



## City of Gainesville Agenda Item Report

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**File Number: 2023-1077**

**Agenda Date:** November 16, 2023

**Department:** Transportation

**Title: 2023-1077 Resolution for 49 U.S. Code Chapter 53, Section 5310 Grant Applications (B)**

**Department:** Transportation

**Description:** Request for the City Commission to adopt a Resolution required in support of the Regional Transit System application for a Florida Department of Transportation 49 U.S. Code Chapter 53, Section 5310 grant for “Free Fare for Seniors,” and for capital assistance to purchase three replacement vans.

**Fiscal Note:** Funds are allocated in the Department of Transportation, Regional Transit System (RTS) FY 2024 budget to provide the required matches, if either grant is awarded. RTS anticipates requesting approximately \$450,000 for the capital assistance grant application, and will use its capital replacement funds for the required 10% match. For the City-County service grant application, RTS will request \$200,000; the 50% match for the grant is allocated in the FY 2024 RTS budget through contributions from the City and County for the Age Based Fare Free Program.

**Explanation:** The City of Gainesville’s Transportation Department Regional Transit System (RTS) is requesting to submit an application to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for operating and capital assistance. The 5310 grant program is administered by FDOT, providing assistance throughout the state with federal funding to support specific, identified prioritized transportation needs. Grant applications are due December 15, 2023, and FDOT requires that applying agencies’ adopted resolutions are included with the submitted federal grant application packages. If funded, the grants will provide operating assistance to supplement the City-County program, and also much-needed capital assistance to help purchase replacement vans that will be used to provide transportation services for the elderly and handicapped. RTS is requesting that the City Commission adopt the Resolution to complete the application packages.

The City of Gainesville has partnered with Alachua County on the age based fare free program offering free fares for 18-and-under and 65-and-over passengers. In addition, federal funds have been made available through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) via FDOT 49 U.S. Code Chapter 53, Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities grant program; RTS will be submitting an application for

assistance with Section 5310 funds for a “Free Fare for Seniors” grant. This application, if successful, is anticipated to enable extension of the City-County program through supplementing funds for a portion of the senior citizen ridership.

FDOT’s capital assistance grant requirements stipulate that recipients procure and encumber the funds for the vehicle within 30 days of award. Should RTS receive a capital award, a budget amendment will be required within this compressed time span, in order to release RTS’s capital reserves and allowing RTS to encumber the local share for the grant. This budget amendment may fall outside of routine City budget amendment schedules.

**Strategic Connection:**

- Goal 1: Equitable Community
- Goal 2: More Sustainable Community
- Goal 3: A Great Place to Live and Experience
- Goal 4: Resilient Local Economy
- Goal 5: “Best in Class” Neighbor Services

**Recommendation:** The City Commission: 1) adopt a Resolution required in support of the Regional Transit System application for a Florida Department of Transportation 49 U.S. Code Chapter 53, Section 5310 grant for “Free Fare for Seniors,” and for capital assistance to purchase a replacement van; and 2) authorize the City Manager or designee to execute related Public Transportation Grant Agreement(s) with the Florida Department of Transportation, subject to approval as to form and legality by the City Attorney.