



## Town of Loxahatchee Groves

155 F Road • Loxahatchee Groves, Florida 33470 • (561) 793-2418 Phone • [www.loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](http://www.loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

August 1, 2025

FloridaCommerce  
Division of Community Development  
107 East Madison Street  
Caldwell Building, MSC 160  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

**RE: Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant Request — FY 2025–2026 Project:  
Strategic Southern Boulevard Corridor Study for Town of Loxahatchee Groves**

Dear FloridaCommerce,

Please consider this funding request letter from the Town of Loxahatchee Groves, a designated Rural Community\* in the agricultural heart of Palm Beach County, for a Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant, State FY 2025–2026, to support the development of a ***Strategic Southern Boulevard Corridor Study***.

*\* presently under review by FloridaCommerce for renewal*

This study will guide the Town in preserving its rural identity, improving corridor conditions, and supporting strategic reinvestment in its most economically and visually prominent corridor. Loxahatchee Groves faces growing development pressure and corridor-related challenges that jeopardize its rural identity, visual character, and fiscal sustainability.

Although individual segments of this corridor have been addressed through signage ordinances or infrastructure repairs, the Town has never developed a comprehensive corridor strategy to address land use, reinvestment, access management, or gateway identity in a coordinated fashion. This grant will allow the Town to shift from reactive maintenance to proactive planning.

### **Proposed Grant Project**

The Town proposes to undertake a ***Strategic Southern Boulevard Corridor Study*** to enhance, protect, and reinvest in Southern Boulevard as the visual, functional, and economic gateway to Loxahatchee Groves, while preserving the Town's rural identity and supporting long-term fiscal sustainability. The Study will explore a coordinated set of solutions tailored to our unique rural context, including:

- Establishing a Corridor Reinvestment Zone (CRZ)—adapting principles from Business and Neighborhood Improvement Districts (BID/NID) for a rural setting

August 1, 2025

## Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Strategic Southern Boulevard Corridor Study

- Advancing land use and zoning strategies that support reinvestment, traffic flow, and environmental resilience
- Promoting rural community preservation in response to suburban sprawl and rising external development pressure
- Evaluating alignment with Rural Areas of Opportunity (RAO) policy goals to the extent possible (\*Note: Loxahatchee Groves is not currently designated as an RAO)

### *Community Significance and Urgency*

Southern Boulevard is Loxahatchee Groves' most visible and commercially active corridor. It serves as the Town's primary gateway and first impression for residents, visitors, and investors. Yet, the corridor faces mounting challenges that diminish its appearance, function, and contribution to community identity:

- Visual blight: Aging properties, deteriorated fencing, and uncoordinated signage erode rural character
- Drainage and dumping issues: Canal edge conditions impact aesthetics, water quality, and infrastructure integrity
- Underutilized parcels: Aging commercial lots with limited reinvestment
- Traffic congestion and lack of cross-access, causing unsafe conditions and cut-through traffic on neighborhood roads
- Inadequate pedestrian and equestrian infrastructure: Limited separation from vehicles poses safety risks
- No clear rural gateway presence: The corridor lacks visual cues or features reflecting the Town's agrarian and equestrian identity

These challenges extend beyond visual or mobility concerns—they result in **higher infrastructure and public safety costs** for the entire Town. For example:

- Road and drainage improvements in this corridor are disproportionately expensive
- PBSO public safety contract costs are driven up by corridor-related incidents
- Adjacent neighborhoods experience elevated impacts from unmanaged traffic and water runoff

By establishing a coordinated corridor strategy—centered on reinvestment, design, safety, and rural character—the Town can protect its identity while enhancing quality of life, safety, and economic vitality for the entire community.

### *Regional Context*

Loxahatchee Groves is a small equestrian and agricultural Town with a 1-unit-per-5-acre land use pattern. It shares equestrian and agricultural values with neighboring areas such as Wellington (to

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Strategic Southern Boulevard Corridor Study

the south), Fox Trails and White Fences (to the west), and The Acreage (to the north). However, immediately adjacent to the Town’s northwest is the new urban development of Westlake, which does not reflect these rural values.

This corridor strategy will serve as a **buffer and identity anchor** for the Town. It is critical to preserving our values amid regional change. The Study will also address concerns from long-time and multi-generational residents who increasingly feel displaced by pressures from encroaching development and rising land costs.

**Scope of Work and Budget**

*Deliverable 1: Traffic & Infrastructure Assessment*

Survey the corridor’s transportation challenges including congestion, driveway conflicts, cut-through traffic on lettered roads, and aging or insufficient infrastructure. Identify problems related to turn movements, intersection stacking, and water management infrastructure in disrepair. Develop recommendations for improvements.

Deliverable due date: March 3, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$20,000.00

*Deliverable 2: Public Safety & Drainage Survey*

Survey corridor-related public safety issues including PBSO response trends, traffic incidents, and environmental risks caused by canal dumping and inadequate drainage. Identify degraded canal banks and water quality threats. Recommend strategies for safety and environmental resilience.

Deliverable due date: March 31, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$20,000.00

*Deliverable 3: Pedestrian/Equestrian Safety & Gateway Identity*

Assess the corridor’s ability to safely accommodate pedestrians and equestrians, including trail separation and crossing needs. Identify areas of visual blight, aging commercial properties, and a lack of cohesive identity at the Town’s gateway. Recommend enhancements to safety, aesthetics, and rural branding.

Deliverable due date: April 15, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$ 5,000.00

*Deliverable 4: Fiscal & Zoning Strategy + Draft Study*

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Strategic Southern Boulevard Corridor Study

Survey existing land use, zoning, and fiscal contributions of the corridor. Explore reinvestment zones, economic revitalization tools, and zoning overlay options. Prepare a **draft Strategic Corridor Study** with integrated recommendations.

Conduct at least one (1) Community Outreach Meeting with residents, businesses, and corridor users to solicit feedback on preliminary findings and reinvestment priorities. Results will help shape implementation strategies and zoning overlays.

Deliverable due date: May 1, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$15,000.00

Deliverable 5: *Final Report + Public Workshop*

Refine and finalize the **Strategic Southern Boulevard Corridor Study**, integrating findings from all previous deliverables. Prepare a final report, draft implementation framework, and conduct a public workshop for presentation and feedback.

Deliverable due date: May 19, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$15,000.00

**Budget/Expenditures**

The Town of Loxahatchee Groves expects to utilize outside consultants and contracted services for these Deliverables. The Town does not have the capabilities to accomplish this in-house with the small amount of staffing and resources available, as it is a small rural community trying to save their ruralness and quality of life. Budgeted Expenditures *include 300 hours at \$250/hour* and are estimated as follows:

| <u>Deliverable</u> | <u>Description</u>                                                                                                    | <u>Estimated<br/>Hours</u> | <u>Due Date</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1                  | Identify traffic congestion, cut-through traffic, turn limitations, and outdated infrastructure. Recommend solutions. | 80                         | March 3, 2026   | \$20,000      |
| 2                  | Assess corridor-related PBSO calls, accident risks, canal dumping, and drainage. Recommend mitigation strategies.     | 80                         | March 31, 2026  | \$20,000      |
| 3                  | Evaluate trail safety, separation from roadways, and gateway visual character. Recommend improvements.                | 20                         | April 15, 2026  | \$ 5,000      |

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Strategic Southern Boulevard Corridor Study

| <u>Deliverable</u>                                                     | <u>Description</u>                                                                                              | <u>Estimated<br/>Hours</u> | <u>Due Date</u> | <u>Amount</u>   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 4                                                                      | Analyze land use, rural reinvestment options, economic impact. Conduct 1 outreach meeting. Prepare draft Study. | 60                         | May 1, 2026     | \$15,000        |
| 5                                                                      | Finalize study. Prepare report with clear implementation strategy. Facilitate public workshop.                  | 60                         | May 19, 2026    | \$15,000        |
| <b>Total Amount Not to Exceed and Funding Request for this project</b> |                                                                                                                 |                            |                 | <b>\$75,000</b> |

**Applicant Profile, Demographics and Contact Information:**

Applicant Information Town of Loxahatchee Groves  
Palm Beach County, FL,  
155 F Road, Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470  
Phone: (561) 793-2418

Demographics: Population 3,355 (US Census 2020)

Project Contact Francine Ramaglia, Town Manager [FRamaglia@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:FRamaglia@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)  
561-277-2153

Chief Elected Official Anita Kane, Mayor [akane@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:akane@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)  
561-793-2418

Consultant Mary McNicholas, Principal, [mem@sluggett.com](mailto:mem@sluggett.com)  
Geoffrey B. Sluggett & Associates 561-662-1805

This effort is time-sensitive and foundational. The Southern Boulevard corridor is the Town's most visible and economically significant gateway, but its long-term viability is uncertain without a clear plan that addresses infrastructure demands, land use conflicts, visual deterioration, and reinvestment challenges. A well-crafted Strategic Corridor Study will ensure that Loxahatchee Groves can protect its rural character, manage growth pressures, and guide fiscally responsible improvements that benefit the entire community.

We thank FloridaCommerce for its continued partnership with small communities like Loxahatchee Groves and respectfully request your support for this important and timely planning initiative. This project represents the Town's first comprehensive corridor study and will provide the strategic tools needed to address rising infrastructure costs, safety challenges, and reinvestment needs—while reinforcing the Town's commitment to preserving its rural character. This initiative

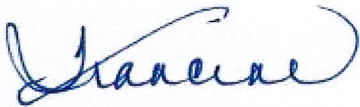
August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Strategic Southern Boulevard Corridor Study

directly supports FloridaCommerce's goals to strengthen local planning capacity, protect the integrity of rural communities, and prepare fiscally sustainable solutions for infrastructure and community resilience. The Town of Loxahatchee Groves deeply values this opportunity and appreciates your consideration of this critical planning effort.

Please let us know if you have any questions and/or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Francine", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Francine L. Ramaglia, Town Manager  
Town of Loxahatchee Groves

Cc:

Valerie Oakes  
Town Clerk  
[voakes@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:voakes@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Richard Gallant  
Public Works Director  
[rgallant@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:rgallant@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Craig Lower  
Public Works Superintendent  
[clower@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:clower@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Mary McNicholas  
Consultant  
[mem@sluggett.com](mailto:mem@sluggett.com)

Randy  
Town Engineer  
[randy@keshavarz.com](mailto:randy@keshavarz.com)

Jeff Kurtz  
Project Coordinator  
[projectcoordinator@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:projectcoordinator@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)



## Town of Loxahatchee Groves

155 F Road • Loxahatchee Groves, Florida 33470 • (561) 793-2418 Phone • [www.loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](http://www.loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

August 1, 2025

FloridaCommerce  
Division of Community Development  
107 East Madison Street  
Caldwell Building, MSC 160  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

**RE: Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant Request — FY 2025–2026 Project:  
Comprehensive Equestrian Plan of Action for Town of Loxahatchee Groves**

Dear FloridaCommerce,

Please consider this funding request letter from the Town of Loxahatchee Groves, a designated Rural Community\* in the Agricultural heart of Palm Beach County for a Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant, State FY 2025-2026 for Development of an Equestrian Plan of Action that identifies the important needs, desires and issues facing the equestrian community and makes recommendations on each of those matters.

*\* presently under review by FloridaCommerce for renewal*

**Proposed Grant Project**

The Town seeks funding to develop a ***Comprehensive Equestrian Plan of Action*** to support and sustain its equestrian identity and rural character amid increasing development pressures. This plan will analyze and provide recommendations across six interconnected areas specific to the equestrian community while preserving and enhancing the Town's rural identity and its rural quality of life while supporting its long-term fiscal sustainability. The six categories include:

- 1) Community Interdependence
- 2) Infrastructure
- 3) Economic Impact
- 4) Equestrian Sports and Tourism
- 5) Land Use
- 6) Environmental Management

This initiative represents the first comprehensive equestrian planning effort for the Town. While previous efforts have focused narrowly on greenways and trails, they have not addressed the broader needs of the equestrian economy, infrastructure, or land use. As a small rural town with limited staff and a constrained tax base, outside technical assistance is essential.

August 1, 2025

## Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Equestrian Plan of Action

The Town of Loxahatchee Groves is an agrarian/equestrian community of 1 unit to 5 acres of land use blended with equestrians overflowing from the surrounding communities of the Village of Wellington (equestrian capital of the country to the south), farms in Fox Trails, White Fences (to the west), and the Acreage (semi-rural 1.25 acre homes) to the north and west. Adjacent to the north-west is a new urban community of the Town of Westlake that does not share the agricultural/equestrian values of Loxahatchee Groves.

Due to the changing demographics in the Town and sprawling suburban development surrounding this community, the rural lifestyle is at serious risk as has occurred in many counties to our south (Broward & Miami-Dade). Residents not only fear that their quality of rural lifestyle is at jeopardy but strongly fear that they are being pushed out of the community that many have multi-generational family homesteads for higher prices.

While the Town has prepared various studies and reports regarding the Town's Greenways and Trails throughout the past two decades, they have not been updated or comprehensive and have never addressed the community interdependence, economic impact, the sports and tourism within the equestrian industry. The infrastructure aspect has been addressed in more often than not in a piece meal fashion due to the limited resources the Town has due to its size, taxbase and inability to truly plan and manage the impending tsunami of growth that surrounds and awaits the town.

The region within and surrounding the Town of Loxahatchee Groves has a rich equestrian lifestyle with varied types and experience levels of equestrian uses from polo to dressage, to hunter jumpers, to western pleasure riding. Being surrounded by development pressure, the Town has the one coveted item needed for all these equestrian passions – undeveloped land. Undeveloped land that has land use of one unit to 5-acres, with most of the geographic area home to greater than 5-acre farms. With this constant outside pressure, the Town has a small window of opportunity to take advantage of properly planning and managing a comprehensive Equestrian Plan of Action, the justification for the Town's funding request to FloridaCommerce.

There are inherent interdependencies within the Town and the surrounding communities, economic impact, sports and tourism, land use, infrastructure and obstacles to the same, as well as environmental management that the Town faces in this next decade of planning that can be addressed properly in this Comprehensive Equestrian Plan of Action.

### **Scope of Work and Budget**

Deliverable 1: *Equestrian Community Baseline Assessment and Needs Analysis*

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Equestrian Plan of Action

The Comprehensive Equestrian Plan of Action study will review all previous studies, compile this historical information and establish a compendium of the status of the Town's greenways and trails systems including volume of usage, identification of the demographics of the Town's equestrian community as a whole, data on the industry, riders, horses, permanent and temporary stalls, types of usage, barns, fields, interconnected uses, obstacles to the greenways and trails systems, identification of needs, issues, concerns and possible solutions. Grantee will provide a written narrative and compilation of the status of the Town's Equestrian community. Town will receive valuable public input from the Equestrian Community Input meeting and surveyed information.

Recommendations will be included in the Comprehensive Equestrian Action Plan.

Deliverable due date: January 20, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$15,000.00

*Deliverable 2: Community Interdependence and Infrastructure Connectivity Study*

Research the Community interdependencies by determining resources that the equestrian community receives from and provides to the non-equestrian community and vice-versa. Survey how the Town can capitalize on its equestrian community while keeping it sustainable. Determine how to promote the Town's unique equestrian brand and capitalize on this.

Grantee will inventory the current status of all greenways and trails, and drainage Infrastructures pertaining to the same along with inter- and intra-trail systems and any connectivity of the same. Recommendations on all these trails and potential Greenway Corridors will be included for Town approval into the Comprehensive Equestrian Action Plan.

Deliverable due date: February 20, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$10,000.00

*Deliverable 3: Economic Impact, Equestrian Tourism, and Venue Demand Evaluation*

Determine the potential Economic Impact of Loxahatchee Groves' equestrian community on the non-equestrian community, the Town and surrounding areas. Utilizing data collected in previous Deliverables, Grantee will determine the impact of the Equestrian Sports Industry and the Tourism potential within the Town. Explore if there are any unmet needs for additional size venues within the town, such as different size events, western or breed shows, polo exhibitions and field play, hunter jumper, etc. and the associated ancillary uses that are necessary for these to be sustainable. Recommendations will be included in the .

Deliverable due date: March 20, 2026

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Equestrian Plan of Action

Payment Not to Exceed: \$15,000.00

*Deliverable 4: Land Use, Environmental Practices, and Comprehensive Action Plan Development*

Collect Land Use data associated with the equestrian community and make recommendations for associated ancillary uses that are needed to promote equestrian related business friendly and economically viable procedures. Recommendations will be included in the Comprehensive Equestrian Action Plan.

Review and research all Environmental Management practices currently being utilized within the Town and explore alternative methods of livestock waste disposal, including economically feasible alternative methods and review the viability of the Town's livestock waste stream for such methods considering the Town's equestrian season.

Prepare draft comprehensive Equestrian Plan of Action for the Town, present to Town Council, make modifications as requested and finalize Comprehensive Equestrian Action Plan for Town implementation.

Deliverable due date: May 20, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$15,000.00

**Budget/Expenditures**

The Town of Loxahatchee Groves expects to utilize outside consultants and contracted services for these Deliverables. The Town does not have the capabilities to accomplish this in-house with the small amount of staffing and resources available, as it is a small rural community trying to save their ruralness and quality of life. Budgeted Expenditures *include 220 hours at \$250/hour* and are estimated as follows:

| <u>Deliverable</u> | <u>Description</u>                                                                                                                                                                         | <u>Estimated<br/>Hours</u> | <u>Due Date</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1                  | Compile and assess all prior trail and equestrian studies; identify current usage, demographics, facilities, and obstacles; conduct public outreach; develop findings and recommendations. | 60                         | Jan 20, 2026    | \$15,000      |
| 2                  | Analyze interdependencies between equestrian and non-equestrian communities; inventory greenways, trails, and drainage infrastructure; assess connectivity and propose improvements.       | 40                         | Feb 20, 2026    | \$10,000      |

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Equestrian Plan of Action

| <u>Deliverable</u>                                                            | <u>Description</u>                                                                                                                                                        | <u>Estimated<br/>Hours</u> | <u>Due Date</u> | <u>Amount</u>   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 3                                                                             | Analyze economic impacts, tourism potential, and unmet event/facility needs; assess demand for additional venues and ancillary uses; develop strategic recommendations.   | 60                         | Mar 20, 2026    | \$15,000        |
| 4                                                                             | Collect land use and environmental management data; evaluate livestock waste practices; draft and finalize the Equestrian Plan of Action for Council review and adoption. | 60                         | May 20, 2026    | \$15,000        |
| <b><i>Total Amount Not to Exceed and Funding Request for this project</i></b> |                                                                                                                                                                           |                            |                 | <b>\$55,000</b> |

**Applicant Profile, Demographics and Contact Information:**

Applicant Information Town of Loxahatchee Groves  
Palm Beach County, FL,  
155 F Road, Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470  
Phone: (561) 793-2418

Demographics: Population 3,355 (US Census 2020)

|                        |                                                                  |                                                                                                          |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Project Contact        | Francine Ramaglia, Town Manager                                  | <a href="mailto:FRamaglia@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov">FRamaglia@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov</a><br>561-277-2153 |
| Chief Elected Official | Anita Kane, Mayor                                                | <a href="mailto:akane@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov">akane@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov</a><br>561-793-2418         |
| Consultant             | Mary McNicholas, Principal,<br>Geoffrey B. Sluggett & Associates | <a href="mailto:mem@sluggett.com">mem@sluggett.com</a><br>561-662-1805                                   |

This effort is time-sensitive and foundational. The Town's equestrian community is a critical asset, but its long-term sustainability is uncertain without a clear plan that balances land use, infrastructure, tourism, and environmental concerns. A well-crafted Equestrian Plan of Action will ensure that Loxahatchee Groves remains a regional equestrian anchor and a resilient rural community.

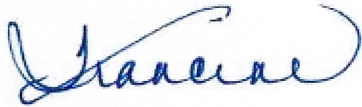
Thank you for considering this request. The Town of Loxahatchee Groves remains committed to thoughtful, resilient, and inclusive planning. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with FloridaCommerce to preserve and enhance the equestrian character and economic vitality of our rural community.

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Equestrian Plan of Action

Please let us know if you have any questions and/or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Francine", with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Francine L. Ramaglia, Town Manager  
Town of Loxahatchee Groves

Cc:

Valerie Oakes  
Town Clerk  
[voakes@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:voakes@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Richard Gallant  
Public Works Director  
[rgallant@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:rgallant@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Craig Lower  
Public Works Superintendent  
[clower@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:clower@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Mary McNicholas  
Consultant  
[mem@sluggett.com](mailto:mem@sluggett.com)

Randy  
Town Engineer  
[randy@keshavarz.com](mailto:randy@keshavarz.com)

Jeff Kurtz  
Project Coordinator  
[projectcoordinator@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:projectcoordinator@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)



## Town of Loxahatchee Groves

---

155 F Road • Loxahatchee Groves, Florida 33470 • (561) 793-2418 Phone • [www.loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](http://www.loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

August 1, 2025

FloridaCommerce  
Division of Community Development  
107 East Madison Street  
Caldwell Building, MSC 160  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

**RE: Commerce Under Community Planning Technical Assistance — FY 2025–2026  
Project: Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan**

Dear FloridaCommerce,

Please consider this funding request letter from the Town of Loxahatchee Groves, a designated Rural Community\* in the Agricultural heart of Palm Beach County for a Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant, State FY 2025-2026 for Development of a Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan that will aid in protection of the tree canopy in the Town's rural community.

\*presently under review by FloridaCommerce for renewal

As the oldest rural municipality in Palm Beach County, Loxahatchee Groves is widely recognized for its natural beauty, equestrian heritage, and iconic native and specimen tree canopy. This canopy, visible throughout our farms, equestrian homesteads, and canal-lined roadways, is not only a defining natural resource but an essential element of our community character, wildlife habitat, and stormwater resilience.

**Proposed Project: Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan**

The Town of Loxahatchee Groves will prepare a Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan for protection of one of the town's most valued resources, its native and specimen tree canopies. One of the most striking natural resources seen upon entering the town are the natural tree canopies throughout town, alongside many of the farms and equestrian homesteads.

The project will inventory existing trees throughout the town and compare to previous years to demonstrate the losses through development, pests, and Hurricane Milton inflicted tornado damage inflicted last year on October 9, 2024.

This plan will:

- Conduct a full survey of all tree canopies, native, non-native and specimen trees within the Town;
- Identify wildlife habitat corridors and environmentally significant areas;
- Identify and recommend options for enhancements to the Town-owned twenty-three (23) acres of conservation tract;

August 1, 2025

#### Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan

- Review potential drainage and canal bank improvements that can collectively preserve and enhance the natural areas in Town;
- Explore the use of public/private partnerships that may be potential options to support the rural supporting corridor;
- Evaluate the feasibility of designating linear parks along the approximate 25 to 30 miles of Town-owned land adjacent to canal;
- Develop policy recommendations, education and outreach programs, incentive programs for possible uses of the Town's Tree Mitigation fund, and integration of Tree Mitigation funds and Land Trust opportunities to expand long-term canopy protection.

Incorporating community input, public-private partnerships, and implementation strategies, the plan will serve as a blueprint for balancing development with ecological stewardship and climate resilience. The Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan, incorporating each of the above areas as well as any related opportunities, will be presented to Council for adoption and funding.

#### Scope of Work and Budget

##### Deliverable 1: Tree Inventory, Habitat & Enhancement Review

The project will inventory existing trees throughout the town and compare the drafted inventory to previous years inventories or pictures to demonstrate the losses through development, pests, and Hurricane Milton inflicted tornado damage inflicted last year on October 9, 2024.

This project will survey all tree canopies, native, non-native and specimen trees within the town, identify areas of potential wildlife habitat corridors, identify potential options to enhance the twenty-three (23) acres of conservation land owned by the town, review potential drainage and canal bank improvements that can collectively enhance the natural areas in town. Recommendations will be included in the draft Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan (Deliverable 2).

Recommendations will be included in the Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan.

Deliverable due date: January 20, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$15,000.00

##### Deliverable 2: Strategy Development, Public Input, and Draft Plan

This task includes identifying and evaluating the use of public/private partnerships that may be initiated in potential options to support the identified rural supporting corridor. It will also encompass research to identify any additional land or easements within the town that may be utilized to support canopy goals, along with assessing the feasibility of creating linear parks by designating the approximately 25 to 30 miles of Town-owned land adjacent to canals.

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan

This task will also explore appropriate uses for the Town's Tree Mitigation fund, and research any Land Trust possibilities that may add to the protection of the Tree Canopy. Implementation strategies to add resiliency to the tree canopy and natural areas through incentivizing procedures, code, education and community involvement will be developed as part of this task

At least one (1) advertised community outreach meeting to solicit input regarding the draft study will be conducted. Grantee will prepare a written narrative summary of the public input received at the community outreach meeting and prepare a draft Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan that includes all Deliverables and Recommendations.

Deliverable due date: March 20, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$10,000.00

Deliverable 3: Final Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan

The final plan will be refined based on Council feedback and public input, incorporating all deliverables and recommendations. It will be formally presented to the Town Council for implementation direction.

Deliverable due date: May 20, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$5,000.00

**Total Amount Not to Exceed and Funding Request for this project: \$ 30,000.00**

Budget/Expenditures

The Town of Loxahatchee Groves expects to utilize outside consultants and contracted services for these Deliverables. The Town does not have the capabilities to accomplish this in-house with the small amount of staffing and resources available, as it is a small rural community trying to protect and preserve its unique ruralness and quality of life.

Budgeted Expenditures are estimated at:

Deliverable 1: 60 hours @ \$250/hour = \$ 15,000.00

Deliverable 2: 40 hours @ \$250/hour = \$ 10,000.00

Deliverable 3: 20 hours @ \$250/hour = \$ 5,000.00

*(Total estimate includes 120 hours at \$250/hour)*

**Total Amount Not to Exceed and Funding Request for this project: \$30,000.00**

Applicant Profile, Demographics and Contact Information

Applicant Profile:

August 1, 2025  
Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan

Town of Loxahatchee Groves  
155 F Road, Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470  
561-793-2418  
Demographics: Palm Beach County, FL, Population 3,355 (US Census 2020)

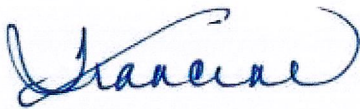
Applicant Project Contact:  
Francine Ramaglia, Town Manager  
[FRamaglia@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:FRamaglia@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Chief Elected Official:  
Anita Kane, Mayor  
[akane@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:akane@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Consultant information:  
Mary McNicholas, Geoffrey B. Sluggett & Associates  
561-662-1805    [mem@sluggett.com](mailto:mem@sluggett.com)

This effort reflects the Town's proactive commitment to preserving its rural tree canopy, addressing storm resiliency, and maintaining its agricultural and equestrian identity. We appreciate your consideration of this important and timely planning initiative and look forward to the opportunity to partner with FloridaCommerce in delivering lasting benefits for our community and region.

Sincerely,



Francine L. Ramaglia, Town Manager  
Town of Loxahatchee Groves

Cc:

Valerie Oakes  
Town Clerk  
[voakes@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:voakes@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Richard Gallant  
Public Works Director  
[rgallant@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:rgallant@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Craig Lower

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Tree Canopy Resiliency Plan

Public Works Superintendent

[clower@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:clower@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Mary McNicholas

Consultant

[mem@sluggett.com](mailto:mem@sluggett.com)

Randy

Town Engineer

[randy@keshavarz.com](mailto:randy@keshavarz.com)

Jeff Kurtz

Project Coordinator

[projectcoordinator@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:projectcoordinator@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)



## Town of Loxahatchee Groves

155 F Road • Loxahatchee Groves, Florida 33470 • (561) 793-2418 Phone • [www.loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](http://www.loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

August 1, 2025

FloridaCommerce  
Division of Community Development  
107 East Madison Street  
Caldwell Building, MSC 160  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

**RE: Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant Request — FY 2025–2026 Project:  
Disaster Recovery & Community Resilience Plan for Town of Loxahatchee Groves**

Dear FloridaCommerce,

Please consider this funding request from the Town of Loxahatchee Groves, a designated Rural Community in the agricultural heart of Palm Beach County, for a Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant for State Fiscal Year 2025–2026. The proposed grant will support the development of an Updated Disaster Recovery and Community Resilience Plan aimed at enhancing the Town's coordination, communication, and response capacity in future emergencies.

*\* presently under review by FloridaCommerce for renewal*

**Proposed Grant Project**

The Town seeks funding to develop an Updated Disaster Recovery and Community Resilience Plan that strengthens the Town's emergency preparedness and post-disaster recovery capacity, especially in the context of its rural setting and limited resources.

On October 9, 2024, Hurricane Milton spawned multiple tornadoes across western Palm Beach County. One of those tornadoes struck Loxahatchee Groves, causing significant destruction — damaging homes, businesses, and public infrastructure, uprooting large sections of the Town's tree canopy, disabling agricultural equipment, and tragically resulting in the death of a horse. In the midst of this devastation, the strength of our community came through: residents organized and responded through a locally formed Neighbors Helping Neighbors network, volunteer groups like CERT, and Town staff who responded immediately post-storm. These collaborative efforts highlighted both the resilience and the vulnerabilities of our emergency preparedness systems.

This grant will enable the Town to assess what worked and what needs improvement, and to develop actionable recommendations for facility hardening, volunteer integration, communication systems, and coordination with outside agencies.

August 1, 2025

## Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Disaster Recovery & Community Resilience Plan

### Scope of Work and Budget

#### Deliverable 1: *Needs Assessment and Inventory*

The task includes review and compilation of all previous plans and other historical information as well as the following:

- Inventory and evaluate Town facilities, emergency plans, communications systems, and equipment.
- Assess the viability and readiness of Town Hall as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), including backup generator capacity and facility hardening needs.
- Review and document participation by volunteer and partner organizations in the Hurricane Milton response, including CERT, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, LGLA, Town staff, and public agencies.
- Conduct at least one (1) Community Outreach Meeting to gather public input and identify additional strategies to improve future response efforts.

Deliverable due date: February 1, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$10,000.00

#### Deliverable 2: *Draft and Final Disaster Recovery and Community Resilience Plan*

The task includes the following:

- Prepare and deliver a comprehensive, updated Disaster Recovery and Community Resilience Plan incorporating findings and recommendations from Deliverable 1.
- Include specific strategies for improving emergency coordination, communication, and volunteer deployment during disaster events.
- Present final plan to Town Administration for implementation.

Deliverable due date: March 20, 2026

Payment Not to Exceed: \$ 5,000.00

### Budget/Expenditures

The Town of Loxahatchee Groves expects to utilize outside consultants and contracted services for these Deliverables. The Town does not have the capabilities to accomplish this in-house with the small amount of staffing and resources available, as it is a small rural community trying to

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Disaster Recovery & Community Resilience Plan

protect and preserve its unique ruralness and quality of life. Budgeted Expenditures *include 60 hours at \$250/hour* and are estimated as follows:

Deliverable 1: 40 hours @ \$250/hour = \$10,000.00

Deliverable 2: 20 hours @ \$250/hour = \$5,000.00

***Total Amount Not to Exceed and Funding Request for this project: \$15,000.00***

**Applicant Profile, Demographics and Contact Information:**

Applicant Information Town of Loxahatchee Groves

Palm Beach County, FL,

155 F Road, Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470

Phone: (561) 793-2418

Demographics: Population 3,355 (US Census 2020)

Project Contact Francine Ramaglia, Town Manager [FRamaglia@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:FRamaglia@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)  
561-277-2153

Chief Elected Official Anita Kane, Mayor [akane@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:akane@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)  
561-793-2418

Consultant Mary McNicholas, Principal, [mem@sluggett.com](mailto:mem@sluggett.com)  
Geoffrey B. Sluggett & Associates 561-662-1805

This effort is time-sensitive and critical to the Town's success when challenged with the next emergency in this Town's rural community.

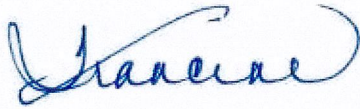
Thank you for considering this request. The Town of Loxahatchee Groves is committed to thoughtful, resilient, and community-centered planning. This project builds directly upon real-life lessons learned and is grounded in the rural values that define our Town. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with FloridaCommerce to develop lasting tools that will strengthen our emergency preparedness and resilience for years to come.

Please let us know if you have any questions and/or need additional information.

August 1, 2025

Loxahatchee Groves Grant Request – Disaster Recovery & Community Resilience Plan

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Francine", with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Francine L. Ramaglia, Town Manager  
Town of Loxahatchee Groves

Cc:

Valerie Oakes  
Town Clerk  
[voakes@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:voakes@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Richard Gallant  
Public Works Director  
[rgallant@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:rgallant@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Craig Lower  
Public Works Superintendent  
[clower@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:clower@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)

Mary McNicholas  
Consultant  
[mem@sluggett.com](mailto:mem@sluggett.com)

Randy  
Town Engineer  
[randy@keshavarz.com](mailto:randy@keshavarz.com)

Jeff Kurtz  
Project Coordinator  
[projectcoordinator@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov](mailto:projectcoordinator@loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov)