

# Drifting Urbanism

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This proposed waterfront redevelopment for Eustis, Florida is the second phase in a redevelopment masterplan prepared for this small town of 14,000. A distinctive feature organizing the masterplan is the integration of ecological concerns with those of transportation and new development. In this current phase the primary objective is to coordinate the redevelopment initiatives of various downtown commercial interest with those of the lakefront in a comprehensive design that promotes economic revitalization yet respects the endangered ecology of the lake's edge.

As a threshold that binds land and water, the design attempts to negotiate the conflicting interests that operate throughout four linear networks - a proposed pedestrian and boat docking infrastructure, the riparian ecology of the lake edge, two proposed landscape anchoring points as open civic spaces, and a band of abandoned commercial buildings slated for adaptive reuse. These four layers combine with the existing railroad to establish an intermodal transportation facility that connects local and regional travel between land and water by boat, train, automobile, small marine airplane, and foot. This diversification of transit expands the options of a car-based culture and its exclusive patterns of attraction across a region.

Fifteen percent of Lake County's surface is covered by a network of more than 1400 lakes, home to a large and growing population of avid boaters. Our proposal could be likened to a *protean urbanism* inspired more by ecology, water and the local patterns of movement that it favors, than by a tradition of proper urban form. As well, the low-impact, flexible, floating transportation infrastructure proposed is better equipped than a heavy, permanent, land-based system in responding to fluctuating demographic concentrations and the attendant stress that such shifts place on local resources. Like most early-American urban waterfronts, the Eustis urban-riparian seam has been organized by the isotropic rationality of contemporary transportation and utility

service networks. This indifference to place, local history, and its myth-laden traditions stems from their single-purpose logic — efficiency in resource allocation. Local history, a sense of place, and the body then, are consciously inscribed values in the tectonic and spatial organizations of the proposed redevelopment infrastructure.



