

SALES TAX PROJECTS

Project Number: 47

Project Name: America's First Christmas: DeSoto Winter Encampment

Total Project Cost: \$500,000

Total Project Cost Notes

The estimated cost includes an entrance feature, sidewalks, landscaping, and crosswalks.

Executive Project Summary:

With the development of the America's First Christmas site, Tallahassee can become a nationally promoted tourist destination for those wishing to commemorate the location of the first Christmas in the Americas.

Actions Taken by the Committee:

March 28, 2013: Removed the project from consideration.

April 26, 2013: Moved to reconsider the project at its next meeting.

May 9, 2013: Moved the project to the Priority Level 1 category and amended project funding to \$500,000 for land acquisition, contingent on receiving state funding for the remainder of the unfunded improvements.

June 13, 2013: Moved the project to Tier 1.

Themes

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Mobility/Transportation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economic Vitality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sense of Community | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ecotourism/Parks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental/Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Vertical Infrastructure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Connectivity | <input type="checkbox"/> Gateways |

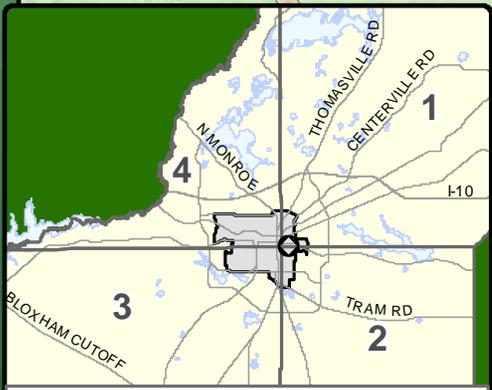
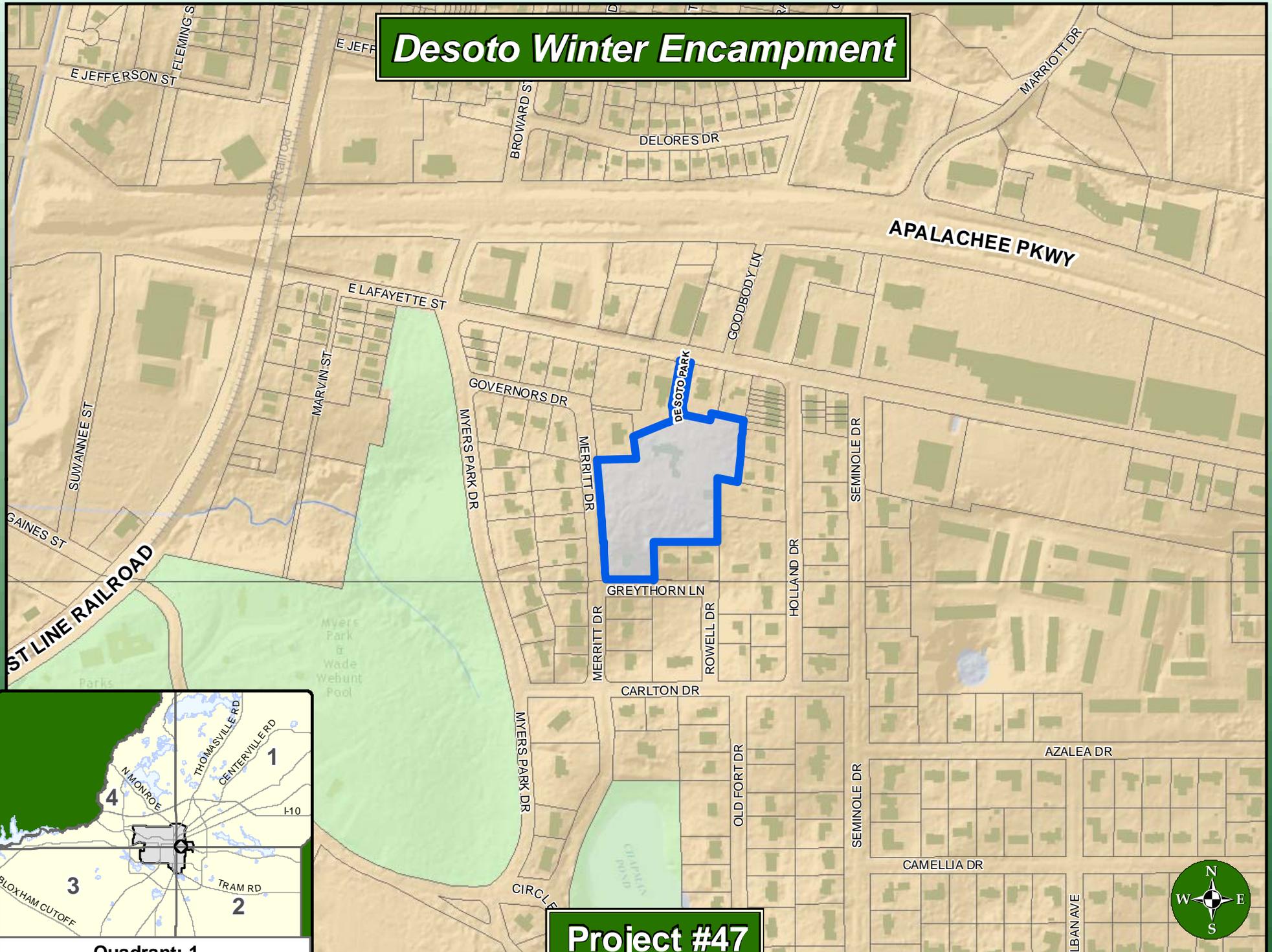
Detail Project Description

As the site itself is part of a state-owned park, the City and County are best suited for developing the surrounding transportation infrastructure such as additional sidewalks, widening of adjacent City/County roadways, and the overall improvement and beautification of the surrounding area. This Sales Tax proposal pertains to Goodbody Lane, a northeast to southwest road which is the preferred access point to the America's First Christmas site. The estimated cost includes an entrance feature, sidewalks, landscaping, and crosswalks.

Cost By Themes

	Regional Mobility/Transportation
	Sense of Community
	Environmental/Water Quality
	Connectivity
	Economic Vitality
\$500,000	Ecotourism/Parks
	Vertical Infrastructure
	Gateways

Desoto Winter Encampment



Quadrant: 1

Project #47



Previous Project Information for:

Project #47
“America’s First Christmas”
Desoto Winter Encampment

Note: Based on direction from the Committee at the March 28, 2013 Sales Tax Committee meeting, below is a list of previous project(s) that were merged or modified to create a holistic project for the Committee’s consideration.

Project Name: Desoto Winter Encampment (*Previously Project #22*)

Program
4g

Inspiring the Creative Class: "America's First Christmas" DeSoto Winter Encampment

Estimated Cost:
\$250,000

WHAT IS IT?

With the development of the America's First Christmas site, Tallahassee can become a nationally promoted tourist destination for those wishing to commemorate the location of the first Christmas in the Americas. The City of Tallahassee, partnering with other stakeholders, will be working with Senator Montford and the Leon County Commission to encourage the appropriation of state funds for the development of the site, the potential purchase of surrounding property, and creating sufficient ingress/egress to the site.

As the site itself is part of a state-owned park, the City and County are best suited for developing the surrounding transportation infrastructure such as additional sidewalks, widening of adjacent City/County roadways, and the overall improvement and beautification of the surrounding area. This Sales Tax proposal pertains to Goodbody Lane, a northeast to southwest road which is the preferred access point to the America's First Christmas site. The estimated cost includes an entrance feature, sidewalks, landscaping, and crosswalks.

Evaluation Criteria:

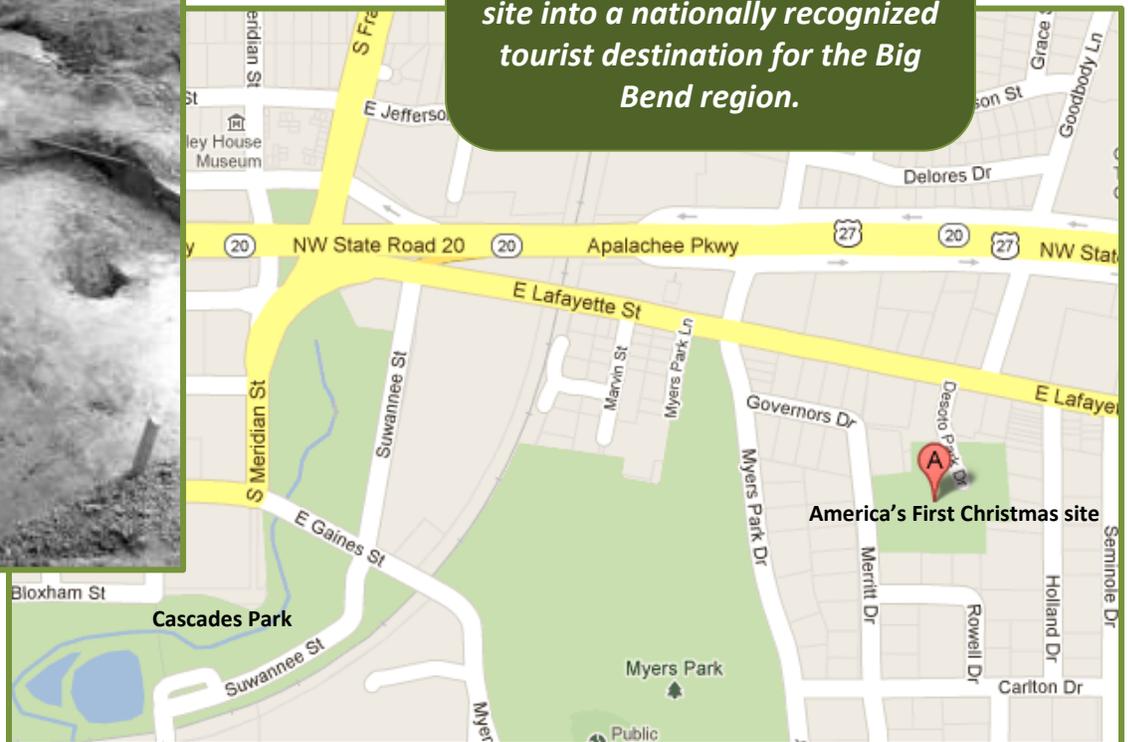
- Provides Regional Impact / Geographic Equity ✓
- Enhances Mobility ✓
- Supports Recreation and Quality of Life ✓

- Benefits the Environment
- Supports Economic Development / Revitalization ✓
- On an Existing Master Plan or Blueprint List
- Leverages Other Funds ✓



Above, Calvin Jones excavating at the DeSoto Site, circa 1987 (photo courtesy of the Florida Memory Project)

The City, partnering with the State and County, can develop the America's First Christmas site into a nationally recognized tourist destination for the Big Bend region.



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Provides Regional Impact/Geographical Equity – Investment in this incredibly important historical resource would lead to increased national and international recognition of Tallahassee and Leon County.

Enhances Mobility – The impact of additional vehicular traffic around the site could be mitigated by enhancing sidewalks and roadways on Lafayette Street and Goodbody Lane. Additionally, businesses and residents in the area would benefit from improved infrastructural improvements along these roadways.

Supports Recreation and Quality of Life – Citizens of Tallahassee and Leon County will be able to visit and enjoy an historic site of national significance. The America's First Christmas site represents a truly amazing find and has the potential to become landmark attraction for the Big Bend region.

Supports Economic Development/Revitalization – Development of the America's First Christmas site would create a nationally recognized tourist destination with the potential to attract large numbers of tourists with varied interests. As such, the site could become a significant economic engine for the City of Tallahassee due to increased tourist demand for hotels, restaurants and other amenities. And with the site's proximity to Cascades Park (about ¼ mile), tourists coming to Tallahassee for the America's First Christmas attraction will likely visit Cascades Park and the businesses along Gaines Street as well.

Leverages Other Funds – A commitment by the City of Tallahassee and Leon County towards this project will support efforts of the Leon County legislative delegation and the Florida Department of State in acquiring additional funding from the State. Leon County is also currently upgrading stormwater, sidewalks, and landscaping along Lafayette Street between the site and Cascade Park.



At left, volunteers assisting with excavation of DeSoto Site, circa 1987 (photo courtesy of the Florida Memory Project)

At right, the Gov. John W. Martin House is a historic home located on the state-owned property of Hernando De Soto's winter campsite. The house, located at 1001 Governor's Drive, was added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places on January 6, 1986. The house may serve a role in the commemoration of the America's First Christmas site.

