

RTS Rundown by Francis Donahue

RTS awarded \$26.4M FTA Low and No Emissions Program grant award for a more energy-efficient fleet



Project Budget:	
Solar canopy design and construction	\$4,265,500
Solar canopy workforce development	\$224,500
19 Hybrid diesel-electric transit buses	\$20,900,000
Hybrid bus workforce development	\$1,100,000
Total Budget	\$26,490,000

Gainesville RTS was awarded \$26.4 million dollars for the solar array canopy construction and hybrid bus purchase project for which RTS applied in spring of 2024. The FTA received 477 eligible project proposals totaling \$9 billion vying for \$1.5 billion of funding. RTS' project was one of 117 selected, and one of only 7 selected in Florida.

Benefits:

- The solar canopy is a 1.2 megawatt solar electric power generating facility which will supplement the power needs of the RTS Maintenance and Admin facilities, while also providing protection against the weather in the employee parking lot.
- The solar canopy, by intercepting sunlight before it reaches the pavement, will make the area around it slightly

cooler, enhancing employee comfort and improving the quality of life of the surrounding community.

- The bus purchase will allow RTS to retire older buses which have exceeded their useful life, and reduce the average fleet age, resulting in less breakdowns and higher reliability.
- Hybrid electric buses have greater fuel efficiency due to regenerative braking. They also emit less pollutants harmful to human health, and create less heat and noise.
- Both components of the project will reduce operating costs over the life of the project.

FAQs:

Why hybrid buses rather than diesel or electric?

In 2023, RTS applied for diesel replacement buses under the Bus & Bus Facilities

Maintenance Tech News

by Jason Garrett, Director of Fleet Management

AssetWorks Fleet Software Integration Running Smoothly

The RTS fleet's new AssetWorks software is integrating smoothly, allowing for more accurate collection of data.

The following projects were also initiated at the same time

- In-servicing 13 new Gillig Low Floor buses
- Completed the core implementation of AssetWorks
- Starting implementation with AssetWorks for Equipment Focus (facilities & bus stops)
- Working with a consultant firm on our Zero-Emission Transition Plan
- Completing a requisition for 2 electric buses
- Two mid-life engine replacements are nearly complete with five more in the pipeline

The Planning Corner

by Krys Ochia, Transit Planning Manager

Transit Planning Welcomes New Recruit



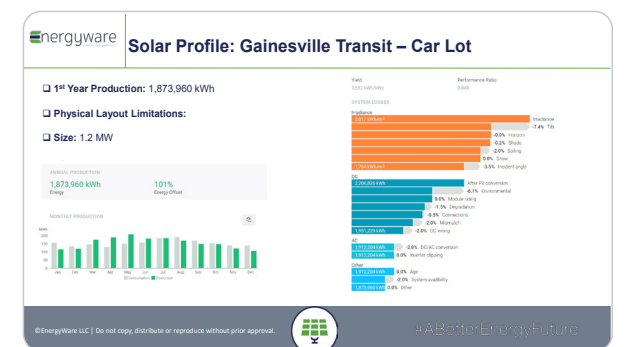
Arielle Hernandez joined the planning department in May as an assistant transit planner. She graduated from the University of Florida with a Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning.

She has worked as a GIS Analyst and for Water Resources, and as an intern for WGI. She was on the Dean's List, and graduated Magna Cum Laud Honors in Spring 2022 as an undergraduate.

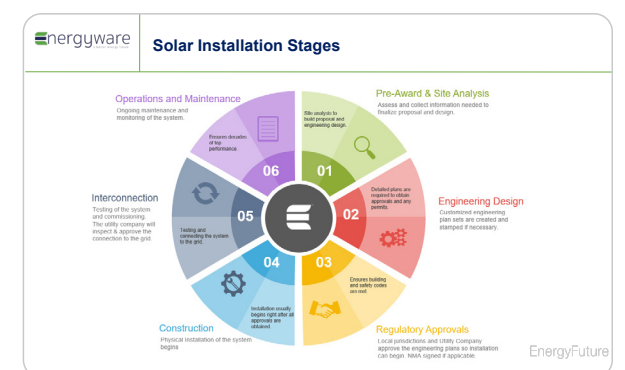
program, but the application was not selected. In 2023, FTA did not select a single competitive grant application for diesel buses for municipal fixed route transit like RTS. For the 2024 grant cycle, FTA requires any applicants for electric buses to have completed a Fleet Electrification Plan (also called a Zero Emissions Transition Plan). RTS is in the process of developing an FEP but does not yet have one completed. Therefore, RTS was not eligible to apply for battery electric buses during this grant cycle.

Can these funds be used for salaries?

These funds come from a competitive grant program for capital funding. This means the purchase of transit vehicles or the construction of new or renovated facilities such as shops and stations. A portion of this grant will go towards workforce training programs because of the use of emerging technologies. This allows workers to keep their jobs through the transition to new technologies and for employers to continue to use a local labor force.



RTS car lot solar profile.



Solar installation stages graph.

THANK YOU!

Giving a BIG 'Thank You' to the RTS team that worked diligently on the FTA "Low and No Emissions Program" grant.

With your open communication, collaboration, and attention to detail, we couldn't have done it without you.

Congratulations!

Jason Garrett

on your promotion to Assistant Director of Transportation, Fleet Operations.

Jason is now formally in charge of RTS Maintenance and the City's Fleet Operations.

Parking and Planning

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

Downtown Parking Changes



You'll soon see changes to the downtown parking environment as approved by the Gainesville City Commission in March to stimulate turnover of high-demand spaces in the heart of downtown and offer less expensive and long-term parking spaces farther away.

Implementation of the changes is underway and should be completed by the end of July. The new rates will become effective this August, with enforcement beginning in September.

Parking options will now include:

- On-street most convenient spaces at a rate of \$0.50/hr. for a two-hour max, spaces a bit farther from the core for \$0.25/hr. with no limit or spaces on the periphery for free;
- Off-street lot parking at \$0.50/hr. with no limit or free and
- Garage parking at \$0.50/hr. with no limit or monthly (\$40) or quarterly (\$100) rates. Employees of downtown businesses may purchase a discounted monthly permit at \$20/month.

New Pay Stations

Six pay stations that accept coins and credit cards will be available for payment, as well as payment through the Passport Parking app (or website or via a phone call). Coin meters will continue to be available in some locations. Text to pay is coming soon!

Neighborhood Zone Permits On Sale Now



Applications for permits for the 2024-2025 program year will be accepted beginning July 15, 2024. Prices are not prorated and nonrefundable. All sales are final.

Annual Grace Period from July 15- August 31

Neighborhood zone permits are not required during this period. Parking enforcement remains in effect for all other city parking rules and regulations during the annual grace period.

Please note: The permit program year runs from August 1st to July 31st. Please allow up to two weeks for review of your application. If you have any questions prior to purchase, please contact Parking Operations at parking@gainesvillefl.gov or 352-334-2569.

Parking Resource Links

[What zone am I in?](#)

[Which permit should I apply for?](#)

[Required documents/proof of residency](#)

[Apply Now](#)

Employee Spotlight



Lisa Brooks,

On December 12, 2022, an RTS Transit Operator had a medical event while driving the bus. After notifying the control center they were not feeling well and would require a relief driver to take over for them, the operator became unresponsive while still in the driver's seat.

Operator Lisa Brooks heard the radio communication while driving her bus, and realized there was a problem with her coworker.

When she approached the area, she pulled the bus she was driving over, went to the other bus driven by the operator having the medical situation. Lisa secured the bus and assisted the driver the best she could by talking to him, keeping him calm and preventing him from accidentally moving the vehicle.

Lisa also addressed the concerns of the passengers that were still on and around the bus. When medical personnel arrived, Lisa confirmed to them that the bus was safely secured and assisted in providing them with as much information as possible.

Once Lisa turned over the situation to an RTS Supervisor and emergency personnel, she promptly returned her bus to in service and took care of the passengers on her route.

Lisa's actions prevented a possible situation of a bus with passengers from moving with an incapacitated driver at the wheel. Also, Lisa comforted her coworker during a serious situation.

Vision Zero

by Karla Rodrigues-Silva, Capital Projects Manager & Vision Zero Coord.
Debbie Leistner, Transportation Planning & Parking Manager

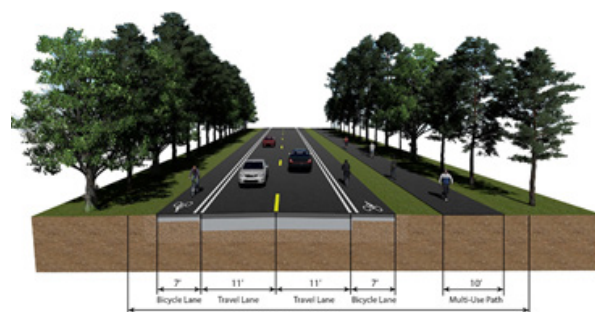
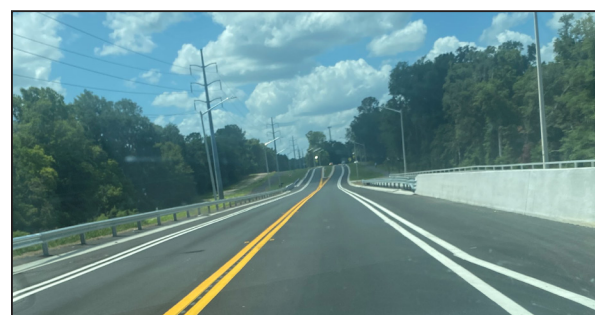
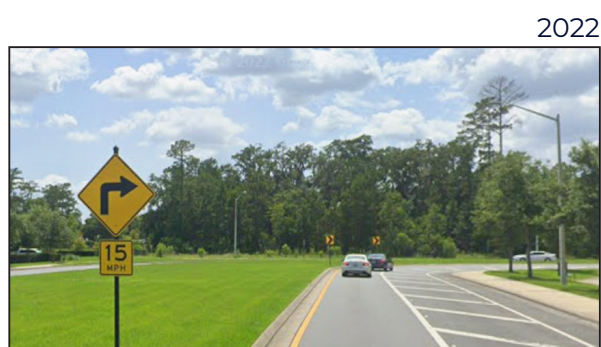
SW 62nd connector complete

The City of Gainesville completed the SW 62nd Boulevard Connector project, opening the 1.1-mile roadway linking the Newberry Road and Oaks Mall area with the Archer Road and Butler Plaza area, improving accessibility, safety, and shaving time off neighborhood commutes.

Funded in large part by a grant from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the \$18.8 million connector was designed as a multi-modal artery. It features wider (11-foot) travel lanes, ten-foot shoulders with seven-foot buffered bicycle lanes on each side, and a 10-foot multi-use path. It also includes the first simple span bridge constructed by the

City of Gainesville, with a 330-foot segment crossing Hogtown Creek.

The connector uses a "Complete Streets" model, aligning with the Vision Zero Policy, enabling safe access for all people who need to use them, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.



DEPARTMENT INFO LINKS

Transit

Provides safe, courteous, equitable, reliable, cost-effective and energy-efficient transportation options.

Transportation Planning

Responsible for all planning activities related to multi-modal transportation infrastructure and services.

Parking

Provides parking options that are safe, convenient and affordable. Our goal is to enhance mobility and access.

Vision Zero Program

Focuses on eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries, while increasing safe and equitable mobility.

Micromobility Program

Consists of a fleet of shared mobility devices, such as e-scooters and bicycles, for short-term rental.

Bike and Pedestrian Program

Focuses on the planning, implementation, and maintenance of policies, programs, and facilities for local bicycle transportation.

NOTICES

RTS CAB Meeting

Wednesday, September 18 @ 5:30 PM
RTS Administration Building
34 SE 13th Road
Gainesville, Florida 32601

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