

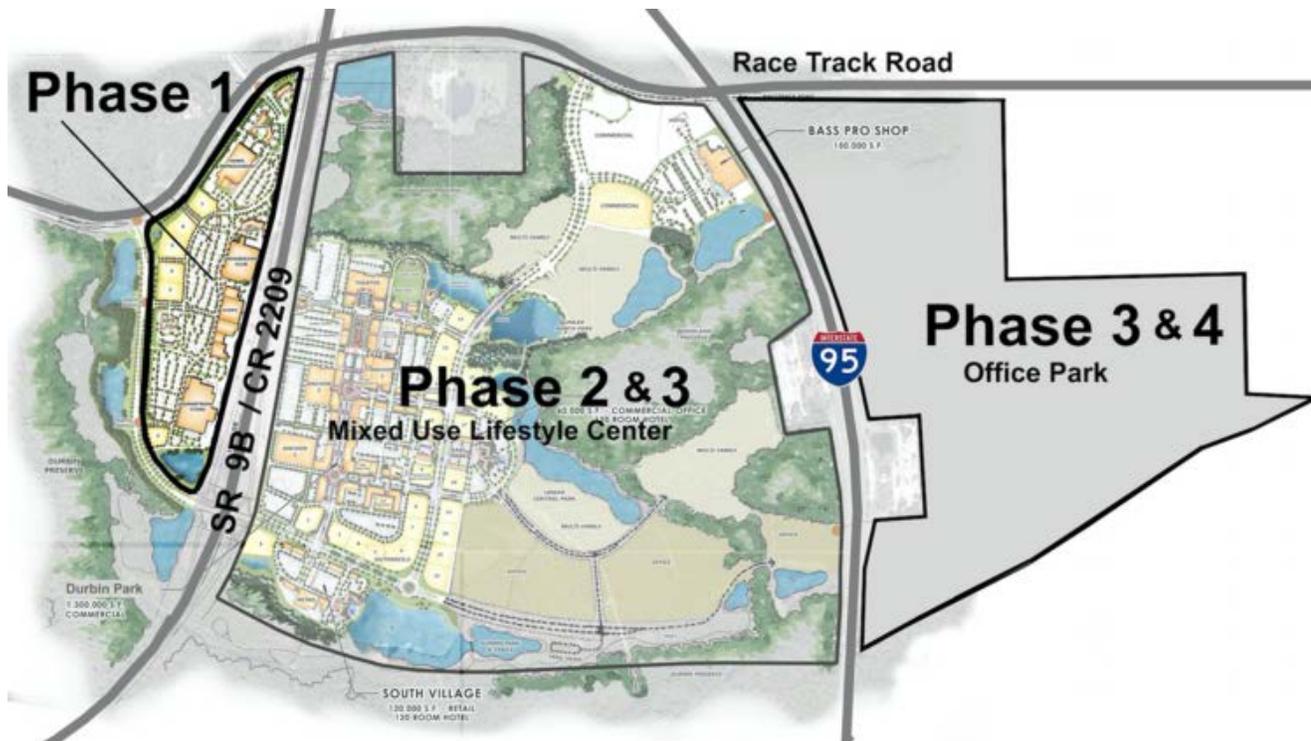
Gate Petroleum, Gatlin Development talk about St. Johns development

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By Derek Gilliam

The massive, 1,600-acre mixed-use development in northern St. Johns County continues to inch closer to the day when raw land is transformed into a shopping behemoth that could one-day rival the St. Johns Town Center.

As previously reported, Durbin Park will include 2.4 million square feet of retail, 2.8 million square feet of office space, 999 multifamily units and 350 hotel rooms once fully built out.



Wednesday afternoon the developers of the project, Gate Petroleum Co. and Gatlin Development Co., released a rendering showing the four phase project laid out in detail.

"Unique to Northeast Florida, Durbin Park will be a distinct destination where individuals and families can live, work, shop and be entertained all within a park-like setting," said John Peyton, president of Gate Petroleum Company, in the news release.

Frank Gatlin, CEO of the real estate investment corporation Gatlin Development Co., moved his company from South Florida to Jacksonville last year.

Gatlin has expressed utter delight with the development in the past and continues to champion the project's potential.

"In my 40 years in the development industry, I have never seen a project with as much potential as Durbin Park," he said. "The large amount of land and the unique topography will allow us to create a destination that features abundant shopping options, dozens of dining experiences and exciting, family-fun entertainment offerings all within a backdrop of hundreds of acres of lakes and green space."

He's been working to lease up three large tenants to act as a engine and drive further development. He has not released specific tenants, but the first phase will be located on 80 acres west of the 9B/County Road 2209 interchange and include 700,000 square feet of retail space.

Construction should be complete in the second quarter of 2018, according to a statement.

Phase two will be located east of the new 9B interchange and adjacent to Interstate 95. It is projected to follow Phase one by 12 to 18 months and will include lifestyle retailers, restaurants, entertainment components and the highly-anticipated Bass Pro Shops.

Full development will be done over four phases.

County officials have thrown support behind the project.

"The Durbin Park project is the culmination of years of effort between the County and Gate to bring high quality mixed-use development to St. Johns County," St. Johns County Administrator Michael Wanchick said. "Not only will it provide convenient retail and office opportunities currently not available to St. Johns County residents, it will also help keep sales tax dollars local and support county-wide programs and services."