



Legislation Text

File #: 20-0101, **Version:** 1

Agenda Item Name:

Approval and Execution of the Grant Agreement with Florida Communities Trust for the Reimbursement of Acquisition Costs for Serenola Forest

Presenter:

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Description:

Request for the Board of County Commissioners to approve and execute the Grant Agreement with Florida Communities Trust and Alachua Conservation Trust. Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) has secured a Florida Communities Trust (FCT) grant for \$1,500,000. From this FCT grant award, Alachua County will be reimbursed \$1,000,000 and ACT will be reimbursed \$500,000 from the December 3, 2018 purchase of the Serenola Forest.

Recommended Action:

Approve and Execute the Grant Agreement with Florida Communities Trust and Alachua Conservation Trust.

Prior Board Motions:

January 23, 2018: BoCC placed the Paynes Prairie - Serenola Tract on the Active Acquisition List (Full Fee).

September 25, 2018: BoCC approved and exercised the Paynes Prairie - Serenola Contract to purchase 110.93 acres.

Fiscal Consideration:

Journal: 2020-1407

Fund#: 021.41.4160.334.3900 - State Grants Physical Environ-other

Description: BCC - WSPP Grant/Reimbursement - Paynes Prairie-Serenola

Reimbursement of: \$1,000,000

Background:

On December 3, 2018, Alachua County collaborated with Alachua Conservation Trust to purchase 110.93-acre Serenola Forest. Specifically, Alachua County paid \$2,997,965.76 for 103.21 acres and Alachua Conservation Trust paid \$225,000.00 for 7.72 acres of the property. Each entity holds separate title for their respective acreage.

Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) submitted a Florida Communities Trust's Parks and Open Space Program (FCT) application on September 12, 2018. The FCT grant award amount requested in the application was \$1,500,000, and the funds would be used to reimburse, in part, the acquisition cost of Serenola Forest. From this FCT grant award, Alachua County will be reimbursed \$1,000,000 and ACT will be reimbursed \$500,000 from the 2018 purchase of the Serenola Forest.

The Grant Agreement and its Attachment-A (Exhibit 1 & 2) list the conditions that need to be met by the titleholders and grant recipients to fulfill the purposes of the FCT grant. As a condition of funding, FCT requires the County and ACT to execute the Grant Agreement. In particular:

- Paragraph X. requires the County to execute and record a Dedication of Public Use and Declaration of Restrictive Covenants (Restrictive Covenants). Violation of the Restricted Covenants without sufficient remedy could require conveyance of the property to the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund.
- Paragraph XI. Requires that the future land use and zoning designation must be changed to categories dedicated to open space, conservation, or outdoor recreation uses, as appropriate.
- Paragraph XII imposes additional conditions or restrictions on the use of the property. These largely relate to the restrictions on the use of bond proceeds that the State may use to fund the grant.

Alachua Conservation Trust will act as the lead manager for both ownerships of the 103.21-acre Serenola Forest and Alachua County will serve as the back-up manager. Alachua County has a Management Agreement with ACT for the management of Serenola Forest and, under this Agreement, the County has remedies to protect its investment if ACT defaults on its obligations. (Exhibit 6)

Comp Plan Reference:

Policy 6.0 Land Conservation Program within the Conservation and Open Space Element, states "Establish and maintain a land conservation program for the purchase, preservation, and management of natural areas and open space to complement the regulatory approaches identified in other section of this element."