

The Planning Corner

by Krys Ochia, Transit Planning Manager



RTS Transit Planning Department to Work with Consultant to Create Plan to Restore Ridership to Pre-COVID Numbers

The RTS Transit Planning Department is working with a consultant to create a plan that will help restore the number of people using public transportation to what it was pre-COVID. The plan is funded by a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The City is currently putting together a list of people from different communities and organizations (i.e. workforce, healthcare, social, educational, and neighborhood organizations) who will help the consultant come up with ideas for how to use public transportation in the future, given changes that have occurred in school, work, and leisure transit trips post Covid-19. The planning process is expected to last approximately 9 months.

The Transit Planning Department is also developing a plan that will help make RTS the best ride in the region. This requires a Public Involvement Plan that must be approved by

the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) or consistent with the approved Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPTO) public participation plan.

The planning process also requires that FDOT, the Regional Workforce Development Board, and the MPO be advised of all public meetings at which the Transit Development Plan (TDP) is presented and discussed, and these entities must be given the opportunity to review and comment on the TDP during the development of the mission, goals, objectives, alternatives, and 10-year implementation program.

Finally, the plan must include an estimation of the community's demand for transit services (10-year annual projections), using the planning tools provided by FDOT or a demand estimation technique approved by FDOT.

Maintenance Tech News

by Jason Garrett, Director of Fleet Management



AssetWorks Chosen As Replacement for RTS Current Fleetnet Software

RTS Maintenance has chosen AssetWorks as the replacement for their current Fleetnet software. AssetWorks will provide additional functionality for both vehicle and facility maintenance, which will increase efficiency and data.

The system will also be partially integrated with Clever Devices, which offers software maintenance, system monitoring, hosting, consulting, database management, field, business intelligence, and onsite support services, to allow real-time service requests to be generated on both vehicles and facilities.

The implementation of AssetWorks will take place through 2024. As part of the implementation, every Fleet Mechanic, Parts Specialist, and Maintenance Worker will be assigned a tablet. This will allow work orders and service requests to be updated at workstations and on-site providing near real-time updates with greater accuracy. RTS Maintenance has also replaced their diagnostic laptops for increased reliability and speed.

NOTICES

RTS CAB Meeting

Wednesday, November 15 @ 5:30 PM  
RTS Administration Building  
34 SE 13th Road  
Gainesville, Florida 32601

RTS Brings Home the Gold at the 2023 FPTA Annual Conference

Henry “Hank” Rodgers  
Fleet Mechanic II  
3rd Place  
Bus Technician of the Year

MV Transportation Paratransit Contractor  
Tier 2, Gold Award

Jason Garrett  
Director of Fleet Management  
Florida Transit Leadership  
Program Alumni

RTS staff in attendance:  
Roy Darnold, April FitzGerald,  
Jason Garrett, Jesus Gomez, Helen Harris,  
Tom Idoyaga and Krys Ochia.



L to R: Todd O’Neal, LPIP (at Lively Technical College); Jason Garrett, Director of Fleet Management; Henry (Hank) Rodgers, 3rd Place Bus Technician of the Year; Clinton Forbes, FPTA Past Chair.



L to R: Randy of MV Transportation Paratransit and Clinton Forbes, FPTA Past Chair.



L to R: Clinton Forbes, FPTA Past Chair, and Jason Garrett, Director of Fleet Management.



L to R: Nancy and David Brandauer of KONTRON app development; Roy Darnold, Operations Manager; April FitzGerald, Marketing and Communications; Tom Idoyaga, Community Services Specialist.



L to R: Jesus Gomez, Director of Transportation, with April FitzGerald and Tom Idoyaga, of the RTS Communications team.





## Employee Spotlight

### Margie Allen: Winning “General Excellence” at the 2023 TEAMS Employee Awards



We are pleased to announce that Margie Allen, the Transit Grants Program Specialist at RTS, will be honored at this year’s 2023 TEAM Employee Awards as an award recipient in the “General

Excellence” category.

Margie Allen is the Transit Grants Program Specialist at RTS. She oversees the entire lifecycle of the state and federal grants from application, through award, and close-out. The 32 multi-year grants currently active represent over \$103 million dollars in funding assistance with a mix of competitive and formula grants. Ms. Allen has written many successful grant applications for RTS including several for Electric Buses, including

a recent one for over \$10.6 million dollars for 12 new buses (\$6.6 million) and a new

Eastside Transfer Station (\$4 million). Ms. Allen consistently holds herself to the highest professional standards and conducts her duties with integrity, honesty and ethics. She always presents herself in a professional and respectful manner with internal and external customers, and does a great job building rapport and positive relationships. Ms. Allen is truly an expert in her field, and uses her attention to detail and technical expertise to carefully guide RTS through the many rules, regulations, and processes of the State and Federal grants management realm.

She willingly shares her knowledge with others to the betterment of the organization as a whole, and goes out of her way to be helpful even if it falls outside the RTS grants area.

In January 2024 when Margie plans to retire, she will have dedicated over 35 years to the City of Gainesville; she hasn’t slowed down at all during this time, and even now is working diligently to train and prepare her replacement to take over the reins and continue her legacy of excellence.

### RTS Fleet Mechanic, Henry “Hank” Rodgers, Wins at FPTA for His Skills, Knowledge and Teamwork



Henry (Hank) Rodgers, 3rd Place, Bus Technician of the Year.

Hank was awarded 3rd Place as Bus Techniciaon of the year at the 2023 FPTA awards ceremony on October 11.

It was an award well deserved as Hank provides exceptional maintenance support to the RTS fleet, contributing to available transit service for the City of Gainesville and surrounding Alachua County. Hank is willing to take on any assigned task and provides clear guidance and insight for his co-workers for any questions asked.

Over his 26-year tenure, Hank has provided a positive atmosphere

and optimistic attitude regardless of the circumstances. He has continually volunteered for any available training, certification, or vendor-provided Q&A. Hank has a vast knowledge of each of the 118 fixed-route buses in the RTS fleet, especially concerning mechanical repair and diagnostics of Cummins, Detroit, ZF, Veith, Allison, Wabco, Dinex, and Bendix.

He has received exemplary ratings on his previous five years of annual evaluations, completed over 1,640 direct hours of labor annually, volunteered for over 300 hours of overtime annually, and provided service during University of Florida events and hurricane emergencies.

Hank is pivotal in his role at RTS, on the Maintenance Team, and is a role model for all up-and-coming employees.

“Hank is pivotal in his role at RTS...”

### 2023 Operator of the Year Nominee



Transit Operator, Kathy Holmes, has been a constant professional over the course of her 25 year career. She has driven approximately 550,000 miles with an average of 25,000 per

year. She always comes to work with a smile planted on her face and has a very professional appearance.

She has a willingness to assist and volunteers to work in other areas of the agency when requested. She is a safe driver and has only had two accidents out of 25 years; which is pretty amazing. There have only been two valid complaints over the course of her 25 year career to-date. She is our #1 driver in seniority!

“She always comes to work with a smile planted on her face and has a very professional appearance.”

## Parking and Planning Vision Zero Highlights

by Karla Rodrigues-Silva, Capital Projects Manager & Vision Zero Coord.  
Debbie Leistner, Planning Manager for Public Works

### Pedestrian Crosswalk and Bus Shelter Upgrade by Grace Marketplace Multimodal Enhancement

When Grace Marketplace opened along NE 39th Ave, the need for enhanced pedestrian and transit facilities was identified and deemed a high priority given the associated access and safety needs of the transitdependent population seeking the facility services.

The Department of Transportation of the City of Gainesville was able to design and fund the construction of upgrades to the bus stop on the south side of the road to make it more inclusive and ADA compliant; a Multiagency effort to enhance safety for all road users resulted in a Pedestrian safe crossing enhancement implemented by FDOT in 2023.

Before



After

