

Chapter 3

**“Let’s Build a Future Together:
Strengthening Our Foundation to
Move Forward”**



*3rd Annual Citrus County
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Leadership Gala*

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Projects Timeline

April 2023 ———

*Friends of Crystal Memorial
Gardens Cemetery Founded*

September 2024 ———

*Senator Blaise Ingoglia visits
Historic Crystal Memorial
Gardens Cemetery*

July 2025 ———

*FCMGC awarded \$81,000
State Appropriation for
Cemetery Projects*

January 22, 2026 ———

*The State Appropriation
executed (Fully Enacted)*

6 months
Appropriation
Projects



- Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Study
- Documentation (Software & Records Archival)
- Flood Mitigation Study/Plan
- National Historic Register Determination Process
- Monument Restoration
- Tree Trimming & Maintenance

18 months ———

*Florida Historical Landmark
Sign Installation Process*

Ongoing ———

*Community Cemetery Clean
Ups (Three per Year)*

*Annual Memorial Day
Veteran's Remembrance
Ceremony*

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Key Challenges & Opportunities

Challenges

Flood Plain Location

The Historic Cemetery is located within a designated flood plain, which presents ongoing challenges related to water retention, drainage, and long-term preservation of our historic burial grounds.

High Water Table & Ground Subsidence

The lower southeast quadrant of the cemetery is experiencing ground sinking due to a consistently high water table. This condition has caused sunken graves, and threatens monuments, and overall site stability.

Surrounding Development & Elevation Changes

Continued development and increased elevation of surrounding properties have altered natural drainage patterns. These changes restrict water outflow from the cemetery, exacerbating standing water and retention issues within the historic grounds.



Mitigating Opportunities

Despite existing environmental, infrastructure, and development challenges, several mitigating opportunities present pathways to long-term sustainability, preservation, and community benefit:

1. Strategic Drainage & Infrastructure Improvements

Targeted drainage enhancements, underdrain systems, and water-management solutions can significantly reduce flooding impacts while stabilizing vulnerable areas. These improvements protect historic grounds while strengthening resilience against future environmental pressures.

2. Proactive Planning with Transportation Expansion

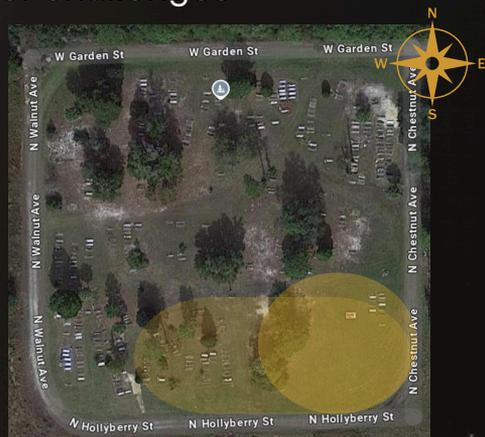
The extension of Toll Road 589 to Citrus Avenue creates opportunities for early coordination with transportation authorities. Collaborative planning can ensure proper buffering, stormwater management, and access control—minimizing negative impacts while improving visibility and accessibility.

3. Preservation-Focused Engineering Solutions

Utilizing preservation-sensitive engineering methods allows for structural reinforcement without disturbing historic integrity. Elevation-appropriate grading, permeable surfaces, and non-invasive stabilization techniques help protect sacred spaces while addressing soil and water challenges.



SEVERE SLOPING ON SE QUADRANT



WATER RETENTION AREAS

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4. Public-Private Partnerships

Partnerships with engineering firms, civic leaders, and community organizations can unlock funding, technical expertise, and long-term stewardship. These collaborations distribute responsibility while amplifying impact.

5. Increased Visibility & Educational Engagement

Infrastructure growth and increased traffic offer opportunities for enhanced signage, educational installations, and heritage tourism. Thoughtful interpretation can transform pass-through traffic into meaningful community engagement.

6. Grant & Resilience Funding Alignment

Environmental mitigation, historic preservation, and resilience planning align with multiple local, state, and federal funding streams. Positioning projects within these frameworks strengthens eligibility for grants and long-term investment.

7. Community-Driven Stewardship

Volunteer programs, service days, and educational partnerships encourage shared ownership and long-term care. Community involvement ensures sustainability beyond initial improvements.

Conclusion

By approaching existing challenges as opportunities for innovation and collaboration, this initiative establishes a forward-looking model for preservation, resilience, and community impact. Through thoughtful planning, strategic partnerships, and intentional investment, the site can be protected, enhanced, and positioned as a lasting asset for future generations.

Community Clean Ups



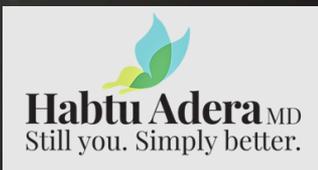
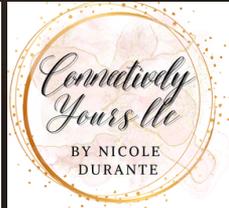
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