

CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

FY 2007 FEDERAL AGENDA

I. Community Development Initiative

- **Downtown Revitalization Project**

II. Public Transportation Enhancement Initiative

- **Regional Transit System Expansion and Replacement Buses**
- **Traffic Management System**

III. Public Safety Enhancement Initiative

- **Joint Communications Project**

IV. Housing Enhancement Initiative

- **Southeast Gainesville Renaissance Initiative**

V. Public Infrastructure Initiative

- **Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Improvements**
- **Wellfield Monitoring Network**

VI. Homeless Housing and Services Initiative

CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

FY 2007 FEDERAL AGENDA

I. Community Development Initiative

Downtown Revitalization Project

The City is requesting \$9.5 million in Federal funding assistance for this project. The Downtown Revitalization Project consists of the Depot Regional Stormwater Project and the reconstruction of Depot Avenue. The proposed \$4.0 million Stormwater Project consists of three engineered ponds designed to manage stormwater runoff within approximately 100 acres of Gainesville's downtown watershed. The City is planning to conduct a \$12.0 million remediation of a brownfield site to construct this project. An \$8.0 million urban park will be built around the stormwater ponds and features a historic train depot, rail trail hub to connect Gainesville's extensive rail trail system, skatepark and amphitheater. The \$6.2 million reconstruction of an approximately two mile segment of Depot Avenue will enhance public safety with a new roadway alignment, in-street bike lanes, turn lanes, and pedestrian improvements. The Depot Avenue project will link historically minority neighborhoods with employment centers, the University of Florida, and the proposed Depot Park.

The Downtown Revitalization Project is important to the citizens of Gainesville in that it will foster economic development, enhance public safety, improve environmental quality, and promote outdoor recreation. The Project supports the objectives and missions of the US EPA Brownfields Program and the federal Clean Water Act and furthers federal interests in urban development and transportation. The City and its funding partners are providing approximately \$20,741,300 towards the total estimated cost of \$30,200,000.

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 anticipated start date for this project is February 2006. 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 tremendous 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. Public Safety Enhancement Initiative

Joint Communications Project

The City of Gainesville and Alachua County are requesting \$7.8 million in Federal assistance to update our Computer Aided Dispatch System, to integrate our Records Management Systems, to create a shared wireless data communication system and to create an integrated data sharing system for public safety agencies within Alachua County. The Public Safety entities within the City of Gainesville and Alachua County currently use disparate and antiquated communications and data management systems. In this age of increased Domestic Terrorism, there is a compelling need for police and fire departments to be able to communicate effectively, especially first responders, to share criminal intelligence and hazards material information; and to be able to coordinate an effective response to both local and national threats.

There has been a significant local governmental contribution to this project. In the past three years, the City of Gainesville and Alachua County have invested over \$20 million dollars in local funds along with significant staff resources to create an interoperable voice (radio) communications system and centralized operational control for responding to disasters, terrorism events, large assemblies (90,000+) and daily operations.

A solid collaborative training effort has been demonstrated between local government, public safety, and criminal justice entities, the Alachua County School Board, Santa Fe Community College and Shands/University of Florida. What is now needed is an integrated data system to supplement and enhance interoperability and rapid information sharing and updates. This proposal is unique in that it brings the ability to communicate and share information together on a region-wide and multi-agency basis by creating an integrated interoperable data environment.

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. Public Infrastructure Initiative

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Improvements

The City of Gainesville is requesting \$1 million in Federal assistance to be leveraged with local funding and other grant monies to provide a central water supply to low and moderate-income neighborhoods currently on wells. Federal funds will be leveraged with funding from the City of Gainesville to provide central water service to low-income families. In addition, the City of Gainesville has set aside approximately \$140,000 per year to extend infrastructure within the city, with the first priority being CDBG target areas.

A two year partnership between Alachua County and the City of Gainesville, has already resulted in \$133,000 in funding for low-income families in the adjacent unincorporated areas. Funding is being sought to pay for on-site costs such as plumbing costs associated with converting residents from wells to central water service as well as costs to extend water service and pay applicable connection charges.

Wellfield Monitoring Network and Protection of Water Supply

The City of Gainesville is requesting \$1.5 million in Federal assistance for the establishment of a regional groundwater monitoring network and for supporting the City's efforts to pursue timely and permanent cleanup of the Cabot/Koppers Superfund Site. The catalyst for this project was the discovery that the Koppers site is contributing pollutants to the Floridan Aquifer from which our community draws its drinking water. The establishment of this early warning detection system will alert the City to potential pollution threats not only from the Cabot/Koppers site but also from any potential pollution sources that may not be known. These sentinel wells will provide advance warning of possible contamination years in advance of its reaching the Murphree Wellfield to allow preventative actions to be taken to protect the water supply. The City has budgeted \$190,000 for engineering studies and design and for the construction of the first two wells in the network. Funds are needed for the construction of the remaining wells and for the establishment and management of the entire twenty-six well monitoring network.

The City has expended a total of \$820,000 so far on activities related to the Cabot/Koppers site. Additional funding is sought to allow the City to continue these efforts. The funding requested will provide peace of mind and security to the community of more than 175,000 people who rely on the Murphree Wellfield for their sole source of drinking water. The local funding already committed to this project demonstrates the City's high level of commitment to protecting the community's pristine water supply and its confidence that this project is a critical element in that effort.

VI. 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, who have been meeting since June of this year to develop the 10-year plan. 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.