

Land Acquisition Program Updates

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North Port Natural Resources Division

City Commission Regular Meeting

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Presentation Goals

- Provide the City Commission with an overall update on the status of the Land Acquisition Program.
- Summarize recent activities, funding efforts, and evaluation outcomes.
- Report on the parcels previously approved by the Commission for acquisition evaluation.
- Present information and request possible direction regarding two additional parcels of interest with potential willing sellers.

Land Acquisition Purpose

- Proactively identify, evaluate, and acquire environmentally sensitive lands.
- Preserve natural resources and support the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) and Comprehensive Plan.
- Enhance ecological integrity, public health, and community resiliency.
- Promote biodiversity and protect existing ecosystems.
- Improve quality of life by providing recreational spaces, improving air quality, and fostering connection with nature.
- Provide economic benefits through property value, tourism, and reduced future flood management costs.

Acquisition Process Summary

- Nomination Process: Properties nominated by internal research, or resident recommendation.
- Evaluation: Scoring based on ecological value, floodplain benefit, connectivity, size, and management feasibility.
- Appraisal & Due Diligence: Third-party appraisal, title searches, environmental risk assessments, and site inspections.
- Approval: Review by Natural Resources Division and City Commission.
- Funding: Leverage City funds for state and federal grants and utilize City Environmental fund.

Background

- Program criteria include ecological value such as heritage trees, listed species habitat, and hydrologically connected systems.
- Commission direction prioritized floodplain protection, focusing on wetlands, flood-prone parcels, and other sensitive natural areas.
- Staff initiated outreach to confirm willing sellers for top-ranked parcels aligned with these priorities.
- Program is transitioning into procurement for parcels on the approved list.
- New parcels surfaced through owner inquiries showing strong environmental conservation potential.

Public Information & Transparency

- New webpage created: northportfl.gov/landacquisition.
- Informational video published.
- Interactive mapping tool.
- Social media posts released to raise awareness.
- Tailored outreach efforts have begun through letters and phone calls conducted by Natural Resources staff.
- In-person meetings with staff are an additional option.

Land Acquisition Webpage

- **Program webpage launched** with clear goals, conservation priorities, and participation guidance.
- **Informational video available** explaining program purpose and benefits.
- **Central source for updates** on outreach, evaluation, and conservation progress.
- **Simple contact options** through email for owners to reach out or submit property information.

Land Acquisition Program

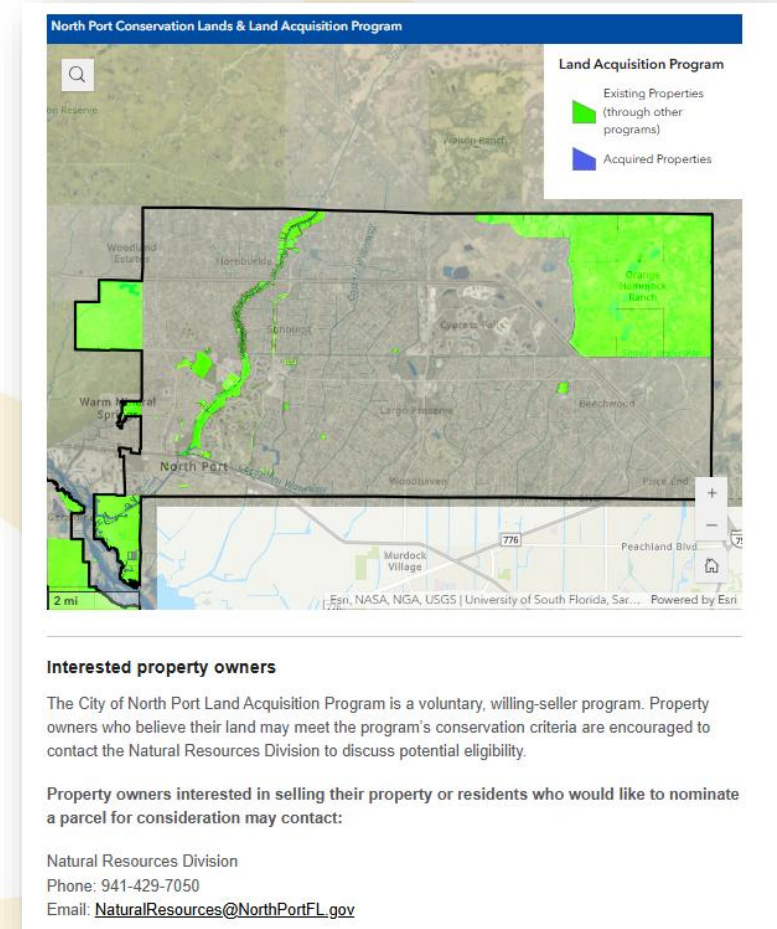


The Land Acquisition Program was approved by North Port City Commission in December 2025 to proactively identify and acquire environmentally sensitive lands for permanent conservation. The program is designed to preserve priority natural resources for long-term ecological protection.



Mapping Tool & Program Benefits

- **Interactive mapping tool** displaying all conservation lands within North Port.
- **Map expands as program grows** with new parcels added after evaluation or acquisition.
- **Supports identification of new parcels** based on conservation value and owner interest.
- **Enhances transparency** by showing how conservation areas fit into the broader landscape.
- **Helps owners understand benefits** of preservation, stormwater function, and long-term community value.



Current Outreach and Engagement

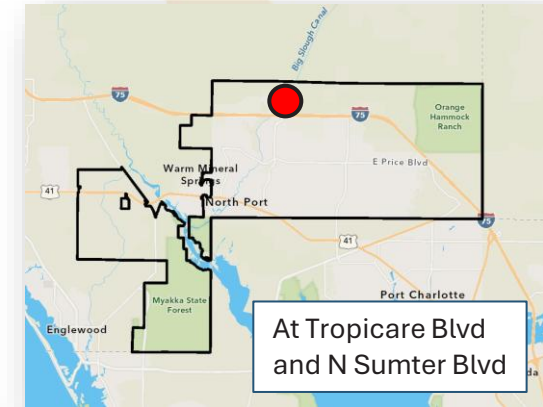
- Ten letters of interest sent to property owners in the first tier of priority parcels.
- Two owners responded directly following the initial outreach.
- Follow-up letters sent to non-responsive owners within the first tier.
- Second-tier outreach to begin once all first-tier outreach efforts are fully completed.
- Additional parcels identified for evaluation following the launch of the City's new Land Acquisition webpage and social media posts.
- Two property owners expressed interest after learning about the program.

Nona Springs - (Charlotte Sarasota Holdings LLP)

- Letter of interest was sent by the Natural Resources Division to the property owner.
- Exceptional ecological value, including a natural spring and wetlands, as well as high potential archaeological significance.
- Owner expressed interest in a potential trade.
- Limited interest in sale, however willing to meet.
- Limited response to follow-ups after recent outreach.
- Environmentally constrained parcel with limited development potential.
- Potential coordination with Sarasota County for trade options.

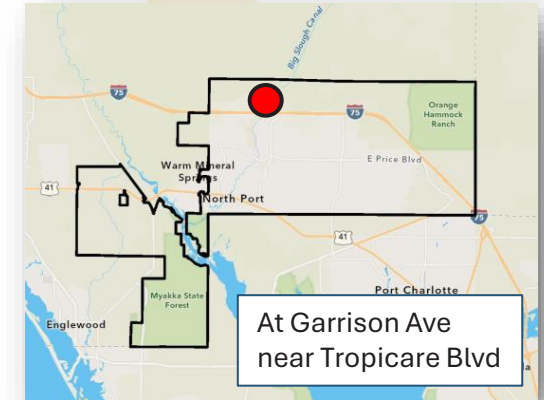
PID 0942042701 (Scott Walker)

- Letter of interest was sent by the Natural Resources Division to the property owner.
- Owner expressed interest, as property currently listed for sale.
- Contains wetlands and mapped floodplain.
- Supports floodplain protection and long-term conservation goals.



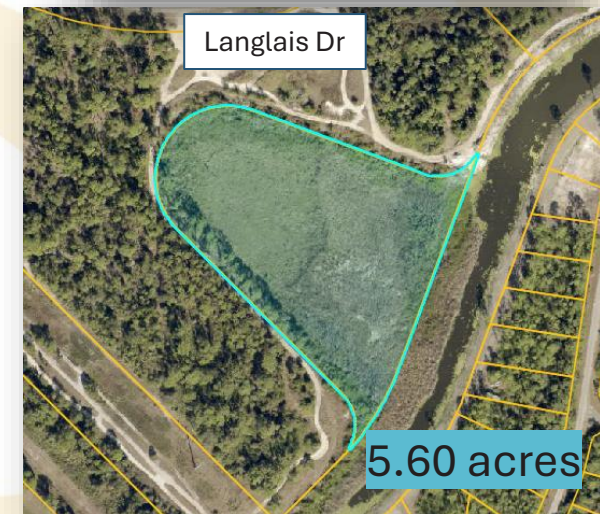
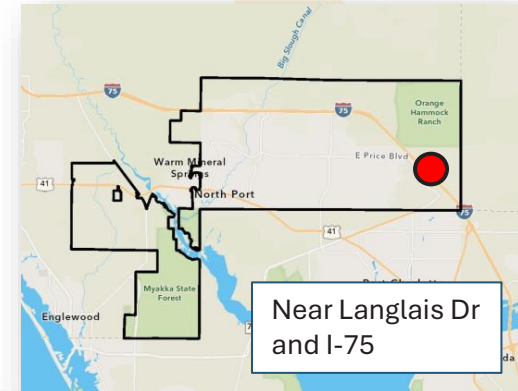
PID 0944071307 (William Burke)

- Owner contacted the City following the launch of the City's Land Acquisition webpage.
- Approximately 90% wetlands across the parcel.
- Willow and red maple canopy with little to no invasive species observed.
- High-quality, undisturbed wetland system based on field conditions.
- Hydrologically connected to the Myakkahatchee Creek corridor.
- Not originally considered but strong ecological condition and connectivity suggest it may warrant consideration.



PID 1131233580 (Andy McDonald)

- Owner contacted the City following the launch of the City's Land Acquisition webpage.
- Approximately 100% wetlands across the parcel.
- Hydrologically connected to an existing ditch and canal system that functions as part of the City stormwater network.
- Potential development would require major alteration of wetlands.
- Preservation would provide various environmental and stormwater benefits.



Next Steps for Staff

- Staff conducts owner outreach in organized groups of ten parcels at a time.
- Continue follow-up outreach to non-responsive owners on the approved acquisition list.
- Coordinate with Real Estate to advance acquisition of parcels with active seller interest.
- Seek Commission direction on two additional willing-seller parcels (Burke and McDonald)
- Evaluate newly identified willing-seller parcels for ecological value and acquisition suitability.
- Periodic updates to Commission summarizing significant progress or changes.

Option 1: Approve the addition of the two additional properties to the Land Acquisition Property List

Pros:

- Responds to willing sellers who proactively contacted the City.
- Captures newly identified ecological value such as high-quality wetlands and hydrologically connected systems.
- Strengthens regional connectivity including Myakkahatchee Creek and City stormwater network.
- Builds program momentum through direct Citizen feedback.

Cons:

- Shifts staff focus away from the second-tier, initially approved properties of interest.

Option 2: Do not approve the addition of the two additional properties to the Land Acquisition Property List

Pros:

- Advances acquisition for parcels previously approved by the Commission.
- Maintains focus and staff time on the second-tier, initially approved properties of interest.
- Supports more predictable process.

Cons:

- May delay or miss opportunities with willing sellers who are actively seeking to work with the City.
- Could limit flexibility to acquire high-value parcels not originally identified.

Summary: Benefits vs. Drawbacks

- **Option 1** reflects newly emerging acquisition opportunities identified through recent public engagement.
- **Option 2** continues the established acquisition track based on the previously approved parcel list.
- Both options advance conservation, stormwater resilience, and ecological protection.
- Trade-offs involve some prioritization of acquisition direction to staff.



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