



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2023-2024

LFIR # 3143

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

The Lehigh Acres Municipal Services Improvement District (LA-MSID) desires to preserve a natural geological feature from a by-gone era for future generations to enjoy before it is destroyed or contaminated. This 19.95-acre property has a sink-hole proven to be 200-feet deep. The investigation indicated that the sinkhole connects to the Sandstone Aquifer. This makes this sinkhole not only important to historians, but important to the main potable water aquifer for an area larger than Lehigh Acres. Divers have noted that there is a very thick layer of silt on the bottom that needs to be explored.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted? No

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	2,215,000
Total State Funds Requested	2,215,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	2,215,000	100%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2023-2024	2,215,000	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? No

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

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

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

No



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

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

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.

Land acquisition for preservation, conservation, enhancement and public enjoyment. LAMSID would initially receive the funds, and upon closing would transfer the funds to Flint's Pavillion, LLC, the current owner of the property in exchange for LAMSID receiving title to the property. Closing would be by March 31, 2024.

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	Land acquisition for preservation, conservation, enhancement and public enjoyment. Closing would be by March 31, 2024.	2,215,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		2,215,000

14. Program Performance

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



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The Lehigh Acres Municipal Services Improvement District (LA-MSID) desires to preserve a natural geological feature from a by-gone era for future generations to enjoy before it is destroyed or contaminated. This 19.95-acre property STRAP: 34-44-27-00-00001.01 has a sink-hole proven to be 200-feet deep. The investigation indicated that the sinkhole connects to the Sandstone Aquifer. This makes this sinkhole not only important to historians, but important to the main local potable water aquifer.

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

LA-MSID will remove exotic vegetation from the 20-acre parcel STRAP: 34-44-27-00-00001.0140 and create nature trails that will be accessible to the public from dawn to dusk. Long term, there are plans to create a historical and cultural museum on the parcel. The sink hole itself has great historic value and can be seen as Lehigh's first true tourist destination attracting researchers, divers etc. University of Miami's School of Marine & Atmospheric Science, said the sinkhole in Lehigh very likely holds treasures in artifacts that will help archaeologists and scientists learn about Southwest Florida's earliest history, dating back perhaps as many as 16,000 years.

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

The parcel will be preserved and will be open to passive recreation. Hiking trails will be opened and fishing will be permitted. The preservation of the sink ensures a direct link to aquifer recharge be preserved. It gives Lehigh a chance to carve out an identity of environmental rich community. It allows to showcase the history of Lehigh Acres through its preservation (the first community center was in this area) when Lehigh was created. There is an opportunity for health and wellness retreats and activities like yoga.

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

It is expected to serve the 134,000 population of Lehigh Acres will be able to enjoy this parcel, as well as the tourists that may visit the site.

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

Staff will work to place a permanent conservation easement over the environmentally sensitive area of the property. Completion of the conservation easement and the five years of monitoring being complete. The sinkhole has a direct connection to the Surficial and the Upper Floridan Aquifers. By disconnecting this sinkhole from any off-site surface water runoff, we will eliminate any possibility off-site contaminants from entering the sinkhole. LA-MSID can add the sink hole to it's sampling and water-quality testing program, on a monthly basis. We would test for nutrients, metals and oil/grease.

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?

If LA-MSID fails to close on the property by March 31, 2024, the funds will be returned to the state.

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

c. Organization Type



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- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify) Independent Special District-Govt.

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

Please complete the questions below for Water Projects only.

18. Have you applied for alternative state funding?

- Waste Water Revolving Loan
- Drinking Water Revolving Loan
- Small Community Wastewater Treatment Grant
- Other (please specify)
- N/A

19. What is the population economic status?

- Financially Disadvantaged Community (ch. 62-552, F.A.C)
- Financially Disadvantaged Municipality (ch. 62-552, F.A.C)
- Rural Area of Economic Concern
- Rural Area of Opportunity (s. 288.0656, Florida Statutes)
- N/A

20. What is the status of construction?



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N/A

21. What percentage of the construction has been completed?

N/A

22. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

March 31, 2024