



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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File #: 22-0285A, Version: 1

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### **Subject:**

Grant agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Florida Communities Trust Program for the acquisition of the Gladys Douglas Hackworth Property in Dunedin, FL.

### **Recommended Action:**

Approval of the grant agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) for the acquisition of the Gladys Douglas Hackworth (GDH) property in Dunedin, FL.

- In December of 2020, Pinellas County, in coordination with the City of Dunedin (City), submitted a joint grant application to FDEP for Florida Community Trust funds in the amount of \$2.4M toward the acquisition of the GDH Property.
- The grant application was submitted for 40% of the appraised value of the property (approximately \$5.5M) and up to \$500,000 in reimbursable expenses (surveys, title search, etc.).
- On October 29, 2021, the project was selected for funding and the grant agreement was delivered via email to both the City and the County on February 4, 2022.
- The agreement must be executed by the County and the City and returned to the Florida Communities Trust Program office within 45 days of receipt.
- Funding from the Local Infrastructure Sales Surtax (Penny for Pinellas) and funding from this grant are consistent with the adopted Multi-Year Capital Plan within project 002168A Environmental Lands Acquisition.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Practice Superior Environmental Stewardship

3.2 Preserve and manage environmental lands, beaches, parks, and historical assets

3.3 Protect and improve the quality of our water, air, and other natural resources

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.2 Be Responsible stewards of the public's resources

### **Summary:**

The GDH Property is a 44 -acre site comprised of two parcels located at 1900 Virginia Avenue in Dunedin, FL. The FCT grant funding in the amount of \$2.4M was awarded to reimburse the City and the County for a portion of their respective acquisition costs for the GDH property. The County contributed a total of \$3.5M toward the firm purchase price of \$10.0M. In addition to the FCT award, the County was granted a legislative line-item (LLI) appropriation from the FDEP Division of State Lands in the amount of \$1.5M for the County's Less-than-Fee interest in the property. The Less-than-Fee interest is in the form of a Conservation Easement (CE) for approximately eighteen (18) acres of

the property. The purpose of the CE is to protect the rare Sand Pine Scrub and Rosemary Bald flora and fauna. The property was purchased in May of 2021.

**Background/Explanation:**

The County entered into an interlocal agreement with the City on March 9th, 2021 for the joint acquisition and the development of a management plan in accordance with the Special Management Conditions outlined in the grant agreement. The plan for the Project Site includes developing a recreational hiking trail and a multi-purpose trail across both the eastern and western parcels that will incorporate viewing benches, an observation platform, an educational kiosk, and picnic facilities. A fishing pier and canoe/kayak launch will be constructed on the eastern parcel along the shoreline of Jerry Lake which will provide recreational water access that was not previously available to the public at Jerry Lake. The site is considered to be a Locally Significant Natural Area (LNA) by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) because it is located on or near a significant region of scrub habitat, a natural community in decline that provides important habitat for several rare species within a small area. The western parcel contains the last remaining documented Rosemary Bald in Pinellas County.

Pinellas County Parks & Conservation Resources Department (PCR) is committed to collaborating and working alongside The City's Parks and Recreation Department for the ongoing development of the property to ensure its sustainability for many generations. City staff will provide primary operations and maintenance of the property and the County will provide invasive species removal, replanting of 10 acres of disturbed land, habitat monitoring, and educational outreach activities as detailed in the attached Interlocal Agreement.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The total amount of this agreement is \$2,400,000.00. Per the interlocal agreement with City of Dunedin, Section 4, paragraph C the County will be reimbursed first in an amount up to a maximum of \$1,500,000.00 with any funds remaining to be reimbursed to the City. Funding is budgeted in the County's Capital Improvement Program, funded by the Local Infrastructure Sales Surtax (Penny for Pinellas) under project 002168A Environmental Lands Acquisition. The County contributed \$3,500,000.00 toward the purchase of the property in May 2021. The FCT grant reimbursement was anticipated at that time. The grant amount of \$1,500,000.00 is reflected in the FY22-FY27 Approved Budget.

**Delegated Authority:**

Approval by the Board of County Commissioners is required under Code Section 2-62 (a)(1).

**Staff Member Responsible:**

Paul Cozzie, Director, Parks and Conservation Resources

Emily Magyar, Senior Grants Specialist, Parks and Conservation Resources

**Partners:**

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

City of Dunedin

**Attachments:**

FCT Grant Agreement

Executed Interlocal agreement with the City of Dunedin w/ FCT Grant Application

Conservation Easement- County Documents (01784578) AATF

Letter from FDEP: Gladys Douglas Hackworth Florida Community Trust

Intent to Apply Approval