



Legislation Text

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Joint Participation Agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to Fund a Commuter Assistance Program

The City of Gainesville established a commuter assistance program with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) funding last fiscal year. The marketing coordinator has established a marketing program for RTS which has won two awards from the Florida Transit Association - one for the Gator One Card unlimited bus pass promotion and the other for the University of Florida Express promotion. In addition to promoting the use of bus service, the commuter assistance program will also be expanded during the coming year to promote the use of car and van pools. To the extent possible, FDOT funds are used to obtain trade outs with various advertising media. FDOT recently notified staff that an additional \$80,000 is available in commuter assistance funds for the Gainesville area for FY 1999. This amount represents a \$10,000 increase in funding from last fiscal year. Although these funds are allocated by FDOT for the State fiscal year 1998-1999, the funds will remain available to RTS until December 31, 2001. FDOT requires a dollar for dollar match for these funds. In-kind matches are allowed. RTS will use such things as office space, telephones, and free advertising on buses, etc., to match the State funds. Approximately half of FDOT's funds will be used to fund the marketing coordinator position. The other half of the funds will be used for promotion of alternatives to single occupant vehicle commuting. FDOT has indicated that it will continue to allocate funds for commuter assistance in its future work programs, subject to approval by Florida Legislature. Commuter assistance programs are now in existence in most urbanized areas of the State, so there is little likelihood that FDOT funding will be discontinued in the future. In fact, if our program is successful, there is a greater likelihood that FDOT funding will be increased in the future.

Funds are available for matching requirements through the existing operating budget.

The City Commission: 1) approve the resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a Joint Participation Agreement with FDOT to receive grant funds for a commuter assistance project; and 2) authorize the Mayor and the Clerk of the Commission to execute the resolution, subject to approval by the City Attorney as to form and legality.