



City of Gainesville

2008 Federal Legislative Statement

December 11, 2006

Table of Contents

	Page
I. Community Development Initiative	
• Downtown Revitalization Project	1
II. Public Transportation Enhancement Initiative	
• Regional Transit System Expansion and Replacement Buses	1
• Traffic Management System	2
III. Education Initiative	
• Opening the Doors to Math and Science	3
IV. Housing Enhancement Initiative	
• Southeast Gainesville Renaissance	4
V. Homeless Housing and Services Initiative	4
VI. Regulatory Initiative	
• Cabot/Koppers Superfund Site	6

CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

FY 2008 FEDERAL AGENDA

I. Community Development Initiative

Downtown Revitalization Project

The Gainesville Downtown Revitalization Project is a \$31.4 million project to revitalize the traditional heart of the city and East Gainesville. This funding request is for \$9.5 million, which will be used to fund urban park development, stormwater management facilities, and reconstruction of Depot Avenue. The Project aims to reverse the effects of several decades of urban decay that have eroded the economic and social health of the city core. This area is a key sector and is adjacent to the University of Florida, one of the nation's largest universities, the Health Sciences Center, and downtown Gainesville.

The Project is embraced by many enthusiastic community partners, including the City of Gainesville, Alachua County, the University of Florida, Gainesville Regional Utilities, United States Environmental Protection Agency, FL Department of Environmental Protection, St. Johns River Water Management District, neighborhoods, businesses, and civic and recreation organizations. It is crucial to the quality of life of thousands of citizens, now and in the future.

II. Public Transportation Enhancement Initiative

Regional Transit System Expansion and Replacement Buses

The City is seeking \$2 million in Federal funding assistance for expansion of its Regional Transit System (RTS) Administration Operations facility. Over the past eight years, the demand for transit services has outstripped available RTS resources. RTS has initiated plans to expand its present operations and administration facilities. RTS has formed a Facilities Expansion Committee and has already completed construction of phase 1, the new employee parking lot, and has completed design plans for phase 2, site work in preparation for expansion of the RTS Administration and Operations facilities. The City needs to move to phase 3 of the project, design and construction of the administration and operations building expansion.

The City is also seeking \$3 million in Federal funding assistance for the Multi-Modal Center. The success of RTS has led to an unsafe and crowded transit transfer center located on the City Plaza. Several years ago, the City purchased the old Gainesville Regional Utilities engineering center and land

to site a Multi-Modal Center. A Federal earmark of \$1 million was received in 2003 to begin engineering, design, and demolition of the old building. Demolition of the existing structure at this location has been completed. Preliminary concept designs indicate a need for additional funds to fully realize the potential of the site and construct an appropriate facility with covered walkways for passengers, a suitable building and sufficient parking for employees and other users of the facility.

Finally, the City is requesting \$14 million in Federal assistance for replacement buses. RTS currently operates 60 buses eligible for retirement, with average fleet age of 14.1 years and annual maintenance cost of approximately \$45,000 per bus (\$2,700,000 in maintenance costs per year). Even though the City will receive SAFETEA-LU grant allocations for buses and FDOT funds under the FDOT 5-Year Plan, it still needs to replace 43 buses in order to be able to sustain its regular service and reduce maintenance costs.

Traffic Management System

The City is seeking \$16 million in Federal funding assistance for replacement of its computerized traffic signal system. Gainesville's current system, a "Computerized Closed Loop Traffic Signal System" was installed in 1987. In the 18 years the system has been operational, Gainesville has experienced new growth and changes in the population density. New activity centers have been developed and existing activity centers have expanded along with the changing growth patterns.

During that same 18-year period, many changes and new developments have occurred in the area of traffic management, traffic signal systems and the development of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Technology. This new ITS technology allows communities to effectively manage traffic on over-congested roadways. Most of these congested roadways are right of way constrained and road widening is not practical. In many areas, existing developments prevent the construction of parallel alternate routes. The only alternative is to effectively manage traffic on our existing roadway network.

A major plus for the City of Gainesville / Alachua County is the inter-agency cooperation with respect to traffic management. The City of Gainesville maintains all of the traffic signals in Alachua County through inter-local agreements. The City coordinates with all of the other Public Works agencies throughout the County as well as all of the law enforcement agencies and emergency service providers. Additionally, the City coordinates with the University of Florida through the same inter-local agreements. The City also coordinates traffic management for the Regional Transit System (RTS).

III. Education Initiative

Opening the Doors to Math and Science

While many students in Alachua County are achieving at high academic levels, certain subgroups of students are not being successful. In the 2006 FCAT assessment, the total population of students in Alachua County made adequate yearly progress (AYP) in mathematics as defined by the No Child Left Behind legislation. Students in the subgroups of White, Asian, and Hispanic also made AYP in mathematics while African-American students, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students did not. We have an achievement gap in Alachua County.

As the global economy becomes more technologically dependent, these student subgroups are being left farther behind. We believe that given the academic support and exposure to the possibilities of the world around them, these students can be successful. The City of Gainesville and Alachua County Public Schools are requesting a total of \$636,800 to implement a comprehensive program aimed at closing the achievement gap in mathematics for the at-risk 9th and 10th grade students in the public high schools.

Component #1: Provide a credit-based Extended School Day program in Math - Projected Budget: \$470,000

Entering 9th grade and 10th grade students, previously identified as at-risk by their FCAT scores and academic record, would be invited to participate in an extended day program at each high school. This program would allow them to earn one elective credit toward graduation. The curriculum would be based on building their mathematics skills and applying these skills in scientific lab experiences. Students will learn to value mathematics as they see a need for learning it. Field trips to the University of Florida and Santa Fe Community College will show the students what is waiting for them if they do well in their academics.

Component #2: Provide a credit-based mathematics/science Summer Camp - Projected Budget \$112,800

Entering 9th grade and rising 10th grade students, previously identified as at-risk by their FCAT scores and academic record, would be invited to participate in a summer camp. The students would be engaged in hands-on math and science activities and would have field trips designed to acquaint them with the scientific discoveries going on at the University of Florida and Santa Fe Community College in their own home town. Students would earn one-half elective credit toward graduation for their participation in the summer camp. An additional benefit to this component is the positive experience that such a program would provide these students. Research has

shown that relationships are important in student achievement, particularly for at-risk students. A positive experience with the high school and the teachers prior to entering high school will start the student off well the following year.

Component #3: Provide after-school tutoring - Projected Budget \$54,000

For the students who are not able to attend the Extended School Day program, a tutoring program will be instituted at each high school to provide support for their mathematics and science classes. Teachers will be employed to provide tutoring before and after school 2-4 days per week. An enrichment curriculum as well as tutoring on specific questions will be available to help students build their conceptual knowledge in mathematics.

IV. Housing Enhancement Initiative

Southeast Gainesville Renaissance Initiative

The City of Gainesville is requesting \$8.3 million in Federal funds to implement the acquisition, infrastructure improvements, pre-development and construction phases of the Southeast Gainesville Renaissance Initiative. The development of mixed-income residential housing on vacant parcels envisioned in the proposed project will be significant in revitalizing Southeast Gainesville. The purpose of this funding request is to eliminate slum and blight by encouraging mixed-income infill residential development in older neighborhoods in Southeast Gainesville. This effort is a specific initiative to implement new residential development pursuant to the recently adopted "Plan East Gainesville" vision.

The City of Gainesville established the Southeast Gainesville Renaissance Initiative to revitalize less developed areas of southeast Gainesville through the construction of new mixed-income housing, while providing a master plan to encourage equivalent quality development on other parcels in the area. This initiative is designed to revitalize this area by providing high quality and affordably priced housing to mixed-income families to increase neighborhood livability, improve neighborhood image and character, and upgrade the physical aspects of the community. The initiative will attract new public and private investment and attract and maintain new residents and businesses to the area.

V. Homeless Housing and Services Initiative

The City of Gainesville requests \$2.8 million to begin implementing the City of Gainesville – Alachua County 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. Gainesville and Alachua County recently completed a 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Gainesville and Alachua County. The Plan represents the work of nearly 100 volunteers and staff from various local agencies, including the City of Gainesville. Gainesville and Alachua County now join over 200

other communities across the country that have chosen to address the issue of homelessness in a deliberate, comprehensive fashion through a locally developed 10-year plan.

There are an estimated 900-1,000 homeless persons living in Gainesville and Alachua County, but only about 350 emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing beds available for them. The 10-year plan proposes adding another 350 beds to shelter or house homeless persons over the next 10 years. Another key component of the Plan is the creation of a “first entry” or one-stop center for homeless services. The center would include medical care, child care, personal hygiene facilities, communications access, some substance abuse intervention, and emergency assistance, among other services. In an effort to increase access to medical services for this vulnerable population, the Plan calls for a mobile medical services van and increasing the capacity of existing medical programs, such as the Helping Hands Clinic, the Alachua County We Care Program, Gainesville Community Ministry’s dental and vision care program, and Meridian Behavioral Healthcare’s substance abuse and mental health programs. To help prevent additional persons from becoming homeless, the Plan calls for a discharge coordinator to work with the Alachua County Jail, Gainesville Police Department and Alachua County Sheriff’s Office to prevent individuals from being discharged into homelessness. Additional prevention measures would include enhanced educational, job training and employment, and related services for at-risk and homeless individuals and families.

CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

FY 2008 FEDERAL AGENDA – Regulatory Initiative

Cabot/Koppers Superfund Site Immediate Measures and Cleanup

The City requests assistance in its efforts to pursue action from USEPA to ensure that the City's water supply is protected from contamination from the Cabot/Koppers Superfund site, and that the site is properly cleaned up in a timely manner. The Cabot/Koppers site has been a designated Superfund site since 1983 and is located 2 miles directly upstream of the City wellfield. Despite the presence of significant contamination, particularly at the Koppers portion of the site, there have been minimal actions taken to clean up the site or to prevent the contamination from reaching the City's wellfield.

The City has been highly proactive in working with USEPA to pursue measures to protect the City's wellfield and obtain timely and permanent cleanup of the site. The City has assembled a team of internationally renowned experts in groundwater contamination and remediation to review the site and advise and assist the City. This team has been instrumental in developing recommendations for actions needed to protect the water supply and clean up the site. This team has recommended that immediate actions be taken to contain the contamination below the Koppers site to prevent it from potentially reaching the City's wellfield.

The City requests assistance in working with EPA to ensure that:

1. Immediate actions are taken to contain the contamination below the Koppers site and protect the City Wellfield; and
2. The Cabot/Koppers Superfund site is properly cleaned up in a timely manner.