



Grants Grove by Francis Donahue, Transit Grants Program Specialist

RTS Maintenance Team Continues to Successfully Complete Tasks for the DOT and RTS Bus Stop ADA Improvements Projects

The RTS maintenance team continues to successfully complete its tasks for the DOT and RTS bus stop ADA improvements projects around the City and County since September 2024. Projects include updating pedestrian ramps to ADA standards, adding shelter pads, installing new or replacement shelters, and adding boarding and alighting pads or making existing ones wheelchair accessible.

Additional project highlights:

- The grants for these projects were FDOT G2J34 Bus Stop Enhancements, FDOT Pedestrian Amenities at Bus Stop Shelters, and FTA 5307 formula grants from 2021, 2022, and 2023, as well as a third FDOT grant which was administered by the Public Works Department.
- Part of this project was a joint venture between Transportation and Public Works, while a separate sector was internal to RTS.
- As it was imperative to ensure that bus stop wheelchair boarding areas didn't impact storm water drainage structures, which could cause ponding or other overflow water issues caused by rain, this project included both engineering design and construction.
- In addition, RTS was also required to obtain permits from the City, County, and FDOT for the roads they maintain, respectively.
- Work was also performed by the Department of Sustainable Development to obtain bus stop easements, particularly for stops where new shelters were installed.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS COMPLETED:

The Arc of Alachua County on NW 83rd St Near Santa Fe College

This bus stop had a shelter which was originally installed prior to 2000 (possibly early 1990s). The shelter was not accessible to people using mobility devices, resulting in many complaints, and was also not well positioned with respect to the actual bus stop. Making the stop ADA accessible replacing the shelter was a high priority at this location. As a sidewalk was also unavailable, a pedestrian path was included for customers to more effectively access the bus stop platform.



Arbor Park Apartments on SW 16th Avenue (across from the former Winn-Dixie)

This stop was shifted further west to provide buses more room to merge left, and to allow for both front and rear door bus areas to be covered with a continuous 8-foot deep boarding and alighting platform. Not only is providing paved platforms important at stops where significant numbers of passengers alight from the rear door, it additionally future-proofs stops in the case that rear door ramps are implemented for customers using mobility devices.



Downtown curb ramps on and around SE 2nd Ave between SE 3rd St and Main St.

In this area there were over two dozen sidewalk curb ramps which did not meet ADA standards or follow current FDOT guidance for accessibility, which includes accessibility for both wheelchairs and blind pedestrians. The new ramps include channelization to guide blind pedestrians as well as tactile surfaces where the sidewalk meets the road. Many of these ramps are within 50 feet of existing downtown bus stops and form part of the pedestrian network to and from the stops. The collection area around a bus stop is usually considered to be a quarter (0.25) mile, and accessibility barriers can prevent certain customers from using the fixed-route transit system.



Want to subscribe to the DOT newsletter?

To be added to our mailing list, you can join via the RTS apps or email us at RTSNews@gainesvillefl.gov



DRIVER APPRECIATION DAY

March 18

Thank you for all you do!

NOTICES

L RTP Workshop (see pg 3)
Monday, March, 24 @ 5:00 PM-7:00 PM
📍 **Freedom Community Center at Veterans Memorial Park**
[7340 sw 41st place](#)
[Gainesville, FL 32608](#)

RTS CAB Meeting
Wednesday, March 26 @ 5:30 PM
📍 **RTS Administration Building**
[34 SE 13th Road](#)
[Gainesville, Florida 32601](#)

Santa Fe College Spring Arts Festival
Saturday, April 12 & Sunday, April 13
📍 **Santa Fe College Northwest Campus**
[3000 NW 83rd Street](#)
[Gainesville, FL 32606](#)



The Transit Planning Corner

by Kryz Ochia, Transit Planning Manager



Planning Department Projects Enable RTS to Meet FTA and FDOT Funding Rules and Regulations

Transit Route Restoration Plan (TRRP)

The Transit Route Restoration Plan was completed as an FTA grant-funded (Section 5307 of Title 49, United States Code) project that required recipients to demonstrate how to improve and increase transit ridership that was impacted by the pandemic.

Working with relevant community stakeholders and elected officials, the Planning Department coordinated and managed the project with consultants that developed a plan to reimagine current network to benefit service productivity and efficiency.

The goal is to enhance transit ridership by improving transit operation to provide better mobility options for residents and visitors. The plan recommends improvements to RTS routes and services which could be funded and implemented through FDOT-mandated Transit Development Plan (TDP). The report was submitted to FTA on January 27.

Transit Development Plan (TDP) FY 2025-2034

This is the FDOT-required 5-Year Update to RTS' development plan (completed in February 2025) that complies with Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) Rule 14-73.001, commonly called the TDP Rule. The TDP is required by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) as a prerequisite to receiving State Public Transit Block Grant funds. The report represents RTS' planning, development and operational guidance document.

The previous plan was a 10-Year TDP major update that was adopted in October 2019. Due to its proximity, the TRRP provided a foundation upon which to build the new 5-year TDP update. The Planning Department managed the project by working with consultants to obtain input from stakeholders, elected officials, and the riding public. The report outlines actions to be taken by RTS in the next year and sets transit goals for subsequent years.

As a strategic plan, the TDP identifies needs in an unconstrained financial environment and, as a development plan for local transit services, the plan is consistent with community goals, reflects established leadership priorities and integrates the various community characteristics and development patterns that influence decisions and growth. Planning submitted the report to FDOT on February 13.

Fare Equity Study

Per Chapter 4, FTA's Title VI Circular 4702.1B, transit providers who operate 50 or more fixed route vehicles in peak service and are

located in an urbanized area of 200,000 or more people to conduct a fare and service analysis to ensure that transit service is provided in a non-discriminatory manner.

The analysis is conducted when the transit agency engages in a Major Service Change as defined in the agency's service change policy. For RTS this is a change of more than 5% in total Revenue Hours or Miles. Planning completed a report that describes proposed service changes for Summer 2025 because if implemented, they will result in substantial (>5%) changes in routes and span of service. These changes are compared to the level of services offered in Summer 2024. The thrust of the report is to show mitigation measures which will be adopted by the agency, based on identifiable potential disparate impacts.

There are proposed measures to address the potential disproportionate burden due to eliminated and/or reduced service levels. The report will be submitted with RTS' Title VI FY 2025-2028 Plan that is due September 30, 2025. The last Title VI plan was developed and submitted in 2022.

Certification of Ridership Data Collection Technology

Every three years, RTS conducts mandatory passenger sampling to ensure that its ridership data collection tool is providing accurate data. Presently, RTS deploys automatic passenger count technology to collect stop level, and route level ridership data which it reports to the FTA every year as part of a National Transit Data (NTD) report. Reliance on Automatic Passenger Count (APC) tool for ridership information requires confidence that its accuracy largely mimics (at least 95% confidence level) or exceeds that of human counters.

The technology uses beams of light (or temporary pictures) to count entering and exiting passengers. The mandatory sampling requirements for the certification are outlined in FTA Circular 2710.2a_1 sampling procedure for obtaining necessary Fixed Route Motor Bus Operating Data.

The certification requires sampling (long/short, weekday/weekend and day/evening service routes) and manually counting passengers and comparing the data with APC-generated ridership numbers. The variance between the two sets of data must be within acceptable levels for approval by the FTA. Upon submittal (September 2025), the approval will allow RTS to continue to use the APC software to collect ridership data.



Get access to RTS transit data reports at [Go-RTS.com](https://go-rtss.com)

65 and Over 18 and Under Free Fare Bus Card Available for Qualifying Applicants



The 65 and Over 18 and Under program allows eligible customers 18 and under or 65 and over to ride RTS buses during regular service hours without paying a fare.

Applicants can apply [online application](#) or [print out the application](#) and drop off at the [RTS Admin building](#).

A current state issued ID is also required. Bus cards are available in digital and physical formats.

Mobility on Demand



Neighbors in East Gainesville can use the "Mobility on Demand" (MOD) service for free transportation to clinic visits, health screenings and other essential community resources.

The shuttles go door-to-door for passengers who can't walk to an RTS bus stop or need additional support to reach their destinations reliably and affordably.

The Mobility on Demand runs on weekdays from 5:30 a.m.–8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.–8 p.m. Passengers can be transported to any destination within the East Gainesville MOD zone.

Residents can schedule a ride up to seven days in advance using the RTS Connect app, which is available for download on both [Apple](#) and [Android](#) devices. After the ride request is received, an RTS vehicle will pick them up at their home and take them directly to their destination at no cost. Those without access to a smartphone can also schedule rides by calling [352-393-RIDE](tel:352-393-RIDE).

Locations available through Mobility on Demand:

- [UF Health Urgent Care Center](#) (Eastside at 457 SE 20th St.)
- [Florida Department of Health in Alachua County](#) (224 SE 24th St.)
- [Partnership for Strong Families Family Resource Center](#) (1734 SE 2nd Ave.)
- [Cone Park Branch of the Alachua County Library](#) (2801 E University Ave.)

For more information visit www.go-rtss.com or call RTS customer service at [352-334-2600](tel:352-334-2600).

Parking and Planning by Debbie Leistner, Transportation Planning & Parking Manager, Jessica Krauszer Planning Administrative Service Manager for Facilities



The City Welcomes New Parking Enforcement Officer



Parking and Planning has a new employee, Evan Cowie. Evan is joining the parking team as a parking enforcement officer, assisting with the education and enforcement of parking

regulations, contributing to the overall safety of the City's transportation network.

Evan brings years of customer service experience to the team, along with a great attitude and demeanor. We are looking forward to him serving our neighbors well!

Downtown Pay Stations Now Accept Credit Cards



Downtown pay stations now accept credit cards for parking payments, in addition to coins, supplementing the various options available for payment.

Access options: Passport Parking app, website, phone call **352-290-3700**, coins or credit cards at pay stations, and coins in areas with pay by space meters.

Discounted Garage Permit For Employees Of Downtown

Employees of downtown businesses are eligible to purchase a discounted permit for the City's parking garage at 105 SW 3rd St. at \$20/month.

Visit www.gainesvillefl.gov/parking to learn more.

2050
LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)

WHAT IS LRTP?
A Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a federally required document that outlines the region's transportation vision, goals, and investment priorities for a 25-year horizon. The 2050 LRTP will serve as a roadmap for transportation investments, focusing on enhancing mobility safety and maintaining infrastructure for different modes of transportation, such as bikes, pedestrians, transit, and automobiles. It sets priorities for transportation infrastructure projects to support future growth and community transportation needs of all users of Alachua County.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP
Join us to share your insights about transportation in the region

EVENT DETAILS
5 PM - 7 PM
Monday, March 24, 2025

WORKSHOP ADDRESS
7340 SW 41st Place, Gainesville, FL 32608 (Freedom Community Center at Veterans Memorial Park)

POINT OF CONTACT
Anyone wishing to contact the MTPO with comments or questions regarding the 2050 LRTP, Please contact:
Alison Moss, AICP
Transportation Planning Manager
Growth Management
10 SW 2nd Avenue • Gainesville • FL • 32601
Office: 352.491.4574

Share your thoughts on the future of transportation in the region! Contribute your ideas by taking the survey using the QR code or the link below:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/J8CLRF2>

For additional information or to request accessible formats, contact Jacqueline Chung at (352) 374-5275. Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender, religion, disability or family status.

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization
For the Gainesville and Alachua County Area

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

Vision Zero 2025 "Open House" Brings In Abundance of Neighbors

The Vision Zero 2025 Open House was held on February 26 at the historic Thomas Center, and was attended by many of the community, including Mayor Harvery Ward.

The Vision Zero Initiative showcased transportation safety efforts with guest speakers from the City, County and State. Speakers presented current findings and held question and answer sessions for the public.

The focus of the event was to raise awareness of safety issues, trends, solutions, and provided an opportunity for public input

Download the latest Vision Zero project posters

Visit the Vision Zero website



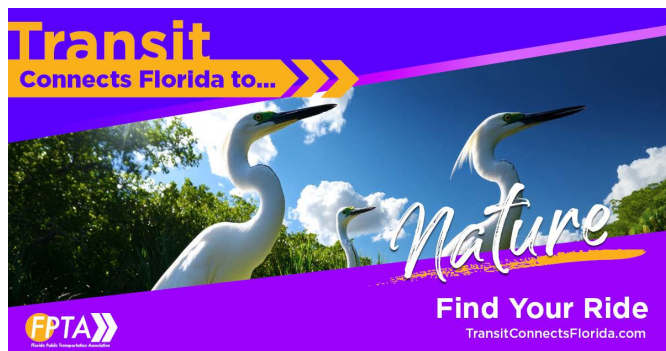
RTS Rundown

FPTA Launches Statewide Transit Educational Campaign



FPTA launches its statewide “Transit Connects Florida” educational campaign in lieu of its **preliminary marketing campaign report**. Research monitored the impact of media types such as video, radio, social media, website, billboard, and many other forms used by FPTA.

RTS will roll out its own version of the campaign to continue to educate the local community of its programs.



RTS Offering Rides to Santa Fe Spring Arts Festival



Experience one of the region's largest art festivals where a diverse mix of artwork from professionals across the globe to students of Santa Fe College converge all in one place.

RTS will provide rides to the event area for attendees. Digital and PDF versions of the bus schedule are available for download at www.Go-RTS.com.

This year's festival will introduce two incredible artists: Alyne Harris, our 2025 featured artist, and Michael Roy, known as Birdcap, our t-shirt artist.

You can enjoy live music, dance, Science, Art and Play zones to get your creative juices flowing and body moving. Take a free train ride to the SF teaching zoo, or grab a bite from the many food trucks available at the scene.

Operations Dispatch

RTS Hosts 2025 Florida Triple Crown State Rodeo

RTS hosted the Florida Triple Crown Rodeo for transit professionals the weekend of February 14-15, 2025.

This year's competition combined the FPTA and RTAP rodeos into a single weekend featuring Florida's best paratransit and fixed route bus operators and maintenance technicians.

The annual event is a joint effort of the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA), the Florida Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP), the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the Florida Association of Coordinated Transit Systems (FACTS).

The Rodeo also offered training opportunities for contestants, as well as skills testing with a written test and on-course driving competition for operators. The maintenance technicians faced similar challenges with a written test and a series of diagnostic module tests.

