



Legislation Text

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Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources Matching Grant for Thomas Center B Facility Improvements (B)

This is a request for the City Commission to authorize the city of Gainesville's Planning and Development staff to apply for, and if awarded, accept a grant from the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources for use in the physical improvements to Thomas Center B. This item also requests that the City Commission authorize a letter of support to be submitted on behalf of the City Commission related to this application.

The state of Florida's Department of State, Division of Historical Resources provides funding between \$50,000-\$500,000 for historic preservation under the Special Category Grants program in order to preserve significant historic structures that promote knowledge and appreciation of Florida history. Originally constructed in 1928, the Thomas Center B has been under city ownership since 1974, and currently houses city offices. Given its historical significance, state of condition and the high volume of citizen traffic to the facility, earlier this year the Thomas Center B was identified as an initial project for efforts related to Citizen Centered Gainesville.

The Planning and Development Department staff is seeking approval to apply for the maximum grant award under the Special Category Grants program of \$500,000, which will allow the team to increase the scope of the Thomas Center B facility improvements beyond the lobby and entryway improvements currently planned. There is a match requirement associated with the Special Category grant; specifically the grantee is required to provide a match of either \$50,000 or 50% of the award request, whichever is the higher amount. The match may be any combination of in-kind services, volunteer labor, donated materials and travel, plus cash-on-hand, which must constitute a minimum of 25% of the total match.

If the grant application is successful, Planning and Development staff will come back to the City Commission to request funding pertaining to the cash match requirement. Any additional match will be met over the two year grant period through in-kind services, staff administration, and donated materials.

As a local government organization, the city of Gainesville is eligible to apply for funding under the grant guidelines.

A 25% cash match is required for this grant. No funding is requested at this time. If the grant is awarded staff will come back to the City Commission to receive further direction on the cash match requirement.

The City Commission: 1) authorize the Planning and Development Services Department to apply for a grant from the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources; and 2) authorize a letter of support from the City

Commission to be submitted with the grant application materials.

Alternative Recommendation

The City Commission do not authorize the Planning and Development Services Department to apply for the grant.