

City of Alachua Transit Service (CATS) Proposal

Presented by: RTS
July 1, 2009

OVERVIEW

The City of Alachua released a City of Alachua Transit Service (CATS) Transit Improvement Program Final Report in December 2008. This Final Report asserts an interest in reinstating an all-day fixed route form of the previous CATS shuttle route, which provided morning and afternoon service between the City of Alachua and Gainesville from September 2006 until November 2008. The report also includes plans to create three additional fixed routes that would operate within the City of Alachua limits.

The final report details four route proposals and emphasizes the connection to RTS at Northwood Shopping Center along U.S. 441. RTS staff met with City of Alachua Assistant City Manager Danielle Judd on April 28, 2009 to discuss the Final Report and its emphasis on collaborating with RTS to fulfill the City of Alachua's vision for creating transit service connections.

RTS has expressed interest in providing transit service to the City of Alachua with local bus service and to the region by beginning an intercity transit service. The connection between Gainesville and Alachua supports the vision of Express Bus/Park and Ride Service as proposed by RTS in the 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan.

However, RTS believes minor service modifications (i.e. running both the express route and the North-South Alachua route only during peak hours) are necessary to make the CATS Plan feasible, and that some route adjustments differing from the Final Report recommendations would increase efficiency in the new CATS plan. It is also important to note that MTPO's Long Range Transportation Plan traffic analysis zone growth rates indicate that densities to support CATS transit service areas may not be achieved until 2019.

RTS presents the following options to the City of Alachua as proposals with RTS as the provider of the City of Alachua's planned transit services.

NORTH - SOUTH ROUTE

OPTION 1. City of Alachua Provides Vehicle for North-South Alachua Route (Peak Service Hours)

This option includes service with City of Alachua providing the vehicle for the North/South route, and RTS providing the driver. The RTS driver's salary with benefits is \$30/hour. The City of Alachua may choose to provide uniforms.

The estimates for this option assume that the City of Alachua covers maintenance and fuel costs for the vehicle it provides, as well as insurance costs and liability for any accidents. RTS recommends modifications to the service and route as proposed in the Final Report. See figure 1 and table 1 for route and service hour modifications.

Annual Operating Costs:

A.) RTS Driver Reporting Directly to City of Alachua—Assuming the driver reports to a site at the City of Alachua and based on the modified schedule (table 1) reflecting 8:16 hours/ day (including report time and travel time) for 245 days/ year, the cost per year would be **\$60,760**.

B.) RTS Driver Reporting to RTS—Assuming the driver reports to the RTS garage and based on the modified schedule (table 1) reflecting 10:36 hours/day (including report time and travel time) for 245 days/ year, the cost per year would be **\$77,910**.

ADA costs: City of Alachua will be responsible for its own ADA certification, as well as ADA travel and training costs. RTS will charge \$30/ trip to provide complementary ADA paratransit service. Assuming 5 trips per day at \$30/trip and 245 days/year, the ADA costs associated with the fixed route service would be **\$36,750**.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Option 1:

-Advantages:

- City of Alachua has better control of vehicle and route changes
- City of Alachua can set fare price in the City of Alachua
- City of Alachua can collect its own revenue on North and South route
- City of Alachua can add advertising on its CATS vehicle

-Disadvantages:

- No access to larger vehicles if needed
- RTS and City of Alachua vehicles will have separate fare structures, which is less convenient for passengers
- No access to additional resources
- City of Alachua will have to coordinate its own ADA support services (ADA certification application, travel training, etc.)
- No access to fare revenue reports or ridership reports
- Will need staff member/hours to prepare FDOT, FTA reports

OPTION 2. RTS Provides Vehicles and Service for North-South Alachua Routes (Peak Service Hours)

Annual Operating Costs:

RTS will charge \$59.70/ hour for the RTS vehicle to provide service from the City of Alachua to Northwood Village. Based on figure 1 and table 1 reflecting 10:36 hours/day (including report time and travel time) for 245 days/year, the cost per year would be **\$155,041**.

ADA costs: Annual Operating Cost includes all ADA costs.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Option 2:

-Advantages:

- Access to larger vehicles if needed
- Access to all RTS routes with All Day, Monthly, and Semester passes
- Universal fare structure is more convenient for passengers
- ADA complementary paratransit service included
- Access to fare revenue reports and ridership reports
- Access to additional resources
 - Grant applications that could reduce the cost to City of Alachua
 - ADA support services (ADA certification, travel training, etc.)
 - Marketing (the City of Alachua could continue to use the CATS logo in conjunction with the RTS logo)

-Disadvantages:

- Loss of advertising opportunity for City of Alachua
- Loss of revenue on North and South route
- No control over fare prices

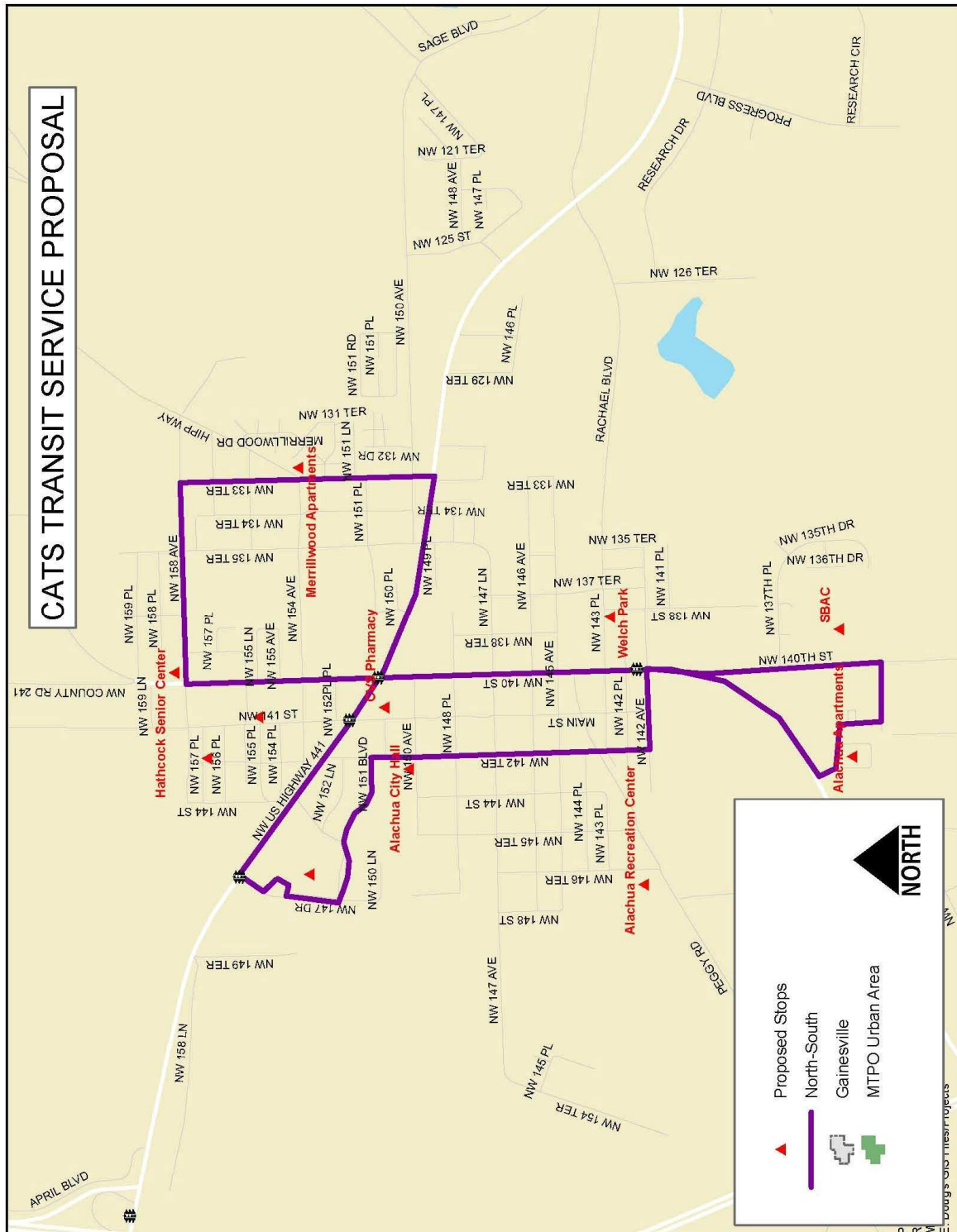


Figure 1- CATS City of Alachua North - South Route (RTS Adjustment)

Table 1. North -South Route (Peak Hour Service)

Hitchcock	Merrilwood Apt.	Hitchcock	Alachua Rec. Center	Alachua Apts.	Hitchcock
	1.4	2.8	4.5	5.9	7.7
Morning					
6:10	6:16	6:20	6:27	6:32	6:38
6:40	6:46	6:50	6:57	7:02	7:08
7:10	7:16	7:20	7:27	7:32	7:38
7:40	7:46	7:50	7:57	8:02	8:08
8:10	8:16	8:20	8:27	8:32	8:38
8:40	8:46	8:50	8:57	9:02	9:08
9:10	9:16	9:20	9:27	9:32	9:38
9:40	9:46	9:50	9:57	10:02	10:08
Afternoon					
14:40	14:46	14:50	14:57	15:02	15:08
15:10	15:16	15:20	15:27	15:32	15:38
15:40	15:46	15:50	15:57	16:02	16:08
16:10	16:16	16:20	16:27	16:32	16:38
16:40	16:46	16:50	16:57	17:02	17:08
17:10	17:16	17:20	17:27	17:32	17:38
17:40	17:46	17:50	17:57	18:02	18:08
18:10	18:16	18:20	18:27	18:32	18:38

EXPRESS ROUTE

RTS will provide both the vehicles and drivers for the Express Route between the City of Alachua and the City of Gainesville, with the drivers reporting to the RTS garage. RTS suggests adjustments to the Express Route recommended in the Final Report (see figure 2). RTS also recommends that this service be limited to a.m. and p.m. peak hours with a 30-minute frequency (see table 2). The following estimates are based on these modifications.

Annual Operating Costs:

RTS will charge \$59.70/ hour for the RTS vehicle to provide service from the City of Alachua to Northwood Village. Based on the proposed map (see figure 2) and schedule (see table 2), reflecting a total of 15:20 hours/ day (including report time and travel time) for 245 days/ year, the cost per year would be **\$224,273**.



Figure 2- CATS City of Alachua - City of Gainesville Express Route (RTS Adjustment)

Table 2. City of Alachua – City of Gainesville Express Route

Outbound							
Downtown	Northwood	PWD	SFC	Hitchcock	Dollar General	Wal-Mart DC	
	0.0	4.8	9.1	11.2	15	17	
6:00	6:21	6:28	6:35	6:40	6:46	6:49	1
6:30	6:51	6:58	7:05	7:10	7:16	7:19	2
	7:21	7:28	7:35	7:40	7:46	7:49	1
	7:51	7:58	8:05	8:10	8:16	8:19	2
	8:21	8:28	8:35	8:40	8:46	8:49	1
	8:51	8:58	9:05	9:10	9:16	9:19	2
15:30	15:51	15:58	16:05	16:10	16:16	16:19	1
16:00	16:21	16:28	16:35	16:40	16:46	16:49	2
	16:51	16:58	17:05	17:10	17:16	17:19	1
	17:21	17:28	17:35	17:40	17:46	17:49	2
	17:51	17:58	18:05	18:10	18:16	18:19	1
	18:21	18:28	18:35	18:40	18:46	18:49	2
Inbound							
Wal-Mart DC	Dollar General	Hitchcock	SFC	PWD	Northwood	Downtown	
0		5.8	8	12.1	16.9		
6:51	6:54	7:00	7:04	7:09	7:16		1
7:21	7:24	7:30	7:34	7:39	7:46		2
7:51	7:54	8:00	8:04	8:09	8:16		1
8:21	8:24	8:30	8:34	8:39	8:46		2
8:51	8:54	9:00	9:04	9:09	9:16	9:34	1
9:21	9:24	9:30	9:34	9:39	9:46	10:04	2
16:21	16:24	16:30	16:34	16:39	16:46		1
16:51	16:54	17:00	17:04	17:09	17:16		2
17:21	17:24	17:30	17:34	17:39	17:46		1
17:51	17:54	18:00	18:04	18:09	18:16		2
18:21	18:24	18:30	18:34	18:39	18:46	19:04	1
18:51	18:54	19:00	19:04	19:09	19:16	19:34	2

SUMMARY

RTS recognizes that a growing number of University of Florida, Santa Fe College, Shands and the Veterans Administration employees commute to and from cities such as Alachua, High Springs, and Newberry. Some of these commuters have expressed interest in an intercity bus service during employer transportation fairs, telephone calls, e-mails, surveys and public meetings. The use of buses for this service would enhance the presence of the CATS service and facilitate connections to other RTS routes. An express service and City of Alachua fixed routes would offer commuters several public transportation options to reach the employment centers in the City of Gainesville and the City of Alachua.

RTS remains committed to providing low-cost, efficient and dependable transportation services to the citizens of Gainesville and Alachua County. Several details, such as fare structure and ADA eligibility certification, require discussion and inclusion in a service agreement between the City of Gainesville RTS and the City of Alachua. Although transit supportive densities may not be reached until 2019, there is still potential for a strategic approach starting with limited service and expanding services as growth occurs and use increases.

Table 3. Summary of Proposed Annual Service Costs

Description	Option 1		Option 2
	A	B	
N/S Route	\$60,760	\$77,910	\$155,041
N/S Route - ADA Cost	\$36,750	\$36,750	included
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$97,510	\$114,660	\$155,041
Express Route	\$224,273	\$224,273	\$224,273
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$321,783</i>	<i>\$338,933</i>	<i>\$379,314</i>