

Memorandum

To: Taco E. Pope, AICP, Nassau County Planning and Economic Opportunity Director
Adrienne Burke, Esq., MSAS, Assistant Director
Sue Ann Alleger, MLS, CFM, Planner II/CRS Coordinator

From: Will Abberger, Vice President, Director, Conservation Finance,
Wendy Muzzy, Director, Feasibility Research and Pegeen Hanrahan,
Southeast Conservation Finance Director

Date: December 19, 2018

Re: Nassau County Land Conservation Referendum Feasibility Research

Adequate funding is a challenge for all park and conservation-related activities. The Trust for Public Land's (TPL's) Conservation Finance program helps communities and agencies identify and raise public funds for parks and land conservation from state and local sources. TPL provides professional, technical assistance services to local governments, special districts, and others that need to research and evaluate the feasibility of park and land conservation finance options. Since 1996, TPL has been involved in over 550 successful ballot measures that have created more than \$74 billion in new funding for parks, conservation, and restoration. Voters have approved 82 percent of the ballot measures supported by TPL, and 94.4% or 17 of 18 won in 2018.

In Florida, The Trust for Public Land has worked on 32 successful bond, sales tax, or property tax campaigns to benefit Florida local governments, including Miami-Dade County, St. Lucie County, Davie, Martin County, St.

Augustine Beach, North Bay Village, Flagler County, Alachua County, Hillsborough County, Ormond Beach, Brevard

County, Lee County, Sarasota County, Doral, Cape Coral and New Smyrna Beach. TPL also provided the campaign leadership for the 2014 citizens' initiative, The



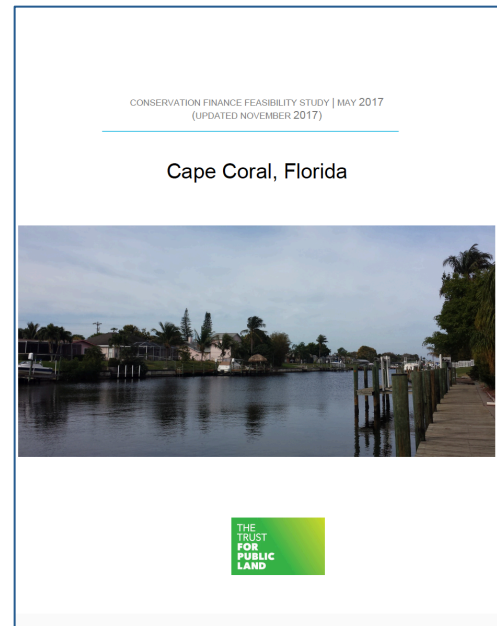
Andy Romano Park in Ormond Beach. A \$5 million bond was approved by 60% of voters in August, 2010 with assistance from the Trust for Public Land; property purchased by TPL and transferred to the city.

Water and Land Conservation amendment to the state Constitutional (“Amendment 1”), to provide dedicated state funding for land and water conservation, management, and restoration. This effort passed with 75 percent voter approval on the November, 2014 ballot. The total new funding for conservation and parks in Florida that TPL has helped to generate well exceeds \$10 billion.

Conservation funding is a very tangible step communities take to guide land use, manage growth, provide recreation amenities, and protect natural landscapes and critical ecosystems. Given the substantial investment of time and resources required to develop and implement a public funding strategy, TPL employs our tried and true conservation finance methodology of sound research to understand conservation options and voter attitudes followed by strategic campaigns that effectively communicate key messages. TPL provides policy and fiscal analysis, public opinion research, technical assistance, strategic recommendations, and legislative drafting, often followed by legislative or ballot measure campaigns.

Feasibility Research

The hallmark of TPL’s Conservation Finance work is feasibility research. Conservation finance feasibility studies typically identify and assess the potential for a range of funding strategies that are realistic and that would substantially increase public funding to address the community’s parks, recreation, and conservation needs. Typical components of a comprehensive feasibility analysis include an assessment of existing funding programs; identification of an array of strategies and funding mechanisms to complement existing programs; exploration of the processes for implementation; and evaluation of the feasibility of various alternatives by analyzing factors such as ballot measure history, constitutional and statutory limitations, and fiscal conditions and forecasts. The reports are based on original research by TPL, as well as a review of existing research and analysis. These reports serve as the foundation for discussions with key stakeholders, policy-makers, partners, and the general public.



TPL proposes research to analyze public finance options that Nassau County may consider to fund protection of lands as identified by the County and any other related capital priorities. TPL will examine the revenue-raising capacity, the fiscal impact to government budgets, and/or taxpayers of the local property tax needed to back general obligation bonds. TPL also proposes to provide examples of where and how this mechanism has been used by other jurisdictions in Florida. In Florida, general obligation bonds and sales taxes require voter approval. As such, TPL also proposes to research election results to examine whether the electorate has

supported or opposed spending public funds for parks and open space, or other priorities, in the past, as well as voter turnout trends. This analysis may require the assistance of Nassau County to provide financial documents, such as budgets, capital spending plans, tax assessment rolls, and relevant comprehensive or open space plans.

TPL staff will make a presentation of key research findings to county staff and officials as well as any project stakeholders, as needed. We will seek staff and any recommended public input throughout the process.

Public Opinion Polling (Recommend Private Funding)

Our practice in almost every jurisdiction is to recommend a public opinion survey of voters to determine voter attitudes towards finance mechanism identified in the feasibility research and inform decisions about ballot measure design, ballot language, and a possible ballot measure campaign. After completing the Feasibility Study, TPL will contract with a qualified public opinion survey firm to conduct a professionally administered, statistically valid public opinion survey, through telephone interviews of randomly selected voters in the using landlines and cell phones. The public opinion survey can be funded either publicly or privately. Private funding of the poll provides TPL with the ability to keep results confidential if necessary.

The poll will be designed to test the following:

1. Specific ballot language and the level of voter support for a funding measure that might include land conservation, parks, and protection of floodplain water supply and/or cultural resources;
2. Alternative funding sources and amounts;
3. Purposes for the use of funds the voters find most compelling;
4. Timing, i.e., when is the best time to bring a measure to voters; and
5. Various accountability measures that may be incorporated into the measure.

Program Recommendations

The feasibility research and public opinion survey will provide the knowledge base to inform deliberations about the amount and duration of financing, expenditure priorities, and public accountability, as well as election timing and ballot language.

TPL will provide recommendations for a public finance strategy to fund land conservation and floodplain protection. If the county decides to move forward with a ballot measure, TPL will advise on the crafting of the ballot language, including state and local requirements, examples of successful ballot questions, and consultation with legal counsel as necessary.

Proposal to Nassau County, FL

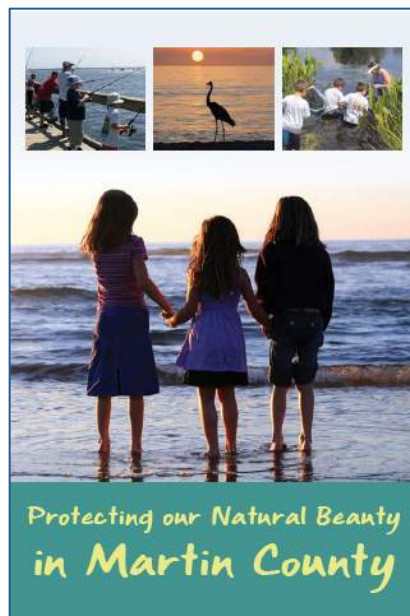
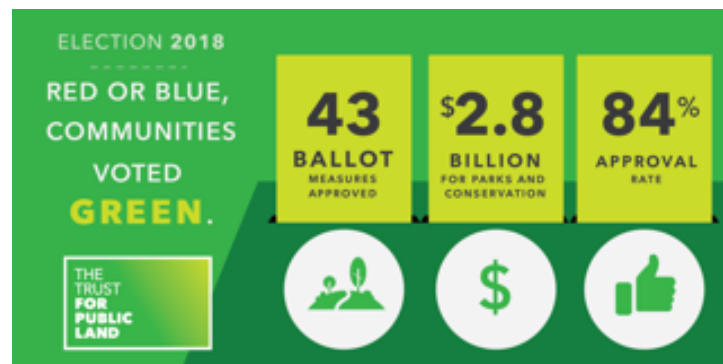
This proposal does not include the costs associated with a citizen-led, privately funded ballot measure campaign to advocate for a “Yes” vote that would be necessary if a measure is referred to the ballot.

Budget

Expenses

Feasibility Research, Recommendations, Measure Design	\$17,000
Public Opinion Survey (estimate; privately funded)	\$20,000
Travel, Meetings, Presentations	\$6,500
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$43,500
SUPPORT FROM DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION	\$11,500
ADDITIONAL PRIVATE FUNDRAISING	\$20,000
TOTAL COST TO COUNTY	\$12,000

Thank you for the opportunity to present this proposal to Nassau County. Please do not hesitate to call Will Abberger at 850-222-7911 Ext 23 or Pegeen Hanrahan at 850-661-1770 if you have any questions.



Conservation Finance

THE
TRUST
FOR
PUBLIC
LAND



The national leader in state and local funding for parks and conservation, The Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance program serves as a trusted advisor to state and local governments and community leaders on how to design, pass, and implement ballot and legislative measures to fund parks and conservation.

Since 1996, we've helped pass over 560 measures—82 percent of those we've worked on—that generated more than \$74 billion for parks and conservation.

Technical assistance

The Trust for Public Land helps elected officials, government executives, legislatures, land trusts, and public agencies research and evaluate conservation finance options and design ballot and legislative measures that reflect public priorities.

FEASIBILITY RESEARCH: Analyzing public finance options and exploring their legal, fiscal, and political constraints.

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEYS: Managing surveys by expert polling firms to gauge voter support for funding mechanisms, uses for funds, and messages.

MEASURE DESIGN: Recommending optimal funding method, measure amount, language, and election timing.

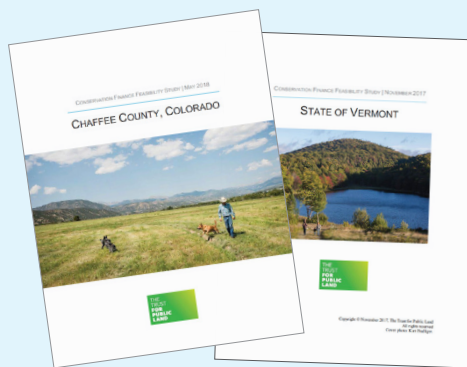
PROGRAM DESIGN AND EVALUATION: Providing models and recommendations for state and local government conservation programs.



Campaign services

The Trust for Public Land and The Trust for Public Land Action Fund, our 501(c)(4) lobbying affiliate, offer a comprehensive suite of campaign services on a case-by-case basis. These include campaign planning, management, and fundraising; selecting and directing pollsters and consultants; writing and producing digital, direct-mail, television, and radio advertisements; overseeing public education and get-out-the-vote programs; and managing compliance with laws governing campaign finance and lobbying.

To learn more about The Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance service, go to tpl.org/services.



Research and thought leadership

The Trust for Public Land conducts research and publishes information in support of public funding for parks and conservation and offer insights into emerging conservation trends. Tools and publications include:

CONSERVATION ALMANAC: A website for discovering, analyzing, and mapping the results of federal, state, and local land conservation funding. [conservationAlmanac.org](https://conservation Almanac.org)

LANDVOTE®: A searchable online database of all state and local conservation ballot measures since 1988. landvote.org

CONSERVATION ECONOMICS REPORTS: Research that quantifies the economic benefits and fiscal impacts of land conservation.

HANDBOOKS: For government and community leaders, including The Conservation Finance Handbook (2004) and The Conservation Program Handbook (2009).



The Trust for Public Land
creates parks and protects land
for people, ensuring healthy,
livable communities
for generations to come.

tpl.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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PHOTO: FRONT, CHRISTI COOPER-KUHN; BACK, DARCY KIEFEL.
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