



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2531

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

Diamond of Dreams is a stand-alone project of the Historic St. Johns County Police Athletic League organization that will provide an all-inclusive specially designed playground and multi-purpose baseball field for children and young adults with special needs. This field will be carpeted and ADA wheelchair compliant. Despite 17% of the county's Pre-K-12 population having special needs, only one ADA compliant baseball field and playground exists in northern St. Johns County. Having just one of these facilities in a county that encompasses 601 square miles of land is unsuitable to the needs of the county's population. Diamond of Dreams, which will be located in the southern portion on leased county land, will provide a much-needed resource to level the playing field for individuals of all abilities. Additionally, the location of this project targets the majority of our population that is at or below the poverty line.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?  No

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	1,000,000
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	1,000,000	28%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	2,187,252	61%
Other	400,000	11%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026</b>	<b>3,587,252</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. Has this project previously received state funding?  No

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (YYYY-YY)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. Is future-year funding likely to be requested?  No

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.



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## Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

### 10. 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)?

No

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

06/01/2025

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

02/28/2026

e. What funding stream will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance of the project?

Historic St. Johns Police Athletic League budgeted funds.

### 11. 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.

This project will be on leased land from the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners to the Historic St. Johns Police Athletic League. The facilities will be operated by the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office and the Historic St. Johns Police Athletic League.

### 12. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Operational Costs</b>		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	The project includes the design, planning, permitting, engineering, and construction of (1) wheelchair accessible playground, (1) carpeted wheelchair accessible multi-purpose baseball field, parking, ADA compliant bathroom facilities, and lighting systems.	1,000,000
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>1,000,000</b>

### 13. Program Performance

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



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The goal of Diamond of Dreams is to ensure that children and young adults with special needs, along with their families, have a safe place to play together and participate in sports that are conducive to their needs and provide an opportunity for these individuals to be a part of a real sports team. From the carpeted multi-purpose baseball field to the all-inclusive specially designed playground, this project will enhance opportunities and field space county-wide for our diverse population.

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

The primary purpose of these funds will be to construct the specially designed playground and multi-purpose carpeted baseball field. Currently, there is only one other specially designed ADA compliant baseball field and playground located in northern St. Johns County. St. Johns County encompasses 601 square miles and has seen a 43% increase in population growth over the last 10 years with no slowing in sight. The Diamond of Dreams playground and field will be located in the southwest portion of the county which will expand the opportunities for our special needs families to be active.

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

Diamond of Dreams will provide much needed organized sports and activities on an ADA wheelchair compliant multi-purpose field space, as well as, a specially designed playground for the special needs community in St. Johns County. No matter if an individual has an intellectual or physical disability, this project will meet their needs.

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

St. Johns County is considered one of the fastest growing counties in the nation and therefore has an ever-growing diverse population. According to a 2020 Department of Education report, 17% of the Pre-K-12th grade student population has special needs. This does not account for children younger than Pre-K or the increase in student population since 2020. The southwest portion of St. Johns County where this project will be located, is the primary population base for those living under the poverty line. Diamond of Dreams will bring a much-needed resource to an already under-served population and begin to put them on an equal footing with their peers. We expect hundreds of children to participate in this program and offer the life-changing experience to be a part of a team, as well as, present the opportunity for special needs families to play together in the great outdoors.

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

The benefit this project will provide to the special needs community in St. Johns County is invaluable. The ultimate goal of Diamond of Dreams is to level the playing field for the special needs community in St. Johns County and provide these incredible individuals with the opportunity to not only be able to play with their friends, siblings, and family members in safe space that meets their needs, but also give them the opportunity to play baseball as part of a team where they will wear a uniform with a live crowd cheering them on. As this project progresses, we expect participation to climb continuously each year.

**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 in the contract?**

Should we fail to meet the deliverables or performance measures, we will pay back the funds.

**14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster?**

**a. If Yes, what phase best describes the project?**

- Mitigation (reducing or eliminating potential loss of life or property)
- Response (addressing the immediate and short-term effects of a natural disaster)
- Recovery (assisting communities return to normal operations, including rebuilding damaged infrastructure)

**b. Name of the natural disaster (or Executive Order # for events not under a federal declaration):**

**15. Has the entity applied for or received federal assistance for this project?**



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- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:

b. Provide the total project cost listed on the FEMA project worksheet:

16. Has the entity applied for or received state assistance for this project (other than this request)?

- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, specify the program and state agency (ex. Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan, Department of Commerce):

#### 17. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name  Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number  Ext.

#### 18. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type

- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity



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University or College

Other (please specify)

d. First Name  Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number  Ext.

#### 19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number

*The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.*