

Historical Background

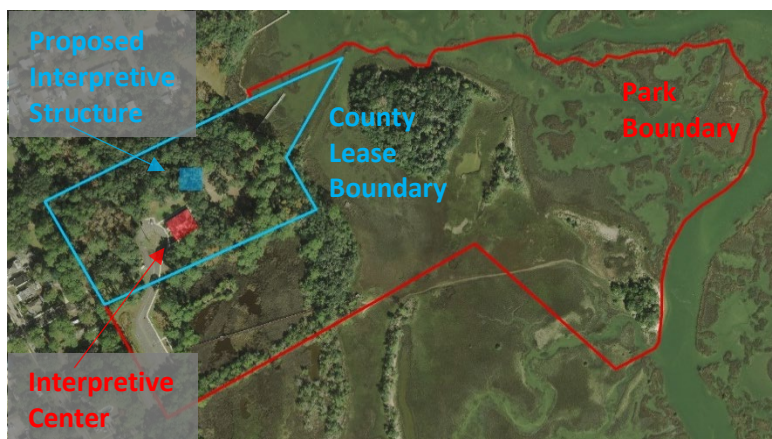
Fort Mose is one of only a few sites in Florida where an autonomous community of free men and women of African heritage existed alongside European colonial civilizations.

Out of the colonial period autonomous black maroon communities, Fort Mose stands out as a time and place where self-emancipated persons and their descendants played a unified, integral role in the geopolitics and wars waged between new world empires at this early point in Florida history. Not only was the African American community free at Fort Mose; it operated as a sociopolitical entity within Spanish Florida, acting as a first defense against British invasion of St. Augustine from the northern English colonies. Today, this interpretive project honors their legacy of perseverance, victory, and freedom.

Project Description

A 2500 square foot ADA-compliant structure will be built in the style of an 18th century Spanish colonial outpost inspired by the original 1738 Fort Mose and akin to other outposts built by the Spanish across northeastern Florida during that time. The proposed location is on St. Johns County land leased to Division of Recreation & Parks for management under Fort Mose State Park. Since no exact description of the original fort survives, this structure is not an exact replica. Rather, it shall serve as an interpretive aid for visitors and re-enactors to better understand this period of history, and to engage with the story of the free black community at Fort Mose.

Project Site within Fort Mose State Park



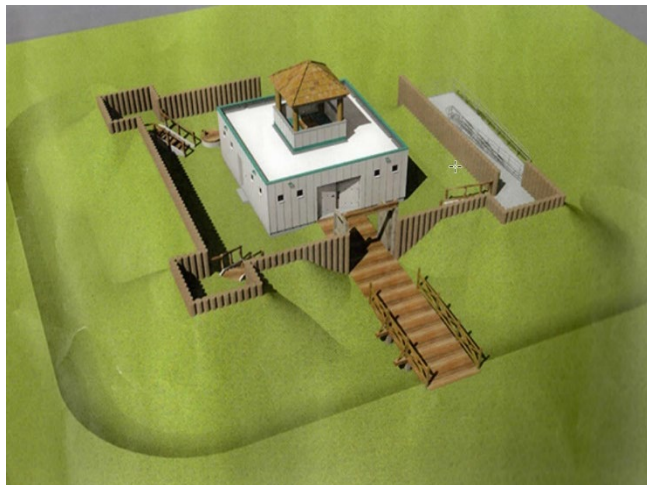
Fort Mose Interpretive Project

Office of Park Planning
2022 Amendment

The option to create a historically inspired structure for interpretation and re-enactment was preferred and selected out of a range of other possibilities, such as superimposed etched-glass imaging. This course of action was selected because, given the active presence of a historical re-enactment community, a physically occupiable interpretive space was deemed more ideal than two-dimensional imagery.

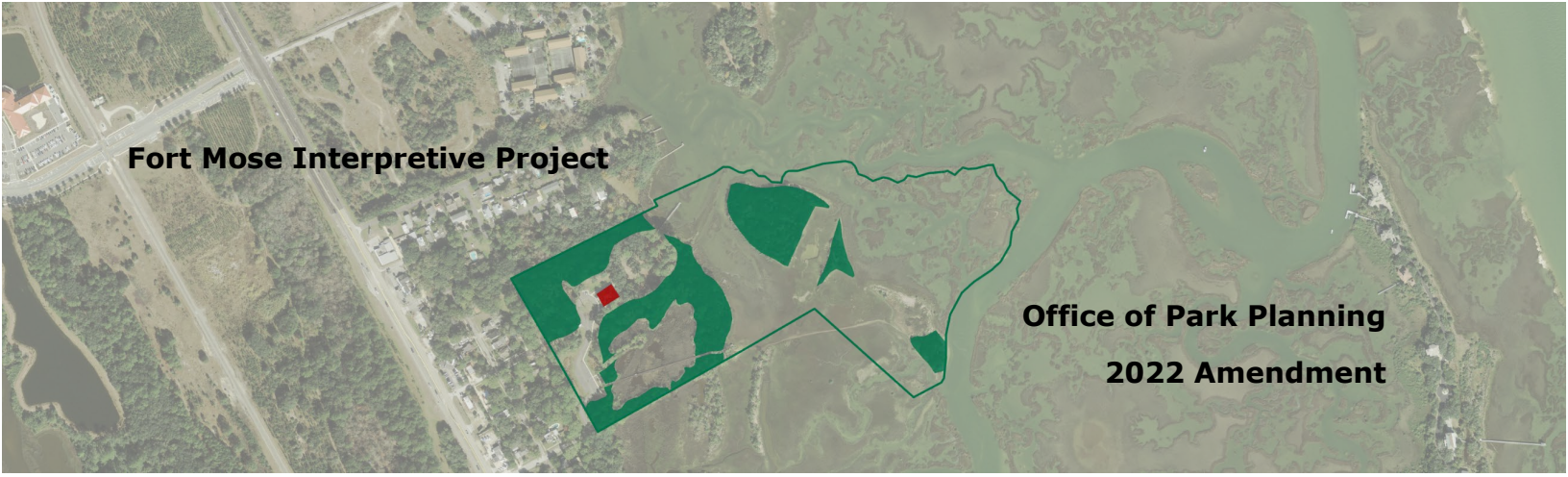
The bastion wall surrounding Fort Mose will include gaps so that audiences can more readily observe re-enactments. These gaps are intended to serve as “snapshots in time”, mimicking damage sustained during siege by the British, adding another interpretive resource for story-building while making re-enactments more viewable.

Proposed Fort Interpretive Structure



Additional Considerations

Various interior and exterior portions of the fort structure may be used as a space for public interpretation aided by park materials. Interpretive materials will need space for storage when not on public display. It is recommended that this storage space be incorporated in a way that does not conflict with the historically inspired aesthetic of the interpretive fort structure. Regarding accessibility, times during which the fort structure shall be open to the public will be scheduled at the discretion of the park and district. From a logistical staff-oriented standpoint, the ideal may be to align the fort’s schedule with the open-hours of the nearby interpretive center.



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Currently, no utility connections are proposed for the fort project. However, such installations may be added as needed. Any visible utility features, such as electrical lines or air conditioning, should likewise not conflict with the historically inspired aesthetic of the interpretive fort structure.

Added impervious surface will likely warrant stormwater conveyance or capture.

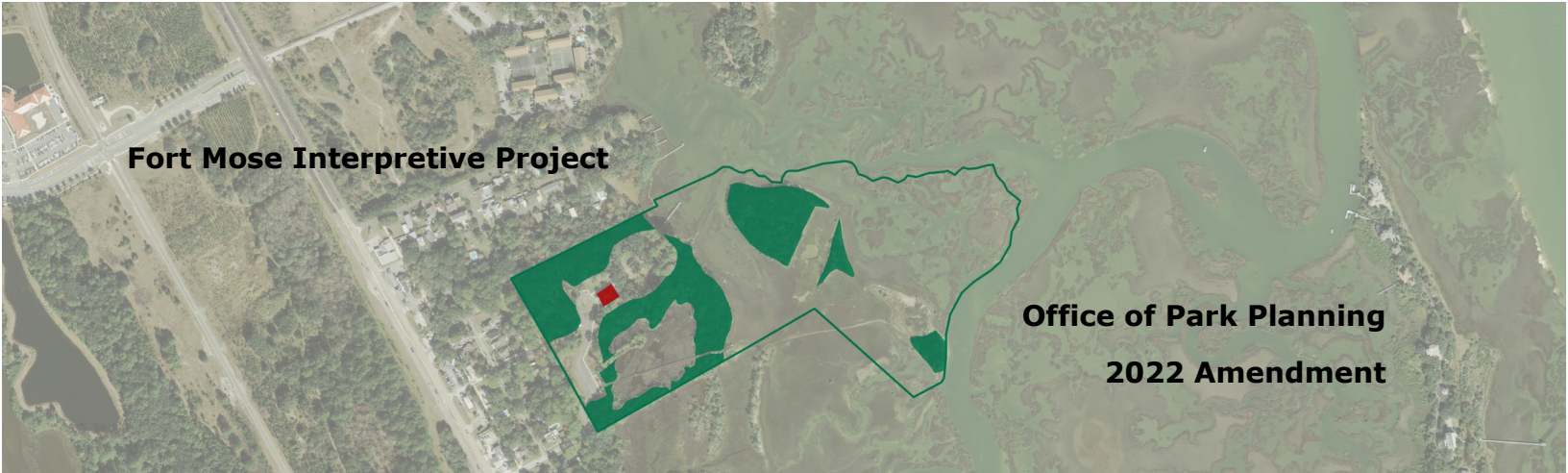
This interpretive project does not establish precedent for future projects in Florida State Parks; all opportunities for interpreting historical sites are planned case-by-case. Options not taken in some circumstances – descriptive panels, superimposed etched-glass viewing panels, etc. – are still tenable for interpretation of other historical scenarios at this park or elsewhere in the park system. The Division of Recreation and Parks is confident in this project as a means of approaching and presenting the history of Fort Mose.

Resource Impact Assessment

Fort Mose occupied two locations in its history. The site of the original 1738 Fort Mose is now thought to lie submerged among estuaries outside the state park boundary. The site of the second Fort Mose rebuilt by the Spanish after the original fort's destruction by the British is located elsewhere in the state park, unaffected by this proposed reconstruction.

The current understanding of history and archaeology at Fort Mose State Park holds that no historically sensitive areas will be impacted by this reconstruction. The fort reconstruction is not being built at either of the locations of the original 18th century Spanish fort. No areas of archaeological sensitivity identified by the Florida Master Site File overlap with the footprint of the proposed structure.

The structure's footprint lies within a 1.33-acre area of previous disturbance and development not classified as any natural community recognized by FNAI. This developed area is adjacent to maritime hammock and salt marsh. Given the disturbed character of the vegetation present at the proposed site, no negative impact to natural communities is foreseen.

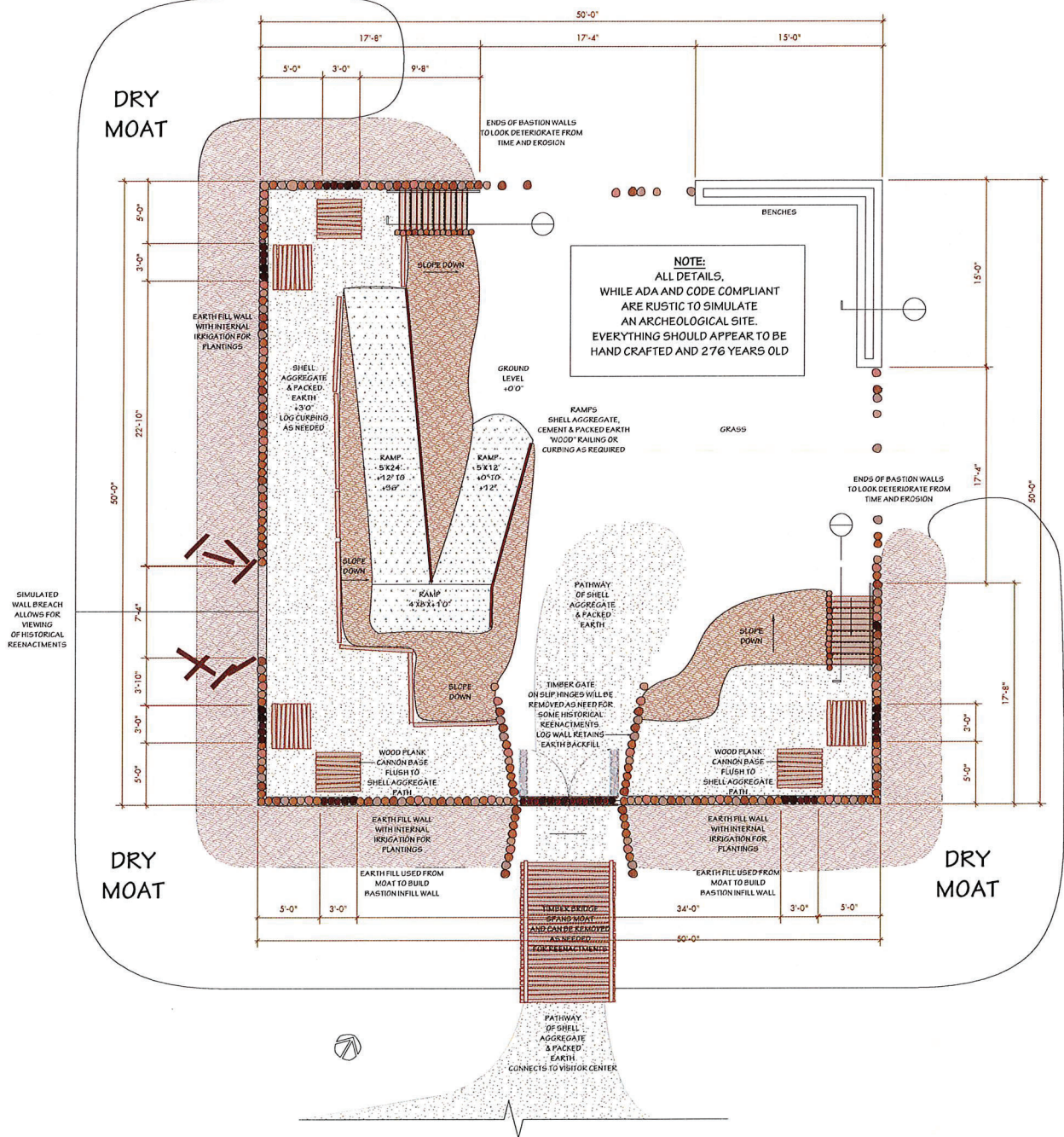


Fort Mose Interpretive Project

**Office of Park Planning
2022 Amendment**

SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES

ALTERNATE ADA RAMP LOCATION



**FORT MOSE STATE PARK
HISTORICAL BASTION RECREATION**
PRELIMINARY PLAN VIEW

SHEPARD DRAFTING DESIGN
CRAWFORD/SHERMAN DESIGN
FORT MOSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

STEPHEN McCOLLAR
REGISTERED ARCHITECT



580 Wells Road, Suite 1
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309
954.384.2443
954.384.8462 FAX
FL Registration: AR 1727

HISTORIC
REPRESENTATION

FORT MOSE
STATE PARK

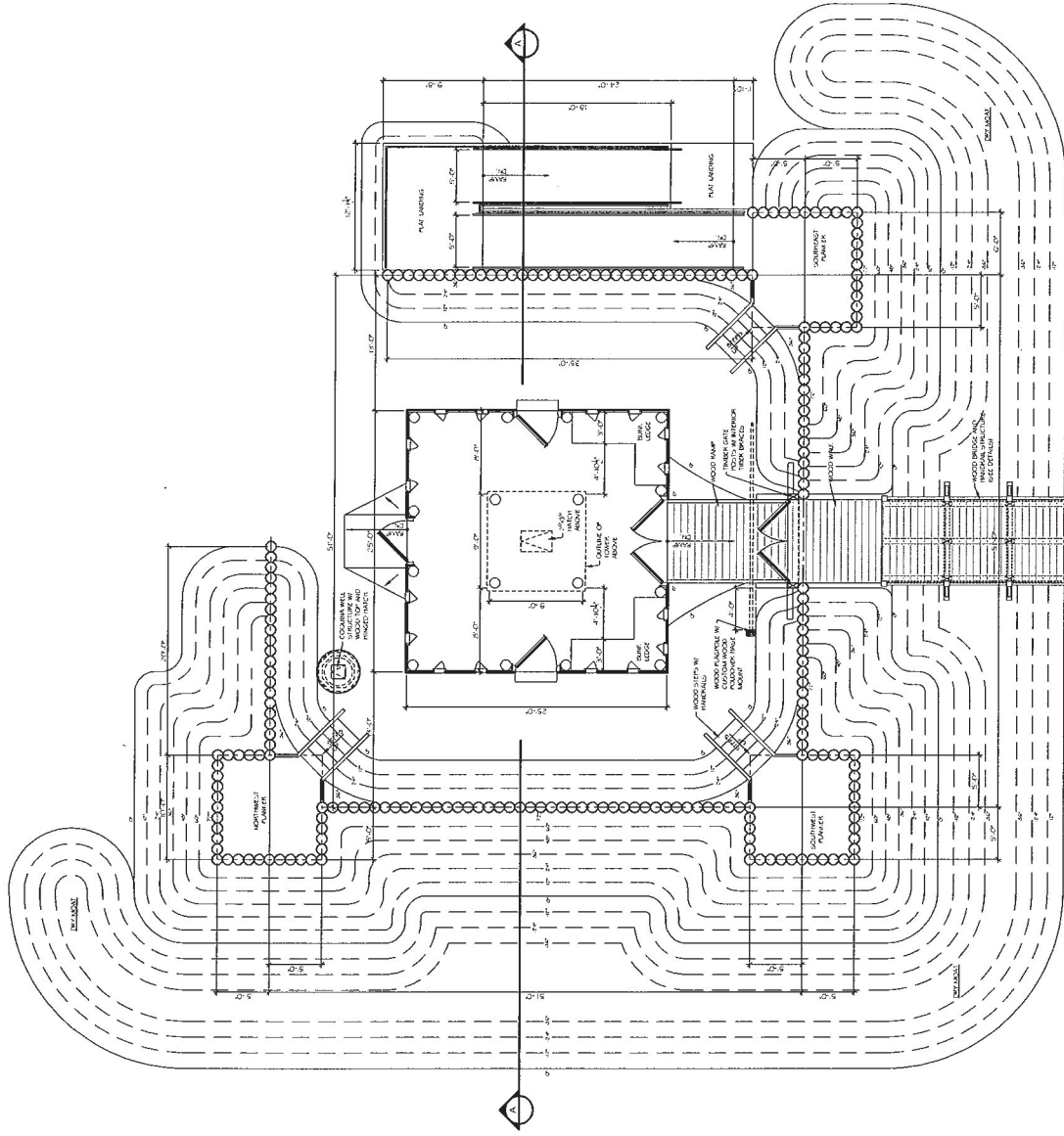
ST. AUGUSTINE
FLORIDA

SCALE

REVISIONS
NO. DATE

JOB NO. 10000
DRAWING NO. DMS
CREATED BY SCM

A



PRELIMINARY FLOOR PLAN
3/28/11

Interagency Review
Letters of Support and ARC Process Comments
August 2022

- **Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources** – Cultural Resources Review
- **St. Johns River Water Management District** – Natural Resources Review
- **St. Johns County** – Local Government Review



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

RON DESANTIS
Governor

CORD BYRD
Secretary of State

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks
Office of Park Planning

July 14, 2022

Re: DHR No.: 2022-1572
Project: Fort Mose State Park Interpretive Project

To Whom It May Concern:

Our office reviewed the referenced project in accordance with Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes*, and implementing state regulations, for possible effects on historic properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the *National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)*, or otherwise of historical, architectural or archaeological value.

It is the recommendation of this office that ground-disturbing activities associated with this project be monitored by a professional archaeologist. The purpose of monitoring will be to identify archaeological deposits or significant artifacts that may be encountered. Should significant archaeological deposits, features or artifacts be encountered, the archaeologist must be empowered to direct the project activities to shift away from such resources. This discretionary power would enable the monitor to contact this office and to determine measures that must be taken to avoid, minimize adverse effects to the site; or to proceed to recover the archaeological resources in a professional manner. When the archaeologist has completed recordation and/or recovery measures the project activities would be allowed to continue as planned. At completion of the project, the archaeological monitor must compile a monitoring report in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 1A-46, Florida Administrative Code to be forwarded to this office. In the event that unmarked human remains are encountered during permitted activities, all work shall stop immediately and the proper authorities notified in accordance with Section 872.05, Florida Statutes.

In addition, because the project will occur on state lands, it will require a 1A-32 permit. The archaeological consultant should contact Brandon Ackermann at Brandon.Ackermann@DOS.myflorida.com or 850-245-6334, Bureau of Archaeological Research.

Division of Historical Resources
R.A. Gray Building • 500 South Bronough Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32399
850.245.6300 • 850.245.6436 (Fax) • FLHeritage.com



If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Tobias, Historic Sites Specialist, by email at Jennifer.Tobias@dos.myflorida.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly L. Chase" with "For" written below it.

Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D.
Director, Division of Historical Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer



St. Johns River Water Management District

Michael A. Register, P.E., Executive Director

4049 Reid Street • P.O. Box 1429 • Palatka, FL 32178-1429 • 386-329-4500 • www.sjrwmd.com

August 19, 2022

Daniel Alsentzer, Planning Manager
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks
Office of Park Planning

Re: Fort Mose State Historic Park Interpretive Project

Dear Mr. Alsentzer,

Thank you for reaching out to the District for comments on the Fort Mose State Historic Park Interpretive Project Conceptual Plan. We normally provide detailed comments on properties we hold fee interest, like Pumpkin Hill Creek or St. Sebastian River Preserve. Since the District does not hold any ownership interest in the project area parcel, or any parcels in the immediate vicinity, District Land Resources staff have no concerns with the conceptual plan. The consideration of known cultural resources as well as the natural communities on site is excellent.

As the project moves forward, please ensure that all applicable permits are applied for including a SJRWMD Environmental Resource Permit which will involve review and approval by District regulatory staff and will address any potential impacts to wetlands. If you have any questions, please contact me at (386) 329-4377 or bemanuel@sjrwmd.com. Best of luck with this great interpretation of cultural resources!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Emanuel".

Brian Emanuel
Chief, Bureau of Land Resources
St. Johns River Water Management District

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Cole Oliver
MERRITT ISLAND

Janet Price
FERNANDINA BEACH

Dear Mr. Alsentzer,

Thank you for reaching out to the St. Johns County Historic Resources Management Office regarding the proposed fort construction at Fort Mose. My only concern is that this construction focuses more so on the site's history as a fortification rather than a free black community of escaped slaves by excluding residential structures that would add to the interpretation possibilities to the site. As the plan document states though it is an "interpretive aid" to give guests an idea of what the site may have looked like and is not definitive. It may be a good idea to position the fort so that additional structures may be built around it at some point in the future to expand on the interpretation of the Fort Mose settlement.

Sincerely,
Trey Asner



Trey A. Asner

Cultural Resources Coordinator
St. Johns County Growth Management
Direct: (904) 209-0623
Cell: (904) 599-3801
tasner@sjcfl.us

From: [Jan Brewer](#)
To: [Alsentzer, Daniel](#)
Cc: [Beverly Frazier](#); [Gail Oliver](#); [Teresa Bishop](#)
Subject: Fort Mose
Attachments: [060121.Blocker.Fort Mose Grant.pdf](#)

Daniel – you requested a letter of support from St. Johns County for the draft plan for the proposed construction of a fort replica at Fort Mose Historic State Park to send to the Florida Acquisition & Restoration Council for final evaluation. On June 1, 2021 the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners sent a letter to Tim Parsons supporting the grant application for the reconstruction. I trust that the letter, which is attached, will suffice as the County’s demonstration of support for the project.

Thank you -

Jan Brewer

Environmental Division Manager

St. Johns County Growth Management

4040 Lewis Speedway

Office: 904.209.0617 / Cell: 904.599.5695

PLEASE NOTE: Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners and employees regarding public business are public records available to the public and media through a request. Your e-mail communications may be subject to public disclosure.



St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

June 01, 2021

Dr. Timothy A. Parsons, SHPO
Florida Division of Historical Resources
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

RE: Letter of Financial Commitment – Reconstruction of Fort Mose, Special Categories Grant Application

Dr. Parsons,

Please accept this letter as our show of support for the Florida State Park Foundation's Special Categories Grant application for the Reconstruction of Fort Mose. The Florida Division of Historical Resource's grant will help provide funding to rebuild a reconstruction of a portion of the wood and earthen bastion wall from the first Fort Mosé, structure dating to 1738, which will be used as a physical educational tool in conjunction with archaeological exhibits and an outdoor classroom.

St. Johns County recognizes the historic significance of Fort Mosé or *Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mosé*. Fort Mosé was the first legally sanctioned Black town in what is now the United States. The site is listed in the *National Register of Historic Places*, is a National Historic Landmark, and is a UNESCO Site of Memory. The site is also part of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor, and the Florida African American History Trail.

At the June 1, 2021 meeting, the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners voted to recommend support for this application. On behalf of the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners, please accept our Letter of Financial Commitment for \$50,000 which shall go toward the required Special Categories Grant match.

Your continued support to preserving and accentuating the historic culture of St. Johns County is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jeremiah R. Blocker
Chair, Board of County Commissioners
St. Johns County, Florida