



Legislation Text

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Findings from the GCI Campus Visioning Session (B)

The purpose of this item is to request that the City Commission receive a presentation on the findings of the public “GCI Visioning Session” held on January 11, 2014. *ESTIMATED STAFF PRESENTATION 15 MINUTES*

This item supports the City Commission Strategic Initiative 3.1: Continue Implementation of the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.

Nearly ten years ago, the City of Gainesville (City) and the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners (County) began a mission to establish a One Stop Homeless Assistance Center (OSHAC). The establishment of an OSHAC was a major objective in the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness. In recent months, several major milestones have been achieved while working to accomplish that mission.

On November 19, 2013, the City purchased the former Gainesville Correctional Institute (GCI) campus and an additional 95 acres of conservation land from the State for \$1.3 million. Construction and renovation work is now underway on the campus, and interim homeless services are scheduled to start on May 1, 2014. Although the complex has yet to be officially named, it is commonly being referred to as the “Empowerment Center.”

On January 11, 2014, the City of Gainesville hosted the first Visioning Session to discuss the future development of the site for other uses. Ms. Debbie Mason was the facilitator for the session. Seventy-nine (79) participants attended the first Visioning Session. There were several common themes that emerged during the small group discussions at the session. Ideas to name the campus were also generated during the session. Ms. Mason is prepared to report the findings of the Visioning Session and submit the Visioning Session Summary Report for review and discussion.

City staff plans to hold another Visioning Session in the summer. Staff also wishes to solicit public input on the names for the campus and bring results back to the City Commission to officially name the campus.

The City of Gainesville and the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners have approved funding in the amount of \$308,000 for Homeless Services for FY14. The City has also allocated over \$1 million dollars in renovation and construction funds to get the campus ready for homeless services. The City Commission and the County Commission have requested funding for the roof repairs, kitchen renovations and equipment in the State Legislative Packet for the campus. In addition, both Commissions are supporting similar request at the federal level. Funds for future development of the campus will need to be identified.

The City Commission: 1) receive the Visioning Session Summary Report; 2) hear a presentation the findings of the Visioning Session from facilitator, Ms. Debbie Mason; 3) authorize staff to solicit public input on names for the campus; and 4) discuss the future development of the campus.