



2010 CITY OF GAINESVILLE FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Gainesville, Florida City Commission

Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan (At Large)
Mayor-Commissioner Pro Tem Jack Donovan (District 3)
Commissioner Jeanna Mastrodicasa (At Large)
Commissioner Thomas Hawkins (At Large)
Commissioner Scherwin Henry (District 1)
Commissioner Lauren Poe (District 2)
Commissioner Craig Lowe (District 4)

Russ Blackburn, City Manager

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CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

FY2010 FEDERAL AGENDA

Executive Summary

The City of Gainesville respectfully submits its Fiscal Year 2010 Federal Agenda, which consists of 5 initiatives selected by the Mayor and City Commission. These requests consist of not only a number of important infrastructure initiatives, but also include those that focus on the underserved elements of the community. Furthermore, each request enjoys substantial support from the City by way of local matching funds and comports with the mission of the Federal Agency where funding is requested.

Summary Table of City of Gainesville FY 2010 Federal Agenda

Project Name	Federal Funds Requested	Appropriations Bill	Grant Program or Account
<u>Downtown Revitalization Initiative</u> <i>(Depot Park Development Project)</i>	\$5 million	Transportation & HUD	HUD – Economic Development Initiative (EDI)
<u>Energy Efficiency Initiative</u> <i>(Low-Income Energy Efficiency Program)</i>	\$1.1 million	Energy & Water	DOE – Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Program
<u>Public Transportation Enhancement Initiative</u> <i>(RTS Replacement Buses)</i>	\$20 million	Transportation, Treasury, HUD	FTA – Bus and Bus Facilities
<u>Water Quality Initiative</u> <i>(Paynes Prairie Sheetflow Restoration)</i>	\$2 million	Interior & Environment	EPA – STAG
<u>Education Initiative</u> <i>(TBD)</i>	\$TBD	Labor, HHS, Education	Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE)

Downtown Revitalization Initiative

The Gainesville Downtown Revitalization Project is a \$32 million project to revitalize the traditional heart of the city and East Gainesville. The project consists of rebuilding Depot Avenue, cleaning up environmental contamination, building a new master stormwater facility, and constructing the Depot Park project. The project aims to reverse the effects of several decades of urban decay and environmental contamination 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 Downtown Revitalization Project is embraced by many enthusiastic community partners, including the City of Gainesville, Alachua County, the University of Florida, Gainesville Regional Utilities, neighborhoods, businesses, and civic and recreation organizations. The Project is crucial to the quality of life of thousands of citizens, now and in the future.

The City of Gainesville, through General Government and Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU), has secured approximately \$27 million in grants, loans, and local government funds to clean up the site, build the roadway and stormwater facilities, and partially fund the park development. Funding partners are the United States Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Program (\$200,000), FL Department of Environmental Protection (\$1.1 million), St. Johns River Water Management District (\$715,000), US Department of Housing and Urban Development (\$526,300), Florida Recreational Trails Program (\$200,000), the State of Florida Revolving Fund, (\$15 million construction loan) and the locally approved referendum Wild Spaces Public Places (\$1.0 million). This is not an exhaustive list of funding partners.

Depot Park Development Project

This funding request is for \$5.0 million, which will be used to complete development of the park site after site remediation is completed. The long range project goal consists of constructing the recreation amenities, rehabilitating the Gainesville Train Depot, providing support facilities such as parking and restrooms, and creating a setting for the proposed Cade Museum, an interactive center dedicated to the spirit of inspiration, innovation, and invention. The Depot Park site improvements complement ongoing revitalization efforts underway in the area such as constructing rails-to-trails, new housing, and improvements to the adjacent Porters Neighborhood. The park is a key component in redeveloping the urban core and is adjacent to the University of Florida, one of the nation's largest universities, the Health Sciences Center, and downtown Gainesville. The park is also adjacent to the 16-acre GRU operations center, which GRU plans to vacate in the future and will become a prime redevelopment site.

The City is planning a partnership with the Cade Museum Group to site a major science and technology museum at Depot Park. The museum purpose is to highlight the process of scientific discovery in a family-friendly venue comprising approximately 50,000 square feet. Museum leaders will complete a preliminary design in early 2009. Both

indoor and outdoor exhibits are planned, which will be integrated in to the park development concept.

The following activities are scheduled to take place in calendar year 2009:

- Begin final park design and coordination steps with Cade Museum
- Begin final design of Depot Building rehabilitation
- Begin reconstruction of Depot Avenue
- Begin next phase of park remediation
- Begin initial rehabilitation of Depot Building

Depot Park Funding Summary

Component	Total Cost	Funding Obtained	Funding Needs
Historic Rehabilitation of Depot Bldg.	\$2,600,000	\$2,128,000 (1)	\$472,000
Depot Park Rail Trail Project	700,000	400,000 (2)	300,000
Museum Support Facilities: Parking, Landscaping, Walkways	600,000	300,000 (3)	300,000
Historic Depot Trail	2,000,000	1,000,000 (4)	1,000,000
Pond Promenade	500,000	250,000 (5)	250,000
Nature Trails and Boardwalk	1,500,000	652,400 (6)	847,600
Park Landscaping, Fences, Entryways, Lighting and Sidewalks	2,000,000	780,000 (7)	1,220,000
Children's Play Area	150,000	0	150,000
Garden Center	300,000	0	300,000
Total Depot Park	\$10,350,000	\$5,510,400	\$4,839,600

- (1) Sources: CRA \$500,000, LAP funding \$628,000, Wild Spaces Public Places sales tax revenue \$1,000,000
 (2) Sources: Recreational Trails Grant \$200,000, 2005 CIRB Bonds 200,000
 (3) Sources: 2005 CIRB Bonds \$300,000
 (4) Sources: UDAG \$641,485, \$HUD EDI Grant: \$119,515, 2005 CIRB Bonds \$239,000
 (5) Sources: UDAG \$50,000, 2005 CIRB Bonds \$200,000
 (6) Sources: UDAG \$588,515, proposed 2009 CIRB Bond \$63,885
 (7) Sources: Proposed 2009 CIRB Bond \$780,000

Note: UDAG is Urban Development Assistance Grant

The City of Gainesville will, by mid-2009, secure approximately \$5.5 million in grants and local government funds for the park improvements. Of this amount, the City of Gainesville is contributing approximately \$4.6 million in local government funds (CRA funds, bonds, sales tax revenue, UDAG) to the project.

Energy Efficiency Initiative

As the City of Gainesville's local, community-owned utility, Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) is committed to environmental stewardship. GRU has made the following commitments to the community:

- We will operate our utility systems in an environmentally responsible manner;
- We will adhere to environmental laws, regulations and standards;
- We will promote wise use of energy and water;
- We will communicate in a timely and effective manner with our customers and community about environmental issues.

To that end, GRU is at the forefront regarding energy conservation and has implemented a variety of programs to assist and encourage customers to make energy efficiency upgrades to their homes and businesses.

Low Income Energy Efficiency Program (LEEP)

The Low Income Energy Efficiency Program (LEEP) assists low-income (HUD guidelines) GRU customers in upgrading their homes with energy efficiency measures to reduce energy use, improve comfort and save money. This program was implemented to address the overwhelming reality that low-income customers pay a disproportionate amount of their income on energy costs, and LEEP helps these customers reduce energy use and ultimately help hold down energy costs for years to come. LEEP uses a "system" approach to improving energy efficiency in low-income households. Eligible participants work with GRU to determine the improvements that best suit their home and provide the most energy efficiency for the least cost. GRU spends an average of \$2,800 per home to make energy efficiency improvements.

According to research from the Consortium for Energy Efficiency (CEE), one of the most cost effective ways to improve energy efficiency is by making changes to an entire system rather than taking a piecemeal approach. All energy efficiency improvements will be implemented to the participant's home based on the most effective measure for the least cost. Improvements covered by this program may include:

- Replace central air conditioning and heating systems;
- Servicing central air conditioning systems;
- Replacement of room air conditioners with high efficiency systems;
- Duct leak repair;
- Install additional installation;
- Replace water heater;
- Install a programmable thermostat.

Currently LEEP is limited to the first 114 participants that apply and meet the program guidelines. Since the program's inception, GRU has spent nearly \$500,000. \$1.1 million is being requested to continue this innovative program and improve more low-income customer homes at a faster rate. This will not only improve their quality of life and

provide a direct economic benefit to low-income citizens but will also allow Gainesville to reduce its carbon footprint through energy savings.

Public Transportation Enhancement Initiative

RTS Administration, Operations and Maintenance Facility Expansion

The City of Gainesville Regional Transit System (RTS) provides public transit service to the City of Gainesville and the adjacent areas of Alachua County. The RTS service area is approximately 75 square miles with a total of 45 fixed routes, including 10 University of Florida (UF) campus shuttles. RTS benefits from a highly successful partnership with UF, providing the community with more than 8.9 million passenger trips in FY 2007 and an average of 45,000 weekday trips. RTS continues to play a key role in building successful partnerships within the community and is committed to providing a safe, courteous and reliable transportation alternative.

Replacement Buses

The City is requesting \$20 million in Federal assistance for replacement buses. RTS currently operates 50 buses eligible for retirement, with average fleet age of 15.2 years and annual maintenance cost of approximately \$45,000 per bus (\$2,250,000 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.

Water Quality Initiative

Paynes Prairie Sheetflow Restoration

The City of Gainesville is requesting \$2 million in funding for a water quality / surface water resource improvement and protection project. The Paynes Prairie Sheetflow Restoration project will restore 1,300 ac of wetlands and improve water quality in Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park, assist in meeting a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), improve water quality and protect the Floridan aquifer, and provide beneficial reuse of 7.5 mgd of reclaimed water. The Paynes Prairie Sheetflow Restoration project is included as a priority in the St. Johns River Water Management District Orange Creek Basin, State Funding Initiative.

The request is 58% of the \$3.5 million estimated construction cost of Phase I, II, and III, and 9% of the \$23 million total project costs. The requested funding will be used as cost-share funding in conjunction with local funding and other funding sources. The funding would help to pay for the construction of upgrades to the Main Street Water Reclamation Facility, Sweetwater Branch Sediment and Trash Removal and Flow Diversion Structure, and Restoration and backfilling of the Sweetwater Canal that connects Sweetwater Branch to Alachua Sink.

Education Initiative

The City of Gainesville is committed to partnering with the School Board of Alachua County, the United Way of North Central Florida, and other local agencies and jurisdictions to achieve the goal of improving the education and well being of our citizens. This commitment has been formalized via strategic initiatives that are included in the City of Gainesville's FY2010 City Commission Strategic Plan. Among other things, the strategic plan includes initiatives aimed towards:

- Analyzing the availability and accessibility of youth programs and identifying a role for city government; and
- Increasing involvement of the city in improving the quality of city schools.

Additionally, the citizens of Alachua County have proven their continued commitment to education by approving a county-wide referendum to add one mill to their ad valorem tax that will be dedicated the school board operating expenses that have been reduced due to state and federal budget cuts. The increase will be implemented July 1, 2009 and end four years later on June 30, 2013. Funding will be directed towards expenses including: providing school nurses; maintaining elementary music and art programs, middle school band programs, school library programs, elementary guidance programs, and academic/career/technical magnet programs; and updating classroom technology. It is expected that the one mill increase will generate approximately \$13 million.

Elementary and Secondary Education Enhancements

The City of Gainesville is seeking funding to develop and implement programs that address the following issues:

- The Root Cause Intervention Program which focuses on early childhood education and development;
- High dropout rate and low graduation rate of students in urban schools;
- Entrepreneurial education for high school students with a focus on at-risk students; and
- Education initiatives aimed at preparing students for comprehensive exams such as the FCAT and alternative education to assist students and adults taking the General Educational Development (GED) test.

An appropriate funding level will be determined following discussions with various potential partners including: the School Board of Alachua County, FloridaWorks, Santa Fe College, Alachua County, and other community based partners.

Non-Appropriation Issues

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. However, there have been minimal actions taken to clean up the site or to prevent the contamination from reaching the City's wellfield.

Investigations that have been completed since 2001 have documented significant contamination in the groundwater below the site, including the Floridan Aquifer, which is the water supply for the City's wellfield located only 2 miles downstream of the site. 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 recommended that immediate actions be taken to contain the contamination in the Floridan Aquifer below the Koppers site to prevent it from potentially reaching the City's wellfield.

The City is also concerned over contamination of surface soils with dioxin and arsenic at the site. The site is located in a residential area which presents concerns for neighboring residents, and in addition, the site could be redeveloped for residential use at a future date. The soil at the site should be cleaned up to residential standards.

It is our understanding that EPA is in the process of evaluating alternatives for cleaning up the site in anticipation of developing a Record of Decision for the final cleanup plan for the site.

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

1. Both immediate and long-term actions are taken to contain the contamination in the Floridan Aquifer below the Koppers site and protect the City Wellfield; and
2. The Cabot/Koppers Superfund site is properly cleaned up in a timely manner so that the City's water supply is protected, and soil is cleaned up to residential standards.