

City of Gainesville Diversity Work Plan

This work plan should be completed by Directors and Managers with oversight of ten or more employees who do not report directly to a Charter Officer.

Name: Eustache Mine'
Title: Transit Operations Manager

Department: Regional Transit System (RTS)
Date Completed: November 16, 2015

I. Introductory statement describing your department/division.

The City of Gainesville Regional Transit System (RTS) is a mid-sized agency that provides public transit service to the City of Gainesville and the adjacent areas of Alachua County. RTS service area is approximately 80 square miles with a total of 48 fixed routes, including 10 University of Florida (UF) campus shuttles and 7 routes serving Santa Fe College (SF). RTS benefits from a highly successful partnership with UF and SF, providing the community with almost 10.8 million passenger trips in FY2014 and an average of approximately 45,000 regular weekday trips. Although RTS faces unique challenges daily as a result of adapting its service to both students and city residents, RTS continues to play a key role in building successful partnerships within the community and is committed to providing a safe, courteous and reliable transportation alternative to the greater Gainesville area.

The RTS mission is to enhance the quality of life in the community by providing safe, courteous, equitable, reliable, and energy-efficient transportation services.

A. Based on the demographics of your department, list any diversity issues specific or unique to the areas in your span of control.

RTS has a current work force of 296.5 FTE positions (including vacancies). The current work force includes 149 (50%) minorities, 85 (29%) females, 51 (17%) minority females. RTS is unlike other City departments in that its services can be reduced through changes in its service structure rather than a reduction in its workforce.

Of the 296.5 FTE positions, the Operations Department has 230. The makeup of the Operations Department is 280 Transit Operators, 4 Clerks 1 RTS, 1 Staff Specialist, 11 Transit Operations Supervisors, 1 Transit Customer Service Advocate, 1 Transit Safety and Security Officer, 1 Transit Scheduler, 1 Assistant Transit Operations Manager and 1 Operations Manager.

With enhanced services and routes to SF and UF on August 19, 2015, approximately 7,000 service hours have been added to the RTS system. This has increased RTS headcount by 7 employees.

There are no figures to compare employee diversity at RTS with other transit systems in the region, however, to continue to receive grant funding, transit systems must have their Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Title VI, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and Equal Opportunity (EO) programs approved by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and meet those goals.

The demographic information and the 2015 Affirmative Action Plan received from the Affirmative Action Officer was reviewed and found to be accurate and complete.

B. List any barriers or other concerns you have for your entire span of control.

Placement goals - As with other agencies, RTS experiences challenges in finding and retaining quality employees. As openings become available they are posted in areas which allow us to reach wide and varied applicant pools thereby increasing our ability for inclusion.

Minorities and women are appropriately represented in the Operations Division at RTS, making it one of the most diverse divisions in the City.

Recently, 2 females (1AA) and 1 male (AA) were promoted. Another female was recommended for hiring for a professional position. Recently held a job fair at RTS for Transit Operators which yielded a diverse group of applicants being selected.

Budget - Providing diversified staffing for transportation services on a limited budget is a continual challenge for RTS who receives its funding from fare-box revenue, aggressive, record setting advertising, employee bus pass programs, UF and SF, as well as grants from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). RTS advertises open positions and is creative in recruiting potential candidates.

Community Relations – RTS staff recruit minority and female candidates from throughout the community by word-of-mouth. RTS is one of the largest departments in the City and because the nature of its business, its employees are literally seen everywhere in Gainesville and surrounding areas, including areas of the City with a more diverse population. RTS staff is also involved in events such as school career days, UF Welcome events, Sustainability fairs, Eco fairs, alternative transportation fairs, City of Gainesville Citizen's Academy, City of Gainesville Employee Safety events, City of Gainesville job fairs, events at SF, Small business fairs, Gainesville Back-to-School events, Safe Place Program, and Chamber of Commerce involvement. These outreach activities increase transportation education and good will and promote the accomplishments of a diverse group working together to encourage others to join the RTS team. RTS recently had its own recruitment workshop.

Customer Service – Notifying the public of changes and disruptions in routes and bus stops takes constant effort by the limited RTS staff. Notification is also given online through Rider Alerts on www.go-rts.com, on bus announcements, as well as TransLoc. Customer service comments go directly from the RTS website to the Transit Director for action. Fare cards and brochures were developed and distributed in Spanish and Chinese.

Staffing – Enhanced service to UF and SF in August, 2015, resulted in over 7,000 service hours being added to the RTS route schedule and the need to hire additional transit operators, mechanics, and staff. This, along with normal turnover and retirements has created obvious challenges to continue diversity in its workforce. RTS has a diverse membership on the Regional Transit System Citizen's Advisory Board (CAB) to receive feedback on how to promote diversity.

Marketing – RTS markets its route service, ADA program, the employee bus pass program, the community bus pass program, and bus advertising to small, large, and minority owned businesses, including ads that target minorities and females. To aid in recruitment, job advertisements were placed on the buses and also on our digital display boards in the buildings.

Labor Agreement – RTS must comply with the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU).

Compliance reviews – RTS undergoes periodic compliance reviews through independent companies to ensure it is meeting Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) guidelines. The most recent was a Procurement Review as well as a Security Review conducted by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Triennial review was conducted in July and August 2014.

II. What were your efforts to address diversity issues in the area(s) under your span of control in the last (evaluation) year?

Hiring - During the last evaluation year, 37 employees were hired at RTS of which 25 (68%) were minorities, 12 (32%) were females and 9 (24%) were minority females.

Placement Goals - RTS met a 2014 goal by promoting 2 minority females and 1 minority male to Transit Operation Supervisors.

Training - RTS addresses diversity through training, coaching, educational outreach, public meetings, and employee referral.

Regional Transit System Citizen's Advisory Board (CAB) – Information is disseminated to members of the CAB regarding information and potential job opportunities to increase the applicant pool.

Community programs – Programs, such as the community bus pass program, are in place to provide service to women, veterans, the economically disadvantaged, and minorities.

A. List recruitment efforts/strategies employed for issues identified above.

CDL training - RTS has a CDL training program for applicants who do not meet the requirements to be transit operators. This attracts minority and female candidates who would otherwise not be able to meet the necessary qualifications.

Advertising – RTS advertises its vacant positions in local and minority publications, on its website (go-rt.com), at UF and at SF in an attempt to reach the broadest minority and female population possible. Open positions are also advertised on bus displays (interior cards and exterior ads) that target specific groups. RTS advertises in national organization publications as related to the open positions.

Employee newsletter – RTS publishes a quarterly newsletter giving information on job openings and encouraging employee referrals to inform friends, relatives, etc., about job opportunities.

Employment brochure - RTS continues to update its informational brochure explaining the requirements for positions and benefits as well as frequently asked questions.

Job fairs – RTS staff attend City events such as the Employee Rally and City of Gainesville job fairs at the Martin Luther King Center for potential recruiting. RTS staff attends corporate transportation fairs to educate employers about the benefits of the employee bus pass program and the community bus pass program to recruit potential candidates.

Schools – RTS staff attend events at UF and SF to recruit interns for its Marketing and Planning Departments. This has been a great mechanism to hire minorities and females and pave the way for their professional entry into the field. During the last year RTS had 7 interns, Five (5) are of Asian descent (2 males, 3 females), and one (1) of Hispanic descent (one male), and one white female.

Public hearings/meetings – These hearings and meetings are used as an opportunity to not only inform citizens of service changes but to inform them of our organizational needs and the opportunity of working at RTS. Advertisements included information in Spanish and Chinese.

B. List Retention and Personnel Development Strategies you employed.

Ongoing training (transit operators) – Operations employees attend a 40 hour refresher training program during reduced service in the summer. Additional training is also offered during reduced service in the spring and during the December holiday. During the annual operator’s training session one (1) period was dedicated to cover how drivers and supervisors should interact with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals.

Ongoing training (supervisors) – Supervisors follow a specific, targeted training strictly related to their position. They attend City related training as well as specialized classes, such as computer training. They also attend an instructor’s course in diversity, bus operator training, transit bus system safety, bus collision prevention and investigation, effectively managing transit emergencies, transit system security, train-the-trainer program, substance abuse management and program compliance.

NIMS training – RTS employees are required to take classes and receive emergency response certification through FEMA. This ensures reimbursement from FEMA (when applicable) to the City and provides additional skills for all employees, including minorities and women, who might not otherwise acquire those skills. Different levels of training are required base on job title.

GCU and offsite classes – Employees are encouraged to attend training classes in order to improve skills that are necessary for their current job or to acquire skills necessary for upper mobility. Most recently RTS staff attended a class on “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.” The Transit Operations Manager, Assistant Transit Operations Manager and the Scheduler completed an 18 month Transit Manager Certificate Program course at the University of South Florida. Course was sponsored by FDOT.

Acting Dispatcher/Supervisor – Employees who exceed standards of performance for the training program (such as no excessive sick leave usage, good attendance, no accidents, good customer service, etc.) complete an in-house training program, making them eligible to fill positions in a higher classification in the absence of dispatchers, training supervisors, and other supervisors. This program is based on seniority and rotation, taking into consideration the employee’s performance for future selection.

Customer Service training – Employees who exceed standards of performance as listed above under “Acting Dispatcher/Supervisor” can qualify for temporary duty at the Rosa Parks Downtown Station to cover Customer Service Agents who are absent. This further allows the public to see the diversity at RTS. RTS staff appeared in a DVD explaining the “Rules of the Road” that is available for viewing on the go-rt.com website. These simple rules help RTS riders have a more enjoyable experience on RTS buses.

Employee handbook updates – RTS updated its employee handbook in 2013 to ensure employees have the most up-to-date information and training, including policies and procedures.

Employee bulletin boards – RTS continues to update its bulletin boards and digital displays to inform employees of training and other activities to promote education and diversity. Updates to the Employee Opinion Survey Action Plan are posted quarterly to inform employees of the implementation and status of their ideas.

III. Were those efforts successful?

A. Why/Why Not?

RTS is successful in recruiting minorities and females through current processes as evidenced by the Equal Opportunity Office's workforce analysis plan.

Feedback on the new employee bulletin boards and digital displays at the facility has been very positive.

B. How did you measure your efforts?

- i. One female for professional has been selected. Applicant pool includes a higher number of qualified applicants.
- ii. Number and nature of complaints
 1. RTS received no referrals from the EO Office in FY15.
- iii. Currently all Supervisor positions have been internal promotions.
- iv. There have not been any DBE complaints or protests in the last 15 years.
- v. Per the Equal Opportunity Office, sixteen (16) positions had AA goals.

IV. What were your efforts to make employees aware of the benefits of diversity?

A. List your efforts here.

Diversity training – All active RTS employees have attended diversity training through the City's Equal Opportunity Office either online or in person.

Staff meetings – Supervisor staff meeting agendas include discussions on diversity and sensitivity.

Promotions of minority employees

Staff participation in the AA plan – RTS Administration employees were asked to comment on the AA plan.

Speech – Inappropriate comments regarding diversity are not tolerated at RTS.

Employee picnic – Employee cookouts are held during reduced service breaks to create opportunities for employees to get to know each other better.

Camaraderie – Changes are ongoing to the Operations building to create an atmosphere of camaraderie. These include exercise equipment in the Operations and Maintenance buildings and changes in the dispatch and clerk areas staffed by minority employees.

Management briefings – RTS management holds meetings with all RTS employees to update them on RTS activities, answer questions, and reinforce the benefits of diversity.

Employee bulletin boards – RTS continues to update bulletin boards and digital displays to inform employees of training and other activities that promote education and diversity.

Community Programs – RTS employees are encouraged to participate in and contribute to the United Way and support other community programs.

V. What were your Women/Minority-Owned Small Business efforts last year?

A. List your efforts here?

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program - RTS updated its DBE program to include initiatives to foster small business participation and development in the following ways: 1) unbundled contracts whenever possible to create prime contracts for small businesses, 2) eliminated or reduced unnecessary or unjustified bonding of contract requirements, 3) required prime contracts on large multi-year design build contracts to specify elements of the contract or specific subcontracts that are of a size that small business, including DBEs, could reasonably perform. RTS staff and the RTS DBE Liaison Officer monitor prime contract activity to ensure DBEs are aware of and are able to receive the maximum number of contracts, according to City purchasing policies and procedures.

Outreach events – RTS staff attended small business events to educate small businesses about DBE certification process and provided business owners and City of Gainesville job fair attendees with Unified Certification Program (UCP) Florida contacts depending on the type of work they perform.

DBE Certification – RTS staff assist women, minority, and socially and economically disadvantaged owned businesses in becoming DBE certified.

Vendor list – RTS continues to update a supplemental vendor list of available DBEs for contracts for bid. Emails are sent to DBEs and other vendors to advise them of upcoming contract opportunities.

Facility Construction – Construction of the new RTS Administration/Operations/Maintenance facility began in January 2013 and is now complete. \$9.2 million (26.88% of construction) was used in local and minority businesses for supplies and services for this project.

B. What can you do differently next year to improve?

RTS can work closer with the City's Purchasing department and participate in additional workshops or training sessions they may sponsor to advise businesses that opportunities are available with RTS. RTS designated a staff liaison to the DBE program.

VI. Your Component of the Overall Departmental Strategic Plan

Your Department Head will work with his or her direct reports to develop a Departmental Strategic Plan to address diversity issues this evaluation year. In this section you will outline your assignment for the department's overall Strategic Plan. You will use this component as the basis for the Diversity objective on your Performance Evaluation Plan.

List one or more components of the overall Departmental Plan outlined by your Department Head in the appropriate sections below. You might not have an element in each of the areas.

A. Recruitment Strategies

Transit Operator Trainee and Transit Operator positions are often vacant due to retirement, turnover, and expansion of service.

EO Committee - RTS has a representative on the City's Equal Opportunity (EO) committee.

Review job descriptions – RTS is working with HR in the revision of job descriptions.

New job classifications - RTS worked closely with HR as it added three (3) new job classifications this evaluation year due to increased service levels at UF and SF. RTS will continue to evaluate service levels and plan staffing accordingly, focusing on meeting AA goals for minorities and women.

Job advertisement/posting - Current processes are successful for recruitment for RTS positions but are continually evaluated. RTS generally advertises positions to the general public to ensure the broadest pool of minority and female candidates. RTS also uses its website (go-rtts.com) and notification to members of the RTS Advisory Board to advertise vacant positions that bring in applicants from around the country. Because RTS receives many applications with a diverse pool of applicants, no plans are in place to change its recruiting plan.

Internship programs

Communications – RTS Marketing and Communications division provides opportunities to alert the general public of open positions for minorities and women.

Screening applications – Currently, the Operations Manager and the Maintenance Manager screen applications for vacant positions with the concurrence of the Transit Director and Human Resources. This approach has proven effective for RTS.

Testing/Interviews – All tests for RTS vacant positions are job related and represent work samples and actual work situations. Questions are directly related to the applicant's ability to effectively perform the functions of the positions. The RTS diverse interview panel works diligently to ensure that all applicants are asked the same questions to give all candidates a fair interview. RTS is often in need of employees because of turnover, retirement, and service expansion so any barrier that would prevent the success of an interview rests on the applicant. All questions asked are legal and relevant.

Analysis of completed selection processes – This process is performed by the hiring manager and demographic information is given to EO for the Workforce Analysis. Because RTS hires several times a year, it works very closely with HR and EO.

Contracts – Contracts are sent to the City's Small Business and Minority Coordinator for review before they are signed.

B. Retention Strategies

(1) Professional Development for all Employees

FROM II. A. and B. above

CDL training - RTS has a CDL training program for applicants who do not meet the requirements to be transit operators. This attracts minority and female candidates who would otherwise not be able to meet the necessary qualifications.

Ongoing training (transit operators) – Operations employees attend a 40 hour refresher training program during reduced service in the summer. Additional training is also offered during reduced service in the spring and during the December holiday.

Ongoing training (supervisors) – Supervisors follow a specific, targeted training strictly related to their position. They attend City related training as well as specialized classes, such as computer training. They also attend an Instructor's course in diversity, bus operator training, transit bus system safety, bus collision prevention and investigation, effectively managing transit emergencies, transit system security, train-the-trainer program, substance abuse management and program compliance.

NIMS training – RTS employees are required to take classes and receive emergency response certification through FEMA. This ensures reimbursement from FEMA (when applicable) to the City and provides additional skills for all employees, including minorities and women, who might not otherwise acquire those skills.

GCU and offsite classes – Employees are encouraged to attend training classes in order to improve skills that are necessary for their current job or to acquire skills necessary for upper mobility. Most recently RTS staff attended a class on “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.”

Acting Dispatcher/Supervisor – Employees who exceed standards of performance for the training program (such as no excessive sick leave usage, good attendance, no accidents, good customer service, etc.) complete an in-house training program, making them eligible to fill positions in a higher classification in the absence of dispatchers, training supervisors, and other supervisors. This program is based on seniority and rotation, taking into consideration the employee’s performance for future selection.

Customer Service training – Employees who exceed standards of performance as listed above under “Acting Dispatcher/Supervisor” can qualify for temporary duty at the Rosa Parks Downtown Station to cover Customer Service Agents who are absent. This further allows the public to see the diversity at RTS. RTS staff appeared in a DVD explaining the “Rules of the Road” that is available for viewing on the go-rt.com website. These simple rules help RTS riders have a more enjoyable experience on RTS buses.

Monthly meetings - Supervisors attend monthly meetings appraising them of current RTS openings, special programs, and helping them to sharpen their supervisory skills.

Employee handbook updates – RTS updated its employee handbook in 2013 to ensure employees have the most up-to-date information and training, including policies and procedures.

Employee bulletin boards – RTS continues to update its bulletin boards to inform employees of training and other activities to promote education and diversity. Updates to the Employee Opinion Survey Action Plan are posted quarterly to inform employees of the implementation and status of their ideas.

(2) Strategies to Foster an Environment of Diversity and Inclusion

FROM II. A. and IV. A. above

Employee newsletter – RTS publishes a quarterly newsletter giving information on job openings and encouraging employee referrals to inform friends, relatives, etc., about job opportunities.

Employment brochure - RTS continues to update its informational brochure explaining the requirements for positions and benefits as well as frequently asked questions.

Diversity training – All active RTS employees have attended diversity training through the City’s Equal Opportunity Office either online or in person.

Staff meetings – Supervisor staff meeting agendas include discussions on diversity and sensitivity.

Promotions of minority employees - No openings for advancement in 2014 were available due to a stable management team.

Staff participation in the AA plan – RTS Administration employees were asked to comment on the AA plan.

Speech – Inappropriate comments regarding diversity are not tolerated at RTS.

Employee picnic – Employee cookouts are held during reduced service breaks to create opportunities for employees to get to know each other better.

Camaraderie – Changes are ongoing to the Operations building to create an atmosphere of camaraderie. These include exercise equipment in the Operations and Maintenance buildings and changes in the dispatch and clerk areas staffed by minority employees.

Management briefings – RTS management holds meetings with all RTS employees to update them on RTS activities, answer questions, and enforce the benefits of diversity.

Employee bulletin boards – RTS continues to update bulletin boards to inform employees of training and other activities that promote education and diversity.

Community Programs – RTS employees are encouraged to participate in and contribute to the United Way and support other community programs.

C. Women/Minority-Owned Small Business Strategies

FROM V. A. above

DBE Program - RTS updated its DBE program to include initiatives to foster small business participation and development in the following ways: 1) unbundled contracts whenever possible to create prime contracts for small businesses, 2) eliminated or reduced unnecessary or unjustified bonding of contract requirements, 3) required prime contracts on large multi-year design build contracts to specify elements of the contract or specific subcontracts that are of a size that small business, including DBEs, could reasonably perform. RTS staff and the RTS DBE Liaison Officer monitor prime contract activity to ensure DBEs are aware of and are able to receive the maximum number of contracts, according to City purchasing policies and procedures.

Outreach events – RTS staff attended small business events to educate small businesses about DBE certification process and provided business owners and City of Gainesville job fair attendees with UCP Florida contacts depending on the type of work they perform.

DBE Certification – RTS staff assist women, minority, and socially and economically disadvantaged owned businesses in becoming DBE certified.

Vendor list – RTS continue to update a supplemental vendor list of available DBEs for contracts for bid. Emails are sent to DBEs and other vendors to advise them of upcoming contract opportunities.

Maintenance Facility Expansion – Construction of the new RTS Administration/Operations/Maintenance facility began in January 2013 and is now complete. Efforts were made to contract with women/minority/socially/economically owned small businesses for supplies and services for this project.

D. How will you measure your department's success?

DBE program – RTS has an on-going DBE program approved by the FTA. The DBE goal for the period of August 1, 2013, through August 1, 2016 is 1.50% overall (1.0% race neutral, 0.5% race conscious).

Purchasing – RTS has its own Buyer who advises RTS of businesses owned by minorities. RTS staff also watches for minority owned businesses that can enroll in the City's small business programs.

RTS spent this year over \$9.2 million as part of RTS regular procurements and the construction of the new facility with Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Local Businesses, Woman Business Enterprise (WBE), and Small Business Enterprise (SBE) agencies.

