

## **Agricultural Land Protection Strategy Framework Development – Continuing Services Contract #13960 between Alachua County and Alachua Conservation Trust**

### **Scope of Services**

**1. Project Description:** PROFESSIONAL will implement this assessment and framework project and create a report detailing the need and framework for an agricultural lands' conservation strategy for Alachua County. This project will be completed through close coordination with, and under the direction of the Alachua County Land Conservation and Management Program.

### **2. Specific Requirements**

**2.1. Project Objectives and Deliverables:** Following the approach used to establish the Alachua County Forever Program, its priorities, process, and guiding documents, the below objectives and deliverables will be completed. At minimum, project status updates detailing deliverables, accomplishments, and challenges will be submitted monthly. County staff and ACT project team members will meet monthly at minimum to review project status.

**2.2. Objective 1:** Create framework for the Alachua County Agricultural Land Conservation Strategy

#### **2.2.1. Deliverables:**

2.2.1.1. PROFESSIONAL will define a mission statement for an Agricultural Land Conservation Strategy within Alachua County based on local stakeholder input and feedback

2.2.1.2. PROFESSIONAL will set and identify conceptual goals for the Strategy based on local stakeholder input and feedback

2.2.1.3. PROFESSIONAL will develop a Ranking Matrix and Associated Scoring Criteria for the Strategy.

2.2.1.4. PROFESSIONAL will assess program demand from local stakeholder engagement

2.2.1.5. PROFESSIONAL will develop a GIS based Strategic Agricultural Lands Ranking Model in consultation with the University of Florida GeoPlan Center. This model will incorporate existing climate change impact and climate resiliency data to the extent available.

2.2.1.6. PROFESSIONAL will develop an agricultural resources inventory to be used in the Ranking Matrix and Agricultural Lands Ranking Model

#### **2.2.2. Documentation:**

2.2.2.1. PROFESSIONAL will provide a written mission statement and list of conceptual goals for the Strategy.

2.2.2.2. PROFESSIONAL will provide a Ranking Matrix and Scoring Criteria based on defined Strategy goals

- 2.2.2.3. PROFESSIONAL will develop a GIS Strategic Agricultural Land Ranking Model based on defined strategy goals in consultation with the University of Florida GeoPlan Center and other partners.
- 2.2.2.4. PROFESSIONAL will provide a strategic land conservation prioritization map based on the GIS Strategic Agricultural Land Ranking Model. All spatial data and associated metadata will be provided in a format compatible with ESRI ArcGIS/ArcMap, and ArcGISPro.
- 2.2.2.5. PROFESSIONAL will collect and submit letters of support from local stakeholders.

2.3. **Objective 2:** Estimate Scale of Work

**2.3.1. Deliverables:**

- 2.3.1.1. PROFESSIONAL will describe the Acquisition Process for acquiring agricultural easements, using the process defined in Alachua County Board of County Commissioners Resolution 22-066 as amended as the foundation.
- 2.3.1.2. PROFESSIONAL will describe requirements for easement stewardship and monitoring, including requirements associated with primary state and federal partner program funding sources.
- 2.3.1.3. PROFESSIONAL will estimate scale of work for implementing the Strategy in consideration of the Acquisition Process and easement stewardship requirements.
- 2.3.1.4. PROFESSIONAL will identify primary state and federal easement funding partners, and estimate scale of work for applying for additional grant funding sources of match.

**2.3.2. Documentation:**

- 2.3.2.1. PROFESSIONAL will provide a detailed written process for acquiring agricultural easements and or agricultural land in fee simple. Template easement deeds that comply with primary state and federal funding partner easement language will be included. Due diligence requirements for primary state and federal funding partners will be explicitly defined.
- 2.3.2.2. PROFESSIONAL will provide written documentation describing easement stewardship requirements.
- 2.3.2.3. PROFESSIONAL will provide an estimate report of required staff, vehicle and equipment needs to implement the Program. The report should include adequate detail to allow County staff to estimate in-house implementation costs. The report will include a cost analysis for implementation if it were contracted out to PROFESSIONAL or a similar organization.

2.4. **Objective 3:** Establish Framework to constitute Advisory Board

**2.4.1. Deliverables:**

2.4.1.1. PROFESSIONAL will assist in identifying and recommending potential members and committee structure, and building a joint subcommittee from the following stakeholders:

- 2.4.1.1.1. LCB members
- 2.4.1.1.2. Rural Lands Advisory Board
- 2.4.1.1.3. Agricultural producers
- 2.4.1.1.4. Local Food Organization
- 2.4.1.1.5. IFAS Representatives
- 2.4.1.1.6. Diverse stakeholders representing county wide municipalities

2.5. **Objective 4:** Develop County Process and Draft Resolution Language

**2.5.1. Deliverables:**

2.5.1.1. PROFESSIONAL will develop the language for county process and resolution for approving agricultural land acquisition, using the process defined in Alachua County Board of County Commissioners Resolution 22-066 as amended as the foundation. The process document and resolution language will include mission and purpose statements which adhere to the legal standards for use of local government infrastructure surtax dollars in acquisition of conservation easements; and will identify values including but not limited to: protecting agricultural land, securing local food production, economic growth and rural land protection, water resource protection, pollution prevention and reduction, and others.

**2.5.2. Documentation:**

2.5.2.1. PROFESSIONAL will provide written documentation detailing the county process and a draft resolution for selecting and acquiring agricultural land conservation land easements. This documentation will point to other relevant successful models of protecting agricultural land.

2.6. **Objective 5:** Develop framework for matching county resources with regional, state, and federal conservation programs.

**2.6.1. Deliverables:**

- 2.6.1.1. PROFESSIONAL will identify specific grant/partner program opportunities for easement fund matching
- 2.6.1.2. PROFESSIONAL will create a framework to help the county submit grant proposals for regional, state and federal easement match.
- 2.6.1.3. PROFESSIONAL will provide documentation of minimum deed terms for potential matching programs.
- 2.6.1.4. PROFESSIONAL will work with County staff to review general strategies and partner program template contract language for potential county match funding of non-county-held easements.

2.6.2. **Documentation:** PROFESSIONAL will create a report documenting successful models to protect agricultural land using matching programs.

2.7. **Objective 6:** Develop an economic impact report for implementation of agricultural land conservation strategy at multiple thresholds levels (e.g. farms/properties, acres, product types, other)

**2.7.1. Deliverables:**

2.7.1.1. PROFESSIONAL will develop a breakdown of spending for a typical working lands easement

2.7.1.2. PROFESSIONAL will assess agricultural economic statistics for Alachua County using census data

2.7.1.3. PROFESSIONAL will produce a cost benefit analysis for implementing an Agricultural Conservation Strategy within the Alachua County Land Conservation and Management Program. Analysis will include options for county-staffed and contract-focused, and hybrid implementation.

2.7.2. **Documentation:** PROFESSIONAL will provide a report detailing a cost analysis of a working lands easement, assessment of agricultural statistics for Alachua County, and a cost benefit analysis for implementing the Strategy.

2.8. **Objective 7:** Participate in stakeholder and community engagement and outreach related to proposed agricultural land conservation strategy process and framework. Deliverables for Objective 7 will be implemented throughout project.

**2.8.1. Deliverables:**

2.8.1.1. PROFESSIONAL will participate with Alachua County staff to conduct 2 public workshops to gain stakeholder input into development and goals for agricultural land conservation strategy process as a part of Objective 1, and citizen feedback to the draft process products from Objectives 1-4 in the review phase of the project to present draft process and framework upon project completion.

2.8.1.2. Costs associated with a stakeholder and citizen workshop(s) will be covered by Alachua County, including cost of meeting rental space.

**2.8.2. Documentation:**

2.8.2.1. PROFESSIONAL will assist with planning, participate, assist with stakeholder and citizen outreach, and as appropriate, incorporate draft process revisions generated by workshop input into final process documents.