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Regional Transit System Fall 1998 Service Adjustments

The Fall 1998 Service Adjustment will initiate service enhancements made possible by funds to be included in the University of Florida (UF) Campus Development Agreement. A settlement agreement should be concluded soon among the City of Gainesville, Alachua County, and the State University System/Board of Regents on behalf of UF which allocates state funds to transit enhancements serving the UF campus. These enhancements consist of increases in frequency on the following bus routes serving the UF campus: Route 9: Lexington Parke via S.W. 23rd Terrace, Route 12: Campus Club via Archer Road, Route 13: Gainesville Mall-Florida Job Services via West 13th Street and Shands, Route 16: Sugar Hill-Shands via South 16th Avenue, and Route 20: Oaks Mall-Shands via S.W. 20th Avenue.

The Fall 1998 Semester will also mark the implementation of the student transportation fee by UF Student Government. UF students will have unlimited access to the bus system through their valid student identification (ID), financed by a transportation fee as part of their Activities and Services Fees.

Express bus service will be implemented from the Oaks Mall to the UF campus. This service is being funded by a grant from the Florida Department of Transportation with matching funds provided by the UF. Any faculty, staff member, or UF student will be able to ride this service for free with a valid ID. All other passengers will pay the regular fare.

The Summer 1998 Service Adjustment implemented enhanced Saturday service on all routes. All routes now operate a minimum of one-hour frequency on Saturdays. Because so much of our ridership is dependent on the UF, we are recommending that Saturday service be extended to all days on which the University of Florida is on official break. For the Fall Semester, Saturday service will operate on all weekdays from December 21 through December 31, 1998. A calendar showing operating days and service levels will be provided in the bus schedule book as well as on the individual route descriptions. We will also post notices in the buses to alert the passengers to the UF break service levels.

We will recommend enhancements to increase frequency of buses from one hour to every half hour on Route 1 (Archer Road) and Route 75 (Tower Road) once Alachua County funding is secured for FY 1999.

A public hearing on the proposed Fall 1998 Service Adjustment was held at the Regional Transit System (RTS) Citizen's Advisory Board meeting on June 24, 1998. Because no major routing changes are being proposed, only increases in frequency, this service adjustment does not meet the threshold for a formal public hearing. However, staff felt that the public should still have the opportunity to comment on these proposed service adjustments at a public hearing. Two members of the public attended the public hearing. Within budget constraints the comments of the public were incorporated into the following proposed service adjustments.

Service on UF campus shuttle, which is operated under contract with the UF, will remain the same with nine buses serving four routes on campus.

The proposed service adjustments are as follows:

Route 1: Veteran's Memorial Park-Shands via Archer Road. No changes. If additional Alachua County funding is secured, this route will operate on half hour frequencies during peak hours. On the UF Campus, this route will go north on North/South Drive and will return south on Center Drive to Archer Road.

Route 2: Kennedy Homes-Robinson Heights. No changes.

Route 4: Shands - Downtown. No changes.

Route 5: Oaks Mall - Downtown via University Ave. No changes.

Route 6: Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) - Downtown. Only one minor change, a diversion of the route south on N.W. 43rd Street, dropping N.W. 8th Avenue and N.W. 34th Street. segments, and continue south to Newberry Road. No changes in frequency on weekdays and Saturday/Holidays.

Route 7: Downtown - Eastwood Meadows. No changes.

Route 8: Pine Ridge-Sugar Hill via N.W. 13th Street. No Changes.

Route 9: Lexington Parke via S.W. 23rd Terrace. This route will operate every 15 minutes during peak hours (7:00 - 10:30 a.m., 2:00- 6:00 p.m.) and every 20 minutes off-peak hours. No changes on Saturday/Holiday service. This route will not operate on Center Drive (Shands), it will go on North/South Drive only.

Route 10: Downtown - SFCC. No changes.

Route 11: Eastwood Meadows via University Ave. No changes.

Route 12: Campus Club. This route will operate every 15 minutes during peak hours and every 20 minutes off peak. The only change to this route will be a new pattern on the UF Campus which includes using North/South Drive north to Museum Road going east, to North Newell Drive and turning on Center Drive back to Museum Road, then back to North/South Drive, instead of using Center Drive.

Route 13: Job Services - S.W. 13th Street. This route will operate every 15 minutes during peak hours and every 20 minutes off peak. This route will operate on the south part of the route from Shands to Job Services. Changes include the diversion of the route on S.W. 13th Street, turning left on Museum Road and going south on Newell Drive to Archer Road then using S.W. 16th Street to go to S.W. 16th Avenue.

Route 15: Downtown Plaza - Gainesville Mall. No changes.

Route 16: Sugar Hill to Shands via S.E./S.W. 16th Avenue. Changes include a diversion of the route going south on Newell Drive to Archer Road instead of going on Center Drive. No changes in frequencies.

Route 20: Oaks Mall-Shands via 20th Avenue. This route will operate every 15 minutes during peak hours and every 30 minutes off-peak hours. Changes include the diversion of the route on Museum Road, going north on Newell Drive and turning on Center Drive to Museum Road, instead of going on Center Drive and North/South Drive.

Route 24: Downtown - Job Corps. No changes.

Route 39: Downtown - Gainesville mall via N.W. 6th Street. Changes include an extension of the route on N.W. 6th Street going north to N.W. 45th Avenue and turning left on N.W. 13th Street, instead of going on N.W. 39th Avenue. No changes on Saturday/Holiday service.

Route 75: Veterans' Memorial Park-Oaks Mall via S.W. 75th Street. No changes on Saturday/Holiday service. In order to meet on time performance necessary for the pulse system, changes on this route include a deviation on Tower Oaks going on S.W. 20th/24th Avenue instead of going on S.W. 19th Place and S.W. 19th Court. If additional Alachua County funding is secured, this route will operate on half-hour frequency during peak hours.

Route 100: UF-Oaks Mall Express. New service operating from the Oaks Mall to the UF Campus during peak hours only.

ADA Complementary Paratransit Service will be operated under contract with the Coordinated Transportation System, Inc. (a not for profit corporation) which is the Community Transportation Coordinator as designated by the Alachua County Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged and the Gainesville Area Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization under Chapter 427, Florida Statutes.

The costs for these Fall service adjustments are already accounted for in RTS's proposed budget for FY 1999. FY 1998 Fall service adjustment related costs will be included on the next amendatory budget ordinance.

The City Commission hear a presentation by staff and approve the 1998 Fall Service Adjustments, effective Monday, August 17, 1998.