

**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Board of County Commissioners

THROUGH: John A. Titkanich, Jr., County Administrator

PREPARED BY: Andrew Sobczak, Planning & Development Services Director

DATE: February 7, 2024

SUBJECT: Gifford Customer Convenience Center Landscaping Project

It is requested that the data presented herein be given formal consideration by the Board of County Commissioners at its regular meeting on February 20, 2024.

DESCRIPTION AND CONDITIONS

During a recent project development review meeting with members of the Gifford community, staff was asked to explore the possibility of completing a landscaping beautification project for the frontage and entrance of the Gifford Customer Convenience Center (i.e. transfer station) located at 490141St Street. This beautification would involve the removal of exotic and invasive plant material, and the design and installation of native landscaping.

ANALYSIS

The Gifford Customer Convenience Center is one of 5 convenience centers in Indian River County, and its frontage and entrance contain nuisance exotic vegetation and various unmaintained plant species.

To complete this project, staff will develop a scope that includes the removal of nuisance exotic vegetation from the subject site's frontage, protection of the existing viable native vegetation, and replanting of open areas with new native vegetation. Staff will then initiate a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the landscaping design, exotic removal, and installation of new native landscaping. Following that process, the selected proposal will be brought back to the Board for approval.

FUNDING

The County's Tree Mitigation Fund was created as an alternative for developers to pay a fee for the removal of native trees from development sites when relocation or avoidance is not possible. Per Code Section 927.11(1)(d)3.c. funds collected under this provision shall be used for "native re-vegetation of restoration areas on public conservation lands; for relocating trees or for planting trees on public-controlled lands; for nuisance invasive plant eradication; or for other similar uses that enhance native tree and native vegetation protection and restoration in unincorporated Indian River County."

Use of the Tree Mitigation Fund to complete this project is consistent with the intent of the fund, and while an exact cost for the project will not be available until the RFP process is complete, staff anticipates the cost of the project to be approximately \$150,000 - \$200,000. If approved, a budget amendment will be brought before the Board to fund the project from the Tree Mitigation Fund/Cash Forward-Oct 1st.

SCHEDULE

It is anticipated that this project can be completed within 6-8 months of Board authorization.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners authorize Staff to develop a scope and initiate the RFP process for the Gifford Customer Convenience Center Landscaping Project.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Aerial of Gifford Customer Convenience Center