Bosque Bello Cemetery Master Plan

2015

City of Fernandina Beach
Planning Department
Parks and Recreation Department

10/1/2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction/Executive Summary

Established c.1798, Bosque Bello Cemetery is a highly significant cultural resource in Fernandina Beach. Resting place to thousands of people, Bosque Bello, "Beautiful Woods" in Spanish, is a tangible reminder of our history and a peaceful and contemplative part of our city. The City of Fernandina Beach has owned and operated the cemetery since as early as 1857, as documented on City plats.

This master plan, directed by the City Comprehensive Plan, will help ensure that proper stewardship is provided for the care and maintenance of Bosque Bello in the years to come. The plan addresses general care of the cemetery, but also takes into account continued challenges and future needs.

City staff began the master planning process in late summer 2012 by convening a group of interested citizens and stakeholders to assist in creation of the plan. The purpose of this group was fact-finding, in order to help staff find information. Prior to the first meeting, staff researched cemetery master plans from across the country to gain an understanding of what topics and issues should be addressed in the Bosque Bello plan, and created a framework for how to approach the master plan. The group accepted different assignments to help complete components of the plan.

During the group meetings, staff and the planning group discussed assignment progress, and brainstormed recommendations and implementation strategies based on the gathered information. From late 2013 to early 2014, a survey was opened to the public about their knowledge and usage of the cemetery. The feedback has been helpful in formulating specific goals and policies, as well as methods of engaging the public in the future.

In November 2014, the City held a public workshop on the cemetery master plan process to date and welcomed additional input. Between staff, the working group, survey information and the public workshop, more data has been gathered on the cemetery than has been done before. Ideas, suggestions, and realizations during the process led to many recommendations and associated action items.

The following recommendations are suggested for managing Bosque Bello going forward:

- **Improve documentation**
- **Nominate to National Register and add Block 221 to Local Historic District**
- **Continue GIS mapping**
- **Provide better information management**
- **Plan for future of Bosque Bello**
- **Evaluate funding**
- **Implement wayfinding system**
- **Protect landscaping, tree canopy and environment**
- **Create programming and outreach**

Cemetery Quick Facts

Established: c.1798

Oldest extant stone: 1813

Number of burials as of 2012: 5500+

Acreage: Approximately 29 acres

Ownership: City of Fernandina Beach

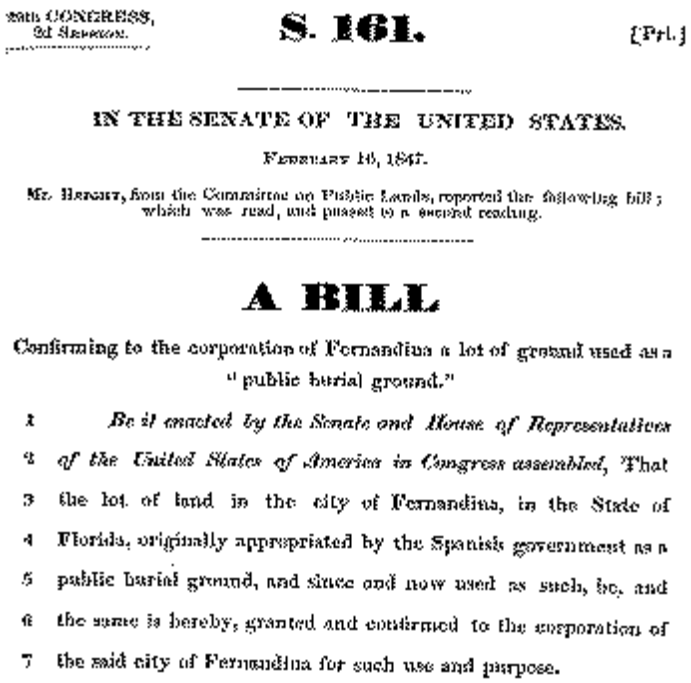
Estimated time to capacity: 10-12 years

Action items for the above recommendations are included on pages 59-60. Preservation of the cemetery is essential, particularly the old section. Many of the action items relate to long-term preservation strategies for protection of the cemetery. Other action items relate to the practical management aspects of the cemetery, such as what to do when the cemetery runs out of space, and how to address funding issues. The following document should assist the City in the management of Bosque Bello over time, and also serves as a centralized location for the majority of accessible cemetery information to date. It is recommended this plan be revisited every five years.

GENERAL CEMETERY INFORMATION

General Cemetery Information

The cemetery is approximately 29 acres in size. It is comprised of two sections, the Old or "Ancient" section, and the New section. Magnolia Street (formerly 12th Street) divides the old and new sections. At one time, colored and white sections were specified in the cemetery during the years of segregation. There are technically five separate entrances into the cemetery, including one from N. 8th Street that was closed for what is now Rock Tenn, and one that was at Towngate Road.



29th CONGRESS, 2d Session.

S. 161. [Pri.]

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 16, 1847.

Mr. HANNEGAN, from the Committee on Public Lands, reported the following bill; which was read, and passed to a second reading.

A BILL

Confirming to the corporation of Fernandina a lot of ground used as a "public burial ground."

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the lot of land in the city of Fernandina, in the State of Florida, originally appropriated by the Spanish government as a public burial ground, and since and now used as such, be, and the same is hereby, granted and confirmed to the corporation of the said city of Fernandina for such use and purpose.

United States Senate Bill 161, February 16, 1847, dedicating Bosque Bello cemetery to the city of Fernandina.

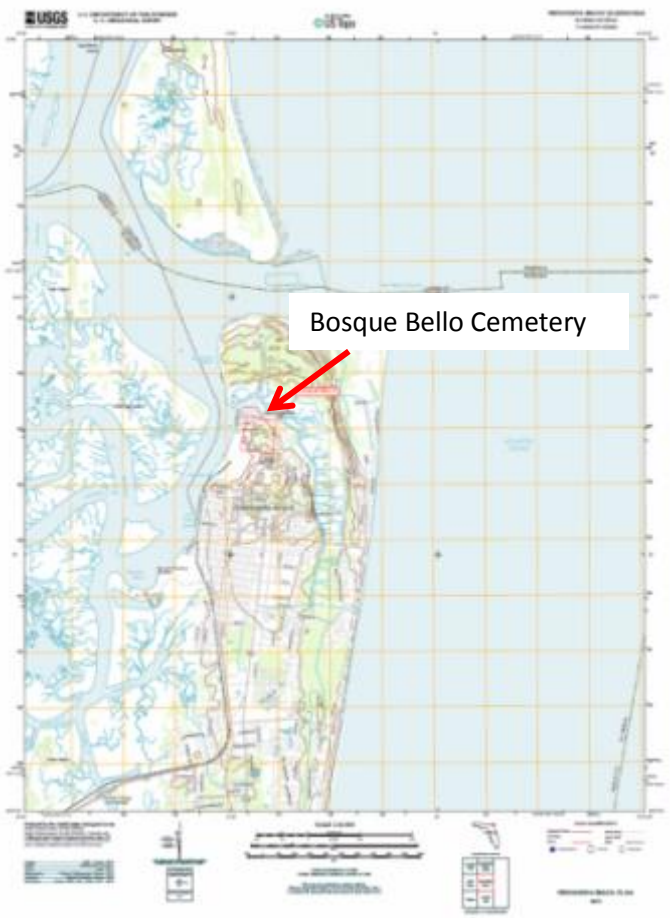
The cemetery's origins date to c.1798, when the land was originally granted as a public burial ground by a private landowner. At this time, Fernandina was under Spanish control. This is why the cemetery retains a Spanish name, Bosque Bello or "Beautiful Woods." For many years during Spanish rule, the cemetery was utilized by those who lived in Old Town.

After Florida became a part of the United States, the land ownership began to change. In 1847, the Senate of the United States officially granted to the city of Fernandina the plot of land originally appropriated by the Spanish government as a public burial ground.

Local Setting

Bosque Bello is located on the northern end of Amelia Island within the City of Fernandina Beach limits, in Nassau County, and is included in the Fernandina Beach Quadrangle of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic map series.

Bosque Bello is one of only a few public cemeteries in Nassau County. While other cemeteries and columbaria exist, they are generally affiliated either with a religious institution, or are privately maintained for family members only.



Bosque Bello is divided into eight separate parcels, reflecting the growth of the cemetery over time.

Bosque Bello Parcel Information:

	Parcel ID	Acreage	Short Legal Description
1	00-00-31-1580-0024-0000	1.86	Blocks 24 + 25 Old Town
2	00-00-31-1580-0024-0000	1.86	Blocks 24 + 25 Old Town
3	00-00-31-1800-0222-00CC	7.25	Cemetery property lying West of Block 224
4	00-00-31-1800-0221-0040	4.46	Block 221 Lots 4, 5, 6 and 7 + N ½ of Lots 3 + 8
5	00-00-31-1800-0225-0400	3.54	Block 225 Lots, 4, 5, 6 and 7
6	00-00-31-1800-0224-0000	8.17	Block 224 Lots All less part of Lot 6
7	00-00-31-1800-0223-0002	0.21	Block 223 Lots all of SW 14th Street
8	00-00-31-1800-0249-0042	2.61	Block 249 West 20' of Lots 4 +5, Block 250 Lots 1 + 2 SW of road and Lot 10 SW of road

Bosque Bello is zoned Recreation and assigned a Recreation Future Land Use. This is not uncommon among cemeteries in Florida, which are often zoned recreation, conservation, or public/institutional.

Future land uses adjacent to Bosque Bello, c.2015. Industrial, Old Town 1 + 2, Residential

Zoning adjacent to Bosque Bello, c.2015. Industrial, Old Town 1 + 2, Residential

Old Town was listed on the National Register in 1990 as a historic site, not a historic district. This is attributable to the historic importance of Old Town being found in its grid, platted by the Spanish, and not any remaining historic architecture. The National Register map provided by the Florida Division of Historical Resources does **NOT** include the old section of Bosque Bello. However, in 1989, the City created the Old Town Historic District by ordinance, and the old section of Bosque Bello is included in that ordinance (#846, 12/19/1989), listed as Block 222. It is staff's recommendation that Block 221, Lots 4, 5, 6 and 7 + N ½ of Lots 3 + 8, also be included in the Old Town Historic District. This process will have to follow the procedures outlined in Land Development Code Chapter 8 for expansion of an existing historic district. Pending boundary issues resolved with Rock Tenn, this process can move forward. Bosque Bello may be individually eligible for a National Register listing. In July of 2014, the initial materials for the cemetery's nomination were forwarded to the Florida Division of Historic Resources (DHR), who determined Bosque Bello to be potentially eligible for listing.

National Register Boundary for the Original Town of Fernandina Historic Site. Provided by Florida Division of Historical Resources.

The following photos illustrate the relationship of Bosque Bello to both the National Register-listed Old Town site, as well as the local Fernandina Beach Old Town Historic District. The other photos are historic aerial tiles of the Bosque Bello vicinity along with some more recent aerial images.

Local Old Town Historic District including a portion of Bosque Bello (Block 222).

The Florida Master Site File (FMSF) form for Bosque Bello was updated in 2014 as part of this cemetery master plan project. The Florida Master Site File is a state listing of historic sites and is not tied to National Register listing. The purpose of the FMSF is documentation. Bosque Bello was first recorded in 2012 as Form 8NA1245 – the 1,245th site recorded in Nassau County. The 2014 update added more information to the form, and corrected minor errors.

There is one archaeological site recorded in Bosque Bello, FMSF 8NA24. This information is not released by the state to the general public in order to protect any potential artifacts.

c.1943 aerial view of Old Town and Bosque Bello.

c.1960 aerial view of Old Town and Bosque Bello.

c.1969 aerial view of Old Town and Bosque Bello.

c.2009 Bosque Bello Aerial with Wetlands.

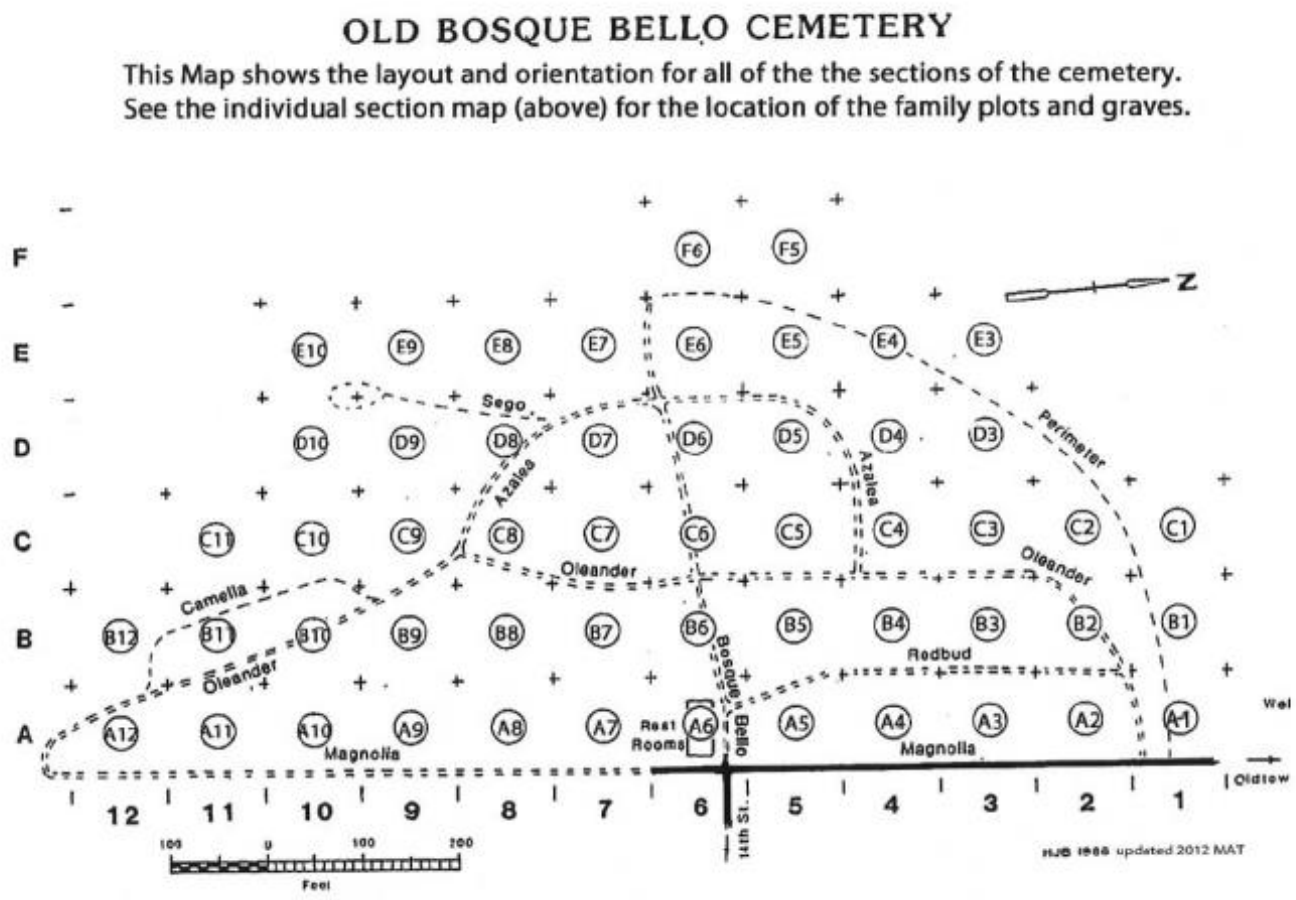
c. 2011 Bosque Bello Aerial with Wetlands.

c. 2014 Bosque Bello Aerial with Wetlands.

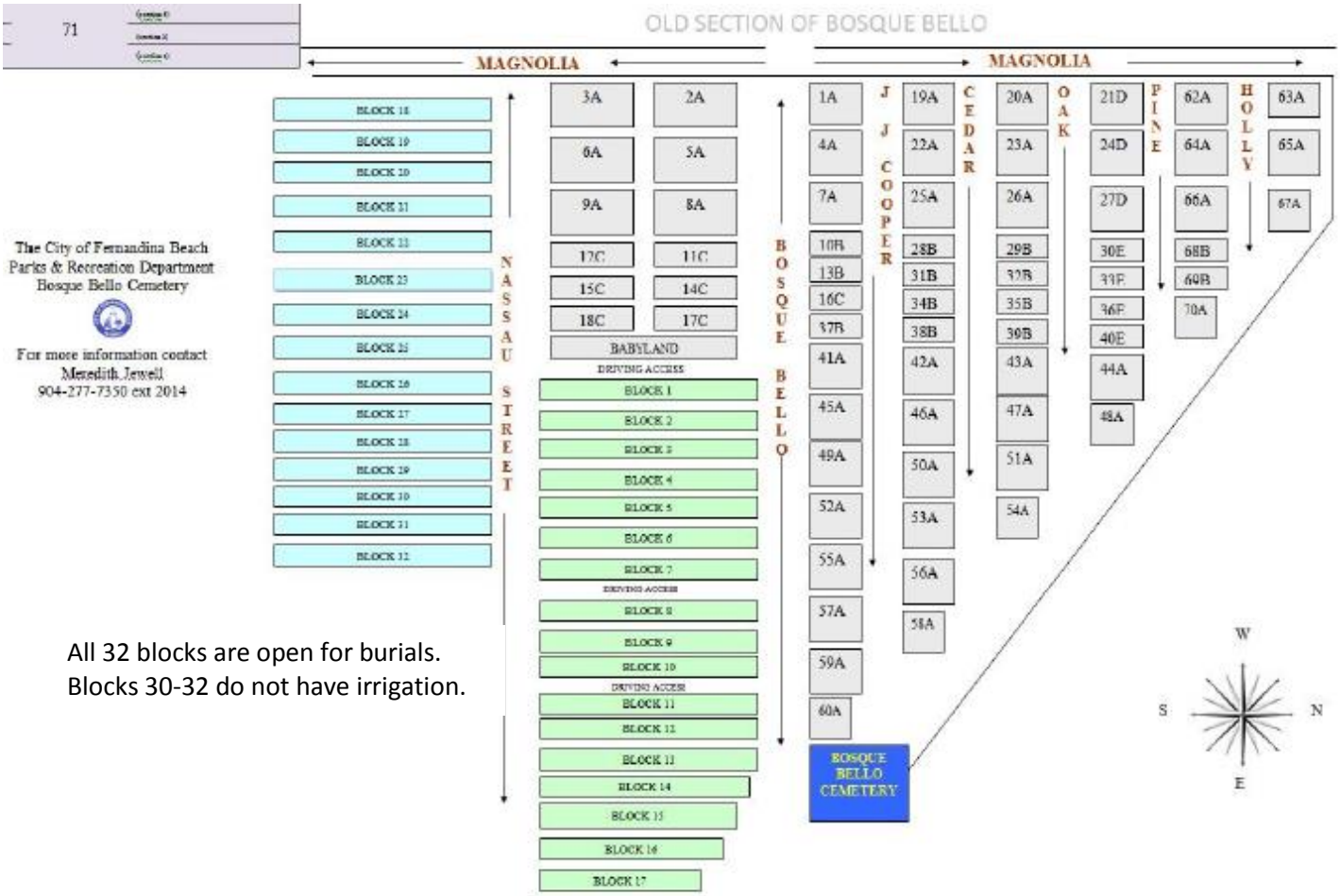
Cemetery Layout

The Bosque Bello Cemetery is set up in three ways. The oldest section of the cemetery is located in the far west portion of the City owned land. This is designated by coordinates. Part of this portion is called Division 71 and is set up in three sections. The portion obtained in the 1940s was set up as divisions. Each division is broken down into sections and lots. There are (5) types of divisions in the cemetery (A, B, C, D and E). The newest sections in the cemetery are in the blocks. Block 1 has 134 lots, Blocks 2-11 have 136 lots each, Block 12 has 134 lots, Block 13 has 113 lots, Block 14 has 95 lots, Block 15 has 75 lots, Block 16 has 55 lots, Block 17 has 30 lots and Block 18-32 has 162 lots each.

- **Old Section**
  - The oldest section of the Bosque Bello Cemetery is located in the far west portion of the City owned land.
- **New Section**
  - The New Section of the cemetery was added by the City of Fernandina Beach on land donated by J.G. Cooper and Sadie Cooper in 1945.



Map of the Old Section of Bosque Bello, created in 1988.



All 32 blocks are open for burials.
Blocks 30-32 do not have irrigation.

Map of the New Section of Bosque Bello, c. 2010.

Cemetery Survey Efforts

The original section of the cemetery was surveyed during 1987 by the General Duncan Lamont Clinch Historical Society of Amelia Island.

In 1997, the Amelia Island Genealogy Society updated the original survey to include later burials, and surveyed the "New" section of the cemetery. This information is included in the current database. Mary Nelson, Nancy Sturges, Hal Belcher, Jean Mann, Joan Johnson, Pat Graham, Bill Hayes, and Ken Sturges Jr. completed this second survey. As of 2012, a completed resurvey of the New Cemetery is underway and will include at least one photograph of each headstone.

The graves in the new section of the cemetery are divided into 71 divisions, including Baby Land, and eleven blocks. The divisions are subdivided into Subdivisions A through E, which are divided again into sections and lots. The blocks are subdivided directly into lots. The information in the database for each grave could show division, block, section and lot. Typically, if a grave has a division, it shows a section and a lot, and if it has a block designation, then only lots are shown. The grave layout shows the divisions and blocks. The subdivisions and blocks showing the lot layout are listed separately. When this survey was done in 1997, the cemetery contained 2028 graves in the new section.

Cemetery mapping in GIS would be extremely beneficial for staff and those interested in finding people buried in the cemetery. There is no electronic mapping right now. As part of this project, mapping got started and should be completed.

City Code, Ordinances and Resolutions

Chapter 30 of the City's Municipal Code contains the City regulations regarding the cemetery. Generally, this chapter covers overall cemetery management, lots, interment, and regulations.

- Article I includes definitions, ownership of cemetery, liability for damages, management, superintendent duties, executing instructions, correction of errors, protection of property, and fees.
- Article II addresses lots, including subdivisions, replatting, sale and placement of lots, bulk purchases, deferred payment, payment prior to burial, contact information for lot owners, transfer of ownership and decorations. It also establishes the perpetual care trust fund and the perpetual care service and fees.
- Article III details interment policies, such as the requirement for a burial permit, the prerequisites to burial, the depth for graves, and regulations for internment and disinterment.
- Article IV discusses visitor policies, planting of trees and shrubs and other improvements, vehicle operations and memorial work and vault installations.

City Ordinances regarding Bosque Bello

The following ordinances were located regarding Bosque Bello. Ordinances pre-1954 were not able to be located.

- Ordinance Number 255
  - Adopted on May 6, 1954, this ordinance enacted that a proper plat be recorded for the third addition of the Bosque Bello Cemetery. In order for this to be properly accomplished several streets, or portions of streets, were made to be vacated, closed and discontinued as public streets. One of the streets connected North 14th Street to 12th Street, and the other street connected North 14th Street to Nassau Street.
- Ordinance Number 389
  - Adopted on May 26, 1966, this ordinance amended sections 7-5 and 7-11 of the code of ordinance. It adjusted the price of cemetery lots and the charge for opening and closing of graves.
- Ordinance Number 406
  - Adopted on June 29, 1967, this ordinance closed, vacated and discontinued certain public right-of-ways in the form of public roads, alleys, footpaths or streets within the Bosque Bello Colored Cemetery.
- Ordinance Number 493
  - Adopted on April 25, 1974, this ordinance established a perpetual care trust fund for the Bosque Bello Cemetery, including services provided by perpetual care and methods of payments from lot owners. It also established a separate annual care service and fee schedule.
- Ordinance Number 672
  - Adopted on August 21, 1984, this ordinance amended Chapter 7 of the code of ordinances, regarding cemeteries. Several new sections were added to the chapter, including: Definitions (7-3), General (7-5), Interments and Disinterments (7-6), Visitors (7-7), Motor Vehicles (7-8), Tree, Shrubs, Plant and Plantings (7-17), Decoration of Plots (7-18), Roadways and Replatting (7-19), Fees, Gratuities and Commissions(7-20), and Memorial Work (7-21). Other existing sections of the ordinance were edited, rewritten or deleted.
- Ordinance Number 828
  - Adopted on May 16, 1989, this ordinance amended the price of the lots in the Bosque Bello Cemetery, which would incorporate the payment for perpetual care. It also amended the cost for the opening and closing of a grave and fees for perpetual care and annual care services.
- Ordinance Number 846
  - Adopted on December 19, 1989, this ordinance expanded the boundaries of the historic district. This expansion encompassed the area known as "Old Town", including the original portion of the Bosque Bello Cemetery.
- Ordinance Number 92-19
  - Adopted on October 6, 1992, this ordinance amended Chapter, 93, Section 93.31 and Section 93.38, in reference to the price of burial lots, burial services, costs, and depth of graves. It raised the pricing for

the purchase of grave spaces and the fees for the opening and closing of graves. It also required that all opening and closing of graves be under the control of and performed by the city and that no burial take place without the issuance of a burial permit. Finally, the ordinance required that the minimum depth of all graves should be 4 ½ feet and the minimum depth for vaults should be 3 ½ feet.

- Ordinance Number 97-14
  - Adopted on March 18, 1997, this ordinance amended Chapter 30 (cemeteries), Section 30-82 (burial services, costs, depth of graves). It required that a one-time fee of $50 be paid for the verification, marking and inspection of a monument, marker, memorial or coping on a grave.
- Ordinance Number 99-11
  - Adopted on May 18, 1999, this ordinance waived the fee associated with the setting of monuments for Veterans. It also allowed the fees required for the opening and closing of graves to be waived for Veterans.
- Ordinance Number 266
  - This ordinance provided for the ownership, operation and maintenance, and general administration of burials in the Bosque Bello Cemetery, as well as penalties of violation of the ordinance. It was established that the ownership of the cemetery is vested in the City of Fernandina Beach, and the city has the authority to subdivide the cemetery and sell the lots. The ordinance set the prices for each area in the cemetery and specified the process of permitting, sale and services associated with burials and outlined the city's administrative and maintenance duties. An official pauper's cemetery was established in Lot 1 of Block 221. Finally, a penalty for violations of the ordinance required a fine not exceeding $100 or imprisonment not exceeding 30 days.
- Ordinance Number 384
  - This ordinance amended Section 7-10 and 7-11 of the code of ordinances, relating to burial permits and burial services of cemeteries. A new sentence was added to section 7-10 that required that the words "deceased human being", as well as "human remains" or "remains" appear on any body in a stage of decomposition or cremated remains. The modification to 7-11 required that all opening and closing of graves must be performed by the City of Fernandina Beach and that no burial shall be performed without a burial permit. Finally, it cancelled and declared null and void any burial permits that had been issued for anything other than human remains.
- Ordinance Number 2000-54
  - Adopted on January 16, 2001, this ordinance changed the requirement for the opening and closing of a grave to only be under the supervision of the city, and that an entrance fee and burial permit/marking be acquired in order to open and close a grave. It stipulated new entrance fee of $100 for all burials and a $50 permit/marking fee for coping. There would be no charge for opening and closing a pauper's grave, as well as World War II Veterans, Korean War Veterans, Veterans of Vietnam War and the Gulf (Desert Storm) War.
- Ordinance Number 2000-36
  - Adopted on December 4, 2001, this ordinance increased the one-time fee to $95 for the verification, marking and inspection of a monument, marker, memorial or coping on a grave. It also raised the price of grave spaces in the Bosque Bello Cemetery.
- Ordinance Number 2004-21
  - Adopted on September 7, 2004, this ordinance amended Chapter 30 of the code, regarding cemeteries. By amending this chapter, new additions, edits and deletions were made to: Definitions, No Liability for Damages, Management; Appointment of Cemetery Superintendent; Duties of Cemetery Superintendent; Executing Instructions, City's Right to Correct Error, City to Protect Property, Fees, Gratuities and Commissions, Subdivision of Cemetery, City's Right to Replat; Regrade and Use Property, Charges; Bulk Purchase, Deferred Payment Plan, Correcting mailing Addresses of Lot Owners, Transfer of Ownership, Decoration and Plantings, Perpetual Care Trust Fund, Perpetual Care Service; Annual Care Service; Fees, Grave Opening Certificate Required; Cost, Prerequisites to burial; Charges; Minimum Depth of Graves, Regulations for Interments and Disinterments, Visitors; Proper Conduct, Planting of Trees; Shrubs and other Improvements, Vehicle Operation, Memorial and Vault Installations; Providing for Severability; and Providing for an Effective Date.

- Ordinance Number 2008-28
    - Adopted on January 6, 2009, this ordinance amended Chapter 30, Article II. It specified that no permanent flower containers may be placed on a grave site, unless the City approves the placement, size, material and design. Containers made of glass, porcelain, ceramic, or like materials are not permitted on cemetery property. Certain decorations are acceptable (such as wreaths, floral arrangements, metal emblems, etc.), but are susceptible to being removed by the City after five (5) days. Finally, the City reserves the right to remove all live floral arrangements, wreaths, and/or potted plants and the like, as soon as in the judgment of the City the decorations become unsightly or pose a threat to health, safety, or welfare.
- Ordinance Number 2009-22
    - Adopted December 1, 2009, this ordinance amended Chapter 30, Article II. It was established that the Perpetual Trust Fund would be known as the Bosque Bello Cemetery Trust Fund and thirty-five (35) percent of the money received from the salve of lots shall be paid to the city and deposited into the fund. It stipulated that the perpetual care service would consist of cutting, trimming, top dressing, and annual fertilizing of all grass area. Finally, upon the payment of the perpetual care fee, the cemetery superintendent or designee is authorized to deliver a certificate evidencing the purchase, on behalf of the City.

City Resolutions regarding Bosque Bello

The following resolutions regarding Bosque Bello were located. Resolutions pre-1948 were not able to be located.

- 1948 Commission Meeting Minutes
    - The City Manager presented to the Commission a proposed plat of an addition to the "new white section of Bosque Bello Cemetery". This new plat consisted of four additional divisions, which he believed would suffice until a comprehensive plat of the remaining un-platted portions of the cemetery had been prepared. The Commission, recognizing the need for a complete plat of the cemetery, decided not to approve this plat, but rather wait until a final plat had been prepared.
- July 1948-December 1949 Commission Meeting Minutes
    - The Commission discussed the foundation of the Cemetery Fund, and made several decisions regarding that fund, including that burial permits would apply to burials in the Old Bosque Bello Cemetery and that a monthly sum, paid out of the General Fund instead of the Cemetery Fund, would be paid to a caretaker for the care of new additions at Bosque Bello. It was also decided that all money derived from burial permit fees or any other revenue from the cemetery be placed in the Cemetery Fund.
- Resolution Number 202
    - Adopted on July 8, 1953, this resolution authorized the cancelation of certain tax certifications sold to the City of Fernandina Beach for unpaid city taxes for the years of 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, and 1910 for a portion of Block 250, lying southwest of the paved extension of 14th Street to Fort Clinch. At the time of the resolution, the City of Fernandina Beach proposed to purchase the lands from the owner, John H. Goodbread, and use said lands as part of the Bosque Bello Cemetery.
- Resolution Number 677
    - Adopted September 21, 1982. Due to the need for an expansion of the cemetery, a new plat of the Bosque Bello Cemetery #2 was approved as the final plat of that subdivision.
- Resolution Number 90-5
    - Adopted on February 20, 1990, this resolution established the "Babyland" plat within Block 6 of Bosque Bello, in which each plot is 2'6'' X 5'' in size.
- Resolution Number 97-160
    - Adopted on December 16, 1997, this resolution approved a request for a budget amendment transferring $10,000 from the Public Works Cemetery Fund to the Contractual Fund, for the purposes of cemetery janitorial and landscape maintenance. Martex Services entered into a contract with the city to provide landscape and sprinkler maintenance to the Bosque Bello Cemetery, beginning on January 1998 on a year to year basis, not exceeding three years.

- Resolution Number 99-62
    - Adopted on November 2, 1999, this resolution opened a portion of Someruelus Street at a distance of 489.53 feet east of New Street to the intersection of the north gate of the Bosque Bello Cemetery entrance, to allow ingress and egress to property.
- Resolution Number 2000-05
    - Adopted on January 18, 2000, this resolution amended the previous Resolution 99-62, which authorized the opening of a portion of Someruelus Street. In this new resolution, the developer was required to pay the sum of $4,000.00, as compensation for the cost of re-locating the entrance gates and landscaping to the Bosque Bello Cemetery, caused by the opening of the street.
- Resolution Number 2004-148
    - Adopted on September 21, 2004, this resolution amended the fees and charges for several park, recreational, and service-providing facilities in the city, including the Bosque Bello Cemetery.
- Resolution Number 2005-155
    - Adopted on September 21, 2004, this resolution amended the fees and charges for several park, recreational, and service-providing facilities in the city, including the Bosque Bello Cemetery.
- Resolution Number 2006-119
    - Adopted on June 6, 2006, this resolution authorized the City Attorney to appear on behalf of and defend the City of Fernandina Beach (doing business as the Bosque Bello Cemetery) in the matter of Edward Wayne Shepherd v. City of Fernandina Beach, regarding a complaint filed for unlawful disinterment of his deceased wife in 1996.
- Resolution Number 2007-136
    - Adopted on September 4, 2007, this resolution approved the final plat for the Bosque Bello Cemetery, titled Section Three.

City Comprehensive Plan Policies

The City Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2012 addresses Bosque Bello in two elements, the Recreation and Open Space Element, and the Historic Preservation Element. Both sections direct the creation of a Bosque Bello master plan to care for the long-term viability and care of the cemetery, and both sections direct the need for proper preservation and care of the historic portion of Bosque Bello. Recreation and Open Space Element policies further address the need to incorporate cemetery planning into disaster and post-disaster planning efforts, seek cemetery maintenance training for staff, and use proper maintenance techniques. The policies also direct monitoring of adjacent wetlands for erosion potential and continued use of the Cemetery Fund for ongoing care of the cemetery. A policy in this Element also encourages the City to establish partnerships with volunteer organizations to help care for and document the cemetery.

The Historic Preservation Element policies regarding Bosque Bello focus on the historic nature of the cemetery. Documentation efforts are required, as are obligations by the City to seek the assistance of cemetery preservation professionals and provide adequate staffing to properly maintain the cemetery. As with the Recreation and Open Space Element policies, staff education and training regarding cemetery preservation strategies and techniques are addressed. Another policy directs evaluation of Bosque Bello for possible inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Lastly, the Historic Preservation Element states that City departments should coordinate to ensure responsibilities for the cemetery are shared.

State Statutes

Chapter 497 of Florida Statutes relating to Funeral, Cemetery and Consumer Services is the primary legislation addressing cemeteries in Florida. However, under §497.260(1)(b), county and municipal cemeteries are exempted from provisions of Chapter 497. There are a few sections of Chapter 497 that exempted cemeteries must still adhere to:

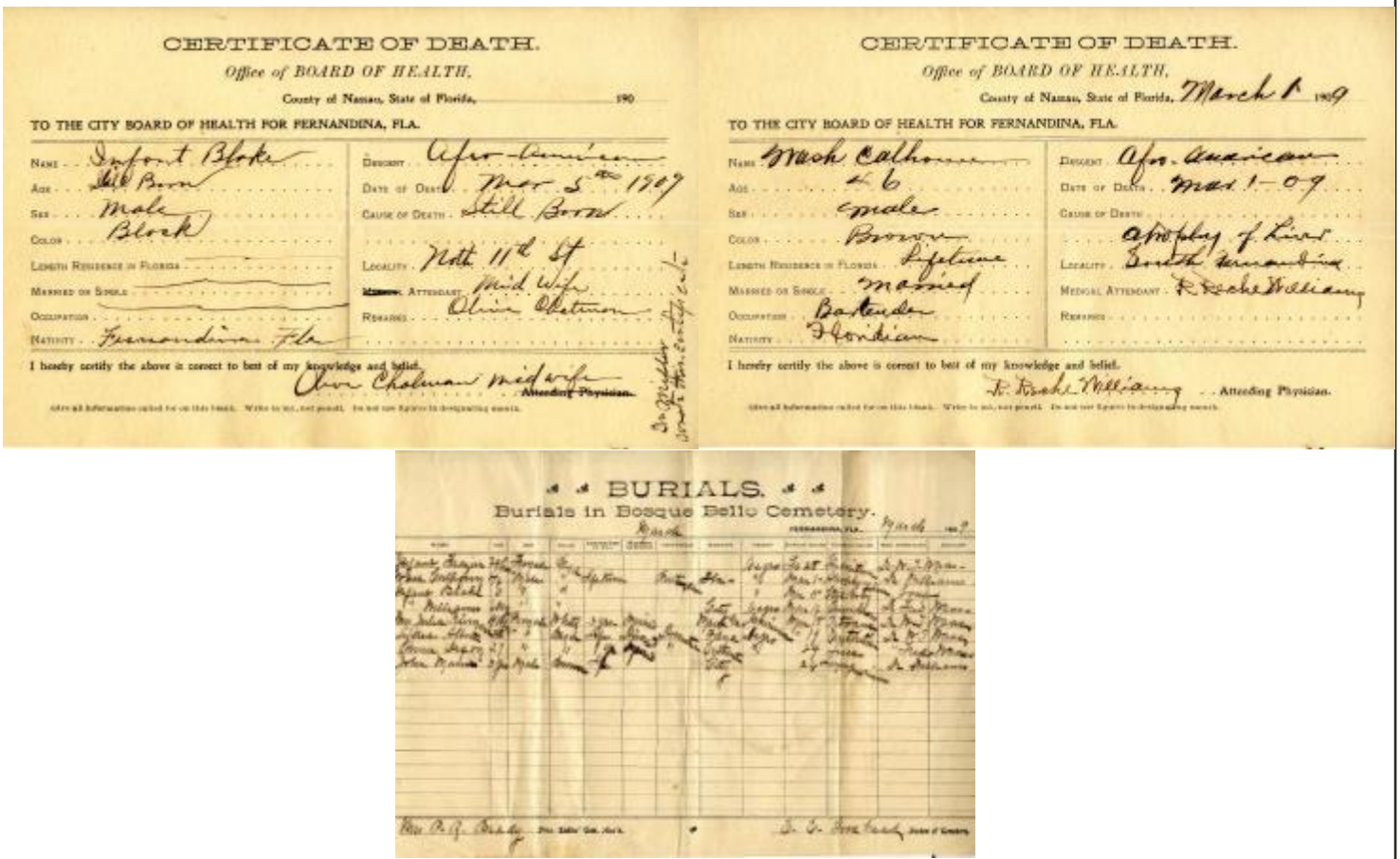
- §497.260(3) – Sets forth an investigation and mediation procedure for exempted cemeteries over five acres which must be followed in the event of a consumer complaint.

- §497.260(6)(a) – Prohibits denial of burial space to any person based on race, creed, marital status, sex, national origin or color and sets a criminal offense for doing so. Religious entities requiring isolation may have a separately designated space.
- §497.287 – Requires reporting to the state for exempted cemeteries over five acres on a schedule established by the state.

Florida Statute §382.007 requires burial transit permits for all final dispositions. Florida Statute §704.08 addresses the right of ingress or egress for visiting or maintenance relating to cemeteries, but relates more to privately owned cemeteries, or cemeteries located on private property. Criminal penalties for injuring or removing a tomb or monument or disturbing the contents of a grave or tomb are established in Florida Statute §872.02. Chapter 267 of Florida Statutes addresses historical resources, as related to public and state lands.

Miscellaneous City Documents

During the course of working on the master plan and evaluating any available City records, historic cemetery records were discovered in the vault at City Hall. The records are comprised of more than 1200 certificates of death and about 200 monthly reports from the superintendent of the cemetery. Dates for the records are from 1896 to 1916. Subsequent records from 1905 were located. The City Clerk loaned the records to the Amelia Island Museum of History to set about archiving and transcribing data. Thanks to Teen Peterson at the Museum, the records were transferred to the Florida State Archives for assistance in this effort. The Florida State Archives scanned all the records and indexed them by name, date, and cause of death. The images are available on the Florida Memory Project website, and the Museum received copies of the data, which will also be backed up on an external hard drive and in the cloud.


CERTIFICATE OF DEATH.

Office of BOARD OF HEALTH.

County of Nassau, State of Florida, 190

TO THE CITY BOARD OF HEALTH FOR FERNANDINA, FLA.

Name Infant Blake
Age Still Born
Sex Male
Color Black
Length Residence in Florida
Married or Single
Occupation
Nativity Fernandina Fla

Descent Afro-American
Date of Death Mar 5th 1907
Cause of Death Still Born
Locality North 11th St
Attendant Mid Wife
Remarks Olivia Chatman

I hereby certify the above is correct to best of my knowledge and belief.
Olivia Chatman mid wife
Attending Physician.

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH.

Office of BOARD OF HEALTH.

County of Nassau, State of Florida, March 1 1909

TO THE CITY BOARD OF HEALTH FOR FERNANDINA, FLA.

Name Mack Calhoun
Age 46
Sex male
Color Brown
Length Residence in Florida Lifetime
Married or Single married
Occupation Bartender
Nativity Floridian

Descent Afro. American
Date of Death Mar 1-09
Cause of Death
Apoplexy of Liver
Locality South Fernandina
Medical Attendant R Roche Williams
Remarks

I hereby certify the above is correct to best of my knowledge and belief.
R. Roche Williams
Attending Physician.

BURIALS.

Burials in Bosque Bello Cemetery.

Examples of documents obtained from the City vault: Certificates of Death and Burial Registers, c.1896-1916.

A memo from the City Manager to the City Commission dated November 21, 1949 was located in a City budget book for the years 1949-1954. The City Manager at that time was Edmund W. Meisenhelder III. This memo addresses the administration of city cemeteries and makes recommendations for changes to the ordinance and management of Bosque Bello into the future. The ordinance being evaluated was adopted by the City Commission on April 22, 1942.

Miscellaneous Documents

Oxley Heard Funeral Home at 1305 Atlantic Avenue has a wealth of records related to their business. Many of these documents reference Bosque Bello in relationship to the funeral home's burial records. Jean Mann and Ken Sturges catalogued all records at Oxley Heard. Jack Heard has many years of information to share and would be a good candidate for an oral history. For example, he shared the store of Estelle Rogers, who was the proprietor of a funeral home in Fernandina Beach at the turn of the 20th century. She was the first female funeral director in Florida. Mr. Heard has historic photographs of early 20th century state funeral director conventions.

Huff and Battise Funeral Home at 410 Beech Street may also have records related to Bosque Bello, but were not able to be reached in order to conduct any research. Local churches were also not contacted during this project.

Management and Operations

Historically, Bosque Bello has been managed by several departments and individuals within the City. Utilizing the records dating back to 1896, and other information available, a list of caretakers from 1896 to present has been created and is included in the appendices. At the turn of the 20th century, a superintendent oversaw the cemetery, in conjunction with the Ladies Cemetery Association, which appears to have existed until at least 1959. The term superintendent was replaced with sexton in the early 20th century. Records beginning in the mid-1950's indicate that the City Treasurer and Collector became the steward for overall management of the cemetery, primarily for purposes of selling lots. The responsibility for cemetery management was moved to Public Works in the 1980's and 1990's. A sexton was named until around 2002, along with City-employed grave diggers, and after the Parks Department took over in 2003, the term sexton was replaced with Cemetery Supervisor/Administrative Coordinator.

Today, the cemetery is managed by the City Parks and Recreation Department. There is one full-time maintenance person in the cemetery who handles mowing, weed eating, removal of debris and any other maintenance issues that may arise. The Parks and Recreation Department also handles all selling of lots and tracking of data collection and recordation in the IMS program. The IMS software program is scheduled to be replaced in the next fiscal year and a new software program will be implemented going forward.

When a person wants to purchase a lot or lots, they meet with a Parks Department staff member to review the grounds and available lots on a map. Surveying within the cemetery for genealogical purposes has been possible, due to a joint effort with the Amelia Island Genealogical Society. Although the cemetery is mapped, staff utilizes a metal rod to insert into the soil to ensure that the plot and area are vacant (to the best of staff's knowledge). Because the cemetery is so old, and old records are unavailable, it is not certain where older burials may or may not exist. Ground penetration is the best methodology for determining this at this time.

Copies of burial permits are retained at the Parks Department and date from 1955 to the present. There is also the "Book of the Dead," which is kept at the Parks Department and is a hard copy ledger of burials and burial locations in Bosque Bello, dating to approximately the last fifty years. Boxes of historic records are under the purview of the City Clerk; these include the 1896 to 1916 records and newer records from the 1980's. Besides those sets of documents, there is not anything else to be located within City records or archives for the cemetery.

The City of Fernandina Beach Police Department routinely monitors the cemetery during the hours after dawn and has been called on in the past to monitor the cemetery after dark. Concerns of various criminal activities and vandalism have been the primary causes for police department presence. At one time, the cemetery had a chain link fence along the N. 14th Street perimeter. Repeated damage to the fence ultimately led to its removal.

In a previous version of the municipal code, the Parks and Recreation Department exercised the right to enter upon any plot and correct hazardous conditions and to remove any deteriorating structure or undesirable vegetation that impaired the overall beauty and dignity of the cemetery. It is the position of the City at this time, however, that any work to a plot stone or fence requires permission of the owners, which is not feasible in the Ancient section for most sites. (See section on Headstone and Enclosure Maintenance and Repair.) In the past, the City posted notices on areas upon which items needed to be removed if they were not done so in the amount of time approved by the City (5 days during holidays and 30 days after funerals). Potted plants and flower arrangements had to be placed on permanent structures and not on the grass. Glass, ceramic, metal or wire plant containers or accessories were not permitted at any time in the cemetery. Landscaping, tree removal and maintenance continues to be the responsibility of the City.

Summary of Recent Management History:

- Prior to 2003:
  - Part time city employees, Lavonne Foster and Jennifer Causier, would meet people at the cemetery to conduct sales of burial plots
  - Ronnie Foster and Brad Lee dug the graves from the 1980s-2003
  - A Jacksonville company did the actual maintenance and lawn care
- After May 2003
  - City Parks Department took over maintenance and sales
  - Vault companies dig the graves
  - City is responsible for maintenance and lawn care

Trends and Statistics

- Currently, the cemetery lots are **$1,500.00** for non-city residents and **$1,200.00** for city residents. There is a **$40.00** burial permit fee associated with any burials within Bosque Bello.
- The average # of sales per year is **85 lots.**
- There are no remaining lots for sale in the Divisions. Blocks 1-17 have **74 lots** available for sale. Blocks 18-32 have **1,024 lots** available for sale. There are a total of **7,727 lots** in these areas. Lots in the old section are not for sale.
- **Based on the rate of sales and the available plots available, it is possible that Bosque Bello will be full within the next 10 to 15 years**. Possible options for including additional space at the cemetery include alternative burial options such as columbaria, scatter garden(s), mausoleums, or smaller plots that allow for placement or burial of memorial urns.

Cemetery Funding

The only three sources of revenue used for funding the cemetery are plot sales, burial permits and monument permits. 65% of plot sales goes toward the cemetery fund, while the remaining 35% goes toward the perpetual fund. Both burial and monument permits are currently $40 and go entirely toward the cemetery fund. Plot sales, burial permits and monument permits do not cover cemetery expenditures. The City should explore whether existing fees are sufficient for purposes of cemetery maintenance. Any new burial options would of course require their own fee schedule, and plan for annual and perpetual maintenance.

The Perpetual Care Fund cannot be touched until all plots in Bosque Bello are sold. Once this fund runs out, the General Fund will be used for cemetery maintenance. Approximately $70,000 is spent on maintenance in Bosque Bello yearly. At this amount, when it is finally implemented, the Perpetual Care Fund will be depleted in approximately 12 years.

The City has deeds for the New Section of the cemetery, but there are no existing deeds for the Old Section.

Four other municipal cemeteries in Florida were compared for price structure:

Delray Beach, FL Memorial Gardens	Dunedin, FL Dunedin Cemetery	Gainesville, FL Evergreen Cemetery	Sebastian, FL Sebastian Cemetery
$575 residents (R) $935 non-residents (NR) (burials only)	Full burial plot - $3,879.52 In-ground cremains - $3,879.52 Infant plots - $1,055.32 Cremain niche (2/spot) - $2,094.31 $50 burial fee	Full burial plot - $1,467.75 Cremains - $406.25 Annual care and perpetual care fees Different rates for interment and disinterment	Full burial plot - $1,000 (R), $2,000 (NR) Cremain lots (4'x4') - $500 (R), $1,000 (NR) Single niche - $1,200 (R), $2,400 (NR) Double niche - $2,000 (R), $4,000 (NR)

Headstone and Enclosure Maintenance and Repair

Many headstones, monuments and enclosures have fallen into a state of disrepair in the Bosque Bello Cemetery. Perhaps the most prevalent issue is overgrown vegetation and roots, as well as falling tree limbs, which have moved and cracked markers, significantly damaging several burial plots. Vandalism has also been a major issue; two recent acts included the removal of the heads of angel sculptures in the Old Section. A general lack of maintenance has led to tilted, broken, and damaged headstones, many of which are covered in soil and vegetation. To improve upon these current conditions, steps should be taken to prevent future injury; unnecessary vegetation and diseased trees should be removed and security and maintenance should be increased to prevent vandalism.

It is unclear what the City's role is regarding headstone and enclosure maintenance and repair. As plots are sold property, they are deemed to be the responsibility of the grave owner or family. However, if the headstones or monuments fall apart leaving pieces on the ground, the City does have a responsibility to maintain the ground to be free of hazards; this may include putting stakes and tape around the gravesite to warn visitors of the danger. Per the City Attorney, the City cannot attempt to replace or restore a dilapidated headstone or monument without permission from a grave owner. If there is no owner, or one cannot be found, the City Attorney states that a private group may be able to restore a stone, marker or fence after signing a release from the City. Staff has reached out to various cemeteries and cemetery preservation groups, and this is not a settled question. The response varies by cemetery. Some cemeteries, like those in Savannah, have a 50 or 70 year rule. This may be worth implementing in the City of Fernandina Beach Code. From the Savannah Municipal Code:

> Sec. 4-3020. - Work performed on burial lots.
>
> The cemeteries director shall have authority to perform work on any burial lot without first obtaining permission of the lot owner when the lot has not been used for the interment of human remains for a period of at least 70 years and a diligent search has failed to produce the present owner of the lot.

In November 2012, City staff met with Patricia Davenport, a historic preservation and conservation professional. She offered the following comments regarding Bosque Bello preservation:

A. Delineate the marsh line to protect sites – consider grading or terracing sloped edges and problem drainage areas throughout the cemetery to stabilize the ground surrounding gravesites.
B. Stabilize structures first for safety – consider "topple test" to determine stability *(this is a debatable practice)*
C. Complete an assessment of the cemetery or even just a section of the cemetery and prioritize
Prioritize rankings based on the following:
1. Safety – Can this structure hurt someone? Is the site visited frequently?
2. Stability – Is the structure at risk of being lost or damaged without immediate attention?
3. Aesthetics
D. Security- consider use of "hunter cams" that use SD cards to capture photo images.

E. Build on existing resources within the community to obtain support for preserving the cemetery such as local churches, veteran's, genealogical society, boy scouts/ girl scouts. Identify, where possible the caretakers for sites and call on them to preserve their area as a cultural resource. Give groups a task list of very specific projects that they can complete.
F. Training Opportunities: Contact Jason Church with the National Park Service with the National Center for Preservation, Technology and Training- Cemetery Conservation (City and/or community partner organization pays for travel costs). NCPTT also has resources available on their website. Use LinkedIn groups with knowledge such as "Graves and Monument Preservation."

Notes on fixing structures:
Leaning stones- lift from ground; stabilize the ground under the stone to avoid the stones from breaking or loss then, replace stone
Broken stones- Professional Required! Route out to provide smooth surface, measure for rods, drill, and insert rods (if needed), epoxy and let set then, use jahn mortar to fill gaps and avoid further weathering or deterioration. http://www.cathedralstone.com/products/mortars.aspx
Masonry walls- Professional Required! Consider use of flexible bars in sections of walls to stabilize and keep them from deteriorating in the future, re-lay brick, re-point brick and add coating (if it was there before)
Tabby walls- Professional Required! "Lost building form" consider contacting people in Jekyll Island to see who they use for tabby work, re-create sections where walls were lost and salvage as much original material remaining onsite as possible. For those sections still in place, score and use bonder. For sections that are leaning, secure them (do not try to bring it back to original position) using horizontal bracing with buttress (this would be an ideal volunteer project).
Unknown gravesite locations with headstone (scattered in cemetery) – the City may consider a memorial space or structure and incorporate these into the structure to recognize that these people are buried somewhere in the cemetery but, we do not know exactly where they are. (Example: Colonial Park in Savannah, GA) http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=pis&PIcrid=33357&PIpi=2846094&PIMode=cemetery

Cleaning Stones and Markers

The City has been fortunate to have the Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN) conduct their Cemetery Resource Protection Training (CRPT) at Bosque Bello. Part of the training is a hands on workshop to teach the proper method for cleaning stones, as follows:

- Utilize a soft brush to wipe the stone in order to loosen dirt and debris.
- Use a spray bottle with water to clean the stone. Often times this may help and there is no need to go further.
- For tougher cases, use D2 Solution (www.d2bio.com) in a spray bottle, and a soft brush, and let the spray sit. It is okay to let the solution sit for some time (2-3 weeks), as it continues to work over time.
- If you do not have time to let the solution sit, wash it off with a spray bottle with water after applying and brushing the solution.

Rubbing Stones

It is NOT recommended that rubbings be done on old headstones and markers. Rubbing can cause deterioration and harm a stone over time. Savannah municipal code disallows headstone rubbing in its historic cemeteries. This is something the City may wish to consider including in the municipal code.

Infrastructure

Bosque Bello is an open cemetery without gates or security around the perimeter; it can be accessed by vehicle, bicycle or foot. Two paved roads, Bosque Bello and Magnolia, which connect the interior of the New Section to North 14th Street, act as the main access points to the cemetery. The seven main roads in the New Section, Nassau, Bosque Bello, J.J. Cooper, Cedar, Oak, Pine and Holly, all run parallel to each other and feed into Magnolia at the western end. Magnolia acts as the division between the New and Old Sections. The old section is accessed via wheel-rutted, one-lane streets. Oleander runs in an arc from Magnolia to Bosque Bello. Redbud runs north-south between Oleander and Bosque

Bello, while Azalea runs in an arc from Oleander to Bosque Bello. These streets are narrow and vehicular traffic has damaged gravesites at the intersection of Oleander and Azalea.

Currently, divisions and blocks 1-25 are fully irrigated. The City has a plan to install irrigation to blocks 26-32 in the near future. As the City works off of two wells, it must comply with the usage requirements set by the St. Johns River Water Management District.

In the past, there was a restroom building at the corner of Bosque Bello and Magnolia (visible on the 1988 map). It was removed in 1999 because it was not ADA compliant and was in need of significant renovation. Today, there are only two structures within the Bosque Bello Cemetery: the pump house for the sprinkler system and a maintenance building for the Parks and Recreation Department's operations (located on Blocks 25/25).

Signage in the cemetery is minimal. There is currently some signage to identify the existing roads and streets, as well as to state the various regulations within the cemetery. In the future, it is recommended there should also be signs implemented for the identification, orientation and interpretation of the cemetery's history and significance.

Environmental Issues

Wildlife

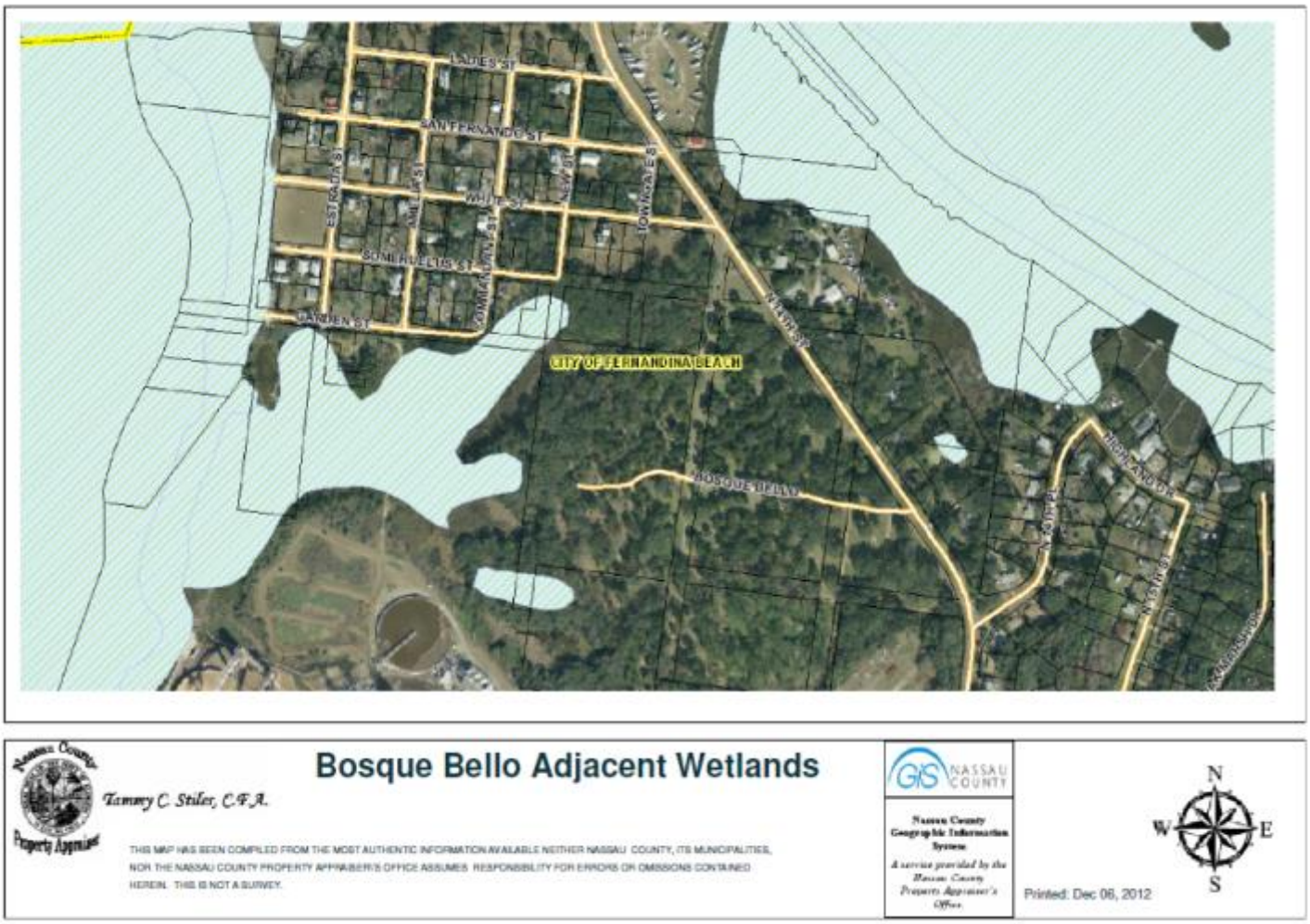
Data provided by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) indicate there are nineteen animals considered rare by the FNAI that are documented to occur in Nassau County. These include reptiles and amphibians: gopher tortoise, eastern indigo snake, sea turtles (loggerhead, leatherback, green and Kemp's Ridley), American alligator, many-lined salamander, and timber rattlesnake. Birds include: woodstork, Bachman's sparrow, black-crowned night-heron, least tern, Wilson's plover, American oystercatcher, red-cockaded woodpecker, little blue heron, snowy egret, and great egret. Birds not included in the FNAI, but present are Southern bald eagle, osprey, and Southeast American kestrel. Generally, there are 119 documented bird species during breeding season (March-September) in the St. Mary's River Basin. Mammals include the North Atlantic Right Whale, Sherman's fox squirrel, Southeast weasel, West Indian manatee, and Florida black bear. Common animals include the white-tailed deer, beaver, gray fox, and armadillo.

Of course, many of the above animals are not present in Bosque Bello. Bird species, squirrels, and armadillos are probably the most common animal visitors to the cemetery. There is a trend in cemetery management to recognize and embrace wildlife in cemeteries. There are opportunities for birds and other pollinators like bees to thrive in cemeteries and help the plant life. As an example, the Dorset Wildlife Trust in the UK has a "Living Churchyards" program that encourages planting of natural plants to attract pollinators, and the use of bird houses and bat boxes to support wildlife. Cemeteries can provide a relatively natural area that can also serve as wildlife corridors. Bird watchers and outdoor photographers can visit cemeteries to glimpse area wildlife.

Wetlands

The City obtains its wetlands mapping overlay through the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI). NWI data was published in 2002. It is maintained by the SJRWMD and serves as the City's "best available data" for purposes of identifying wetland areas. Wetlands and vegetation data mapping projects for this region started in 1984 and were completed for roughly 70% of the SJRWMD's area. The remaining areas were mapped and published in 2002. The NWI dataset is for general reference only and not for legal purposes. Accurate information related to on-site wetlands can only be obtained through wetland delineation as provided by a property owner on a survey.

Wetlands are adjacent to Bosque Bello to the north. Historic aerial photos do not clearly indicate wetland encroachment further into the cemetery, though there are verbal accounts by local citizens that the cemetery used to have gravesites in what is now wetland. Increased encroachments of wetlands and water may increase as a result of sea level rise (see discussion below).



Landscape and Horticulture

As Bosque Bello means “Beautiful Woods”, the trees are a significant cultural and historic component for the cemetery. Planted landscapes have a dynamic cycle: growth, decline, and eventual need to be removed and/or replaced. It is essential that the landscape be maintained in order to preserve the historic character of the cemetery.

There are over 1,300 trees in the cemetery totaling nearly 30,000 tree inches. One of the trees, a sago palm, was listed in 1985 as a Florida Champion Tree. According to the city’s tree inventory, there are approximately 25 different tree species present in Bosque Bello. Prominent species include live oak, laurel oak, red cedar and hickory. While a majority of the 1,094 surveyed trees were found to be either “good, fair, new or specimen”, 221 were deemed “dead, poor or removed”. The City is responsible for maintaining and removing trees.

Live Oak represents 28% of all of the species in the inventory. But, considering their size they represent a much greater percentage of the canopy cover. If a pest or disease were introduced that killed off only live oaks there is a potential loss of 40%-50% of the total canopy. There is also the consideration of diversification by age. In order to maintain canopy coverage it is important to have a variety of ages so that as old trees die there are mature and young trees to take their place. Determining where to plant new trees will be a challenge, as the older trees are often conflicting with stones and markers. It would not be recommended to simply replace an existing tree in the same location if this is the case.

The rule of thumb for diversity is 10/20/30. No more than 10% of the forest should be composed of one species, no more than 20% of one genus and no more than 30% of one family. Fernandina Beach far exceeds these recommendations. Future plantings should be selected to increase diversity. With a diverse forest the functions of the forest remain intact even if an entire species is wiped out. (Street Tree Management Plan 10/15/2009)

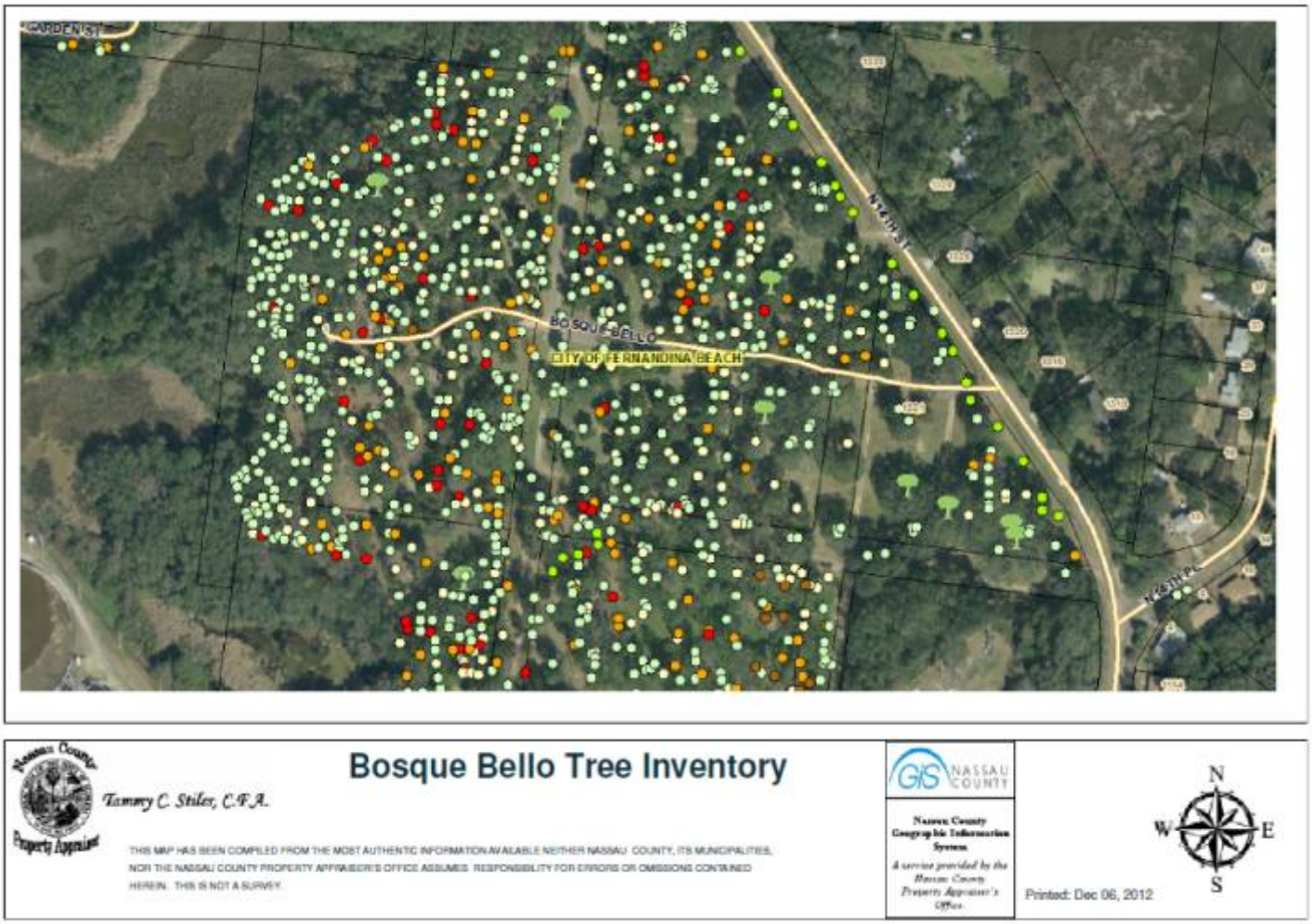
A third consideration is the use of native plants. There is a growing movement to use native plants in design. Native plants help to maintain the integrity of our ecosystems and are adapted to the environment. They can be critical habitat for fauna as many creatures have developed relationships with specific species. Natives should require no irrigation beyond establishment.

Per the City's Street Tree Management Plan, the City must take into account environmental, cultural and economic considerations when replanting and maintaining trees. In Bosque Bello, it is essential being mindful of what grows, how their root systems expand, and the impact this may have on stones and walls. Culturally, Bosque Bello or "Beautiful Woods" emphasizes the importance of trees to this particular space.

City staff met with Rebecca Jordi of the Nassau County IFAS office in March 2013 regarding landscaping in Bosque Bello. Her recommendations include the following:

- Failing trees in Bosque Bello should be thinned and removed as soon as possible. This will stabilize erosion, as it will not tolerate standing water or foot traffic.
- Replacement trees should be native and slow-growing.
- New trees should not be planted in the same spot as the old ones, but placed in nearby more open areas and be no larger than 4'' in diameter breast height.
- Planting a variety of species, as well as species with good groundcover, such as Asiatic jasmine, is encouraged.
- In the Old Section, non-hardwood trees, such as crepe myrtle or bottlebrush, should be utilized.
- Other good planting options include:
    - Live oak
    - Magnolia
    - Holly
    - Crepe myrtle Natchez (need lots of sun)
    - Bottlebrush tree
    - Bald cypress
    - Camellia – in old section – like sun/shade
    - Blue eyed grass and mimosa vine – native, can provide some stability for eroding sites (but Asiatic jasmine better)
- Avoid:
    - Leland cypress
    - Laurel oak
    - Bradford pear
    - Pencil holly
    - Anything invasive – asparagus fern, etc.

Ideally, the City should look to have a landscape plan for the cemetery created to expand on the Street Tree Management Plan evaluation and in particular, evaluate replanting and future maintenance options.



The symbology above is taken from the Street Tree Management Plan and assigns colors to trees based on priority:

- Red – hazard trees
- Bright green – new trees
- Brown – removed
- Tree symbol – specimen trees

Programming, Use and Recreation

Bosque Bello provides a unique setting for potential programming and events. It is important that the traditional cemetery functions continue, and the recreation, interpretive, horticultural, and other uses be respectful and compatible with the traditional uses. At Memorial Day, American flags are placed on the graves of veterans by a local veterans group. Walkin' Nassau is a fitness and recreational group that uses the cemetery as a venue once a year in conjunction with guides who share stories of some of the people buried in Bosque Bello. In the past, Amelia Island Genealogical Society, in conjunction with the Amelia Island Museum of History, has staged historic tours where members have dressed in costume and portrayed famous residents buried in Bosque Bello. Photo Walk Amelia is another community group that recently utilized the cemetery for a group photography event in early 2014.

Passive recreational uses such as educational tours, heritage or nature trails, bird watching, photography, or meditation would be appropriate for the cemetery. 74% of survey respondents indicated they would support such passive activities. Such activities would maximize the use of the cemetery without causing damage to the landscape or architecture. Regularly scheduled events, such as historic or architectural tours, as well as annual events, such as a "Festival of Lights" during Christmas time or an "All Souls Day" near Halloween, would promote community participation in the education and preservation of the cemetery. These aspects will not only increase awareness about the cemetery, but also provide

a better understanding and appreciation for it. By providing welcoming information, wayfinding and educational signage, the city can effectively help visitors navigate the site and interpret its historical significance.

Photo Walk Amelia Gathering, April 2014.

Walkin' Nassau Cemetery Tour, October 2014.

Evergreen Cemetery in Gainesville has capitalized on the history there and partnered with tourism groups to highlight the significance and unique nature of that cultural resource. Mr. Gary Smith, Cemetery Coordinator for Evergreen Cemetery, offered the following information:

> "We partnered with a local tourism group, "Visit Gainesville". We were able to receive some funding from a Tourism Product Development (TPD) grant. The "Visit Gainesville" folks helped us fund the Evergreen Cemetery brochure/map as well as the new cell phone tour brochure/map, both of which the City of Gainesville Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Marketing Department developed. Our Parks Department has been working with "Visit Gainesville" for a long time, and it seemed natural to work with them for these cemetery projects. I would seek out your local chamber of commerce or tourism agency and ask them about TPD grants that you could use to promote your cemetery. We marketed the cemetery here as a destination for historians, genealogists, naturalists (for folks interested in plant and bird species), and artists (photographers and painters).
>
> You might also consider, if you don't already have one, creating a non-profit association of friends of the cemetery to promote the cemetery in your community and to assist you with marketing projects. Our cemetery association has been extremely helpful in implementing marketing programs.
>
> Another idea is to sponsor an exhibition of cemetery art, photographs, sculpture, and historic artifacts from the cemetery. This would attract considerable interest in the cemetery. You also might consider getting local

Veterans groups involved, as there are probably a number of Veterans graves in your cemetery; they may want to have ceremonies for Memorial Day and Veterans Day which would attract public as well as media interest in the cemetery. At Evergreen Cemetery, our local Veterans groups place small American flags on every Veteran grave."

Emergency Preparedness, Disaster Planning, and Resilience

Cemeteries present unique problems in disaster preparation. The City should undertake a disaster preparedness plan for Bosque Bello, and ensure the cemetery is included in any post-disaster planning as well. Resources like "Cemetery Disaster Planning" from the Chicora Foundation should be used in preparing a disaster prep plan for Bosque Bello. The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) also has resources for preparing and responding to disasters in relation to cemeteries.

Nassau County is vulnerable to various hazards, as it is a coastal community located on the Atlantic Ocean with many rivers, streams, creeks, and marshes spanning from the coast to the inland areas. The highest risk hazards for Nassau County as identified in the County's 2003-2004 Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) and the 2007 County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) are hurricane-generated storm surge and high winds, flooding, wildfires, and hazardous materials spills.

Storm surge is considered the most destructive of the forces related to hurricanes. The surge is caused by low atmospheric pressure, which, when over a large body of water such as the Atlantic Ocean, results in a high dome of wind driven water. This surge of water contains immense, destructive power. At times, the effects of the moving water can be likened to a bulldozer clearing everything in its path. Debris propelled by the storm surge can act as a battering ram destroying objects in its way. The high dome of wind-driven water can be 50 to 100 miles wide, and moves across the coastline generally north of the "eye" as a hurricane makes landfall. Worst-case storm surge heights for Category 1 through Category 5 hurricanes are those approaching 90 degrees relative to the coastline.

Based on past history, beach erosion, usually the result of the stress placed on the shore from the storm surge, is a problem in the Northeast region. In the event of a hurricane either striking or passing near this coast, the potential of beach erosion, which can undermine both houses and roads, must be seriously considered. It is advisable for all beachfront areas to evacuate in the event of a threat of a hurricane affecting the coast. Effects of beach erosion on coastal roads should also be considered in relation to late evacuations, recovery from storms and in planning future roadways.

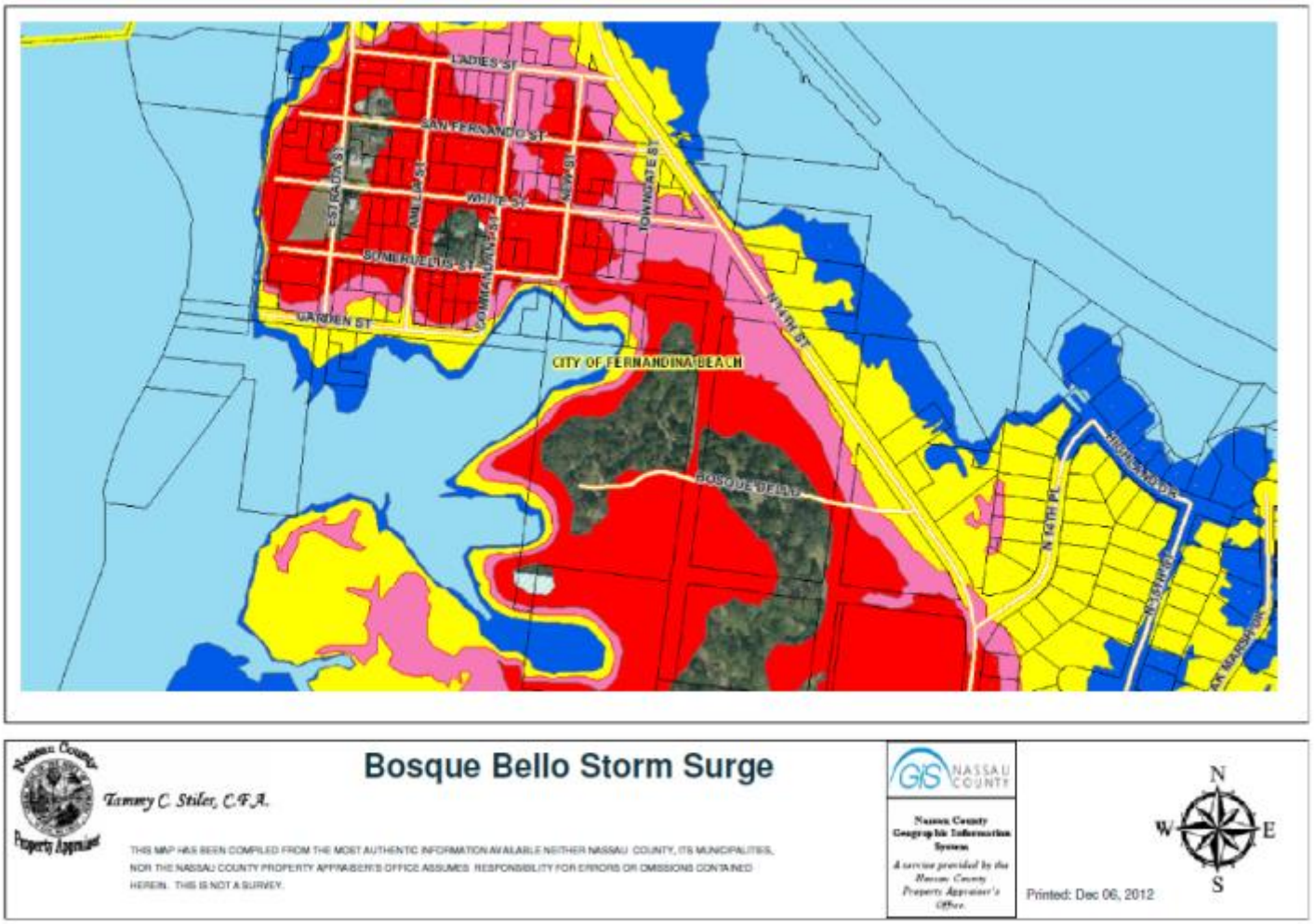
Wind is the second ranked of the lethal components of a hurricane's destructive force. Strong winds can be a very dangerous element of a hurricane due to wind-borne debris, from improperly constructed houses or from loose objects, which can result in injury or death. Gale force winds and tornadoes associated with hurricanes are very hazardous to mobile homes. High winds often down power lines and trees thus inhibiting mobility during and after the storm.

Unlike the effects of the storm surge, the high winds associated with a hurricane will have an impact on inland as well as coastal areas. Therefore, inland areas must plan for the impacts of high winds (fallen trees and power lines) on their road system and, perhaps more importantly, on the health and welfare of their citizens living in mobile homes or in substandard homes which may not be resistant to these high winds.

Rain ranks third in the order of a hurricane's destructive force. During the average 24-hour period that it normally takes a hurricane to pass over an area, an average rainfall of between five and ten inches may occur. Normally, this happens concurrently with the arrival of gale force winds. In Florida, however, there have been hurricane-related rainfalls ranging from 12 to 20 inches. These excessive rains which accompany hurricanes can cause excessive flooding in low lying areas requiring their evacuation. It is very important to consider roads which are rendered impassable during heavy rains and which may affect the evacuation of the vulnerable population.

A storm surge model, SLOSH (Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes), was used to predict the magnitude of storm surge for various scenarios of storm strengths and directions. Data from the SLOSH model was used to map storm

surge inundation areas. Based on these areas of inundation, evacuation zones were established, the population at risk was determined for various hurricane intensities, and the facilities vulnerable to hurricane related flooding were identified. All of Amelia Island, including the entire City limits, is subject to evacuation as part of Evacuation Zone A.



All Florida coastal communities are required to develop a Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP) as part of the Local Comprehensive Plan or as a separate document. The PDRP is likened to an umbrella plan that unites growth management and emergency management planning efforts to develop a comprehensive and collaborative PDRP with community stakeholders. The PDRP addresses issues such as: government operations and citizen response, housing and structural repairs, infrastructure and public facility recovery, economic resumption, land use planning and quality of life resiliency.

Despite commonalities in Nassau County communities, it is recognized that each jurisdiction has its unique features and recovery strategies may slightly vary. The PDRP is intended for use on a County-wide basis. However, local jurisdictions are encouraged to modify the contents as deemed appropriate prior to adoption. Currently, the City of Fernandina Beach has not adopted its own PDRP. The City sent representatives from the Planning Department to be a part of the County's PDRP process and represent City concerns regarding post-disaster redevelopment planning.

As part of this process, City staff ensured that historic preservation and cultural resources were addressed in the Nassau County PDRP. Although many of these policies are applicable primarily to historic structures, there is no reason not to adapt them to Bosque Bello post-disaster planning considerations. Disaster planning activities that should include Bosque Bello are:

- Inventory historic properties in CHHA, SFHA, WUI. (Pre-Disaster)
- Develop post-impact damage assessment data for historic properties. (Short-term recovery period: 1-60 days post-disaster)

- Create a post-disaster Historic Resource Assessment Team, comprised of building department, preservation planner, architect, engineers, and volunteers (if available). (Pre-Disaster and Short-term recovery period: 1-15 days)
- Create a Historic Preservation Response Network (Pre-Disaster, Emergency Period, and Short-term recovery period)
- Review and update historic property review and permitting procedures with the Fernandina Beach Historic District Council and the Florida Division of Historic Resources to ensure that procedures expedite redevelopment and include consideration for hazard mitigation measures. (Pre-Disaster and Short-term recovery period: 15-90 days post-disaster)
- Develop a post-impact workshop or mailing to private historic property owners to let them know about restoration requirements and to avoid demolition. (Pre-Disaster and Short-term recovery period: 15-60 days)
- Develop Fernandina Beach Historic District Council procedures for post-disaster restoration plan. Prioritize resources for making temporary and long-term repairs. (Pre-Disaster, Short-term recovery period: 1-90 days, and Long-term redevelopment: 4 to 18 months)
- Encourage local building officials to employ hazard mitigation measures for repairs to historic structures damaged during a disaster. (Pre-Disaster and Long-term redevelopment: 4-24+ months)
- Ensure that historic properties are not destroyed by demolition or that damages are exacerbated by recovery activities (i.e., debris removal). (Emergency period and Short-term recovery period: 1-60 days)

The Nassau County PDRP Section 4.4.6 also addresses cemeteries specifically:

> "Cemeteries have been known to flood in low-lying areas during disasters, such as Hurricane Floyd in North Carolina. Flooding can unearth coffins and float them away, creating the need for collection, refrigerated storage and re-interment of the remains, as well as cause potential public health and safety issues. There are 11 cemeteries that are vulnerable to flooding in Nassau County, as shown in Figure 4.66, and four of these are historic. It is important to create as best an inventory of these grave sites as possible to identify the person and their next of kin, if possible."

Bosque Bello is included on the map of cemeteries in Figure 4.66, but is not identified as one of the at-risk cemeteries.

Sea Level Rise

The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has indicated that climate change, regardless of source, is a reality. According to this Panel, cilmate change is "a change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of tis properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. It refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variabiltiy or as a result of human activity." The major aspects of climate change that will potentially affect Florida are increasing greenhouse gases, increasing air temperature and water vapor, increasing ocean temperature, and increasing sea level. Results of these aspects include increased ocean acidification, altered rainfall patterns, increased frequency and intensity of tropical storms and hurricanes, loss of marine life, changes in species and nutrient supply, and increased algal blooms. Potential strategies to addressing climate change include accepting some effects of climate change impacts, mitigating against change, or adapting to the changes.

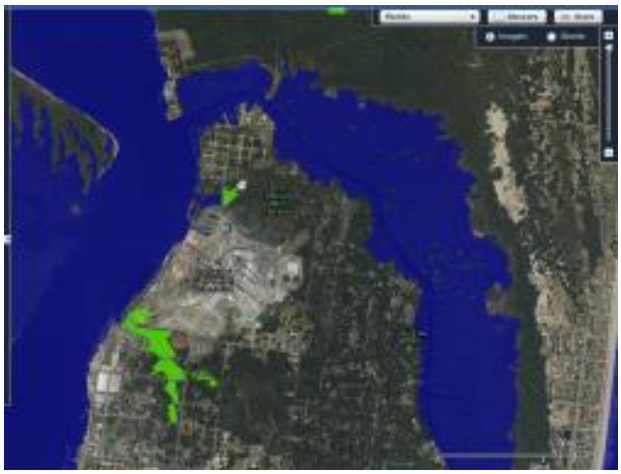
Increasing sea level can lead to increased stresses on or losses of tidal wetlands, changes to the landforms of estuaries, tidal wetlands, and tidal rivers, increased instability of beaches, barrier islands, and inlets, and increased threats to coastal fresh water supplies. As a community located on a barrier island, the City must take sea-level rise seriously. A rise in sea-level will have impacts on infrastructure, development, community health, and the economy. In the report, The Effects of Climate Change on Florida's Ocean and Coastal Resources (2009), the following is stated regarding impacts on barrier islands:

Effect: Changes in Beaches, Barrier Islands, and Inlets
What We Know: Shoreline retreat due to erosion and overwash is occurring now. There is an increase in the formation of barrier island inlets and in island dissection events, in which islands are eroded by wind and waves.
What is Probable: Continued sea-level rise will exacerbate erosion. Barrier islands will continue to erode, migrate landward, and be reduced in elevation. Coastal transportation infrastructure will be affected.

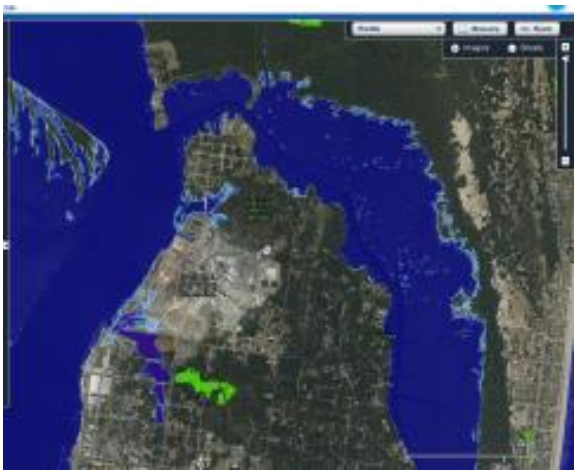
What is Possible: Increased overwash, breaching of coastal roads, and dissection of barrier islands will occur. Low barrier islands will vanish, exposing marshes and estuaries to open coast conditions.

Although estimates of sea-level rise vary greatly, and the most certain aspect is the uncertainty, the reality is that the sea-level is increasing. How much remains to be seen, but the City should begin proactively planning for rising sea-levels. Coordination with the County, state and federal governments should occur to help address how to begin planning for a long-term strategy to accept, mitigate, or adapt to rising sea levels. The City should also prepare for other climate change-related impacts, such as the potential for increased storm activity and intensity, and the impacts on estuarine systems.

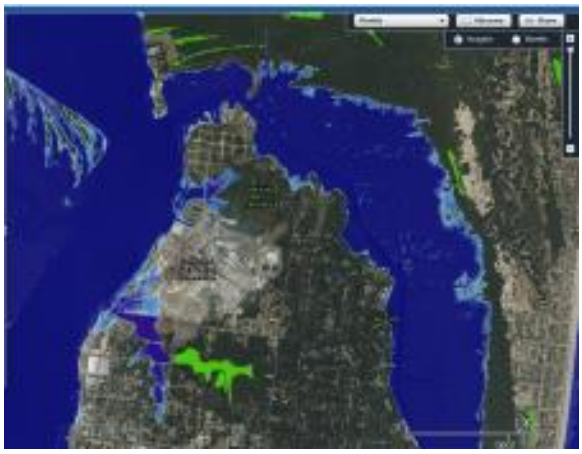
The City should take into sea level rise in long-range planning for Bosque Bello. Maps from NOAA's Digital Coast Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flooding Impacts Viewer indicate water encroachment into Bosque Bello with as little as a one-foot increase in sea level. As part of this research, staff investigated cemetery planning in light of sea-level rise, and found few resources offering guidance at this time. This is a relatively new topic and should be monitored as more becomes known about sea level rise. The City will need to evaluate the impacts of increased water on existing gravesites and evaluate options for addressing them. The historic section of Bosque Bello is most at risk due to its proximity to existing wetlands and water. Steps in planning for sea level rise include a vulnerability assessment and identification of mitigation strategies. It is safe to say that the old section is the most vulnerable; the next step will be to identify potential mitigation options for this portion of the cemetery.



Base Level

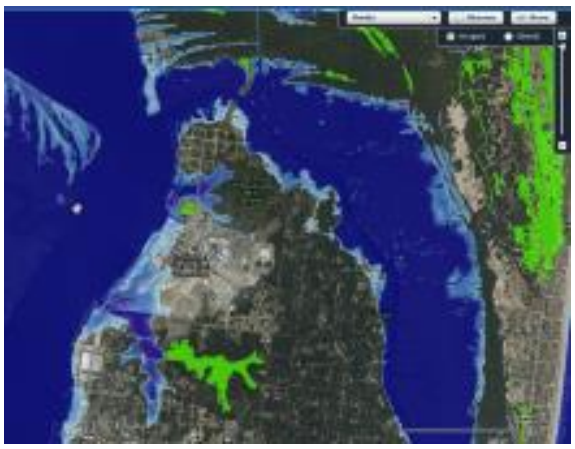


1ft. Sea Level Rise

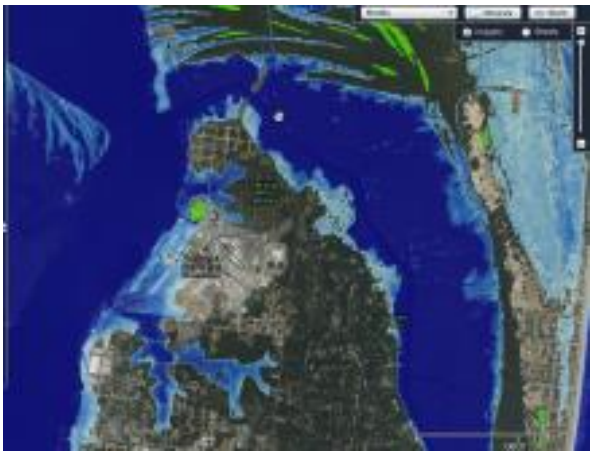


2ft. Sea Level Rise

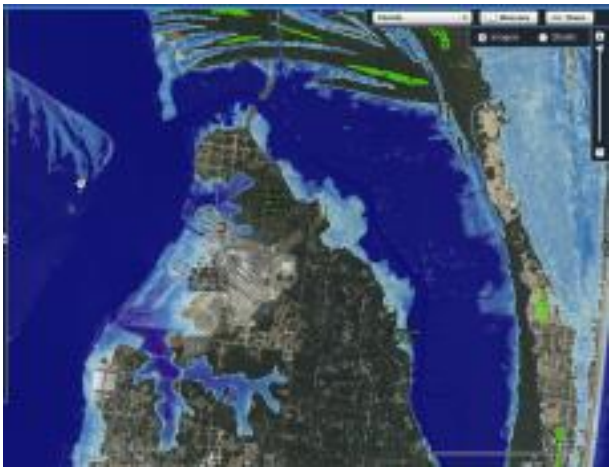
3ft. Sea Level Rise



4ft. Sea Level Rise



5ft. Sea Level Rise



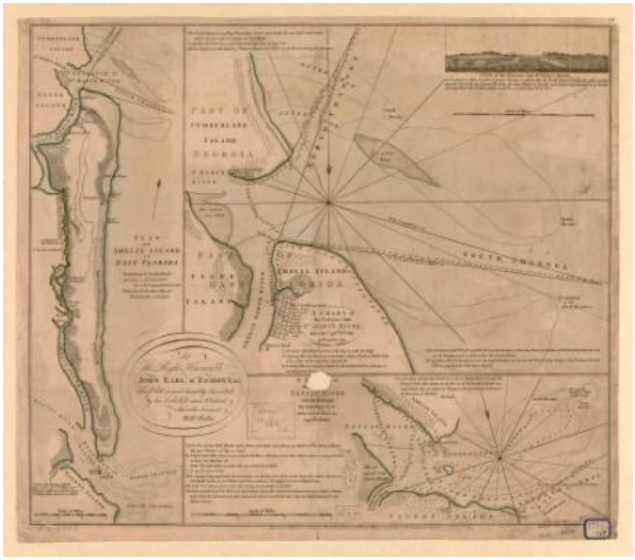
6ft. Sea Level Rise

Imagery Source: Digital Coast (NOAA Coastal Services Center), Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flooding Impacts Viewer

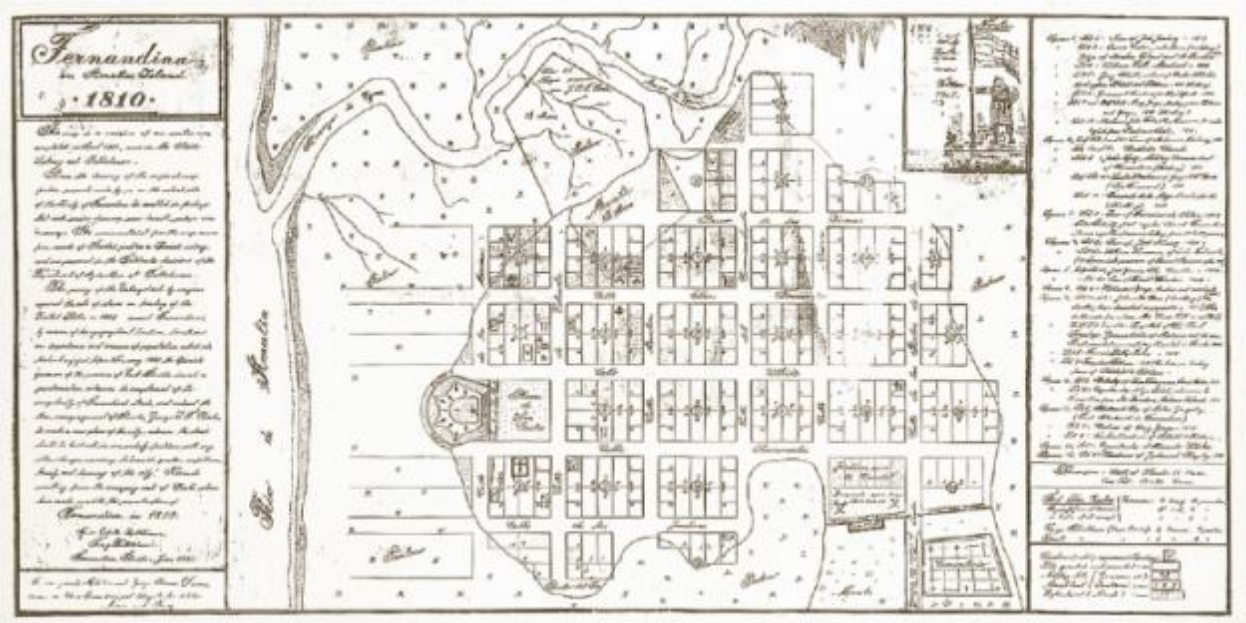
CEMETERY HISTORY

Cemetery History

Bosque Bello Cemetery is the oldest cemetery in Fernandina Beach. It is situated in the original town of Fernandina, now known as Old Town, on 34 acres of land that were originally part of the Spanish Land Grants. The original sections are believed to have been donated from a land grant held by Don Fernandez in 1798. The 1810 and 1811 Fernandina maps shown below indicate land designated for a cemetery. The city plat of 1857 shows the cemetery although the city did not claim the old portions of the cemetery. The name, Bosque Bello, is Spanish and can be translated as "Beautiful Woods" which does describe its area of hills and many large live oaks. The cemetery did not become known as Bosque Bello until well into the 20th century. Earlier, it was called Old Town Cemetery. No Sanborn maps exist showing the cemetery.



c. 1777 Map – Bosque Bello is not noted since this is pre-establishment.



c.1941 map illustrating Old Town c.1810. The cemetery is noted at the bottom right of the image.

Evolution of Cemeteries in the United States

Understanding the evolution of cemeteries in the United States provides context for understanding the evolution of our city cemetery, Bosque Bello.

Before 1831 burials were in churchyard cemeteries or common areas near center of a city or town. The burial areas were treated as unattractive necessities to be avoided by the living and were most often neglected. As the burial grounds became overcrowded and became public health hazards, the rural cemetery movement began. The dead were moved out of the city center larger burial grounds. This movement resulted in a most positive image of peacefulness surrounded by nature. It led to the creation of public parks. Tombstones became an art form. Elaborate markers and walls defining the grave plots were erected by families.

After 1855, the rural cemetery movement evolved to a lawn cemetery movement. Cremation had become more popular and monuments were less popular. Common open space with unbroken lawn scenery characterized cemeteries of this era.

After 1920, the memorial park movement grew. This reflected changes in American society on death and mortality—changes away from severe views to the creation of peaceful places of internment with trees and lawns. Memorial parks also reflected economic growth in the United States; they were managed by professionals who cared for every lot and grave. Grave markers flush with the ground became popular.

These stages in cemetery evolution are reflected in Fernandina's cemetery, Bosque Bello. The old section is filled with family plots often defined by walls and containing sometimes elaborate monuments. The new section is characterized by more open space, simpler monuments, and a lawn-like appearance.

Bosque Bello Cemetery in Context: A Timeline of Early Cemeteries

Cemeteries in bold are in Nassau County. Only those established before 1900 (with one exception) and having more than 12 graves are included.

1789 St. Louis Cemetery, New Orleans, LA. Burials in above ground vaults due to high ground water.
1796 New Burying Ground (later Grove Street Cemetery), New Haven, CT. First chartered burial ground in United States.
1798 Bosque Bello Cemetery established. Fernandina, FL
1793 Harrison Cemetery. Amelia Island, FL. Includes Harrison family members and Dorion Dig reburials.
1804 Père-Lachaise Cemetery, Paris, France. Model for Mt. Auburn.
1831 Mount Auburn Cemetery. Cambridge, MA. First large designed landscape open to the public in United States.
1832 Kensal Green Cemetery. London, England.
1836 Laurel Hill Cemetery. Philadelphia, PA.
1838 Green-Wood Cemetery. Brooklyn, New York.
1839 Highgate Cemetery. London, England.
1845 Spring Grove Cemetery. Cincinnati, OH.
1848 Holly-Wood Cemetery. Richmond, VA.
1849 City Cemetery. Sacramento, CA.
1849 Bellefontaine Cemetery. St. Louis, MO.
1849 Forest Lawn Cemetery. Buffalo, New York.
1850 Oakland Cemetery. Atlanta, GA. 88 acres.
Mid-1800s Connor-Green Cemetery. FL-GA border.
1860 Graceland Cemetery. Chicago, IL.
1860 King's Ferry Cemetery. King's Ferry, FL.
1860 Vaughan-Scott Cemetery. Amelia Island, FL.

1863 Mountain View Cemetery. Oakland, CA. Designed by Frederick Law Olmsted.
1868 St. Peter's Episcopal Cemetery. Fernandina, FL.
1868* Acosta Cemetery. Yulee, FL.
1869 Braddock Cemetery. Yulee/Callahan FL.
1870 Fernandez Cemetery. Fernandina, FL. For heirs of Domingo Fernandez.
1870 Haddock-Libby Cemetery. King's Ferry, FL.
1874 Higginbotham Cemetery. Evergreen, FL.
1872 Braddock Cemetery. Hilliard, FL.
1875 Wilds Landing Cemetery. North of Yulee, FL.
1877 Wingate Cemetery. North of Yulee, FL.
1877 Evergreen Cemetery. Los Angeles. Oldest existing cemetery in Los Angeles
1880 Chester Cemetery. Chester, FL.
1880 Evergreen Cemetery. Jacksonville, FL.
1884 Kirkland Cemetery. Kirkland Lake, FL.
1885 Judd Cemetery. Amelia Island, FL.
1912 Franklintown Cemetery. Amelia Island, FL. Established for descendants of Harrison Plantation slaves.

Timeline of Events and Expansion of Bosque Bello Cemetery

Year	Event
1798	Reputed date of establishment. Site given by Domingo Fernandez for public burial ground under Spanish rule.
1811	Platting of Old Town. Plat notes existing burial site.
188-1847	City Blocks 24 and 25 (each 0.93 acres) of Old Section platted.
1847	City Block 221 (7.25 acres) of Old Section platted. City Block 221, Lots 4-7, (3.70 acres) of Old Section platted. Division 71 – City Block 221, 100' of Lot 8 (0.53 acres) of Old Section platted. United States Senate Bill 161 officially dedicating public burial ground to City of Fernandina Beach.
1847-1857	City Block 221, 100' of Lot 3 (0.53 acres) of Old Section platted.
1857	Cemetery appears on City Cemetery on City Plats.
1877	Yellow fever victims buried.
1896-1916	City in possession of cemetery records from this time, including over 1,500 burial records and death certificates, and monthly burial registers. Documents indicate existence of Ladies Cemetery Association during this time.
Early 20th C	Cemetery divided into "white" and "colored" sections. Prior to this, the cemetery was integrated.
1938	Ladies Cemetery Association re-formed April 14th. The association appears to have existed until at least 1959.
1942	Divisions 1-18 (1.80 acres) of New Section platted.
Mid-1940's	New section added. Land donated to City by J.G. Cooper and Sadie Cooper in 1945.

Year	Event
1945	Section east of North 12th Street added.
1947	New sections cleared and established as New White Cemetery and New Colored Cemetery.
1949	Divisions 19-22 (0.43 acres) of New Section platted. City Manager requests changes to cemetery management and ordinance.
1952	Divisions 23-27 and part of Division 21 (0.77 acres) of New Section platted.
1955	Divisions 28-70 (3.5 acres) of New Section platted.
~1960's?	Cemetery reintegrated after desegregation required by U.S. Supreme Court.
1967	City Commission asked by Cemetery Association for funding for perpetual care.
1970	Bosque Bello Cemetery Association, represented by President James Beard, asks City Commission for perpetual care fund.
1982	Blocks 1-17 (3.948 acres) of New Section platted.
1988	First mapping and inventory of cemetery by members of the General Duncan Lamont Clinch Historical Society completed and published as *The Original Section of Bosque Bello Cemetery*. Harold J. Belcher was the project chair.
1990	Blocks B1-B2 (0.08 acres) of New Section platted.
1997	Amelia Island Genealogical Society survey update of later burials and survey of New section.
2007	Blocks 18-32 (4.26 acres) of New Section platted.
2007-2012	City Blocks 225 and 249 of New Section platted.
2011	Bosque Bello is included in the City's Comprehensive Plan in the Historic Preservation and Recreation and Open Space elements.
2012	Amelia Island Genealogical Society starts work on resurvey of New Section and begins a database including photographs of gravestones.
2012	City starts cemetery master planning process.

Significant People and Groups

There are many important people, families and groups buried at Bosque Bello. The fascinating stories of these individuals tell the story of the town of Fernandina Beach; they represent our connections to locally, regionally, and nationally significant events. Early residents, lighthouse keepers, mayors and other politicians, yellow fever victims, nuns, and veterans of many wars are all buried at Bosque Bello.

Bosque Bello is the resting place of numerous veterans of various conflicts. A list of veterans through World War I can be found in the appendices.

Burial records were kept by the superintendents of the cemetery and stored at City Hall. Burial reports for the year 1896 to 1916 were discovered during this master planning process. Death certificates were also discovered among the monthly burial reports. These death certificates contain valuable data about the citizens of Fernandina and are included in the Florida Memory Project (http://www.floridamemory.com). Information is indexed by surname, date, and cause of death.

Peter Bouissou de Nicar
1813--Peter Bouissou de Nicar (1747-1813) has the oldest gravestone found in the cemetery. He was a black mercenary, a Mason and a Captain in the army. He apparently died in Old Town.

Father Patrick Halligan
1963--Father Halligan was a respected priest at St. Michael's Catholic Church from 1935 to 1952. He requested burial next to Peter Bouissou.

Sisters of St. Joseph
1877-1934--The Sisters of St. Joseph were an order of Catholic nuns from France. They founded a school in Fernandina to teach freed slaves following the Civil War. They tended the victims of the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1877. Two young nuns who died of yellow fever were originally buried in the church yard. Many years later, they were moved to Bosque Bello where 11 of the Sisters are buried.

Sister Catherine Byrne with two young girls (left)
Sister Marie Celinie Joubert (right)

Spanish American War veterans
1898-- At least fifteen veterans of the Spanish-American War are buried at Bosque Bello and it is documented that 28 died from disease, primarily typhoid fever.

Acosta Family
1838-1916--At least 11 members of the Acosta family are buried there. They include Jane Alberti Acosta who died of yellow fever in 1838 (at age 50); she was the wife of Domingo Acosta and mother of seven children born in Nassau County between 1815 and 1834. Several of the Acostas were postmasters.

Antonio Diaz
1841--Antonio Diaz was witness to the Patriot War of 1812 and a resident of Old Town. He was born in Palma (Canary Islands).

Amos Latham/Thomas John O'Hagan
1761-1842--Amos Latham was one of two Revolutionary War soldiers buried on Amelia Island. He served as first on Cumberland Island. When the lighthouse was brought to Amelia Island in 1838, he became the first lighthouse keeper on Amelia Island. His wife and other Lathams are buried in his plot. Patrick O'Hagan became light keeper in 1905. His son, Thomas John O'Hagan was the last civilian light keeper on Amelia Island. His wife, Helen Morse, was the great-great-granddaughter of Amos Latham.

Seton Family
1856--The Seton family plot includes remains of Charles (died 1856) and his wife Matilda (died 1856), who were early settlers of Old Town and owned at least 16,000 acres in the county. Charles Seton was once mayor of Old Town.

Civil War Veterans
Civil War veterans include 37 Federal (Union) troops (33 of these were African-American) and 11 Confederate troops. This group includes Major Thomas Leddy, who later owned the Florida House Inn. He died in 1873. There are 11 Confederate troops buried, including Christian Peterson, the only Civil War soldier to die in Fernandina; he died of disease in 1861. Henry and Mary Muller are both buried in Bosque Bello; Henry was a private with the 47th Georgia Confederate troops, and Mary was a nurse in Confederate service. Lt. Edward J. Johnston died in 1863 in Fort Warren, a prison in Boston Harbor. He served as Engineer in Confederate Navy. Part of his remains were brought to Bosque Bello and reburied in 2002. His grave is at the foot of that of his wife, Virginia (1830-1916) who outlived him by many years.

John Henry McDermott and Samuel Sidney Sauls
1873--An unusual dual monument was erected to John Henry McDermott and Samuel Sidney Sauls. These two men were killed together in a saw mill explosion in St. Mary's on 23 October 1873.

A. A. Cushman
1904--The only zinc marker in the cemetery is on the grave of Mrs. A. A. Cushman (died 1904). The marker was probably cast up north. There is a similar marker in St. Peter's Episcopal cemetery.

Andrew Higginbotham
1909--Andrew Higginbotham served as the city's sheriff from 1900-1906. Other family members share his plot.

Steil Family
1891-1906--The grave markers of the Steil family were vandalized in the late 1980s. The elaborate stone carvings were too expensive to repair. The oldest graves in the plot are those of Arthur (1854-1906) and Emma (1866-1954). Arthur Steil was a saloon owner in Fernandina. The family of his wife, Emma Theide, came to Fernandina shortly after the Civil War.

Steil Family Plot

Delany Family
1874-1897--Thomas and Sarah came to Amelia Island from Georgia as freed slaves at the end of the Civil War. They had eleven children all of whom were educated and learned a trade. One son, Henry Beard Delany, became the first African-American Episcopal bishop in the United States.

Suhrer Family

1884-1949--Ferdinand Charles Suhrer served in the Civil War as a Union soldier. After the War, he brought his wife, Eva Rosa Plotts, to Fernandina. He served as postmaster and later became manager of the Mansion House. He was murdered by Thomas Jefferson Eppes in 1884. Eppes was found not guilty after evidence that Suhrer had insulted his wife was presented.

Headstone of Ferdinand Suhrer

Sollecito Salvador

1869-1924--Sollecito Salvador was a Sicilian immigrant who became known as the "Father of the Shrimping Industry".

Sollecito Salvador

Ferreira Family

1850-1937—The Ferreira family worked for the Florida Railroad Company, which was founded by David Levy Yulee in 1853. John Apolonia Ferreira was an ancestor of Juan Ferreira, who came to St. Augustine from Portugal in 1800. He worked as a railroad engineer on the train that ran from Fernandina to Cedar Key.

John A. Ferreira

Dr. D. Granville Humphreys

1873-1956--Dr. D. Granville Humphreys was a well-respected physician in Fernandina. The former Hospital on 14th Street was named after him.

Kelly Family

1826-1967--Several members of the Kelly family are buried at Bosque Bello. Colonel Patrick Kelly (1826-1908), a native of County Sligo, Ireland, came to Fernandina in 1855. He became the assistant supervisor of the old Florida Railroad and was elected to the state legislature in 1859, serving until the opening of the Civil War. William R. Kelly (1865-1896), was the first president of the Fernandina Western Railroad and head of the large wholesale and retail form of Kelly & Bros. T. Howard Kelly (1895-1967) was a renowned author and screenwriter, as well as business executive.

T. Howard Kelly

Demetrios Nicholas Deonas

1909-1969-Dematrios Nicholas "Jimmy" Deonas was born in Santorini, Greece and immigrated to Fernandina Beach. Influenced by the Greek art of shipbuilding, he designed the "Super trawler" boat, which is commonly used today in the shrimping industries.

Demetrios Nicholas Deonas

Traeye Family
1839-1979-- An African American Family that lived in Old Town as free, property-owning citizens prior to the Civil War. Their descendants are still prominent in Fernandina Beach today.

Romeo Joseph Roberts
1919-1983--Romeo Joseph Roberts was the cook on board the *Jim Guess*, a pogy boat owned by the Nassau Fertilizer and Oil Company. Pogy fishing was once an important employer of many residents of Old Town. Pogy, also called Menhaden, was processed at the Pogy Plant producing fertilizer and oil.

Helen Gordon Litrico

1927-2008--Helen Gordon Litrico was a pioneer in television and print advertising, and served as one of the first employees at Amelia Island Plantation as the Public Relations Director. As an avid lover of local history, she was instrumental in the creation of the historic district in downtown Fernandina Beach and founded "Amelia Now," a quarterly guide to Amelia Island.

Helen Gordon Litrico

Lasserre Family

(1855-2010) The Lasserre Family has several prominent members buried at Bosque Bello. Thomas Burke Lasserre was an early harbor pilot and was a resident of Old Town. His son, Thomas N. Lasserre fought in World War I. Elmer Eugene "Gene" Lasserre served during WWII and became president of the Lasserre Motor Company. He also served as Commissioner of the Ocean Highway and Port Authority and was instrumental in the development of the Port of Fernandina, which opened in 1986.

Elmer Eugene Lasserre

Tringali Family
(1883-2012) Originally from Sicily, Salvatore and Francesca Tringali immigrated to Fernandina and became pioneers of the shrimping industry. Two of their sons, Joe Tringali and Angelo Tringali served in WWII and came back to Fernandina to become co-owners of the Tringali Brothers Seafood Company; this company became one of the most well-known and successful operations on the east coast. Joseph A. Tringali captained the *Dixie Queen* and won the first three annual races of the Fernandina Shrimp Festival. His brother, Angelo, was captain of the *Amelia.*

Joe Tringali (left) and
Angelo Tringali (right)

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE INFORMATION

Cultural Landscape Information

Ancient Cemetery – North End

The oldest section of Bosque Bello lies in the northwest corner of the cemetery, approximately 550 feet of City Block 222, as measured along Magnolia Street (aka N. 12th Street) on the east. It is bordered on the South by the unpaved portion of Bosque Bello Street, on the west by wetlands, and on the north by undeveloped City Blocks 24 and 25. Under a dense canopy of Oak and Cedar trees, the oldest graves lie in its northwest corner of this section, not far from where the town gates to Old Fernandina (Old Town) once stood. Many century-old Sago and some Coontie plants also dot the landscape.

The interior of this section is accessible via wheel-rutted one-lane streets. Oleander Street runs in an arc from Magnolia Street to Bosque Bello Street. Redbud Street runs north-south between Oleander Street and Bosque Bello; while Azalea Street runs in an arc from Oleander to Bosque Bello. These streets are narrow and vehicular traffic has damaged gravesites at the intersection of Oleander and Azalea.

The terrain in this section slopes steeply to the northwest corner point from a peek that runs roughly parallel and west of Redbud Street. A more gradual slope to the west extends all along the west border of this section as well. Lack of ground cover under the canopy has led to erosion that threatens the integrity of monuments and walls around plots in this section.

Almost all plots in this section are family plots, most sharing walls or coping, with few individual gravesites located outside these family plots. Walls are generally coquina or brick covered by a stucco mixture and most of them are in a state of significant decomposition. Some plots are surrounded by iron decorative fences with gates. Other plots are surrounded by coping (less than 12 inches high), most made of brick covered with concrete.

With just a few exceptions, burials are under ground. Monuments are granite or marble - typical of 19th and early 20th century design. Some of these monuments include statuary – angels, children holding lambs, and female form at the foot of a large cross. The only zinc monument in the entire cemetery is here in this oldest section. There are at least three above-ground tombs: the Mizell tomb is granite and in good condition; the tomb of an unknown person is brick, covered with stucco, and it is in need of immediate attention, as it is coming apart at the top.

Many monuments and markers in this section are sharply tilting, broken, or vandalized. Damage has been done by fallen limbs of huge oaks or cedars. Small plants installed a hundred years ago within some plots have grown large, cracking and pushing monuments in their way. Some monuments have suffered from vandalism. Two most recent acts of vandalism involved the removal and disappearance of the heads of two beautiful angels in this section. As a result of all of the above, there are many monuments and statuary that

require stabilization and repair. Looking to the future, diseased trees and limbs must be removed to prevent further damage to this beautiful old section. Finally, steps should be taken to reduce the possibility of even more vandalism.

Ancient Cemetery – South End

This section of Bosque Bello Cemetery lies directly south and is contiguous with the North End described above. It consists of the rest of City Block 222 and Lots 4 thru 7 of City Block 221. It is bordered on the north by Bosque Bello Street, on the east by the unpaved portion of Magnolia Street for a distance of approximately 650 feet, on the south by Division 71 (next page) and on the west by wetlands. The canopy here is predominantly cedar trees and less dense than that at the north end of Block 222. Palms, Sago, and a variety of ornamental trees also share the landscape. Burials in this section are primarily that of the African-American citizens of Fernandina and Old Town. Historically significant in this area are the graves of "U. S. C. T." (U. S. Colored Troops) who fought for the Union in the Civil War. These gravesites are scattered throughout this section.

The interior of this section is accessible from the unpaved portion of Bosque Bello Street via Oleander Street that runs south and parallel to Magnolia, for the full length of this section until it curves east to intersect with Magnolia; the west portion of this section is accessible via Azalea that runs south only a short distance before it curves to intersect Oleander.

For the most part, the terrain here is flatter than the north end. Although it gently slopes toward the southeast corner of the section, there is much more ground cover in this section and erosion is less significant, although there are several areas that need attention. Some flooding has been observed at Nassau Street. There is also a gentler slope to the wetlands to the west, all along this section. At this writing, the "ground cover" in this section includes many weeds, with a high concentration of sandspurs.

The burials are all under-ground. Markers and monuments are mostly typical 20th century design with some 19th century specimens, made of granite, marble, or concrete, being smaller with less variety of style and less ornate than many at the north end. There is no significant statuary. There is a mix of family plots and individual graves. With the exception of one wall built in 2012 around the Allen family plot (stucco over concrete block), there are no walls in this section. There are only a few iron fences with gates. While some family plots are surrounded by coping, many family plots have no boundaries identified.

The most significant problem in this section is the sinking of markers and monuments – some to the point where even names are unreadable. The soil appears to be looser in some parts of this section. These markers will have to be raised before they completely sink below the surface. The section also shares many of the problems that plague the North End, including deteriorating coping around plots and tilted, broken and damaged monuments. Many trees have dead limbs that must be trimmed to prevent future damage to monuments and coping.

Ancient Cemetery – Division 71

Division 71 was platted in 1947 and covers the north 100 feet of Lot 8 in City Block 221. It lies at the south end of the unpaved portion of Magnolia Street and extends beyond the south end of Oleander Street at its intersection with Magnolia. It is bounded on the south by property belonging to the Rock-Tenn Company and on the west by wetlands. It is contiguous to the southeast end of Block 222, with an equivalent canopy and terrain. (Ancient Cemetery – South End).

This is a small section of Bosque Bello and existing graves are accessible from its bordering streets, Magnolia and Oleander. There is an unused portion of this section to the west (north 100 feet of Lot 3, City Book 221) which has not been cleared for gravesites and is not easily accessible from those streets. Future use would require an easement on Rock-Tenn Company property to the south. In addition, some of these potential gravesites may be susceptible to encroaching marsh lands with the rise of sea-levels in future years.

This Division is divided into three fairly distinct sections, each laid out south to north. Section 1 consists of 40 lots laid out in two back-to-back rows; Section 2 consists of 80 lots laid out in 4 back-to-back rows; and Section 3 consists of 60 lots laid out in 3 back-to-back rows. Within each section there is a mix of family and individual graves – some with coping and others with none. Monuments are 20th century designs – as in the adjacent Ancient Cemetery – South End. At this writing, there is no indication of sinking monuments.

New Bosque Bello Cemetery– Divisions 1 through 70

This section of Bosque Bello Cemetery was platted and developed in stages from 1942 through 1955. Of irregular shape, it is bordered on the west by Magnolia Street, running from North 14th Street to Nassau Street; on the south by Nassau Street, until you reach an unnamed lane which borders Block 1 (see next section); on the east by the unnamed lane running from Nassau Street to Bosque Bello Street; from there on the south by Bosque Bello Street until you reach the North 14th Street Main Entrance; and on the northeast by North 14th, until you return to Magnolia Street. Within the borders described above is a section known as “Babyland,” but it will be described separately in this document.

The interior of the majority of this area is accessible by a series of parallel rutted one-lane streets which run between Magnolia Street and North 14th Street, parallel to and north of Bosque Bello Street: J. J. G. Cooper Street, Cedar Street, Oak Street, Pine Street, and Holly Street. The interior of the remaining area is only accessible from walking lanes running north-south between Nassau Street and Bosque Bellow Street. Each division within both areas is a rectangle of lots. The configuration of these rectangles vary: configuration A contains 10 sections; B contains 5 sections; D contains 12 sections; E contains 6 sections. The remaining configuration is not separated into sections; configuration C is a single rectangle two lots wide and 20 lots long (total 40 lots). Each of configurations A, B, D, and E contains eight 5’ by 10’ lots; lots in configuration C are also 5’ by 10’. Note that the divisions and sections that border North 14th Street are truncated by that Street and contain two or more partial sections, rather than the full complement of sections.

The canopy in this area of Bosque Bello is dense with mostly cedar trees and oaks, and some examples of palms and ornamental trees. These trees appear to be in better condition than those in the Ancient sections, although there is some trimming and maintenance that needs to be scheduled. Most of the gravesites are organized by family with coping defining the family plots. Burials are below-ground in this section, with the exception of two above ground tombs near the Main Entrance to the cemetery. There are no walls or fencing in this area. Many family plots here are also bordered by plants forming full or partial hedges. Landscape plants are pretty well maintained and their growth does not threaten damage to coping or monuments at this time.

The terrain is relatively flat with no known erosion issues. Ground cover is in good condition, although much of it would be classified as weeds. Monuments are granite or marble, with some small statuary at some sites. The style of monuments and symbolism are 20th century. Many are dual tombstones, citing the surname and then given names of husband and wife. There are several fine examples of art-deco monument designs. Late-20th century examples are engraved with symbols that reflect the occupations, hobbies and interests of those buried – doctors, lawyers, fishing, hunting, sports enthusiasts, etc. The condition of monuments/tombstones and coping are generally in good condition.

New Bosque Bello Cemetery - Babyland

The area known as "Babyland" was partially platted in 1990, AFTER an unknown number of graves already existed in this section. The area in which those original graves were established has never been platted. While this area is supposed to contain graves of infants and children, there are some adult graves here. This section occupies a part of the area described above (New Cemetery - Divisions 1 – 70). It runs parallel to and west of the unnamed lane described in the previous section of this document, running north-south between Bosque Bello Street and Nassau Street and consists of less than 0.2 acres. It is just west of Block 1, described in the section below. Access is along the boundary roads of Bosque Bello Street on the north, the unnamed lane on the east, and Nassau Street on the south.

The canopy and terrain is very much like that described in the previous section (New Bosque Bello Cemetery - Divisions 1 through 70). The area slopes downward from Bosque Bello Street to Nassau Street. There are no apparent erosion issues.

Burials are all below ground and monuments of mostly granite dot the landscape. They appear to be in good condition. Lot sizes are 2.5' by 5'. But since there are adult graves as well in this section, four lots were probably merged into a 5' by 10' lot to accommodate adult burials. There is some coping (less than 6 inches high) around sets of graves, assumed to be family plots. But most graves are individual.

New Bosque Bello Cemetery - Blocks 1 through 17

This area of Bosque Bello was platted in 1982, consisting of almost 4 acres. It is bounded on the north by Bosque Bello Street, running from North 14th Street to the unnamed lane mentioned above; on the west by the unnamed lane; on the south and east by property belonging to the Rock-Tenn Company, and on the northeast by North 14th Street.

Lots are laid out in long Blocks running approximately east/west. Each block consists of a total of 135 lots laid back to back in two rows. Lot sizes vary due to the plat tapering at an angle. Interior access is provided by rutted driving paths between the Blocks that run from Bosque Bello Street to a narrow dirt road that borders the Rock-Tenn property at the east and south sides of this section.

The canopy in this section is less dense than previous sections described and consists exclusively of large majestic oaks. There are no landscape plants. All burials are below-ground and grave makers here are all level with the ground; most are bronze on granite slabs – typical of late 20th century cemeteries concerned with easy-maintenance lawn trimming. For this same reason, there are no coping, walls, fences, or foliage to define family plots.

New Bosque Bello Cemetery – Blocks 18 through 32

This area of Bosque Bello was platted in 2007 and consists of 4.26 acres. It is bordered on the west by an unpaved portion of Magnolia Street, on the north by Nassau Street, and on the south and east by an unnamed dirt road that borders Rock-Tenn property and runs from Magnolia Street, eventually curving until it intersects Nassau Street. Each Block is laid out in two rows of back-to-back lots. There is no interior road access to this area; but there are twenty-foot rights-of-ways running north-south between Nassau Street and the dirt road that borders Rock-Tenn property between each Block.

The canopy in this section is oaks and some cedar. Since this is the newest section of the cemetery, any landscape foliage planted has not had time to mature into the larger landscape plants seen in other sections. The terrain is relative flat here with no known erosion issues. Ground cover is in fair condition, but many weeds. Monument design is quite diverse. There are 21st century granite designs with several examples of laser-etched digital images. The popular use of black granite is more prevalent here than in other areas of the cemetery. Some monuments are shaped or engraved with symbols or pictures that reflect the occupations, hobbies and interests of those buried. Monuments are new and in very good condition. There are at least four above ground tombs for multiple burials, and some examples of a return to older traditional elements. A black aluminum wrought-iron-looking fence is around one plot. Several older Celtic crosses have been mounted on granite bases. Large white marble statues of angels can be found here. Many family plots are surrounded by low coping; sometimes the ground within is covered with white gravel or plant groundcover. There are no real problems, with the exception of at least one instance of vandalism– the destruction of one of the angel statues.

Iconography in Bosque Bello

Bosque Bello is home to both traditional and contemporary cemetery symbolism and iconography. Iconography is defined as "the visual images and symbols used in a work of art or the study or interpretation of these." Contemporary iconography is illustrated in the new section, particularly Blocks 18-32.

One of the traditional forms of iconography involves hands placed on a stone. Hands may be pointing up, down, or be clasped together. Hands pointing up or down are intended to indicate the presence of God. Where a hand is pointing up, this is a symbol that the person's soul has gone to Heaven. Where a hand is pointing down, it is symbolizing the arm of God reaching from Heaven to bring the person home. In the instance of the photo at right, the hand is paired with a broken chain, which can indicate a life that ended too quickly or unexpectedly. The stone notes that Irene died at 14 years old.

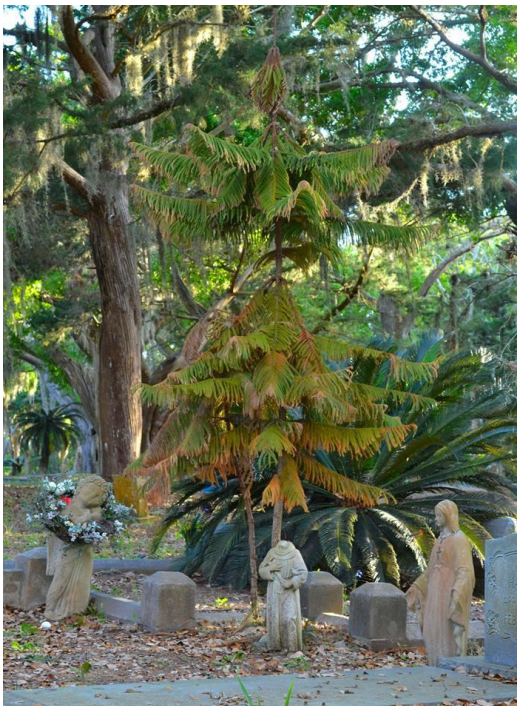
Clasped hands can have a couple of meanings. Sometimes the hands represent marriage, and in that case one sleeve may appear masculine and one may appear feminine. That symbol may be found on a joint headstone of a married couple. In the photo at left, the clasped hands may be a symbol of either a welcome from Heaven or a farewell from Earth, since they do not appear on a joint headstone.

The photo at right depicts a hand holding some type of flower, and is surrounded by other flowers. Flower symbolism is very common, especially during the Victorian era, and usually the flowers chosen were intended to represent a virtue or attribute. The flowers on the Brady stone at right are hard to discern, but may be some type of daffodil and rose. Daffodils carried the attributes of divine love and sacrifice, and roses are used in Christian symbolism as either a sign of martyrdom or purity. The rose can also mean Paradise. For whatever reason the flowers shown were chosen, the fact that they are in the hand of the person may illustrate that they had the attributes of the flowers selected.

Bosque Bello is home to at least a few crosses that are made of stone, but are carved to look as if the cross was made of wooden logs. In at least one instance, a descendent indicates that the family head buried there was a carpenter. Another option may be Christian symbolism that Jesus' cross was made of wood from the Tree of Life. In certain communities, the fraternal organization Woodmen of the World utilized headstones that looked like wood or a tree stump, because part of membership in that group (at least until the 1920's) involved a guaranteed headstone. There is not an indication that any of the stones pictured here were because of membership in that organization, however.

Bosque Bello is also home to numerous stones that have various symbols, letters, or images that represent societies, clubs, and fraternal organizations. In the photo at left, the pentagram at the top of the stone is a sign that Laura Burt was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, which is the female counterpart to the Freemasons. Each symbol within the star represents a heroine and also represents one of the five tenets of the Eastern Star. Other organizations' symbols are similar and represent aspects of that particular group's membership.

The most common religious symbolism found in Bosque Bello is Christian. Crosses of all shapes and sizes are present on many stones, as are angels.



Although the cultural landscape evaluation has documented some preservation problem areas, there has been an improvement in cemetery maintenance since Parks and Recreation took over management of the cemetery in 2003, as illustrated by the photos below.

2003

2012

2003

2012

BURIAL OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

Types of Burials Currently Available

The only type of burial that is presently allowed in Bosque Bello are below ground and above ground burials for traditional casket burials. Cremains may be buried, but are required to purchase a full size plot. No columbaria or cremation niches exist.

The Parks and Recreation Department has gotten a steady increase in the amount of requests for a columbaria space or an alternative burial option that does not require purchasing a full size plot. Given the trends and statistics for the cemetery, illustrating that the plots may be sold out within 10-12 years, and the fact that there are very few public burial options in Nassau County, and no other on the island, the City will need to explore other options besides plot burial. 70% of survey respondents indicated that they would be interested in a columbaria option at Bosque Bello. 54% of respondents were interested in a memorial wall option to commemorate loved ones, even if they were not buried there.

The survey asked people about the option of having a pet cemetery or pet memorial garden in the City (not necessarily Bosque Bello). 25% of respondents did not own pets. 44.9% responded yes or maybe, with 30% saying no. This may be something for the City to consider.

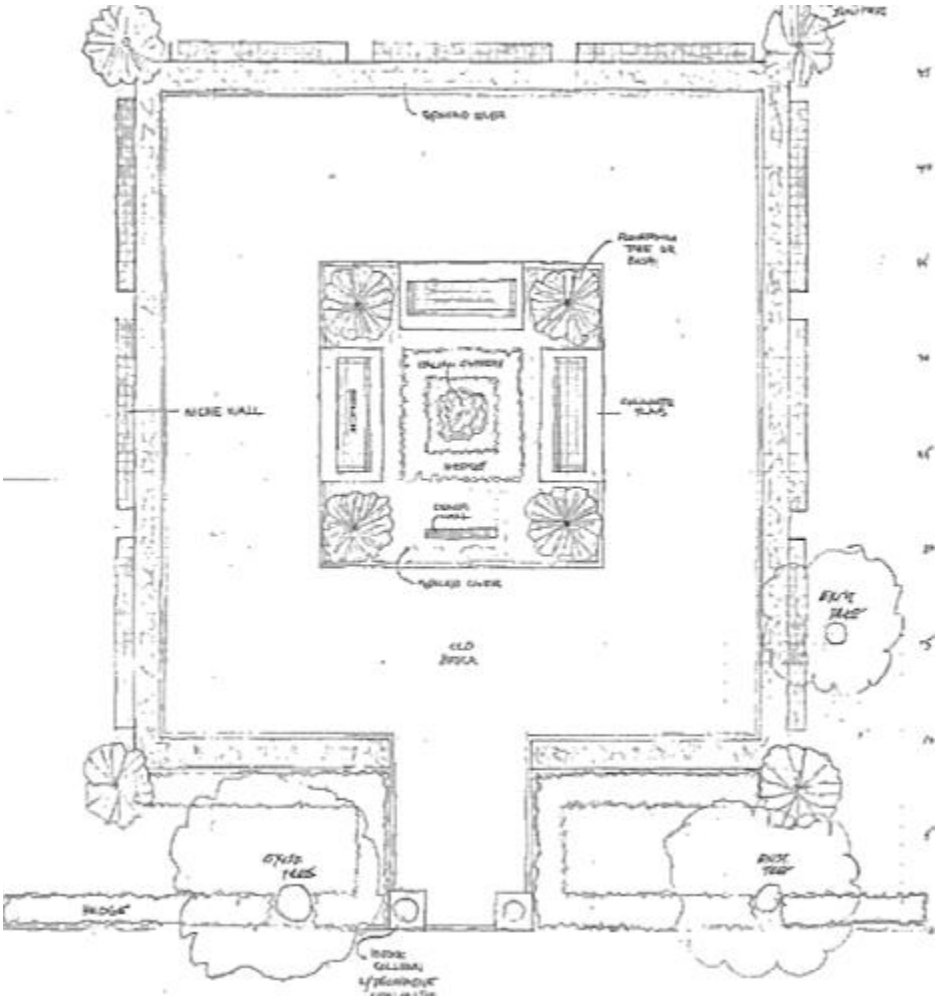
Potential Expansion Areas

Possible areas within the cemetery that may provide more space for traditional or alternative burials:

- Along Magnolia and Nassau Streets,
- Outside of the cemetery along North 14th Street, and
- Lots 24 and 25.

Even if the City adds alternate burial spaces, space for traditional burials will eventually run out. The City may wish to explore alternate land within City limits for future cemetery expansion, keeping in mind site constraints and environmental considerations such as sea level rise. Survey results indicated that a majority of respondents were very interested in alternative burial options such as columbaria, memorial walls, or gardens.

This above area, near Nassau Street, has not been platted and is an open, flat area that would appear to be suitable for a columbarium and/or memorial garden.



An example design for a memorial garden and columbaria in Bosque Bello along Nassau Street.

Fortunately, there are examples of alternative burial options on Amelia Island that can provide some background into this subject and ideas of the direction the City could take.

Amelia Plantation Chapel

The Amelia Plantation Chapel on the south end of the island has several alternative burial options to plot burial. Because they do not have a traditional cemetery, they offer two options.

The first option is a columbarium, which is a wall with small niches where the cremains of people are interred. The Chapel has constructed a second columbaria, because the first columbariums sold out so quickly with reservations. The second columbarium is still accepting reservations. The total cost of one of the columbariums walls was approximately $25,000, excluding landscaping.

From the front, the columbaria look like a simple stone wall in a garden. The niches are accessed from the back of the wall, and a centralized plaque is placed on the wall for individual names to be added as the niches are used. Photos on this page illustrate the columbaria at the Chapel.

The columbaria were designed by a local architect, helping to reduce costs, and ensuring that the design would be appropriate for the location. The Chapel reports that the columbaria are very desirable, and that the Chapel members have been thankful for such an option.

The Chapel indicates that "[t]he fee for the ashes of each person to be interred in either the Garden directly into the ground or in an urn in a Columbarium niche is $1,000. (Fee includes exterior bronze name plate installed on the plaque.) If interment in the Columbarium is requested in a Chapel-supplied urn, a charge for the current cost of a brass urn and engraving will be made at the time of interment. The Chapel office will provide current cost upon request."

Urn provided by the Chapel for the columbaria

The second option is a memorial garden, which functions similiarly to a columbaria in that the name of the individual is placed on a plaque onto a wall. However, the difference is that niches are not included in the wall; rather, ashes are buried directly into the ground in a place adjacent to the wall. This potentially has an even smaller financial impact than a columbaria.

Memorial Garden at the Amelia Plantation Chapel

The Chapel at the Plantation does not offer a strictly memorial wall, which is a wall in which names are inscribed, but neither the person nor their ashes are interred there. This is usually used as an option when an individual is buried elsewhere, but the family or friends wish to commemorate them in some manner.

First Presbyterian Church of Fernandina Beach

The Presbyterian Church located in downtown Fernandina Beach offers both a memorial column and columbaria. Located behind the Church's office, this memorial area contains three columbarium walls with niches for interring the cremated remains of Church members and their loved ones and a column that may be etched with names.

Per the Presbyterian Church, the current one-time fee for the right of interment in a columbarium is $1,700 per niche. This fee includes all costs directly associated with inurnment, inscription of names and dates, and perpetual care of the Columbarium. It does not include the urns, cost of cremation, transportation and other off-premises cost. The fee may be changed in the future by the Committee if approved by the Session. Current holders of Interment Rights will neither be reimbursed nor assessed additional costs if the fee changes.

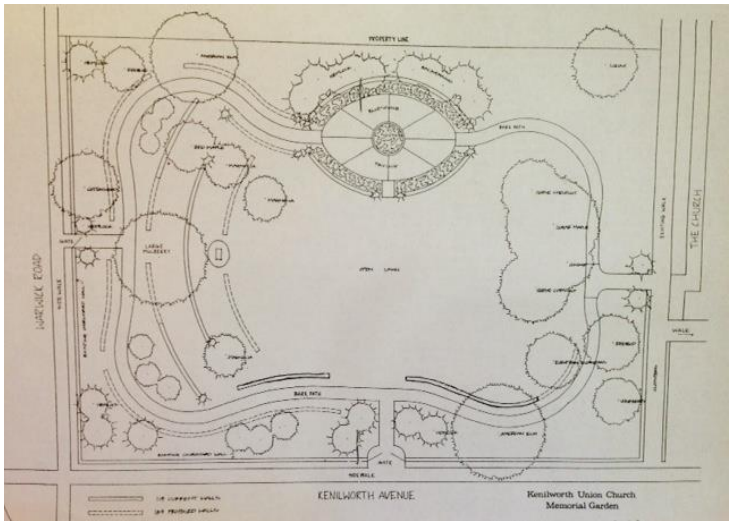
The Church utilized a company that specializes in columbaria design, and the estimated total for the project was approximately $100,000.

Columbaria area at First Presbyterian. The memorial column is visible just beyond the fountain.

Kenilworth Union Church
Memorial Garden

Another option that is not available in Nassau County at this time is a memorial garden. An example of this is found at Kenilworth Union Church in Kenilworth, Illinois. It is called the Bowen Memorial Garden. Names and dates are put on granite plaques set in meandering stone walls throughout the garden. Small urns may be buried in front of the appropriate plaque. A full plot/site can accommodate up to nine in-ground urns (3 urns closest to wall, 3 in middle, and final 3). Cost for full plot/site: $3,500. A half plot/site entitles owner to space for 4 urns. Cost is $1,800.

Kenilworth Union Church
Memorial Garden Site Plan



Summary

Given that Bosque Bello is estimated to run out of burial space within 10-12 years at the current rate of sale, the City needs to be evaluating different options for burial. There is not another public burial site on the island.

Items to consider include:

- The type of alternative burial options to make available (include pros/cons of each),
- Design,
- Costs of construction,
- Locations,
- Phasing,
- How the sites would be designated/dedicated (by resolution, most likely),
- Funding,
- How the columbaria would be maintained annually and in perpetuity, and
- Fees for spaces and interment.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public Outreach

Survey

As a means to gauge public understanding, awareness, and usage of the Bosque Bello Cemetery, a survey was distributed to the residents of Fernandina Beach from late 2013 to early 2014. Hardcopies of the survey were available at city hall and the parks and recreation office, while electronic versions were sent out over email, press releases and the city website. A total of 217 residents took the survey and the results were considerably positive. It indicated that a majority of the respondents were in favor of improving and utilizing the cemetery, as well as participating in any future visioning exercises and cemetery-related events.

According to the survey results, though only a few individuals were aware of the possibility of alternative burial methods, the majority of participants (over 70%) were interested in creating a location for cremated remains, such as a columbaria, scattering garden or memorial wall. There was also a strong indication that the participants desired to diversify the burial options, and have the city offer new methods such as, family vessels and urns. Another important outcome was that the majority of the participants could see Bosque Bello as a public space for passive activities, such as meditating, walking, bird watching or special events to honor those who have died. Over 60% were in favor of making information about the history and location of graves available via a kiosk or mobile app, and believed that the addition of benches and interpretive signage would greatly enhance a visitor's experience to the cemetery. At present, the respondents found the lack of landscape, tree, headstone and wall maintenance to be the most prominent issue at Bosque Bello. To become more involved with these improvement and preservation efforts, a majority have indicated a willingness to partake in a "Friends of Bosque Bello" group, which would help guide the restoration and future care of the cemetery, as well as desire to attend events or activities hosted by Walkin' Nassau, the Amelia Island Museum of History or the Amelia Island Genealogical Society in Bosque Bello.

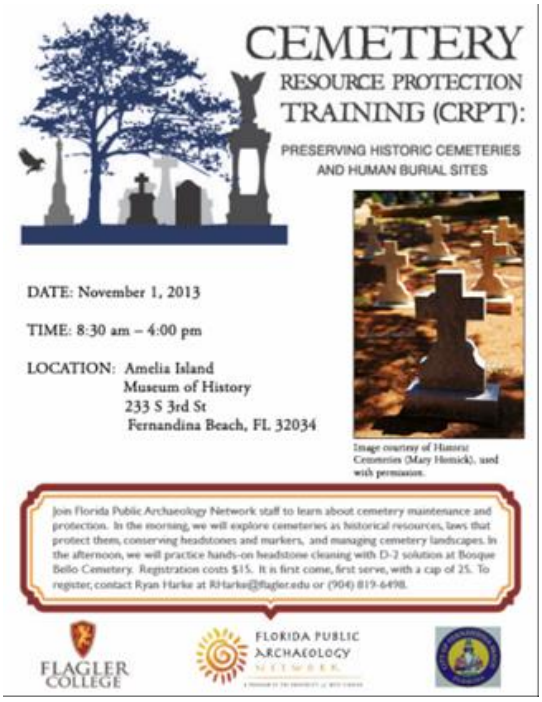
The survey results are including in the appendices. 69 people left their contact information in order to receive more information about Bosque Bello or get involved in future activities, events, or workshops.

Cemetery Resource Protection Training

On November 1, 2013, the Florida Public Archaeology Network conducted their Cemetery Resource Protection Training (CRPT) in Fernandina Beach, open to the public. This training consists of classroom work in the morning on cemetery preservation in general, laws, and cemetery iconography, history, and discussion. The afternoon portion of the program is a hands on session, which was conducted at Bosque Bello. Participants learned how to property clean headstones and markers, and got some basic information on other types of cemetery materials and structures, like fencing and coping. Several members of the cemetery master plan working group participated, and in all, there were 22 class attendees.

William Henry Hewlett Stone Before Cleaning

William Henry Hewlett Stone After Cleaning



Cemetery Resource Protection Training Conference 2014

In June 2014, several members of the cemetery working group, Adrienne Burke, Teen Peterson, and Meredith Jewell, went to the first annual FPAN Cemetery Resource Protection Conference in Gainesville. This two day event elaborated upon concepts learned in the local CRPT workshop, and including training on how to reset headstones, clean ironwork, use different tools for maintenance, and learn about ground penetrating radar. In addition, there were classroom sessions, one of which was a presentation by Adrienne Burke on the Bosque Bello cemetery master planning process.

Adrienne Burke presenting at the CRPT conference

Conference attendees at Evergreen Cemetery in Gainesville

Public Workshop

A year later, on November 1, 2014, the City hosted a public workshop on the cemetery master planning process at the Amelia Island Museum of History. Part of the program was an overview of the cemetery master planning process, and the rest of the session was a small group breakout exercise around a series of questions:

- what does Bosque Bello mean to you,
- what do you need to find when you visit a cemetery,
- what do you want to learn when you visit a cemetery,
- what do you need to know when you visit a cemetery,
- how do you want to access information about the cemetery,
- how would you encourage people to learn about Bosque Bello,
- would you support appropriate and respectful tourism programs at Bosque Bello (walking tours, photography, etc.),
- how do you feel about partnerships between the City and community organizations to help maintain and promote the cemetery, and
- what tools would make it easier for people to document histories of people buried in the cemetery and what should the City or partners do with that information?

Information from the workshop participants is included in the appendices. Answers were similar to some of the survey input which indicated that people want more interpretation at the cemetery and better access to location information about people buried at the cemetery. They provided some ideas for such projects. Participants encouraged the City to provide more maintenance and care of the cemetery, and overall supported passive activities in the cemetery.

Summary

In the future, the city should seek to increase their public outreach efforts regarding the cemetery. There are several possible methods, such as activities in the cemetery as mentioned earlier in the plan, community meetings/public forums, posting and exchanging information with residents via a website or blog, conducting oral histories, engaging partners to help care for the cemetery, etc. that may be used to further this goal. Most importantly, it is necessary for the city to keep an outlet open to the public for both the giving and receiving of information pertaining to the cemetery, and work to strengthen and maintain relationships with the entities dedicated to it. 139 survey respondents indicated they would either be interested in joining a "Friends of Bosque Bello" group (50) or would maybe be interested (89). Increased participation is crucial to the success of the Bosque Bello Master Plan and continued preservation of the cemetery.

Ideas include:

- Partnerships with community organizations for care and maintenance of the cemetery.
- Utilize City website to provide more information on the cemetery.
- Create brochures with information on significant people buried in the cemetery, walking tour
- Informational kiosks at the cemetery.
- Better communication by the City about existing information available through Amelia Island Genealogical Society website.
- Better wayfinding signage so that people can easily identify grave locations.
- Continue to have cemetery protection training workshops.
- Work with the Museum to conduct oral histories of people who have connections to Bosque Bello.
- Continue to make Bosque Bello available for passive activities like photography, bird watching, history or nature walks, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Recommendations and Implementation

It is recommended that this cemetery plan be re-evaluated at least every five years. Another suggestion is to take the recommendations as outlined and establish priority levels (1-2 years, 3-5 years, 5-7+ years) for projects and phasing, as well as identifying who the responsible entities are for carrying out the recommended actions.

Improve Documentation

- Need updated survey of Ancient Section (last done in 1988)
- Update documentation of old section
- Complete enclosure survey of family plots
- Coordinate ground penetrating radar in areas where stones may be missing or it is suspected there are burials
- Need to identify full list of veterans known to be buried and identify by conflict

Nominate to National Register and add Block 221 to Local Historic District

- Received preliminary National Register eligibility from DHR after sending in PSIQ
- Need boundary survey
- Will need design guidelines created per districting process in Land Development Code
- Will go through process in LDC

Continue GIS Mapping

- Finish mapping of old section first
- Move on to new section
- Coordinate with County on module that would allow access on public GIS
- Determine how mapping will be updated in the long-term

Provide Better Information Management

- Try to identify any City resolutions pre-1948 and ordinances pre-1954
- Coordinate with Huff + Battise and local churches to see if they have any records related to Bosque Bello
- Implement new software system to improve tracking and sales
- Identify long-term document and record management strategy and who formal record keeper will be

Plan for Future of Bosque Bello

- Plan for alternative burial options in light of plot space running out within 10-12 years – columbaria, scattering garden, urns, family vessels, memorial wall
- Implement preservation and cleaning techniques recommended by P. Davenport and Florida Public Archaeology Network
- Provide appropriate staffing levels to maintain the cemetery
- Provide appropriate training for cemetery staff (office and field)
- Consider upgrades: meditation garden, benches, trash receptacles, restroom
- Update City Code to allow for City to maintain structures/markers/stones after 50 or 70 years after last burial and diligent search fails to produce owner of lot
- Consider prohibiting gravestone rubbing
- Identify other needed updates to municipal code regarding the cemetery
- Increase security in the cemetery – consider installing trail cameras and have regular police presence. Consider installing fence/gates around Ancient Section
- Long-term questions: Contracting out operation and maintenance or selling to a private cemetery operator
- Consider pet cemetery or pet memorial garden option (not necessarily at Bosque Bello)

Evaluate Funding

- Evaluate fee structure for existing burials and future options, including annual and perpetual maintenance requirements
- Determine whether perpetual fund could be put in interest-bearing account
- Identify grant opportunities and/or potential funding sources for landscape plan (incl. irrigation) specifically – SJRWMD, DAR, Utility Dept., DHR Small Matching Grant, Rayonier, impact fees
- Establish policies/procedures for special circumstances – waived burial fee for veterans, pauper burials
- Identify whether impact fees can be used for future expansions/alternative burial options
- If Friends group is established, consider annual fundraiser or other fundraising/capital campaigns

Implement Wayfinding System

- Update street signs in new section – remove National Register (not accurate)
- Provide clear identification of old and new sections for easier wayfinding for visitors
- Look at other cemeteries for examples of signage and wayfinding
- Name the unnamed streets
- Create brochures
- Explore placement of kiosk near entry that helps explain how to navigate the cemetery

Protect Landscaping, Tree Canopy, and Environment

- Have landscape plan created for the entire cemetery by landscape professional
- Implement ideas from IFAS – Rebecca Jordi
- Install measures to prevent further erosion
- Identify if impact fees could be used to pay for irrigation or landscape plan
- Create pre-disaster and post-disaster plan for cemetery
- Identify sea-level rise mitigation options
- Establish partnerships – Amelia Tree Conservancy, North Florida Land Trust

Create Programming and Outreach

- Better share available options with the community
- Consider regularly scheduled events that help encourage community stewardship
- Identify partnerships with community organizations for help in maintenance and care of the cemetery
    - Consider establishment of volunteer/conservancy/friends group
    - Cemetery Advisory Board, Cemetery Committee
    - Donations/fundraising - Memorial bench or tree program
    - Day of Service
    - Local landscapers help in exchange for putting up their signs
    - Master gardeners/naturalists
    - Churches, Boy Scouts, etc.
- Utilize City website to provide more information on the cemetery
- Create brochures with information on significant people buried in the cemetery, walking tour - heritage trail, tree trail
- Install informational kiosks at the cemetery – information about those buried, available online resources through AIGS, rules of the cemetery
- Ensure communication by the City about existing information available through Amelia Island Genealogical Society website
- Provide wayfinding signage so that people can easily identify grave locations
- Continue to have cemetery protection training workshops
- Work with the Museum to conduct oral histories of people who have connections to Bosque Bello.
- Encourage use of the cemetery for passive activities like photography, bird watching, history or nature walks, etc. A watched cemetery is a protected cemetery!

Appendices

APPENDIX A: Applicable State Statutes

APPENDIX B: Comprehensive Plan policies

APPENDIX C: City documents, codes, ordinances and resolutions

APPENDIX D: Budget/Capital Improvement Plan Projects

APPENDIX E: City Sexton/Superintendent List and City Forms

APPENDIX F: Florida Master Site File Form (updated 2014)

APPENDIX G: National Register Preliminary Site Information Questionnaire and State Response

APPENDIX H: 1988 Maps of Old Section

APPENDIX I: Cultural Landscape Information

APPENDIX J: List of Pre-WWII Veterans Buried at Bosque Bello

APPENDIX K: Presentation on Master Planning for City Cemeteries

APPENDIX L: Agendas from Master Plan Working Group Meetings

APPENDIX M: Survey Information

APPENDIX N: Miscellaneous Outreach

APPENDIX O: November 2014 Public Workshop Information

APPENDIX P: Notes from Meetings with Patricia Davenport and Rebecca Jordi

APPENDIX Q: Information on Amelia Plantation Chapel Columbaria and Kenilworth Memorial Garden

APPENDIX R: References and Sources