



## FSU shows ‘brotherhood’ in blowout victory

SPORTS, 1B

# TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

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## A ‘FRESH START’



City commissioners and others gathered for a ground-breaking ceremony for a new grocery store in the Griffin Heights Neighborhood on Sept. 4. PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF TALLAHASSEE

### Griffin Heights grocery store groundbreaking blends hope, politics

**TaMaryn Waters**  
Tallahassee Democrat  
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Construction kicked off Sept. 4 for a new grocery store in the Griffin Heights neighborhood, despite no operator being identified yet to run it.

The \$1.3 million building on Alabama Street is owned by the city of Tallahassee, which plans to issue a Request For Proposal (RFP) in the next four to six weeks – making this the second time the city has attempted to entice a grocery store to set up shop in the space.

“There’s always a chance that someone will not come forward,” said John Baker, who manages the city’s Neighborhood Affairs Division, when asked what happens if no one responds. “The city has put out RFPs in the past and didn’t get any.”

If that happens again, Baker said the city will issue another RFP until an operator is selected. The city, he said, has several incentives it can offer to a potential operator but added details have not been finalized.

However, examples of potential incentives include technical assistance



Early rendering of proposed shell-only building for a potential grocery store or retailer that provides fresh foods at 1309 Alabama St. in the Griffin Heights Neighborhood. SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

and about \$80,000 the city has set aside for interior preparations like shelving and refrigeration.

In an interview with the Tallahassee Democrat, City Commissioner Curtis Richardson said the construction of the new grocery store is a leap of faith, in many ways.

“This is something the community

said they wanted through the Neighborhood First Plan,” he said. “We’re trying to honor their wishes, but it has not been easy.”

In addition, he said the city has tried to acquire the neighboring lot for parking with no success. Richardson said,

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## \$11M school funded by taxpayers now vacant

**Alaijah Brown**  
Tallahassee Democrat  
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Leon County Schools Superintendent Rocky Hanna said the case of the abandoned school complex on Mahan Drive is perfect for Florida’s new Department of Government Efficiency to investigate.

“I think this would be an outstanding test case for that new department,” Hanna told the Tallahassee Democrat on Sept. 4. “You want to talk about a waste of taxpayer dollars and lack of efficiency? This is a prime example.”

When Renaissance Charter School Inc. closed the district’s only Title I charter school May 28 due to insufficient enrollment and financial instability, it announced Tallahassee Preparatory Academy would be taking over the space. That’s a private school managed by Discovery Science Schools (DSS), based out of Orlando.

The school was slated to open Aug. 11 and advertised tours, open house events and acceptance of state vouchers in anticipation of enrolling 600 students.

Then it didn’t open.

But when asked why, a representative for DSS told the Democrat only “inadequate enrollment.”

And now the multi-million dollar property sits vacant.

“What a huge waste of taxpayers’ money,” one Facebook user said. Another: “So many of these schools are scams.”

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## Bill cited by DeSantis never mentioned crosswalk art crackdown

**Gray Rohrer**  
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

There was no mention of crosswalk art when the bill Gov. Ron DeSantis cites as the reason for the state’s crackdown on street art was passed in the Legislature.

The removal of colorful arrays on street crossings throughout the state in recent weeks has sparked frustration – and in some cases outrage – as students, parents and activists who raised money, installed and painted the artworks have seen state and local officials remove them.

DeSantis says he has no choice but to follow the new law (SB 1622), which allows the Florida Department of Transportation to withhold funds for road projects if cities and counties don’t comply with artwork removal orders.

“The Florida Legislature passed a law that was very clear, that I signed into law: We’re not doing the commandeering of the roads to put up messaging,” DeSantis said Aug. 26 at an event in Tampa.

But FDOT already had the authority

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## Is justice done with Adelson family?



**Tim Jansen**  
Legal analysis

Eleven years after the heinous murder of Florida State University Professor Dan Markel, we’ve seen five individuals convicted and held responsible for the unthinkable crime.

The question left unanswered is whether the wheels of justice have completed their journey or will the train

collect more individuals many believe are in the crosshairs?

Let’s start with a timeline:

- On July 18, 2014, Professor Dan Markel was shot while in the driveway of his home in the Betton Hills neighborhood. Professor Markel succumbed the following day due to his injuries caused by two south Florida hitmen hired by the Adelson family of Miami.
- The investigation lingered for nearly 2 years before the arrest of the shooter, Sigfredo Garcia in May 2016.
- In June 2016, Sigfredo Garcia and Luis Rivera were indicted for first degree murder in the murder of Markel.
- In October 2016, Luis entered into a favorable plea deal with the State Attorney with a condition he will cooperate and testify against others responsible for the murder.
- November 2016 Katie Magbanua is indicted and charged in the murder of Markel.
- In October 2019, Sigfredo Garcia was convicted at trial and the jury was hung on Magbanua. In April 2022, the first Adelson, Charlie, is arrested for the

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