

FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BILL ANALYSIS

This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

BILL #: [HB 4089](#)

TITLE: City of Trenton, Gilchrist County

SPONSOR(S): Johnson

COMPANION BILL: None

LINKED BILLS: None

RELATED BILLS: None

Committee References

[Intergovernmental Affairs](#)

13 Y, 0 N



[Natural Resources & Disasters](#)

16 Y, 0 N



[State Affairs](#)

SUMMARY

Effect of the Bill:

The bill directs the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund to convey a parcel of state land to the City of Trenton in Gilchrist County. The bill requires the city to use the land for public purposes and to ensure continued public use of the adjacent Nature Coast State Trailhead and its associated facilities.

Fiscal or Economic Impact:

None.

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ANALYSIS

EFFECT OF THE BILL:

The bill directs the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Board) to convey, in fee simple, a parcel of [state lands](#), known as the [Trenton Train Depot](#) (Depot), to the [City of Trenton](#) (City) in Gilchrist County. (Section [1](#))

The bill requires the City to continuously manage the property for public purposes and to ensure continued public use of the adjacent [Nature Coast State Trailhead](#) and its associated facilities. The bill requires the City to retain ownership of the property in perpetuity and provides that any sale of the property will result in the property's ownership reverting back to the State of Florida. (Section [2](#))

The bill requires the City to initiate a [cultural resource assessment survey](#) if the [Division of Historical Resources](#) (Division) within the Department of State determines that the Depot is eligible for or listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) or is otherwise deemed historically significant under current law.¹ The City must provide the scope of work and any resulting report to the Division for review and recordkeeping. (Section [3](#))

The bill requires that the Board convey the property to the City within 90 days of the bill taking effect. (Section [4](#))

The bill provides an effective date of upon becoming a law. (Section [5](#))

FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

The Economic Impact Statement for the bill states the bill will have no fiscal impact as the City will continue to maintain the Depot, with plans to secure future grant funding for repairs and renovations.

¹ See Ch. 267, F.S.

RELEVANT INFORMATION

SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

State Lands

The State of Florida owns lands for many purposes including preservation, conservation, recreation, water management, historic preservation, and administration of government. These lands include all:

- Swamp and overflowed lands held by the state or that may inure to the state;
- Lands owned by the state by right of its sovereignty;²
- Internal improvement lands proper;
- Tidal lands;
- Lands covered by shallow waters of the ocean or gulf, or bays or lagoons thereof, and all lands owned by the state covered by fresh water;
- Parks, reservations, or lands or bottoms set aside in the name of the state, excluding lands held for transportation facilities and transportation corridors and canal rights-of-way; and
- Lands that have accrued or may accrue to the state.³

State lands are held in trust for the use and benefit of the people of Florida by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Board).⁴ The Board consists of the Governor, Attorney General, Chief Financial Officer, and Commissioner of Agriculture.⁵ The Board may sell, transfer, and administer state lands in the manner consistent with state law.⁶

The Division of State Lands within the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) generally performs all staff duties and functions related to the acquisition, administration, and disposition of state lands, although certain staff duties may be performed by water management districts, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.⁷

City of Trenton

The City of Trenton (City) was incorporated in 1908⁸ in Gilchrist County and has a population of 2,221.⁹ The Trenton Historic District encompasses municipal, commercial, and residential buildings, including the Trenton Train Depot, in the downtown area.¹⁰

Trenton Train Depot

The Trenton Train Depot (Depot) was built in 1905 as a stop on the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad line and was listed in *A Guide to Florida's Historic Architecture*, published by the University of Florida Press, in 1989.¹¹ The City

² These are "sovereignty submerged lands," which include but are not limited to, tidal lands, islands, sand bars, shallow banks, and lands waterward of the ordinary or mean high water line, beneath navigable fresh water or beneath tidally-influenced waters, to which the State of Florida acquired title on March 3, 1845, by virtue of statehood, and which have not been heretofore conveyed or alienated. R. 18-21.003(67), F.A.C.

³ [S. 253.03\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁴ [S. 253.001, F.S.](#)

⁵ [S. 253.02\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ [S. 253.002\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁸ City of Trenton, [Our History](#) (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

⁹ Florida Legislature, Office of Economic and Demographic Research, [Florida Population Estimates by County and Municipality April 1, 2025](#), p. 4 (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

¹⁰ Dept. of Environmental Protection, [Nature Coast State Trail Management Plan](#), p. 18, (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

¹¹ University of North Florida Digital Commons, [Old Depot, Trenton, FL](#) (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

manages the Depot through a Memorandum of Agreement with DEP.¹² The Depot provides parking, restrooms, a pavilion, and access to the Nature Coast State Trail via the Trenton Trailhead.¹³

Nature Coast State Trail

The Nature Coast State Trail (Trail) is a 32-mile biking/hiking trail built on a repurposed railroad bed.¹⁴ The Trail connects former passenger stops of the Atlantic Coastline Railroad, which operated from 1901 to 1967, with stops in Cross City, Chiefland, and Trenton.¹⁵ The train stations in these towns still stand, with the Chiefland station now housing the Chiefland Train Depot Museum. The Trail has been designated as a national recreation trail and is part of Florida's Greenways and Trails System.¹⁶ As funding becomes available, the trail will extend approximately nine miles east from Trenton toward Newberry.

Division of Historical Resources

The Florida Department of State's Division of Historical Resources (Division) is responsible for preserving and promoting Florida's historical and archaeological resources.¹⁷ The Division directs historic preservation efforts throughout the state in cooperation with state and federal agencies, local governments, private organizations, and individuals. The Division's Bureau of Historic Preservation oversees the National Register of Historic Places program for Florida and maintains an inventory of the state's historical resources in the Florida Master Site File. The Division has the authority to adopt rules to implement provisions of Chapter 267, F.S., known as the Florida Historical Resources Act.¹⁸ Under the act, the Division has the responsibility to direct and conduct a comprehensive statewide survey of historic resources and to maintain an inventory of such resources.¹⁹

The Florida Master Site File (Site File) is the official state inventory of historical cultural resources.²⁰ Categories of resources recorded at the Site File include archaeological sites, historical structures, historical cemeteries, historical bridges and historic districts. The Site File is an active inventory of Florida's historical cultural resources without regard to historical significance. The Site File currently holds information on more than 200,000 cultural resources and copies of over 22,000 manuscripts. Site File staff do not evaluate the historical significance of sites or the potential impact of development projects, however, evaluations of historical significance by other State Historic Preservation Office staff and preservation consultants are included in the records.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is an active list of United States properties that have been determined to be historically significant by the National Park Service.²¹ Properties that are listed in the NRHP are also recorded at the Site File, and the Site File has copies of the federal nomination forms. However, most properties recorded at the Site File are not listed in the NRHP because many Site File properties do not meet the criteria of the NRHP for historical significance and because the NRHP nomination process can be complex.

Cultural Resource Assessment Surveys

The Division's Public Lands Archaeology (PLA) program works with state land managers and other agency personnel to inventory and evaluate archaeological and historical sites on conservation lands.²² The primary responsibilities of the PLA are to conduct cultural resource surveys on state-owned lands and provide management recommendations to state land managing organizations. The PLA conducts cultural resource inventories and assessments on state-owned lands to locate undocumented sites. As part of the assessments, PLA

¹² Dept. of Environmental Protection, [Nature Coast State Trail Management Plan](#), p. 5, (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

¹³ Dept. of Environmental Protection, [Nature Coast State Trail Management Plan](#), p. 20, (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

¹⁴ Gilchrist County Tourist Development Council, [Nature Coast State Trail](#) (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

¹⁵ Florida State Parks, [History of the Nature Coast State Trail](#) (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

¹⁶ Florida State Parks, [Nature Coast State Trail](#) (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

¹⁷ Florida Dept. of State, Division of Historical Resources, [About](#) (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

¹⁸ Ss. [267.011](#), [267.021\(2\)](#), and [267.031\(1\)](#), F.S.

¹⁹ [S. 267.031\(5\)\(a\)](#), F.S.

²⁰ Division of Historical Resources, [Master Site File](#) (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

²¹ *Id.*

²² Florida Dept. of State, Division of Historical Resources, [What We Do](#) (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

staff update the Florida Master Site File and generate reports on cultural resource activities for federal, state, and local projects.²³

Local Bill Forms

The Florida Constitution prohibits the passage of any special act unless a notice of intention to seek enactment of the bill has been published as provided by general law or the act is conditioned to take effect only upon approval by referendum vote of the electors in the area affected.²⁴ A legal advertisement of the proposed bill must be placed in a newspaper of general circulation or published on a publicly accessible website²⁵ at least 30 days prior to the introduction of the local bill in the House or Senate.²⁶ The bill was noticed on the publicly accessible website of [Gilchrist County on December 4, 2025](#).

The House local bill policy requires a completed and signed Local Bill Certification Form and Economic Impact Statement Form be filed with the Clerk of the House at the time the local bill is filed or as soon thereafter as possible.²⁷ Under the policy, a committee or subcommittee may not consider a local bill unless these forms have been filed. The following forms have been submitted for the bill:

- [Local Bill Certification Form](#)
- [Economic Impact Statement Form](#)

BILL HISTORY

COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee	13 Y, 0 N	2/5/2026	Darden	Hilliard
Natural Resources & Disasters Subcommittee	16 Y, 0 N	2/12/2026	Skinner	Jones
State Affairs Committee			Williamson	Hilliard

²³ See [Ch. 1A-46](#), F.A.C

²⁴ [Art. III, s. 10, Fla. Const.](#)

²⁵ [S. 50.0311\(2\), F.S.](#)

²⁶ [S. 11.02, F.S.](#) If there is no newspaper circulated throughout or published in the county and no publicly accessible website has been designated, notice must be posted for at least 30 days in at least three public places in the county, one of which must be at the courthouse.

²⁷ Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee, [Local Bill Policies and Procedures Manual](#), p. 11 (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).