



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 26-00176

Agenda Date: 4/14/2026

Agenda Item Name:

Addition of Land Conservation Projects to the Alachua County Forever Active Acquisition List – Agricultural Easement Category

Presenter:

Jean Willoughby, Senior Planner – Environmental Protection Dept., (352) 756-1403

Description:

Staff requests the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) approve the addition of the following land conservation project to the Alachua County Forever (ACF) Active Acquisition List, agricultural easement category. The staff recommendation is based on the addition of this property to the Priority Pool by the Agricultural Land Conservation Board (ALCB) as outlined in Resolution 2025-99.

1. Paynes Prairie Additions – Kahn Property, Daniel Kahn (Full Price List) – Agricultural Easement Category

Addition of this project to the Active Acquisition List, authorizes staff to obtain title work and appraisals, negotiate price and easement deed terms with the owners, and execute purchase or option contracts. Any purchase contract or option will be brought back to the Board for consideration.

Recommended Action:

Approve the addition of the following property to the Active Acquisition List, agricultural easement category:

1. Paynes Prairie Additions – Kahn Property, Daniel Kahn (Full Price List) – Agricultural Easement Category

Prior Board Motions:

None.

Fiscal Note:

Paynes Prairie Additions – Kahn Property (Agricultural Easement) - Cost Estimates:

Alachua County Property Appraiser (ACPA) Property Value: \$98,370*

Total estimated cost for acquisition due diligence, and 10-year stewardship: \$76,800.

The current annual property tax revenue of all the project parcels is: \$3,323.18

*Easements are valued as a portion of the independently appraised property value based on the property rights sold and property rights retained in the easement deed.

Purchase and maintenance would be funded from the Wild Spaces Public Places surtax.

Additional details can be found in the attached exhibits. (Exhibits 2 and 3).

Strategic Guide:

Environment and Conservation

Background:

The Kahn property is approximately 65.58 acres based on Alachua County Property Appraiser (ACPA) tax assessment and consists of one parcel (16107-200-000) and has been nominated for an agricultural conservation easement by the landowner. The property is known locally as the “former blueberry farm” and is located off SE 15th Street in Southeast Gainesville, near other small farms and a handful of residences. The landowner is collaborating with internal and external partners to develop a sustainable farm management and habitat restoration plan encompassing the agricultural and natural resources on the property. Most recently, the landowner and their project team has begun implementing a three-year plan in collaboration with NRCS through the Alachua Conservation Trust to conserve the 0.5 mile of Calf Pond Creek and surrounding riparian area, remove invasive plants throughout the property, and also make an initial plan for longleaf pine restoration. Agricultural operations focused on serving local markets and using sustainable principles is part of the landowners’ long-term vision.

The property is not currently being used for agriculture and has not been used as a farm since the 1990s. According to the Property Appraiser’s website, the property owner has not received an Agriculture tax exemption since 2023. However, in accordance with Section 704.06(13), Florida Statutes, conservation easement agreements are authorized to include historic uses that occurred on the land, as long as they are conducted in accordance with applicable best management practices adopted by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

The property is currently located in the City of Gainesville. County staff has discussed the applicable zoning and land use requirements with the City of Gainesville staff. The property is zoned Residential Single-Family with a Future Land Use that is Single Family. In accordance with Sec. 30-4.16. of the City of Gainesville Code, up to 5 acres of Urban Market Farm is a permitted use in a Residential Single-Family Zoning District. “Urban Market Farm” is defined in the City of Gainesville Code as land used for hydroponics, aquaculture farming, or the cultivation of fruits, vegetables, plants, flowers, herbs, or fowl by an individual, organization, business, or association with the primary purpose of growing agricultural products for consumption, wholesale, direct-to-consumer sale, or combination of these options. However, if more than 5 acres are used for an “Urban Market Farm,” then approval of a special use permit is required from the City of Gainesville Plan Board.

Issues related to zoning and future land use will be reviewed and discussed with the landowners prior to any county acquisition-related negotiations with the landowner and prior to investment of staff time and resources in easement deed drafting or other steps related to potential easement acquisition. Resolution of conflicts with zoning and future land and easement deed requirements will be the landowners responsibility. County staff recommends that if an Option Contract is pursued for this Property, and the Board wishes for more than five acres of Urban Market Farm Use or a broader agriculture use, the Contract should not take effect until the Property Owner has received approval from the City of Gainesville for a Special Use Permit for an Urban Market Farm Use for the Property or received approval for a Rezoning of the Property to the Agriculture Zoning District and Approval of a Land Use Plan Amendment to “Agriculture”.

Additional information can be found in the attached site evaluation. (Exhibit 1)

General:

The staff recommendation is based on the addition of these properties to the Priority Pool by the Agricultural Land Conservation Board as outlined in Resolution 2025-99.

Comp Plan Reference:

Policy 6.0 Land Conservation Program within the Conservation and Open Space Element, states “Establish and maintain a land conservation program for the purchase, preservation, and management of natural areas and open space to complement the regulatory approaches identified in other section of this element.”

Policy 5.0 Human-Related Resources within the Conservation and Open Space Element, states “Agricultural and silvicultural lands which have value for historic or natural resources conservation, recreation, or open space purposes shall be identified and, based upon willing landowner participation, may be included as part of the County’s land conservation program.”