




CITY OF GAINESVILLE

Office of the City Manager

Memo

To: Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

From: Dan Hoffman, Assistant City Manager 

Date: November 27, 2019

Re: Infrastructure Surtax Uses

To facilitate the discussion regarding potential uses of the proposed infrastructure surtax, staff has developed a list of high priority needs that could be facilitated by such a funding mechanism. Several themes emerged from staff: public safety, transportation and economic opportunity and housing. The following are rough cost estimates based on analogous projects and should only be relied upon to develop a rough order of magnitude. **The following list amounts to \$90m.**

Public Safety – Total Estimate \$25.7m

Due to growth, demand and aging facilities, the City anticipates it will need a significant influx of capital over the next 5-7 years to replace or renovate aging facilities or add new stations. In the case of Gainesville Fire and Rescue (GFR), three current stations were built in the 1960s and one was built in 1976. An additional, temporary, modular station was deployed in the Butler Plaza area to address annexation and growth. Gainesville Police Department (GPD) faces similar challenges related to annexation and growth. Increased demands in the southwest have prompted the need for a SW Annex. Additionally, a new radio system has allowed us to keep pace with current standards, but requires further investment. The projects below are in order of priority:

- Replacement of Fire Station 5: Built in 1965, Station 5 experiences severe flooding and has previously been studied for replacement. The property has severe space limitations making a new station on a new property more desirable. Estimate: \$5.5m
- Southwest Public Safety Annex: Staff has begun discussions with North Florida Regional Medical Center (NFRMC) about the potential co-location of a joint police and fire facility in the southwest. This facility would provide GPD a presence in an area of high growth and would replace GFR station nine. It could also provide

Public Works and Parks and Recreation storage for hard to move equipment in the SW. Estimate: \$11m (depending on partnership with NFRMC)

- Renovation of Fire Station 2: This station has significant plumbing and roof issues that are becoming more difficult/expensive to repair and mitigate. The current structure is also space constrained given the presence of the HAZMAT team. Estimate: \$2.5m
- Relocation and Replacement of Station 3: This station, built in 1960, is the oldest station. It is located in the 8th and Waldo master plan area which is slated for redevelopment. A new station could be located in the area as part of the redevelopment or moved slightly north on Waldo Road where data indicates it would be better positioned. The Station 3 site, as well as the administrative complex, also hosts GFR's training program. This should be factored into the project. Estimate: \$6m
- Radio Redundancy: The new system lacks adequate backup/redundancy capabilities. The Radio Management Board has looked at the issue as well as coverage deficiencies in the unincorporated area. Estimate: \$700k for backup site; County could fund additional towers with its portion.
- Unified Emergency Operations Center: The City and County have had very preliminary discussions regarding the establishment of a Unified Emergency Operations Center. Currently the City operates emergency management functions out of either GPD or Public Works in facilities that could not accommodate a sustained event. Estimate: Unknown

Transportation – Total Estimate \$23.8m

The Department of Mobility will need to replace a significant number of its fleet in the coming years. Traditionally used buses have been purchased. Although this has saved money, it also limits the useful life of the vehicles. No capital replacement plan is currently in place and grant funding is not sufficient to keep up with demand. The City also has aging transportation infrastructure that is not currently addressed through the gas tax. These are also in order of priority:

- Fleet Replacement: In order to implement the Transit Development Plan, additional funds will be needed for not only vehicle replacement but also to acquire the smaller vehicles used in our First Mile/Last Mile service. These funds from the surtax would only be used for vehicles, not operations. Through the surtax we are proposing three new full size buses and three First Mile/Last Mile vehicles annually. This roughly amounts to \$1.8m annually or \$18m over the life of the surtax.
- Eastside Transfer Station: Staff is currently considering a “pop-up” transfer station on the east side of town in order to expedite travel from the east side of town to employment centers on the west. Staff has sought grant funds for a permanent transfer station but have been unsuccessful. Estimate: \$3m

- NE 9th Street Redesign: Staff are proposing taking advantage of the width of NE 9th Street to create a safe multimodal environment and promote Vision Zero goals. This project could also spur redevelopment in the area. Estimate \$1.6m
- NE 14th Street Redesign: In order to support the 8th and Waldo Master Plan, staff has proposed turning NE 14th Street between NE 8th Avenue and NE 12th Ave into a promenade to support events, calm traffic and create a multimodal spine through the master plan area. Estimate: \$1.2m

Economic Opportunity and Housing – Total Estimate \$32.5m

Currently the City dedicates few resources to economic development and one of the primary methods to reduce disparity is by building community wealth through economic opportunity. With the loss of the Job Corp Center and the potential of Opportunity Zones, the City should act to build institutions that will build sustainable equity in Gainesville.

- Housing: Affordable and appropriate housing has been an area of focus for the Commission. Creating housing stock that is safe and provides equal access to opportunities (jobs, education, and amenities) could be built through a surtax set aside. Set aside amount: \$22.5m
- Gainesville Future of Work Center: In partnership with community stakeholders the City can take the lead in building a center that brings together community partners to prepare our residents for the future of work. Automation of many jobs will exacerbate existing disparities and new models are needed. This center, possibly part of the 8th and Waldo Master Plan, could provide training and entrepreneurship support. Estimate: Unknown but begin with a \$10m set aside

Other Needs – Total Estimate \$8m

Existing stormwater infrastructure in the Downtown area does not meet the level of service expectations due to aging and undersized pipes and inlets. Phase I of the project would be to develop a modern flood study of the Downtown area and replace a portion of the central trunk main. The cost is estimated to be \$3m.

Although the renovation of Citizens Field was identified in the early visioning for the Wild Spaces Public Places initiative, there will not be sufficient funding available in the program to completely renovate the facility. The City should, in partnership with the School Board, fully fund the renovation using a combination of Wild Spaces, school system and surtax funds. Estimate \$5m