

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 5, 2020

To: Max Royle, City Manager

From: William Tredik, P.E., Public Works Director

Subject: Ocean Hammock Park Update

BACKGROUND

Land Acquisition

The City's acquisition of Ocean Hammock Park began in 2005, when the owners of the tract applied to the City for approval of a final development plan for a residential condominium development on 16 of the 18 acres. The name of the subdivision was Maratea. As a condition of the City's approval of the plan, the owners deeded 2.2 acres to the City for conservation / preservation purposes, and provided a strip of land for a 1,600-long beach access walkway, which was completed in the fall of 2009. Included in the 2.2 acres are 1.2 acres adjacent to A1A Beach Boulevard, which have been designated as a conservation area.

Since 2005, the City met several times with the Maratea owners to discuss possible modifications to the approved planned unit development and the sale to the City of part of subdivision. The City's ability to bargain was strengthened in 2008, when City voters approved the City levying up to half a mill in ad valorem taxes for 20 years, for the purpose of purchasing land to protect it from development.

In 2008-09, negotiations by County and City staff members with the Maratea owners resulted in the sale to the City of 11.5 acres for \$5,250,000. Money for the purchase came from a bond program administered by the Florida League of Cities and later from a \$4.5 million Florida Communities Trust (FCT) grant. The owners kept the final 4.5 acres in the northeast corner of the tract.

From 2009 to 2015, the City continued its negotiation efforts with the owners for the sale of those acres. Because FCT grants weren't available, the City engaged The Trust for Public Land to purchase the land on the City's behalf. In 2015, the owners agreed to sell the land to The Trust for \$4.5 million, an amount determined by an appraiser hired by The Trust. The City reimbursed The Trust with money from savings and from a Florida League of Cities' bond issue. In 2016 the City was awarded \$1.5 million from the FCT grant program. A management plan has been developed to ensure that the Ocean Hammock Park Phase I and Phase II will be developed in accordance with the Declaration of Restrictive Covenants and in furtherance of the purpose of the grant application.

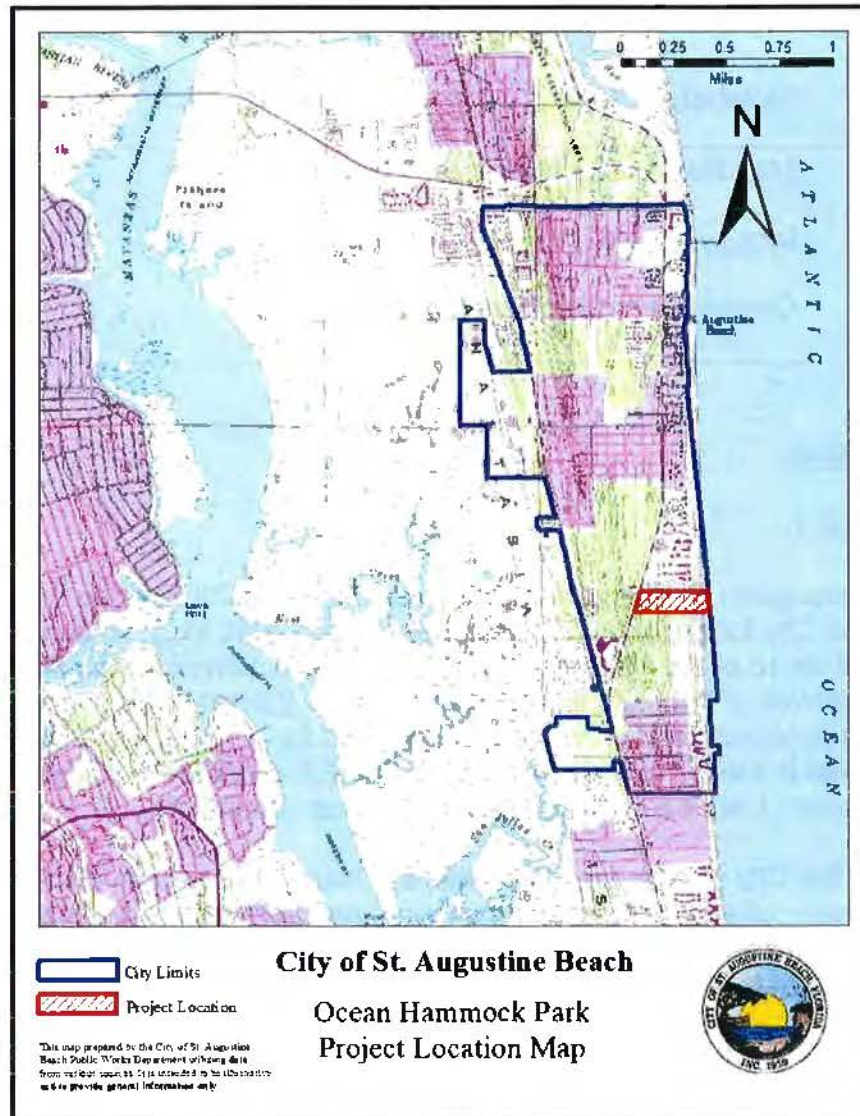


Figure 1 - Ocean Hammock Park Location

Approximately 88% of the site is undisturbed. The natural communities that exist on the project site are predominately coastal uplands and mixed scrub-shrub wetlands. The coastal uplands on the park property include beach dune, coastal grassland, coastal strand, and maritime hammock, with characteristic ridge and swale topography throughout the site.

Park Development

The first phase of the park, including the beach walkway was constructed in 2009 with the assistance of the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP). In 2012, a twenty-one space parking lot was added. Additional features include a handicap parking space on A1A Beach Boulevard and a crosswalk at the park entrance.



Figure 2 - Ocean Hammock Park Existing Condition

In 2018, the Park Management Plan was modified (Figure 3) to incorporate the newly acquired 4.5 acres. The Modified Management Plan included restrooms, information kiosk, nature trails with interpretative signage, picnic areas, a picnic pavilion, observation deck, education center, children's playscape, canoe kayak storage, bike racks, and wetland and dune restoration.



Figure 3 - Ocean Hammock Park Management Plan

Due to lack of funding the remainder of park improvements were delayed. In Fall 2019 the City applied for and was awarded the following two (2) grants for Ocean Hammock Park:

- **Ocean Hammock Park Phase 2A Construction**
Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)
Grant amount - \$106,500; \$35,500 match required
Purpose: Restrooms, picnic area, handicap space and nature trail @ parking lot
- **Ocean Hammock Park Phase 2B Design**
Coastal Partnership Initiative (CPI) Grant – NOAA funded
Grant amount \$25,000; \$25,000 match required
Purpose: Design and permitting of remaining interior park improvements, in

Phase 2A is currently in final design and will be constructed in FY 21. Phase 2B is in the early stages of design with permitting scheduled to be complete in Summer 2021. Phase 2B includes additional walkways, an observation platform, picnic pavilion, nature trails, children's playscape, education center, bike racks, kayak storage, benches and wetland and dune restoration.

Phase 2B construction is anticipated to cost up to \$400,000. The City submitted an application for to the CPI program in September 2020. The maximum construction funding through the CPI program is \$60,000, therefore this application included the following Phase 2B components:

- Dune and wetland restoration
- Observation platform
- Accessible path from parking lot to the observation platform and to the beach walkway



Figure 4 - Work covered Under Sept. 2020 CPI Application

The remainder of Phase 2B improvements will be included in a FRDAP application in October 2020. If funded, Phase 2B will be constructed in FY2022.

Management Plan Modification

The current Ocean Hammock Park Management Plan expires at the end of 2020. The City is currently working with FDEP to extend completion deadline to allow for the completion of Phase 2 construction. The City will submit a park management plan update in October detailing progress to date and requesting extension of completion of Park improvements to December 2022.

Anticipated Remaining Project Schedule

9/25/2020	Submit CPI grant application for Phase 2B construction
10/15/2020	Submit FRDAP grant for Phase 2B construction
10/31/2020	Submit Park Management Plan Update
5/31/2021	Receive notice of award for grant applications
6/30/2021	Complete Phase 2B Design and Permitting
7/1/2021	Revenue Agreements with State for new grants (if funded)
9/30/2021	Complete Construction of Phase 2A
10/1/2021	Commence Construction of Phase 2B
9/30/2022	Complete Construction of Phase 2B

ACTION REQUESTED

Agenda Item is to brief the commission and the public on the progress in development of Ocean Hammock Park. No action is required.