

**Alliance for Innovation
2011 Transforming Local Government Conference
June 1-3, 2011 Clearwater, Florida**

**Creating an Innovation Economy Platform in a University Community
Gainesville, Florida: A Case Study**

COVER SHEET

Case Study Title: Creating an Innovation Economy Platform in a University
Community Gainesville, Florida: A Case Study

Jurisdiction Name: City of Gainesville, Florida

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200 Word Case Study Description:

The proposed session, "Creating an Innovation Economy Platform in a University Community" is an attempt to provide a forum to discuss how local government professionals can partner with various community entities, inclusive of private industry, to facilitate the New Innovative Economy.

Over the past ten years, the City of Gainesville, FL has worked to accentuate its local economic competitive advantage which is the growth and development of innovative economy industry. This is due primarily to the community's profile that emphasizes the role of intellectual and social capital in community economic development with the University of Florida and Santa Fe College serving as primary anchors. This approach is consistent with recent economic development literature documenting those factors that will be increasingly important in securing economic opportunity for a community's residents in future years.

The approach is facilitated on a public policy level by effective institutional arrangements and the important role of partnerships and collaboration with other economic entities and actors. Many of these efforts go beyond the traditional economic development model of providing a low cost operating environment and although costs and benefits to business cannot be overlooked, this approach often focuses on quality of life concerns particularly as it relates to the built environment and the availability of various urban amenities.

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PRESENTATION SYNOPSIS

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Since the beginning of the new millenium, the City of Gainesville has attempted to position itself to capture the benefits of the New Innovative Economy through a number of local government policy actions including:

- the funding of a technology incubator and a shared role in its management
- the creation of a standing City Commission Committee that is focused on partnership building to facilitate the New Innovative Economy
- the utilization of traditional planning tools to foster the New Innovative Economy inclusive of Comprehensive Plan language and spatial targeting; creation of appropriate underlying land use and zoning designations; and a pro-active posture in terms of participating in the preparation of an appropriate site design regulatory regimen
- the provision of appropriate financial incentives particularly as it relates to New Innovative Economy development within the existing urban fabric
- partnering with the University of Florida and Santa Fe College in growing the New Innovative Economy continuum through development of various physical facilities throughout the region
- staff participation in making the development of the New Innovative Economy a proposition that is growing and developing organically through limited and targeted government action

The training objective for the participants in the conference balances the application of various urban planning tools related to the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, Campus Master Planning and Design Review within the context of achieving a community's

economic development and redevelopment goals. Importantly, the proposed session focuses on the role of partnerships in achieving these urban planning and community economic development goals.

For the experienced urban planning professional, the proposed session will communicate subject matter that is familiar within the normal context of planning responsibilities (related to the application of the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code and Development Review). However, more broadly, it will also communicate lessons learned in using these tools to achieve a community economic development vision through engagement with entities that are not always seen as typical urban planning partners. Furthermore, the proposed session will communicate features of the New Innovative Economy which represent the new platform for community economic development for the State of Florida and the Nation overall.

The intent is to provide local government professionals with a view of implementing the new economic paradigm, the New Innovative Economy, through institutional implementation, adaptation and partnership. It is hoped that elements of lessons learned in the greater Gainesville area can be pro-actively applied in other communities throughout the State of Florida and Nation even in those instances where a community does not have a strong University presence. Because the acceleration of the New Innovative Economy likely represents the focus of the State and Nation in this time of reset in the economic environment, it is hoped that the proposed session will stimulate various local government and outside entity professionals working in communities to consider their role/positioning in achieving these ends.

Local government has many tools at its disposal, particularly relative to setting the regulatory platform and providing for the citizen participation process, that can be of service in getting the State of Florida and Nation to the next level in terms of community economic development. The proposed session provides a case study but will also lend itself to sharing lessons learned that can be translated into action within other communities throughout the Nation.

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PRESENTATION COMPONENTS

- 1) **Innovation/Creativity:** This project helped to spur a new approach to community economic development planning which is more pro-active. It focuses on using traditional local government policy tools in order to reorient the community's long term economic prospects through collaboration with various community entities as well as private industry. In terms of technology employed, standard technologies were utilized. Although consultant's may have been used in some aspects of this project no one was directly employed to make this successful over the longer term.
- 2) **Outcomes Achieved:** The community has moved forward in providing the platform for future community economic development. This effort will ultimately benefit various constituencies inclusive of local government, private industry, educational organizational and the citizens of the community. Service delivery has been enhanced as this process has made the regulatory environment more conducive to the achievement of New Innovative Economy outcomes. To the extent that folks in the community who participate in this segment of the economy feel more comfortable with the City's posture on these efforts, access to local government has been enhanced. In terms of health, the evidence isn't really clear however, it appears that the project's focus on collaboration has assisted in the context of communication amongst formerly disparate parties and therefore has increased the level of understanding amongst community members.
- 3) **Applicable Results and Real World Practicality:** The presentation does tell a tale of partnership and collaboration (with a variety of community actors) in achieving a community's economic development objectives. The lessons revolve around the long term nature of this effort and the need for local government to become pro-active (in approach and in the utilization of various local government policy tools) to achieve certain community economic development objectives. Although this presentation is particularly applicable to university communities, it is related to all community's in the sense that it emphasizes a regional approach tied into a common theme confronting all communities namely the reset to the New Innovation Economy platform. Outcomes and performance are in the positioning of the community in terms of physical and policy assets and in terms of the organic growth of Innovative Economy firms
- 4) **Case Study Presentation:** This case study will consist of a Powerpoint presentation and a handout (Narrative and copy of Powerpoint) as a take away for session attendees.

