



Legislation Text

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Transit Service Enhancements in the Southwest Area (B)

Since the Spring Service began on January 10, 2000 several transit routes in the southwest have been experiencing a severe overload in ridership. The Archer Road and SW 23 Terrace stops run 10-15 minute headway. It is primarily these stops that fill up after the first few stops and leave 10-15 passengers behind during the morning peak hours. Other stops also fill up on a daily basis during the morning peak hours. On one hand this is a good problem to have because it indicates that there are greater numbers of people choosing to utilize transit as their transportation choice. If RTS is not responsive to the ridership demands, RTS will lose ridership because these people are opting to use their personal vehicles to drive to their destination after watching bus after bus pass them by. This dramatic increase in demand on transit services has been the result of hundreds of new residential units opening up in the southwest area south of Archer Road and west of SW 23rd Terrace. All of these units are located outside of the City limits.

In addition to the current unmet service demand, there are hundreds of additional residential units that are under construction or are being proposed for construction and many are anticipated being open in the fall of 2000. There has been no coordination with RTS as to how this service demand will be met. In an effort to solve the current problems and to anticipate additional ridership in the fall, RTS has proposed the implementation of a new route and modification of some existing routes that serve this area. The new service will require four additional buses and staff to operate the buses. The annual operating costs are approximately \$500,000 and the capital cost for bus acquisition is approximately \$1,000,000.

The cost of enhanced service in the unincorporated area is approximately \$1,500,000.

The City Commission: 1) endorse staff's proposal to address unmet service demands; and 2) forward the enhanced service proposal to the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO) and the Alachua County Commission for consideration.