek approval. Have Council decide on Modular Units or Limestone Rocks	Harbor & Waterways Board, Destin Council	Q4 of 2025/ Q1 of 2026	
If Council approves, then get Council to direct City engineer to design engineered drawings (or hire Coastal Engineer)	City Planner/ Engineer	Q1 of 2026	
Apply for Permits (8-18 months)	Planning, DEP, ACE	Q1 of 2026	
Figure out Costs	??	Q1 of 2026	
Apply for Grants	Harbor & Waterways Board/ City Grants Manager	Q1 of 2026	
Coordinate with Council to direct Destin's PIO for awareness of Oyster Gardening Program to citizens/ businesses	Council/Destin PIO	April of 2026	
Training/implementation of Oyster Gardener Volunteers with CBA	Volunteers/ CBA	May 2026	
Begin installation (pending Permits)	Contractor, CBA (in conjunction with Force Blue)	Q1 of 2027	
Mature Oyster relocation to Clement Taylor Park Living Shoreline Project with CBA. (contingency plan if not ready - Mattie Kelly outfall livery shore line idea)	Volunteers/ CBA	May 2027	
Coordinate with Council to promote and launch snorkeling area	Council/ Destin PIO	2027	
Monitor and assess marine biodiversity impact. CBA will need to add another monitoring site.	CBA	2027	
Find new City-owned Waterfront Location for new oyster gardens	Harbor & Waterways Board/ Parks & Rec Committee	2028	
Find new City-owned Waterfront Location for Living Shoreline & mature oyster gardens	Harbor & Waterways Board/ Parks & Rec Committee	2028	

Notes from Action Plan:

- **Clement Taylor Park site visit:**
 - water depth at the roped swimming area is 3.5ft.
 - Will need to decide if we want to put the breakwaters at this depth (which would be cheaper) or do we want to potentially go out a little deeper and away from fishing pier
 - these breakwaters could attract fishing
 - Need to make sure it's not too close to the fishing pier. swimmers & fisherman could have a conflict
- **CBA** is in full support of the City-wide Oyster gardening & Breakwater plan.
 - Any structure must be at least 3ft away from any grassbeds.
 - CBA's FDEP permits can only go to 10ft from shoreline, so they might not be able to assist with permits.
- **Destin Harbor & Waterways** is in full support of the City-wide Oyster gardening & Breakwater plan.
 - Only concern that came up is potentially people standing on breakwaters and getting cut
- **Okaloosa County Coastal Resources** are in full support of the City-wide Oyster gardening & Breakwater plan.
 - Expressed interest to work collaboratively on this project. Will require County Board of Commissioners approval, but we can start these discussions.
 - Potentially could assist with one of these options:
 - County assists with design and then Destin implements installation.
 - Could potentially use the county's continuing services coastal engineers (Taylor or MRD).
 - Could potentially match funding
 - Limestone rock would be easiest. install 2-3 structures, with 15ft gaps in between.
 - If using prefabricated modular units (like snorkel reefs) could serve as a breakwater, Walter Marine has developed designs that serve as a breakwater system. County is looking at these systems for Okaloosa Island breakwater project
 - Estimated Costs:
 - 2 reefs could cost up to \$60,000 in limestone rocks (material only)
 - prefabricated modular unit cost unknown (if decide to go this route)
 - Mobilization Costs unknown.
 - Pending depth of location, recommend contracting this out
 - Signage:
 - Need to have "Caution - submerged Rocks" signage on each end of the structure
 - Florida's focus is on resiliency & erosion control measures on shorelines right now and there is funding for this.
- **Destin Harbor CRA** is in full support of the City-wide Oyster gardening & Breakwater plan.
 - Only suggestion is to add another breakwater, to give an 'L' shape protection on the Destin Fire Station side. (Drawing has been updated to reflect this)
 - Recommended adding more Breakwaters closer to shore

Process Improvement:

Recommend to Council to have CBA add a new site for continuous monitoring and reporting on water quality improvements.

Recommend to Council for public-private partnerships to ensure long-term sustainability of project.

Recommend adding another city-owned waterfront location, once the pilot one is established.

Stakeholders:

Internal	External
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Destin High School Students - Volunteer hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harbor & Waterways Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Okaloosa County Coastal Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harbor CRA Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Force Blue (former Navy Seals that help CBA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parks & Rec Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Business that have access to docks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Destin Public Information Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Property Owners that have access to docks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Destin Grants Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Army Corp of Engineers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department of Environmental Protection
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteers, such as Oyster Gardeners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coastal Engineer (if needed)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Destin High School (they have a artificial reef program)

Process Owner:

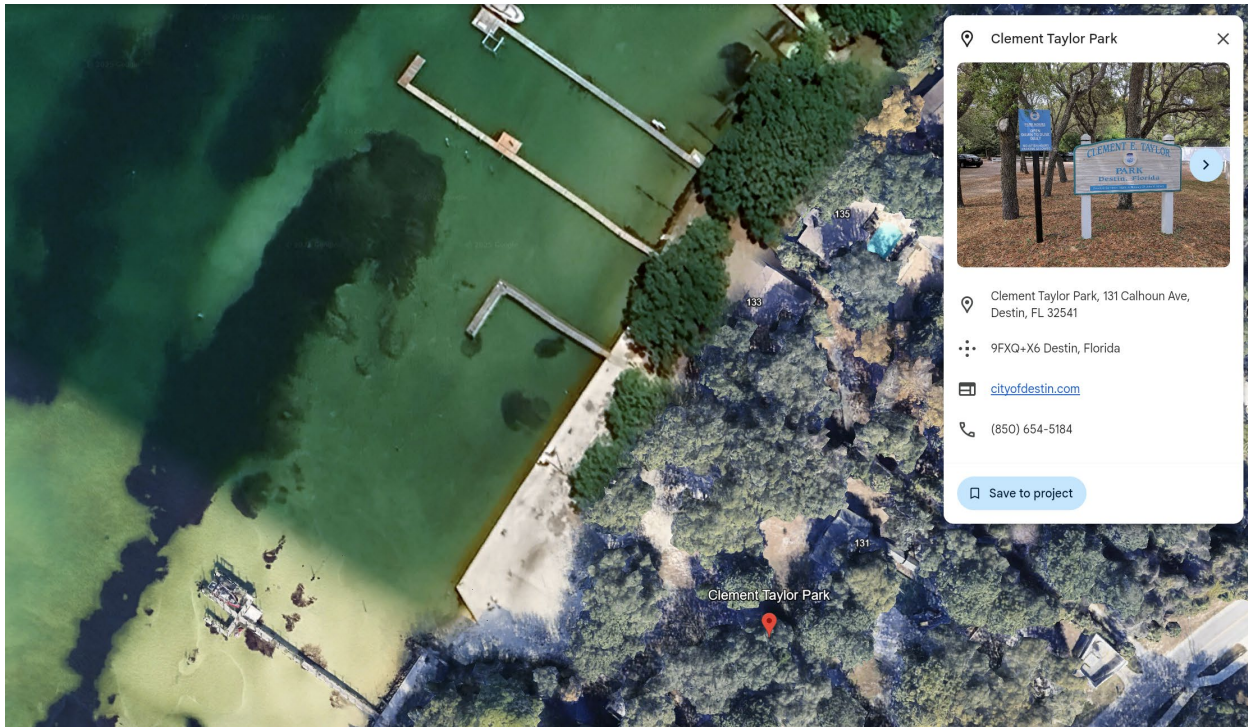
John Stephens

Example:

Current living Shoreline Project in Boca Raton:

<https://www.instagram.com/citybocaraton/p/CUQT4K-r1O-/?locale=pl&hl=am-et>

Aerial View of Clement Taylor Park:

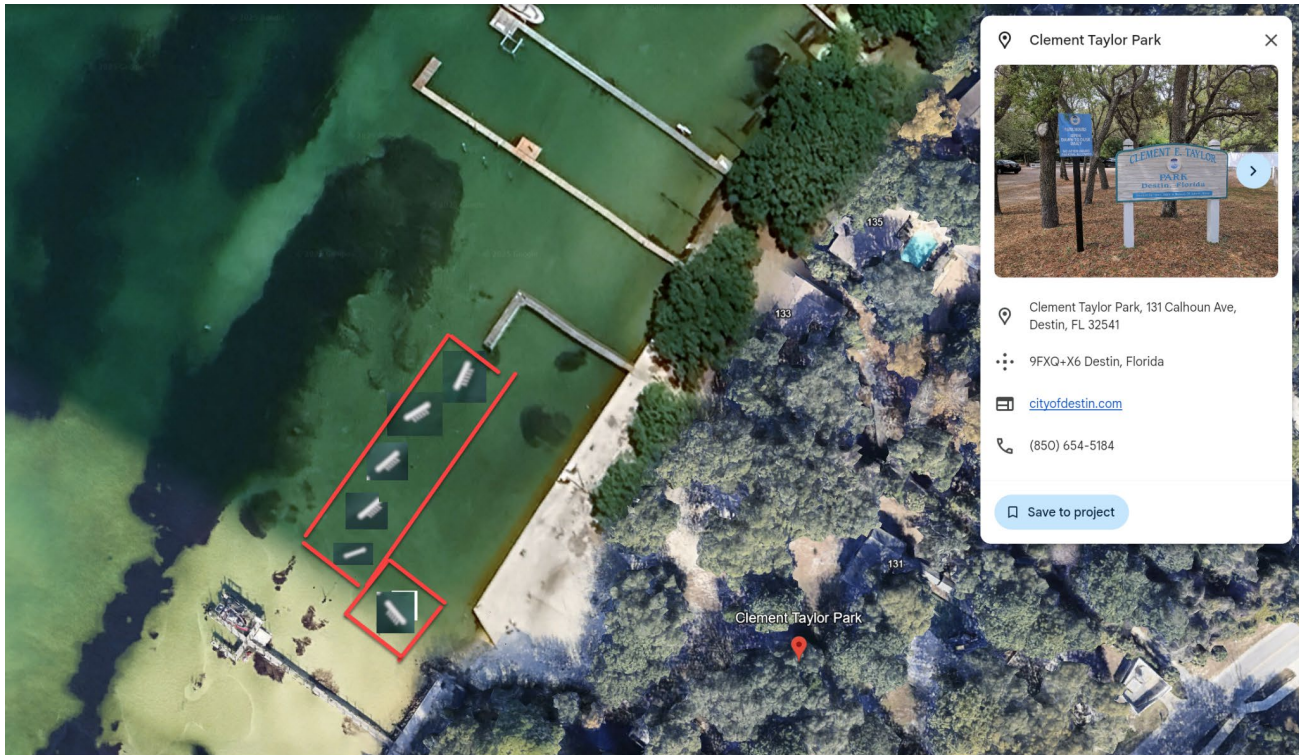


View of Clement Taylor Park:



Concept Breakwater Limestone at Clement Taylor Park:

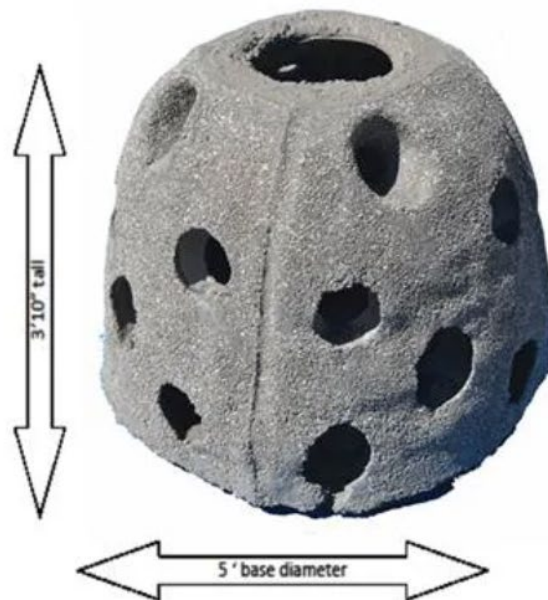
1. Breakwater/living shoreline must be at least 3ft away from seagrass



There are 2 methods. **Modular Units or Rock mound Breakwaters**

1. Modular Units

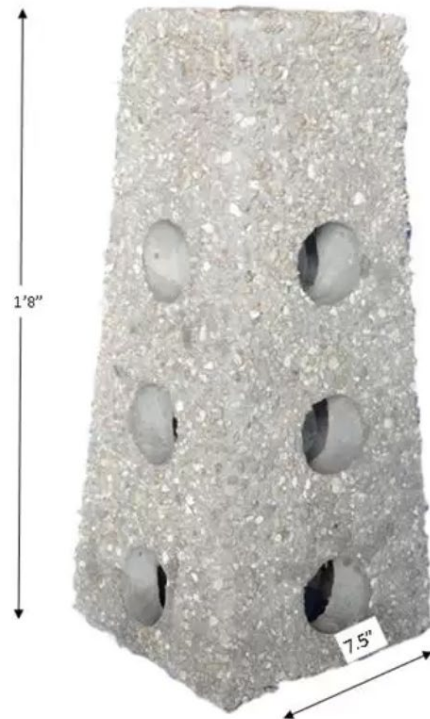
1. <https://reefinnovations.com/>
2. A modular reef ball is an artificial reef structure designed to mimic natural coral reefs and provide habitats for marine organisms. Reef balls are made of a specially designed, pH-neutral concrete that is environmentally safe. Our reef balls come in various shapes and sizes but most are dome-shaped with holes or slots to allow water and marine life to pass through.
3. Ultra Reef Ball Module



- 3' 10" tall
- 5 feet base diameter
- surface area 150 sq ft
- Weight 3000—3200 lbs
- average number of holes 25
- wavy bottom
- interconnecting holes
- aggregated exposed outside surface texture

- a.
- b. An ultra reef ball module is a type of artificial reef that is designed to be highly durable and resistant to wave action. It is made of a concrete mixture that is specially formulated to be strong and durable.
- c. Ultra reef ball modules are typically larger than traditional reef balls, and they have a more streamlined shape. This makes them more resistant to wave action and more likely to stay in place on the seabed.
- d. Ultra reef ball modules are often used in deep water, where they can provide habitat for fish and other marine life that prefer deeper waters. They are also used in areas with high wave action, such as nearshore reefs and breakwaters.

4. IJV Habitat



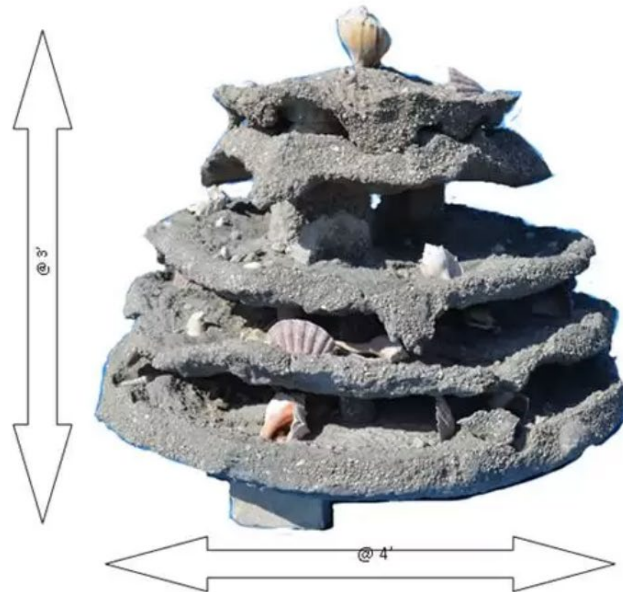
- The Internal Juvenile habitat is a module designed as an addition to our Reef Balls.
- Adding 1 or more inside a Reef Ball can provide additional surface area and small connecting holes.
- aggregated exposed outside surface texture
- Height 1'8"
- Width at the base 7 1/2"
- Base is 7 1/2" square
- Top 5" square
- Internal hole 6 1/2" —→ 2 1/2 "
- Side holes 2 1/2 "

- a.
- b. IJV Habitats are a valuable tool for reef restoration and fisheries management. They can be used to create new habitat for juvenile fish and increase their survival rates. This can help to boost fish populations and improve fisheries yields.

5. Pallet Layer Cake



Pallet Layer Cake



- 3' tall
- 4' max. diameter
- surface area sq ft
- weight 1300 lbs
- layers allowing more surface area
- interconnecting holes
- aggregated exposed outside surface texture
- various decorative material, shells provide a unique habitat.
- complex design increases marine diversity
- weight will vary between modules

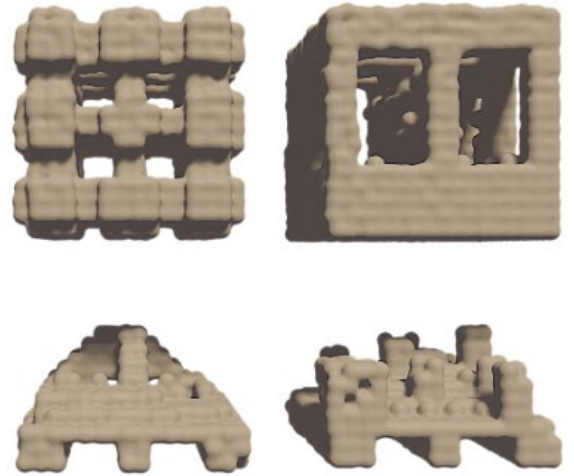
- a.
- b. A pallet layer cake is a type of artificial reef that is made up of a series of recycled pallets that are stacked on top of each other. Pallet layer cakes are typically made of a lightweight material, such as wood or plastic, and they are designed to be placed in shallow water.
- c. Pallet layer cakes are a popular choice for reef restoration projects because they are easy to deploy and maintain. They are also a good choice for areas where there is limited funding for reef restoration.
- d. Here are some examples of how pallet layer cakes have been used:
 - i. The Reef Ball Foundation has used pallet layer cakes to restore damaged reefs in the Florida Keys and the Caribbean Sea.
 - ii. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has used pallet layer cakes to create artificial reefs in areas off the coast of California.
 - iii. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has used pallet layer cakes to protect shorelines from erosion and improve water quality.
- e. Pallet layer cakes are a versatile and effective tool for reef restoration and coastal protection. They can be used to create new reef habitat, improve water quality, reduce erosion, and restore damaged reefs.

6. More options & Pricing can be found here:

<https://reefinnovations.com/products-specs/product-price-list/>

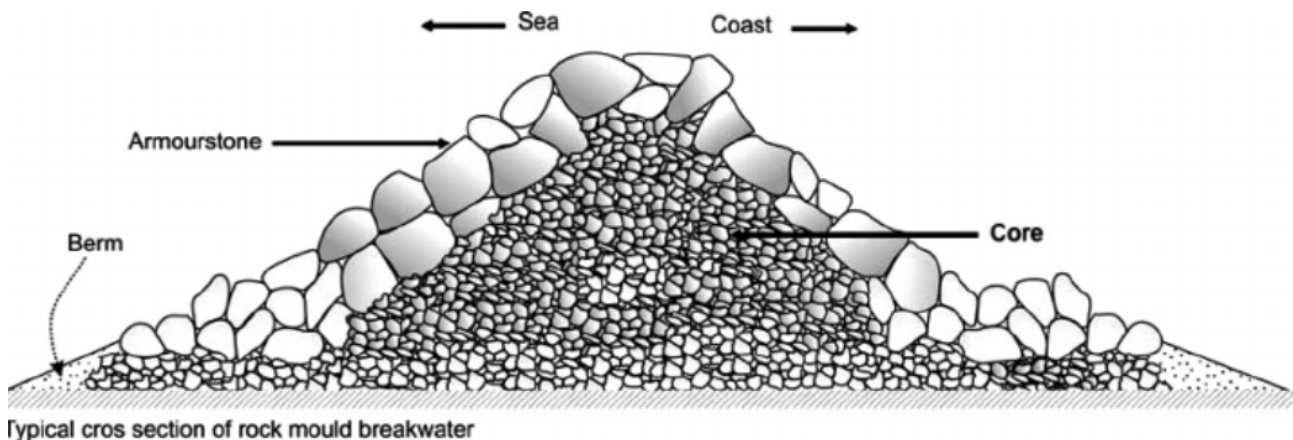
2. Natrx has other types of modular units

a. Natrx ExoForms™



- i. Natrx ExoForms™ are designed to leverage nature to provide more benefits than traditional methods with far less material.
- ii. And because ExoForms™ are a nature-based system, they promote new habitat growth right away and grow even stronger over time.
- iii. ExoForms™ can be customized to best benefit the specific demands of each project.
- iv. Digital design allows for rapid prototyping to explore the best approach to creating resilience and habitat-positive benefits.
- v. <https://natrx.io/more/natrx-tech-overview-natrx-exoforms>
- vi. <https://natrx.io/natrx-exoform-modules>

3. Typical cross section of rock mound breakwater:



FUNDING/GRANT INFORMATION:

1. TDC
2. FWC Florida Artificial Reef Program
 - a. Deadline is March of each year
 - b. Website: <https://myfwc.com/fishing/saltwater/artificial-reefs/>
3. NOAA
 - a. \$100 million in funding for transformational projects that restore coastal habitat and strengthen community resilience
 - b. Deadline is April of each year

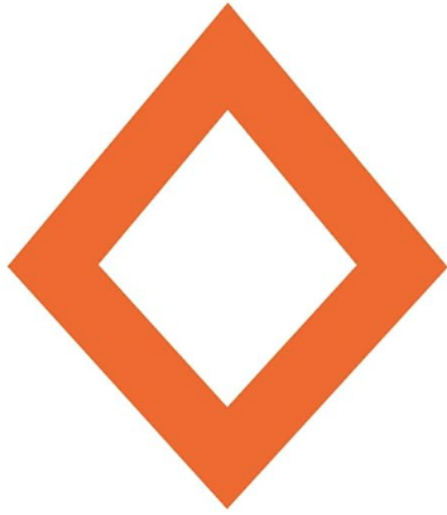
- c. Website: <https://www.noaa.gov/legislative-and-intergovernmental-affairs/noaa-tribal-resources/grant-education-opportunities>
- 4. **National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)**
 - a. Coastal Resilience Grants (supports living shorelines and marine biodiversity projects)
 - b. Website: <https://www.nfwf.org/>
 - c. Gulf Fund:
 - i. Website: <https://www.nfwf.org/gulf-environmental-benefit-fund>
- 5. **Corporate & Foundation Partnerships**
 - a. Engage companies in eco-tourism, seafood, water sports, DWU, FPL, High Speed Internet Provides for sponsorship opportunities.
- 6. Explore community-driven funding initiatives, such as the **Friends of Destin Parks**
- 7. Explore environmental conservative funding initiatives, such as **Force Blue**
- 8. Reach out to Destin High School is a collaboration effort, see: <https://www.getthecoast.com/destin-high-school-aims-to-deploy-15-new-artificial-reefs-with-upcoming-fundraiser/>

Concept Snorkeling Area Signage:



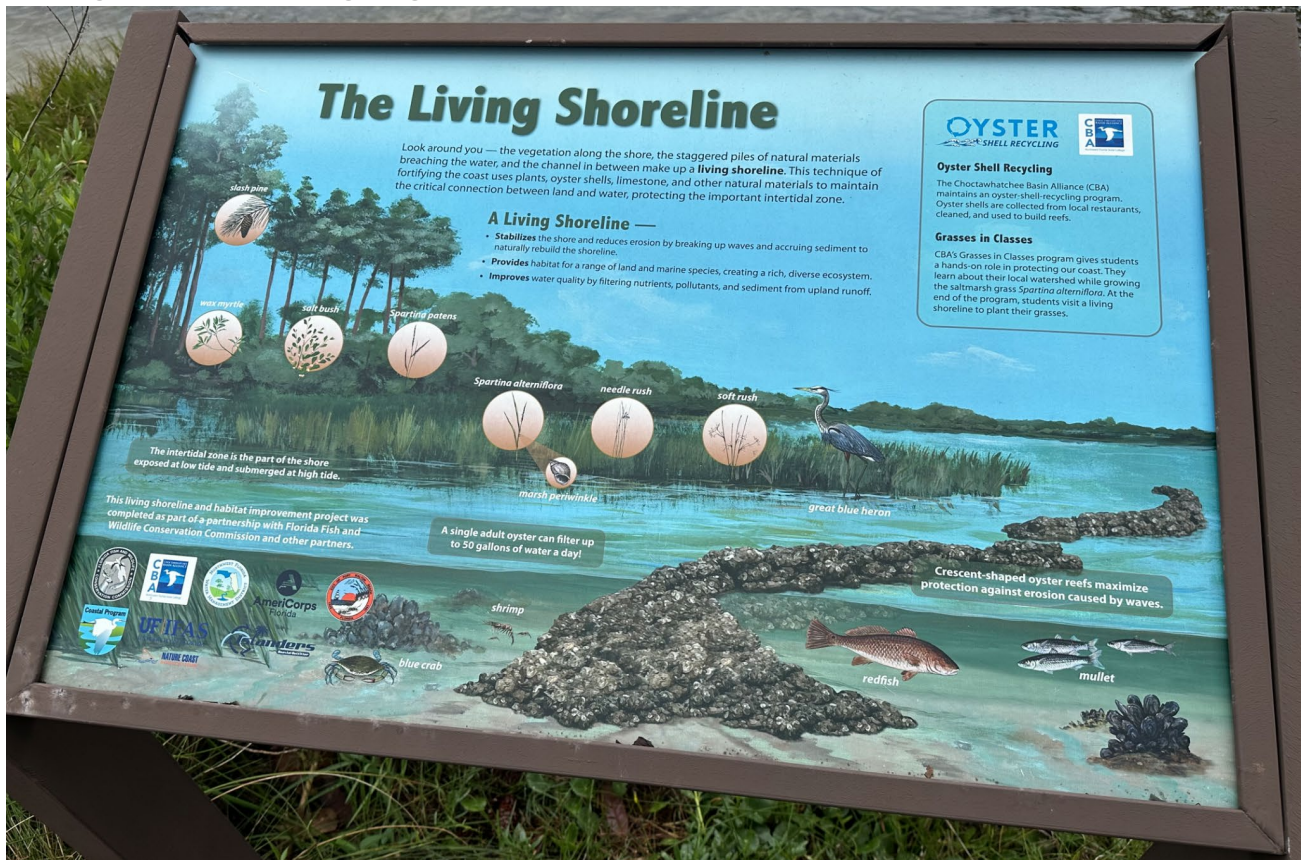
Boater awareness signage for submerged rocks

DANGER



ROCKS

CBA Living Shoreline Signage (from Lisa Jackson Park in FWB)



Concept Oyster Gardening Signage:

1. Provide this sign with each Vertical Oyster Garden



2. QR code will go to City of Destin Website link that will show contents:
 - a. What is Oyster Gardening, 101

Discover Oyster Gardening with the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance

Calling all City of Destin residents! Help restore our bay—one oyster at a time.

The **City of Destin**, in partnership with the **Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA)** invites you to be part of a hands-on, rewarding environmental program: **Oyster Gardening**. Whether you're passionate about protecting our coastal ecosystems or just love being on the water, this is your chance to make a real impact in your own backyard.

What is Oyster Gardening?

Oyster gardening is a community-driven initiative where volunteers grow juvenile oysters on Vertical Oyster Gardens suspended from private docks. These oysters help improve water quality, support marine life, and eventually get placed on living shoreline restoration projects throughout the Choctawhatchee Bay. This project in particular, will have all mature oysters benefitting the City of Destin's shorelines. Now is the time to make your impact on our bay.

What is a Vertical Oyster Garden?

A **Vertical Oyster Garden (VOG)** is a simple, space-efficient method for oyster gardening, especially well-suited for Destin's residential & commercial docks. This project is low-maintenance, but highly effective. Here's how it works:

- **Recycled oyster shells** are threaded vertically along ropes and suspended from your dock into the bay.
- During the warm summer months—typically from **late May through August—free-swimming oyster larvae**, or spat, naturally settle out of the water column.
- These spat are drawn to hard surfaces and begin attaching to the recycled oyster shells in your vertical garden.
- Once attached, the spat will begin to grow into juvenile oysters, creating a thriving habitat right under your dock!
- Once these oysters mature and a date is set (usually in May), everyone will be part of “Move your Mollusk” to relocate their oysters to a TBD shoreline restoration project location.
 - Your oysters can be transported to the site in a cooler on ice with a damp cloth or newspaper covering your oysters. They should even be fine if you put them on ice the night before.
 - If you would like to help place your oysters on the reefs, please wear clothes you can get wet in and closed toed shoes.
- You will be receiving your new Vertical Oyster Garden and instruction on how to maintain it for the upcoming year, if you're interested in continuing the program.

Vertical gardens attract juvenile oysters naturally and also serve as shelter for small fish, crabs, and other marine life—making them a mini-ecosystem right at your fingertips!

Why It Matters

- One oyster can filter up to **50 gallons of water per day**.
- Oyster reefs protect shorelines from erosion and storm surge.
- Vertical gardens increase biodiversity and restore damaged habitats.

How to Get Involved

If you have access to a dock or waterfront property, you can become an oyster gardener! CBA provides all materials—including the vertical garden setup—and teaches you how to care for your oysters over the season. It's a great activity for families, classrooms, or anyone who loves our bay.

- b. Oyster Gardening info diagram:
 - i. http://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Aquaculture_Infographic_oystergardening_2.jpg

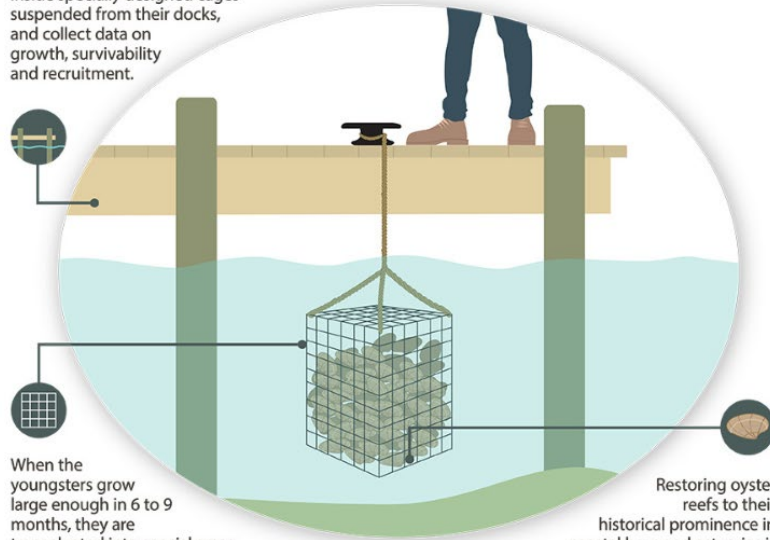
OYSTER GARDENING

One adult oyster can filter up to 50 gallons of water each day, a capacity that UF/IFAS and Florida Sea Grant are using as part of a larger strategy to help restore water quality at imperiled waters in Florida, such as the Indian River Lagoon.

How does it work?

Thousands of residents thus far have signed up to turn their backyard docks into garden plots that will raise baby oysters from newly hatched larvae, or seed.

These volunteers grow oysters inside specially designed cages suspended from their docks, and collect data on growth, survivability and recruitment.



When the youngsters grow large enough in 6 to 9 months, they are transplanted into special areas where they can make new oyster reef.

Restoring oyster reefs to their historical prominence in coastal bays and estuaries is considered essential to the recovery of coastal ecosystems.

FLSEAGRANT.ORG/RESTORATION/



Florida Sea Grant is a member of the National Sea Grant College Program network which is supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Florida Sea Grant
FOSTERING RESPONSIBLE AQUACULTURE

- ii.
3. Oyster Gardening Information:
 - a. Volunteers must
 - i. get training
 - 1.
 - ii. fill out [form for FWC Special Activities License](#)
 - b. Need a way to store volunteer name, cell phone, & email for updates
 - c. Volunteers must “Move you Mollusks” on a certain date TBD
 - i. coordinate with Tucker Reynolds with CBA
 1. Office: 850-200-4175
 2. Reynol59@nwfsc.edu



City of Destin Implement Christmas Lighting/Decorations/Events in CRA District FY-2025 Work Plan

Strategic Focus:

II. Enhanced quality of life and safety for families

Organizational Goal:

Enhancing public spaces and community engagement in the CRA district during the holiday season

Promote tourism, economic vitality, and community pride through seasonal beautification and events.

Performance Objective:

Implement Christmas decorations/lighting/events in CRA medians and the Destin Harbor Boardwalk, including Harbor light poles; create new Boardwalk Lights Contest category; engage Harbor property owners in participation and support.

PRIORITY: CRITICAL IMPORTANT DESIREABLE

Measurable Outcome(s):

Outcomes	Fiscal Year		
	2025	2026	2027
Minimum participation interest from Harbor property owners	25%	50%	75%
Installation of Christmas decorations in medians along CRA boundaries	2 medians	5 medians	All Medians

Lighting of Harbor Boardwalk and harbor light poles	5 poles	10 poles	All Poles
Launch of the "Harbor Boardwalk" category in the Destin Christmas Lights Contest	Created	N/A	N/A
Create a Giant Christmas Tree on Norriego Point or on a floating Barge to provide something different	Implement	N/A	N/A
Create Temporary mural walls for photo ops with beach-Santa themes, mermaid elves, etc on Clty Property	Implement	N/A	N/A
Expand "Holly on the Harbor" Currently have FWB HS Jazz Band	Get Destin HS Choir or Band for another time slot	Get Destin Middle Band or Choir for another time slot	Get FWB HS Choir for another time slot
Expand "Holly on the Harbor" as a weekend event with Food vendors/Trucks, hot cocoa stands, local art booths, and family activities	N/A	Implement	N/A
Santa on a barge on the Captain Royal Melvin Park Transient Slip	Implement	N/A	N/A

Action Plan:

Task	Resource Needs (persons/organization)	Target Completion Date	Done
Create letter for Harbor Property owners	John Stephens	May 2025	X
Present to Harbor CRA Board and seek approval	John Stephens	May 2025	X
Present to Parks & Rec Committee and seek approval	John Stephens	May 2025	
Figure out if we are we allowed to put Christmas Tree on barge in Norriego Point		June 2025	

Figure out costs for Christmas Tree on Norriego Point or Floating Barge		June 2025	
Identify power on medians. If no power, then it'll have to non powered decorations		June 2025	
Survey Harbor CRA property owners for interest of: 1. Christmas window decorations 2. Christmas lighting on outside a. Visible from road category b. Visible from boardwalk category	Harbor CRA	June 2025	
Estimate costs and vendors for lighting + installation	Vendor, Parks & Rec Committee, Harbor CRA	July 225	
Find any potential Grants	Harbor CRA, City Grants Manager, FPL?	August 2025	
Add Harbor category to City of Destin Christmas Lights Contest	Harbor CRA, Council, Mayor's Office	September 2025	
Present to City Council,	Council, Harbor CRA	September 2025	
Begin Installation	Parks & Rec staff, vendor?	November 2025	
Host lighting contest in conjunction with Holly Jolly on the Harbor, with Mayor & Council members voting.	Parks & Rec, Mayor's Office, property owners/ business partners	December 2025	
If this plan goes well, pass on to Town Center CRA to implement	Town Center CRA	2026	

Process Improvement:

Adds new annual engagement opportunity for waterfront stakeholders.

Expands CRA visibility.

Enhances holiday tourism appeal and walkability.

Notes from Action Plan:

- **Destin Harbor CRA** - approved & recommended that Chairman Stephens present to the Parks & Rec.

Stakeholders:

Internal	External
· Harbor CRA	· Installation Vendor?
· Public Works?	· Harbor CRA Property Owners
· Parks & Rec	· Harbor Business Owners/vendors
· Major's Office	· Visitors
· City Grants Manager	
· Council	

Process Owner:

Harbor CRA Department

Funding/Grant Information:

1. CRA budget
2. City Manager Budget (I can't remember what it's called)
3. possible business sponsorships
4. TDC
5. Explore external funding support from organizations such as Florida Power & Light (FPL) for community lighting or beautification grant opportunities.

6. Ask Property owners/Businesses in the Harbor CRA for donations
 - a. Option 1- Legally take donations, then City would have to do budget amendment
 - b. Option 2 – Donation in kind of actual lights or decorations. This would avoid having to do a budget amendment
 - c. Option 3 – Have everyone donate to Friends of the Parks Foundation. Then foundation donates to City. Also, everyone would get a tax deduction benefit by donating to Foundation

Notes:

2024 was the first year of the Destin Harbor's Holly Jolly at the Harbor event hosted by Parks & Rec from 3pm-5pm at Captain Royal Melvin Heritage Park on Sunday, December 15th, in conjunction with the Holiday on the Harbor Lighted Boat Parade. We had Fort Walton Beach High School Jazz Band provide music & Parks & Rec provided cookie decorating, hot chocolate and children's crafts.

Goal would be to add FWB HS Choir, Destin HS Band, Destin HS Choir, Destin MS Band, Destin MS Choir to schedules

The Holiday on the Harbor Lighted Boat Parade began at 6 p.m. sharp. To end the night, Harborwalk Village put on fireworks.

Letter to send out to all Harbor CRA Property Owners:

City of Destin – Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)
[Insert Date]

Dear Destin Harbor Property Owner,

As part of our continued mission to enhance the Destin Harbor CRA District, the City of Destin is exploring a new holiday beautification initiative for the 2025 season. This includes:

- Installing festive Christmas decorations in medians along CRA boundaries
- Adding holiday lighting along the Destin Harbor Boardwalk and light poles
- Creating a new "Harbor Boardwalk" category in the annual Destin Christmas Lights Contest
 - Visible from road category
 - Visible from boardwalk category

- Create Temporary mural walls for photo ops with beach-Santa themes, mermaid elves, etc on all Boardwalk Properties
 - Visible from road category
 - Visible from boardwalk category

We believe this will draw more visitors to the harbor, support local businesses, and create a joyful, walkable holiday experience for the community.

Before we move forward, we want to hear from you. Would you be interested in participating or supporting this effort—whether through decorating your property, offering sponsorship, or just sharing ideas? There are two options to donating, without having to make a budget amendment.

- d. Option 1 – Donation in-kind of actual lights or decorations. This would avoid having to do a budget amendment
- e. Option 2 – Donation to Friends of the Parks Foundation. Then the foundation can donate to the City. Also, everyone would get a tax deduction benefit by donating to Foundation & the city will not have to do a budget amendment.

Please let us know your level of interest by [insert date here]. If enough stakeholders are on board, we'll organize an optional in-person meeting to collaborate further.

You can reply to this letter or email [insert contact name + email]. We appreciate your ongoing partnership in making the Harbor a vibrant destination year-round.

Warm regards,

[Your Name]

Community Redevelopment Agency

City of Destin

[Contact Info]



City of Destin

FY 2025 Work Plan

Strategic Priority:

Preservation of heritage & environment

Strategic Goal:

Enhance quality of life and safety for families

Organizational Objective:

Parks & Recreation - Establish Little Free Libraries in Destin's public parks to promote literacy through free access to books, sustainability by giving used books another life, and civic engagement within our local parks for all ages.

Performance Objective:

Establish 1 Little Free Library in 1 park per year, starting with the Nancy Weidenhamer Dog Park (2025). Next, the Children's Park at Morgan Sports Center (2026), Captain Leonard Park (2027), and Clement Taylor Park (2028).

Measurable Outcome(s):

Outcomes	Fiscal Year	
	2025	2026
Appropriate and frequent usage of Little Free Libraries	Steady turnover of books and restocking required at times	Steady turnover of books and restocking required at times
Recreational engagement for all ages	10+ attendees at opening event and continued socialization through media	15+ attendees at opening event and continued socialization through media

Action Plan:

Task	Resource Needs (persons/organization)	When Complete
1. Fund and purchase library through Parks & Rec budget and/or seeking business sponsors	P&R Committee and Staff	By 8/31/2025

2. Build library and install in park	P&R Committee and Staff	By 11/2/2025
3. Host a ribbon cutting with community social gathering and book exchange	P&R Committee and community attendees	By 11/2/2025
4. Ensure library is stocked and maintained	P&R Committee, Community Volunteers, and Staff	Ongoing

Process Improvement:

The P&R committee will periodically review to identify improvements.

Stakeholders:

Internal	External
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks & Rec. Department Staff & Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Businesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment

Process Owner: *Parks & Recreation Committee, Autumn Weidenhamer*