



## Legislation Text

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### **Purchase of a Mobile Stage for Cultural and City Programming Use (B)**

**This item involves a request to authorize the purchase of a mobile stage that will serve as a replacement stage for Bo Diddley Community Plaza events during the upcoming Plaza renovations. The stage will also offer a much-needed venue to provide cultural and other programming at locations throughout the City where suitable facilities for this programming are not currently available.**

Starting March 1, 2015 the Bo Diddley Community Plaza will be shut down for renovations and improvements. It is estimated that this work will take place over a one year period. Throughout the year the Plaza is scheduled up to a hundred times for events and programs. The City has identified Lot 10, located between SW 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> Streets, for a temporary location for these events and programs such as the Farmers Market. Although the lot is big enough to serve as a temporary site for events and programs, this does not address programs or events that would require a stage.

The purchase of a mobile stage would provide a suitable performance venue. The “Free Fridays” Concert Series, Downtown Festival and Art Show, Jest Fest, Farmer’s Market and other citizen-produced rental events would be able to utilize this stage during the Bo Diddley Plaza closure. This would also allow the annual programming occurring throughout the year, continuing to help support the downtown businesses.

After the Plaza is re-opened, the mobile stage will offer a much-needed resource to extend cultural programming to other areas of our City such as parks and recreation centers as well as in neighborhoods that are currently culturally underserved. As the City Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department is also the Local Arts Agency for all of Alachua County, outreach programs could also potentially serve other Alachua County communities.

Another major benefit of a mobile stage is that it can go virtually anywhere, be set up in minutes and provide programming throughout our community. It can function not only for cultural programming such as concerts, festivals, theatre and dance but also for community events such as ground breakings, dedications, speaker engagements, children’s programs, employee rallies and public meetings.

In addition to serving as a resource for City programming, mobile stages can be rented to non-profit and profit organizations and other communities thus providing an effective source of revenue while facilitating the needs of current events and encouraging the growth of future events that enrich our citizenry. The cost for a mobile stage purchase is approximately \$145,000 and the useful life expectancy is 20+ years.

\$40,000 is available in the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs 107 Special Projects Fund balance. The remaining funds would come from the unreserved General Fund balance. A portion of the revenues generated from the rental use would go to pay back the special projects account (used for cultural programming and events) and the remaining would be placed in the fund balance.

The City Commission 1) authorize the City Manager to purchase a mobile stage; and 2) authorize the City Manager or designee to execute purchase-related documents, subject to approval by the City Attorney as to form and legality.