



Marion County

Board of County Commissioners

Workshop

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, July 2, 2026

9:30 AM

McPherson Governmental
Campus Auditorium

Workshop for Parks & Recreation Regarding Department Funding

INTRODUCTION OF WORKSHOP BY CHAIRMAN CARL ZALAK III

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

1. [Workshop with the Trust for Public Land to Discuss Topics Related to Parks & Recreation Department Funding and to Present Update on Bond Funding Initiative](#)

BOARD DISCUSSION AND CLOSING COMMENTS



Marion County

Board of County Commissioners Workshop

Agenda Item

File No.: 2026-23535

Agenda Date: 7/2/2026

Agenda No.: 1.

SUBJECT:

Workshop with the Trust for Public Land to Discuss Topics Related to Parks & Recreation Department Funding and to Present Update on Bond Funding Initiative

INITIATOR:

Jim Couillard, PLA, ASLA, Director

DEPARTMENT:

Parks & Recreation

DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND:

The Parks & Recreation department is providing the Board of County Commissioners with an update on the process of bond funding to address deferred maintenance backlog, recreational opportunities and land conservation in Marion County.

During this workshop, staff will present information regarding the latest status of the bond funding initiative, project prioritization, implementation schedule and the status of ongoing discussions with stakeholders and municipalities.

BUDGET/IMPACT:

None

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Presentation only.

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

BOND FUNDING UPDATE – JULY 2, 2026

Topics for Discussion

Bond Funding

- Status of Bond Funding Initiative
 - What we have been working on
 - Public Input
- Project Prioritization
- Implementation Schedule

Status of Bond Initiative



Since Last Workshop

- Project Prioritization
- Bring Back Items
- Meetings with Municipalities
- Meeting with Gainesville staff
- Stakeholder & Agency Discussions

Project Prioritization



Existing Parks & Sites

District	Commissioner	Existing Parks & Sites	Asset Replacement	New or Expansion	District Subtotal
1	Commissioner Curry	15	\$9,470,000	\$24,045,000	\$33,515,000.00
2	Commissioner Bryant	5	\$2,725,000	\$5,650,000	\$8,375,000.00
3	Commissioner McClain	10	\$18,675,000	\$29,210,000	\$47,885,000.00
4	Commissioner Zalak	18	\$7,615,500	\$23,012,500	\$30,628,000.00
5	Commissioner Stone	6	\$225,000	\$665,000	\$890,000.00
	Countywide Projects	N/A	\$7,025,000	\$0	\$7,025,000.00
	SUBTOTALS	54	\$45,735,500.00	\$82,582,500.00	\$128,318,000.00

Numbers Not Included:

- Figures from Municipalities
- Conservation/Environmental
- Grant Matching Figures

Potential New Parks & Sites

District	Commissioner	Potential New Parks & Sites	Acquisition Cost	Development Cost	District Subtotal
1	Commissioner Curry	0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00
2	Commissioner Bryant	2	\$5,945,000	\$8,900,000	\$14,845,000.00
3	Commissioner McClain	0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00
4	Commissioner Zalak	3	\$5,212,000	\$1,500,000	\$6,712,000.00
5	Commissioner Stone	1	\$7,500,000	\$8,300,000	\$15,800,000.00
	Countywide Projects	1	\$5,400,000	\$25,000,000	\$30,400,000.00
	SUBTOTALS	7	\$24,057,000.00	\$43,700,000.00	\$67,757,007.00

District Total and County Grand Total

District	Commissioner	District Total
1	Commissioner Curry	\$33,515,000.00
2	Commissioner Bryant	\$23,220,000.00
3	Commissioner McClain	\$47,885,000.00
4	Commissioner Zalak	\$37,340,000.00
5	Commissioner Stone	\$16,690,000.00
	Countywide Projects	\$37,425,000.00
	GRAND TOTAL	\$196,075,000.00

Bring Back Items



Percentage of Change Per Square Mile

Marion County Commissioner Districts — Population Summary

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2010 & 2020 Decennial Census | UF BEBR 2025 Medium Projection (Vol. 58, Bulletin 201) | Marion County GIS

District	Commissioner	Area (sq mi)	2010 Census	2020 Census	2025 Estimate*	Change 2010–2025	% Change 2010–2025	Change 2020–2025	2025 Density (per sq mi)	% of County (2025)	% Change per sq mi
District 1	Craig Curry	326.76	65,812	74,603	84,843	+19,031	28.9%	+10,240	260	19.9%	0.09%
District 2	Kathy Bryant	257.45	67,714	80,249	91,264	+23,550	34.8%	+11,015	354	21.4%	0.14%
District 3	Matt McClain	109.66	65,134	73,065	83,094	+17,960	27.6%	+10,029	758	19.5%	0.25%
District 4	Carl Zalak, III	607.92	66,683	71,671	81,508	+14,825	22.2%	+9,837	134	19.1%	0.04%
District 5	Michelle Stone	361.09	65,811	75,965	86,392	+20,581	31.3%	+10,427	239	20.2%	0.09%
Marion County Total		1,662.88	331,154	375,553	427,100	+95,946	29.0%	+51,547	257	100.0%	0.02%

* 2025 Estimate = UF BEBR Medium Projection (April 1, 2025). District estimates are allocated proportionally based on each district's share of the 2020 Census population.

BEBR projects a range for Marion County in 2025: Low = 414,300 | Medium = 427,100 (used here) | High = 439,900. The April 1, 2024 estimate was 419,510.

Yellow-highlighted cells are estimates, not official Census counts.

Where does this data come from?

2010 & 2020 Pop. U.S. Census Bureau — official counts from the Decennial Census, conducted every 10 years.

2025 Estimate UF Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) — Florida's official population projection source. Published August 2025.

Comm. Districts Marion County BOCC GIS — the official district boundary map maintained by IT-GIS.

Bring Back Items



Meetings with Municipalities

Ocala

- Has provided an project list
- Prioritized based on their internal methodology
 - All Needs: **\$107,730,000**
 - Highest Priorities: **\$33,165,000**
- Ocala Recreation Commission Meeting: July 9, 2026

Bellevue

- Highly Supports Bellevue Sportsplex projects

Bring Back Items



Meetings with Municipalities

Dunnellon

- Needs assistance in reviewing parks and needs
- Meeting with city leadership: July 8, 2026

Reddick/McIntosh

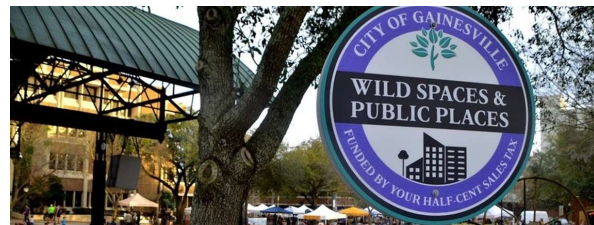
- Meetings being planned
- Minimal needs/wants expected

Bring Back Items



Meetings with Gainesville Team

- Discussed implementation process
- Roles of the people hired to implement Wild Spaces, Public Places Sales Tax:
 - Overall project manager
 - Fiscal manager
 - Construction, Engineering Inspector
 - Community Engagement
- Biggest Challenges
 - Staff availability
 - Projects running multiple districts at the same time



Stakeholder Discussions



Rural Lands and Conservation Groups

- Horse Farms Forever – Farmland Preservation Area
- Conservation-oriented teams
 - Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation
 - Felburn Foundation
 - Land Trusts

Local Stakeholders & Agencies

- CEP
- Clerk of Court – Finance Team

Public Input



Trust for Public Land

- Polling Discussion
- Opportunities
- Challenges

MARION COUNTY GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND REFERENDUM FOR PARKS, TRAILS, CLEAN WATER PROTECTION, FARMS AND FORESTS"

"To acquire and improve lands and conservation easements to provide parks, trails, sports fields and recreational facilities; preserve and protect water quality of drinking water sources, springs, rivers and lakes; and protect natural land, farms, forest; shall Marion County issue bonds up to \$140 million maturing within 20 years, bearing interest not exceeding the maximum legal rate, payable from ad valorem taxes not exceeding 0.3 mill, with full public disclosure of all spending?"

Project Prioritization



General Overview

- Tasked with developing overall project lists
- Started with projects listed in 2007 Parks & Recreation Master Plan
- Met with each Commissioner to review projects within each District
- Formulated a final list
 - Total value of final list far exceeds the \$140 million threshold
 - Currently assessing highest level of threshold with impact of <\$50/household
- Process created to guide prioritization of projects

Project Prioritization



Methodology – Metrics and Measures

Developed a system to assign ranking based on a mathematically sound approach of using eight metrics and measuring each one.

- **Health & Public Safety Deficit** (Weight: 20%)
- **Current Asset Condition & Depreciation** (Weight: 15%)
- **Economic Impact, Revenue Generation & Tourism Attraction** (Weight: 15%)
- **Policy Leverage & Resource Optimization** (Weight: 15%)
- **Population Density & Growth Need** (Weight: 15%)
- **Statutory & Regulatory Mandate Compliance** (Weight: 10%)
- **Service Co-Location & Duplication** (Weight: 5%)
- **Asset Life-Cycle & Operational Sustainability** (Weight: 5%)

Project Prioritization



Methodology - Cutoffs

Ranked all existing parks and proposed new acquisitions and projects by assessing each specific project, line-by-line:

- **54** existing parks and site include **206** individual projects
 - **2** existing countywide projects include **12** sub-projects
 - **7** proposed acquisitions and/or projects include **15** individual projects
- Tier 1 – Phase 1/Mandatory Keeps** (Score of 6.0 or greater)
Tier 2 – Value Engineering & Policy Holds (Score of 4.5 to 5.9)
Tier 3 – The “Defer or Cut Zone” (Score of less than 4.5)

BONDING OPTIONS

Marion County Bond Financing Estimates							
Bond Issue	Interest Rate	Maturity (Years)	Annual Debt Service	Total Taxable Value*	Mills Required	Annual Cost for Median Homestead**	Annual Cost per \$100K Tax Value**
\$20,000,000	4%	20	\$1,471,635	\$38,028,967,910	0.0387	\$4	\$4
\$50,000,000	4%	20	\$3,679,088	\$38,028,967,910	0.0967	\$10	\$10
\$70,000,000	4%	20	\$5,150,723	\$38,028,967,910	0.1354	\$14	\$14
\$100,000,000	4%	20	\$7,358,175	\$38,028,967,910	0.1935	\$20	\$19
\$140,000,000	4%	20	\$10,301,445	\$38,028,967,911	0.2709	\$28	\$27
\$150,000,000	4%	20	\$11,037,263	\$38,028,967,910	0.2902	\$30	\$29

*Florida Department of Revenue, Ad Valorem Valuation and Tax Data Book, Florida Association of Counties
**Median homestead taxable value = \$102,622 with \$50,000 exemption.

HJR1-Year 1

Marion County Bond Financing Estimates							
Bond Issue	Interest Rate	Maturity (Years)	Annual Debt Service	Total Taxable Value FY27*	Mills Required	Annual Cost for Median Homestead**	Annual Cost per \$100K Tax Value**
\$20,000,000	4%	20	\$1,471,635	\$22,368,488,806	0.0658	\$0	\$7
\$50,000,000	4%	20	\$3,679,088	\$22,368,488,806	0.1645	\$0	\$16
\$70,000,000	4%	20	\$5,150,723	\$22,368,488,806	0.2303	\$1	\$23
\$100,000,000	4%	20	\$7,358,175	\$22,368,488,806	0.3290	\$1	\$33
\$140,000,000	4%	20	\$10,301,445	\$22,368,488,807	0.4605	\$1	\$46
\$150,000,000	4%	20	\$11,037,263	\$22,368,488,806	0.4934	\$1	\$49

*Florida Department of Revenue, Ad Valorem Valuation and Tax Data Book, Florida Association of Counties
**Median homestead taxable value = \$2,822 with \$150,000 exemption.

HJR1-Year 2

Marion County Bond Financing Estimates							
Bond Issue	Interest Rate	Maturity (Years)	Annual Debt Service	Total Taxable Value FY28*	Mills Required	Annual Cost for Median Homestead**	Annual Cost per \$100K Tax Value**
\$20,000,000	4%	20	\$1,471,635	\$13,674,906,219	0.1076	\$0	\$11
\$50,000,000	4%	20	\$3,679,088	\$13,674,906,219	0.2690	\$0	\$27
\$70,000,000	4%	20	\$5,150,723	\$13,674,906,219	0.3767	\$0	\$38
\$100,000,000	4%	20	\$7,358,175	\$13,674,906,219	0.5381	\$0	\$54
\$140,000,000	4%	20	\$10,301,445	\$13,674,906,220	0.7533	\$0	\$75
\$150,000,000	4%	20	\$11,037,263	\$13,674,906,219	0.8071	\$0	\$81

*Florida Department of Revenue, Ad Valorem Valuation and Tax Data Book, Florida Association of Counties
**Median homestead taxable value = \$0 with \$250,000 exemption.

BOND PLUS MILLAGE OPTIONS

Marion County Property Tax and Bond Financing Estimates								
Mills	Total Taxable Value*	Annual Revenue	Annual Cost per \$100K Tax Value**	Bond Issue	Interest Rate	Maturity (Years)	Annual Debt Service	Remaining Annual Revenue
0.28	\$38,028,967,910	\$10,648,111	\$28	\$20,000,000	4%	20	\$1,471,635	\$9,176,476
				\$50,000,000	4%	20	\$3,679,088	\$6,969,023
				\$70,000,000	4%	20	\$5,150,723	\$5,497,388
				\$100,000,000	4%	20	\$7,358,175	\$3,289,936
				\$140,000,000	4%	20	\$10,301,445	\$346,666
<small>*Florida Department of Revenue, Ad Valorem Valuation and Tax Data Book, Florida Association of Counties</small>								
<small>**Median homestead taxable value = \$102,822 with \$50,000 exemption.</small>								
HJR1-Year 1								
Marion County Property Tax and Bond Financing Estimates								
Mills	Total Taxable Value FY27*	Annual Revenue	Annual Cost per \$100K Tax Value**	Bond Issue	Interest Rate	Maturity (Years)	Annual Debt Service	Remaining Annual Revenue
0.47	\$22,368,488,806	\$10,513,190	\$47	\$20,000,000	4%	20	\$1,471,635	\$9,041,555
				\$50,000,000	4%	20	\$3,679,088	\$6,834,102
				\$70,000,000	4%	20	\$5,150,723	\$5,362,467
				\$100,000,000	4%	20	\$7,358,175	\$3,155,015
				\$140,000,000	4%	20	\$10,301,445	\$211,745
<small>*Florida Department of Revenue, Ad Valorem Valuation and Tax Data Book, Florida Association of Counties</small>								
<small>**Median homestead taxable value = \$2,822 with \$150,000 exemption.</small>								
HJR1-Year 2								
Marion County Property Tax and Bond Financing Estimates								
Mills	Total Taxable Value FY28*	Annual Revenue	Annual Cost per \$100K Tax Value**	Bond Issue	Interest Rate	Maturity (Years)	Annual Debt Service	Remaining Annual Revenue
0.76	\$13,674,906,219	\$10,392,929	\$76	\$20,000,000	4%	20	\$1,471,635	\$8,921,294
				\$50,000,000	4%	20	\$3,679,088	\$6,713,841
				\$70,000,000	4%	20	\$5,150,723	\$5,242,206
				\$100,000,000	4%	20	\$7,358,175	\$3,034,754
				\$140,000,000	4%	20	\$10,301,445	\$91,484
<small>*Florida Department of Revenue, Ad Valorem Valuation and Tax Data Book, Florida Association of Counties</small>								
<small>**Median homestead taxable value = \$0 with \$250,000 exemption.</small>								

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Next Steps – Implementation Items



1. Continue with prioritization
2. Conduct 1:1s to review projects and ballot language
3. Continue discussions with Finance and Legal teams
4. Draft Authorizing Resolution
 - Adoption Tuesday, August 4 during BCC Meeting

Next Workshop – Wednesday, August 5, 2026 at 2:00pm

Conclusion



Questions?

Empowering Marion for Success