



**City of North Port  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT**

**Alaina Ray, AICP, Director  
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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Honorable Mayor & Members of the North Port Commission

**THRU:** A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, City Manager

**THRU:** Jason Yarborough, ICMA-CM, Assistant City Manager

**THRU:** Alaina Ray, AICP, Development Services Director

**THRU:** Lori Barnes, AICP, Planning and Zoning Division Manager

**FROM:** Jeremy Rogus, Arborist, Staff Liaison to the Environmental Advisory Board

**SUBJECT:** Recommendation to use tree fund monies to acquire properties for conservation land/easements

**DATE:** June 6, 2023

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Honorable Mayor and Members of the North Port Commission,

Code of the City of North Port Chapter 4, Boards and Committees – Article IX, Environmental Advisory Board – Section 4-182, states that The Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) shall advise the City Commission on matters pertaining to preserving and promoting wildlife, habitat protection, trees, the city’s natural and environmental resources, its flora and fauna, tree planting and care, beautification of public spaces, and safeguarding environmental quality for the future.

On June 5, 2023, during their regular meeting, the EAB discussed and made motion to approve the attached advisement to request that a substantial portion of Tree Fund Monies be used to acquire land for conservation/preservation pursuant to the City of North Port Tree Protection Regulations Section 45-13 – *Tree Fund*.

**Attachments:**

- A. EAB request that tree fund monies be used for acquisition of conservation land
- B. Area 1 Map, Legend, and Parcel List (Scrub Jay Area)
- C. Area 2 Map, Legend, and Parcel List (Scrub Jay Area)

## Attachment A

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Dear City Commissioners,

Code of the City of North Port Chapter 4, Boards and Committees – Article IX – Section 4-182, states that The Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) shall advise the City Commission on matters pertaining to preserving and promoting wildlife, habitat protection, trees, the city's natural and environmental resources, and safeguarding environmental quality for the future.

The EAB sees land acquisition for conservation as the most important and urgent goal for protection of trees and wildlife habitat within the City of North Port. Land which is set aside for conservation and permanently maintained for both wildlife habitat and tree canopy will benefit generations of North Port residents for hundreds of years into the future and the entire life of the City. The vision that the EAB has is for hundreds of years, not tens of years. Now is the time to acquire properties for conservation as continued growth occurs and funds currently exist in the tree fund for this purpose.

As tree fund monies begin to be spent the first desire of the City Commission may be for tree plantings in public spaces. While tree plantings in public spaces is an important and necessary purpose of the tree fund it can also occur without time constraints. In contrast, the ability to acquire property for conservation and the availability of dwindling vacant property containing important wildlife habitat and tree canopy is limited by time as the City continues its rapid growth.

The majority of the tree fund balance needs to be used for land acquisition, maintaining conservation property to promote wildlife habitat, and restoring native plants on public property to restore habitat. The Tree Protection Regulation Section 45-13 states that the tree fund "shall be used" for acquiring and preserving land within the City. Land acquisition for conservation is a mandate made by City Commission within Section 45-13 of the Tree Protection Code. The EAB recommends that land acquisition for conservation be an immediate focus and many properties should be acquired with no further delay using tree fund monies.

The Environmental Advisory Board has developed a list of properties which the City should consider to be acquired for conservation (see attached lists and maps). These properties are contiguous to one another therefore their acquisition is more beneficial to conservation for wildlife habitat than scattered lots. In order to achieve the greatest positive benefit to wildlife many or all of these properties should be immediately pursued, not a few. The listed properties host or support a

(cont.)

## Attachment A

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population of scrub jay and gopher tortoise. The habitat contained on these properties is also home to other wildlife such as bobwhite quail and bobcat. This list was developed through collaboration with the EAB and The Environmental Conservancy of North Port, Inc. A portion of these properties will have unwilling sellers therefore it is important to pursue the entire list.

While it is accurate to state that there are large tracts of park, preserve, and reserve land adjacent to the City of North Port, there are invaluable benefits of having accessible and visible conservation property where residents conduct daily life within the City Limits of North Port. These benefits include better quality of resident life, public health, stormwater control, water quality, environmental health, local wildlife, housing stock value, and tree canopy.

The EAB will continue to research and recommend additional parcels for conservation and propose them within future memorandum to Commission. These parcels will include parcels adjacent to Myakkahatchee Creek as well as existing City owned parcels.

Conservation lands are an integral aspect of intelligent use of natural resources. Acquiring property for conservation and designating property for conservation demonstrates a responsibility and commitment to environmental stewardship. It is the course of wisdom to set aside an ample portion of our available and contiguous parcels as conservation property.

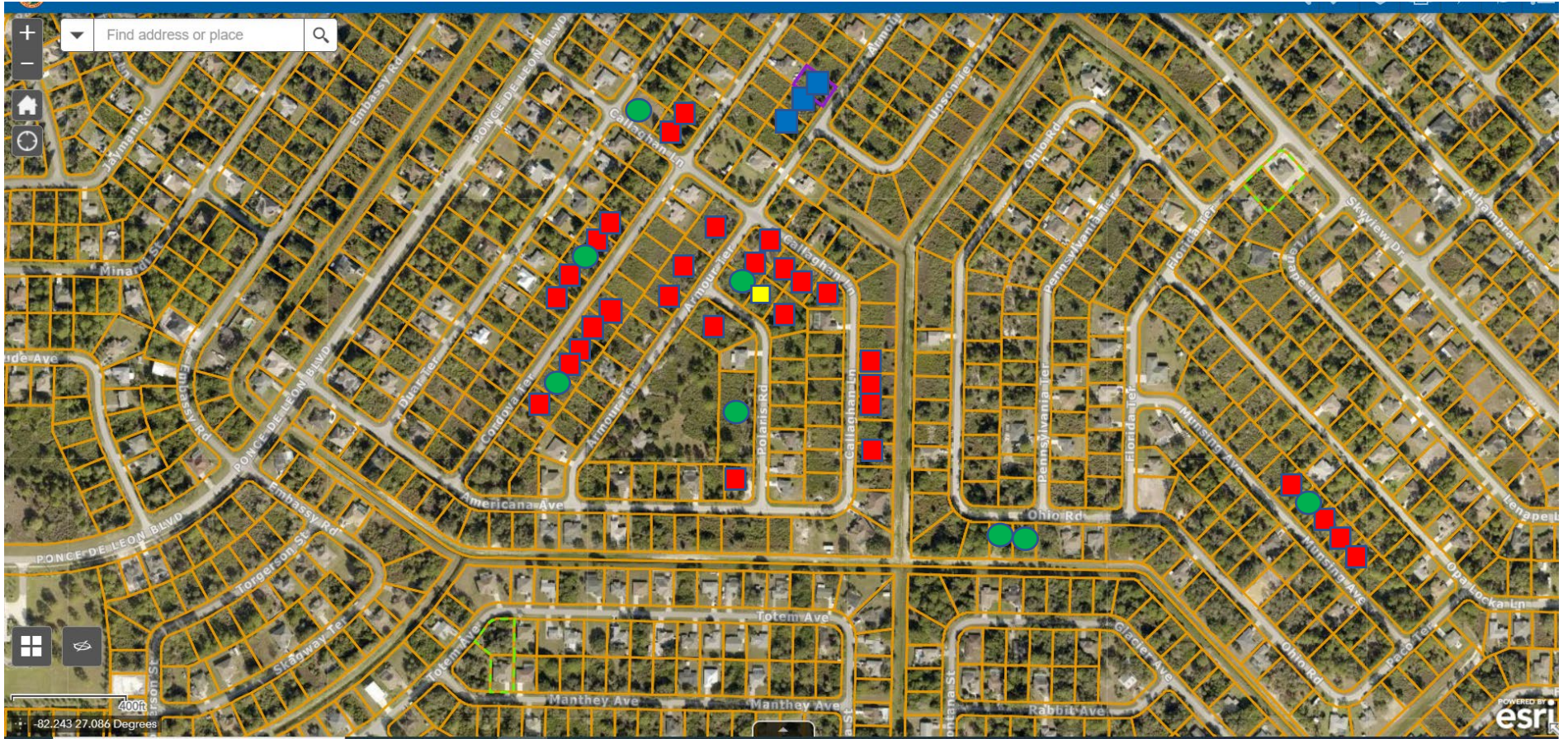
Thank you,

Environmental Advisory Board:

Desiree Holland  
William English  
Kathleen Therrien  
Erin Hall  
Lola Robinson

## Attachment B

### Area 1



- Lots owned by City of North Port that should be converted to conservation land
- Green Dots: Lots owned by the Environmental Conservancy of North Port
- Lots which should be acquired for conservation using tree fund monies. These properties are adjacent or can be linked to Conservation properties to provide permanent contiguous greenspace habitat.
- Lot is owned by Sarasota County for conservation

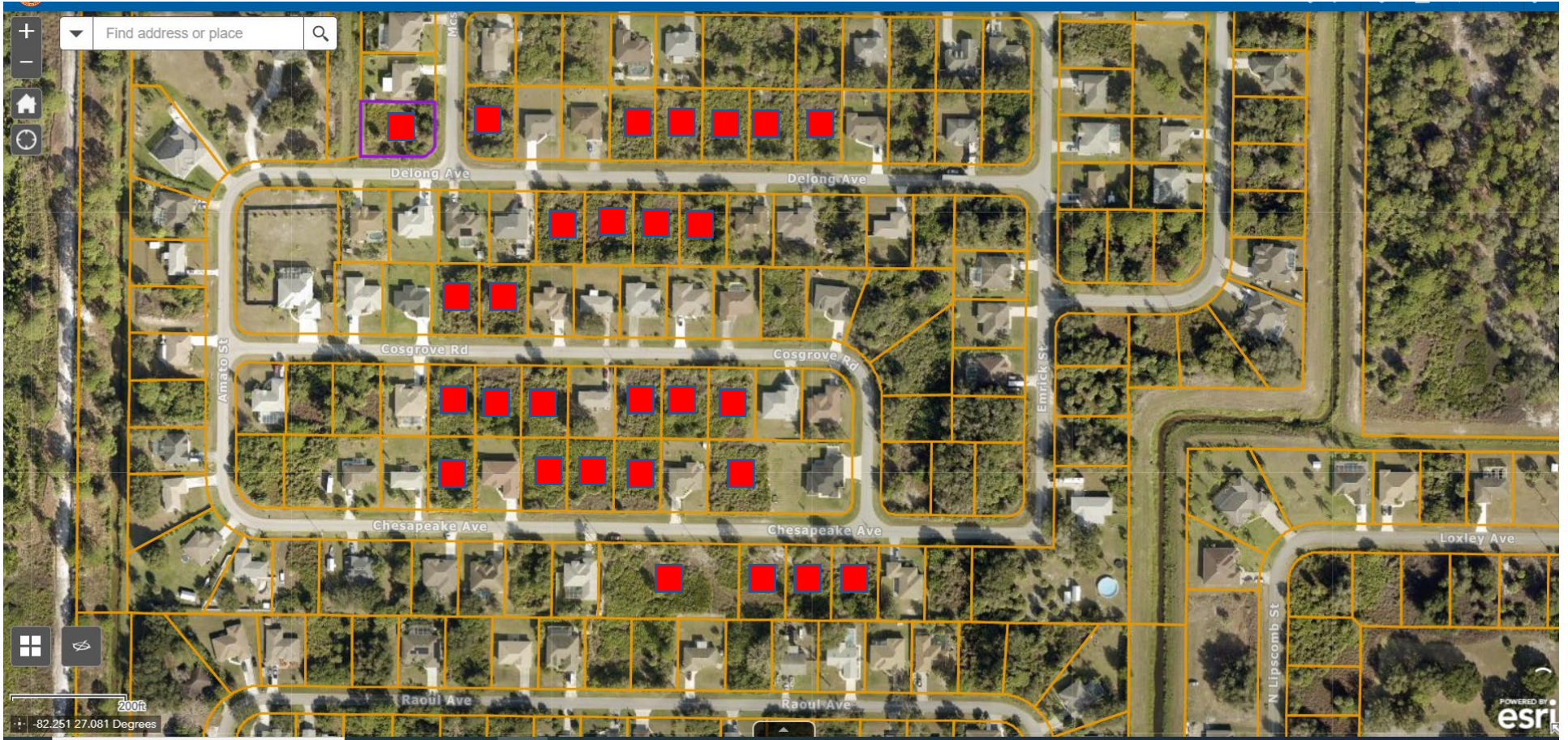
## Area 1 Parcel List

- Lots owned by City of North Port that should be converted to conservation land
- Green Dots: Lots owned by the Environmental Conservancy of North Port
- Lots which should be acquired for conservation using tree fund monies. These properties are adjacent to one another or can be linked to Conservation properties to provide permanent contiguous greenspace habitat.
- Lot is owned by Sarasota County for conservation

<span style="color: blue;">■</span>	0969065413
<span style="color: blue;">■</span>	0969065412
<span style="color: blue;">■</span>	0969065411
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	0970064721
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064901
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064903
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064905
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0970064701
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064723
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0970064720
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0970064702
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0970064703
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0970064704
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064801
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064808
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064920
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064922
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064923
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064924
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064925
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972065008
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972064007
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0972065005
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0971064004
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0970064127
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<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0970064130
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<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0970064630
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<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0970064628
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0970064632
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0971065316
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	0971065315

## Attachment C

### Area 2



- Lots which should be acquired for conservation using tree fund monies. These properties are adjacent to one another or can be linked to Conservation properties to provide permanent contiguous greenspace habitat.

## Area 2 Parcel List

■ Lots which should be acquired for conservation using tree fund monies. These properties are adjacent or can be linked to Conservation properties to provide permanent contiguous greenspace habitat.

■	0972129820
■	0972129924
■	0972129921
■	0972129920
■	0972129919
■	0972129918
■	0972129917
■	0972129710
■	0972129709
■	0972129708
■	0972129707
■	0972129735
■	0972129734
■	0972129605
■	0972129606
■	0972129607
■	0972129609
■	0972129610
■	0972129611
■	0972129614
■	0972129618
■	0972129619
■	0972129620
■	0972129622
■	0972129503
■	0972129504
■	0972129505
■	0972129506