



Abacoa

A tradition of community

Foreword

Creating community on a human scale..... **5**

Master Plan

Connecting people to the place where they live..... **6**

Residential

Neighborhoods: The soul of community..... **8**

Non-Residential

Creating a synergy..... **10**

Education

Higher Education: The Honors College and Branch Campus

Primary and secondary schools..... **11**

Recreation

Leveling the playing field of accessibility..... **12**

Environment

The Greenways: Linking human and natural environments..... **14**

Communications

Connecting electronically: The Abacoa community network..... **15**

Foreword

Creating community on a human scale

If we have learned one thing about being human, it is that our sense of community contributes to our sense of ourselves. The friendships we make, the lasting relationships we forge, the feeling of belonging that we cherish are all part of who we are, and all are part of community.

Abacoa embodies these fundamental elements of community. Its juxtaposition of uses and people encourages the creation of a community closely knit. Here is a place where people can live and work and go to school. Here are neighborhoods that can accommodate people of all ages and income levels, and houses that will function the way that people do today.

Abacoa captures the American community's human, pedestrian scale.

By crafting a design that engenders community interaction, Abacoa captures that small-town, hometown, Our Town tradition of American community—its human, pedestrian scale; its practicality and permanence. The environment that Abacoa fosters is one that reflects very clearly who we are and how we live: as part of a community.



master plan

LEGEND

- Residential Neighborhoods
- Residential Districts
- Tour Center District
- Community Commercial District
- Neighborhood Commercial District
- Workplace District

Sub-total 501 acres

- Municipal Park & Rec Facility
- Stadium & Spring Training Facility
- Florida Atlantic University
- Golf Course
- Upland Preservation / Greenway
- Edge Area Buffers

Sub-total 615 acres

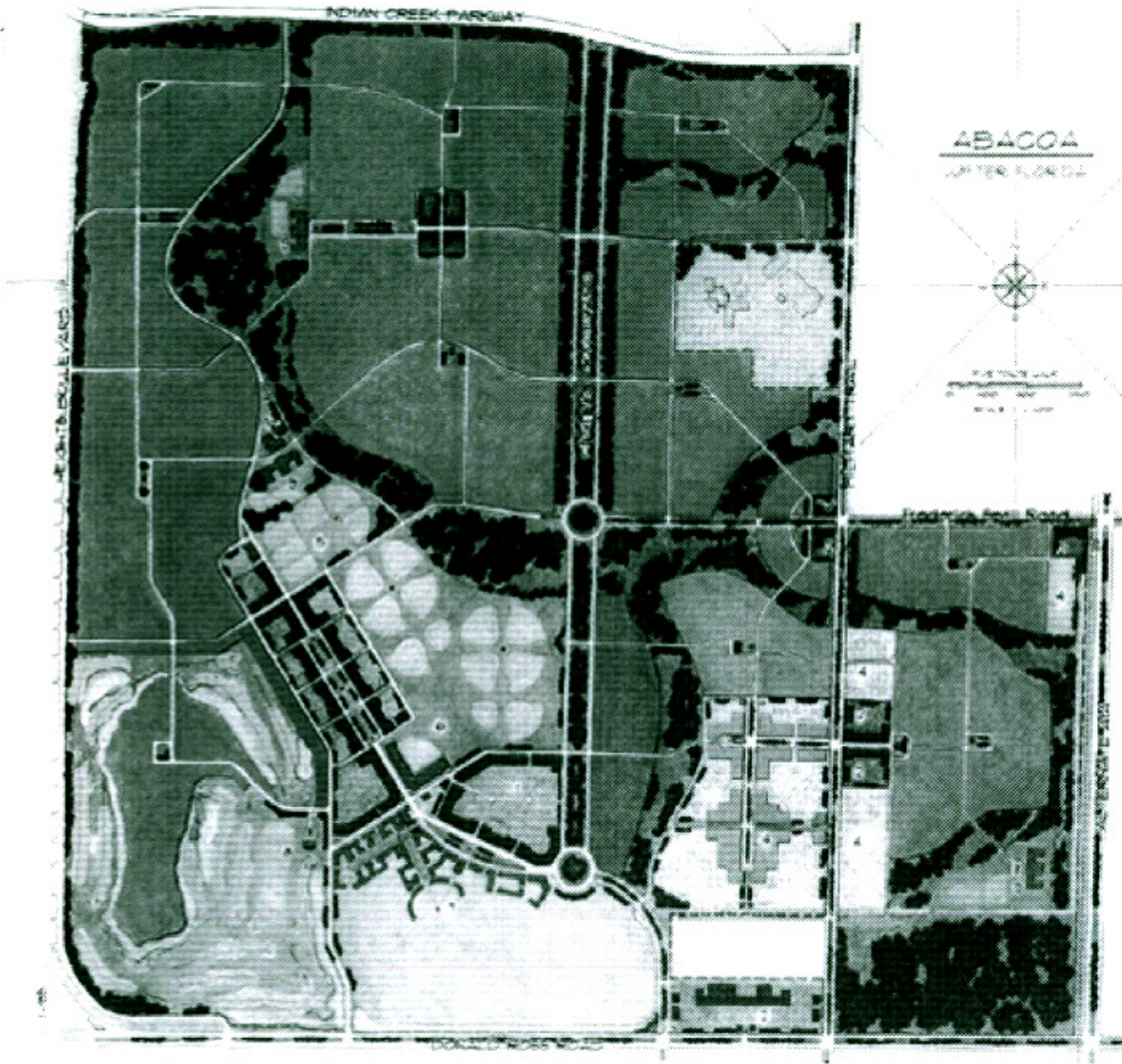
- Schools
- Tour Center Square
- Fire Station
- Future Train Station
- Roadways

Sub-total 99 acres

Total 1295 acres

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ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN



ABACOA
 JUPITER, FLORIDA



Abacoa is a 2,055-acre, master planned, mixed-use community planned around the concepts and principles of Traditional Neighborhood Development.

The master plan resembles a patchwork quilt: a collection of different patterns that come together in a cohesive and unified whole. In this richly textured community, one finds seamless transitions between residential and non-residential zones, education sites and recreation areas.

Within Abacoa's master plan are areas identified for neighborhoods, two college campuses, three public schools, a spring training stadium, a golf course, a Main Street-style Town Center, community commercial centers and a workplace campus.

Interspersed throughout the community are the greenways, tracts of multifunctional open spaces that serve both conservation purposes and as edge areas defining the neighborhoods. And linking much of Abacoa is an element that has all but disappeared from the modern American landscape: tree-lined streets, with sidewalks on both sides.

The basis of Abacoa's master plan is connectivity, the idea that every discrete entity is part of a larger whole. Houses, neighborhoods, schools, shops, offices, recreation sites, preserves—none of these exists in a vacuum, all of them are part of something larger than themselves. Collectively, they form the basis of community. By connecting one to another, they engage people more closely with their surroundings and with one another. They make Abacoa feel like home.



The Master Plan

Connecting people to the place where they live

residential

The word “neighborhood” evokes strong feelings for many people, conjuring up a sense of belonging and a feeling of ownership. For most residential developments, the master plan starts with the orientation of a house lot. By contrast, in Abacoa it starts with a neighborhood. Neighborhoods are the soul of the Abacoa community.

Each neighborhood offers an assortment of housing styles and prices. The goal is to attract a diverse group of neighbors, thus lending a vibrancy to the community and fostering a sense of inclusiveness. Such variety makes it possible for people to complete every phase of their life cycle in the same neighborhood, rather than having to move because of income or space limitations.

Each Abacoa neighborhood is organized around the neighborhood square and the neighborhood parks. The square is a large, inviting green that offers both passive and active recreation and that contains the neighborhood civic center, whose multipurposes are determined by its residents. Framing the square are the neighborhood's townhouses; on intersecting streets are the various types of single-family homes. Most homes are a five-minute walk from the square. Also within easy walking distance are the neighborhood parks. Connections to the parks, greenways or neighborhood square are never more than a block away.

*In Abacoa, the
master plan starts
with a neighborhood.*



Residential

Neighborhoods: The soul of community




What defines the Abacoa neighborhood visually is its housing architecture and streetscape. There is a picture that many people carry in their hearts of what a neighborhood street should look like. It should have a narrow roadway with slow-moving traffic, wide sidewalks on both sides, and a buffer of trees between the two. These are the streets of Abacoa's neighborhoods. The streets and sidewalks interconnect, inviting all residents to stroll or bike to any area of the neighborhood.

The architecture of Abacoa homes is one of the most compelling and evocative elements of the community. A sense of history is built into each home, as the designs draw from the past. Houses face the street, garages are consigned to the back. And serving as the welcome icon and the natural gathering place for families, friends and neighbors is that great American classic, the front porch.

There is a picture that people carry in their hearts of what a neighborhood should look like.



residential

 Abacoa's retail and commercial districts are designed to function in sync with residential areas, mirroring the way that most people conduct their lives—a balance of work, shopping, leisure and home life.

If neighborhoods are the soul of Abacoa, the Town Center is its heart. Here is the old-fashioned Main Street setting in all its pedestrian-friendly, eclectic glory. Restaurants, offices and neighborhood-scale stores mix easily with the university campuses, the stadium and even the golf course just a block away. The pulse of the Town Center is the rhythm of daily life, with parents running errands and kids meeting their friends in a secure setting nearby, and with all the resources of a community within easy reach.

The community commercial centers are situated near Abacoa's main entrances, providing plaza-style shopping with larger stores. Their architectural design and features tie into the whole. The workplace campus holds the potential for bringing an economic base right into the Abacoa community, but without compromising the integrity of Abacoa's design. Buildings will conform to the community's architectural standards and will be sited in the same way as Abacoa's other structures: on a tree-lined street, with sidewalks on both sides, and parking in the back.

*The pulse of the
Town Center
is the rhythm of
daily life.*



Non-Residential

*Town Center, Community Centers and Workplace Campus:
Creating a synergy*



So closely connected is education to the Abacoa concept of community that two contiguous college campuses are within walking distance of the stadium and Town Center, placing the benefits of a college-town environment practically at the doorsteps of Abacoa residents. The campuses are home to the Northern Palm Beach branch campus of Florida Atlantic University and the Honors College. The two provide a unique mix—the considerable programmatic and research opportunities of a state university system at the branch campus, coupled with the intimate and in-depth learning environment of the Honors College.

The first such public institution in the country to be constructed from the foundation up, the Honors College is being built around the traditions of the classic American liberal arts education. Enrollment will be limited to approximately 500 top scholars, while creative learning opportunities will know virtually no limits. Cross-disciplinary and customized courses of study, plus one-on-one student-faculty interaction, will be key elements of the Honors College experience.

While future generations of Abacoa residents may aspire to the Honors College, the current generation of young professionals can look to FAU's branch campus for both education and career enhancement. The Northern Palm Beach Campus will offer continuing education classes in career skills and personal enrichment, as well as bachelor's degrees for those completing the last two years of their baccalaureate program, and master's and certain doctoral degrees.

*Two college campuses
are within walking
distance of the
Town Center.*

Primary and secondary schools

Abacoa's master plan includes site designations for two new elementary schools and one new middle school, with bicycle and pedestrian paths connecting them to all of Abacoa's neighborhoods.

Two existing schools are located adjacent to the Abacoa property, Lighthouse Elementary and Jupiter Middle schools. The W.T. Dwyer High School and Jupiter High School are situated nearby, on Military Trail. All schools are part of the Palm Beach County School District.



Education

Higher Education:

The Honors College and the Branch Campus



The Stadium


In the early decades of 20th-century American towns, the sport of baseball was more than a sport; it was folklore and ritual. And the facility in which the game was played was the subject of civic pride. The spring training stadium in Abacoa draws from this framework, using a scale that puts the game back in its Main Street setting and the players back in touch with their fans.

Recapturing this intimacy starts with returning baseball to its original sense of place in the American landscape. The stadium anchors one corner of the Town Center, segueing effortlessly into Abacoa's Main Street and following the same pedestrian-scale sensibility: it's close to the street and easily accessible. The public plaza in front is an invitation for gathering, with no front-facing parking lot to intrude upon the ambiance. (Parking is on-street and behind the Town Center buildings.)

*The stadium puts
players in touch
with their fans.*

Abacoa's stadium is the spring training home of the Montreal Expos and the St. Louis Cardinals. For the fans, getting to know the players will become as much a rite of spring as the training itself. Fans are not so much spectators as they are participants. They can walk virtually shoulder-to-shoulder with the players from one practice field to the next, following the pedestrian trails. They can stand at close range to watch the practice, following the players' careers as they progress from minor league rookies to Major League stars. Basically, the fans will be a part of those smaller, intimate, human-scale stadiums, cheering for the home teams.


Municipal playing fields

 Little League meets Major League on Abacoa's municipal playing fields, a field-of-dreams connection rarely found in communities. The municipal fields are designed to interface with several of their Major League counterparts in the spring training stadium, welcoming aspiring young players to literally walk, pitch and run on the same turf as their heroes.

The playing fields put Little League in touch with the Majors.

Plans call for the facility to accommodate other sports in addition to baseball. Youngsters have an open invitation to play here, and a safe means of getting there: via bicycle paths and sidewalks.

The golf course

 More than simply an amenity, the golf course at Abacoa is intended to be a community resource, an asset that can be shared. The golf course will make what is essentially open space more accessible: it is planned as a public course, with no membership requirements. At the same time, the course will be designed to be of championship caliber, thus bringing challenge to the play and satisfaction to the game.

The golf course is everyone's turf.

Whether birdie or bogey, golf at Abacoa follows the true course of the game, which is to make it an integral part of its surroundings.

Recreation

Leveling the playing field of accessibility



Integrating the natural environment with human structures is a guiding principle of the Abacoa master plan. The overall plan for the greenways parallels those for the residential and non-residential zones, assigning the greenways multiple purposes and multiple levels of use. The greenways represent a number of linking elements—passive recreation, observation, upland preserve, water management, species habitat. A 60-acre portion of the greenways in Abacoa's southeast quadrant has been set aside as a preserve, providing a habitat for the gopher tortoise, a protected species, as well as for other wildlife.

But with the greenways, "nature" is not isolated in one corner of the community. Instead, it is closely woven into each neighborhood, as much a part of the neighborhood as the houses, sidewalks and square. The design rationale is to bring open space and passive recreational opportunities into all the neighborhoods, and to share an identity with each of them.


Nature is closely woven into each neighborhood.

Much as Abacoa represents a restoration of community, the greenways have resulted in the reweaving of natural ecosystems within the human ecosystem—a balance that some might describe as a sustainable environment. Rather than unraveling natural connections, Abacoa stitches them together, providing residents with opportunities and experiences unprecedented among South Florida developments.



Environment

*The Greenways:
Linking human and natural environments*

Connections are made on many levels, and communication takes many forms. For Abacoa, one such level will be electronic, with an online network that offers residents access to the world at large and to their own “world”—the community in which they live.

Every home in Abacoa will be pre-wired to connect to the Internet as well as to the “intranet”: two channels dedicated to Abacoa internal communications. Using their PCs, residents will be able to “travel” from the information superhighway to the streets of Abacoa. The network will serve as a national model for community-based electronic communication, offering ease of access as well as technical support.

Every home is pre-wired for Internet and “intranet.”


Much like the master plan of Abacoa itself, the community network will start with neighborhood—residents, homeowner associations, clubs, Little League coaches—and all the day-to-day connections and interactions in which households engage. Long-term, households will be able to make these same kinds of connections with businesses and service facilities.

Like the streets and structures of Abacoa, the community network puts electronic communication on a human and personal scale. It is another thread that weaves through Abacoa, connecting people and helping to strengthen the fabric of community.



Communications

*Connecting electronically:
The Abacoa community network*

eotraditionalism, the New Urbanism, Traditional Neighborhood Development: these are the labels that planners, architects and critics frequently use to describe what Abacoa is.

More important, though, is what Abacoa accomplishes: not simply the defining of a planning concept, or the building of homes and retail centers and recreational amenities, but the crafting of community.

Abacoa is the crafting of community.

Through community we connect and become a part of the main. Through community we grow and progress, endure and sustain. Community is the essence of Abacoa.



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