

SITE AND AREA EVALUATION

The Site

The site of the proposed hotel is located at 601 US 41 South in Inverness, Florida. US 41 is a major “Blue Highway” – reflecting the color of the road asphalt sections. It was the main North/South road through North Central Florida prior to the construction of Interstate 75.

The East Property Boundary is the Withlacoochee State Trail. A connection to the trail from the hotel site is required to serve the hotel guests.

Highways

U.S. Highway 41

U.S. Route 41 (US 41) in the U.S. state of Florida is a north–south United States Highway. It runs 479 miles from Miami in South Florida northwest to the Georgia border north of the Lake City area. Within the state, US 41 is paralleled by Interstate 75 (I-75) all the way from Miami to Georgia (on the northern border).



US 41 as it runs through the State of Florida

Between Miami and Naples, US 41 cuts across the Florida peninsula, running through the vast Everglades wilderness. This section has been designated a National Scenic Byway. The byway runs east–west through the Big Cypress National Preserve, skirting the northern border of the Everglades National Park for about 20 miles. The part of the highway between Tampa and Miami is known as the Tamiami Trail (derived from the combination of Tampa and Miami, the road's two ends), thus, this section of the road is commonly known as the East Trail, as it runs east-west across the state, in contrast to the road's otherwise distinctively north-south route. Alligators are a common sight along the scenic Tamiami Trail from Miami to Naples. Unlike the parallel road, Alligator Alley, the trail is only one lane in each direction, and it has no fences to keep wildlife from crossing it.

In Naples, US 41 changes direction at the intersection of hidden SR 90 and hidden SR 45, turning from west to north towards Tampa, or from south to east towards Miami. This segment of US 41 is still considered the Tamiami Trail. US 41 has a bypass in Fort Myers that separates from the trail, however in the Venice Area, US 41 breaks away from the trail onto hidden SR 45A, while US 41 Business uses the trail. A connector to I-75 can be found just north of the northern end of the business route.

Two major US highways terminate at US 41 in the Sarasota-Bradenton Metropolitan Area. The first is US 301 in Sarasota, which runs straight, while US 41 curves to the west towards the John Ringling Causeway, only to turn back north again. North of the western end of it CR 610, it runs along the western edge of Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport where it crosses the Sarasota-Manatee County line. Across from the airport, the road serves as the address for New College of Florida, and then the University of South Florida's Sarasota/Manatee Campus. In Bradenton, US 41 makes a sharp turn east onto SR 684 at the intersection of US 41 Business. The road curves north onto SR 55 and it encounters US 301 again, and shares a short concurrency with the road across the Manatee River. US 301 makes a sharp right turn onto SR 43 at a diamond interchange, while US 41 continues north. Just after the interchange with the northern end of US 41 Business in Memphis, another interchange exists with the southern end of US 301 exists. Here, US 41 rejoins hidden SR 45, while hidden SR 55 moves to US 19, where it will stay until it reaches Perry. The rest of US 41's journey will continue along the east coast of Tampa Bay.

Tampa to Lutz

From US 41 Business and SR 676 near the unincorporated Palm River-Clair Mel to US 92 in Tampa, US 41 carries the unsigned SR 599 designation. It contains the northwestern end of the Tamiami Trail at the SR 60 intersection. It is normally three lanes wide, but between I-4 and the northern end of SR 569 is only two lanes wide. The unsigned state highway is 5.6 miles (9.0 km) long. At the northern end, US 41 turns west. (If one continues straight, 40th Street leads to Busch Gardens Tampa Bay.) Major intersections include the Lee Roy Selmon Expressway (SR 618), SR 60, I-4, SR 583, SR 569, and SR 574. US 41 runs west along US 92 (Hillsborough Avenue) for several blocks, and upon doing so shares SR 600 as a hidden route. One other major intersection exists

with SR 585, before running along the southern border of the Hampton Terrace Historic District where it turns north onto Nebraska Avenue (SR 45) just before approaching I-275 at Exit 47 A-B. Though not every signalized intersection along Nebraska Avenue provides access to I-275, many of them do. At first, the road runs through Old Seminole Heights where it remains along the border of the Hampton Terrace Historic District until the intersection of Hanna Avenue. The only other intersection that passes for a major street in the area is Sligh Avenue, which leads to Exit 48 on I-275 to the west. The road leaves Old Seminole Heights by crossing the 1923-built Nebraska Avenue Bridge over the Hillsborough River and enters Sulphur Springs, where one can find such sites as the Springs Theater on the corner of Sitka Street and on the opposite side, the former Tampa Greyhound Track between Bird Street and Waters Avenue. As the road is about to leave Sulphur Springs, a concrete median begins before US 41 crosses another at-grade railroad crossing along the south side of SR 580(Busch Boulevard). The rest of the way, it becomes the main north-south road through North Tampa, other than I-275.

West of the University of South Florida, US 41 intersects such major streets as State Road 582 (Fowler Avenue) and then several block north of there crosses SR 579/CR 582A (Fletcher Avenue). Further north, SR-CR 678 is the last chance for motorists to access I-275. After this, it curves to the northwest as it begins to run along the west side of the CSX Brooksville Subdivision, and both share an underpass with no access to I-275. Entering Lutz, the at-grade interchange with the northern end of BUS US 41 (Hidden SR 685), is where US 41 becomes six lanes wide. Most intersections beyond this point are only of local importance. Nevertheless, US 41 crosses the Brooksville Subdivision at a sharply diagonal at-grade crossing, and both curve to the right, where they both run straight north through the rest of Lutz. From this point on, it runs along the east side of the Brooksville Subdivision, both of which run straight north throughout most of the community. Shortly after passing the historic Old Lutz Elementary School on the east side, it encounters a traffic signal with the eastern end of Lutz-Lake Fern Road (unmarked CR 582) on the west side. A replica of the former Lutz Seaboard Air Line Railroad Depot can be found on the northwest corner between the railroad tracks and the local library. The further north that US 41 runs, the more likely it runs into dead end streets and private roads, some of which are on the opposite side of the tracks. The road curves to the northwest before intersecting with County Line Road at the Hillsborough-Pasco County Line and enters Land O' Lakes, where it is named Land O' Lakes Boulevard throughout the county.

Pasco County

US 41 only remains in the northwest direction until it encounters the northern end of State Road 597 (Dale Mabry Highway) and after turning straight north passing by some nudist colonies, almost instantly intersects SR 54. Almost a mile north of that point, the Brooksville Subdivision banks off to the northwest, while US 41 prepares to squeeze between some lakes for which the hamlet is named. North of County Road 583 (Ehren Cutoff) in the former community of Denham, the road narrows down to four lanes but remains divided as it curves to the northwest. Here, the road crosses the former right-of-way for a railroad line that ran between Tarpon Springs and Trilby until the mid-1970s. The road

curves north again and then passes Land O' Lakes High School where it had only recently been widened. This newly widened section serves as the two gateways to the still under construction Connerton Conner development, and has been slated to become the future end of CR 524 (Ridge Road Extension). Just after that, the gateway to the still under construction Tierra Del Sol development is where the division of the highway ends, although US 41 is still in the process of being widened throughout the northern Tampa Bay suburbs. Most of the surroundings beyond that point include dog sitting kennels, and run-down farms, although a road to the Pasco County Jail, with a fire station on the northeast corner stands out among the usual surroundings. After making another right curve and squeezing between two more small lakes, US 41 approaches a section of Land O' Lakes known as Gowers Corner, where the intersection of SR 52 can be found. Just east of Gowers Corner is the Pilot Country Airport, a local airport community.

Besides some random former motels and other businesses, most of the surroundings of this segment of the road consists of farmland, this time, much more active. Near a former lumber yard, US 41 crosses the Brooksville Subdivision again, and a local automotive and truck repair shop can be found on the northeast corner of that crossing. Continuing north, the road encounters sites such as the Detroit Resort Motel and shortly after this runs along the western edge of the Pasco Lake Estates community where it runs along a former section of the road known as Old Gainesville Highway and Pasco Lake Drive. An old narrow bridge across a dry creek can be found just north of this development. By the time the road reaches South Masaryktown the number of farm fields begin to diminish. A few small trailer parks, private homes and even some small businesses pop-up along the side of the road, but the farms don't completely move away from the road until after it crosses a narrow bridge over the Masaryktown Canal. Just north of the intersection of Bowman Road the west side of the road features a somewhat larger trailer park and private houses in front of a notably wide right-of-way for a future southbound lane. This right-of-way ends at Hernando-County Road 578, another County Line Road in Masaryktown, and US 41 becomes Broad Street.

Hernando County

Within Masaryktown, US 41 remains two lanes wide and serves as the main road, which includes a few small private motels and a restaurant known as Cafe Masaryktown, at a blinker-light intersection. Before the intersection of County Road 576, the road widens to four lanes again, and then enters Garden Grove, where it serves as the eastern edge of Hernando County Airport. After the airport property ends, it intersects County Road 574 (Spring Hill Boulevard), and then widens to six lanes nearly half way before approaching County Road 572 (Powell Road). Near downtown Brooksville, US 41 intersects SR 50/US Truck Route 98, and secretly takes SR 700 with it. SR 700 is exposed further north as it branches off to the northwest near the former Brooksville Hospital site. US 41 then narrows down to two lanes, curves to the east and becomes a one-way street that's concurrent with southbound U.S. Route 98 and eastbound SR 50A. At the intersection of North Mildred Avenue, eastbound SR 50A, US 41, and US 98 are concurrent along Broad Street, while westbound SR 50A, US 41, and US 98 are concurrent along East Jefferson Avenue, then West Jefferson Avenue. This one-way configuration for Broad Street and

Jefferson Street has been in effect since November 1993, according to the Florida Department of Transportation. While both segments go up and down steep hills in the heart of the city, the Broad Street (eastbound) section runs over an old railroad bridge built in 1936. The two intersections of Main Street (CR 445, former SR 45A) also contain the Hernando County Courthouse on the northeast corner of temporarily "eastbound" US 41/US 98/SR 50A," and the southeast corner of "westbound" US 41/98/SR 50A. After both segments drop into one last hill, US 98/SR 50A leaves US 41 at East Jefferson Street near May Avenue, and US 41 becomes a two-lane highway that drops down into yet another steep hill before curving north again where it intersects County Road 484 at a blinker-light intersection and climbs another one. It remains a two-lane highway through the rest of Hernando County. From this hill the road descends again as it runs between a trailer park on the northbound side, and a Brooksville school complex on the southbound side, both of which are on the southeast and southwest corners of CR 480 (Croom Road) respectively. From there the road serves as the end of CR 445 (Howell Avenue), but shortly afterwards becomes the southern end of Old Crystal River Road, which despite the name does not lead to Crystal River, assuming that it ever did. The rest of the route becomes more rural, as it runs towards some preserved land. Less private land can be found north of the southern end of CR 481 near Lake Lindsey. North of CR 476, US 41 runs through a portion of the Withlacoochee State Forest where it remains until it crosses the Hernando-Citrus County Line, and gets the name South Florida Avenue.

Citrus County through Marion County

Upon leaving the forest, the road remains almost as rural as it spends much of its time in Southern Citrus County as the same two-lane highway it was in northern Hernando County moving up and down various hills. As the road gets close to Downtown Floral City, it begins to run along the west side of the Withlacoochee State Trail, a former Atlantic Coast Line Railroad right-of-way that was converted into a rail trail shortly after being abandoned by CSX in 1987. The western end of County Road 48 is where US 41 also begins to include part of the DeSoto Trail. Meanwhile, the Withlacoochee State Trail continues to run along the east side of the road, often behind the backyards of local businesses and vacant lots. The only resemblance of a major intersection within this area is County Road 39A, a suffixed route of a former segment of State Road 39.

At some point, the road expands to a four-lane divided highway. The same types of local businesses continue to flank both roadsides until the road enters Inverness Highlands South where Citrus County Speedway and Inverness Airport can be seen on the west side. On the opposite side of these landmarks, Fort Cooper State Park is only accessible from the Withlacoochee State Trail, until the road enters the city limits of Inverness where it widens to six lanes. As the road climbs a slight grade and curves to the left, it approaches a concurrency with SR 44 which also includes a local divided highway named Highland Boulevard in this intersection. From there, US 41/SR 44 descends along a slight grade on the west coast of Cooter Lake, then winds around the Old Citrus County Courthouse and then Inverness Masonic Temple and at the intersection of Seminole Avenue suddenly turns

straight west. The concurrency ends at a wye intersection west of Tallmadge Avenue, as SR 44 heads straight to Crystal River, while US 41 branches off to the northwest onto North Florida Avenue. The first intersection after this is Davidson Avenue, which is part of County Road 581. Later it dips towards a hotel at the intersection of Montgomery Avenue and curves to the right as it replacing the aforementioned road's alignment. The road runs along the eastern edge of Whispering Pines Park as it climbs another hill with a shopping center at the bottom of an embankment and descends again towards the entrance of the Inverness Middle School on the same side, and a small industrial park on the other side.



Signs along US 41 in Inverness












Just before leaving the Inverness city limits, the Withlacoochee State Trail crosses under US 41 and runs along the west side of the road. The trail can be seen again on the west side of the road just south of East Arlington Street near Inverness Highlands North, and remains along that side of the street, although the trail moves slightly further away north of East Van Ness Street. On the opposite side of the street, a former Seaboard Air Line Railroad right-of-way follows US 41, although it's no longer noticeable until further north. Nevertheless, US 41 and the trail still remain close enough to each other as they enter the City of Hernando. Here, the road serves as the eastern end of County Road 486, a short cut to Crystal River for southbound traffic. As the road approaches the shores of one of the Tsala Apopka Lakes, State Road 200 branches off to the northeast towards Ocala, Jacksonville, and Fernandina Beach while US 41 continues northwest. From here the road is slightly further away from the Withlacoochee State Trail, but that trail is still close enough to the road. In the meantime, the previously mentioned SAL line becomes more noticeable. The road curves to the north and descends along a hill into Holder, where it meets the only main intersection; County Road 491. From there the road curves back northwest again, and runs through Citrus Springs.

The first intersection of Citrus Springs Boulevard is not the last place where Withlacoochee State Trail. and the former SAL line can be found on both sides, but it is the last place where a trailhead can be found in close proximity to the road. North of there the area has more pine trees, but both trails can still be seen on each side. Dead end streets for housing developments that were never built can be seen across the former railroad tracks. The Withlacoochee State trail moves away from US 41 for the last time just south of the

second intersection with Citrus Springs Boulevard, which is the gateway to Citrus Springs. US 41 becomes wide enough for turn lanes on both sides and has a traffic signals that the previous intersection lacked. North of here, the former SAL ROW is still in sight, even though the area remains wooded for the most part, although there's some slight clearing as it curves straight north. Deep within another unfinished development on the west side of the road, the trail ends, but part of the name is encountered again at the western end of County Road 39 (Withlacoochee Trail), a former segment of State Road 39, which now terminates all the way down in eastern Pasco County. The road curves northwest one last time as it prepares to leave Citrus County, passing by some small industrial lots and a local youth athletic park.

Citrus County To Georgia Border

Upon leaving Citrus County US 41 travels Northwest through the following Counties: Levy, Alachua, Columbia and Hamilton before Crossing the Georgia Border just north of Lake City Florida.

Citrus		325.907	524.496	 CR 480 west (East Stage Coach Trail)	
	Floral City	327.250	526.658	 CR 48 east (East Orange Avenue) – Bushnell, Dade Battlefield State Historic Site, Floral City Historic District	
		329.467	530.226	 CR 39A east (East Gobbler Drive)	
	Inverness	333.471	536.670	  SR 44 east to I-75 – Wildwood	south end of SR 44 overlap
		334.381	538.134	 SR 44 west (West Main Street) – Crystal River	north end of SR 44 overlap
		334.534	538.380	 To CR 581 / Davidson Avenue	
	Hernando	339.345	546.123	 CR 486 west (East Norvell Bryant Highway) – Crystal River	
		339.720	546.726	 SR 200 north (Carl G. Rose Highway)	
	Holder	344.797	554.897	 CR 491 (North Lecanto Highway) – Beverly Hills, Ocala	
		349.996	563.264	 CR 39 south (West Withlacoochee Trail)	
	351.061	564.978	 CR 488 west (West Dunnellon Road) – Crystal River		

Major Intersections in Citrus County and the City of Inverness (site of Proposed Hotel)

State Route 44

State Road 44 (SR 44) is an east–west state highway in the U.S. state of Florida. It runs from Crystal River on the Gulf of Mexico east to New Smyrna Beach on the Atlantic Ocean, passing through Inverness, Wildwood, Leesburg and DeLand.

A section in Lake County, between eastern Leesburg and a point north of Mount Dora, is concurrent with U.S. Highway 441 (SR 500). This concurrency is not signed; signs on US 441 mark it as TO SR 44. The former alignment of SR 44 in that area is now mostly County Road 44, which runs north of Lake Eustis, on the other side as US 441 and current SR 44.

A former western extension of SR 44 from Crystal River to the Gulf of Mexico is now County Road 44. In some locations, it is signed as *County Road 44W*.

Crystal River to Inverness (Main Street in Inverness)

State Road 44 begins as Gulf-to-Lakes Highway at the intersection of US 19-98 and 4th Street in Crystal River, a four-lane divided highway. The divider only exists at the intersection, however. The rest of the road is undivided throughout much of Western Citrus County. SR 44 runs directly east, until it leaves the city limits, then makes a sharper southeastern turn prior to the intersection of North Dunkenfield Avenue and West Norvelle Bryant Highway (County Road 486). It briefly turns east again as it reaches the intersection of Canyon Rock Road, but curves back to the southeast roughly a mile later. The proposed interchange with the Suncoast Parkway Extension will be built just northwest of where the divider begins again near the intersection of County Road 490 in Lecanto, after which the road turns east again.

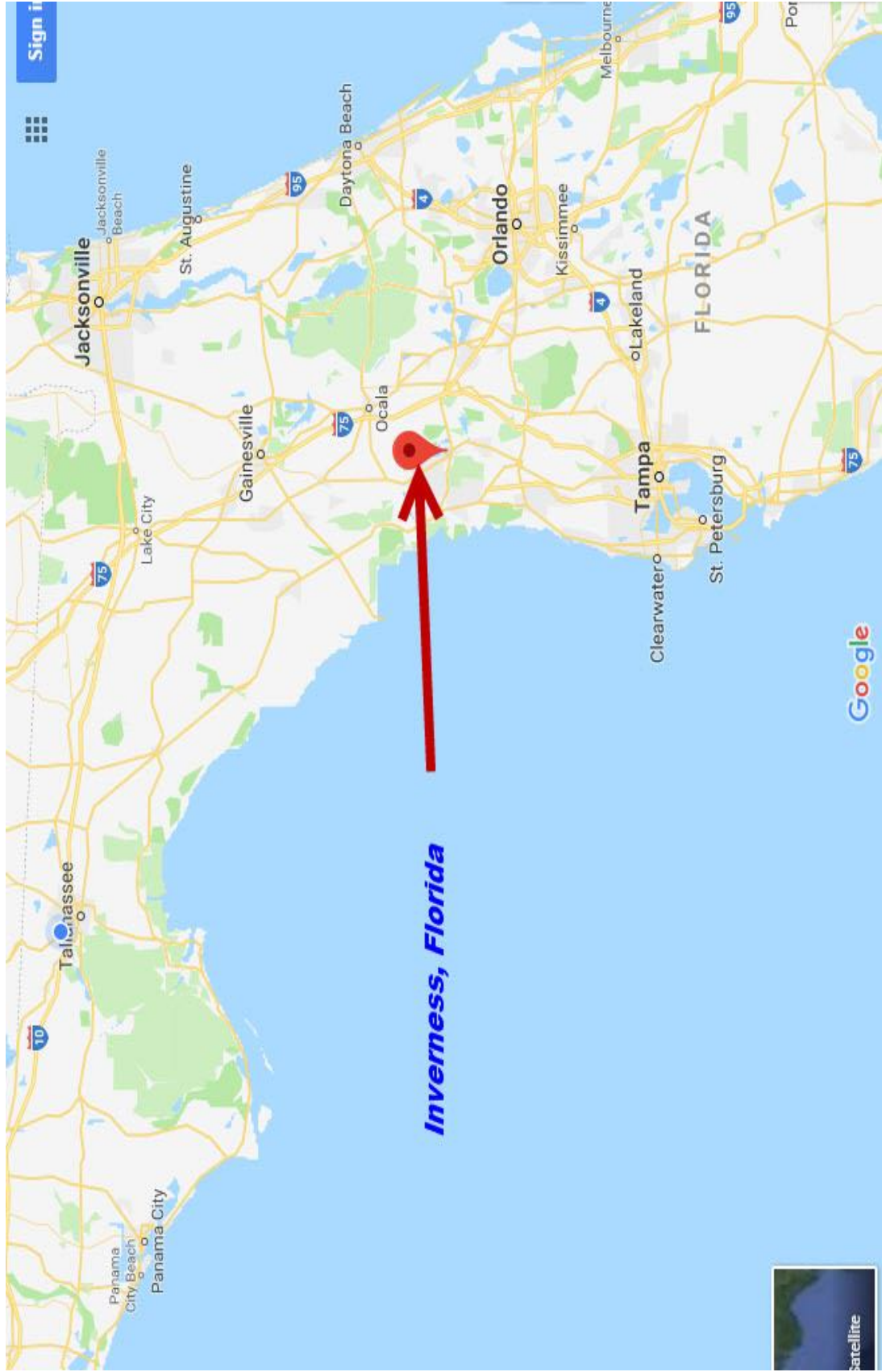
After crossing Lecanto Highway (County Road 491), the divider becomes more prominent. The road runs up and down various hills as it runs along the northern border of Withlacoochee State Forest, and though it never stays straight, it still runs mostly east. Near a pair of shopping centers, the divider ends east of Croft Avenue, and the road resumes its status as an undivided four-lane highway with center-left turn lanes. Entering the Inverness City Limits, the road straightens out again at the intersection of South Pleasant Grove Road (County Road 581) and Forest Drive, where it becomes Main Street. CR 581 secretly joins SR 44 as a hidden route. One block before CR 581 leaves SR 44 to become its own route again, southbound US 41 joins SR 44. The two routes continue to move directly east until the intersection of Seminole Avenue, where it curves around the Old Citrus County Courthouse, and then moves to the southeast before breaking off at East Highland Boulevard, where US 41 continues towards Floral City, Brooksville, Tampa, and points south, while SR 44 moves onto Gulf-Atlantic Highway and becomes a divided highway once again.



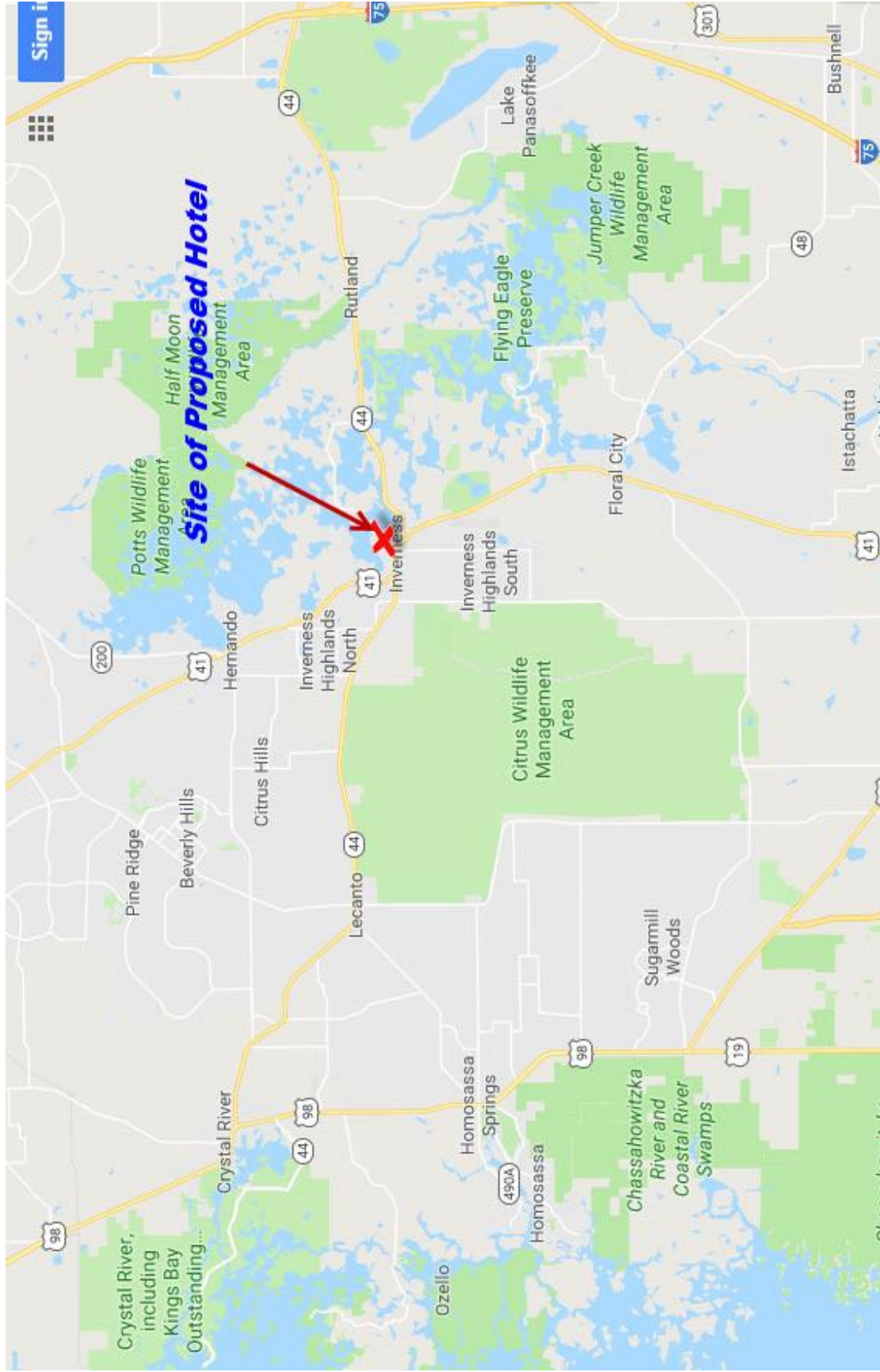
Maps and Site Pictures

Maps and site pictures and plans, are shown on the next pages.

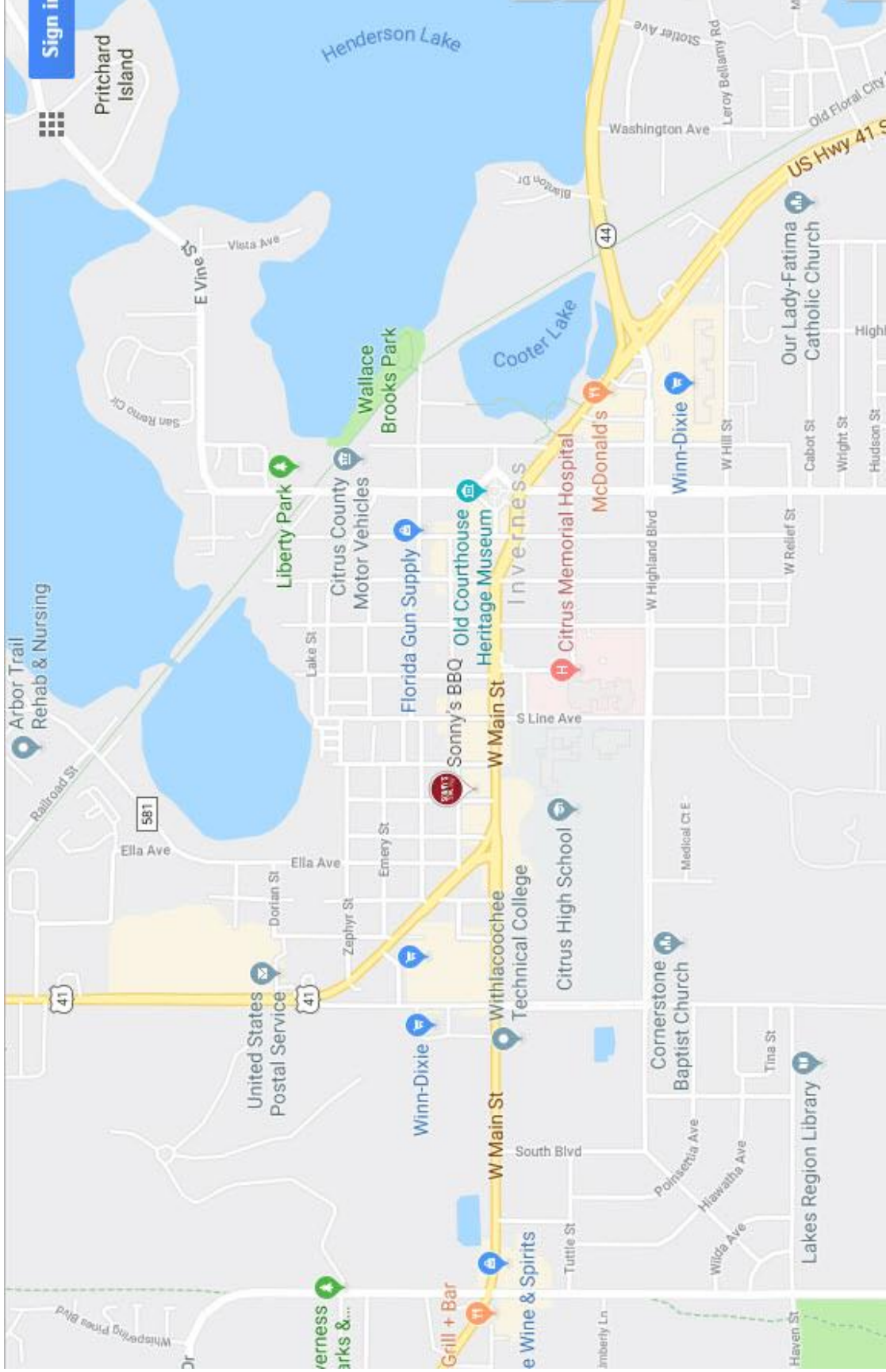
State of Florida With Location of Inverness Shown



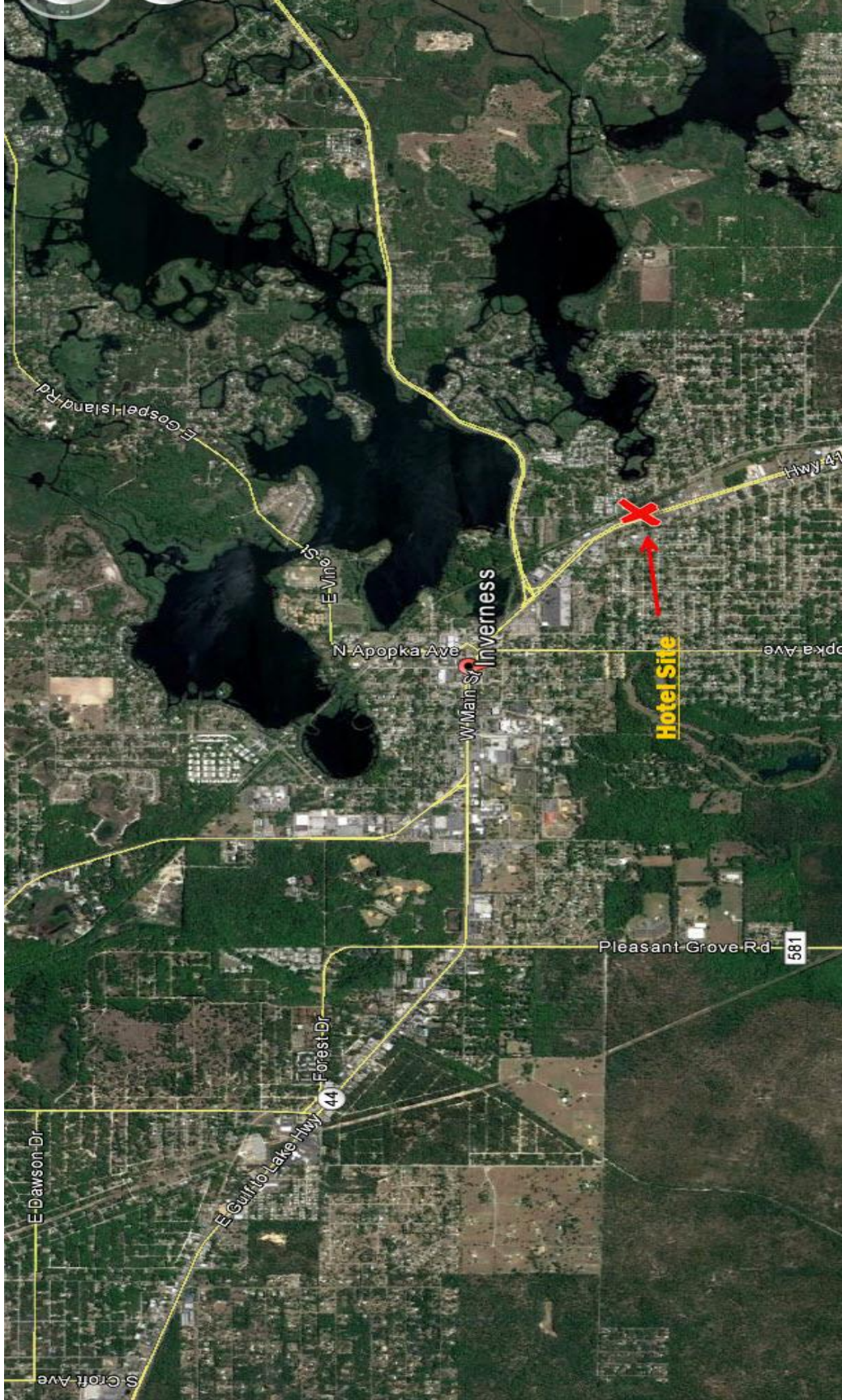
Inverness and Surrounding Areas



Downtown Inverness, Florida



Inverness, Florida



Site of Proposed Hotel



Inverness, Florida

**Site picture of Proposed Hilton Garden Inn
Inverness, Florida**



View to the east from US 41

Withlacochee State Trail



Withlacochee State Trail – On Eastern Boundary of Proposed Hotel Site

Hotel Signage

As the subject site is located in Inverness, Florida various sign ordinances must be reviewed concurrently with the development of a signage program. It is recommended that the development obtain the following signs:

1. A monument sign at the drive entrance;
2. A large logo sign mounted on the front of the hotel;

Utilities

With the site in Inverness, Florida, all public utilities of water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, telephone, and cable television systems are available to the subject hotel. Satellite television and propane gas will be provided by the hotel.

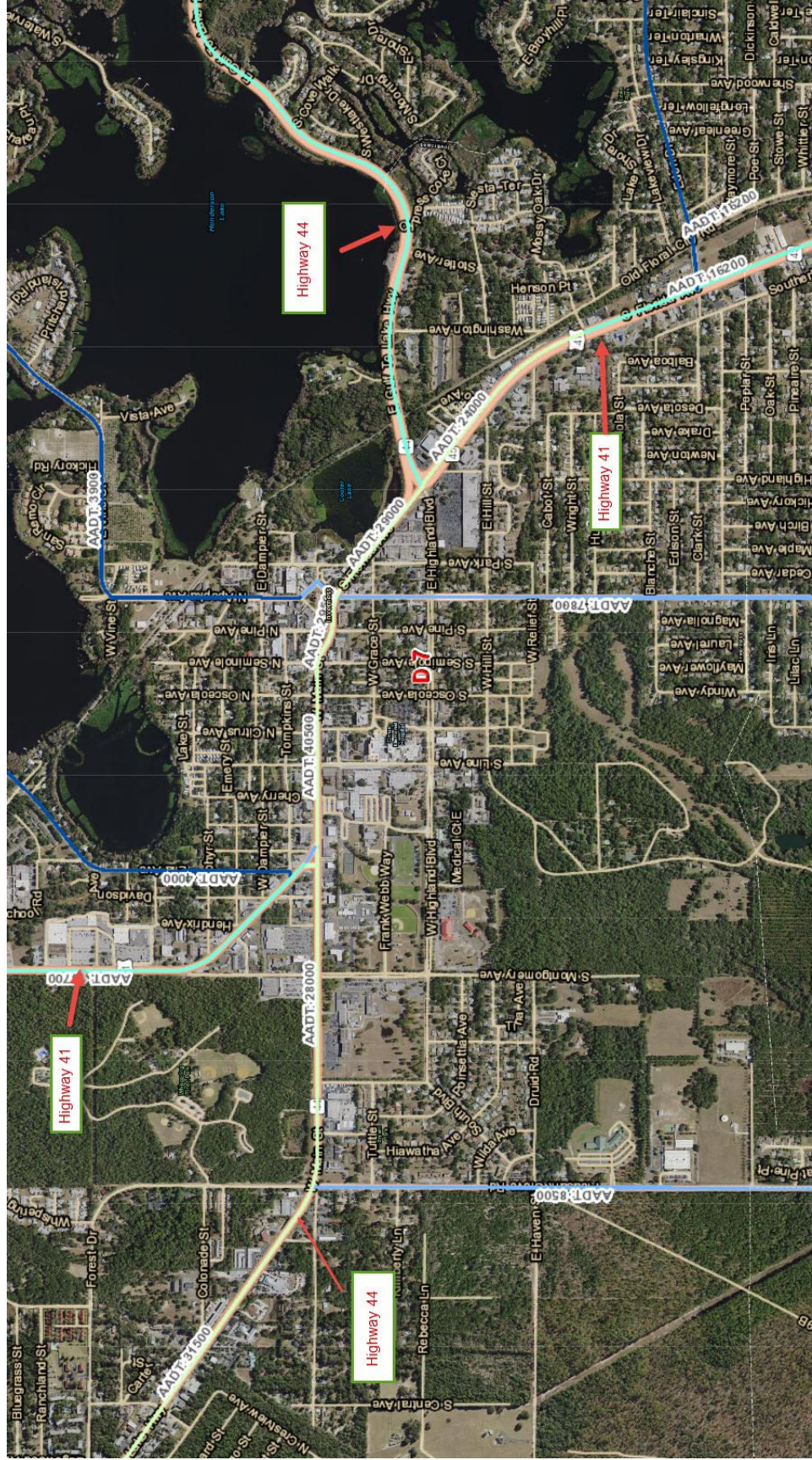
Traffic Counts

The Florida Department of Transportation has published the following daily traffic counts of the area of the proposed hotel.

Traffic Counts (Annual Average Daily Traffic)	
State Route 44 (Main Street in Inverness)	40,500
Downtown near Intersection of SR 44 and US 41	29,500
US 41 South (below intersection of SR 44 and US 41)	29,000
SR 44 leaving Inverness (East Gulf Lake Blvd)	16,300
S. Apopka Avenue Near Highland Blvd	7,800
US 41 North of Intersection with SR 44 (West Main Street)	6,800

Source: <https://tdaappsprod.dot.state.fl.us/fto/2018>

Traffic Counts Inverness Florida 2018



2018 Traffic Counts around the 2 major highways in Inverness (Near site of proposed hotel)

Source: <https://tdaappsprod.dot.state.fl.us/ftor/>



Summary

The site of the proposed hotel is located at 601 US 41 South in Inverness, Florida. US 41 is a major “Blue Highway” – reflecting the color of the road asphalt reflection. It was the main North/South road through North Central Florida prior to the construction of Interstate 75.

The East Property Boundary is the 46 mile Withlacoochee State Trail of hiking, jogging, bicycling, and horseback riding. A connection to the trail from the hotel site is required to serve the hotel guests. Various Inverness City Administrators stated they supported connectivity to the State of Florida Trail.