

Draft

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Advising the City Commission on the Significance of Trees for Carbon Sequestration

Dear Mr. Fletcher and North Port City Commissioners,

I am writing in regards to concerns related to the sale of city park land and the use of funds set aside for tree purchase.

As a decision maker, it is imperative that you become aware of carbon sequestration in soils. The amount of carbon in the atmosphere continues to rise and with all the construction and clearing of land in North Port this should concern us all. One method to help reduce carbon dioxide is to increase the storage of carbon in soils. Soil contains approximately 75% of the carbon pool on land and forests contribute to this process. As forests and trees grow, they store carbon in plant tissues and soil organic matter. A young forest has the highest uptake of carbon and an old forest can store the carbon for a very long time. When we cut down trees and forests, we release the carbon back into the atmosphere. The environmental advisory board proposes that we utilize the tree funds to purchase park land under a trust for conservation purposes only and we also propose the purchase of adjoining lots for sale as available to increase the amount of land conservation. If the land is utilized to create and maintain forests, we will be able to sequester large amounts of carbon. This will also ensure that our native species such as gopher tortoise, scrub jay, American alligator, bald eagle, pileated woodpecker, raccoon, bobcat, wild turkey, black bear, white tailed deer, armadillo, otter, and southern black racer have a place to call home forever. We would also propose that the tree funds be utilized to increase the planting of native trees and plants that these animals depend on for food and survival. The city of North Port must learn from the mistakes of other Florida cities and make the environment a top priority and stop putting the interest of big business over the health of our communities.

“The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.” - Nelson Henderson

Reference: <https://www.esa.org/esa/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/carbonsequestrationinsoils.pdf>

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