

080288

Submitted  
8/11/2008  
Citizen Comment

# Memo



**To:** City Commissioner  
**Via:** Russ Blackburn, City Manager  
**Via:** Paul Folkers, Assistant City Manager  
**From:** Michelle Park, Assistant Director of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs  
**Date:** August 11, 2008  
**Subject:** Teen Zone Program and Transportation Information

---

Teen Zone programs provide after school enrichment, life skills and recreation experiences for middle school youth in Alachua County and have documented significant success in improved academic performance and reduced juvenile referrals and incidents both during the school day and after school hours.

The first Teen Zone program was established at Eastside Recreation Center in 2003 and is funded by the Federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Grant in partnership with the Alachua County School Board. The annual operating budget is \$124,000. The program is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year of funding and the grant is scheduled to end in 2009. The Eastside program serves Lincoln and Howard Bishop Middle Schools. Funding is provided to the School Board who administers the grant and the City provides the facility and site administration. This grant provides significantly more funding than the other Teen Zone budgets due to its educational requirements stipulated by the Federal government requiring certified teachers, purchase of books and other required reading materials. The grant covers the cost for transportation from both schools to the Center and returns the children from the Center to two strategic stops near the school neighborhoods. The cost of transportation is \$4,700 annually. Approximately 30 youth are transported daily. A total of 100 youth are registered for the program with a daily average attendance of 60 youth. Capacity is 100 youth. This program experiences a great deal of transient attendance. Children register all year long as families move in and out of the school district.

The Kanapaha Middle School Teen Zone began in 2004 and Westwood Middle School Teen Zone was established in 2005. The City administers these programs and the County provides the funding for Kanapaha and the City provides funding for Westwood Middle School, \$75,000 annually for each. Neither has provided transportation in the past. However, the County did allocate \$7,500 for the Kanapaha program for transportation this year with an additional \$2,000 for field trip transportation. Staff has calculated the cost for transporting youth home would be \$17,000. An additional \$7,500 would be needed to fully fund transportation for the Kanapaha program. No funding exists for Westwood Middle School. Staff calculated the cost to provide transportation home from Westwood would be \$15,000.

Ft. Clarke Middle School is entering its 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Similar to Kanapaha, the program is administered by the City and funded by the County. Transportation has not been provided in the past however, the County did allocate \$7,500 for the Ft. Clarke program for transportation this year with an additional \$2,000 for field trip transportation. Staff calculated the cost for transporting youth home would be \$17,000. An additional \$7,500 would be needed to fully fund transportation for the Ft. Clarke program. Staff believes that the Ft. Clarke and Kanapaha budgets could be analyzed to determine if there were funds in other accounts they could reduce and then reallocate those funds to transportation. If staff is successful, then only Westwood Teen Zone would need funding. That budget has already been analyzed and determined that there is no potential for fund reallocation to cover transportation costs.

Transportation Funding Summary:

Site	Current Funding	Provided By	Funding Needed
Eastside	\$4,700	Federal Grant	\$0
Ft. Clarke	\$9,500	County	\$7,500
Kanapaha	\$9,500	County	\$7,500
Westwood	\$0		\$15,000

Total funding needed to provide transportation at all Teen Zone sites is \$30,000. These transportation expenses are based upon the Alachua County School Board providing transportation. An alternative transportation option would be RTS. The cost is \$32.50 for a semester for an RTS pass. The use of RTS as an option has drawbacks in that it could take over an hour or more for a child to travel home on RTS routes. Note that staff is trying to identify funding within the existing Kanapaha and Ft. Clarke budgets.

Participation levels, capacity levels and daily attendance levels at the four Teen Zones are listed below. You'll notice that even though enrollment capacity is reached at the sites, the number of youth participating daily is far less. It is believed that this is due to children having difficulty getting home. They sign up with every intention of participating but then realize how hard it is to get home and then drop out. If transportation were provided we would provide youth with the option and anticipate daily participation increasing dramatically.

Site	Capacity	Enrollment	Av. Daily	With Transportation
*Eastside	100	100	60	N/A
Ft. Clarke	100	100	60	40 +
Kanapaha	120	120	65	55+
Westwood	200	200	120	80+
Total	520	520	305	175+

I hope this is helpful background information. Should you need additional information, please let me know.

Cc: Steve Phillips, Director  
Shannon Keleher, Recreation Manager  
Brian Shea, Recreation Supervisor  
Karen Cayson, Recreation Supervisor

\* Eastside Teen Zone is different from the other locations in that youth are transported from school to the recreation center and then home. The other sites occur at school and therefore would experience higher daily attendance if transportation were provided. It's more convenient for the student to stay and participate at the school sites. In addition, the cost for transportation is far less as a result of being tied to grant restrictions and being administered by the School Board.