



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Honorable Mayor and Town Council  
**From:** Rafael G. Casals, Town Manager  
**Date:** May 20, 2015  
**Re:** 2015 State of Florida Department of Agriculture – Grant Application

### REQUEST

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CUTLER BAY, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION WITH THE STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

### BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Town of Cutler Bay was awarded \$10,000 during the 2012-2013 Fiscal Year AND \$10,000 during the 2013-14 Fiscal Year from the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program. The Town subcontracted with Top-Notch, Inc. to conduct corrective pruning of Town trees, located along right-of-ways. Additionally, our Public Works Department canvassed the affected neighborhood and placed educational material on resident's doors. The educational packages included a notice regarding the project as well as information on how homeowners can properly maintain trees on their private property. The Urban and Community Forestry Grant is renewable up to three (3) years; however, the Town must submit a new application each year. This grant request/application will be the Town's third and final request submitted under the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program.

As a result of the Town's documented success throughout the previous years, the Town will submit a similar grant proposal requesting \$10,000 under the Site Specific Projects category, to be used for maintenance of Town owned trees, located along the swales and right-of-ways. The Town's Grant Coordinator in collaboration with the Public Works Department has completed and submitted the grant application package, in response the State of Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service's RFP/FFS-14/15-50.





The purpose of the Forestry Grant Program is to cooperate with local governments to promote the planting and protection of trees to improve the livability of urban environments within the State of Florida. There are three (3) categories of funding for local governments; Tree Program Development/Improvement, Site Specific Projects, and Information/Education.

Town staff has worked diligently to follow the goals and objectives of the adopted 2009 Street Tree Master Plan and has succeeded in being designated a “Tree City” each year since 2009 and received the Arbor Day Foundation’s “Growth Award” in 2013 and 2014. The Town’s Public Works Department has successfully completed the planting of over 2,364 Florida Native Trees Live Oak trees, throughout our residential neighborhoods.

The Town will benefit from the proposed Project (Selective Tree Pruning), as stated in the Town’s 2009 Street Tree Master Plan, adopted by the Town Council via Resolution Number 09-02. Below is an excerpt from the adopted Street Tree Master Plan (p. 11):

*“Selective pruning of shade trees and frond removal of palms will be the major effort required. Pruning is necessary both to correct structural deficiencies in existing trees, and maintain the proper growth habit on newly planted trees. Most shade trees require pruning about once every three (3) years to remove dead and crossing branches, maintain dominant leaders, and selectively thin the branches to allow winds to blow through. This helps make the trees more wind/hurricane-resistant.”*

The Town’s grant application package consists of a fifty percent (50%) match of the total Project (Selective Tree Pruning) costs. The required match can be in the form of in-kind costs (Town staff salaries) and cash match.

The Town’s grant application (*Attachment “A”*) will focus on the following goals and objectives, identified by the State of Florida’s Department of Agriculture:

- ***Goal 1: Maintain current trees***
  - Objective 1:* Prune shade trees and remove palm fronds from older and newly planted trees to correct structural deficiencies and promote proper growth habits.
  - Objective 2:* Fertilize trees on public owned streets as necessary.
  - Objective 3:* Inspect current trees for presence of pests or disease.
  
- ***Goal 2: Educate residents about Tree Ordinance and maintenance.***
  - Objective 1:* Send press release to local news outlets about proper maintenance.
  - Objective 2:* Distribute educational brochures to Town residents educating them about proper tree maintenance and the Town’s tree ordinance.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Town Council approve the attached Resolution.

