



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 2420

1. Project Title
2. Senate Sponsor
3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

Manatee River at the Jacksonville Zoo & Gardens is a \$70 million project with the primary objective is to enhance the Manatee Critical Care Center (MCCC) to meet the increased demand for acute care and rehabilitation for manatees, particularly in light of the ongoing Unusual Mortality Event along Florida's east coast. With the current Florida manatee population, the species transitioned from endangered to threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act in May 2017. The expansion of the MCCC encompasses a revamped zoo entrance and habitat, featuring four treatment pools and three convalescent areas within the Manatee River habitat, offering a total of 330,000 gallons of space. This upgraded facility aims to significantly bolster the zoo's rehabilitation efforts, enhancing its ability to promptly and effectively respond to the rescue and medical care of an increased number of distressed manatees, especially during the heightened winter rescues.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds
- State Agency contacted? Yes

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	1,000,000
Total State Funds Requested	1,000,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	1,000,000	6%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	15,943,244	94%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025	16,943,244	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? No

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. Is future funding likely to be requested? Yes
- a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.
- b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.
- Private fundraising and local taxpayer funding.



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10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.

The Zoo received \$5,217,361.60 from the COVID Cares Act; \$2,146,413.00 from the PPP Loan Forgiveness; \$25,000.00 from the American Rescue Plan Grant; \$8,163,913.68 from the SVOG Grant. These funds were used to upgrade and purchase items to mitigate the spread and keep the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens safely open and operable. These mitigation processes and purchases not only were for humans but also for our animals.

Complete questions 11 and 12 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

11. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning
 Design
 Construction
 N/A

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

12. List the owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

The owner of the Zoo is the City of Jacksonville. The entity receiving funding to implement the improvements is the Jacksonville Zoological Society, which has a long-term contractual relationship with the City to manage the Zoo and deliver infrastructure investments.

13. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Construction of manatee river to include 330,000 gallons of habitat for manatee rehabilitation.	1,000,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		1,000,000



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14. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?

The funds will play a crucial role in advancing the development of the Manatee River at the Jacksonville Zoo & Gardens. The primary objective is to enhance the Manatee Critical Care Center (MCCC) to meet the increased demand for acute care and rehabilitation for manatees, particularly in light of the ongoing Unusual Mortality Event along Florida's east coast. With the current Florida manatee population, manatees transitioned from endangered to threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act in May 2017. The expansion encompasses a revamped zoo entrance and habitat, featuring four treatment pools and three convalescent areas within the Manatee River habitat, offering a total of 330,000 gallons of space. This upgraded facility aims to triple the zoo's rehabilitation efforts, enhancing its ability to promptly and effectively respond to the rescue and medical care of an increased number of distressed manatees.

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?

A variety of activities and services will be implemented to enhance the Manatee Critical Care Center (MCCC) and promote conservation education. This involves the construction of a new zoo entrance, four treatment pools, and three habitats, effectively tripling the Zoo's rehabilitation capacity. Additionally, a tailored educational program for increasing awareness and encouraging public engagement.

c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

Manatee River is designed to educate visitors about the importance of protecting and caring for Florida's manatees, Manatee River will feature informative displays, multimedia presentations, and interpretive signage. The overarching goal is to inspire a sense of responsibility among visitors towards manatee conservation, encouraging them to actively become advocates for manatee protection.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

The manatee population in the state of Florida will be served by the Manatee Critical Care Center, as well as thousands of Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens visitors will experience the benefits of the newly constructed manatee river.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

Manatee River will increase guests understanding and appreciation of local wildlife and ecosystems. JZG uses pre- and post-visit surveys to assess visitors' knowledge and attitudes toward local wildlife and ecosystems. Evaluate qualitative feedback and conduct interviews to understand the perceived cultural enrichment resulting from the experience. By educating students and general public, there will be a reduction in potential harm to the environment through increased awareness and responsible behavior. JZG expects to have an increase in tourism, specifically due to the Manatee River experience, which could be tracked by visitor demographics, surveys and attendance data.

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?

Standard contract penalties are sufficient.

15. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number Ext.

16. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County



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c. Organization Type

- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number