



Marion County

Board of County Commissioners

Workshop

Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

2:00 PM

McPherson Governmental
Campus Auditorium

Workshop with the Trust for Public Land Regarding Parks & Recreation Department Funding

INTRODUCTION OF WORKSHOP BY CHAIRMAN CARL ZALAK III

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

1. [Presentation by Pegeen Hanrahan, P.E., Trust for Public Land, to Discuss Options for the Parks & Recreation Department Projects](#)

BOARD DISCUSSION AND CLOSING COMMENTS



Marion County

Board of County Commissioners Workshop

Agenda Item

File No.: 2026-22197

Agenda Date: 3/3/2026

Agenda No.: 1.

SUBJECT:

Presentation by Pegeen Hanrahan, P.E., Trust for Public Land, to Discuss Options for the Parks & Recreation Department Projects

INITIATOR:

Jim Couillard, PLA, ASLA, Director

DEPARTMENT:

Parks & Recreation

DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND:

During the Budget Workshop on July 9, 2024, the Marion County Board of County Commissioners (Board) requested more discussion regarding the support needed for the Parks & Recreation Department (Department) projects. This led to a series of workshops related to capital improvement, future parks, funding opportunities and strategies.

On December 3, 2024, a joint workshop was held with the City of Belleview to discuss existing conditions and needs.

On December 5, 2024, a workshop was held with the Board to discuss the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, deferred maintenance & capital replacement, new parks and funding.

On December 19, 2024, a workshop was held with the Board to discuss expansion improvements, funding proposals for the work needed and project classification funding.

On January 29, 2025, a workshop was held with the Board to discuss funding options for the Capital Improvement Program.

During these workshops, the Department presented a diversified funding strategy to meet the needs of our current and growing population. Those strategies include restructuring of the Parks & Recreation Fees fund, the implementation of Parks & Recreation Impact Fees and the pursuit of bond funding. Bond funding was recommended to address maintenance projects and as a solution to address the need of regional parks in the higher growth areas of Marion County. To bring clarity to the process of how bond funding for parks can be implemented, the Board requested more information on how a feasibility study can provide a glimpse of the community's tolerance and support of such funding. In response to this request, Pegeen Hanrahan, P.E., with the Trust for Public Land, will be presenting information related to this process.

BUDGET/IMPACT:

None

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

For review and discussion.

Marion County, Florida



Voter Approved Funding for Capital Projects
including Land Conservation, Water Protection,
Parks, Trails and Recreation

March 3, 2026

Pegeen Hanrahan, P.E.
National Associate Director of Conservation Finance

Casey Bauer, Florida Director of Conservation Finance

Connecting everyone to the outdoors™



TPL's Conservation Finance Program works to help communities protect the places they love and improve access for people to enjoy them through approval of funding both legislatively and at the ballot box.

Connecting everyone to the outdoors™

OUR IMPACT ACROSS THE COUNTRY

5,504

Public outdoor spaces created or protected

\$112+ Billion

Secured in public funding

We've created

311

Community Schoolyards in **23** states.

4 Million Acres

protected



HOW WE DO IT




PUBLIC LAND: PUBLIC GOOD

We partner with communities where we know parks and public land have the greatest potential to deliver public good.




DATA & INSIGHT

Our Land and People Lab experts help communities make the case for more green space with sophisticated GIS-informed data.




ADVOCACY

With TPL's support and guidance, voters have approved more than \$110 billion in public funding for parks and conservation.




FUNDING & LEVERAGE

Our conservation finance pros deploy their expertise, leveraging every \$1 donated to return \$2,000 in public funds.




PARK CREATION & TRANSFORMATION

We convene, listen to, and facilitate connections, helping our partner communities leverage relationships to realize their visions.



OUR TOOLKIT

Trust for Public Land Protection Projects

Since 1972, TPL has protected more than 4 million acres of public land, created more than 5,500 parks, trails, schoolyards, and iconic outdoor places across the United States.

In Florida alone, TPL's impact includes the protection of over 180,626 acres of land and the completion of more than 470 projects.



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Regional Focus – Florida Wildlife Corridor



 **The Florida Wildlife Corridor**

Land Acquisition
Projects Including
Seeking Funding
and Real Estate
Negotiations and
Closing

Trails, Parks, Public
Lands

Ballot Measures and
Legislative Work

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We Work with Cities, Counties and States to Fund Conservation and Recreation Priorities, and Often Other Needs as Well.

Early voting is October 24 to November 5. Visit berkeleycountysc.gov/dept/elections for more information.

WIDE EYES

ON LOCAL QUESTIONS 1 & 2
Help fix roads & protect land & water quality before it's too late

VOTE YES BERKELEY
 FIX ROADS & PROTECT LAND

On November 8th, Vote FOR Alachua County's WILD SPACES & PUBLIC PLACES

Wild Spaces, Public Places, Road Repair, Fire Stations, and Affordable Housing Our Shared Goals

Small text describing the ballot questions and their benefits.

VOTE FOR ALACHUA COUNTY
WILD SPACES & PUBLIC PLACES

TO PROTECT LAND AND WATER, IMPROVE PARKS, REPAIR ROADS AND FIRE STATIONS, AND BUILD AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In Florida we've assisted Alachua, Brevard, Collier, Flagler, Hillsborough, Indian River, Manatee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Lee, Nassau, Sarasota, St. Lucie, Volusia and in 2024 we assisted Clay, Lake and Osceola Counties. We are currently working with nine Florida Counties toward 2026 referenda.



Our Measures Often Include Other Capital Needs

JASPER COUNTY
 South Carolina

ROAD REPAIR & GREENBELT FOR WATER & LAND PROTECTION SALES AND USE TAX REFERENDUM

NOV. 5, 2024

YES or NO - the decision is yours, Jasper County Voters!

VOTE EARLY OR ON ELECTION DAY

REGULAR VOTING HOURS at your precinct are from 7 A.M. to 7 P.M. on Election Day, Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

EARLY VOTING is available for anyone from Monday, October 21 to Saturday November 2, except Sunday October 27 from 8:30 A.M. to 6 P.M.

EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS:

- Jasper County Election Office (11504 Gray Highway, Exit A in Ridgeland)
- St. Stephens AME Church (710 Main Street in Haneyville)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
 For additional information on Jasper County referendums open Nov. 1 & 2 on your November 5, 2024 ballot, please contact:

County Administration
clintonhobbs@jaspercountysc.gov
 843-717-3699

For additional information on voting locations, times and procedures, please contact:

Justine M. Bionick
 Director of Elections and Voters Registration
 843-717-3709

QUESTION 1:

- Approval of 1% sales tax on most retail purchases, not including:
 - Alcohol/beverage
 - Food
 - Prescriptions
 - Medical supplies
 - Some foods.
- 80% to transportation purposes (\$370 million).
- 20% to greenbelt (land and water protection) projects (\$94 million).
- Up to a 15 year authorization, will end once the revenue limit is reached.
- County will seek private, state and federal matching funds.
- All expenditures are subject to full public disclosure and annual independent audits.
- Jointly appointed oversight board representing County, Haneyville, Ridgeland, and School District.

QUESTION 2:

- Approval to bond \$150 million of funds from Question 1 to complete same projects sooner.

Jasper County Questions #1 & #2 are at the END of your ballot!

VOTE YES! OPEN SPACE

Protect our natural resources, wildlife, farmlands, and clean water in our streams and rivers for future generations.

VOTE YES! HOUSING

Ensure stable homes for children, homeownership for working families, and safe housing for seniors.

Pictured are actual affordable homes and true local homeowners.

DORCHESTER COUNTY
Vote YES Parks & Libraries
 - TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5 -

OPEN SPACE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Question #1 for Dorchester County IS NOT A TAX INCREASE

FIX OUR ROADS. PRESERVE OPEN SPACE.

VOTE YES ON QUESTION #1

A 'YES' VOTE CONTINUES FUNDING OUR ROADS

Since 2005, Dorchester County has dedicated a penny sales tax to fix our roads. Since then, the county has built more than 20 road projects.

However, that penny sales tax is set to expire. And we still have more roads we need to fix.

Additionally, Question 1 expands to also include money for land conservation. This money is vitally needed to preserve land and water access for Dorchester County for generations to come.

Find more information at www.VoteYesDorchester.com

www.facebook.com/voteyesdorchester
www.instagram.com/voteyesdorchester

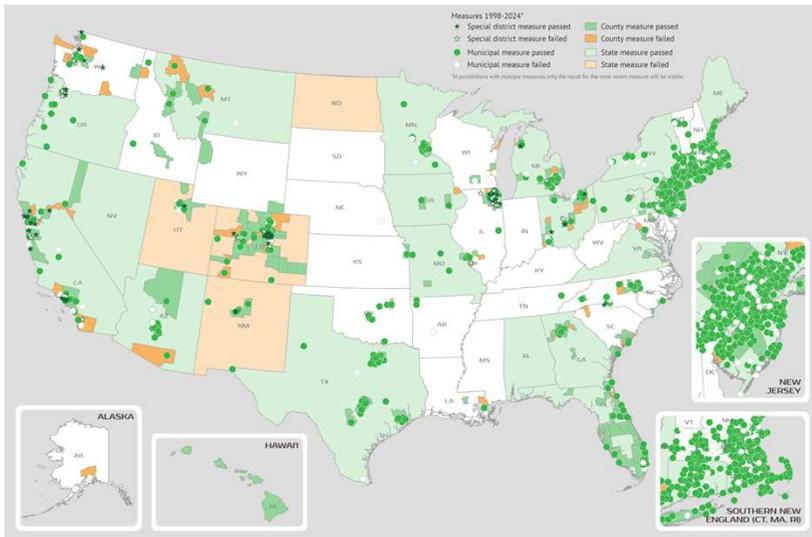
BEAUFORT'S GREENSPACE PENNY
 - Funding to Protect Our Land and Water -

On November 8th, Beaufort County voters have an opportunity to protect green space to benefit us all.

The GreenSpace Penny is a targeted sales tax with both in compliance to protect the taxpayer - it will be used to preserve green and open spaces, collect over a 2 year period, and collect will not exceed \$50 million. A citizen advisory panel will guide, review, and recommend projects with public benefit.

VOTE YES FOR GREENSPACE!





LandVote

STATE, COUNTY, MUNICIPAL, AND SPECIAL DISTRICT MEASURES 1998-2024

December 6, 2024. Copyright © Trust for Public Land. Trust for Public Land and Trust for Public Land logo are Federally registered marks of Trust for Public Land. Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only. www.tpl.org



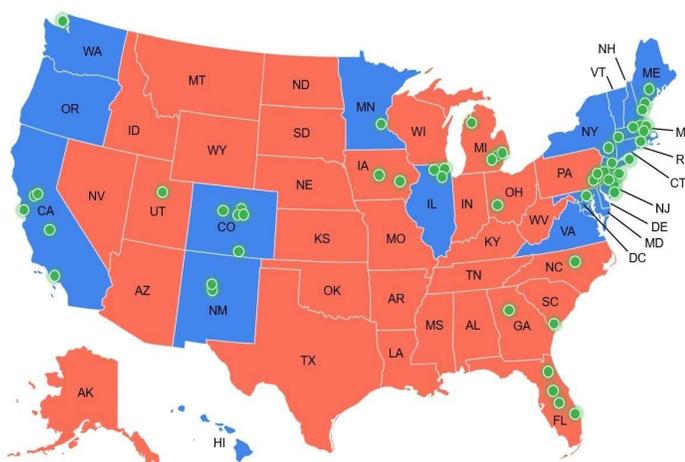
Trust for Public Land has helped pass 688 ballot measures for parks, land, trails and schoolyards since 1996, representing \$112 billion in funding, with an 84% win rate.

In Florida we've worked on 45 successful ballot measures with a 90% win rate.



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Conservation Wins in Red Communities and Blue



In November 2024 23 out of 23 ballot measures that TPL worked on were approved by voters, a 100% win rate.

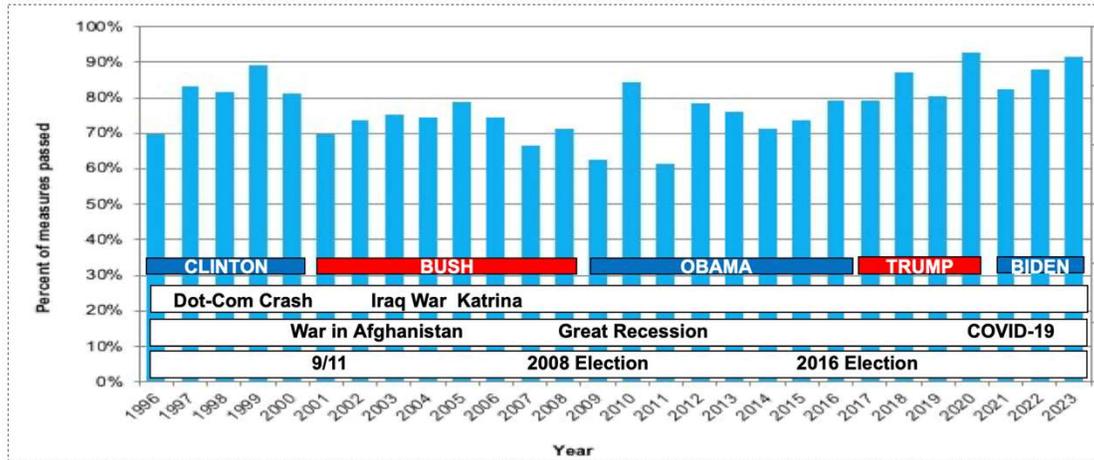
In 2025 we won 6 of 6.

So far in 2026 we've won 2 of 2.



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This is True in Good Times and Bad



77% Overall Approval Rate Across the United States



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Three Main Local Capital Funding Options in Florida

- 1 General Obligation Bonds**
 Single subject, should focus on capital projects, typically backed by ad valorem property tax millage
- 2 Property Taxes or Budget Allocation**
 City or County Commission can allocate on their own, without voter approval; voter approval is a "straw poll"
- 3 Sales Taxes – Usually for Capital Projects**
 Referred by County Commission for voter approval. smaller Florida counties can approve by BOCC.



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84% of All Florida Conservation Ballot Measures Have Passed

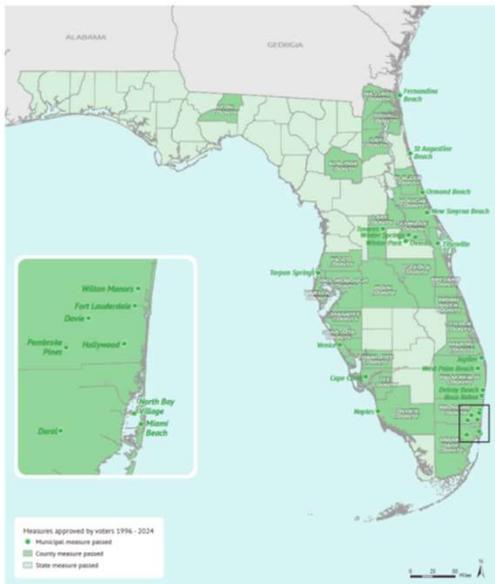


Protecting our Natural Beauty
in Martin County

Florida Local Conservation Finance Measures, 1996-present				
Finance Mechanism	# Measures	# Passed	% Passed	Total Funds Approved
Bond	64	56	88%	\$3,963,510,000
Sales tax	26	19	73%	\$10,666,540,142
Property tax	17	15	88%	\$1,824,634,980
Budget allocation	2	2	100%	
Total	109	92	84%	\$16,454,685,122

Source: Trust for Public Land's LandVote Database, www.landvote.org

Over 90% of Florida Measures TPL has worked on have passed.



Counties with Existing Voter-Approved Conservation Funding

- Alachua **Manatee (2026?)**
- Brevard **Martin (2024)**
- Broward
- Miami-Dade
- Charlotte (2026?)**
- Nassau
- Clay (2024)**
- Osceola (2024)**
- Collier
- Palm Beach
- Flagler
- Pasco
- Hillsborough
- Pinellas
- Indian River
- Polk
- Lake (2024)**
- Sarasota (2026?)**
- Lee
- Seminole
- Leon
- St. Lucie
- Volusia

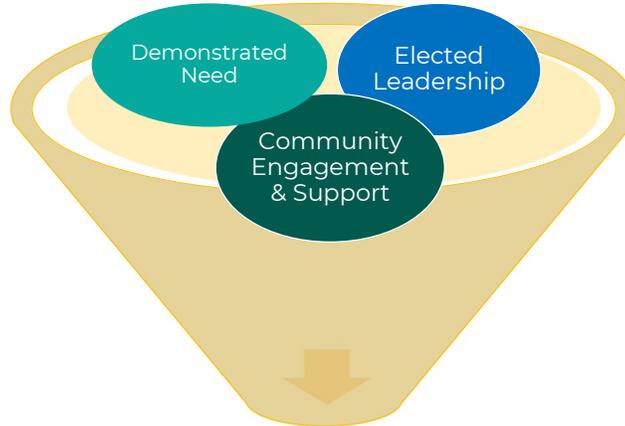
Florida

LOCAL CONSERVATION MEASURES: APPROVED BY VOTERS 1996 - 2024



KEY Ingredients for Voter Approved Funding Sources

We want all parts of the community (different neighborhoods, urban/suburban/rural, different constituencies) to be able to see value in the projects. "Put the voters in the picture."



Community support, and support from advocacy groups, is important.

Avoiding opposition is time well spent.

CLEAR, LEGAL, DESCRIPTIVE BALLOT LANGUAGE

APPROVED BY VOTERS FOR THOSE DEMONSTRATED NEEDS



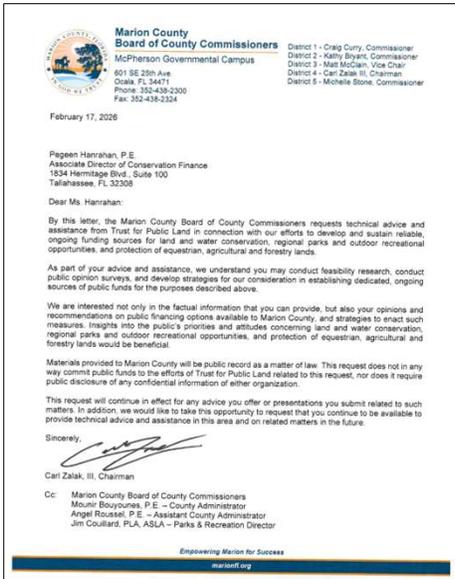
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We follow a well-tested road map to help decisionmakers assess funding options to see if there is one that the community will embrace.



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First Step: Request for Technical Assistance from TPL

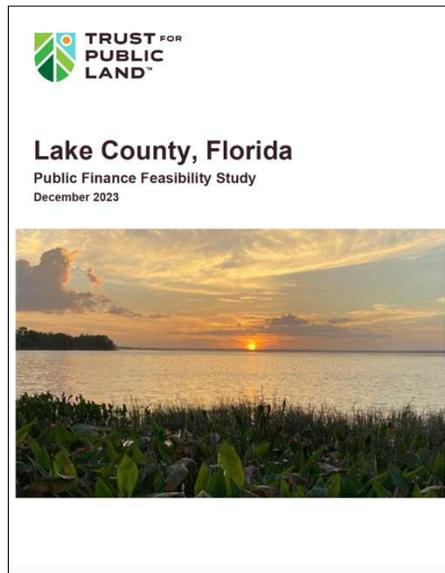


- Our work is entirely privately funded
- Must have a request for technical assistance from the County Commission
- Completion of feasibility report
- Completion of public opinion polling
- Recommendations on program elements
- Work with private citizens to communicate to voters, County cannot spend resources to advocate

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Second Step: Feasibility Research



- Demographics
- Current Parks and Conservation Budget
- Fiscal Capacity and Finance Options
- Political Profile
- Election History
- Election Requirements
- Ballot Language Requirements
- Pathways to the Ballot
- Best Practices

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Report Key Findings Will Include Bond Plus Millage Options

Marion County Bond Financing Estimates						
Bond Issue	Interest Rate	Maturity (Years)	Annual Debt Service	Total Taxable Value*	Mills Required	Annual Cost for Average Single Family Home**
\$60,000,000	4%	20	\$4,414,905	\$38,129,248,000	0.1158	\$18
\$80,000,000	4%	20	\$5,886,540	\$38,129,248,000	0.1544	\$24
\$100,000,000	4%	20	\$7,358,175	\$38,129,248,000	0.1930	\$30
\$120,000,000	4%	20	\$8,829,810	\$38,129,248,000	0.2316	\$36
\$140,000,000	4%	20	\$10,301,445	\$38,129,248,000	0.2702	\$42

**Marion County FY26 Adopted Budget*

***Average single family residential taxable value = \$155,621 (Florida Department of Revenue, Ad Valorem Valuation and Tax Data Book, 2025 Parcel Count Report)*

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Report Key Findings Will Include Bond Plus Millage Options

Marion County Property Tax and Bond Financing Estimates								
Mills	Total Taxable Value*	Annual Revenue	Annual Cost for Average Single Family Home**	Bond Issue	Interest Rate	Maturity (Years)	Annual Debt Service	Remaining Annual Revenue
0.25	\$38,129,248,000	\$9,532,312	\$39	\$60,000,000	4%	20	\$4,414,905	\$5,117,407
				\$70,000,000	4%	20	\$5,150,723	\$4,381,589
				\$80,000,000	4%	20	\$5,886,540	\$3,645,772
				\$90,000,000	4%	20	\$6,622,358	\$2,909,954
				\$100,000,000	4%	20	\$7,358,175	\$2,174,137

**Marion County FY26 Adopted Budget*

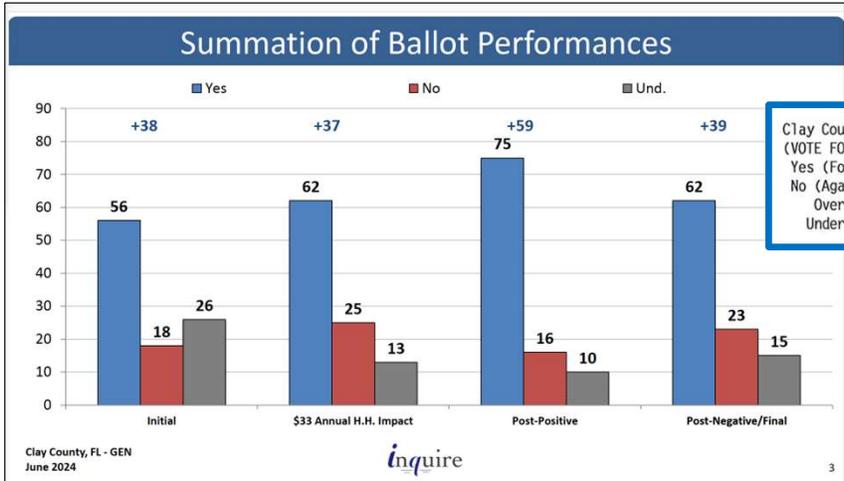
***Average single family residential taxable value = \$155,621 (Florida Department of Revenue, Ad Valorem Valuation and Tax Data Book, 2025 Parcel Count Report)*

Trust for Public Land's bond cost calculations provide a basic estimate of debt service, tax required, and cost to the typical homeowner in the community of potential bond issuances. Assumptions include the following: the entire debt amount is issued in the first year and payments are equal until maturity; 20-year maturity; and a conservative 4.0 percent interest rate. The property tax estimates assume that the jurisdiction would use property taxes to pay the debt service on bonds. The cost per household represents the maximum estimated annual impact of property taxes levied to pay the debt service. The estimates do not take into account growth in the tax base due to new construction, annexation over the life of the bonds, or the possibility that the jurisdiction will issue bonds only as needed for specific projects, rather than all at once. The annual debt service and cost per household are the maximum tax impacts that could occur if the entire debt amount is issued at once. The jurisdiction's officials, financial advisors, bond counsel, and underwriters would establish the actual terms of any bond.

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Third Step - TPL Will Complete Polling for Marion County Using Grant Funding



Clay County Land Conservation Referendum to Protect Water (VOTE FOR) 1		
Yes (For Bonds) (NPA)	87,650	72.93
No (Against Bonds) (NPA)	32,536	27.07
Over Votes		32
Under Votes	7,411	

Our polling indicated that without negative messaging the Clay County measure polled at 75%, it won with 73% in November 2024.



Fourth Step - Ballot Language Is Very Important

CLAY COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION REFERENDUM TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY, WILDLIFE HABITAT, FORESTS AND FARMS

To acquire and manage lands that protect water quality in rivers, lakes, creeks, and drinking water sources; conserve wildlife habitat, natural areas, and working forests and farms; reduce flooding; and provide outdoor recreation, shall Clay County issue general obligation bonds up to \$45 million, maturing within 20 years, bearing interest not exceeding legal maximum rates, payable from ad valorem tax up to 0.2 mills, with annual audits, citizen oversight, and full public disclosure of spending?

YES, FOR BONDS
 NO, AGAINST BONDS

PASSED WITH 73% SUPPORT IN 2024



Fourth Step - Ballot Language Is Very Important

Reestablish funding for Conservation Collier to protect water quality, water resources, and wildlife habitat

Shall Collier County reestablish the levy of a .25 mil ad valorem tax for 10 years for the purpose of continuing to acquire, preserve and manage environmentally sensitive lands, and provide compatible public access wherever applicable to such lands, for the protection of water quality, water resources, wildlife habitat, and public open space in perpetuity?

Restablecer fondos para Conservación Collier para proteger la calidad del agua, los recursos hídricos y el hábitat de la vida silvestre

¿Deberá el Condado de Collier restablecer la exacción de un impuesto ad valorem de .25 mil por 10 años con el propósito de continuar adquiriendo, preservando y administrando tierras ambientalmente sensibles, y proporcionar acceso público compatible donde sea aplicable a dichas tierras, para la protección de la calidad del agua, recursos hídricos, hábitat de vida silvestre y espacios públicos abiertos a perpetuidad?

- Yes / Sí
- No

**PASSED WITH
76% SUPPORT IN
2020**

Clean Water Protection, Overdevelopment Prevention, Natural Area Preservation, Parks And Trails General Obligation Bond Referendum

To acquire and improve land to protect drinking water sources; preserve natural areas; protect open space from overdevelopment; provide parks and trails; improve the water quality of rivers and lakes; protect springs; and establish a citizen oversight committee with full public disclosure of spending, shall Lake County be authorized to issue unlimited general obligation bonds maturing within 20 years, not exceeding the legal maximum interest rate, not exceeding \$50,000,000 payable from ad valorem taxes?

- For Bonds
- Against Bonds

**PASSED WITH
80% SUPPORT
IN 2024**

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Program Recommendations Reinforce Accountability

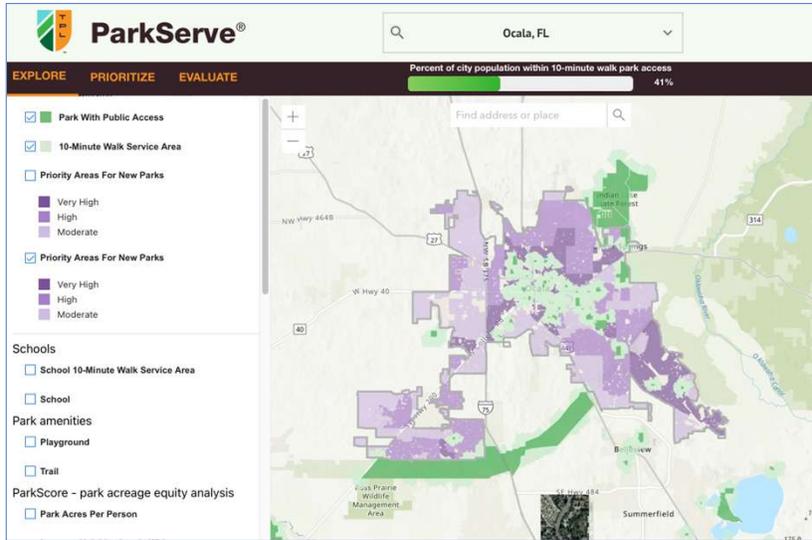
- Community outreach to inform on plan
- Equitable distribution of funds and transparent selection process
- Fiscal impact: Prefer under \$50 per household per year in new revenue is ideal; renewal is easier than new, lower cost is usually easier to pass
- Levy duration: Less sensitive than the amount, but 10 years is often a dividing line
- Large November elections have higher success
- Citizen oversight, independent audit for how funds are spent – accountability is key



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Needs Assessment is Important



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Fifth Step – Campaign, Must be Privately Funded



As with candidate campaigns, elected officials and staff should NOT expend any county resources to advocate for or against passage. Unlike candidate campaigns, non-profits may legally do so. Funds for advocacy are publicly disclosed through a PC.

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Everyone Has a Role to Play, County Staff is Most Constrained

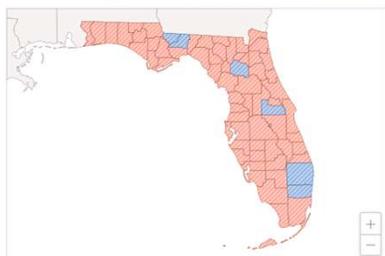
Activity	Citizens/Volunteers/Businesses/ Civic Groups	Elected Officials	Staff	Consultants and Non-Profits
Participate in Establishing Process to Prioritize Projects, Expenditures	Yes	Yes	Yes	As Requested Only
Ensure Public Integrity, Transparency, no Quid pro Quos, etc.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Research Funding Options, History, Fiscal Impact	Probably Not - Most Don't	Probably Not - Most Don't	Yes	Yes
Conduct Public Opinion Polling	Probably Not - Most Don't	Probably Not - Most Don't	Probably Not - Most Don't	Yes
Write Ballot Language	Probably Not - Most Don't	Probably Not - Most Don't	Yes	Yes
Discourage Opposition	Yes	Yes	Probably Not - Most Don't	Yes
Raise Funds for Campaign	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Advocate for YES votes	Yes	Yes	Probably Not - Most Don't	Yes
Stay on Key Messages	Yes	Yes - Remain Neutral, Share Costs too	Yes - Remain Neutral, Share Costs too	Yes
Respond to Citizen, Press Questions, Speaking Events	Designated Individuals Only	Yes	Yes - Remain Neutral, Share Costs too	As Requested Only
Volunteer Time for Campaign	Yes	Yes	Probably Not - Most Don't	Yes
Donate to Campaign	Yes	Yes	Probably Not - Most Don't	Yes
Access Voter File, Send Mail, Buy Ads, etc.	Yes	Probably Not - Most Don't	No	Yes
Put up signs, hand out shirts, staff booths, etc.	Yes	Yes	Probably Not - Most Don't	Yes
Offer Anything of Value in Exchange for Support	No	No	No	No

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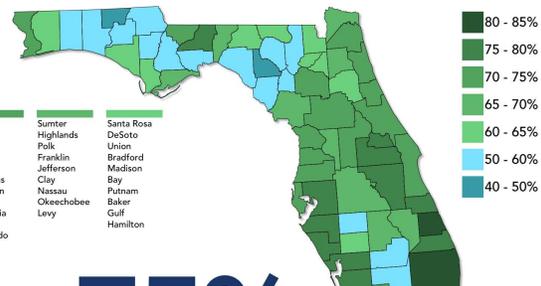


We are Proud of the Bipartisan Nature of Our Work

Florida Conservation Land Acquisitions Dashboard



Leading/Won ◆ Harris ◆ Trump ◇ No clear leader



- Palm Beach
- Broward
- St. Lucie
- Orange
- Monroe
- Coxscoola
- Martin
- Sarasota
- Lee
- Indian River
- Leon
- Manatee
- Hillsborough
- Miami-Dade
- Charlotte
- Seminole
- Pasco
- Collier
- Pinellas
- Brevard
- Volusia
- St. Johns
- Gadsden
- Marion
- Escambia
- Alachua
- Hernando
- Duval
- Flagler
- Lake
- Citrus
- Sumter
- Highlands
- Polk
- Franklin
- Jefferson
- Clay
- Nassau
- Okeechobee
- Levy
- Santa Rosa
- DeSoto
- Union
- Bradford
- Madison
- Bay
- Putnam
- Baker
- Gulf
- Hamilton

- Hardee
- Glades
- Columbia
- Liberty
- Gilchrist
- Hendry
- Jackson
- Wakulla
- Dixie
- Okaloosa
- Walton
- Taylor
- Suwannee
- Washington
- Calhoun
- Holmes
- Lafayette

75%
VOTED
YES ON 1

www.VoteYesOn1FL.org

Pd. pol. adv. paid for and sponsored by Florida's Water and Land Legacy, Inc., 1700 N. Monroe St., Ste. 11-286, Tallahassee, FL 32303

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For Further Information



Pegeen Hanrahan, P.E.
Trust for Public Land



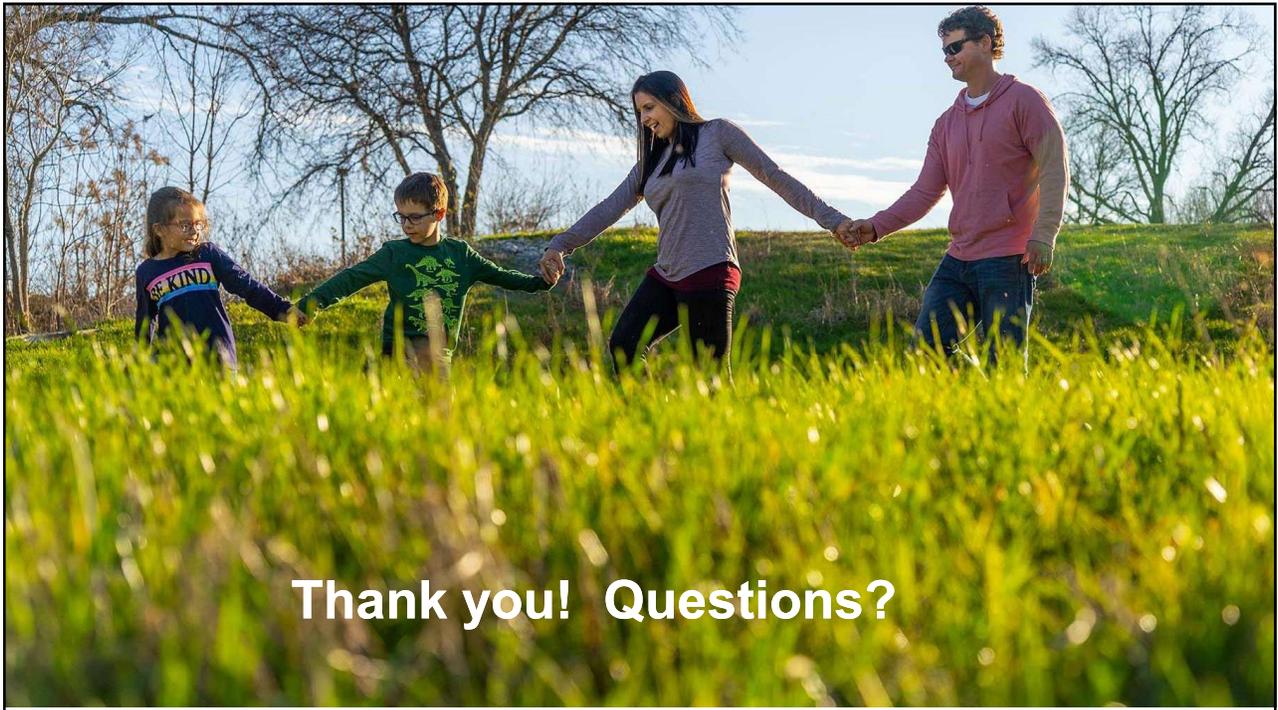
Associate Director of
Conservation Finance

Pegeen.Hanrahan@tpl.org

Website: tpl.org

352-665-5939

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Thank you! Questions?