

## 4. Conclusions – Deliverables 1B and 1C

The Vilano Beach Town Center will mark a new retail location in the St. Augustine area. As such it will compete in different ways with existing and planned commercial centers in other locations in the area.

It enjoys several important advantages:

- Prime location relative to underserved markets in Vilano Beach and oceanfront developments to the north and portions of the City of St. Augustine to the west.
- Accessibility to tourists via the recently built Usina Bridge that makes the historic downtown an easy 5-minute drive.
- Excellent site on a walkable street that connects the Atlantic oceanfront with the Intracoastal Waterway, one of the few places where this link exists.



There are also several disadvantages that the community can address:

- The place as designed lacks a place identification that makes it stand out in some exceptional way. In spite of the historic character there is very little remaining of its history in terms of spaces, signage and structures. While the setting is dramatic and there is waterfront at both ends of the street there is little feeling of a waterfront place or experience. The design suggests a mixed-use “lifestyle center” that could be anywhere.



- Vilano Beach is a little known location compared to the popular beaches to the south. It is “off the beaten track” in the context of the St. Augustine area and the northeast Florida coastal region, and it lacks the “built-in” market and wide recognition of Atlantic Beach near Jacksonville. The seasonal summer orientation further limits the scope of its appeal.

There are many types of actions that can bridge the gap to the larger vision, including design and transportation elements, public relations and business recruitment.

The construction of the supermarket-anchored neighborhood shopping center will be an important step in an evolutionary process. This market study finds that additional space for restaurants and stores is supportable and can represent another step. As the experience of the place becomes clear and Vilano Beach becomes known over a larger area, it has the potential to evolve from a neighborhood to a community to the planned Town Center.