

February 3, 2016
Immediate Release



CELEBRATE THE GRAND OPENING OF THE MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WALKING TRAIL AND PARK

-Saturday, February 27th, 2016 -

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INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FL – Join the Gifford Community, Indian River County, and the Florida Department of Health in Indian River by celebrating the grand opening of the Martin Luther King Jr. Walking Trail and Park. A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held Saturday, February 27, 2016 at 11:00AM located in the south parking lot of the Gifford Health Center. Historical Markers provided by the Indian River County Historical Society will also be unveiled along the walking trail. This trail has long been envisioned by the Gifford community as symbol of unity.

"I am so proud to be a witness to such an impactful community project coming to a completion. Not only does the walking trail have a physical component, but also a symbolic element which reflects the spirit of unity and the true essence of what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stood for", said Freddie Woolfork, Gifford Youth Achievement Center Director of Public Relations and Facilities Operations.

This trail was one of the projects first created in the County's "Gifford Neighborhood Plan", a Community-Driven plan that resulted from workshops attended by over 200 Gifford Residents and Officials and is part of the Beautification project outlined in the plan. This walking trail and park features an 8-foot-wide path of asphalt millings as well as a playground for the community to enjoy. Piper employees painted a portion of the trail as part of the Day of Caring. The painted portion features the United Way's Born Learning trail, the first in the county.

The project was underwritten by a grant from the State of Florida's Recreational Trails Program as well as contributions from the Grand Harbor Homeowners Association, Indian River County Hospital District, Florida Department of Health in Indian River, Indian River County Board of County Commissioners and Indian River County Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The site was originally designated as a cemetery in 1924. Many of the graves were moved to a city-owned cemetery in Vero Beach, but some tombstones remain and are left for their historical significance. In 1994, the historic 1908 Macedonia Baptist Church was moved to the site as a future museum and meeting place. Because of its historic significance, the Macedonia Church

and Cemetery has been acknowledged by the State Division of Historical Resources as a site on the Florida Black Heritage Trail. In 2000, the Gifford Health Clinic was established just north of the cemetery. This year, the vision of the Gifford Community will come full circle with the completion of the Martin Luther King Jr. Walking Trail and Park.

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