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December 5, 2016

Mr. Paul Folkers
Assistant Manager, City of Gainesville
200 East University Avenue
Gainesville FL 32601

Thank you for the sustained effort you and your team have made over the past year or more, to consider a forward-looking approach to the revitalization of neighborhood infrastructures in Gainesville, using Golf View as a case study. As you know, it has been an involved commitment on your part (the City of Gainesville), and for GRU staff members, Golf View residents, and University of Florida faculty and students.

As a reminder, three UF faculty members from the College of Design, Construction, and Planning committed one half of their teaching assignments for the spring semester, working with 20 students across three disciplines. We estimate that UF faculty and students invested nearly 5,600 hours on the project, which would have cost, very conservatively, \$265,000 if private consultants had been hired.

We write today to respond to your October 13th email, giving your team guidance which will allow all of us to move forward.

In short, we feel we have no real choice but to proceed with the base option you proposed, to replace identified water/sewer infrastructure and mill and resurface all the roads. We request that you include neighborhood representatives in each step of this project moving forward, and will describe our specific requests in more detail, below.

We came to this determination after much discussion and further research. As a neighborhood, we would not meet the legal requirements to submit grant requests, nor do we have the expertise to identify or write such grants, in any case, without the help of the City. Because, like many older neighborhoods, we have residents struggling to meet increased tax obligations and the daily financial challenges of living in older homes, we do not have the internal financial capacity to perform this experiment without partners. We have explored such partnerships as best we can, given the short time line, but as you surely realize, such relationships are rarely built on the fly, especially with ad hoc groups such as our neighborhood.

We would like to address each of the points we have discussed with your team this fall, as you outlined them in your October 13th email.

1. Establish a special assessment district. The neighborhood discussed this at length, but we do not feel we could achieve 100% neighborhood support to increase our taxes for this purpose. We note that our neighborhood, like most near the University, struggles with absentee landlords and their interests typically do not align with those of residents who live in their own homes.

Like most other neighborhoods, we feel we have contributed significantly to Gainesville's tax rolls over the past several decades. We regret that, despite the substantial "sweat equity" we have contributed to this project already, the City is not able to consider using Golf View to prototype a forward-looking infrastructure system.

2. Explore installing GRUCom fiber and receive GRUCom services as part of the infrastructure upgrade project. One of our committee members has contacted GRU as you recommended. We look forward to coordinating this effort with your team in the months to come.

3. Consider undergrounding utilities. This item needs additional discussion at the neighborhood level, working with a knowledgeable GRU staff member. We note that the GRU estimate is rough at this point, and our neighbors are not clear about which lines would be placed underground. There is interest in undergrounding at least some of the lines.

4. Presentation to the City Commission. As you and I have discussed, we would like to present the studio's work, and we believe January 19th, 2017, to be the better alternative. Could you let me know the precise deadline for backup material, and where I should submit a pdf of an abbreviated slide show?

5. Neighborhood prioritization of desired/financially feasible improvements, such as undergrounding utilities, etc. The neighborhood remains committed to improving our infrastructure as best we can, working with your team. Specifically, 1) we would like to refine the estimates presented to underground utilities, and decide which utilities we can afford to underground, 2) we would like to work with Public Works to redesign traffic flow and designate on-street parking before the roads are repaved, and 3) we would like to work with Public Works to design a solution to the ongoing water seepage across the road at the bottom of the City-owned entry circle.

In addition to these issues, we would like to communicate two final points.

First, we want to make it clear that we are not confident that the ongoing water leaks in the street are simply the result of faulty connections from the water main to homes. We believe they may be the result of a subsurface inadequate to carry the weight of today's trucks, including waste management trucks. We note that many leaks occur in the middle of the street (not near the curb), and at least one very recent patch is again leaking. It was for this reason that we began to explore replacing, not just milling, the road, nearly two years ago. If water breaks continue to occur following the resurfacing project, new patches will immediately appear, and the City will continue to leak valuable, potable water. We hope Public Works will core the existing road, including its subsurface, across the neighborhood, to determine the depth of the base before proceeding.

(To provide historical perspective, the 1963 Golf View history written by Raymond W. Blacklock states that the streets were first paved in 1926. The Golf View Association took action in 1945 to resurface the streets with tar and crushed rock, because the County refused to pave dead end streets at that time. It may be that this inadequate subsurface continues to plague the neighborhood to this day. The City incorporated Golf View in 1962, and resurfaced the streets when sewer lines were installed in 1963. Neighbors remember one resurfacing project since that time, in the early 1980s.)

Second, our neighborhood remains optimistic that bundling utilities in an underground "chase" that can be discretely accessed to repair or replace utilities is a good idea. We hope that you will explore this innovation in another neighborhood in Gainesville, perhaps a new neighborhood, if Golf View is not considered suitable. We believe this design provides several benefits, including the creation of a new industry--with jobs and potentially intellectual property attached to it--and that it simply makes good sense. If we can be of help with this project for another neighborhood, we remain interested in participating as citizen-advisors.

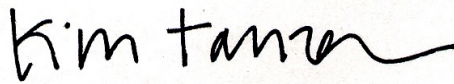
We also hope you will consider taking advantage of UF's recent offer to provide seed funding for neighborhood-based projects, by using our Golf View project as your first such collaborative effort.

In summary, at the outset we realized we were proposing a bold path forward, that might serve as a model for neighborhoods across the nation. And, after more than a year of trying to move beyond the status quo, we have hit a wall. We are hopeful that our presentation to the City Commission will provide enough bread crumbs to allow some future city and some future neighborhood to follow, to move beyond a patch-and-repair approach to a more comprehensive and ambitious infrastructure future.

Because I have posted our final report and other related essays online, a range of design and construction professionals and policy-makers from around the world have read about of this project. In this way, too, we hope that our efforts will contribute to a larger, much-needed global conversation.

In the meantime, we are grateful for your support throughout the project. We look forward to a continued positive working relationship as we proceed to implement the base option your team recommended.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Tanzer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Kim Tanzer,

On behalf of Chris Monahan, Jean and David Chalmers, Gary Edelman, and the Golf View Neighborhood Association

Cc: Dean Chimay Anumba, College of Design, Construction, and Planning, UF