



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 22-0092, **Version:** 1

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**Agenda Item Name:**

Wild Spaces Public Places Presentation and Draft Infrastructure Sales Surtax Ballot Language

**Presenter:**

Lori Weigel - New Bridge Strategies  
Charlie Houder - Conservation Lands  
Jason Maurer - Parks & Open Space

**Description:**

Wild Spaces Public Places Project Updates

**Recommended Action:**

Hear presentation and provide direction to staff regarding WSPP projects and draft infrastructure sales surtax ballot language

**Prior Board Motions:**

N/A

**Fiscal Consideration:**

N/A

**Strategic Guide:**

Environment

**Background:**

Lori Weigel, New Bridge Strategies, will provide an overview of the recent research conducted in partnership with the Trust for Public Lands (TPL).

Prior Board direction asked staff to evaluate a new local government infrastructure sales surtax pursuant to section 212.055(2), Florida Statutes, which would extend the current Wild Spaces Public Places program and fund several additional new types of projects, including affordable housing, road repair/safety, as well as the contraction/renovation of fires stations and other types of public facilities. Since this type of surtax must undergo a performance audit by OPPAGA and must also be approved by referendum of the electorate at a general election (November 8, 2022), staff is requesting Board direction regarding: the types of WSPP projects that would be funded by a new surtax, whether or not to partner with all nine (9) cities on partnership projects, the draft infrastructure sales surtax ballot language, and the potential expansion of duties for the existing Citizens Oversight Board to include the review of housing and infrastructure expenses.

The attached timeline was prepared by TPL. Staff has not yet verified all of the dates/deadlines set

forth in the timeline, but will do so prior to the adoption hearing. The Board is required to hold only one public adoption hearing. Section 125.66(2), Florida Statutes, requires at least 10 days notice of the adoption hearing to be published in a newspaper of general circulation. Staff's short term plan is as follows: On March 8, 2022, staff will ask the Board to schedule the surtax adoption hearing for the Board meeting scheduled to start at 11:30 am on March 22, 2022; notice of the adoption hearing will be published in the Gainesville Sun no later than March 10, 2022; and the adoption hearing will be held on March 22, 2022, at which time staff will present the proposed surtax ordinance for adoption. Assuming the surtax ordinance is adopted by the Board, staff will timely transmit the adopted surtax ordinance to the Florida Department of State for filing and to OPPAGA for performance audit of the programs to be funding by the proposed surtax. This type of surtax must be approved by the voters of Alachua County at the general election to be held on November 8, 2022, and, if approved, would have an effective date of January 1, 2023 [see s. 212.054(5), F.S.].