



## Legislation Text

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### **GainesvilleConnect.com Sponsorship Request (B)**

**This item is a request for the City of Gainesville to become a sponsoring partner of the GainesvilleConnect.com initiative which seeks to develop a comprehensive online community tool to assist in recruiting and welcoming employees, researchers, companies and investment to the City of Gainesville and Alachua County.**

On October 24, 2012, GainesvilleConnect representative Stewart Thomas met with City Manager Russ Blackburn to discuss a partnership opportunity between the City of Gainesville and GainesvilleConnect.com. In a follow-up meeting held on December 3, 2012, city staff met with Ms. Annie Pais and Mr. Thomas to review details of a proposed partner sponsorship of the GainesvilleConnect.com initiative. Ms. Pais is Executive Director and Mr. Thomas serves as Creative Director for Florida's Eden, a non-profit citizen initiative which promotes a sustainable and prosperous regional economy for North Florida based on the preservation of our natural and cultural resources. Florida's Eden serves as the lead coordinating agency for GainesvilleConnect.com with in-kind support from Innovation Gainesville (iG) and the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce.

GainesvilleConnect.com describes the project as a collaborative web portal that seeks to provide a community portrait which reflects the quality of life in Gainesville and Alachua County and showcase the community as a regional hub for education, healthcare, arts and culture, recreation and a growing innovation based economy. The portal will help people relocate, find employment, start or move a business, plan conferences and identify other opportunities in Gainesville and Alachua County.

GainesvilleConnect.com requests that the City of Gainesville Commission become a participating sponsorship partner with a one-time investment of \$5,000 to support development of its website. Partnership benefits include: exclusive partnership representation within your industry, control of framing of needs and messages; partnership logo display and link embedded in each page footer of the site; dedicated page content; real-time control of content management including text, photo, video, blog, newsfeeds and links; and preferred access to premium advertising.

According to project organizers, current sponsorship partners include: UF&Shands HealthCare, Santa Fe College, UF Office of Licensing and Technology (OTL), UF Innovation Square (I<sup>2</sup>), UF|Sid Martin Biotechnology Incubator, UF|Cultural Plaza and UF College of Fine Art, Gainesville Regional Airport, Gainesville/Alachua County Association of Realtors (GACAR), FloridaWorks, and Charles Perry Partners, Inc. (CPPI). City staff discussions with County staff indicate they will recommend Alachua County participation as a sponsoring partner of GainesvilleConnect.com. Other Gainesville prospective sponsoring partners include: GSOC/University Athletic Association and Plum Creek Development Corporation.

Funding in the amount of \$5,000 is available to become a GainesvilleConnect.com sponsoring partner through vacancy rate savings for Economic Development.

The City Commission approve a one-time request to become a sponsoring partner of GainesvilleConnect.com and authorize the City Manager to use \$5,000 in Economic Development vacancy rate savings to fund the sponsorship.