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6/16/2011
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Acquisition Plan 29th Rd. Nature Park

Introduction

29th Road Nature Park is a 6-acre park located at 1502 NW 29th Road in Gainesville. It was acquired as part of the Hogtown Creek Greenway in 1995. Funding for acquisition of the property came from a grant from the Florida Communities Trust, a non-regulatory agency of the Florida Department of Community Affairs.

Significant Features

Noteworthy features of the park that justified its acquisition include Hogtown Creek, which passes through the property, and the upland mixed forest and slope forest onsite. Plant species listed by the State of Florida as Threatened or Endangered occur on the property.

Acquisition Purpose

The purpose of the park's acquisition was to protect the natural features of the park and to provide recreational opportunities for the community.

Allowable Uses

The management and use of the jointly-owned portions of the park are governed by the Grant Award Agreement (GAA) between the City and FCT as well as by the Hogtown Creek Greenway Master Plan and Management Report, which was approved by FCT. The GAA states that the property "shall be managed only for the conservation, protection, and enhancement of natural and historical resources and for passive, natural resource-based public outdoor recreation which is compatible with the conservation, protection and enhancement of the Project Site, along with other related uses necessary for the accomplishment of this purpose."

Uses and activities specifically allowed or required under the GAA and the Master Plan and Management Report, or that are consistent with the City's purpose for acquiring the property, include:

- Environmental education programs
- Restoration of natural resources, including upland, wetland, or creek restoration
- Natural resource management, including but not limited to removal/treatment of invasive non-native plants and animals
- Development of additional nature trails/boardwalks
- Subject to approval by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department, utilities as needed for park or other city-owned property development, or to serve another utilities customer outside the park or the city-owned property

Acquisition Plan Bivens Arm Nature Park

Introduction

Bivens Arm Nature Park is an 81-acre park located at 3650 South Main Street. It was acquired in two phases: the southern portion was purchased in 1981 by the City, and 24 additional acres were donated to the City in 2004.

Significant Features

Noteworthy features of the park that justified its acquisition include East Tumbler Creek and two marshes. The park also contains extensive areas of upland mixed forest, including some plant species listed by the State of Florida as Threatened or Endangered. Bivens Arm Nature Park is separated from Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park by Williston Road, and acts as a buffer for the prairie, as well as removing sediments and nutrients from urban runoff before it enters the prairie.

Acquisition Purpose

The purpose of the original park acquisition was to provide recreational and educational opportunities for the community and to protect the land's natural features. The donation of the northern addition to the park was intended to maintain natural vegetation characteristic of the area, to provide a corridor for wildlife, and to provide opportunities for people to learn about and experience nature.

Allowable Uses

Management of Bivens Arm is governed by the park's management plan, by conditions in the donation agreement for the northern 24 acres of the park, and by a grant agreement with the Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program (FRDAP), which funded the original park development in 1985.

Uses and activities allowed or required under the park management plan, the donation agreement, or the FRDAP grant agreement include:

- Maintenance of the site as a public outdoor education area in perpetuity
- Environmental education programs
- Restoration of natural resources, including marsh restoration and enhancement planting of native upland plant species
- Creek restoration, subject to the conditions in the donation agreement
- Natural resource management, including but not limited to removal/treatment of invasive non-native plants and animals, and the use of prescribed fire
- Maintenance, renovation, or other improvements to existing nature trails, boardwalks, and facilities
- Installation of trails on the northern 24 acres, subject to the terms of the donation agreement.
- Subject to approval by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department, utilities as needed for park or other city-owned property development, or to serve another utilities customer outside the park or the city-owned property

Uses specifically prohibited on the northern 24 acres under the terms of the Donation Agreement include:

- Soccer fields, athletic facilities, or other "active park" facilities
- Retention, detention, or holding ponds
- Dwellings, emergency shelters, accessory uses, community residential homes, transmitter towers
- Fencing

Acquisition Plan Clear Lake Nature Park

Introduction

Clear Lake Nature Park is a 12-acre park located at 5480 SW 1st Avenue in Gainesville. It was purchased by the City of Gainesville in 1986. The park is considered part of the Hogtown Creek Greenway, although it was not acquired with grant funds from the Florida Communities Trust.

Acquisition Purpose

The purpose of the park's acquisition was to protect the natural features of the park and to provide natural resource-based recreational opportunities for the community.

Significant Features

Noteworthy features of the park that justified its acquisition include upland mixed forest, a basin marsh, and basin swamp habitat associated with Sugarfoot Prairie and Hogtown Creek. The property is contiguous with the City's Sugarfoot Prairie Conservation Area.

Allowable Uses

Although the property was not originally purchased with funds from the Florida Communities Trust (FCT) as part of the Hogtown Creek Greenway, it is considered a part of the Greenway and, as such, the management of the property is guided by the Hogtown Creek Greenway Master Plan and Management Report.

Uses and activities that are specifically allowed or required under the FCT master plan and management report, or that are consistent with the City's purpose for the property, include:

- Environmental education programs
- Restoration of natural resources, including marsh restoration and enhancement planting of native upland plant species
- Natural resource management, including but not limited to removal/treatment of invasive non-native plants and animals
- Maintenance and improvements/repairs to nature trails and boardwalks
- Development of facilities necessary to provide the public reasonable access to learn about and enjoy the natural features of the site.
- Subject to approval by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department, utilities as needed for park or other city-owned property development, or to serve another utilities customer outside the park or the city-owned property

Acquisition Plan Forest Park Conservation Area

Introduction

Forest Park Conservation Area is a 24-acre park located along Hogtown Creek between SW 20th Avenue and I-75. It was acquired as part of the Hogtown Creek Greenway in 1995. Funding for acquisition of the property came from a grant from the Florida Communities Trust (FCT), a non-regulatory agency of the Florida Department of Community Affairs.

Significant Features

Noteworthy features of the park that justified its acquisition include floodplain forest and floodplain swamp surrounding Hogtown Creek, the creek itself, and upland areas containing upland mixed forest. Plant species listed by the State of Florida as Threatened or Endangered are known to occur. The property is directly downstream from Sugarfoot Prairie Conservation Area, directly upstream from Split Rock Conservation Area, and adjacent to intact floodplain habitats at Alachua County's Forest Park.

Acquisition Purpose

The purpose of the park's acquisition was to protect the natural features of the park and to provide recreational opportunities for the community.

Allowable Uses

The management and use of the park are governed by the Grant Award Agreement (GAA) between the City and FCT as well as by the Hogtown Creek Greenway Master Plan and Management Report, which was approved by FCT. The GAA states that the property "shall be managed only for the conservation, protection, and enhancement of natural and historical resources and for passive, natural resource-based public outdoor recreation which is compatible with the conservation, protection and enhancement of the Project Site, along with other related uses necessary for the accomplishment of this purpose."

Uses and activities specifically allowed or required under the Master Plan and Management Report, or that are consistent with the City's purpose in acquiring the property, include:

- Environmental education programs
- Restoration of natural resources, including hydrological restoration and enhancement planting of native plant species
- Natural resource management, including but not limited to removal/treatment of invasive non-native plants and animals
- Development of nature trails or boardwalks
- Development of facilities necessary to provide the public reasonable access to learn about and enjoy the natural features of the site
- Subject to approval by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department, utilities as needed for park or other city-owned property development, or to serve another utilities customer outside the park or the city-owned property

Acquisition Plan Morningside Nature Center

Introduction

Morningside Nature Center is a 278-acre park located at 3540 East University Avenue in Gainesville. It was acquired in 1964 from the federal government and opened as Gainesville's first nature park in the 1970s.

Significant Features

Morningside Nature Center contains some of the region's best examples of longleaf pine flatwoods and sandhills. These natural communities are globally rare, having been reduced to less than 4% of their former extent, and are highly diverse, containing large numbers of rare and endemic species. Over 550 plant species are known to occur at Morningside, and over 30 threatened, endangered, or rare plant and wildlife species have been documented. The park also contains several wetlands which play an important role in flood control and water quality protection for the Lake Forest Creek watershed.

Acquisition Purpose

The 1964 deed from the federal government required that the property be used for public park and recreational purposes for a period of 20 years (1964-1984). The city's objectives in operating the park since the 1970s have been to protect and manage the land's natural resources, to provide nature-based recreational opportunities, and to educate the public about the area's natural and human history.

Allowable Uses

Management of Morningside Nature Center is governed by the park's management plan, which was approved by the Nature Centers Commission. Portions of the site are also governed by a grant agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection from the Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program (FRDAP), which funded the development of the educational pavilion.

Uses and activities allowed or required under the park management plan or the FRDAP grant agreement, or that are consistent with the City's purpose in acquiring the property include:

- Environmental education programs
- Natural resource restoration, including but not limited to restoration of flatwoods and/or sandhill habitat, mechanical or chemical removal of plants not characteristic of these habitat types, planting of native plant species, and hydrologic restoration
- Natural resource management, including but not limited to removal/treatment of invasive non-native plants and animals, and the use of prescribed fire
- Maintenance, renovation, or other improvements to existing nature trails, boardwalks, and facilities
- Maintenance of pavilion and surrounding area as a public outdoor recreation area in perpetuity
- Storage of land management equipment and supplies within the existing footprint of the maintenance facility
- Office space for Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs staff within the footprint of existing facilities at the site
- Special events related to the mission and purpose of the park, on a limited number of days per year
- Keeping farm animals and undertaking farm-related activities within the footprint of existing living history farm facilities
- Subject to approval by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department, utilities as needed for park or other city-owned property development, or to serve another utilities customer outside the park or the city-owned property

Acquisition Plan

Sugarfoot Prairie Conservation Area

Introduction

Sugarfoot Prairie Conservation Area is a 195-acre park located at 4415 Clear Lake Road in Gainesville. It was acquired as part of the Hogtown Creek Greenway in 1995. Funding for acquisition of the property came from a grant from the Florida Communities Trust (FCT), a non-regulatory agency of the State of Florida Department of Community Affairs.

Significant Features

Noteworthy features of the park that justified its acquisition include Hogtown Creek and associated wetlands. In addition to floodplain swamp, the property encompasses the wetland known as Sugarfoot Prairie in its entirety, as well as small areas of diverse upland hammock. Plant species listed by the State of Florida as Threatened or Endangered occur onsite.

Acquisition Purpose

The purpose of the park's acquisition was to protect the natural features of the park and to provide natural-resource-based recreational opportunities for the community.

Allowable Uses

The management and use of the park are governed by the Grant Award Agreement (GAA) between the City and FCT as well as by the Hogtown Creek Greenway Master Plan and Management Report, which was approved by FCT. The GAA states that the property "shall be managed only for the conservation, protection, and enhancement of natural and historical resources and for passive, natural resource-based public outdoor recreation which is compatible with the conservation, protection and enhancement of the Project Site, along with other related uses necessary for the accomplishment of this purpose."

Uses and activities specifically allowed or required under the Master Plan and Management Report, or that are consistent with the City's purpose in acquiring this property, include:

- Environmental education programs
- Restoration of natural resources, including hydrological restoration and enhancement planting of native plant species
- Natural resource management, including but not limited to removal/treatment of invasive non-native plants and animals, and the use of prescribed fire
- Development of nature trails or boardwalks
- Development of facilities necessary to provide the public reasonable access to learn about and enjoy the natural features of the site.
- Subject to approval by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department, utilities as needed for park or other city-owned property development, or to serve another utilities customer outside the park or the city-owned property