

Orlando buys Constitution Green Park, saving massive live oak



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The massive live oak at Constitution Green Park will remain where it has stood for more than a century, after Orlando's City Council on Monday approved purchasing the tree and park from its private owners.

The park was owned by the Caruso family, which has leased it to the city for \$1 per year since the late 1980s.

But when the Carusos contemplated developing the Summerlin Avenue parcel last spring, preservationists and residents raised alarm about the fate of the tree, estimated at between 125 and 175 years old.

Instead, city leaders persuaded the Carusos to sell the park. The city will pay \$3.34 million in cash and also to hand over a roughly half-acre city-owned parcel at 129 East Gore Street, valued at \$2.5 million.

On Monday, Mayor Buddy Dyer said the purchase will "ensure that this land remains a park and a very special green space."



The city is contemplating adding a dog run, he added.

Said District 4 Commissioner Patty Sheehan, who championed saving Constitution Green: "It's not very often we get to do something this special and preserve something for generations to come."