

## Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor and members of the City Commission

From: Anthony Lyons, City Manager *ALL*

Subject: Transition from position of City Manager

Date: December 11, 2018

In November, 2006, I began my career with the City of Gainesville as manager of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), then as its director, followed by interim planning and development director, executive director of the blue ribbon committee on economic competitiveness, interim city manager and city manager. All told, between my two tenures and six positions as of February 14, 2019 I will celebrate 11 years of service to the citizens of this wonderful city.

Although the city has experienced tremendous change during this time period, and I have been a part of much of it, no single project or event defines this. However, there is much to reflect upon, a small portion of which I would like to chronicle for you today.

When I arrived here, the urban core had seen some revitalization, however what truly attracted me to the city, among many personal reasons, was the knowledge that there existed great potential in many urban neighborhoods that had little investment for decades. I was drawn to the brownfield site(s), the vacant parking lots, homes that were in significant disrepair, a university context area that did not match its national stature, the lack of a start-up community, the forgotten histories, a lack of cultural facilities, downtrodden public parks or public spaces, a downtown hospital past its prime, and I could go on. You see, for me, what I love, and what the community desired, was for all of that to change, and change it did!

In the following, and in no particular order, many of those community desires of investment, business development, rebuilt infrastructure and hope, has occurred. I will share just a few examples of the projects that I worked on in full or in part, as a reminder, for all of us on just how much the city has changed.

1. Depot Park - an environmental blemish now home to a world class park and Cade Museum
2. Helyx Bridge on SW 13 St. - a barbed wired former rail bridge now iconic gateway depicting twisted railroad tracks into DNA
3. Bo Diddley Plaza - tired and not well used, now fully renovated with an information center, new coffee shop and rebuilt a former gas station into a local eatery
4. Lynch Park - once home to crime now a fully renovated park/dog park
5. NW 5th Avenue Tot Lot - from rusted and broken equipment to brand new and usable
6. SW 5th Avenue pocket park - once an overgrown median now an elegant public art space
7. Cotton Club - new cultural facility born out of numerous buildings in disrepair
8. A. Quinn Jones Museum - a donated house turns into a full-time cultural center on the National Registry of historic places

9. Innovation Square - from a former public hospital site to many new and rebuilt buildings, parks, trails and businesses
10. The Power District - former utility operations site now a planned (food hall, housing, waterway, businesses) redevelopment district. Catalyst Building; first building renovated which now houses a drone company and shared UF/City work space
11. Cornerstone - once home to an underperforming city owned incubator, now a successful start up facility run by Santa Fe College. In addition an international company is building a large new building on the campus with many additional building sites available for similar new business growth opportunities.
12. CRA Office Building on NW 5th Avenue - one of the first LEED certified commercial buildings off campus and first new building built in neighborhood in decades.
13. Hampton Inn and Suites (downtown) - turned a city owned parking lot into highest value per acre property in the county
14. Many rebuilt roads including South Main St., NW 5th Avenue, Depot Avenue, SW 6th St.
15. Model Block Homes - renovated or built new homes in Pleasant Street and 5th Avenue neighborhoods, first in many years
16. Heartwood - former condemned housing site now under construction for 34 homes subdivision, including thirty percent of it set aside for affordable housing.
17. Army Reserve - vacated former army site now a renovated structure as local company HQ.

Add to this the thousands of new housing units, retail stores and hundreds of millions of dollars in private sector investments and it is easy to see the story of revitalization that is happening everywhere within the urban core of Gainesville and throughout much of the community. All of the above projects have allowed for a wonderful foundation upon which we could build. Each project has hundreds of stories about how it came to be, who worked on them, the intent behind each design detail, the impact it has had and will have, and the sheer fortitude it takes to accomplish one of those on the list, let alone all of them.

The City of Gainesville is now discussed on a national and international scale. We are being written about in the New York Times, the Atlantic, Washington Post, Fast Company Magazine, an Australian Marketing publication, and numerous other national media outlets. Our departments are being written about in their respective trade journals. Many of our department directors are national figures in their field. Think tanks are studying our work, examples include the New America Foundation and the Manhattan Institute. National and International foundations and non-profits are working with the city for the first time - Bloomberg Philanthropies, National League of Cities, MacArthur Foundation and the Kettering Foundation, to name a few.

We are now leaders in thinking about ways to have a better citizen experience, our Citizen Centered movement (viewed as a leader in civic innovation worldwide), our budding relationship with the University of Florida is the envy of many cities, our mobility plans are shaping up to be amongst the best of class, the smart cities projects will become in short order the finest in the nation and all told have won well more than 50 local, national and international awards.

And yet, as proud as I am about having led the development of some of Gainesville's newest iconic destinations and projects, brought national and international attention to the City of Gainesville, it pales in comparison to the pride I have in working with some of the finest people and minds in our field. To accomplish so much, in this brief time period, takes many individuals working together. It takes creative tension, honesty, teamwork, thoughtfulness, mindfulness,

tenacity, trust, hard work, vision, care for one another and, at many times, a teflon suit. I certainly cannot name each here, though I would like to, each of those stellar employees past and present, however I would like to say thank you for allowing me the honor of serving and working along side of you. We have an extremely diverse workforce representing nearly all corners of the globe, with many fine employees who have worked in various areas of city government, sometimes under challenging circumstances, and through sheer will and determination, built and rebuilt the core of the city.

Now, to the task at hand, a transition from the position of City Manager. There is always a time in life, personal or career, that change must happen. We are at one of those times today and I ask that you consider a plan to allow for this to occur in the best interest of the City. With that, and my personal and the City's future in mind, I have discussed a transition plan with Mayor Poe under which I am offering to resign my position as City Manager, subject to the City Commission's approval of the resignation, the first amendment to my employment agreement, and transition plan.

The Mayor and I recommend that the City Commission on December 13, 2018, the scheduled General Policy meeting, approve the attached amendment to my employment agreement, which provides for me to voluntarily resign from employment with the City as City Manager effective January 18, 2019 at 5 p.m., and in consideration for such, twenty weeks of severance pay and payment for my unused and accrued paid time off. Secondly, I will serve the City in an advisory role until February 14, 2019 in order for me to assist the selected interim city manager during this administrative leadership change. In this position I would be a time limited temporary City employee, receive the same rate of compensation and benefits as I currently do, and will be available by phone or in person for meetings as needed or requested.

Throughout my career and years here I have enjoyed seeing the City prosper in numerous ways and will forever look back at this time with fondness and pride. I believe I have led the City in all of my roles with professionalism, care and the utmost integrity.

If the City Commission is agreeable to the aforementioned terms of resignation and transition I request the Commission approve a motion to approve the Amendment to the Employment Agreement between the City of Gainesville and City Manager Anthony Lyons and further to support the transition plan as presented.

Thank you for the pure joy and honor of serving and congratulations on your 150th Anniversary!