

City of Gainesville, FL

Organizational Culture Assessment and Report

MAY 18, 2021

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Gainesville





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Introduction

In January 2021, the City Commission requested the Office of the City Auditor conduct an organizational culture assessment. The City Auditor's Office explored conducting an employee satisfaction survey and other options for working with organizational culture before selecting the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument, which offered a unique approach that asks participants questions about their work environment as they perceive it now, and as they would prefer it to be.

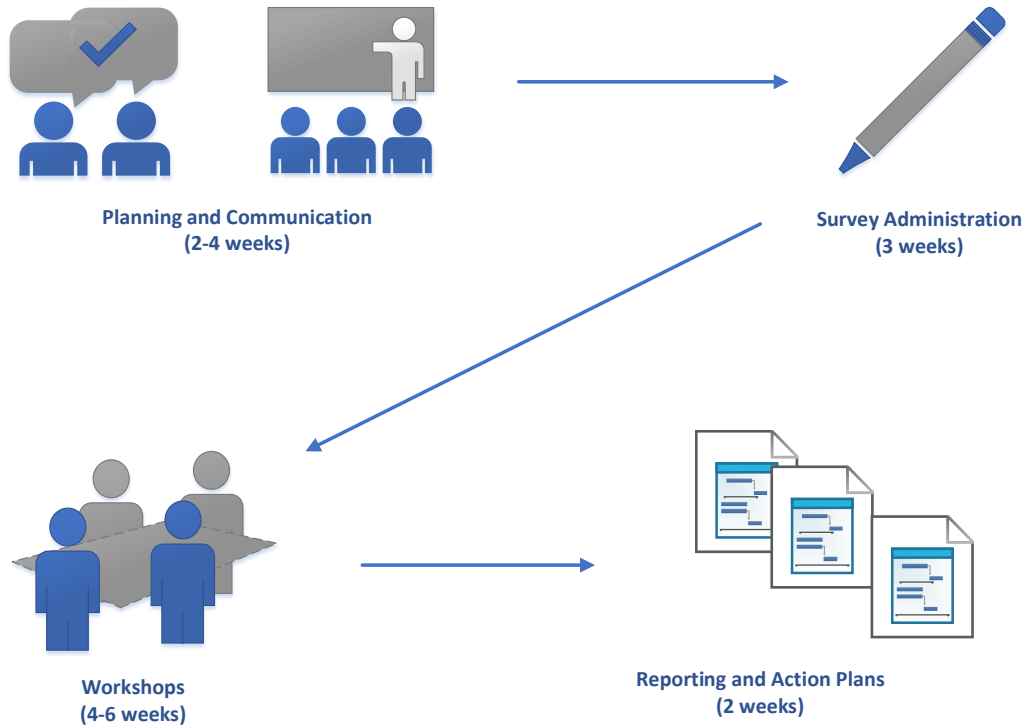
The City Auditor's Office formed a small, cross-functional organizational culture core team of City leaders and managers who wanted to help and were willing to volunteer time despite already heavy workloads. The initiative was possible thanks to generous staff volunteers and support of the City Commission and Charter Officers, to plan, conduct, report and act on the organizational culture assessment and recommendations, and to participants who were willing to take time to share their opinions.

The Core Team launched the OCAI, a validated tool for assessing organizational culture, developed by Robert Quinn and Kim Cameron at the University of Michigan to gauge the City's current organization-wide culture and better identify and understand factors that negatively impact chances for successful outcomes and relationships. The OCAI is further explained in the Background section of this report.

The culture assessment included the following phases: planning and communication (2-4 weeks); survey administration (3 weeks); workshops (4 weeks); reporting and recommendations (4 weeks). See Figure 1.

Figure 1

CITY OF GAINESVILLE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ASSESSMENT - PROCESS



January 7, 2021
Office of the City Auditor

Background

What is organizational culture? According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), “An organization's culture defines the proper way to behave within the organization. This culture consists of shared beliefs and values established by leaders and then communicated and reinforced through various methods, ultimately shaping employee perceptions, behaviors and understanding.”¹

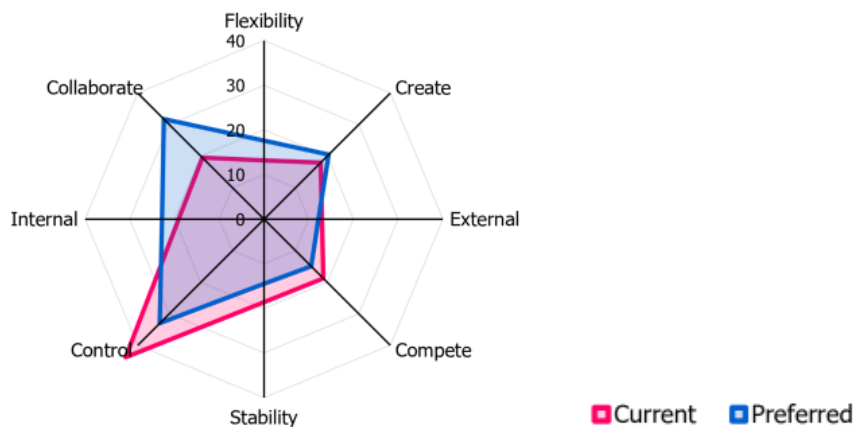
According to OCAI, all organizational cultures are based on a mix of competing values that span creativity, collaboration, controlling, and competitive environments. In addition, the following factors are present to some degree within organizations: flexibility and freedom to act vs. stability and control; internal focus and integration vs. external focus and differentiation. These factors form the Competing Values Framework. There is no right culture that fits every organization but there are characteristics identified with successful organizations.

¹ SHRM. (2021) Developing and Sustaining Employee Engagement. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/sustainingemployeeengagement.aspx>

- Positive culture promotes outcomes such as thriving at work, healthy interpersonal relationships, ethical behavior, positive emotions, and energizing networks to carry out the City’s mission and vision.²
- Christine Porath and Christine Pearson polled thousands of workers in several industries and found that incivility demoralizes people. “Nearly everybody who experiences workplace incivility responds in a negative way, in some cases overtly retaliating. Employees are less creative when they feel disrespected, and many get fed up and leave. About half deliberately decrease their effort or lower the quality of their work. And incivility damages customer relationships.”³
- Bill Sutton (Stanford University) has suggested that productivity could decrease by 40% when workers experience bullying.⁴

The cultures in the Competing Values Framework are further described here. The **Create Culture** promotes individual initiative and freedom. The long-term goal is to create and grow resources. The **Collaborate Culture** focuses on the needs of the people the organization serves. Teamwork, participation and consensus are encouraged. People and relationships matter. The **Control Culture** is cautious, conservative, predictable, reliable and low cost. The **Compete Culture** is results-based and emphasizes targets, deadlines, and getting things done. Figure 2 illustrates an example of OCAI results that depict a current assessed culture in pink and the preferred culture in blue. In this example, there is a preference to work in a slightly less competitive and much less controlling environment, and move toward a much more collaborative culture.

Figure 2



² Bremer, Marcella. (2018). *Developing a Positive Culture Where People and Performance Thrive*. Motivational Press, Inc. and Cameron K, Wooten, L. (2009) *Leading Positively—Strategies for extraordinary performance*.

<https://positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/Glance-Leading-Positively.pdf>

³ Porath, Christine and Pearson, Christine. (January – February 2013) *Harvard Business Review: The Price of Incivility*. Retrieved from: <https://hbr.org/2013/01/the-price-of-incivility>

⁴ OCAI Online. Source: <https://www.ocai-online.com/about-the-Organizational-Culture-Assessment-Instrument-OCAI>

Methodology

The Assessment

Before launching the OCAI assessment, we needed to determine how OCAI assessment results would be reported. The OCAI Core Team and Leadership agreed on applying the following areas around which to organize assessment results. Each OCAI participant answered four preliminary questions to identify with the following four reportable categories:

- Government (GRU or General Government)
- Gender (male, female, non-binary)
- Labor affiliation (ATU, CWA Non Supervisor, CWA Supervisor, FOP and PBA, IAFF, MAPS Executive, MAPS Miscellaneous)
- Race/Ethnicity (Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Latino, White, I prefer not to answer).

The GRU and General Government Communications Directors (Communications) provided information about the assessment through InsideGNV and GRU Daily newsletters. The City Auditor sent emails to all staff and elected officials with the link to take the assessment. Information Technology (IT) created a QR code giving participants the option of taking the assessment using a mobile device.

The City has a few hundred employees who do not work with computers on a daily basis. Managers in those areas posted bulletins or otherwise communicated through team meetings about the assessment to encourage participation.

The anonymous OCAI assessment was launched February 1, 2021 and closed March 1, 2021. A total of **545** elected officials, management and staff completed the assessment (approximately 25% of all staff). The assessment asked each participant to read six questions and rate each question's answer selections based on their perception of the current organizational culture. The participant then answered the same questions again, rating the answer selections based upon the participant's preferred culture.

The Workshops

While the culture assessment was active during February 2021, the OCAI Core Team made preparations for conducting voluntary workshops held over three weeks in March 2021. Completion of the OCAI assessment was not a prerequisite for attending a workshop. Two members of the Core Team who participated in additional training tailored for workshop facilitators served as facilitators for all of the City's organizational culture workshops.

Each workshop was designed to accommodate 10 participants with the two facilitators. Workshop duration was condensed into one hour though more time was preferred. Workshops were held in person at the GRU Administration Building, the Emergency Operations Center, and virtually. There were a total of **166** workshop participants.

The workshops were very well received by staff due to the professionalism of the facilitators, employee willingness to engage, and establishment of ground rules that provided a safe environment for sharing ideas, including following the Chatham House Rule. When a meeting is held under the Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker, nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.⁵

Assessment and Workshop Results

OCAI Assessment Results

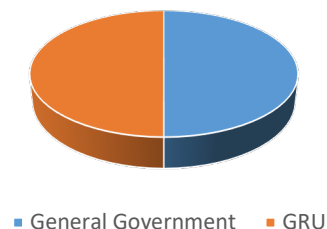
Each OCAI anonymous assessment participant received their personal results and the organization received results based on the agreed upon demographic categories. Results are primarily indicative and where participant numbers were higher, statistically significant. The assessment results are summarized below while the four vendor reports with full details are provided as additional attachments. Overall, the City prefers a less controlling culture in favor of a more collaborative culture. While overlap is expected in all four culture types, and preferences vary within the City, there is a clear desire to break down silos and collaborate more. See section **5. Internal Audit Recommendations** for steps to move toward a more collaborative culture.

The four demographic categories described in the methodology section received the following assessment participation rates.

- Government: General Government-50% ; GRU-50%
(Attachment 1. OCAI-Government Division)

- ♦ Gainesville Regional Utilities (270 participants)
- ♦ General Government (275 participants)

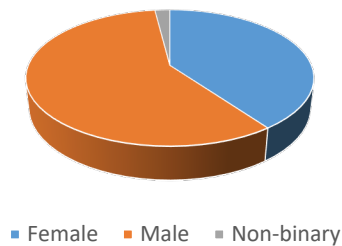
Government



- Gender: Female-40%; Male-58%; Non-binary-2%
(Attachment 2. OCAI-Gender)

- ♦ Female (216 participants)
- ♦ Male (317 participants)
- ♦ Non-binary (12 participants)

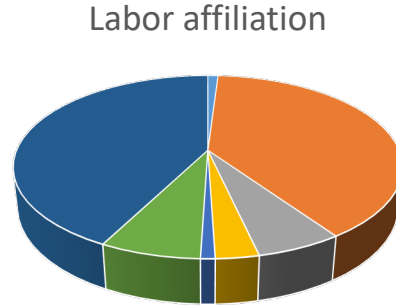
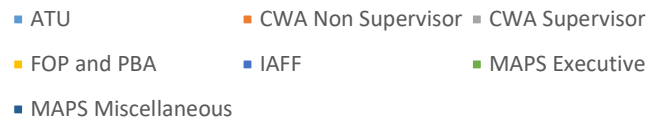
Gender



⁵ Chatham House Rules. (2021) <https://www.chathamhouse.org/about-us>

- Labor affiliation (ATU-1%; CWA Non Supervisor-39%, CWA Supervisor-6%, FOP and PBA-3%, IAFF-1%, MAPS Executive-7%, MAPS Miscellaneous-42%)
(Attachment 3. OCAI-Labor Unit)

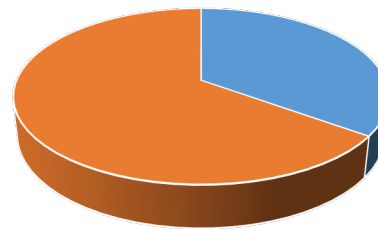
- ♦ ATU (8 participants)
- ♦ CWA Non Supervisor (212 participants)
- ♦ CWA Supervisor (35 participants)
- ♦ FOP and PBA (15 participants)
- ♦ IAFF (8 participants)
- ♦ MAPS Executive (39 participants)
- ♦ MAPS Miscellaneous (228 participants)



- Race/Ethnicity: Non-white-35%; White-65%
(Attachment 4. OCAI-Race and Ethnicity)

- ♦ American Indian or Alaska Native (9 participants)
- ♦ Asian (17 participants)
- ♦ Black or African American (85 participants)
- ♦ I prefer not to answer (35 participants)
- ♦ Latin (45 participants)
- ♦ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (5 participants)
- ♦ White (367 participants)

Race/Ethnicity

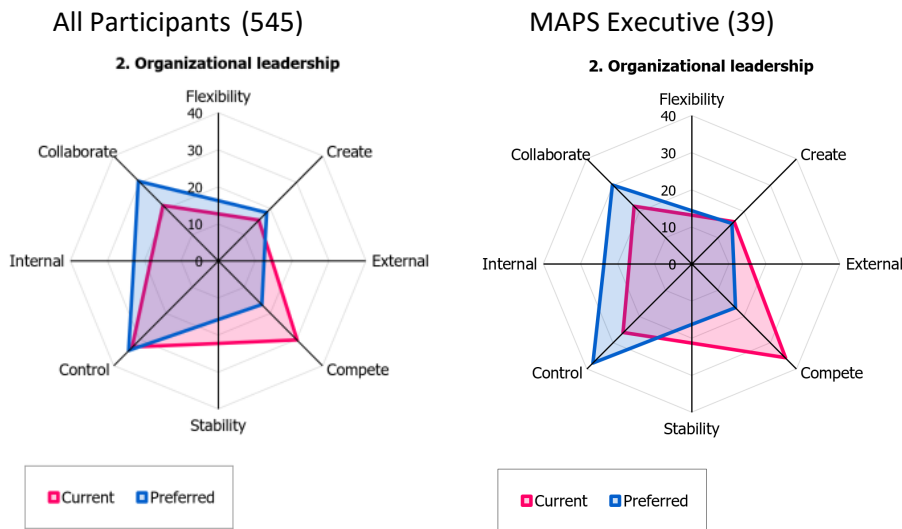


Overall, OCAI participants assessed the City's current culture as more controlling than preferred. Participants prefer to move toward a more collaborative work environment while reducing controlling behaviors. Results are indicative, rather than statistically substantiated for demographic categories where participant rates are low. See Attachments 1 through 4 for the detailed vendor reports.

Figure 4 below is indicative of different perspectives between all participants (545) and City Leadership (39) regarding organizational leadership behaviors. Leaders assessed the current culture as less controlling than most participants and preferred to move to a more controlling culture while both categories of participants prefer a much less Compete and more Collaborate culture.

Figure 4

Overall City Assessment Results



Workshop Results

The Workshops were held in March 2021, following the culture assessment, and all employees were invited to attend. Workshop participants discussed many ideas on how the City might move from its current culture toward the preferred culture. Ideas varied based upon the areas in which participants worked; however, there were recurring themes that we captured. Please see **Appendix B-Summary of OCAI Workshop Takeaways** for descriptions.

Other Factors Affecting Organizational Culture

Another way to view organizational culture is to think of the organization as the shape of an iceberg. The visible portion (above sea level) are the documented strategic priorities, policies, etc., the way we say things get done. The invisible portion (below sea level) are the traditions, values, unwritten rules, stories, etc., the way things actually get done. See Figure 3, below.

Figure 3



Factors depicted below sea level are primary areas of focus when organizational culture changes are desired. Below are a few examples of programs and activities that impact our organizational culture.

Office of Equity and Inclusion

In November 2020, 52 City senior leadership staff attended Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) training, "Advancing Racial Equity: The Role of Government." The Office of Equity and Inclusion established a citywide Equity Core Team with 24 members from key functional areas. Currently, the City's Equity Core Team is going through a series of trainings with GARE, which started in January 2021 and will continue through September of 2021.

GRU Inclusion Office

GRU General Manager, Ed Bielarski, and Chief Inclusion Officer, Yvette Carter, recently sat down to discuss the continued rollout of GRU's inclusion curriculum and programming. Since 2018, one third of GRU staff have gone through inclusion training with a goal of completing intercultural competencies within five years. The conversation can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/540282800>.

TEAM Events

Some employee volunteers are joining the Organizational Culture Core Team conversations to help organize cross-functional employee events, including a possible employee appreciation event around the time of National Employee Appreciation Day in the first week of March 2022.

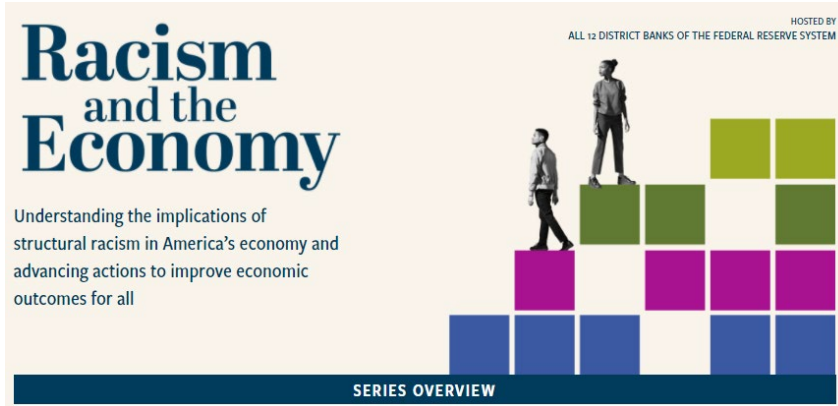
Ethics Training for All Employees and Commissioners

The City Auditor's Office recently began delivering the employee Ethics training program, Ethics 101, which resumed in April 2021 and is part of the learning and development program, Gainesville Corporate University, managed by Human Resources. Discussions are underway regarding possible approaches to host an additional Ethics training geared toward Charter Officers and Commissioners.

External Factors

While not part of the OCAI Assessment, there is potential for current events to significantly impact employee well-being and morale in the work environment. Consider:

- The pandemic effects (less personal interaction and cessation of employee events, blur of work and personal time, virtual meeting fatigue, etc.)
- The City's fiscal health, including General Fund Transfer disputes and downgrade of GRU credit ratings
- Major organizational changes, such as implementation of a new enterprise resource planning systems
- External social, political and economic factors. The 12 Federal Reserve Banks are hosting a series of virtual events to examine the ways in which structural racism manifests in America and advance actions to dismantle structural racism. The next event is scheduled for June 2, 2021. Visit <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/policy/racism-and-the-economy> for more information.

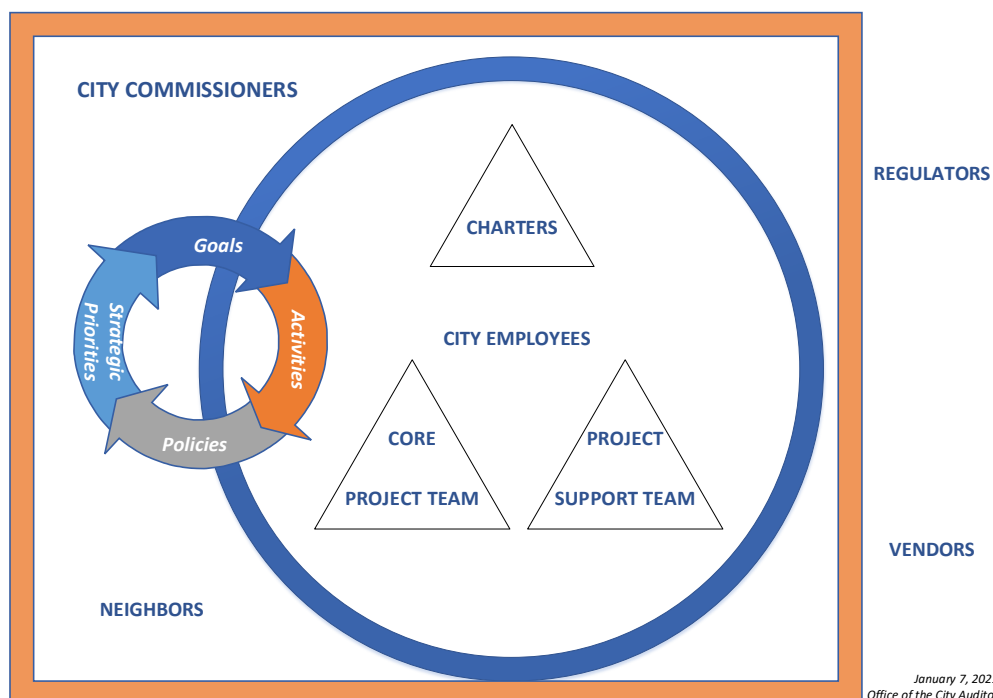


External stakeholder Considerations

City neighbors, vendors, and other external stakeholders were not included in our first organizational culture assessment; however, management may want to consider including them in future assessments and some positive culture activities. See Figure 5 below for an illustration of external and internal stakeholders.

Figure 5

CITY OF GAINESVILLE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ASSESSMENT - PEOPLE



Internal Audit Recommendations

As a result of the OCAI assessment, workshop takeaways, and discussions with Charter Officers and City Commissioners, the following recommendations are proposed as first steps in improving our organizational culture. Recommendations #2-5 collectively should be managed by Human Resources after risks and rewards are considered; therefore, statements A and B are intended to provide guidance for City Commissioners when considering next steps. See **Appendix A - Preferred Culture Recommendations** for details.

A. We recommend topic #1 Policy Research Workflow be enhanced by the Charter Officers and Policy Oversight team, and reviewed with City Commissioners for final approval.

1. **Policy Research Workflow**

The influx of numerous ideas and new project requests through the policy research workflow can lead to acceptance of new projects or programs that have not been vetted with all impacted stakeholders and internal subject matter experts.

See *Appendix A - Preferred Culture Recommendations* for details.

B. We recommend topics #2-5 be handled by Human Resources management to consider risks and rewards of various program options and identify those options that could add the most value to the City.

2. **Leadership Training**

While some leadership training is available, City Commissioners should consider including:

- a. A formal Executive Coaching program available for City Commissioners and Charter Officers, managed by Human Resources;
- b. Re-establishing a leadership development program for senior leaders and potential leaders, and
- c. Enhanced City Commissioner onboarding training.

See *Appendix A - Preferred Culture Recommendations* for details.

3. **Policy Management Framework**

The City does not have a consistent approach to managing policies, procedures and guidelines. In addition, it is not clear who must follow some policies. Policy practices across the city are inconsistent, and many policies have not been updated for several years.

See *Appendix A - Preferred Culture Recommendations* for details.

4. **Internal Conflict Resolution Assistance**

The City does not offer resources for voluntary employee conflict resolution.

See *Appendix A - Preferred Culture Recommendations* for details.

5. **Capturing Employee Suggestions**

There is no formal citywide process for employees to submit suggestions for process improvement and have their ideas seriously considered. Employees who cannot participate in the betterment of their organization may feel less engaged. Low staff engagement is a characteristic of poor organizational culture and low trust.

See *Appendix A - Preferred Culture Recommendations* for details.

Conclusion - Sustainable Cultural Change

The City's first organizational culture assessment results indicate an overall preference to strongly increase Collaborate behaviors, slightly increase Create behaviors, and decrease Compete and Control behaviors. Most of the recommendations in this report are actionable first steps toward an effective organizational culture program that do not require additional City resources. Some of the recommendations do require additional resources, such as activities requiring Human Resources staff time and funding for professional services. Use of technology and data analysis capabilities may help automate some processes and facilitate better communication and decision-making.

Our organizational culture is a set of values and behaviors that require consistent attention to ensure the City's people, processes and technology are resilient and align with the City's mission. City leadership may consider launching another culture assessment in two to three years, perhaps reporting at the department level at that time, to gauge impact of positive culture efforts. According to Deloitte's *Five workforce trends to watch in 2021*, "A complex and shifting environment makes it impossible to rely on point-in-time data or data that covers only part of the workforce. Instead, an organization needs a holistic view of its people's sentiments, norms, and behaviors to understand its culture, pinpoint risks, and decide what must be done to achieve its aspirations."

We would like to thank the City Commissioners, Charter Officers, Leadership and all staff for their support and participation during this culture assessment. We look forward to continued engagement as organizational culture becomes a sustainable focus area in our day-to-day activities.

2021 Organizational Culture Assessment Cross-functional Core Team

The Office of the City Auditor would like to express gratitude to all assessment and workshop participants, and the Core Team who volunteered their time and expertise to engage with staff, coordinate communications, facilitate workshops, leverage technology, and collaborate to help improve our organizational culture and build trust.

Ginger Bigbie, City Auditor

Yvette Carter, Chief Inclusion Officer

Omichele Gainey, City Clerk

T.C. Kelley, Interim Director, Enterprise IT Strategy & Governance

Malisa McCreedy, Director of Transportation and Mobility

Shelby Taylor, Office of Communications and Engagement Director

David Warm, Communications Director

Office of the City Auditor

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City Auditor Website: <http://www.cityofgainesville.org/CityAuditor>

Form for submitting ideas for internal audits: <https://form.jotform.com/210403411199143>

Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline

Staff can report an incident directly to the City Auditor, or

To anonymously report an incident, call 1-844-818-2492 or visit: <https://www.lighthouse-services.com/cityofgainesville>

To report other issues:

Harassment or Discrimination Issues, call the Equal Opportunity Office at 334-5051.

Employee Relations Issues, call Human Resources at 334-5077.

Appendix A - Preferred Culture Detailed Recommendations

Recommendations #2-5 collectively should be managed by Human Resources after risks and rewards are considered; therefore, items A and B provide guidance for City Commissioners when considering next steps.

A. We recommend topic #1 Policy Research Workflow be enhanced by the Charter Officers and Policy Oversight team, and reviewed with City Commissioners for final approval.

1. Policy Research Workflow

Current Culture

The influx of numerous ideas and new project requests through the policy research workflow can lead to acceptance of new projects or programs that have not been vetted with all impacted stakeholders and internal subject matter experts.

Resources needed for new projects or programs can divert from resources already allocated to provision of core services, and leave staff feeling unsure of City goals and priorities, which some indicate, seem to fluctuate frequently.

Preferred Culture Recommendation

City Commissioners and Charter Officers should agree on an enhanced policy research process workflow that:

- Ensures new projects or programs align with the City's mission, vision and strategic plan;
- Draws on leadership and impacted stakeholder subject matter expertise before and after research commences;
- Estimates resources needed for a new project or program as well as resources that may need to be reallocated if the project or program were accepted; and
- Provides a mechanism for determining how a new project or program should be prioritized in a consistent and equitable manner with current core services, programs and project plans.

B. We recommend topics #2-5 be handled by Human Resources management to consider risks and rewards of various program options and identify those options that could add the most value to the City.

2. Leadership Training

Current Culture

While some leadership training is available, City Commissioners and Charter Officers do not have a formal Executive Coaching program.

Preferred Culture Recommendation

- a) The City should establish an **Executive Coaching** program, linked with leadership development and organizational effectiveness. Executive Coaching comes with a higher cost and should be used selectively. It can be especially beneficial for Elected Officials and Charter Officers by helping participants improve communications and interactions, change management, organizational culture, team effectiveness and employee engagement. A successful Executive Coaching program relies on participants who are open to feedback and are willing to change. Source: <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/organizational-and-employee-development/pages/executive-coaching-costs.aspx>
- b) The City should reestablish an employee **leadership program** as part of citywide succession planning efforts. The inactive Emerging Leaders program was designed to assist participants in the development of their knowledge and skills to further their careers and be competitive for positions in the organization while assisting the organization in retaining its top performers. The Emerging Leaders Development Program was a comprehensive, two-year program that helped participants gain exposure to many areas of the organization, develop critical skills necessary to be successful leaders, work on team projects, and pursue opportunities to participate in rotational assignments, as appropriate. The program started in 2013 with 23 participants successfully completing the program but is not currently active.
- c) Leadership should enhance the **City Commissioner onboarding** experience that provides critical information to City Commissioners at the time they begin their first term. The onboarding process has recently been enhanced and improvements continue. Onboarding should include ongoing training on the activities and services provided by various functional areas, leadership best practices, and fiscal management topics, including the Government Finance Officers Association's *Elected Officials Finance Guide: Understanding the Fiscal Health of Your Community*. The materials should be available on demand in a central location for easy access.

3. Policy Management Framework

Current Culture

The City does not have a consistent approach to managing policies, procedures and guidelines. In addition, it is not clear who must follow some policies. Some functional areas, such as Human Resources, do maintain a central inventory of policies and require all employees to review them annually; however, policy practices across the city are inconsistent, and many have not been updated for several years.

Policies establish boundaries for employee performance and behavior. When policies are not clear, current, consistent, or enforced, organizational activities may become inefficient, may not align with strategic priorities, and may negatively affect employee morale and organizational culture.

Preferred Culture Recommendation

City Leadership and management should adopt a citywide policy management framework that formally establishes key requirements for all City policies. Human Resources may be in the best position to drive the development and maintenance of the citywide policy management framework. The policy management framework should include:

- Description of events that trigger policy creation;
- Process to develop, review (including equity impact assessment), approve, communicate, implement, monitor compliance and update policy;
- Required policy components, such as purpose, definitions, scope, principles or guidance, roles and responsibilities, and version history or change log;
- Expectations for departmental creation and maintenance of procedures and guidelines that align with policy;
- Establishment of a central repository (e.g., intranet, Workday) for all City policies.

4. *Internal Conflict Resolution Assistance*

Current Culture

The City does not offer resources for voluntary employee conflict resolution.

Preferred Culture Recommendation

Human Resources should consider providing internal or external resources for voluntary conflict resolution. The first steps toward resolving work-related issues involve open communication. When colleagues require assistance to help with open communication, or need help when issues are unresolved, the Human Resources business partner or conflict resolution designee can offer guidance and suggestions. Voluntary conflict resolution efforts would most likely benefit peer-to-peer conflicts. Human Resources subject matter experts should design the program to best fit the organization's preferred culture of becoming less controlling and more collaborative.

The Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) provides extensive resources. "HR professionals and conflict management experts recommend that HR get involved in workplace conflicts when:

- Employees are threatening to quit over the problem. Recruiting and training are expensive; it is often cheaper to work out a solution.
- Disagreements are getting personal, and respect between employees is being lost.
- Conflicts are affecting morale and organizational success."

SHRM recommends ten steps to resolve conflicts:

1. Set ground rules. Ask all parties to treat each other with respect and to make an effort to listen and understand others' views.

2. Ask each participant to describe the conflict, including desired changes. Direct participants to use “I” statements, not “you” statements. They should focus on specific behaviors and problems rather than people.
3. Ask participants to restate what others have said.
4. Summarize the conflict based on what you have heard and obtain agreement from participants.
5. Brainstorm solutions. Discuss all of the options in a positive manner.
6. Rule out any options that participants agree are unworkable.
7. Summarize all possible options for a solution.
8. Assign further analysis of each option to individual participants.
9. Make sure all parties agree on the next steps.
10. Close the meeting by asking participants to shake hands, apologize and thank each other for working to resolve the conflict.

Source: <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/Pages/070815-conflict-management.aspx>

5. Capturing Employee Suggestions

Current Culture

There is no formal citywide process for employees to submit suggestions for process improvement and have their ideas seriously considered. Employees who cannot participate in the betterment of their organization may feel less engaged. Low staff engagement is a characteristic of poor organizational culture and low trust.

Kathleen Ryan and Daniel Oestreich, in their book, *Driving Fear out of the Workplace: Creating the High-Trust High-Performance Organization*, address the inverse correlation of fear and trust in the work place. As fear decreases and trust improves, the organizational performance and worker satisfaction improves. In the 2008 best seller, *Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything*, Stephen Covey states trust is the single most important factor of successful organizations. In the January 31, 2021 Forbes article, 5 Key Characteristics of High Performing Teams, Ashira Prossack states, “The biggest factor separating high performing teams from average teams is trust.”⁶

According to SHRM, “Employees want to feel valued and respected; they want to know that their work is meaningful and their ideas are heard. Highly engaged employees are more productive and committed to the organizations in which they work.”

Source: <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/sustainingemployeeengagement.aspx>

Preferred Culture Recommendations

Listening to employees with different perspectives fosters inclusive environments and promotes more equitable decision-making.

⁶Prossack, A. *Forbes* (2021) <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ashiraprossack1/2021/01/31/5-key-characteristics-of-high-performing-teams/?sh=66867dd9351d>

Employee Suggestions

Leadership and management should:

- Within functional areas – create opportunities for intake of process improvement suggestions, especially in areas that appear to have very low culture assessment participation rates;
- Across functional areas – create opportunities for process improvement suggestions that may be submitted from staff in any department;
- Consider developing a feedback mechanism, such as a dashboard, to let staff know their contributions are recognized even if the action cannot be taken.

Small Focus Groups

Leadership and management should continue small cross-functional focus groups. The organizational culture assessment core team should train volunteers to assist with future culture workshops and establish a sustainable process for conducting the workshops periodically. Leadership and management should identify other opportunities for conducting periodic employee focus groups, especially in areas where culture assessment participation rates appear to be very low. This activity was the top polling result when employees were asked, *“How would you like to share new ideas or process-improvement suggestions?”*. See poll #3 in Appendix C - Employee Newsletter Polls.

Collaboration and Relationship Building

Leadership and management should seek opportunities for collaboration within and across teams as appropriate. Through relationship building and collaboration, management can benefit by hearing from staff with diverse perspectives and subject matter expertise. Collaboration helps break down the walls or silos between departments and contributes toward shared goals and purposes. Staff working in different functional areas often have different perspectives which may not foster collaboration. Management should consider various ways to build relationships in with diverse groups of workers, such as team lunches or events.

Team Events and Employee Appreciation

Leadership, management and staff should identify opportunities to create or resume team and citywide employee events, including National Employee Appreciation Day recognized the first Friday of March each year. These events also provide an opportunity for City Commissioners to interact with staff in a safe environment.

Appendix B - Summary of OCAI Workshop Takeaways

The following workshop takeaways were aggregated from organizational culture workshop discussions held during March 2021 with 166 participants.

Appreciation: Some staff feel only mistakes are acknowledged but would like their successes acknowledged and appreciated. Some staff may do things that benefit their areas but not others. Employees are the City's top resource. Employees indicate they desire a friendly work environment and family atmosphere in their departments and between GRU and GG. There are no employee town halls. Employees need to feel a sense of agency and it is difficult to create that in a control culture.

Empowerment and Support: Some staff don't feel encouraged to speak up, innovate and problem solve. There is a general sense of lack of empowerment. Staff want to know why they are doing something. Empowerment is necessary for the organization to move toward a more collaborative culture.

Communication: Staff feel the lines of communication between departments need to be open. They feel leadership may be unwilling to compromise and their opinions are not valued. Decisions are often not communicated well to staff. Leaders should seek input from impacted staff. People have learned how to navigate the hierarchy but it is exhausting. Information does not flow.

Collaborative culture: Most organizational culture assessment results show staff want more collaboration. Staff want silos eliminated to support collaboration. Staff would like to be empowered to collaborate with employees from other areas. Encouraging relationships across the city helps build collaboration and trust. Staff could identify their counterpart in another functional area and establish a collaborative relationship. Collaboration builds teamwork.

City Commission: Staff would like better communication and consistent messages. They feel "tossed around".

Community: Community input is necessary and important but not a lot of the community gets involved. Loudest may not represent majority viewpoint.

Compensation: Staff would like to see more competitive pay to attract qualified talent and help retain employees.

Competitive culture: While some aspects of competitive culture are beneficial, staff feels competition hinders collaboration and building of trust.

Control culture: While some aspects of control culture are beneficial, too much control hinders creativity and collaboration necessary for high performance. Too much control is stifling. Staff

working in a military control type of environment would like to see more empowerment and internal engagement.

Education and Training: Staff want access to training rather than being told it is not a priority. Staff want to become better at their jobs and would like better cross training within and across departments. Management who establish vision need quality leadership training; managers need better project management skills; staff need better technical training with next level training available. All would benefit from more training to improve communication skills.

Enterprise Resource Planning Systems (ERP): ERP implementation can be very difficult and can negatively impact culture. Staff would like better communication and understanding how the ERP will impact their jobs.

Metrics: Metrics may not result in process improvement if we don't measure the right processes or place too much importance on the wrong metrics.

One City: Staff feel if we want to be one city we would eliminate silos.

Policies: Some staff feel policies and procedures can prevent collaboration and creativity and are not consistent across departments.

Resources: Staff feel they are being asked to do more with the same or fewer resources to the point of burnout. Competition for limited resources may discourage collaboration.

Strategic Objectives: Some staff feel the City's direction is constantly changing. They would like stability so everyone knows what everyone is doing.

Team building events: Staff would like to resume team and citywide employee events that build teamwork and collaboration. Workshop participants enjoyed participating in workshops with staff from other departments.

Technology: Technology is improving communication in the City but some staff do not have equitable access.

Trust: Trust is needed for collaboration but it takes time to build trust. Some staff feel they are not trusted to perform the work they were hired to do. Employees must be accountable to be trustworthy (all levels). Staff should bring forth solutions when discussing problems. Some staff indicate we blame negative outcomes on someone else. When an employee breaks the trust, hold the individual accountable, not the entire department/division.

Select quotes from workshop participation:

If all the above comes together, we would all be happy to share with our customers the vision and what their government can do to better their lives.

Collaboration will be difficult without the depth of relationships. It will take time to establish trust.

We aren't asked, "Will this help?" My opinion has value. There isn't much compromise.

Seems like changes are made and you don't know that a change was made. There is a lack of communication.

We miss city group activities. They build teamwork and collaboration.

Stop the "us" vs "them".

Appendix C - Employee Newsletter Polls

Poll #1

Week of March 29:

Thanks to everybody who participated in a culture assessment workshop over the past three weeks. Your observations and insights will help the City of Gainesville further define its organizational culture. As we analyze the information we received during several thought-provoking conversations, we'd like to continue gathering feedback from you. Please take this one-question poll about our organization's culture; we'll publish the responses in next week's Positive Culture Corner.

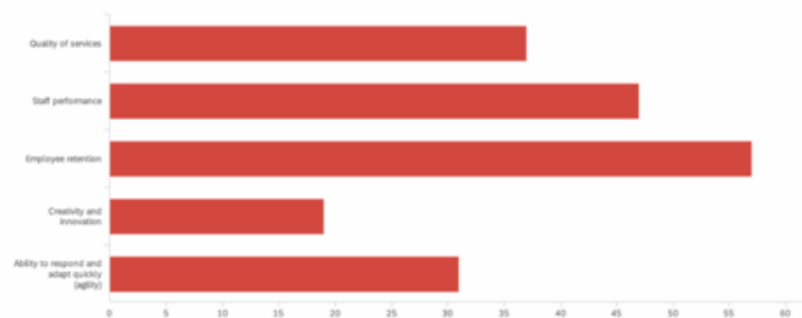
Select two work outcomes you feel are most influenced by our organization's culture.

Answer selections:

- *Quality of Services*
- *Staff Performance*
- *Employee Retention*
- *Creativity and Innovation*
- *Ability to Respond and Adapt Quickly (Agility)*

Results

Positive Culture Corner: Poll Results



Thank you for taking last week's Positive Culture poll. We asked you to "select two work outcomes you feel are most influenced by our organization's culture." The poll received nearly 200 responses. Please see the results and check back next Thursday for a new Positive Culture poll.

Quality of Service - 20%
Staff Performance - 24%
Employee Retention - 30%
Creativity and Innovation - 10%
Ability to Respond and Adapt Quickly (Agility) - 16%

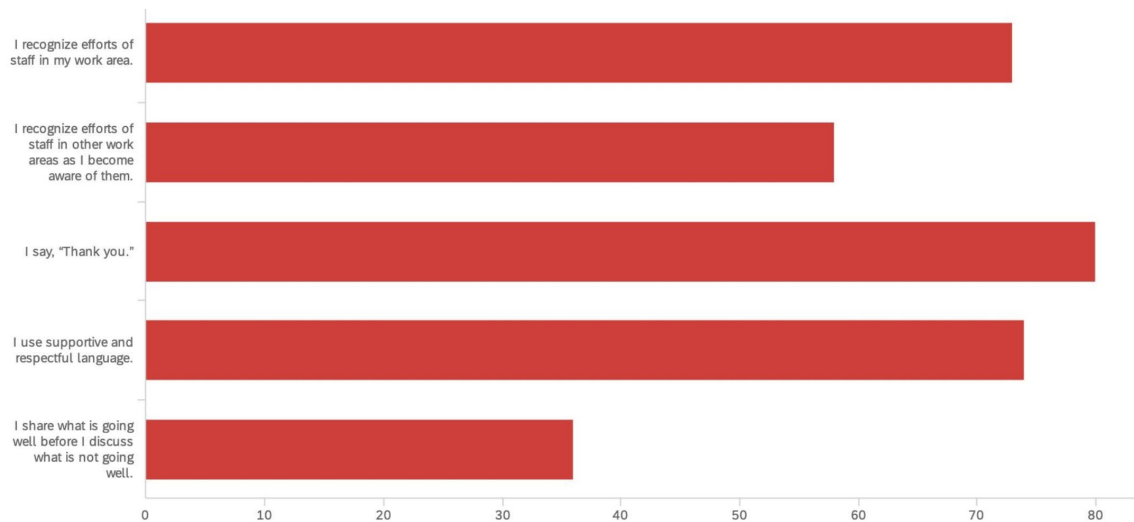
Poll #2

Week of April 12

Expressing appreciation for others often leads to a positive culture. How do you show gratitude in the workplace? Select all that apply.

- *I recognize efforts of staff in my work area*
- *I recognize efforts of staff in other work areas as I become aware of them*
- *I say, "Thank you"*
- *I use supportive and respectful language*
- *I share what is going well before I discuss what is not going well*

Results



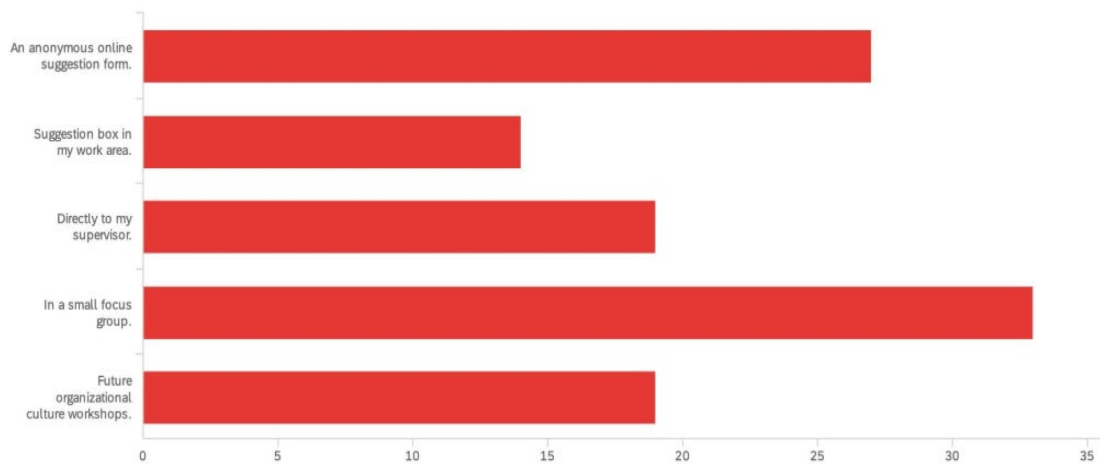
Poll #3

Week of April 26

Employees sometimes feel their new ideas or process-improvement suggestions are not valued. How would you like to share new ideas or process-improvement suggestions? Select all that apply.

- *An anonymous online suggestion form*
- *Suggestion box in my work area*
- *Directly to my supervisor*
- *In a small focus group*
- *Future organizational culture workshops*

Results



An anonymous online suggestion form - 24%

Suggestion box in my work area - 13%

Directly to my supervisor - 17%

In a small focus group - 29%

Future organizational culture workshops - 17%

Appendix D - References

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