

MEMORANDUM

To: Alachua County Board of County Commissioners
From: GRACE Marketplace and City of Gainesville
Date: September 25, 2020
Re: Dignity Village Closure/Transitional Campground Project – FY 20-21 Funding Request

In May 2019 the City and County Commissions jointly approved GRACE Marketplace's proposal to close Dignity Village and create a temporary transitional campground on the GRACE campus for former residents of Dignity Village. The project had a two-year timeline, and called for the onsite campground to shrink in size as GRACE staff worked to assist former Dignity Village residents into housing. The City and the County each appropriated \$250,000 for the project in FY 19-20, for a total of \$500,000.

The project costs for FY 20-21 total \$299,136. However, because the FY 19-20 costs were \$433,963 rather than \$500,000, \$66,037 of the FY 19-20 appropriation has been carried forward to FY 20-21, leaving a net funding requirement of \$233,099 for FY 20-21.

The City has now appropriated \$116,549.50 in its FY 20-21 budget for this project. The City and GRACE seek an equal contribution from the County so that the project can be carried through to its completion.

To date, the project has run on budget and ahead of schedule. Despite the complications of the COVID-19 pandemic, GRACE has secured housing for 97 of the individuals on the Dignity Village roster. After five and a half months of transitional campground operations, fewer than 50 individuals remain in the campground. While those remaining present some of the greatest challenges, GRACE is hopeful that it will succeed in finding housing for them by the end of FY 20-21, well shy of the original two-year project timeline.

This project is separate from and vitally supplements the emergency shelter and homeless services GRACE provides. Pursuant to the City's and County's inter-local agreement, the City is assuming a greater share of the \$1.5 million annual cost of those services, and the County is enhancing its funding of Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing programs. However, with regard to this Dignity Village Closure/Transitional Campground project, the City and County have agreed to share the costs equally, at least in the past.