



Legislation Text

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Homelessness and the Downtown Community (B)

This presentation provides the City Commission with recommendations to address concerns regarding the homeless in the downtown area.

The City of Gainesville has taken several significant steps to address homelessness in our community. Less than a year ago, the City Commission approved the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness (GRACE). This plan was developed over nine months with participation from over 200 community residents, agencies and businesses. Following approval of this plan, the City Commission approved and funded the new Office On Homelessness (OOH) within the Alachua County Housing Authority.

In considering recommendations to address the homeless in the downtown area, staff has met with numerous business owners, residents and non-profit service providers. All recommendations have been coordinated with the OOH, the agency recently funded by the City and County to coordinate implementation of GRACE. The Implementation Committee will be briefed on November 9, 2006. Committee recommendations will be presented for consideration by the City Commission.

Staff recommendations include:

- 1) Establishing a day time uniformed security and social services team for the downtown area.
- 2) Proceeding with the RFP for a one-stop service center, located outside the downtown area, which emphasizes on a collaborative, outcome-based approach.
- 3) Conducting a review of pertinent city ordinances, zoning categories and current enforcement approaches.
- 4) Initiating discussions with downtown services providers regarding phased re-alignment of current services to encourage utilization of the one-stop service center by clients.

Staff will explore funding options for the security-social services team and bring recommendations to the Commission. Funding for the one-stop service center has been budgeted. There are no additional costs associated with the remaining recommendations at this time.

The City Commission approve the concepts outlined in the presentation: 1) Authorize staff to develop a Security-Services team proposal for the downtown area, including funding options; 2) Authorize the City Attorney to work with staff to review city ordinances, land use/zoning categories and enforcement approaches and bring recommendations to the City Commission; and 3) Work with downtown service agencies to discuss phased re-alignment of services to emphasize and encourage use of one-stop day center by clients and providers.