

*For immediate release:*

## **SARASOTA FLORIDA RENAMES CITY ISLAND ‘GOOGLE ISLAND’ IN BID FOR GOOGLE FIBER TRIAL SELECTION**

City of Sarasota seeks to host Google Fiber ultra-high speed broadband trial by re-naming City Island.

MARCH, 2010 – Sarasota business and government leaders are seeking to make a good impression on Google by temporarily naming City Island “Google Island” in a bid to host Google’s fiber ultra-high speed broadband trial. (<http://www.googleisland.net/>) Last month Google announced its intention to build and test broadband networks in a small number of trial locations across the country. Google has asked communities across the nation to respond to a Request for Information to help identify the best locations to rollout their network.

Google is also looking for feedback and support from the local residents. As part of their review process, they are asking people why their community should be part of the rollout.

A group of business leaders have launched a formal campaign called “I Want Google Fiber in Sarasota” to educate the community on the opportunity. The goal of the campaign is to drive people to nominate the community of Sarasota, but also to find innovative ways to get Google’s attention. People can submit their nomination online at <http://www.google.com/appserve/fiberrfi>.

“We only have a few weeks to make an impression”, says Rich Swier Jr., local entrepreneur and co-founder of The HuB Sarasota, a tech and creative incubator spearheading the Google Fiber initiative with city officials, “There are hundreds of communities fighting for this opportunity, so we want to do whatever we can to show the world that Sarasota is a creative community.” Swier continues, “There are two components to this campaign, one is submitting the application to Google and the city and country are working day and night on it, and there is a light-hearted side where communities are competing for attention like Topeka, Kansas and Duluth, Minnesota – and of course our proclaiming City Island as “Google Island” is a fun attempt to get into the mix.”

Currently, over 20 cities have launched campaigns on popular social media websites like Facebook and Twitter. Sarasota, Florida currently has 6th most fans supporting the initiative. According to the Google Website the application process will be over on March 26th.

Matt Orr, Co-founder of The HuB Sarasota, believes that “The reason Sarasota is the right place (for Google Fiber) is because we have one of the best health care clusters in the United States, and medical imaging along with other broadband applications is one of Google’s top priorities. We also have another great application with world-renowned Ringling College of Art and Design's animation lab and Mote Marine Laboratory, which is one of the world's leaders in marine biology research. Having a network that is 100 times faster will affect our medical businesses, our film and creative industry, our interaction with oceanic research and most importantly, consolidate our region's entrepreneurs and technology-based companies to one area.”

One of the major reasons cited in the Google application from Sarasota is digital film production. Jeanne Corcoran, film commissioner for Sarasota County states, “The Film industry needs a digital backbone - where better than here on the gorgeous Gulf of Mexico to have unlimited bandwidth and beautiful sunshine?” High speed broadband is integral to the growth to organizations in bandwidth-intensive areas such as digital film production and animation. The need for high speed broadband is well illustrated by Sarasota-based Ringling College of Art and Design, which besides generating top computer animation talent, has launched a Digital Filmmaking Studio Lab to engage film industry luminaries such as directors Werner Herzog and Oren Moverman, actor Ben Foster and producer Paul Schiff in a collaborative effort to develop Sarasota’s film development and production capacity.

#### ABOUT THE HUB

The HuB is a destination for entrepreneurs, artists and professionals to connect and share ideas. Founded by a group of entrepreneurs, our goal is to bring a new energy to the creative-class in Sarasota, Florida to help transform our city socially, economically and politically. More information is available at <http://www.hubsarasota.com>  
<<http://www.hubsarasota.com/>>