

**RESOLUTION NO. 140739**

**PASSED: March 17, 2016**

**A resolution of the City of Gainesville, Florida,  
designating Gainesville a Welcoming City, and  
part of the Welcoming America network.**

WHEREAS, Gainesville is known as a city that welcomes newcomers from many parts of the world and recognizes their many contributions to the cultural, social, and economic life of the community and its broad hopes for general prosperity; and

WHEREAS, Sister City Program of Gainesville, Inc., has pioneered and promoted citizen diplomacy for 33 years, thereby bringing Gainesville residents into relationships with people in cities around the globe; and

WHEREAS, Gainesville citizens have joined in interfaith harmony to repudiate racial, ethnic or religious bigotry whenever it has arisen; and;

WHEREAS, Gainesville is known as a center of innovation in science, technology, industry, and health care because of its academic researchers, health care professionals and entrepreneurs, many of them from other countries; and;

WHEREAS, the more than 8,000 international students currently enrolled at the University of Florida and Santa Fe College contribute to their respective preeminent standings; and;

WHEREAS, it is in the City's interest to attract and retain business and professional leaders, potential job creators, and a skilled work force by encouraging efforts to eliminate unnecessary barriers and enhance a climate of welcome; and

WHEREAS, Welcoming America is a national movement, headquartered in Decatur, Georgia, that has inspired people to build communities that embrace immigrants and foster opportunity for all and has already assisted 56 cities, large and small, and 10 counties in developing their own local programs to achieve these goals; and

WHEREAS, Gainesville citizens representative of business, academic, student, faith, and social service communities and the City Commission have worked together for more than a year to develop ways to make Gainesville an even more Welcoming Community; and

WHEREAS, that planning has identified existing programs in the City of Gainesville, the Alachua County School Board, the University of Florida, Santa Fe College, and other public and private institutions that make Gainesville a hospitable community for newcomers and recent arrivals, and has identified opportunities to enhance Gainesville as a Welcoming Community; and

WHEREAS, Welcoming Gainesville is now incorporated as a non-profit organization with volunteer cross-community advisory committees and a salaried Executive Director to create and implement a Welcoming City plan to enhance Gainesville as a Welcoming Community; and

WHEREAS, The City Commission, at its meeting on February 18, 2016, approved the designation of Gainesville a Welcoming City, and part of the Welcoming America network;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA:

Section 1. Gainesville is designated a Welcoming City, and the City of Gainesville will become part of the Welcoming America network, the first Florida city to do so; and

Section 2. Welcoming Gainesville, Inc., will be primarily responsible for implementing the goals and recommendations of Welcoming City, analogous with the way Sister City Program of Gainesville, Inc. is responsible for administering Gainesville's sister city relationships; and

Section 3. Welcoming Gainesville, Inc. will develop and conduct programs, activities, research projects, and cultural events that will make existing programs more accessible, provide new resources to support welcoming efforts, promote the Welcoming City concept, increase public involvement, and help make Gainesville an even more Welcoming City for everyone who comes here; and

Section 4. The City Manager (or designee) is designated as the official liaison between the City of Gainesville, its departments and staff, and both Welcoming America and Welcoming Gainesville; and

Section 5. The City Commission encourages immigrant groups, government agencies, community institutions, and business leaders to make Gainesville not only a receptive, hospitable place for new residents from other countries, but also a center of world commerce, higher education, and intellectual and cultural innovation.

Section 6. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 17th day of March, 2016.

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Edward B. Braddy  
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND  
LEGALITY:

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Kurt M. Lannon  
Clerk of the Commission

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Nicolle M. Shalley  
City Attorney