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Broadband Connectivity Sub-Committee requests to proceed with Broadband expansion Request for Proposals (B)

The Gainesville City Commission established the Broadband Connectivity Subcommittee to the General Policy Committee to explore broadband availability, affordability, performance and development opportunities in our community. The initial meetings began in July of this year with three City Commissioners (Hayes-Santos, Ward, and Arreola), invitees from Alachua County IT and University of Florida representatives. Since then, the Subcommittee has reviewed a number of issues related to broadband delivery, with an emerging goal of "Expanding Affordable Internet in Gainesville". The sub-committee recognizes there are other areas of the county that are also underserved and have challenges in getting adequate broadband service.

At the November 17, 2017, Broadband Connectivity Subcommittee meeting, the commissioners unanimously approved a motion to request that Alachua County partner with the City to further study how we may be able to improve broadband availability, affordability and access throughout Alachua County. The Subcommittee is in the process of recommending a Request for Proposals to conduct an analysis to determine how we can make Gainesville the "Most Connected City in America" and how we may achieve the following goals…

Primary Goals
- Lower prices and increased speeds for residents
- Lower prices and increased speeds for businesses
- Everyone has access to municipal network in designated areas

Secondary Goals
- Lowest priced gigabit internet for residential service in the United States
- Lowest priced internet for businesses in the United States
- Universal free service to all residents served

With consideration that areas outside of the city limits are in need of affordable broadband access, we would like to study the following areas to see if expanding our municipal internet service is a feasible option:
- GRU Service Area
- Urban Reserve with consideration for density
- Municipal areas within the county where GRUCom has infrastructure (Newberry, Hawthorne, Archer, High Springs, Waldo and Alachua

The expense for the feasibility study is estimated to be around $140,000 and is expected to include feasibility cost estimates for several coverage options, financial feasibility and forecasting models for various market-based levels of service, a market analysis and a report of the study's findings.

The expected expense for the study as outlined is approximately $140,000. Both GRU and General Government have budgeted $20,000 each for a total of $40,000 available funding.

Hear a report on the Broadband Sub-Committee's recommendation to proceed with a broadband expansion

Request for Proposals.

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