



FEDERAL ADVOCACY PRESENTATION FOR



BIG FIRM CAPABILITY • SMALL FIRM ATTENTION • RESULTS YOU DESERVE

WHO WE ARE

- Founded in 1990, VSA is a bipartisan, full-service Federal affairs firm.
- VSA has broad experience in representing municipal governments and in working with the Florida Congressional delegation.
- VSA has 50 employees with hundreds of years of government experience and a vast network of contacts on Capitol Hill and in the federal agencies.
- When you hire VSA, you have access to the entire firm.
- The team in the proposal has experience working with the City of Gainesville and an expertise in transportation, infrastructure, and broadband.



OUR EXPERTS TO SERVE GAINESVILLE

Harry Glenn, Vice President, Team Lead

- 34 years of House experience, more than 40 years of experience in working with the Florida delegation, and four years of experience working with the City of Gainesville.

Steve Palmer, Vice President

- VSA's transportation and infrastructure lead with deep experience in working with, and securing funding for transit agencies large and small.

John Fuller, Counsel

- VSA's lead on telecommunications and broadband issues. Deep experience in working with the FCC and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

David Haines, Director of Government Relations

- In his seven years at VSA, David has worked with municipal clients on policy and funding issues ranging from housing and community development, to homelessness and public safety.

Will Smith, Manager of Government Relations

- Has worked with the City of Gainesville throughout his two years at VSA, is a firm lead on COVID relief policy and funding issues as well as the writer and editor of the weekly newsletter for municipal leaders and other special issue papers.



An EXPANDED TEAM TO MEET YOUR NEEDS

- We know that transit, transportation, and broadband services are among the Commission and the City's priorities.
- We have expanded our team for the City to meet these needs.
- We also know that Congress later this year will finish work on a broad new infrastructure bill and we want to be able to help the city respond to new opportunities.



VSA Commitment to Gainesville

- Continue to provide comprehensive federal advocacy services.
- An understanding of the special needs of municipal clients.
- An ability to cover the full range of issues that are of interest to the City.
- Continue our regular written, virtual, and in person communications with the City.
- Understand your priorities and making them our own.
- Continue to seek Federal funding opportunities.
- Accountability and results delivered in a professional manner.



OUR WORK WITH THE CITY

- We have engaged energetically with your Mayor, Commissioners, and staff.
- We have raised the City's visibility with the Congressional delegation and Federal Agencies.
- We have provided nonstop support throughout the COVID pandemic.
- We have partnered with other Gainesville area interests.
- We have made your issues our issues and continuously look for ways to open doors for the City.



- 1. How will your firm prepare our City Commission for the upcoming Federal Legislative Session?



- Prior to the COVID pandemic, we made regular trips to Gainesville to meet with the Mayor, Commissioners, and staff.
- We have hosted trips to Washington by the Mayor, four Commissioners, and two City Managers.
- We have participated in Commission meetings and Workshops.
- We have regular calls with City and GRU staff.
- We constantly update the City of legislative and regulatory issues that may impact your Federal agenda.





2021 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Expand COVID-19 Relief

- Expand COVID-19 supplemental relief assistance to include cities with populations less than 500,000 that did not receive previous direct CARES Act funding.
- Streamline and expedite the FEMA Public Assistance Program reimbursement process for both natural disasters and COVID-19 expenditures.

Build a Sustainable Infrastructure

- Support FEMA, HUD and other federal disaster preparation and recovery programs that provide for climate resiliency and flood mitigation projects.
- Support timely reauthorization of FAST Act transportation funding, FTA, and other opportunities to augment no-lo emission efforts and expand bicycle/pedestrian facilities.
- Encourage expansion of FCC broadband programs to include underserved urban areas.
- Increase options for pilot programs to expand carbon-neutral and renewable energy sources.
- Support funding for water infrastructure and other zero waste efforts.
- Allow EPA to establish science-based PFAS drinking water criteria using existing authorities.
- Expand opportunities to develop artificial intelligence (AI), smart infrastructure, crowd analytics, and other technology projects to enhance livability, workability, and sustainability.

Create More Job Opportunities

- Determine best use in redevelopment of local US Department of Labor Job Corps site.
- Position the expansion of new job training opportunities for a post-COVID world via partnership with other stakeholders and prospective assistance from US Commerce's EDA.
- Update the federal Opportunity Zone program to better encourage private investment in underserved areas of the City.

Address Affordable Housing, Homelessness, Public Health, & Food Security

- Continue funding for CDBG, HOME, and other programs while promoting equity in housing.
- Prevent homelessness through furtherance of the ESG grant program for local CoC work.
- Enhance public health through support of our Community Resource Paramedicine Program.
- Secure funding to improve access, justice, and sustainability in our local food system via Healthy Corner Store initiatives, food workforce development, and a food hub establishment.

Promote Public Safety and Reduce Violence

- Ensure sufficient federal funding streams are in place and appropriations are directly made locally for various emergency services, mental health, and violence prevention needs.
- Enhance JAG Byrne Grant funding, especially for technological advancement and provide funds for additional training on racial and gender bias, community policing, and de-escalation.



- 2. How would you or your firm ensure the City Commission will be updated on breaking issues on programs and services that may impact the community?



Glenn, Harry

From: Smith, Will
Sent: Friday, May 14, 2021 5:01 PM
To: VSA/TIG/CDI Distribution List
Subject: 5.14.21 Municipal Update



May 14th, 2021: Municipal Update

1. Treasury Releases ARP Guidance
2. Homeowner Assistance Fund

Treasury Issues American Rescue Plan Guidance

On May 10, the U.S. Treasury Department released its interim final rule on the use of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act's State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). This rule will govern the allocation of \$350 billion that ARP provided to states, counties, cities, and tribal and territorial governments.

In a series of calls and briefing this week, Treasury has emphasized the much needed relief is intended to:

- Support urgent COVID-19 response efforts to continue to decrease spread of the virus and bring the pandemic under control
- Replace lost revenue for eligible state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments to strengthen support for vital public services and help retain jobs
- Support immediate economic stabilization for households and businesses
- Address systemic public health and economic challenges that have contributed to the inequal impact of the pandemic

According to the statement put out by Treasury, "The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds provide substantial flexibility for each government to meet local needs—including support for households, small businesses, impacted industries, essential workers, and the communities hardest hit by the crisis. These funds can also be used to make necessary investments in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure."

The rule allows recipient governments to use the money in the following ways:

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Glenn, Harry

From: Smith, Will
Sent: Friday, May 21, 2021 4:51 PM
To: VSA/TIG/CDI Distribution List
Subject: 5.21.21 Municipal Update



May 21, 2021: Municipal Update

1. Infrastructure Update
2. Distribution of American Rescue Plan Funds Continues
3. HHS Distributes \$3 billion in American Rescue Plan SAMHSA Block Grants
4. FEMA Notice of Funding Opportunity- Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program

Infrastructure Update

Negotiations continued this week between Senate Republicans and the White House over a widely anticipated infrastructure package. A group of Republican Senators led by Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) met with President Biden earlier this week, and today, the White House responded to Republicans with a \$1.7 trillion counteroffer, which is about \$550 billion less than the Administration's original proposal.

A memo sent to Sen. Capito and other Senate Republicans and also released by the White House indicate that the Administration is willing to shift spending on manufacturing, supply chains, small business, and research and development to other pieces of legislation being considered by Congress.

Compared with the Administration's original \$2.25 trillion "American Jobs Plan," spending requests on roads, bridges, other transportation infrastructure projects, and broadband were trimmed.

The memo, however, also suggested that to find agreement Republicans would need to come closer to the President's position on power sector investment and tax credits, environmental remediation investments, workforce development and training, investments in "care infrastructure", resiliency investments, critical transportation infrastructure, and the elimination of lead pipes, among others items.

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Glenn, Harry

From: Smith, Will
Sent: Friday, July 2, 2021 3:32 PM
To: VSA/TIG/CDI Distribution List
Subject: 7.2.21 Municipal Update



July 2nd, 2021: Municipal Update

CDC Eviction Moratorium and Housing Update

The Supreme Court earlier this week left in place the CDC's COVID-19 public health eviction moratorium. While the ban had previously struck down by lower courts, the 5-4 decision means the current moratorium, extended on June 24th by CDC Director Rochelle Walensky, will extend until its expiration on July 31st.

In a brief opinion, the justices indicated they were leaving the ban on evictions in place because it is due to end in a month and "because those few weeks will allow for additional and more orderly distribution of the congressionally appropriated rental assistance funds." This is notable as the Biden Administration and CDC have indicated there will be no further extensions beyond July 31st, and any extension seems unlikely to withstand a similar legal challenge before the Court.

Separately, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) has announced [more measures](#) to help homeowners with FHA-insured mortgages who are struggling financially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures are intended to provide additional, immediate relief while also expanding outreach and home retention options for struggling homeowners.

FHA is extending its foreclosure and eviction moratoria for all FHA-insured single family mortgages, except vacant or abandoned properties, through July 31, 2021. The agency is also continuing its extension of the deadline for first legal action and reasonable diligence timeframes for 180 days after July 31, 2021, to provide servicers with the additional time needed to focus their work on assisting distressed homeowners. This extension excludes vacant or abandoned properties.

FHA also announced it is extending the time period for homeowners to start new forbearance plans to September 30, 2021. Homeowners who have not previously been in COVID-19 forbearance can request this pause or reduction in mortgage payments. The COVID-19 Forbearance for homeowners who newly request forbearance assistance between July 1, 2021, and September 30, 2021, is for six months. For homeowners who received a forbearance from their mortgage servicer between July 1, 2020, and September 30, 2020, FHA is providing one additional three-month

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Glenn, Harry

From: Smith, Will
Sent: Friday, June 25, 2021 5:03 PM
To: VSA/TIG/CDI Distribution List
Subject: 6.25.21 Municipal Update



June 25th, 2021: Municipal Update

1. Infrastructure Agreement Update
2. Bipartisan Agreement Announced on Police Reform
3. HUD to Reinstate Disparate Impact Rule
4. Federal Reserve Extends PPPFL for Last Time

Infrastructure Agreement Update

Yesterday, President Biden and a group of 10 Senators announced they had reached a deal on bipartisan infrastructure legislation. While a promising development, the plan still faces serious hurdles before it can become law.

The framework includes \$312 billion in overall transportation funding, including \$109 billion for roads, bridges, and other major projects; \$66 billion for passenger and freight rail; \$49 billion for public transit; \$11 billion for rail safety improvements; and \$15 billion for electric vehicle infrastructure, including electric buses and transit. The transportation portion also includes \$25 billion for airports and \$16 billion for ports and waterways.

The proposal also includes \$65 billion for broadband investment. According to the Biden Administration, the framework is intended to "Connect every American to reliable high-speed internet, just as the federal government made a historic effort to provide electricity to every American nearly one hundred years ago. The Framework will also drive down prices for internet service and close the digital divide." This money includes \$20 billion from "repurposed" broadband funding from previous allocations, with an additional \$65 billion from spectrum auction proceeds also intended to support the funding of this section.

While the energy and environmental provisions in the bill did not go as far as earlier proposals put forward by the Administration, the package does contain \$55 billion to eliminate the nation's lead service lines and pipes and deliver clean drinking water to up to ten million American families and more than 400,000 schools and child care facilities that currently don't have it, according to the President. The deal proposes \$73 billion in to upgrade power infrastructure, including by building thousands of miles of new, resilient transmission lines to facilitate the expansion of renewable

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Broadband Provisions The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021



- Section 904. Benefit for Broadband Service During Emergency Period Relating to COVID-19
- Creates the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program
 - Subsidizes broadband service for eligible households—defined as those households that suffered income loss during the pandemic or meet other need-based criteria specified in the act.
- The program will reimburse participating broadband providers
 - FCC is to automatically approve for participation any broadband provider
 - That has an established program as of April 1, 2020
 - Is widely available
 - Offers internet service offerings to eligible households
 - Maintains verification processes that are sufficient to avoid fraud, waste, and abuse.



- The FCC may reimburse providers up to \$50 for service to each eligible household to offset the cost of providing standard rate internet service—defined as a participating provider's monthly retail rate for service as of December 1, 2020 (excluding taxes and government fees)
- The FCC may also reimburse costs of providing a computer or tablet to eligible households if needed to access the internet
- There is no monthly subscription cost to participating households if the standard rate is less than the reimbursement rate.
- Providers may charge subscribers the difference in cases where the standard rate is greater.
- Congress appropriated \$3.2 billion to fund the program, which remains available until expended.
- The program expires six months after the Secretary of Health and Human Services terminates the COVID 19 public health emergency.
- The emergency broadband benefit is separate from the existing FCC Lifeline.
- The act required the FCC to promulgate implementing regulations by February 25, 2021.



National Telecommunications and Information Administration

- NTIA is the executive branch agency that is principally responsible for advising the President on telecommunications and information policy issues.
- A focus of the agency's programs and policymaking is expanding U.S. broadband internet access and adoption.
- NTIA administers the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), an approximately \$4 billion grant program focused on deploying broadband infrastructure, enhancing and expanding public computer centers, and encouraging the sustainable adoption of broadband service.
- NTIA operates the BroadbandUSA program, which provides information and technical assistance to local and state governments, industry, and nonprofits that seek to enhance broadband connectivity and promote digital inclusion.



- Section 905. Grants for Broadband Connectivity
- Broadband Infrastructure Deployment
- \$300 million to implement a broadband infrastructure deployment program
- Grants are to be awarded on a competitive basis to covered partnerships for covered broadband projects.
- A "covered partnership" means "a partnership between
 - (A) a state, or 1 or more political subdivisions of a state; and
 - (B) a provider of fixed broadband service."
- A "covered broadband project" means "a competitively and technologically neutral project for the deployment of fixed broadband service that provides qualifying broadband service in an eligible service area."



- Priority must be given to applications for covered broadband projects as follows, in decreasing order of priority:
 - covered broadband projects designed to provide broadband service to the greatest number of households in an eligible service area;
 - covered broadband projects designed to provide broadband service in an eligible service area that is wholly within any area other than—
 - (i) a county, city, or town that has a population of more than 50,000 inhabitants; and
 - (ii) the unincorporated area contiguous and adjacent to a city or town described in clause (i);
 - covered broadband projects that are the most cost effective, prioritizing projects in areas that are the most rural;
 - covered broadband projects designed to provide broadband service with a download speed of not less than 100 megabits per second and an upload speed of not less than 20 megabits per second; and
 - any other covered broadband project that meets the requirements.



- 3. Please describe your understanding of the City's Equality and Inclusion initiative and how your firm is prepared to assist the City of Gainesville in the implementation of this Strategic Initiative.



- We have spent considerable time meeting with your Commissioners and staff to discuss the City's commitment to equity and inclusion:
 - Responding to the needs of underserved sections of the City
 - Transportation
 - Food
 - Affordable housing/rental assistance
 - Affordable and high-quality broadband service
 - Job training
 - Access to medical care



4. How will you or your firm coordinate and communicate the City's Federal Legislative priorities with the other priorities (University of Florida, Gainesville Chamber of Commerce, Alachua County Board of County Commissioners, Career Source and Santa Fe College) coming from Alachua County?



- 5. How will you or your firm coordinate or communicate the City priorities among other Florida cities or lobbyists who represent other Florida communities?



- 6. Please describe how you or your firm is prepared to assist the City of Gainesville and its implementation of the Strategic Plan in FY21/FY22.



Thank you.

