



City of Gainesville

Office of the City Manager

City Manager Memorandum No. 200054

To: The Honorable Mayor and City Commission
From: Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager *L.R. Feldman*
Date: October 30, 2020
Re: **City Manager Accomplishments**

As of the writing of this memorandum I have served you and the neighbors of the City of Gainesville as your City Manager for just under one (1) year, the last seven and one-half months during the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this memorandum is to outline achievements during that period. While the General Government team of community builders have had many accomplishments, I wish to highlight specific activities that I have either initiated or spearheaded (in no particular order of importance).

- On January 23, 2020 (with a revision on May 1, 2020) established the operational paradigm for the function of the portion of General Government under the City Manager's purview.
 - Promulgated the use of term "neighbor" to replace "citizen", "taxpayer", "resident" and other terms when referring to those individuals we serve.
 - Promulgated the use of the term "community builder" to replace "employee" to recognize the common mission and effort to build community for our neighbors.
 - Reorganized and consolidated various functions of General Government to create efficiencies, avoid duplication of efforts and reduce the span of control resulting in fewer departments and the establishment of offices to provide specific functionality within the City Manager's Office.
 - Placed the public safety functions as direct reports to the City Manager.
 - Aligned the Communications and Neighbor Engagement functions of General Government within one office.
 - Established equity and inclusion as an enterprise-wide function assigned to an Assistant City Manager.
 - Set forth the process of establishing a vision, mission, strategic plan and an annual action plan for the City.
- Organized a strategic planning effort involving administrative staff, other Charter Officers and the City Commission resulting in the adoption of a citywide vision,

mission, strategic plan, annual action plan of August 6, 2020. The annual action plan identified five (5) top priorities and eight (8) priorities to guide the work of General Government.

- Established PerformGNV as the accountability tool for the strategic plan and annual action plan elements under the responsibility of the City Manager.
- Brought to fruition the Annual Neighbor Survey to establish a system to benchmark perceptions of service delivery against other peer communities as well as creating historical data to continually measure neighbor impressions. *[Note: this year this was completed out of sequence; starting in 2021 the neighbor survey will be conducted prior to the annual action plan and budget to feed necessary inputs into both processes.]*. The neighbor survey is also deployed in an interactive tool to allow community builders and neighbors alike to explore its data.
- Examined the existing debt of the General Government of the City resulting in the issuance of \$206 million in new 2020 Pension Obligation Bonds. The transaction refunded 95% of the Unfunded Accrued Actuarial Liability (UAAL) of the City's 2 pension plans resulting in a combined Present Value Savings of \$114.5 million. This translates to \$16.8 million in savings in the first five (5) years for General Government and \$14.3 million in savings for GRU for the same period.
 - Despite the financial uncertainty resulting from revenue fluctuations due to COVID-19, the City maintained its Aa2 rating with Moody's and AA with Fitch.
- In the area of Budget and Finance:
 - Delivered a proposed General Government budget with no increase in the tax rate, the fire assessment fee or other fees which was adopted by the City Commission.
 - Retimed the City's contribution to its pension plans and saving the General Government over \$570,000 for FY21.
 - Reduced the reliance on "vacancy savings" to fund ongoing operational programs.
 - Proposed a new General Fund Balance policy which established a higher minimum fund balance and established a maximum fund balance ceiling and incorporated a minimum balance for emergencies. The policy was adopted by the City Commission.
 - Updated the City's Investment Policies (including a newly adopted policy for the Evergreen Cemetery Trust) and established quarterly reporting to the City Commission of the status of investments.
 - Negotiated a new multi-year agreement with the Alachua County School Board resulting in an increase in funding by the School Board of the School Resource Officer program.
- Co-designed the effort with Gainesville Police Department resulting in a reallocation of resources to increase funding for mental health co-responders, the dedication of

funding for the Reichert House and BOLD programs, and the deployment of body worn cameras for all sworn and some non-sworn field personnel (service technicians).

- Guided the General Government through the COVID-19 response with minimal disruption to municipal services; Implemented remote working for a majority of community builders and redeployed community builders to other vital tasks to avoid layoffs and furloughs; created an online database to allow neighbors to track the City's enforcement efforts regarding facial coverings and business capacity compliance. Developed the Streatery program designed to move indoor bar/entertainment activity to the outdoors. Additionally, spearheaded an effort (currently underway) to identify methods to influence behavior to assist in efforts to reduce community spread.
- Initiated a Downtown Masterplan process, including the securing of a partnership for funding with the University of Florida, which will kick-off in the first quarter of 2021.
- Consolidated the General Government's real estate activities (sale/acquisition/leasing) into one office reporting to an Assistant City Manager. The City retained the services of a broker to assist in this activity and is currently preparing an inventory of all municipal land assets which can be more effectively utilized for opportunities such as affordable housing.
 - Proposed a modification to the City's Land Disposition Policy which allows for the more active marketing of municipal property for affordable housing. The policy was adopted by the City Commission. One letter of intent has been received by the City since the policy's adoption.
- During this past year I continued to serve on the Board of Directors of ICMA-RC (the entity which administers the City's 401(a) and 457 plans) and the National Civic League. I was also elected as a Tri-Chair of the National Homeland Security Consortium. I continue to be an active member of the National League of Cities' Crime Prevention and Public Safety Committee and the Florida League of Cities' Municipal Administration Committee.

Let me conclude by emphasizing that none of the above efforts were singular in nature. I have been fortunate to work with a great team of hard working and creative community builders who have been instrumental in many accomplishments. We remain committed to the mission of building community.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve.

WE BUILD COMMUNITY.