

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

Section 10

Anthony Lyons

*Gainesville City Manager
Candidate Report*

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Cover Letter and Resume

Section 10

2/26/2016

• • •

Colin Baezinger

Colin Baezinger & Associates

2055 South Atlantic Avenue, Suite 504

Daytona Beach Shores, FL 32118

Dear Mr. Baezinger,

It is with enthusiasm that I write you today in order to be considered for the position of City Manager, Gainesville Florida. For much of the past decade, I have worked tirelessly to assist the City in every way possible, in whatever has been asked of me. I started as the CRA Director and three positions later, am currently the interim City Manager.

In order to assist you and the Gainesville City Commission in considering me, I have included a resume as well as a booklet of previous projects and some written pieces. These represent several, though not nearly all, examples of the transformative work I have been honored to be a part of.

Yet the items detailing my contributions do not tell the whole story of meaningful community change, what does shed more light on these are inspired employees, talented colleagues, important mentors, wonderful appointed and elected officials, and engaged citizens. Throughout my professional career, seeking, cultivating, working with and maintaining this group of diverse, dynamic individuals has been the essential ingredient to making meaningful work possible. Success takes a team and a leader.

I have decided to apply for the position of City Manager because I am confident that I am the right leader for the City of Gainesville at this point in the city's history. Though I have been fortunate to assist many projects and agencies in the city, more work needs to be done in order to ensure that the city government become the most Citizen-Centered in the world, a big achievable goal, and one that will enable all sectors of the City to achieve whatever dream they have.

I have enjoyed the nearly four months as the interim City Manager and would like to continue. The employees seem enthused and inspired and coupled with the goals the City Commission has set, I truly believe that together we can achieve greatness.

Sincerely,

Anthony Lyons

Section 10**ANTHONY LYONS**

1909 NW 31st Terrace
 Gainesville, FL 32605
 E-mail: anthonyrosslyons@yahoo.com

Mobile: (603) 852-2949

EXPERIENCE**Interim City Manager, 2015-present**

City of Gainesville, Florida, www.cityofgainesville.org

Responsibilities

Oversee all areas of the general government, 1300 employees, and a budget of approximately \$300 million (all funds). This is achieved through the supervision of the City Manager's staff; two Assistant City Managers; Administrative Services Director; Human Resources Director; Police Chief; Fire Chief (through ACM); Public Works Director (through ACM); Planning and Development Services; Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Director (through ACM); Economic Development and Innovation Director; Communications and Marketing Manager; and CRA Director. Also serve as Executive Director of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).

As Interim City Manager, numerous areas of government efficacy and procedure are being addressed including: a Police Department reorganization; a Planning & Development Services contract with a renowned software vendor for e-plan review; new leadership, organizational, and procedural changes to Administrative Services, Finance, Strategic Planning, and Fleet; and a new position of Citizen-Centered Gainesville Director has been created and hired to assist in the redesign of service.

Interim Planning and Development Director, 2015 -present

City of Gainesville, Florida, www.cityofgainesville.org

Responsibilities

Manage the Planning and Building Divisions with a staff of over 40. As Interim Director, introduced new PDS management team model--divided by work type--in order to better meet citizen, developer, and staff need. Additionally, identified necessary enhancements including: new software and hardware for a common technology platform across all areas of the city government and GRU which will allow for electronic submission and review of all plans for development projects; a redesign to the Thomas Center Lobby--the public interface with PDS; as well as upgrades to the Planning & Building Offices to enhance the user experience (in progress).

Participated in the update to the Land Development Code (in progress).

Executive Director, City Commission Blue Ribbon Committee on Economic Competitiveness, 2015

City of Gainesville, Florida

Responsibilities

Defined and designed how to make Gainesville more economically competitive by working closely with Committee Chair, our diverse Board of twenty-three community stakeholders as well as UF, Santa Fe College, Shands Hospital, Cox Communications, Council of Economic Outreach, North Central Florida Community Foundation, Builders Association of Northern Central Florida, Gainesville Alachua County Association of Realtors, City of Gainesville, and Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency, and last but not least hundreds of citizens, business owners, City staff, and appointed and elected office holders. Hired IDEO, one of the most innovative global design firms and Alan Webber, co-founder of Fast Company Magazine to assist in the effort.

Full report on making Gainesville the most Citizen-Centered City in the world can be found on the City website - www.cityofgainesville.org/Newsroom/tabid/805/PostID/636/Default.aspx

Community Redevelopment Agency Director, 2006 – 2011 & 2013 - 2015

City of Gainesville, Florida - www.gainesvillecra.com

Responsibilities

Oversee four urban redevelopment areas and a dynamic staff with an annual budget of \$6 million (approximate).

Contributions

Planning: Developed in-depth strategic planning process for each of the four redevelopment areas; planned city's southeast neighborhoods by identifying future development sites and creating Special Area Plan ordinance; oversaw planning/rezoning and future redevelopment of city's publicly owned, fifteen acre downtown utility operations center into a newly branded mixed-use "Power District" - 100% Master Plan approved for Kennedy Homes, a former 15 acre public housing site.

Transportation Planning and Infrastructure Improvements: Managed design/ construction of road projects which include underground utilities, storm water exfiltration, and streetscape elements; oversaw development of a parking management plan; planned and designed portions of city's rails to trails system including new signage, lighting, benches, and native landscaping as well as redeveloping former rail bridge – "DNA" Bridge

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Business Recruitment, Retention, Expansion: Added approximately \$300 million of taxable property in redevelopment areas; redeveloped city-owned downtown parking lot into *Hampton Inn and Suites*; over 2000 new downtown housing units built during tenure; *Lunchbox Café/Steamers*—adaptive reuse of early 20th century Historically Registered brick gas station into outdoor café; *Southern Charm*—converted prominent vacant building and site into a sit-down restaurant; constructed mixed-use LEED Silver Office Building.

Economic Development: catalyst for redevelopment of former warehouse in Power District; developed façade grant program, paint program, wrote new business lending programs including: SBA504, SBA7A; oversaw city owned incubator, *GTEC*; assisted Council of Economic Outreach with *Innovation Gainesville*; assisted the University of Florida with the reuse of former multi-acre urban hospital site into *Innovation Square* - work written about in *Fast Company Magazine*.

Cultural and Historic Resource Development: recruited *Cade Museum of Innovation to Depot Park*, oversaw adaptive reuse of Nationally Registered *Train Depot*; planned and partly reconstructed the *A. Quim Jones House*—a newly Nationally Registered Historic Site; rebuilt numerous historic & non-historic homes, assisted with the historic *Cotton Club*.

Park/Greenspace Development: responsible for design and construction of thirty-five acre urban park, *Depot Park*, on Brownfield. Will include: *Cade Museum, Depot Building*, recreational trails, children's area with playground, storm water ponds and wetlands restoration; designed sculpture and native plant *Gateway* on Brownfield-featured in national magazine; redeveloped blighted park into dog park and city garden; features city's first LED streetlights, *Lynch Park*; created public art pocket park on former median, *SW 5th Avenue and SW 13th Street*.

Project Awards: *American Public Works Association*: Project of the Year (in category), Innovation Square, 2015; *International Economic Development Council*: Excellence in Economic Development-Bronze, Annual Report, 2015; *Florida Chapter of the America Public Works Association*: Project of the Year (in category), Innovation Square, 2015 & Depot Building, 2014, Helix Bridge, 2014; *America Public Works Association*: Project of the Year (in category), Helyx Bridge, 2014; *Florida Institute of Consulting Engineers*: Grand Award, Innovation Square, 2014; *Florida Redevelopment Association*: Roy F. Kenzie Award, Annual Report, 2014 & Strategic Planning, 2014; *North Florida Chapter of the US Green Building Council*: Project of the Year (in category), 2013; *Florida Native Plant Society*: Award of Excellence, Haisley Lynch Park, 2012; *Florida Redevelopment Association*: President's Award & "Out of Box" Award, Innovation Sq. - 2012; *American Planning Association*: Donald E. Hunter Excellence in Economic Development Planning, Innovation Square, 2012; *Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, Inc.*, Outstanding Achievement in Adaptive Reuse, Bethel Gas Station, 2012; *Gainesville Chamber of Commerce*: Innovation Advocate of the Year - 2011; *Southeast Building Conference design competition*, Aurora Award, CRA Office Building, 2011; *Northwest Chapter ALA*: Best Commercial Building, CRA Office/retail space, 2011; *Florida Redevelopment Association*: Best Reuse, Bethel Station, 2010; *Historic Gainesville, Inc.*: Bethel Station Rehabilitation - 2010; *Florida Chapter of American Planning Association*: Best Neighborhood Plan, 2009; *Florida Redevelopment Association*: Planning Studies - Southeast Gainesville Renaissance Initiative, 2008; *City of Gainesville Beautification Awards*: Over 20 awards granted for various projects, 2008-present

Executive Director, 2011 - 2013

Capital City Development Corporation, Boise, Idaho - www.ccdcboise.com

Responsibilities

Oversaw four-urban renewal areas and staff with an annual budget of more than \$23 million, assets of \$100m (approximate) Supervised innovative economic development, development and planning activities that include: institution/commercial/adaptive reuse, public infrastructure, development agreements and parking facilities.

Contributions

Economic Development: downtown had nearly \$250 million of new construction underway or planned during year at corporation
Capital Improvements: initiated, designed and built capital improvement plan; rebuilt 20 block faces with lighting, landscape, utilities and hardscapes; built historic bike/pedestrian trail connecting downtown to the river; commissioned several public art projects including sculptures and traffic box art; significant capital improvement projects for six parking garages

Parking: oversaw 6 parking garages and 2 surface lots with nearly 3000 spaces. Selected and managed new parking operator with 40 employees. Net income in first 6 months up 19% and expenses went down 24% (approximate).

Planning and Development Director, 2003 – 2006

City of Claremont, Claremont, New Hampshire – www.claremontnh.com

Responsibilities

Supervised all city-wide planning, economic/community development, building, permitting and code enforcement, zoning, City visitors' center, branding and marketing, as well as numerous boards and commissions. Restructured and reinvigorated department from three divisions—economic development, building and code enforcement, and planning—into one seamless and progressive department. Served as the administrator for the Claremont Development Authority (CDA)—an organization that works to fund, retain, recruit and expand businesses.

Contributions

Economic Development: Initiated revitalization of Nationally Registered Historic Mill District (vacant approximately 40 years). Development includes a boutique hotel, *Common Man Restaurant*, and the *Red River Computer Company*—an international computer corporation; responsible for 1.2 million square feet of newly constructed, reconstructed or permitted commercial real estate; recruited technology based, manufacturing (cabinet, aerospace parts, outdoor sporting, modular home builder.)

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Planning and Development: initiated conservation subdivision ordinance, City Master Plan, and numerous other planning documents; improved processes and workflows through new software, linking business development with planning and building divisions.

Infrastructure Improvements: oversaw design, through hired engineers, landscape architects, surveyors, planners, and geotechnical professionals; \$1.3 million pedestrian bridge, linking visitor's center with urban core spanning the Sugar River; developed 250 car parking facility adapted from a Brownfield on the site of a Nationally Registered site; complete road, water, sewer, stormwater and pedestrian facility reconstruction for urban Mill District; upgraded water and sewer system, from septic, for 125 manufactured home park; built 120 acre industrial park with all new infrastructure.

Project Awards: *New Hampshire Preservation Alliance*, Claremont Mill District, 2010; *International Economic Development Council*, Claremont Mill District 2010; *International Economic Development Council General Brochure Award*, 2006; *Northeastern Economic Developers Association*, 3 marketing awards, 2006.

Executive Director, 2000-2003

Main Street Claremont, Inc., Claremont, New Hampshire

Responsibilities

Served as Downtown organization's first Executive Director. Position encompassed all aspects of City Center revitalization including building, zoning, design, promotion, and economic restructuring. Instrumental in all phases of organizational startup such as: business development, branding, capital campaigns, development, marketing, and program management.

Contributions

Attracted \$5 million in new investment; attracted fifty new businesses. Number One in New Hampshire Downtowns, 2001/2002; secured \$2.5 million in grants, tax credits, and loan funds for the rehabilitation of cornerstone building in downtown; managed over 150 volunteers. Conducted 30 seminars for volunteer development; produced five television programs. Published newspaper bimonthly with a circulation of 25,000.

Awards: New Hampshire Community of the Year: June, 2003, eight statewide Main Street awards 2003, National Main Street Community, National Trust for Historic Preservation – 2001, 2002

President, 1993-2000

Telenova, Inc.

Responsibilities

Founded small company in emerging prepaid technology market that provided various phone card/gift card applications to corporate accounts including Crayola Crayon and Mr. Coffee Coffeemakers.

Awards and Articles: *Telecard Magazine (1996)* Best Telecard Promotion of the Year: Crayola Crayons; Best Card *International Card Manufacturers Association (1997)* Best Card Design, Retail Card; *Telecard Magazine:* various articles

SERVICE

Downtown Boise Association - *Board Member*, 2011-2013

Boise Valley Economic Partnership - *Board Member*, 2011-2013

Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho - *Board Member*, 2011-2013

Innovation Advocates – Gainesville Chamber of Commerce – 2009-2011 & 2013 - 2015

U.S Department of Health and Human Services- *Twice selected as a Grant Reviewer*, 2009

International Economic Development Council, *Hurricane Rita Volunteer*, Lake Charles, LA, 2006

Upper Valley Regional Planning Commission, *Commissioner*, 2005 - 2006

Vermont Economic Development Authority, *Regional Board Member* 1998 – 2000

Community Action Brattleboro Area, *Board Member* 1998- 1999

International Telecard Association, *Founding Member and Board Member*, 1995- 1997

Former Memberships

International Economic Development Council

International City Managers Association

American Planning Association

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, *Bachelor of Arts*, Art History

International Economic Development Association, coursework towards Certified Economic Developer

Federal Emergency Management Agency, completed various courses in emergency management

PERSONAL Happily married for 22 years, son, 10 years old; 2 time All-America in Masters Track and Field; Half Ironman Triathlon

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Candidate Introduction

Section 10**Anthony Lyons - Gainesville City Manager Candidate Introduction**

EDUCATION

Indiana University, Bachelor of Arts, Art History

EXPERIENCE

Interim City Manager, Gainesville, FL	2015-present
Interim Planning & Development Services Director, Gainesville, FL	2015-present
Blue Ribbon Committee on Economic Competitiveness, Executive Director	2015
Community Redevelopment Agency Director, Gainesville, FL	2006-2011/2013-2015
Capital City Development Corporation, Executive Director, Boise, ID	2011-2013
Planning & Development Director, Claremont, NH	2003-2006
Main Street Claremont, Inc., Executive Director, Claremont, NH	2000-2003

BACKGROUND

Gainesville is located in beautiful North Central Florida, within Alachua County, the county seat and its largest city with close to 130,000 residents. In addition, Gainesville is home to two significant, public post-secondary educational institutions: the University of Florida, the 9th largest public university in the nation and Santa Fe College, the #1 ranked community college in that nation. Throughout the years, numerous publications have ranked Gainesville as one of our country's most desirable places to live because of our amazing attributes and amenities including: a vibrant park and bike-trail system; abundant open, green space; a thriving, eclectic downtown; a booming arts scene; diverse economic investment; affordable housing stock whether in our celebrated historic districts or suburban developments; top-notch healthcare; and quality public education from elementary school through the doctoral level.

Aside from this, Gainesville also boasts great public and private employers. Some of the larger public entities include the University of Florida, UF Health, the Alachua County School Board, the VA Hospital, and city government, while large private firms such as North Florida Regional Medical Center, Gator Dining Services, and Nationwide Insurance call Gainesville home. The City of Gainesville, my current employer, employs approximately 1300 individuals in the General Government who report through various Department Directors and the Assistant City Managers to my position, which includes 10 direct reports. This talented group handles a General Fund Budget of approximately \$120 million and a Total Budget of nearly \$300 million.

The three most significant issues facing the Gainesville are:

- Fostering a city government that is more open, accessible, equitable, and approachable, what our Blue Ribbon Committee and City Commission have defined as "Citizen-Centered." Our goal in implementing this ethos is not to

Section 10**Anthony Lyons - Gainesville City Manager Candidate Introduction**

merely have a new-tagline but to radically change the way Gainesville's government interfaces with and inspires our constituents, the Citizenry, and how our government participates with and empowers our employees, also often our Citizenry and our City's virtual front door. City Government should offer an obvious, accessible helping hand to its Citizenry, whether extending its reach towards dream fulfillment—opening a business, building or rehabilitating a home, or any daily routine—reporting an accident or code violation, or signing up for summer basketball. Gainesville is ready to level the playing field.

- Providing significant job creation, housing development, and economic investment to the Eastside of our community. The Eastside of Gainesville has a vibrant, committed, active citizenry and provides tremendous opportunity with significant roadways, available land, and outstanding magnet programs. The City of Gainesville should assist in this effort however possible and use the power and size of the institution to contribute meaningfully.
- Managing the growing organizational, infrastructural, transportation, and public safety needs of our booming City within a somewhat static yearly budget. Sound governance requires a clear strategic plan that drives the budget. Designing a system that engages many stakeholders during this process will be one key to ensure its success.

GENERAL, MANAGEMENT STYLE AND EXPERIENCE

Gainesville is my family's home. We have moved here twice, once in 2006 for my career and again in 2013 for the dynamic community we dearly missed. Gainesville is a fantastic city, not only for how it functions today but also for what it is becoming. Throughout my tenure, I have been invested in the City's evolution whether assisting in the redevelopment of many of our older neighborhoods—building and rebuilding streets, homes, bridges, parks, and a host of our cultural amenities; changing the way the public interacts with and perceives the City Government—redesigning Planning and Development Services and creating a Citizen-Centered Gainesville; and empowering our City's employees to be agents of change and their own future. Gainesville is poised for further greatness and my intimate knowledge of the City, its stakeholders, and its citizens, as well as my keen ability to harness the City's momentum make this a perfect time for new leadership.

My management style and philosophy are quite simple—I believe in developing and recruiting top, diverse talent; setting and adhering to the highest standards of ethics, communication, and work product, what some would call “leading by example”; and promoting an atmosphere, or culture, of collaboration, commitment, and happiness.

Section 10**Anthony Lyons - Gainesville City Manager Candidate Introduction**

I always try to surround myself with the greatest talent I can find—one that has a diversity of thought and background. I have consistently found this approach produces the best variety of sound outcomes. As a leader, I also believe in both mentoring and training. I have been the beneficiary of great mentors including my maternal and paternal grandfathers, my former boss—Guy Santagate, and many others in various fields that still provide unique insight. Because of this ethos, I work to cultivate an environment where dialoguing is encouraged and growth opportunity outlined. In all of my leadership positions, staff members regularly sought me out to discuss their ideas—whether for our City’s governance or their future goals and I have consistently offered opportunity for them through redesign, further training, or more education.

I have had the great opportunity to revitalize the culture of many organizations—demonstrating that we will do a lot of work and do it well—with immense thoughtfulness, creativity, and respect. I prefer a team approach where we communicate and collaborate often—as a whole group in our staff meetings, in small groups on a regular basis, and one-on-one when needed ensuring everyone that their skills and input are highly valued and respected and ensuring that our work product is stellar.

The qualities highlighted above point to some of the adjectives my staff would use to describe me—ethical, hardworking, creative, collaborative, empathetic, humorous, and demanding. We are all a part of the same symbiotic system and each mutually benefit from one another, where great employees and great coaching in turn make for great work product and great work environment. I believe elected officials would describe me in a similar fashion and as being a direct, honest, “can do” employee with the ability to bring many disparate ideas and groups together to achieve results.

My greatest strength is in my ability to analyze complicated situations, navigate complex systems, negotiate with diverse stakeholders and conceive new answers to old problems. By thinking deeper and differently, I hope to not only reach the best outcomes for the City but to also transform Citizen’s perception of their neighborhood, city, and government, thereby inspiring joy, security, and commitment. I have several examples of this characteristic applied in Gainesville, some of which I will detail in later answers, but would like to begin in Claremont, NH. When I arrived in Claremont, NH the city was in dire straits, evidenced by having no fewer than 6 city manager changes during that first year, virtually no reserves, several vacant department head positions, and nearly 80% empty storefronts and buildings in the downtown. In spite of this somber picture, I successfully aided in the revitalization of the downtown’s multi-building mill district that had been vacant for 40 years and was a brownfield in several of its areas. Early on, it was clear that bringing together numerous developers; preservationists; engineers; federal government officials; elected leaders at the local, state and national level; and most importantly the local community was the key to restoring the town’s center to its previous glory. And, we did just that: now the restored mills boast a new inn, a restaurant, the global headquarters for a computer company, a new river front park system, the visitor’s center, and a parking garage. At the conclusion of this massive project, Claremont received not only huge financial investment in terms of both private and public funds, grants, and tax credit programs but also “buy in” from the local community, making the district an essential part of the community’s pride once again.

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In terms of weakness, I recognize that my drive for excellence can be exacting at times. This attention to detail can especially be a challenge for employees not accustomed to working in this manner.

In business there is a saying: “What gets measured is what gets done.” This adage is also appropriate for governmental organizations and I have always made performance measurement a part of the agencies I’ve run whether through performance charts or work plan reviews. More recently, as part of the Blue Ribbon Committee’s work, we proposed a type of “command center” for collecting, analyzing and responding to real time feedback from our citizens, in order to engage with them directly and expediently, sometimes on a data platform while others times with a simple phone call to an action officer. This unique assessment tool will help us measure how the City’s doing to meet the needs of its Citizens.

I have been fortunate to be a part of many successes in both life and career, but if I have to choose just one example I would select Depot Park. Situated in East Gainesville, close to the downtown and home to many warehouses, this once contaminated property’s vision is to become Gainesville’s Central Park. The project area needed to be cleaned of numerous contaminants; required moving a multilane roadway; rehabilitating the historic train depot; designing each and every park feature from the interactive water features and custom kids play equipment to the gateway structures, stormwater ponds, wetlands restoration and promenade. Finally, we also recruited what will come to be known as world class cultural amenity, the Cade Museum. The leadership, vision, and coordination necessary to execute this was extraordinary and I am proud of myself and every City employee, private contractor, stakeholder, and citizen that devoted their time, vision, or money to this. Once complete in summer 2016, Depot Park will be amongst the best public spaces anywhere and will continue to spark the revitalization already underway in this area of the city. I smile every time I drive by or walk along its borders.

While I’ve enjoyed great successes, I have also made mistakes and have worked hard to learn from them. Early in my career, I lead a non-profit organization that experienced success while under my helm but began to falter when I left it for another position within the same city. I had concentrated on project completion rather than organizational sustainability and that singular focus harmed the organization. Departments, organizations, and governments need to have the right people in the right positions, trained and sometimes cross-trained, in order to ensure the culture and viability of the whole not only maintains but achieves great success in the future. Since that time, I have spent many years cultivating the organizational structure as well as the people I work with so we always have a deep, talented bench from which to draw from in times of change.

One aspect of building or rebuilding any organization is the difficult work of firing or letting go of employees for performance or conduct issues. While I like to think that every employee is always a wonderful fit, sometimes that is just not the case and on the many unfortunate occasions I have been faced with this, I have always applied fairness and firmness in my decision making.

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In addition to the three challenges mentioned in previous paragraphs (please see above,) the next Gainesville City Manager will also face some of the following:

- Managing a workforce that is retiring rapidly while ensuring a more diverse one is hired in its place.
- Providing assistance to the ongoing police department reorganization and new fire services delivery in our growing city.
- Assist in providing sound services for homeless individuals through Grace Marketplace and Dignity Village

During my first Six Months my efforts will involve:

- Learning, more deeply, the plans, strategies, ideas, and goals of the city commissioners and the city commission;
- Begin to align the strategic plan and the budget process in order to be more inclusive, transparent and relevant to each other;
- Continue with the implementation of the Blue Ribbon Report;
- Learn about and begin to address any outstanding audits;
- Continue analyzing each department of the organization for efficacy;
- Communicate with and engage numerous groups: employees, neighborhood associations, higher education institutions, other specific groups to deliver on their needs.

I have always enjoyed a fair and honest relationship with all press outlets and am quite proud of this; I believe we enjoy a mutual respect. I utilize various media outlets personally and professionally quite well, though I do admit I spend far more time “doing” things than talking about what I am doing, when necessary I defer to communication professionals to assist. However, this communication model, under a Citizen-Centered Gainesville, will change these relationships, making accessibility more distinct and inviting more channels and more users, more often, so groups that both do and do not participate in communication with their City Government can do so. Two-way communications will ensure success of this collaborative governance approach.

I do not anticipate anyone contacting you or the City of Gainesville with “the dirt” on me. I have been in the public eye for a number of years already and have no private dealings that would embarrass me or my family.

In my spare time, I hike and bike the outdoors, travel the southeast, and eat spicy food with my wife and son. I also enjoy competitive sports and have placed nationally in masters track and completed a half Ironman triathlon.

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SIX ADJECTIVES OR PHRASES YOU WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF

- Thoughtful and creative
- Fair
- Integrity
- Inspiring
- Committed to equity and access
- Balanced

REASON FOR WANTING TO LEAVE CURRENT JOB

I wish to leave my current position as Interim City Manager of Gainesville to become City Manager of Gainesville.

CURRENT/MOST RECENT OR RELEVANT SALARY

Current salary is \$176,500

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CB&A Background Checks

**Background Check Summary for
ANTHONY LYONS**

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
Alachua County, FL	No Records Found
Ada County, ID	No Records Found
Sullivan County, NH	No Records Found
State	
Florida	No Records Found
Idaho	No Records Found
New Hampshire	Records maintained by county of Residence - See above

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Alachua County, FL	No Records Found
Ada County, ID	No Records Found
Sullivan County, NH	No Records Found
Federal	
Florida	No Records Found
Idaho	No Records Found
New Hampshire	No Records Found

Motor Vehicle

Florida	No Records Found
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Credit

Very Good

Bankruptcy

No Records Found

Education

Confirmed

Employment

Confirmed

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**Background Check Summary for
ANTHONY LYONS
Personal Disclosure**

Personal Disclosure Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: Anthony Lyons *revised 3.9.16.*

The following questions are designed so that we will be able to make full disclosure to our client concerning your background. Please answer them honestly. Cutting corners or misrepresenting your past will result in you being eliminated from all further searches conducted by this firm. We understand that frivolous charges are sometimes made and that charges do not mean you were guilty. We also understand that you may have been wronged and needed to seek compensation. The bottom line is that we want to be certain that our client is fully informed. If you have any questions, please contact us for clarification.

Please explain any yes answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Have you ever been charged or convicted of a felony?
Yes No
2. Have you ever been accused of or have been involved in a domestic violence or abuse incident?
Yes No
3. Have you ever declared bankruptcy or been an owner in a business that did so?
Yes No
4. Have you ever been the subject of a civil rights violation complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
 Yes No
5. Have you ever been the subject of a sexual harassment complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
6. Have you ever been convicted of driving while intoxicated?
Yes No
7. Have you ever sued a current or former employer?
Yes No
8. Do you have a personal My Space, Face Book or other type of Web Page?
 Yes No
9. Do you have a personal Twitter Account?
Yes No
10. Is there anything else in your background that, if made public, would cause you, our client or our firm embarrassment if it came to light through the press or any other mechanism?
Yes No
11. Please provide a list of any lawsuits in which you are or have been a party either as plaintiff or defendant.

Attested to: _____

Signature of Applicant

Please email this form via PDF DOCUMENT to kknutson@ch-asso.com or via fax to
(888) 539-6531

(Note: Please be sure to sign the form with your actual signature if you are sending Fax or PDF Document)

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ANTHONY LYONS
Personal Disclosure Explanation**

4. Have you ever been the subject of a civil rights violation complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?

Yes - In February 2009, a former employee filed a complaint to the USEEOC for age discrimination. The complaint was dismissed in April 2009 with no finding. I was not named rather the City of Gainesville was though my name does appear as her supervisor.

11. Please provide a list of any lawsuits in which you are or have been a party either as plaintiff or defendant.

D. Henrichs vs. City of Gainesville & interim City Manager Anthony Lyons, filed late February 2016, on the City Commission agenda March 17, 2006.

CB&A Reference Notes

Reference Notes Anthony Lyons

Deborah Cutts – Former Mayor, Claremont, NH 603-290-2558

Ms. Cutts was the Assistant Mayor and hired Mr. Lyons in 2003 as their Planning Director. Right before he came to work for the City the entire governing body was overturned. He was quite brave accepting the position because of the instability in the community.

Claremont had a negative reputation when Mr. Lyons was hired. He helped market the positive attributes of the community including the historical features and the development of the Plainfield area. Promoting their assets was an effective marketing tool.

Mr. Lyons is tenacious and has incredible vision. He rehabilitated three incredible mill buildings and another building to make them suitable for businesses. In just a year and a half he was able to cultivate solid interest from three separate investors and he directed the sale. He was involved in 3 to 4 sizeable projects for a city with a population of just over 10,000.

Another strength is Mr. Lyons' ability to interact with a variety of different people. He adapted to every situation well. He is respectful while maintaining a sense of humor. Towards the end of Ms. Cutts' term she became the Mayor. They held public sessions to talk about the mills. He shared information on the investors and asked the Council to vote. Ms. Cutts said that she wanted it to be posted by a particular person to bring a particular group into the City. Mr. Lyons was incredible respectful while replying that this group would never come to Claremont. He then encouraged them to focus on a more reasonable option.

One thing that Mr. Lyons does well is follow through on assignments and tasks. He hired three talented individuals with a focus on succession planning. One of the employees he hired is still with the City and finished the work that he started.

Mr. Lyons is most definitely a change agent and he maintains an organization at a high level. Those who work both for and with him know what he expects. He manages operations in a way to create a natural delivery of services and assignments.

Mr. Lyons attended every community meeting including the master planning board and council meetings so the elected officials could receive instant answers on what was happening rather than having to wait for a response. He orchestrated the first master planning session and opened it to residents to elicit public feedback, which was beneficial in moving the projects forward. He was very successful in leading the process and keeping others informed.

When working with the public Mr. Lyons is engaging, informative, and respectful. At the beginning of his tenure many of the residents were unhappy with the change in the elected body mentioned earlier. Watching him interact with everyone in the community, regardless of how they felt about the governing body, was wonderful. He had a way of eliciting trust and worked very well with everyone.

Reference Notes

Anthony Lyons

The planning department had a small budget. What Mr. Lyons was able to achieve with the budget he was given was nothing short of a miracle. The elected officials provided a vision and asked him to engage in it. He is a self-starter who completed tasks by the deadline requested.

The change in the governing body was very controversial for about a year. Mr. Lyons stayed the course and did not become disillusioned or lose his way. The second most controversial situation related to the school system. For the first time in 12 years the school budget did not pass and the situation was extremely negative. Mr. Lyons and the City Manager created a healing culture and brought the community together which ultimately helped pass a default budget. Mr. Lyons then sought donations and grants to make up the difference. He played a very significant role in the process. The grant money was used to renovate a high school that was in danger of losing accreditation due to structural issues.

Nothing in Mr. Lyon's background would concern an employer should the press dig into his past. He left to work for a larger community after accomplishing his goals in Claremont. Ms. Cutts does not know anyone who would disagree with the statements in this reference.

Ms. Cutts was sad to see Mr. Lyons leave and would hire him again without any doubt. Ms. Cutts had hoped that Mr. Lyons would first be selected as the Assistant City Manager and eventually become the Claremont City Manager, but the manager in place decided not to retire as expected. If you can convince Mr. Lyons to work for you, you will not be disappointed. He will make a fabulous City or County Manager. He does great from a budget perspective, has vision, and a wonderful way of engaging the community.

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Enthusiastic,
- Honest,
- Respectful,
- Engaging,
- Happy, and
- True pleasure to be around.

Strengths: Tenacious; incredible vision; interacts with others; and gets the job done.

Weaknesses: He sets a high bar and has an eye for protection, which causes him more pain than it affects anyone around him. You can see the sadness in his eyes when things do not come to fruition the way he wants them to.

Reference Notes

Anthony Lyons

Guy Santagate – City Manager, Claremont, NH 617-548-3178

Mr. Santagate was hired as the Claremont City Manager in 2001. At the time the organization was very dysfunctional. A nonprofit organization called Main Street was trying to revitalize the downtown area. Mr. Santagate noticed that Main Street was the only group/organization in the area that was working well, due to the management of Mr. Lyons. Mr. Santagate hired Mr. Lyons in 2003, even though he did not have much experience, because he was bright and had potential. He did extremely well with every responsibility he was given.

Mr. Lyons was hired as a grant writer and was such a quick study that he quickly became a Director. He knows more than development and has great critical thinking skills. He knows how to plan, execute, influence and evaluate any issue or topic.

While others were involved, Mr. Lyons was the prime mover in developing four very large mills that had been vacant for decades and were inhabited by wild birds. He accomplished this goal through tax credits and financing. He has a good sense and knows how to make things happen. While the development is still vacant because of the downturn, the property is much more valuable today and they have high hopes for the development now that the market is improving.

Mr. Lyons makes good decisions both when hiring personnel and in general. He attends community meetings to represent the organization. He is very skilled at forming partnerships with other municipalities and community groups like the Chamber of Commerce.

They had a comfortable relationship. Mr. Lyons was very open in his communications. He had good financial skills. His work was frequently submitted before the deadline. He was very quick and knew how to manage an organization.

Many of the projects Mr. Lyons worked on were controversial, particularly the Mill project mentioned earlier. The first partnership they formed to develop it was not successful but they were able to complete the process through effective execution.

Nothing in Mr. Lyons' background would embarrass an employer. He left Claremont because the organization had limited growth opportunities. Mr. Santagate was disappointed to lose Mr. Lyons, he was not easy to replace. While others may have a different opinion of Mr. Lyons, on the whole everyone gave him high marks.

Mr. Santagate has high praise for Mr. Lyons, especially with the additional experience that he has gained since leaving Claremont. Mr. Santagate would hire Mr. Lyons again immediately because he is very effective.

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Effective,
- Self-starter,

Reference Notes

Anthony Lyons

- Takes meaningful actions,
- Team player,
- Assertive,
- Decisive, and
- Can manage.

Strengths: Effective; can get things done; his critical thinking skills are transferrable to any matter.

Weaknesses: Both weaknesses mentioned are very minor. He is very bright and he understood jokes that others did not. He sometimes had to be reminded not to rub it in. His speaking style is not always smooth, occasionally he does not verbally close a thought, but this trait does not affect his ability to make presentations or manage operations. He may have improved in these areas since leaving Claremont.

Susan Davenport – Executive Director, Gainesville Chamber of Commerce, FL 352-334-7100

Ms. Davenport has known Mr. Lyons since 2013. They confer frequently on strategy and city initiatives that involve both organizations, more specifically economic development initiatives and corporate interactions including expansions and relocations.

In terms of job performance Mr. Lyons is incredible. He is very well respected in the region. He has done some very visionary work in Gainesville that impressed everyone. When making changes to the organization Mr. Lyons makes the process feel seamless.

When hiring personnel Mr. Lyons has made some fantastic decisions. He had a good team in the CRA, when working for the planning department, and as the Interim City Manager. He made some changes to the staff and motivated employees who have been there a while. He has made strategic hires and personnel decisions, and his decisions in general are very good.

Mr. Lyons is an innovator and a change agent. He drives an organization to a high level and then keeps it there. He puts a great team together and then teaches them how to function well. The CRA hummed through his leadership and he is doing the same in the city of Gainesville.

Mr. Lyons is strategic about which community meetings he attends but he is very visible in the City. He keeps others informed of what is happening in the organization. He works very well with the public. When working for the CRA he was very involved with neighborhood projects and on a project involving an iconic bridge. He oversaw several initiatives, which meant multiple community meetings during which he gave citizens a chance to ask questions. He has a good rapport with neighborhood associations, which is important.

Reference Notes

Anthony Lyons

A corporate entity wanted to be the first to move into an area. Mr. Lyons worked on multiple facets of the project, with everyone from elected officials to planners both in the region and out of state. He drove a nice consensus on the project and brought all the parties together.

One of Mr. Lyons' favorite topics is customer service. He is helping with an initiative to make Gainesville the most user friendly city in the country. The initiative involves an entire scope of activities. He is doing phenomenal work and creating a positive experience. He is changing the culture of the organization and how they deliver services.

Mr. Lyons works with very stringent budgets, being careful not to overcommit while also not holding back progress. He is very fiscally sound and structured, and very diligent. He is very responsive to any requests.

Re-creating government and the user experience is controversial. Mr. Lyons has handled the process very deftly. He knows how to talk to others and structure the initiative to give it the best opportunity for success. He has the facts and figures ready, and is polite and very respectful of other viewpoints. Everyone feels heard in the process.

Ms. Davenport has not heard anyone say anything negative about Mr. Lyons. He was rehired in the City of Gainesville, which says much about his performance.

Ms. Davenport would hire Mr. Lyons and would love to see him as a city or county manager. He has taken a careful but innovative approach in a growing community and has done an amazing job. He gives his all and sincerely believes in the mission.

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Trustworthy,
- Innovative,
- Takes a very balanced approach,
- Very well respected,
- Disciplined, and
- Well liked in the community.

Strengths: Visionary; has the skills to implement and garner consensus on different ways of doing things; others follow his guidance because he is well respected; executes well; has a great vision.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Reference Notes Anthony Lyons

Lauren McLean – Boise City Council & CCDC Board Member, ID 208-866-6797

Ms. McLean was part of the hiring team that hired Mr. Lyons in 2011. She served on the Board of the CCDC.

Mr. Lyons performed very well in Boise. He was very innovative in guiding the organization. He was very open and responsive to the board. The organization functioned at a very high level through his leadership.

Ms. McLean and Mr. Lyons worked very well together. He was always very transparent and clear with where the organization was headed. He responded to requests and solicited her thoughts and ideas in a very respectful peer to peer manner that was much appreciated.

Ms. McLean cannot recall which employees were hired by Mr. Lyons, however the Board did not have any concerns with his staff, and the manager who followed him did not have to address any personnel issues. Mr. Lyons was also very good at assessing the staff in place and recognizing who needed to be moved onto other things. His decisions are good.

Moving into a small community can be very challenging, but Mr. Lyons engaged with the community very quickly. His job was to work with the principal individuals in urban renewal and development, and he did a good job.

Mr. Lyons is a leader who rallies employees around the vision of the Council. When he was hired the agency was trying to determine their role in the downtown urban environment. He pulled the staff together and led an incredible strategic planning process with the Board. He showed what the organization could and should be doing, and enabled the team to focus on the task at hand, which was ending blight and promoting economic development. Prior to his involvement the staff did not recognize their role in building and improving downtown Boise.

While Ms. McLean was not closely involved in the budgeting side of operations, they did not uncover any budget issues after Mr. Lyons left, and the organization functioned well during his tenure. He completed tasks in a timely manner.

They hired a recruiting firm to oversee the hiring process and conduct background checks. Nothing was found in Mr. Lyons' background, or occurred during his tenure in Boise, that was of concern. He resigned because his family did not enjoy living in Boise and wanted to return to Florida. Because Mr. Lyons really encouraged everyone to reframe and renew, some might have a different opinion of him than the one expressed in this reference.

Ms. McLean really enjoyed working with Mr. Lyons and would hire him. He has experience in urban renewal which is very similar to city management.

Reference Notes Anthony Lyons

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Strategic,
- Visionary,
- Intuitive,
- Challenges others to grow,
- Fun – which is important in a team setting in an intense job, and
- Committed.

Strengths: Good strategic planner; very strong at assembling a team to implement the plan; strategic thinker; thinks outside the box in terms of problem solving.

Weaknesses: He is often a few steps ahead of everyone else and needs to remember to bring others to where he is at. This quality is also a strength because he is so forward thinking. Also, he presents himself with less stature than he merits for the position that he holds.

Jane Taylor – City Attorney, Claremont, NH 603-542-7002

Ms. Taylor was hired in Claremont at the end of 2003 as the City Attorney. She worked with Mr. Lyons in this capacity until his departure in 2006.

In terms of job performance Mr. Lyons was very creative, engaged and wonderful to work with. He absolutely made good decisions. He was very innovative and ahead of the curve, which has its advantages and disadvantages. When you are ahead of the curve you have to encourage others to come along for the ride.

Mr. Lyons attended community meetings and encouraged Ms. Taylor to attend on more than one occasion. His working style was very collaborative so he kept everyone very well informed and involved. He did not sit behind a desk; he led his department.

Claremont had a series of old abandoned mills on a beautiful riverbank setting. Mr. Lyons led the charge to bring developers in, design the project, and work with finance personnel. He left before the construction started but the redevelopment would never have happened without him. The complex is very beautiful and he did not receive enough credit for his part in the process.

Mr. Lyons was customer service oriented but he was also not afraid to stand up for the city's position, though he always did so in a pleasant way. He was always responsive and timely in their interactions.

Reference Notes Anthony Lyons

The Mill project was extremely controversial. Preserving an old building was also controversial. If you work in the planning department in an old mill town just about anything you do to move the city forward becomes controversial.

Ms. Taylor is not aware of anything in Mr. Lyons' background that would concern or embarrass an employer. He resigned because he wanted to move forward in his career and did not have many opportunities in the small town of Claremont. Ms. Taylor is sure that others in the community hold a different perspective of Mr. Lyons but she does not know who they are or what their opinion is.

Ms. Taylor would hire Mr. Lyons in an instant. Being successful in a city or county manager role is contingent on gaining the support of the right individuals and delegating work appropriately. Mr. Lyons had good leadership qualities when he worked in Claremont and has enhanced those abilities even further with the additional experience he has gained. Any municipality would be lucky to employ him.

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Hard working,
- Earnest,
- Responsible,
- Collegial, and
- Forward thinking.

Strengths: Great sense of humor; willing to stand up for a point of view or position without being obnoxious about it.

Weaknesses: Sometimes he was a little ahead of everyone else, which is both a strength and a weakness because he had great ideas and wanted to accomplish them. He has matured since leaving Claremont and may have overcome this weakness by now.

Tom Saunders – Former Community Development Director, Gainesville, FL 412-427-8483

Mr. Saunders hired Mr. Lyons as the redevelopment manager in 2006. They worked together for a year or so and have stayed in contact.

Mr. Lyons is a wonderful person. His job performance is excellent, he received the very highest marks. He hired superb employees. Mr. Saunders is a very hands-on manager so before he trusts someone to run an entire project they have to prove they are capable. He trusted Mr. Lyons to run any project, he is a high caliber employee.

Reference Notes

Anthony Lyons

Mr. Lyons is innovative and a change agent. He is more likely to gradually make changes and put the right people in place to notch things up a bit, rather than maintaining the status quo. He keeps others informed.

Gainesville has the highest level of public involvement in comparison to other communities that Mr. Saunders has worked in, which includes very long public workshops. Mr. Lyons is very realistic about the type of community it is. He does very well at taking input and making people feel involved but he does not become mired in the process. When someone is being unreasonable he gives them an opportunity to be heard and then moves the project forward.

Gainesville had already redeveloped the downtown area but they had neighborhoods in need of public investment. One concern that Mr. Lyons addressed was to redirect development towards Pleasant Street, Porters Street, and East Gainesville in general. He shifted beautification projects to enhance these areas. Mr. Saunders still owns a home in Gainesville and visits 3 to 4 times per year. He has witnessed the improvements in these neighborhoods.

Mr. Lyons is very good with excel and spreadsheets, which is important in redevelopment. He managed a staff of 80 and never had any problems. He was realistic about not giving the store away when negotiating with contractors. He gave subsidies at a realistic level by injecting a small amount of public funds after making sure the concept was financially sound. He is very organized and kept processes moving, while including others in a very impressive way.

Mr. Saunders is not aware of anything controversial in Mr. Lyons's background. Mr. Saunders does not know of anyone who has a negative opinion of Mr. Lyons. During the time they worked together he was very well liked and respected.

Mr. Saunders runs a nonprofit with 200 employees in Pittsburg and his standards are very high. Mr. Lyons is the one person in Florida that Mr. Saunders would consider hiring for the work he is currently involved in. Mr. Lyons is just really good.

Mr. Saunders believes that Mr. Lyons is the right choice for Gainesville. The community is poised to become more than it currently is. The community is mid-sized and the manager needs to have good judgment about what will improve the community. Gainesville has a very highly rated university, and a reputation as an intellectual and creative mecca in Florida. Mr. Lyons would bring ambition and advancement to Gainesville in a positive way.

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Smart,
- Funny,
- Ambitious for the community,
- Creative,
- Warm, and
- Kind.

Reference Notes

Anthony Lyons

Strengths: Good design eye for redevelopment; very creative; accomplishes large scale projects without being mired in bureaucracy; very funny; very smart; good leader.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Greg Bradley – Former Finance Manager, Gainesville CRA, FL 678-612-7229

Mr. Bradley met Mr. Lyons in 2007 and went to work for him in early 2008. Mr. Lyons is one of the best individuals that Mr. Bradley has ever worked with.

When they began to work together Mr. Bradley stated that he would not work for Mr. Lyons, but with him. Mr. Lyons was open to the idea and they had a batman and robin type relationship. Mr. Lyons came up with creative ideas and Mr. Bradley made sure they were completed.

One of the most admirable traits that Mr. Lyons has is his ability to identify talent and allow employees to grow. When making decisions in general he is right most of the time. He is innovative while ensuring that operations function at a high level.

In his role as the CRA Director Mr. Lyons elevated the position by building relationships with organizations and entities that did not even talk to the city prior to his arrival. Because of his efforts they now have a good relationship with the University of Florida.

Gainesville is a very segregated community. African Americans live on the east side and Caucasians live on the west side. Mr. Lyons was one of the few individuals who made inroads with stake holders from both communities. He works very well with the public.

Mr. Lyons keeps everyone apprised of what is happening in the organization. He is visionary and rallies others around the objectives. He understands numbers and the mechanics behind the budget but he finds value in surrounding himself with department heads who are very skilled in their area of expertise. He is timely in completing his assignments.

One year they were debating the format for the annual report. Mr. Lyons had some very strong opinions but the group was not ready to work with a digital format, it was too far advanced from how they were working at the time. He allowed the team to shape the vision and suggested they print the annual report on biodegradable paper which could be planted to help the environment.

Because of the positions Mr. Lyons has held he lives in controversy but he is very politically shrewd. He taught the staff to never let anyone get a hook in you, meaning do not do anything that you would not want to see on the front page of the newspaper. He understands that once you lose your credibility, you are finished in the business. He believes in letting each deal stand on its own merits without any favor trading or politics. While some in the community might not like what he is fighting for, they still appreciate how he is fighting for it.

Reference Notes Anthony Lyons

Mr. Bradley is not aware of anything in Mr. Lyons' past that is controversial. Mr. Bradley would hire Mr. Lyons and respects him. Even though they did not always see eye to eye, working with him was one of the most pleasurable experiences that Mr. Bradley has had.

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Intelligent,
- Creative,
- Unique,
- Visionary,
- Gets things done, and
- Thoughtful.

Strengths: Creativity; looks at situations from different viewpoints; visionary; very skilled from a political perspective.

Weaknesses: Sometimes he knows the right answer and can stick to this answer even when others want to proceed in a different way. He usually comes around but it can sometimes take a while.

Jackson Sasser – President, Santa Fe College, Gainesville, FL 352-538-5471 352-395-5164

Mr. Sasser has known Mr. Lyons since 2006. Mr. Sasser knew Mr. Lyons before he left Gainesville and has appreciated his work even more since Mr. Lyons returned, particularly in his role as Interim Manager.

The college has a campus in downtown Gainesville and Mr. Lyons is one of the people you can go to and receive an answer. He has integrity and is very bright. He is one of the best city officials with whom Mr. Sasser has worked with during his entire career. He is exceptional.

Mr. Lyons is forthright. When he says he can do something, he does it. When he cannot do something, he says so. Mr. Sasser appreciates his honesty. He is very wise, very smart, and has a good set of critical thinking skills.

Mr. Lyons is very creative and innovative. He worked with the elected officials on the streetscape project around the campus. He is working with a very different Commission now and has done very well both in working with them and keeping everyone informed.

When something is happening in the community Mr. Lyons is there. He is not verbose but he is present. He attends Chamber meetings and fundraising events. Another area that he excels in is discipline, both in his work and personal life. He is athletic and has good health and endurance.

Reference Notes Anthony Lyons

The city asked the college to manage a facility. Mr. Lyons led the team who built the relationship with the college to establish this arrangement. The financials were a large piece of the deal, he was very helpful. He immediately responds to any request for help.

Interim positions can be very challenging. Mr. Sasser read a newspaper article that mentioned a situation with an employee of Mr. Lyons. Because they never talked about the situation Mr. Sasser cannot comment on the details but he believes that Mr. Lyons would not have applied for the position if the situation were not resolved. Nothing in his background would embarrass an employer, he is a straight arrow. Everyone that Mr. Sasser knows agrees with the statements in this reference.

Mr. Sasser would hire Mr. Lyons without any hesitation, and may offer him a position if the one he applied for does not work out. Mr. Lyons is very good and would do well as a city or county manager based on everything that Mr. Sasser has seen and heard.

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Responsive,
- Gets closure on tasks which is very important,
- Committed,
- Joyful, and
- Excellent choice to manage a municipality.

Strengths: Bright; honest; knows when to listen and when to speak; listens more than he speaks; people are drawn to him because of his style; works well with both conservatives and liberals.

Weaknesses: During his first tenure in Gainesville he was a little impetuous but growth comes with experience and age. Since returning to Gainesville he has matured into a very seasoned professional.

Kyle Messier – Chair, Main Street, Claremont, NH 603-542-2263

Ms. Messier was the Chair of the Main Street Board in 2000 when Mr. Lyons was hired as the Executive Director. She continued to interact with Mr. Lyons on matters related to the revitalization of the City Center after Mr. Lyons went to work for the City of Claremont in 2003.

Mr. Lyons is very dedicated to his job and he does good work. They worked closely together and met regularly. The Board set the vision and Mr. Lyons performed the tasks necessary to make that happen.

Reference Notes

Anthony Lyons

Main Street was a small program. Mr. Lyons was the primary employee with one part-time secretary and as such he did not have many opportunities to hire personnel. His decisions in general are good because he is thoughtful and he researches well.

In the role Mr. Lyons held he was a change agent. His second strongest characteristic is innovation. He attended community meetings and met with small businesses trying to move the revitalization forward. Main Street had 50 volunteers from the community who were active on a regular basis. Mr. Lyons interacted well with them.

Mr. Lyons worked with state agencies on grants and innovative ideas like tax credits. He kept everyone well informed. He had a small budget but he managed it well. He completed tasks by the deadline.

Main Street was trying to revitalize a completely run down historic city center. Mr. Lyons was asked to stabilize the buildings, particularly in the downtown area on the four corners of the region, and he accomplished it by interacting with business people, grantees, and banks. He brought them together to invest in the anchor buildings which attracted businesses to the area.

Ms. Messier does not know of anything controversial in Mr. Lyons' background. He left Main Street to work for the City of Claremont. In a small community some residents do not want change and they might have a different opinion of Mr. Lyons but because of the time that has passed she cannot remember their names.

Ms. Messier would hire Mr. Lyons. He has the ability to expand his information base and incorporate what he already knows into his next role. He transitioned from leading a small community based organization to the Economic Development Director position in a relatively seamless way.

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Out of the box thinker,
- Innovative,
- Organized,
- Able to bring varied entities together,
- Able to work with government banking and the community, and
- Dedicated.

Strengths: Organization; thinks out of the box; perseverance.

Weaknesses: He had a hard time tolerating those with less of a vision.

Reference Notes Anthony Lyons

Russ Blackburn – Former City Manager, Gainesville, FL 772-284-0910

Mr. Blackburn hired Mr. Lyons as the CRA Director for Gainesville in 2006. Mr. Lyons worked in this capacity until 2011. He then was rehired in this role when they had a vacancy in 2013. Mr. Blackburn directly supervised Mr. Lyons during the majority of his tenure.

In terms of job performance Mr. Lyons is very good. He makes good decisions both when hiring personnel and in general. He is a change agent. He is also innovative while keeping operations running at a high level.

When necessary Mr. Lyons is visible in the community. For the most part he kept everyone well informed. His role as the CRA Director did not require him to work with the broad spectrum of the public. He provided good leadership to the organization.

The downtown plaza project had many players with competing interests of what they wanted the end result to be. Mr. Lyons and his staff worked with a number of downtown business representatives to really develop a vision for how the plaza should look and function.

The CRA had a budget of over \$3 million dollars per year, Mr. Lyons did a fine job managing it. He accomplished tasks given to him in a timely manner.

Mr. Blackburn would hire Mr. Lyons as a CRA Director.

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Very innovative, and
- Creative.

Strengths: Very creative and innovative.

Weaknesses: Sometimes your strengths can be your weaknesses, so creativity and innovation.

Mary Walter – Finance Director, Claremont, NH 603-542-7001

Ms. Walter was hired in May 2001 and she participated in the hiring process to bring Mr. Lyons to the City of Claremont in 2003.

Hiring Mr. Lyons was a great decision, he was a very good find and fit. He was innovative and always thinks outside the box. Quite a few of the employees he hired are still with the City and doing well.

Reference Notes

Anthony Lyons

Without Mr. Lyons they would not have been able to overcome the major impediments in a significant redevelopment project. He kept the City Manager very well informed.

Part of Mr. Lyons' job was to meet with the public and businesses. Feedback from the community was always very positive, they felt that he and his staff were great to work with.

Mr. Lyons is more of a visionary than a manager who sits behind a desk managing processes. He is always very responsive to any request for help or information.

A redevelopment project involving three mills was a \$25-million-dollar investment. In order to entice businesses, they needed to build and fund a parking garage. Mr. Lyons was instrumental in securing funding, working with outside sources, and building necessary partnerships.

Ms. Walter cannot think of anything controversial related to Mr. Lyons. She would hire Mr. Lyons. Their City Manager is retiring and they would love to have him back in Claremont.

Words or phrases used to describe Anthony Lyons:

- Innovative,
- Go-getter,
- Responsive,
- Diligent in financial reporting, and
- Very involved in the community, and
- Listens.

Strengths: Working with people; very good at listening; did a great job managing his budget.

Weaknesses: He did not like to be told no very well, but he tried to find alternative ways to accomplish the objectives, including public/private partnerships. This quality is a strength as well as a weakness.

Prepared by: Lynelle Klein
Colin Baenziger & Associates

CB&A Internet Research

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun
January 27, 2016

Mayor, others outline successes, challenges

Author: April Warren

Gainesville still has its challenges, officials acknowledged during last Wednesday's State of the City event, but its growth is fast-paced and a vision of making citizens the heart of the city is changing its culture. About 100 people attended the address, the last of Mayor Ed Braddy's term, but the first for interim City Manager **Anthony Lyons** and Gainesville Regional Utilities General Manager Ed Bielarski. All three spoke during the hourlong afternoon event at the Gainesville Police Department.

“So how is the state of the city?” Braddy asked the audience. “Well, the evidence is all around us. It's hard not to feel good about our future when driving through and seeing all the activity taking place.” He described new construction, new businesses and new parks being built. “For the honest observer, there has been an undeniable acceleration of activity,” Braddy said. He spoke about all the things that have changed under his three-year tenure, including the state of the city address itself. Previously given by just the mayor, the event now includes speeches from the mayor, charter officers and pre-recorded remarks from city commissioners. “To sum it up, Gainesville is cooperative, focused and strong,” Braddy said. Braddy says the city still faces challenges on infrastructure, funding to aid the homeless, and utility bills that are still too high.

But he spent most of his time focusing on progress. The city has some of the lowest unemployment in the state, is first in the nation to offer discounted Uber rides to low-income seniors and since his first state of the city address in 2014, Gainesville's declining population is now on the rise. “Gainesville is growing again and it's evident all around us,” the mayor said. Braddy attributes the growth in part to city efforts to be more welcoming to businesses. The city has sponsored a small business incubator, and the Gainesville Housing Authority has also worked on a business incubator for low-income residents. “This last one of course represents a concrete effort to address economic disparities and to narrow the gap of income inequality,” he said.

Braddy said the reach of job fairs has expanded and that he established the city's first committee to promote minority-owned and minority-oriented opportunities and businesses. “It is amazing the progress that can be made when we listen to our community partners and act in ways to facilitate ambitions rather than telling them how they can fit into our prescribed plans,” Braddy said. “The unmistakable common denominator is a city hall that facilitates the aspirations of its community rather than defines them,” Braddy. Before Braddy spoke, both **Lyons** and Bielarski offered their thoughts.

Lyons said having only been in his position 70 days, he wouldn't try to take credit for the city's accomplishments over the last year, but highlighted the opening of the Sweetwater Wetlands Park, and a year in which city departments did a good job of providing core services to the

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

public. “As public servants, employees at every level of government have an obligation, a duty, to maintain the integrity of the institutions of public governance,” he said. “Without it, it is impossible to maintain the trust of the public we serve.” **Lyons** said it's important to maintain city employees' integrity, especially city leaders. “That is precisely why, when presented with issues that clearly are conflicts of interest or may reasonably appear to be conflicts, I will take action immediately to eliminate the actual or the reasonable perceived conflicts of interest.”

Lyons focused on the future, much of which is in line with his work on the now-retired Blue Ribbon Committee on Economic Competitiveness, which answered the question of how to make Gainesville a more competitive city with the answer of making it the most citizen-centric city in the world. “We do it by design, or shall I say, redesign of our processes to accommodate the novice rather than the expert,” **Lyons** said.

Bielarski said recently he met with employees of GRU to talk about where the utility is headed. He shared with the audience a vision plan he conveyed to them. He suggested the utility has worked toward becoming an organization where information bubbles up, rather than being pushed down by executives. He brought in a Chief Change Officer to develop a more engaged employee work force. He said the utility is working to make information technology the backbone of the organization so work can be done effectively and efficiently. And he spoke of finding a work-home life balance for employees.

After the meeting, Bielarski told the Sun he expanded on the idea of a diversity and inclusion agenda in GRU's budget, which would include implicit-bias classes and creating a wide-candidate pool for new hires. Bielarski said GRU recently lowered its rates slightly and the utility is working toward bringing its rates from some of the highest in the state closer to the average range. He also hopes to invest in employees and the community. “Our mission as an organization is to return GRU to a position of pre-eminence within the community,” Bielarski said. He wants it to be as acceptable to wear a GRU hat or shirt in public as it is to wear a University of Florida hat.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun
January 19, 2016

Questions swirl after board member removed before Plum Creek vote

Author: April Warren

Hours before a crucial November meeting of the county planning board involving the Plum Creek Timber Company, a city employee serving on the board was told by his boss to resign from the panel. That request came shortly after the boss — interim City Manager **Anthony Lyons** — hung up the phone after talking with a Plum Creek official. The quick, unexplained departure of Planning Commission member Forrest Eddleton has led to sharp words among elected officials and a request by Alachua County to Gainesville city officials for an explanation. “I’m not happy with the way things shook out, I think it makes it all look bad and I’d like some clarification, some public answer as to whether or not Plum Creek influenced our advisory committee process inappropriately and whether or not there are any policies involved, and if not, should there be,” said County Commissioner Mike Byerly.

The planning board on Nov. 18 was to decide whether to send the timber giant’s plans for more than 52,000 acres of land to the County Commission. After extensive public comment, the board voted 4-2, after Eddleton left, to send the plan to the commission, which will hear the proposal in mid-February. Gainesville City Attorney Nicolle Shalley was asked to look into the issue after another member of the planning board, School Board member Eileen Roy, raised the issue with the City Commission at its Dec. 17 meeting. “This was a very important meeting that took days to prepare for and to have someone taken off just hours before the meeting, it looks very bad. It looks very bad. It looks like some shady process,” said Roy, shaking her head. “To be taken off at the last minute is inexcusable,” she said. “Commissioners, this does not pass the smell test. At the very least it gives the impression and the appearance of governmental corruption. That the city manager takes orders from Plum Creek instead of allowing an employee to complete a civic duty. Does the city take orders from Plum Creek instead of impartially serving its constituents? It certainly appears that way.”

At the start of the Nov. 18 planning meeting, Eddleton made a brief statement, then quickly left. “I regret the abruptness of this announcement, it was also abrupt for me,” he told the board. The next day, he sent an e-mail to the county. “At 3 p.m. yesterday, I was called into a meeting with Gainesville’s Interim City Manager **Anthony Lyons**. I was told that a phone call made him aware that I was serving on the County Planning Commission. **Mr. Lyons** said that he had determined that this was a conflict with my position as a Planning Technician with the city and that I would have to immediately resign from the board or I would no longer be able to do my job effectively.”

Lyons had become interim city manager two weeks before the Plum Creek vote, after Russ Blackburn tendered his resignation. City spokesman Bob Woods said **Lyons** did not have time to speak with the Sun Tuesday, but relayed what **Lyons** told him. Woods said while there is no formal policy as to whether city employees can serve on other boards they are generally

Section 10**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches****Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

encouraged to do so, but that they should consider whether that service would pose a potential conflict of interest. Woods said since **Lyons** has become aware of the matter, he has directed the human resources department to develop a written policy to address the issue. "He felt strongly that the issue needed to be a policy," Woods said. Eddleton had been a member of the board since August 12, 2014. He also previously served on the Historic Commission from October 2013 through May 2015 and is currently serving on the land conservation board.

Roy, who voted against the Plum Creek plan, then went to the city's Dec. 17 meeting looking for answers. Roy said if Eddleton was to have any role in a discussion at the city level about Plum Creek his role would likely be small, and therefore he still could have served on the planning board. She then referenced a public records request made by local attorney Joe Little, on behalf of Scott Camil, a local resident and coordinator of Stand By Our Plan, an association with concerns about Plum Creek's proposal. The request asked for more information about what transpired between **Lyons** and Eddleton and how that conversation came about.

Public records obtained by The Sun show **Lyons** had a 14-minute phone call at 12:15 p.m. on Nov. 18. The telephone number listed is the cell phone number for Rose Fagler, manager of public relations for Plum Creek in Florida. Little told the Sun he asked the city for any of **Lyons'** notes from that phone conversation but was told none exist. He also asked for a summary of the conversation, but was not provided one. Audible conversations are not subject to public records laws and no such recording exists of the call between **Lyons** and Plum Creek. Fagler told The Sun she had called **Lyons** weeks before and he was returning her call that day. She said the nature of the call was to congratulate him on his new position.

During the phone call, Fagler said, she asked **Lyons** how Eddleton liked to review projects. Fagler said with the meeting scheduled for that evening she wanted to know if Eddleton would be focusing on any specific topic areas so Plum Creek staff could be prepared. "I told him Mr. Eddleton serves on the county planning commission and he was surprised with that," Fagler said. "To be honest, we mostly talked about him getting appointed to the (interim) city manager position," she said. Fagler said Plum Creek staff had met with each planning commissioner individually this fall and as far as she knows Eddleton still hadn't taken a position for or against the plan. "It's not our role to determine a conflict of interest, that's not our role, that's up to the individual commissioners or organization," Fagler said.

During the Dec. 17 meeting, Gainesville City Commissioner Todd Chase came to **Lyons'** defense asking that if any of his colleagues thought **Lyons** had done anything wrong they should make a motion to remove him. No such motion was ever made. "To come in here, into our auditorium and levy charges against our interim city manager who I think is of the finest integrity that we have and I challenge again, any sitting city commissioner who has an ounce of thought that **Anthony Lyons** is of the integrity that he'd go following orders, I am not going to allow this Plum Creek nonsense to get dragged into our city commission right now," said Chase. Chase said **Lyons** had talked to him about it and he was fine with the decision. He went on to say he couldn't imagine walking into the school board and challenging every decision the superintendent makes. "You've lost all credibility — all," Chase said to Roy.

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Commissioner Randy Wells said before holding office he served on the city plan board and a member that stands out from his time on the board was a county planner. He said the city policy of whether or not an employee can serve on another municipality's board needs to be clear. Commissioner Helen Warren asked the city attorney's office to look into what city policy says about city employees serving on county boards and wondered if an employee could just remove themselves from any discussions where they might have a conflict of interest. She said she wanted to clarify the policy "for the element of transparency."

Shalley's written response came last week. "In short, this was not a matter of violation of City policy or violation of state ethics laws. It was an employee management issue. When the issue came to the attention of City Management, they (both the City Manager and Planning Manager) considered the nature of the employee's work duties and the nature of the citizen board they were serving on, consulted with my Office and then provided guidance to the employee," wrote Shalley in an e-mail response to commissioners.

Tuesday afternoon, Shalley responded in an e-mail to the Sun addressing the city's policy: "I am not aware of a city policy that addresses City employees serving on citizen boards. Absent a policy, or even with a policy (such as the City Policy regarding Outside Employment or Business Activity), management decisions are made based on an analysis of the facts of a particular case/situation." In a response to Little, Shalley explained she understood city management had only recently become aware Eddleton served on the county board and they were concerned that role would interfere with his work as a city planner... "as both roles involve handling quasi-judicial petitions and other development review with many of the same developers, landowners and agents in this community." "An impartial decision-maker is a required component of providing procedural due process in quasi-judicial decisions," she wrote.

During the Jan. 12 County Commission meeting, Commissioner Mike Byerly brought up the topic and explained the planner had been approached by the city manager and given an "ultimatum" after the phone call with Plum Creek. "Now, those facts aren't in dispute, they're out there, a lot of people think that looks really bad, and if it's true, it is bad," Byerly said. "And it reflects not just on the city but on us and our process and whether or not it's fair and above board or whether or not it's been manipulated." He said county employees have served on city boards before and it's always been encouraged, but that changed in one day. Byerly said he has since learned the city doesn't have a policy in place, so what transpired was an "ad hoc decision."

According to County Attorney Michele Lieberman, the county's own policy doesn't exclude county employees from participating in other municipalities boards or committees, nor does it even prohibit county employees from serving on county boards or committees. Commissioner Lee Pinkoson questioned whether Byerly, who has been outspoken against Plum Creek, would have brought up the topic if the circumstances were different. Commissioner Charles Chestnut said he hadn't seen anything in writing so far and was concerned what Byerly was relaying had been hearsay. He also wondered why the planner wouldn't have exercised his rights as an employee. Chestnut said if the allegations were true that would be "disturbing" and "unfair. The

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

Commission voted to draft a letter to the city inquiring further on the topic. The Sun has obtained a copy of the letter, in which Hutchinson asked for the answers to questions about the policies surrounding Eddleton's departure from the city plan board. The letter is expected to be sent to the city this week.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun
January 7, 2016

Leaders debate manager search, will keep looking

Author: April Warren

The search for a Gainesville city manager is back on. The city commission voted unanimously Thursday evening to direct its human resources office to continue efforts to find the best candidates to fill the position. A commission vote on Dec. 17 hit the brakes on a search after Commissioner Todd Chase brought up the possibility they had already found the best candidate in interim City Manager **Anthony Lyons**. **Lyons** took over in November after Russ Blackburn resigned. Blackburn said after a decade in the position he believed he was no longer the right person for the job and had lost some commissioners' support.

When Chase discussed what he was looking for in the next city manager with a consultant helping in the search, he said he was told that someone who fit that criteria better than **Lyons** might not exist. **Lyons** previously held positions at the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency, the city planning department and the Blue Ribbon Commission, which came up with ways to bring economic growth to the city. Chase said **Lyons** is talented and has done a good job in leading the city in a new direction of being more open and citizen-centric. Chase said he wasn't interested in searching further and that there is absolutely zero requirement for the commission to do so.

But while other commissioners expressed support for **Lyons**, they thought a search was still warranted. "I want us to open the door to the process and if **Anthony's** our butterfly he'll stay," said Commissioner Helen Warren. "I want to see that we have the best choice." Commissioner Charles Goston said he's a stickler for doing things the right way and that the city is in a very pivotal moment right now, where it needs to continue to move forward. He emphasized the importance for having a diverse candidate pool.

Commissioners Harvey Budd and Randy Wells floated the idea of having **Lyons** stay in the position for about a year and then having the commission reassess. Other commissioners said the instability wasn't fair to **Lyons**. "I certainly support **Anthony** and his role here as interim city manager and I frankly would be comfortable seeing him as city manager," said Mayor Ed Braddy. "I think it's important to have a competitive process," he said. "I also think it's very important for transparency's sake to have a public process so people can see what we're doing." The commission directed the search to be conducted as soon as possible.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun

December 18, 2015

Gainesville puts city manager search on hold — for now

Author: April Warren

The search for a new Gainesville city manager has been put on ice. Commissioner Todd Chase brought up the issue during Thursday night's commission meeting. He said when he spelled out the qualifications he'd want in a candidate to a consultant helping in the candidate search he was told that person already was in place — interim **Anthony Lyons**. "I think you've got your person and I don't know if I can find anyone like that," the commissioner said the consultant told him. The meeting had already run into overtime and the commission agreed to delay the discussion for a future meeting. In the meantime though, the search will be on hold.

Lyons took over as interim manager in early November after Russ Blackburn resigned from the post after a decade. Blackburn said while he was the right person for the job when he was hired, he didn't believe he was still the best fit. Commissioners said **Lyons** would be the right person to serve as interim because he would bring a fresh perspective to the position and referenced his success at previous positions with the Community Redevelopment Organizations and the Blue Ribbon Commission, which looked into ways to bring economic growth to the city.

On Dec. 3 the city commission heard **Lyons** and others pitch an idea for making Gainesville the most citizen-centered city in the world. Their vision was the culmination of eight months of work for the 23-member Blue Ribbon Committee that came up with ways to change the city's culture from one of "no" to one of "yes." Suggestions included making employees take an oath or commitment pledge to the citizen-centered idea, a new slogan capturing the crux of that promise and a new city logo. Thursday evening, **Lyons** gave a presentation on how to go about implementing the Blue Ribbon panel recommendations. Next steps include training employees about the new way of thinking, designing a new web portal where city information is easily displayed and creating a department of measuring that would gauge the city's progress in becoming more citizen-centered.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun
December 3, 2015

Report: City must be friendlier to citizens, business

Author: April Warren

The city's Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee, which tackled the question of how to make Gainesville a more competitive city, has come up with one lofty answer: make Gainesville the most citizen-centered city in the world. “(We want to) change the perception that we're not as citizen- or business-friendly enough to one of exceptional customer service,” said Mitch Glaeser, the committee's chairman, during the presentation of the panel's final report Thursday night before the city commission.

Since its April inception, the 23-member committee came up with several ways on how the city could change from a culture of “no” to a culture of “yes.” The report suggests every city employee — including commissioners — take an oath or Pledge of Commitment to the idea of a citizen-centric government. It also calls for a new city logo and message that captures the essence of the city's promise. “The city fundamentally exists for the people of the city,” said **Anthony Lyons**, the committee's executive director.

Lyons said the group started with the mindset that it would need to change zoning and other items, but through its work, realized that the answer was much bigger than that. **Lyons** said Ritz-Carlton is regarded as tops in the hotel industry even though it still offers a bed and sink like its competitors. Uber has become a popular service, even though it offers a service similar to taxi companies and Best Buy put its competitor Circuit City out of business. **Lyons** said the difference is those that prevailed offered an enjoyable, customer-friendly experience.

The committee also suggested one unified strategic plan for the city and recommends city employees be trained in team building and cross-disciplinary problem-solving skills that will help with doing business in an innovative way. In looking for new hires, the report says to look for individuals who can act as “service designers and entrepreneurs.” Changing the city's website to make it more user friendly, making city phone numbers more accessible and providing “action officers” who help citizens navigate city government are other fixes, the report suggests.

The report also recommends a "Department of Doing," a one-stop shop for those looking to grow a business that includes experts helping citizens navigate the unfamiliar path. It also calls for a "Department of Measuring" that would evaluate how the city is living up to its goals. “I will tell you this is a defining moment in Gainesville's history,” said Glaeser, former Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce chairman.

The idea for the committee came about in early 2015, when Mayor Ed Braddy proposed re-imagining economic development in Gainesville. Then in April, city officials created the Blue

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Ribbon Advisory Committee on Economic Competitiveness. The group's work included a day-long retreat and trip to California's Silicon Valley to see how to attract business to Gainesville. The committee hired IDEO, a California "human-centered design and innovation firm," to assist in creating a plan for a more citizen-centered Gainesville.

The committee members and IDEO officials interviewed hundreds of business owners, city employees and citizens to figure out key issues and hurdles those who do business with the city encounter. After hearing Thursday's presentation, Braddy said the committee was made up of people from all over the city, which could be a recipe for impasse. "The diversity became your strength, you decided to leverage each others' talents and experience and what I'm seeing is just a fantastic, fantastic product," Braddy said.

Commissioner Randy Wells said the report gives employees and citizens as a whole something to aspire to. Commissioner Helen Warren said she's encouraged that many of the suggestions came from city staff and feels the next step is to get citizens to make a commitment to their city. Commissioner Todd Chase said he is excited about the report. "A lot of this isn't being held back by anything other than empowerment from leadership," he said.

Gainesville Regional Utilities General Manager Ed Bielarski said from here the work only gets harder because now the city must take the report's "euphoria" and figure out how to prioritize the work within cost constraints. The committee has now disbanded, but the commission asked **Lyons**, now interim city manager, in conjunction with city charter officers, to come up with an implementation plan and report back at a future meeting.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun
November 6, 2015

With city manager's exit, comes chance for new leadership

Author: April Warren

In the wake of Gainesville city manager Russ Blackburn's resignation Thursday, more details have come to light on perhaps what caused his departure after a decade. Blackburn, 62, said he was leaving because he felt he was no longer the best person for the job and didn't have the confidence of every commissioner. Thursday evening, several commissioners said it was time for a change, some of them pointing out that the usual tenure for a city manager is only 5 to 7 years. "I think the city is prime and ready for a culture change from the top down," City Commissioner Craig Carter said Thursday.

Under Blackburn's administration, Mayor Ed Braddy said he's been approached repeatedly by city government employees who have asked to speak with him and said they didn't feel certain information about the city was reaching the mayor. "I can't tell you how many times I've had that happen, and it's never from the same person," Braddy said Thursday.

Commissioner Randy Wells said Thursday the departure gives the city a chance to be reinvigorated. "There's an opportunity (here) for kind of rebranding, reworking...re-empowering our staff," he said. Braddy said the interim manager, **Anthony Lyons**, won't merely be a place holder. "There's going to be a high bar set for the interim," Braddy said. While it may take until the end of March to have a permanent leader in place, according to the city's human resources department, a more immediate timeline is already clear.

Blackburn ended his employment with the city officially at 5 p.m. Friday, city officials expect **Lyons** to get down to business Monday. Meantime, Assistant City Manager Fred Murray will serve as acting city manager through Sunday. "So we have someone in charge," Braddy said Friday afternoon. Braddy said he spoke with **Lyons** after Thursday's meeting ended. The pair is expected to meet over the weekend to secure the terms of **Lyons'** contract, such as pay and benefits. **Lyons** has been acting as the city's director of planning and before that was director of the Community Redevelopment Agency — twice. He also leads the mayor's blue ribbon panel, a group attempting to re-imagine how business is done in the city. **Lyons** said Friday he's been thinking about the time he spent with Blackburn, who hired him at the start of both CRA stints, calling himself "forever thankful" to Blackburn. "It's been a good partnership and he's a loss to me personally," **Lyons** said.

Lyons said he spent Friday reaching out and introducing himself. "I think **Anthony Lyons** has a track record, quite frankly, with the CRA of engaging people, lifting up the staff and letting them shine," Carter said Thursday evening. Carter brought **Lyons'** name up as a candidate and moved to secure him as interim manager. "I think as he's moved over to the planning and development department I've seen encouraging things over there immediately."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

Braddy said Friday it was just time for a leadership change. “Mr. Blackburn was doing things — it’s just a different style, a different kind of leadership, so I won’t speak disparagingly of Russ because he’s done a good job, there’s moments in time there’s just a good time for a change,” Braddy said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun

July 19, 2015

A city designed for the people

Author: Nathan Crabbe

Anthony Lyons is helping make Gainesville’s lumbering city government operate more like a nimble tech company, starting with his office. I stopped by that office last month, a couple of weeks after **Lyons** was named the city’s interim director of planning and development services. He previously served as director of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency. When I arrived, **Lyons** was with staff members looking over blueprints of the planning department’s Thomas Center home. They were identifying changes to make it more accessible to the public.

After the meeting ended, one staff member stayed to work at the conference table there. **Lyons** explained that the table was a shared workspace that allowed him and staff to work more collaboratively. These kinds of things might seem hokey, but they’re part of an ambitious plan to make Gainesville into the country’s most user-friendly city.

Lyons described the plan in similar terms as a business article that said the railroads went bankrupt because they thought they were in the railroad business. They didn’t realize they were actually in the transportation business. A city that views its job as permitting businesses to operate is similar, **Lyons** said. “Our job is to enable them, not permit them,” he said. “It’s a different way of doing things.”

The city’s plan includes a new development services center and ideas from Mayor Ed Braddy’s blue-ribbon panel on economic competitiveness. **Lyons** is the panel’s executive director, and former Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce Chairman Mitch Glaeser is its chair. They were part of a group that visited Silicon Valley in April to attract business to Gainesville. While there they visited IDEO, an international design firm that has worked on retail products such as Apple’s first mouse. The firm more recently has designed the delivery of services, including overhauling business licensing for Dubai.

As **Lyons** announced at Thursday’s City Commission meeting, the firm has been hired to help make Gainesville user friendly. It will conduct the effort from a prominent local storefront to encourage public involvement. “We’re looking at a government designed with people for people,” he said.

If that sounds vague, a document developed at a retreat with Fast Company magazine co-founder Alan Webber gives more specifics. It asks, what if every city department had the equivalent of an Apple Store genius bar where someone could meet a city worker to resolve any problem? What if citizens were asked to automatically rate every interaction with a city worker? What if City Hall was set up more like a welcoming hotel lobby or coffee shop? Other ideas include a “welcome wagon” to provide info on local services and businesses to new residents. A single

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

card or a high-tech wristband, like those used at Disney, might allow a person access to any city activity.

To **Lyons**, this is about much more than Gainesville shedding its reputation for being unfriendly to business. “It’s not just about changing the way you do business with the city. It’s your city,” he said. It’s up to the rest of us to fill in the blanks of what that means. We can start here: send changes you would like to see in city government to letters@gainesville.com.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons**

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

cityofgainesville.org

June 3, 2015

Gainesville CRA Director Selected as Interim Planning and Development Services Director

City Manager Russ Blackburn is pleased to announce the selection of **Anthony Lyons** as the interim Planning and Development Services Director effective Monday, June 8. This selection follows the departure of Steve Dush, who recently left the City of Gainesville after being selected as the next Assistant City Manager of Imperial Beach, California.

“I am confident that **Anthony** and the outstanding members of the Planning and Development Services Department will continue critical initiatives and our commitment to providing outstanding service to all stakeholders and users of our planning and development services functions,” said Blackburn.

Two initiatives **Lyons** is expected to oversee are the update of the Land Development Code and the formation of a Development Services Center. **Lyons** was the project manager for the development of the Innovation District zoning category, which has served as a model for the zoning changes that are being proposed in the Land Development Code update.

Lyons has served as the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency Director for almost five years. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Art History from Indiana University Bloomington. Previously, **Lyons** was the Executive Director for the Capital City Development Corporation in Boise, Idaho; the Director of Planning and Development in the City of Claremont, New Hampshire and the Executive Director of the Main Street Program in Claremont, New Hampshire.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun

October 12, 2014

Our once sleepy town is transforming into Awesome City

Author: Ron Cunningham

Anthony Lyons is a sharp dresser. Given to bold stripes, sharp ties and sharper creases, this guy doesn't leave his bathroom in the morning without cuff links firmly fastened like rivets. Wrinkles? Not in his world. Listen, **Anthony** — director of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency — looks as put-together when making a presentation before the City Commission as he does sliding down the stainless steel banister of the terraced stairway of Gainesville's new but already iconic DNA bridge. No, seriously. You can be buttoned down and still loosen up. Especially in this town.

Lyons' moment of serendipity is the catalyst that leads to truly awesome stuff in "Reimagine Possible," a just under three minute video burst of Gainesville exuberance newly produced by the CRA (view it at <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=wmuKbTv4UEU>). "Reimagine Possible" revolves around what happens when **Lyons** has his Walter Mitty moment on the railing and then gestures to a nearby group of UF student types to join him at play. Ah, but it turns out that these faux-students are, in reality, a wandering band of traceurs and freerunners.

Yeah, I had to look it up too. Basically they're people who like to indulge in astounding feats of precision jumping and acrobatics. The next thing you know, they're doing handstands and summersaults with wild abandon, leaping clear over the handrails, and turning cartwheels in freefall. Warning: Do not try this at home, folks. And especially do not try it on the DNA bridge. Ouch!

So what's the message here? "Have the courage to shut off autopilot and be human," prods the narrator. "Take a risk." And what does all this leaping, twisting and turning have to do with the CRA? Isn't it just another city bureaucracy? Curious, I went to the CRA's website and read its goal statement: "Build awesome things that matter." The DNA bridge is awesome. When it's finally finished the urban park on Depot Avenue — with its ponds and paths and, eventually, the new Cade Science Museum — will be awesome. Downtown is looking increasingly awesome. Second Avenue and Innovation Square? Awesome.

Gainesville likes to call itself Innovation City. But the CRA's redevelopment strategies are slowly transforming our once sleepy college town into Awesome City. "The future is here in bits and pieces," says the narrator. "We just have to have the eyesight to see it and take action." And it's beginning to pay off, as evidenced by the increasing number of home grown start-ups and high-tech companies that are taking root here.

Anyway, message smessage. "Reimagine Possible" is just fun to watch. Listen, these are grim times. Ebola. War. An unpopular president and a reeking Congress. A governor's race that makes you want to hold your nose while voting. In a grim world we could all use something to feel

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

good about. Something to make us smile. Maybe even leap for joy. The CRA's video leap for joy made me think about a piece I read recently on news360.com by Pierre Herman, with the MA Sustainable Cities program at King's College London. Herman raises the question: "Should cities be built to make people happy?" The answer, by the way, is yes.

He cites Barcelona as a city that sustains happiness by design. "Neighborhood festivals are common throughout the year. Squares are buzzing with jazz or electronic music festivals, marching bands wake you up at 3am and bustling street markets of all kinds take over streets on the weekend. There are even bonfires in the middle of busy roads (closed to traffic of course!) on certain public holidays."

In too many American cities, by contrast, the "Anglo-Saxon insistence on 'hyper-individualism' and personal success ... has come at the expense of anything we do collectively, and the way we perceive and design cities, especially in America and increasingly in the developing world, has been the result." We don't build bonfires on busy roads here in Gainesville (especially with the Gators losing more than winning) but last week's first ever Open Streets event — when they closed part of University Avenue for several hours and thousands showed up to enjoy an afternoon without cars — had a Barcelona feel to it. A couple of years ago, a Gallop survey named Gainesville one of the 10 "happiest" cities in America. That didn't happen by accident. Happiness by design? Yes we can.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun
September 24, 2013

CRA seeks to narrow its focus

Author: Christopher Curry

The long-discussed, unrealized redevelopment of two former subsidized housing properties is among the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency's slimmed down set of priorities. Beginning with the upcoming budget year, CRA staff intends to focus more narrowly on projects and initiatives that spur economic development and have ripple effects in the city's four community redevelopment districts. Those include the redevelopment of the Seminary Lane property in the Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street district and the Kennedy Homes site in the Eastside district.

The six-acre Seminary Lane property off Northwest Fifth Avenue and Northwest 12th Street has stood fallow since the subsidized apartment complex was razed in 2009. The property's owner, Gainesville, Florida Housing Corporation, and the Gainesville Housing Authority for years eyed a mixed-use development that included an affordable housing component. To this point, those plans have not progressed. Now, the CRA will take the lead in an attempt to draw in private investment and get redevelopment moving. While details on the plans for the property still must be worked out, the 2014 CRA budget sets aside an initial amount of \$89,176 for Seminary Lane.

CRA Director **Anthony Lyons** said six developable acres located in the heart of the city and in close proximity to the University of Florida campus should draw interest and be a catalyst for additional redevelopment in the Fifth Avenue area. The city also has the option of purchasing the Seminary Lane property, and the CRA expects to add the Mom's Kitchen site, which is located a short distance to the east along Northwest Fifth Avenue, to the redevelopment plans.

In 2009, the City Commission approved the controversial \$165,000 purchase of that closed restaurant and property in a 4-3 vote. The property has since stood boarded and unused and has been deemed unsafe by city building inspectors. The talk of redeveloping the Kennedy Homes site dates back longer than Seminary Lane. The city purchased the property in 2007 and razed the buildings. After years of planning, redevelopment has yet to advance. Now, the CRA is making the Kennedy Homes site and redevelopment of the area of the Hawthorne Road corridor adjacent to the Gainesville Technology Enterprise Center priorities for the Eastside district. "We need to push those over the goal line," **Lyons** said.

The 2014 budget includes about \$212,000 for the GTEC area and about \$70,600 for Kennedy Homes. That will push the funding for each project to more than \$369,000. Commissioner Yvonne Hinson-Rawls, who has criticized the lack of progress in the Eastside district, said it is a potentially encouraging sign to see the Hawthorne Road corridor, including the area around GTEC, and the Kennedy Homes site listed as priorities. "Hopefully, they are going to give more time, persistence and attention to the projects that are not moving forward fast enough," Hinson-Rawls said.

Section 10**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches****Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

At the Sept. 16 CRA meeting, city commissioners narrowly voted down an Eastside project in the works for years -- a \$144,000 fence along Hawthorne Road to shield the view of the barbed wire fence at the school district's bus depot. Hinson-Rawls opposed the fence because it lacked economic development impact and, to her, was not a good use of the Eastside district's limited money. Each CRA district is funded separately by the taxes paid on the increase in property values since the date of its establishment. With more development, the Downtown and College Park/University Heights CRA districts have significantly more money for projects than the Eastside and Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street districts.

In the budget year starting Oct.1, projected revenues are about \$562,000 for the Eastside district and almost \$554,800 for Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street. By comparison, Downtown is expected to take in a little less than \$2 million and College Park/University Heights almost \$3 million. CRA priorities for the Downtown district include a planned redesign and reconstruction of the north side of the Bo Diddley Community Plaza, a project that will have about \$507,000 set aside by the upcoming budget year. There is also the continued development of Depot Park, the anticipated redevelopment of the Power District and more infrastructure projects in the Porters neighborhood.

In College Park/University Heights, priority infrastructure projects include road work in the Innovation District and planned projects on South Main Street, Northwest First Avenue and Northwest Fifth Avenue. One proposal the CRA has not deemed a priority is the possible development of a hotel and conference center downtown. Still, city commissioners say they want to revisit talk of the possibility at their October meeting. At Monday's meeting, City Manager Russ Blackburn told commissioners that pursuit of a hotel/conference center likely would require the CRA to abandon its current priorities.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

ktvb.com

November 24, 2013

Boise revitalization project still needs council approval

BOISE There is economic investment going on all around downtown Boise. Dirt is moving at 8th and Main, a popular grocery store just opened its doors and now the Boise City Council is looking into another revitalization project. While many things are changing in downtown Boise, nothing has changed at 30th and Main streets, on the western edge of the downtown corridor. Now, there is a focus to renew this neighborhood, something the city council will talk about again this week.

Boise businessman Glen Eberle found a niche product in an unsuspecting market. His company ships backpacks all over the world that are used by hunters, snipers and the military. We grew our business in a little 4,000 square foot building, sign painted over black, didn't want anyone to come bother us, said Eberle. But when he expanded, he chose 30th and Main to harvest his business. Right off the river, all sorts of interesting potential for the future right here, and of course I won't say I saw all of that coming, but I think I did said Eberle.

Tuesday, the Boise City Council will hold a second reading of the 30th Street Urban Renewal District. Anyone who has gone through there in a while has seen sort of that lack of activity, said **Anthony Lyons**, Capital City Development Corporation. **Lyons** says the vacant land and lack of infrastructure could change dramatically. But it will take private investments along with public funds to do it. So when properties get redeveloped and there is added value, we get a portion to help put right back into the land there, said **Lyons**. It's paid for through tax increment dollars from businesses and residents alike. As property values increase, more money comes in, and the CCDC invests that money.

And you see right downtown, Whole Foods, or 8th and Main, or JUMP, or soon to be Macy's, where all the public investment is happening, it's a pretty good time in the downtown and we would like to encourage growth down the 30th Street corridor, and we think it will happen, said **Lyons**. With a retail showroom ready to open, Eberle may have started small, but knows his 30th Street location holds big things to come. I just felt like this was a great place to invest for the future, and we plan on being here for a long time, and love to see the rest of the area improved, said Eberle.

This proposed urban renewal district will run from 23rd Street all the way to the Boise River. The CCDC has been looking into this district for close to seven years. The Boise City Council will not make a decision Tuesday. They are set to do that at a third reading in December. A public hearing on the matter has already been held. If council members approve the urban renewal district, the CCDC will start work on January 1st.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun

July 7, 2013

CRA funding \$3.1 million in road projects in Innovation Square

Author: Christopher Curry

The future site of Innovation Square now stands as a fenced, 16-acre grass plot along Southwest Second Avenue. As companies continue to announce plans to locate in the technology hub, the City Commission has approved plans for the Community Redevelopment Agency to fund the bulk of the approximately \$3.1 million construction of two perpendicular roads that will cross the property. Diane Gilreath, a project engineer with the CRA, has described the planned Southwest Ninth Street as the “signature corridor” in Innovation Square. More than just a street, the roughly 150 feet of right of way will include sidewalks, trees and landscaping and a park.

The approximately \$2 million project — an additional \$118,000 has gone toward design and engineering — will include several unique features for a Gainesville road project. The project calls for the use of Portland cement, a building material not typically used for a Gainesville project, LED street lighting, underground frames known as silva cells to protect the root systems of trees, and a rectangular, vegetated stormwater collection and treatment system.

The approximately \$1.1 million Southwest Third Avenue project — an additional \$98,000 has gone toward its design and engineering — will be a more typical “service road,” Gilreath said, except for the extensive underground utility system that will include the new wrinkle of backup electricity provided by Gainesville Regional Utilities. The road projects are the latest in a string of significant CRA investments in the College Park/University Heights redevelopment district or the adjacent Downtown district — two areas of focus for the city's burgeoning technology economy.

In those districts, the last 12 months have seen the reconstruction of the pedestrian overpass across Southwest 13th Street, the multimillion-dollar renovation of a vacated Gainesville Regional Utilities warehouse in an area the city now dubs the Power District, the ongoing construction of Depot Park and the renovation of the historic train station building at that park. The CRA has had a lead role in the planning and zoning of Innovation Square and has a contracted consultant in the midst of updating a master plan for the Power District. The level of involvement and investment has sparked two differing reactions from some members of the City Commission.

When the road projects moved ahead at the commission's June 17 CRA meeting, Commissioner Yvonne Hinson-Rawls, whose district includes east Gainesville, expressed frustration about the money and focus spent in and around Innovation Square compared to the far more modest investments in the city's Eastside CRA. “There seems to be this single-minded focus on the Innovation district,” she said in an interview. “We're specifically changing policies and zoning so it can happen. Those are things we should be doing citywide.” Commissioner Thomas Hawkins

Section 10**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches****Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

said the money and resources put toward Innovation Square will have a positive economic impact beyond the boundaries of any CRA district.

“When we're talking about growing jobs, it's regional, and we have to put our investment where we're going to have the greatest return,” Hawkins said. “Companies want the proximity of UF and the land available for redevelopment. So the focus is there. That's where we can get the biggest bang for the community, and the real estate is there.” Under state law, local governments have authority to establish a community redevelopment area to address conditions of slum and blight in an area. Once a district is established, 95 percent of the tax revenues generated by increased property values stay in the CRA instead of flowing to the city or county general fund. That money has to be spent within the boundaries of the CRA district on things like infrastructure, landscaping, home rehabilitation or construction, grants to spruce up building facades or tax incentives for businesses.

Of the city's four CRA districts, College Park/University Heights, with a taxable value of some \$333.4 million, has the most financial resources available. The Downtown district is next at \$193.4 million. The two districts established in historically African-American areas of the city have less money with which to work. The Eastside CRA, which was established in 2000 and is the city's newest district, has a taxable value of \$88.5 million. The Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street CRA, the city's oldest district, has a taxable value of \$51.7 million. The CRA 2012 annual report showed project-related expenditures of \$3.1 million in the College Park/University Heights redevelopment area, \$1.4 million in the Downtown CRA, \$674,800 in Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street CRA and \$277,500 in the Eastside CRA.

CRA Executive Director **Anthony Lyons** said each redevelopment area has its “own trajectory” and the city has to tackle smaller projects in an effort to draw private investment, boost taxable values and increase the CRA budget for that community. In the predominantly residential Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street area, the city has invested in the construction of new homes and a road project and streetscaping along the business corridor of Northwest Fifth Avenue. The CRA has built its offices there and leased out the first floor to a technology company.

In the Eastside area, the CRA funded the purchase and renovation of a building to bring a restaurant, Southern Charm Kitchen, to the Hawthorne Road corridor. There is the landscaped gateway on the triangular island bounded by University Avenue, Hawthorne Road and Southeast 15th Street. The CRA also oversees the Gainesville Technology Enterprise Center (GTEC) incubator, although the city has been in lengthy talks with Santa Fe College on the possibility of the school taking over operation through its business incubator, the Center for Innovation and Economic Development.

The CRA and its Eastside advisory board also have a goal of aesthetic improvements along the Hawthorne Road corridor to draw in private investment there. At the City Commission's June 17 CRA meeting, Hinson-Rawls took umbrage with a proposed project related to that goal — a \$144,000 fence along Hawthorne Road to shield the view of the barbed wire fence at the school district's bus depot. At her request, the commission rescinded, for the time being, approval of a

Section 10**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches****Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

contract to build that project, which has been under discussion for some four years. Hinson-Rawls said with the Eastside district's limited resources, the school district should pay for that project. She also questioned what positive effect the fence would have on the transformation and redevelopment of that area. She said she would like to see GTEC move away from its technology focus to get an incubator for all types of business startups in the community. She also expressed frustration that the long-discussed redevelopment of the site of the former Kennedy Homes subsidized housing complex had not yet become a reality.

Hawkins said that, at this point, the CRA has limited financial resources in east Gainesville. Still, he pointed to significant government investments such as the Alachua County Health Department building, the improvements at Cone Park, the library that will be built at that park and the University of Florida east Gainesville campus.

Lyons said he is as frustrated as anyone when redevelopment of an area does not progress at the rate he would like to see. Still, he said he feels the CRA is “setting the groundwork for more investment to happen.” Currently, the CRA is in the midst of a strategic planning process to re-examine everything it does and all its priorities and projects. That comes as projects in areas such as Innovation Square and the Power District have become increasingly complex and now include zoning, utility and stormwater work. Commissioner Todd Chase has said a focus on smaller projects, such as the rehabilitation of homes in residential neighborhoods, might be a return to the core mission. “I don't think of slum and blight in Innovation Square,” he said. “That's more economic development.”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

Idahobusinessreview.com

January 16, 2013

Anthony Lyons, CCDC director, steps down to take old job in Florida

Author: Brad Iverson-Long

Anthony Lyons

After 409 days on the job, **Anthony Lyons** is stepping down as executive director of the Capital City Development Corp., Boise's urban renewal agency. **Lyons** cited family considerations in his Jan. 16 resignation letter to CCDC Board chairman Phil Reberger. However, **Lyons** is re-taking his old job, managing a redevelopment agency in Gainesville, Fla. **Lyons** wrote in his letter that he will work with CCDC to have a smooth transition in February. His last day on the job is not yet known, though a Gainesville news release said he should start his job there on Feb. 18. "We have selected the most qualified candidate from a national pool of exceptional applicants. In **Anthony**, the CRA will have a proven leader who knows Gainesville, and can hit the ground running without missing a beat," Russ Blackburn, Gainesville's city manager and the executive director of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency said in a news release.

Reberger called **Lyons** a superb leader. He also said CCDC will now start the search for a new executive director. "All options are on the table, but no decisions with regards to the search process have been made," Reberger said. He said **Lyons'** decision to resign happened quickly, though he did not have any details on the family considerations that led **Lyons** to step down.

During **Lyons'** tenure, CCDC, with approval from the Boise City Council, started the 30th Street Urban Renewal District west of downtown. The redevelopment area, which will use tax increment financing for improvements, will be in place for 20 years. Reberger said that project gained momentum while **Lyons** was with CCDC. In the past year, CCDC also reduced its involvement in planning activities, with **Lyons** saying that CCDC was duplicating services done by City of Boise planning officials. Reberger said **Lyons** placed an emphasis on getting new projects under way, whether it be finalizing plans for the 8th and Main office tower or upgrades to city streets and infrastructure. Updated Jan. 17: **Lyons** accepted a job in Gainesville.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Idaho Statesman
September 4, 2012

CCDC director eager to start Boise projects

Author: Sven Berg

Anthony Lyons summed up his goal for the Capital City Development Corporation in four words. "Less planning. More doing." Not that there's anything wrong with planning, he said. It's an appropriate exercise that the development corporation, Boise's urban renewal agency, ought to engage in at a high level, **Lyons** said. But the minutiae of planning, zoning and design are better left to city government, he said.

Since taking over as the development corporation's executive director in December, **Lyons** has eliminated three of 14 paid positions and restructured the agency's budget. He said he's almost doubled the amount of money devoted to new economic development projects. A lot of the money is going to infrastructure upgrades such as water and sewer lines, sidewalks and storm drains in the corporation's three Downtown urban renewal districts, **Lyons** said. Those are worthy projects, he said, but they're a means to an end. The ultimate goal is economic development, and that means buildings. "We want a city that has lots of cranes, lots of scaffolding, lots of construction signs," he said. "That's the sign of a city that's moving forward." **Lyons'** focus on "getting as much stuff done as possible as quickly as possible" is exactly what the people who hired him hoped to see.

David Eberle, a city councilman who sits on the development corporation's board of commissioners, said **Lyons'** drive, not to mention his intelligence and enthusiasm, separated him from the pack of about a dozen candidates who applied for the job. "He likes doing things. He's not terribly interested in sitting in a lot of meetings," Eberle said. It was 12 years ago that **Lyons** started down the municipal economic development path. He was 31 years old. He had spent the better part of the past decade in his native New England running a business that sold prepaid phone cards and electronic gift cards. The business was successful enough to support himself and his wife, **Lyons** said, but it wasn't what he wanted to do long-term.

He landed a job in July 2000 with a nonprofit organization working to restore the economy of Claremont, N.H. At the time, the city was in bad shape, **Lyons** said. Most of downtown was vacant. Its bank accounts tallied all of \$4,300. Claremont was, in **Lyons'** words, "sort of first in all the bad stuff." He was hooked. To this day, he describes the line of work the way an engineer might analyze a new toy: "the complexity and how challenging it is to really figure out how to help a city that's in need of something and what's that thing that will really change the dynamic of the city."

During his time in Claremont, he said, the city benefited from \$100 million worth of development. Six years later, after transitioning to a position in city government, **Lyons** took a job in Gainesville, Fla. In Florida, he built up a small urban renewal agency with a focus on overcoming urban blight. He oversaw the founding of a research district and construction of a

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

new storm-water park. When the Boise opportunity came up, **Lyons** jumped at it. It was a good career move, he said, but that wasn't all. The personal opportunities the city offered ... recreation, family-friendly lifestyle ... mirrored the professional potential. Boise, he said, is "about to explode in a really kind of cool way." "I frankly fell in love with the city," he said.

Lyons took over the development corporation from former executive director Phil Kushlan, who was as influential as anyone in making Downtown Boise what it is today. Kushlan, through a combination of guts and perseverance, saw through landmark development such as the Basque block and the 8th Street retail area, Mayor Dave Bieter said. "Those kinds of projects fundamentally changed the nature of downtown," Bieter said. "Those are two that come to mind that really show what a downtown urban setting can be like."

Responsibility for shepherding Boise growth now passes to **Lyons**, whose ability to advocate for a Downtown streetcar and a new minor league baseball stadium, as well as develop a new urban renewal district will largely determine **Lyons'** success, Bieter said. "Ultimately those kind of projects are central to our success, especially Downtown, and CCDC has an important part of those," he said.

Section 10**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches****Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

Boise Weekly
February 15, 2012

**CCDC Director Granted More Authority on Personnel, Budget Matters
Anthony Lyons proposes to reduce FY 2012 budget by more than \$4.2 million.**

Author: George Prentice

Anthony Lyons is wasting no time in making dramatic changes to the Capital City Development Corporation. In the first days of his tenure (his office furniture had yet to arrive), BW met with CCDC's new director and found a bit of an enigma (BW, Citizen, "**Anthony Lyons**," Jan. 4, 2012). **Lyons** has been a top athlete, private and public sector businessman, and intellectual.

But **Lyons** is also an agent of change and beginning Feb. 13, he made it clear that he intends to restructure the very core of how CCDC does business, internally and externally." In order to get ready for this effort, and further to allow CCDC to play its role, a number of changes are required for the agency to perform at the very highest level," **Lyons** wrote to the CCDC Board of Commissioners. "In many ways these changes are foundational, or as I say to the staff, 'Let's get back to the basics and from there move forward.'"

In particular, **Lyons** has fixed his sights on the two pillars of his organization: how he manages his subordinates and how he chooses to spend tens of millions of dollars from the agency's budget. Commissioners granted **Lyons** new authority, through a rewrite of the agency's personnel manual, as well as his job description. Henceforth, **Lyons** is able to communicate directly with all agency employees, and more importantly, he is to be the arbiter on discipline and terminations. "Considerable leeway is granted to the executive director to determine the best methods for the selection, development, evaluation, discipline and termination of agency employees," reads **Lyons'** newly crafted job description.

In his letter to CCDC commissioners, **Lyons** said he needed a staff that was "flexible, dynamic and nimble." Secondly **Lyons** proposed to reduce CCDC's Fiscal Year 2012 budget by more than \$4.2 million. Specifically **Lyons** is looking to eliminate \$756,930 in consulting, \$143,000 in legal services and \$75,000 in public art projects. "This will allow us to increase our capital projects budget by 60 percent," **Lyons** told commissioners. "We should double the amount of downtown street improvements." **Lyons** said that the proposed changes could shift funding for physical improvements from 28 percent of CCDC's budget to 49 percent. Before any of the cuts can be adopted, a public hearing is scheduled for Monday, March 12.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons**

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Boise Weekly
January 4, 2012

Anthony Lyons**CCDC's new boss talks sawhorses, triathlons and selling burgers to classmates**

Author: George Prentice

Anthony Lyons is a bit of an enigma. The new director of the Capital City Development Corporation is an intellectual, businessman, public servant and a top athlete--though he would probably push back at any of those labels. Without question, he is a free thinker.

Embracing his entrepreneurial spirit while still in high school, **Lyons** has lived and worked around the world and helped craft community development in Claremont, N.H. Most recently he was the director of the Community Redevelopment Agency in Gainesville, Fla. But now, he was quick to remind BW, he and his wife Wendy and their 6-year-old son, Asher, are Boiseans.

What was the big dream for you when you were in high school?

I started my own business. I was attending a boarding school. A friend of mine would pick me up after classes and we would drive into town and buy about 100 McDonald's hamburgers and sell them for a buck apiece to my classmates.

In what corners of the world have you lived?

Here in the states, I lived in New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Chicago, Boston, Santa Fe, [N.M.], Hilton Head, [S.C.], and Gainesville, [Fla.]. Overseas, I lived in the Hague, Netherlands. I attended Indiana University to study art history. While I was in college, I lived in Athens, [Greece], for two different years. That's where I met my wife, Wendy. She was also studying abroad at the time. We've been married 17 years.

Is your wife a professional?

She's a trained anthropologist. She's in the process of writing a book.

Did she show you some of her chapters or were you inclined not to read them until she's finished?

At the beginning, we talked quite a bit about it, but I think it's best that she retain it. It's really her work.

What do you do to recreate?

I have three things: family, work and then something else. My something else last year was participating in triathlons, something I got deeply into. I competed in the national championships in Burlington, Vt. Going forward, I'm not sure what I'll do.

Section 10**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches****Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

Can you leave something that dramatic behind you?

Absolutely.

It's our understanding that there were more than 100 candidates for your job. What did the CCDC board tell you they were looking for?

Not to boast, but in my kind of role, I'm often recruited, but I actually found this opening on my own. After reading the recruitment brochure, I turned to my wife and said, "I found it." It was just like that. What were they looking for? I think it was me.

If I remember the short list of finalists for your position, there were a few candidates who lived in Boise or were from the Northwest. Is there an advantage to coming to this job as an outsider?

I don't look at it as being internal or external. It's neither here nor there. It's all stuff. You can live in the history books, or you can decide to live in the present and think about helping the city for its future.

Your office is quite bare.

My desk is on its way. I travel with my own desk.

What's so unique about it?

Back in 1995, I opened my first office in an old warehouse outside of Boston. I bought two bright-orange sawhorses and some weather stripping. And I walked by a windshield repair shop that had a huge piece of glass with a sign saying, "Take it now for \$5." I put it together and that's my desk. I've had it ever since. I'm a minimalist. You'll never see my degrees or awards on my office wall.

Are they in boxes at home?

Yes. It's all in the past. There's something to be said for not surrounding yourself with a bunch of stuff. It gives you an ability to think through things.

Would we be terribly surprised if you were still in this position 10 or 15 years from now?

The last thing I've ever done is chart my career. My expectations are to be here, period.

Time to get your sawhorses set up.

Absolutely, and let 'er rip. This feels really good here.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

Business Report of North Central Florida
December 13, 2011

Anthony Lyons Leaves Gainesville Changed for the Better

Business Leaders Willing to Help City Find Successor.

About a year from now, a spartan abandoned warehouse at the former GRU compound south of downtown Gainesville will open as the home of a fast-growing local maker of small spy planes. **Anthony Lyons** calls plans to transform the warehouse into a manufacturing and office space for Prioria Robotics Inc., a catalyst for the Power District, a 16-acre site that Gainesville Regional Utilities left when it moved to its new operations center on North Main Street.

“Catalyst”—a person or thing that precipitates an event or change—aptly describes **Lyons**. Over the past five years, **Lyons** has been pivotal to a flurry of economic development as manager of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency, a post he left Dec. 1 for a job in Boise, Idaho, which he calls a step up in his career ladder. His legacy, both in bricks and mortar and philosophically, are impressive, including 1,500 housing units, the Innovation Hub at the University of Florida, the new Hampton Inn downtown and a new gateway landscape sculpture for East Gainesville.

Beyond what’s tangible today are the building blocks for future economic activity, including:

- Creating more flexible zoning in the 40-acre Innovation Square area between the UF campus and downtown;
- Launching plans to revitalize the Gainesville Technology Enterprise Center and develop light manufacturing plants and other businesses nearby along Hawthorne Road;
- Helping flesh out plans for the 30-acre Depot Park, which include rebuilding the train depot and leasing a two-acre site to the Cade Museum for Innovation and Invention; and
- Hiring a talented and visionary staff that includes an architect and an engineer as well as planners and a finance manager.

Hard Shoes to Fill

“**Anthony** redefined what we expect of the CRA director,” says City Commissioner Thomas Hawkins. Brent Christensen, president and CEO of the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce, says **Lyons** will be missed. “It’s quite a loss,” Christensen says. “He did an awful lot of great things. He’ll be hard to replace as a visionary and consensus-builder.” Christensen says that he and other members of the business community are available to assist City Manager Russ Blackburn in selecting **Lyons**’ replacement. “We would welcome any involvement,” Christensen says.

Blackburn says he plans to form an interview panel that includes business leaders and involves members of the advisory boards for the city’s four redevelopment districts in the search, as he does whenever he replaces a department director. “It’s important to engage people who work closely with a department and to hear their perceptions,” says Blackburn, who has appointed Kelly Fisher, the CRA’s project coordinator for neighborhood planning, as interim director.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

Transforming City’s Economic Development Approach

In one sense, his job was simple, **Lyons** says. “When you have great relationships, great things happen,” he says. In another sense, **Lyons’** accomplishments were Herculean. He took a little-known agency with a narrow mission and transformed it into the vehicle that was critical to many of the changes in the city’s economic landscape.

Traditionally, the CRA’s role has been to invest in infrastructure, such as roads, sewers and landscaping, that provides a foundation for areas in decline. Gainesville, like many other cities, funds CRA projects with what is known as tax-increment financing, which is based on increases in property taxes that occur as property becomes more valuable in a redevelopment district. **Lyons** expanded beyond that role when he came to Gainesville in 2006. As time went on, Blackburn gave **Lyons** responsibility for all of the city’s economic development activity.

Lyons, who studied art history as an undergrad, brings a historical perspective on the nature of community to the job. He was used to small-town politics from his work in economic development in Claremont, N.H. He also identifies with entrepreneurs, having started one of the nation’s first pre-paid phone companies.

Responding to Prioria’s Needs

Lyons’ business experience came into play as he worked with Prioria, which has outgrown its space in the Wells Fargo Bank Building on Main Street and was considering all options, including leaving town. “We had to get in the heads of the employees and the brand,” **Lyons** says. “We needed to understand their attitude, their culture and their business.” Bryan da Frota, Prioria’s CEO, credits **Lyons** with being steadfast in his relationship with the company. “I’ve known **Anthony** for years,” da Frota says. “We built up a rapport.”

Over the past two years, Prioria’s sales jumped 600 percent, due to increased demand for its two-foot long aircraft from the Air Force, Navy, Army and the Canadian military for its planes that military personnel carry in a tube and launch by hand. The company’s workforce has doubled from 20 to 40, stretching the limits of its space in the Wells Fargo Bank Building, da Frota says. **Lyons** recommended four potential relocation sites, none of which worked out, da Frota says. “**Anthony** was patient and dedicated to the process,” he says.

When **Lyons** proposed the GRU warehouse, he showed Prioria examples of successful warehouse conversions elsewhere, da Frota says. “**Anthony** was very creative in pushing the envelope. It was brilliant.” Once Prioria bought into the warehouse conversion, **Lyons** moved quickly on firming up details. “While he had been patient as we looked for a site, he picked up the pace and moved the deal to closure quickly when he needed to,” da Frota says. A plus in the deal was that Prioria may be able to test-fly its planes at nearby Depot Park. “It’s important to be able try out things,” da Frota says. “Having a place for test flights was very attractive.”

Big Payoff for Hampton

Section 10**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches****Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

While the CRA helped Prioria stay in town, the Hampton Inn & Suites brought new money into the local economy. The Hampton project is a great example of the use of redevelopment dollars, **Lyons** says. The agency invested \$750,000 to help develop the hotel's site. Meanwhile, some of the investment is being recouped through taxes the hotel pays. "There was a great payoff, with \$12 million being invested in the building, and the Hampton bringing new jobs and new retail space to the community," **Lyons** says.

CRA Accomplishments Well Recognized

Lyons' accomplishments generated national attention when Fast Company magazine highlighted the Innovation Square design work that the CRA is doing with the help of Perkins+Will, an Atlanta firm that specializes in redevelopment in college communities. In the magazine, **Lyons** emphasized that the planning for Innovation Square is very flexible, allowing for the market to dictate the balance among office, light manufacturing, retail and residential space. "If you're too prescriptive, what are you left with that allows people to plan for their own needs?" **Lyons** says.

The CRA received numerous awards during **Lyons'** tenure. **Lyons** is proudest that in 2009 the CRA was presented the Award of Merit for Outstanding Achievement in Neighborhood Planning from the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association. The CRA staff itself developed the honored plan, which was for the Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street redevelopment area. "Most of the applications were based on the work of a consultant," **Lyons** says. "We did all of the work ourselves."

Other awards honoring work in which the CRA was involved include:

- **Lyons** being named the Innovation Advocate of the Year for 2010 by the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce;
- The CRA office building winning an Aurora Award in the Southeast Building Conference's design competition;
- Florida Redevelopment Association Award for Adaptive Reuse for the Bethel Station project in 2010; and the
- Florida Redevelopment Association Award for Planning Studies for the Southeast Gainesville Renaissance Initiative in 2008.

Lyons is going from a salary of \$104,000 to one of \$140,000 in Boise, and he's moving from Gainesville, with a population of about 124,000, to a city with a population of about 206,000. He's heading the Capital City Development Corp., Boise's urban renewal agency. "**Anthony** represents a revitalization of this agency," CCDC board member and Boise City Council member David Eberle told the Idaho Business Review.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun
October 25, 2011

CRA manager leaving for job in Idaho**Anthony Lyons was selected from more than 100 applicants.**

Author: Chad Smith

Anthony Lyons, who has been manager of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency since 2006 and has had a hand in a number of major projects around the city during his tenure, is leaving the agency for a similar position in Boise, Idaho. The Idaho Statesman reported that **Lyons** was selected last week out of more than 100 applicants for the position of executive director at the Capital City Development Corp. In an interview with The Sun on Monday, **Lyons** said he was “thrilled and honored” to be going to a “great organization, wonderful city and really cool state.”

The Boise job carries a larger salary — from \$103,788 in Gainesville to between \$125,000 and \$150,000 in Idaho — and is in a larger, capital city. According to census figures, Gainesville's population was 124,354 in 2010; Boise's was 205,671. **Lyons** said he was thankful for the opportunity he has had in Gainesville. “The city has been wonderful to work in and wonderful for my family,” he said.

Since taking over, the CRA, which is funded by increments in property-tax values in four designated areas in the city, has helped build the Hampton Inn downtown, turned a former service station near the Bo Diddley Community Plaza into a cafe, and helped build up the midtown area between downtown and the University of Florida campus with apartment buildings and improvements to Southwest Second Avenue. The organization is currently working on redeveloping the former train depot that will be an integral part of Depot Park and is working on plans to create the nearby Power District, which will be commercial and residential space in the heart of Gainesville Regional Utilities' former industrial complex. “I think we've done a lot of really, really good things for the city,” **Lyons** said. “I really enjoyed being here quite a lot. The city has tremendous upside, and I think it's beginning to get there.”

Lyons' last day here is expected to be Dec. 1 and his first day in Boise is expected to be Dec. 5. In a news release from Boise, CCDC Chairman John May said **Lyons** was picked “because of his track record of success in Gainesville, a strong background in economic development, and experience in the public, private and nonprofit sectors.” Gainesville City Manager Russ Blackburn said he will appoint a replacement and that the agency would carry on with its mission. “There are a lot of very important projects that the CRA is involved with, and we'll make sure the work continues,” Blackburn said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun
July 31, 2011

@WORK Profile: Anthony Lyons

Author: Chad Smith

Anthony Lyons

Anthony Lyons is the manager of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency, which is funded through increments in property tax revenues in four areas of the city -- Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street, downtown, College Park/University Heights and east Gainesville. The agency is tasked with redeveloping blighted sections of those areas through infrastructure projects, business development and housing and is working on projects as varied as the University of Florida's Innovation Square in midtown and redesigning the Southwest 13th Street bicycle and pedestrian overpass.

Redevelopment and recession: The CRA has to be fairly nimble and has to think both in terms of today and down the road and how we use our money to place investments in the community, whether it's an infrastructure improvement or (redevelopment) of a restaurant or business or whatever the case may be -- trying to figure out how to utilize our funds for redevelopment to happen. ... The recession has changed things, but it's also given us some time to make a lot of public improvements as well as trying to think through what we need today to help businesses tomorrow.

CRA's role in Innovation Square: We took the lead in rewriting the underlying land use for Innovation Square. We acted as the ombudsman for the hub coming through the city processes. We have taken the lead to do an infrastructure-assessment study working with the other utilities and other city departments and we will help with the development side of infrastructure improvements ... or help incentivize for companies to move there.

Explaining the CRA's role: We are not the city government in that sense. We are not the university. We are sort of this intermittent entity that does a lot of work. One way to describe it is people may know Intel but when you look at your computer it generally says HP or Dell ... but the thing that powers it is this little computer chip that helps everything run. In some ways the CRA acts as the agent of good change in the urban core. And we may not be known, but a lot of the projects downtown have our fingerprints on them.

In the works: We have, under some sort of design, close to five miles of roadways. Some we are finishing now. We are in the process of working on (the Gainesville Technology Enterprise Center), which we assumed some responsibility for from the city last fall. We're about to open up the (Southern Charm) restaurant on Hawthorne Road. We're working a lot on Innovation Square, both on infrastructure stuff and other needs that will happen there. We're about to launch some programs to figure out how to get more retailers in our urban core. Depot Park, we're about to start construction on that.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun
February 21, 2011

After a \$190,000 face-lift, issues remain for Lynch Park

Author: Chad Smith

Since reopening after roughly \$190,000 worth of renovations in the fall, Haisley Lynch Park again has become a harbor for homeless residents, who occasionally sleep there on makeshift beds, their clothes and belongings strewn about. But residents who spearheaded the project say the park is a shell of its former self — in a good way. "It has a huge impact on who hangs out there," Jim Beeler said of the renovations. "It's like the downtown plaza. When the farmers' market happens, the crowd scatters."

Beeler, a member of the Community Redevelopment Agency's downtown advisory board that proposed the idea of a dog park across from the St. Francis House homeless shelter, said the renovations turned a "dark, hidden grotto in the middle of town" into a "huge boost to that area." It's no longer "just a big empty lot filled with people wearing backpacks," he said. When he takes his Italian greyhound, Kai, to the park, he said he usually sees the same group of regulars, who appear to be homeless, but it doesn't deter him. "They're real friendly," Beeler said. "They invariably ask, 'What kind of dog is that?'"

But with a soup kitchen and shelter directly across the street, Lynch Park still has its share of issues. Since Jan. 1, the Gainesville Police Department has logged close to 15 calls for service at the park, located at 450 S. Main St. "I always felt it was going to be difficult in keeping them away since it is right across the street from St. Francis House and most of them did not have a place to live," said Janie Williams, another member of the CRA advisory board and the chairwoman of the nearby Porters neighborhood crime watch. Williams said some people still avoid the park — "especially the parents won't take their children down there" — but that it is improved, at least aesthetically, from what it used to be.

Before, it was a hodgepodge of flowers and plants and was covered with trash and homeless people's belongings. Now, there is a brick-lined path with benches, and it's filled with plants native to Florida. It's also the first city park with light-emitting diode technology, also known as LED, which uses less energy for lighting. Gainesville police spokeswoman Cpl. Tscharna Senn said when she joined the force 17 years ago, the 1.4-acre park was known for drug and other criminal activity. Officers still are patrolling the area in hopes of eliminating the problem, she said.

Reports show most of the problems in recent months have stemmed from possessing open containers of alcohol, something the City Commission partially decriminalized on Thursday, when it passed a measure to give police the option of issuing civil citations for such violations. **Anthony Lyons**, the manager of the CRA, which is funded through increases in revenues in city and county property taxes in certain districts, said the Lynch Park renovation was a prime example of what his agency does. "Our job is to redevelop the area and turn a blighted park into

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a beautiful park," **Lyon** said. "And that's what we did." When asked whether the agency should have spent money on a project directly across from a homeless shelter in an area known for illegal activity, he said conditions need to be altered to bring up areas in the community. "We have to keep improving the city for everybody," he said. "That's all I know."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Herald Tribune

August 8, 2008

Museum would honor creator of Gatorade and other inventors

Author: Megan Rolland

A daughter of the late Robert Cade -- University of Florida professor and inventor of Gatorade -- announced this week that a family-oriented museum in honor of her father's innovation will be located near the northwest corner of Depot Park, south of downtown Gainesville. "This new museum will continue" Cade's "tradition by telling the stories of people who created the inventions and innovations that continue to change our lives today as a way of inspiring each of us to achieve our individual potential in the future," explained daughter Phoebe Cade Miles in a media release.

Don Adams, interim director of the new museum, said the Cade family chose the Depot site from about eight locations, including one on the University of Florida campus. "We wanted the museum to be seen as Gainesville's museum, and we wanted it to be seen as a real partner in the revitalization of the community," Adams said. "It seemed like a real anchor or resource needed to be out there in that direction to really pull the community."

The park, which is now partially closed to the public due to ground contamination, and the museum would be developed simultaneously, both shooting for an opening date in 2011, said **Anthony Lyons** director of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency. "Depot Park, for all that's been talked about and hoped for, is truly going to be a first-class, innovative, creative, wonderful open community space," **Lyons** said. "The leaders for this community a while ago had a very innovative idea, which was to have an area where community storm water could be located. "Layered on top of that are improvements to the park, a first-class family and ... state-of-the-art, phenomenal museum. Plus the nearby RTS station, rail trails ... and Cotton Club. "I think you can really get a great sense as to why this kind of building here can do so much for this community," said **Lyons**, adding that it just feels as though everything is coming together for the area.

Steve Orlando, UF spokesman, said the university had been having conversations with the Cade family about locating the museum near the Cultural Plaza on Hull Road. "That's great," said Orlando about the announcement. "We're totally in support of anything like that, that would recognize the accomplishments of Dr. Cade. It's something that certainly the whole community ought to be able to share."

However, the city's \$27.5 million plan to redevelop Depot Park is not without hurdles. The 2011 time line for park completion is based on a remediation plan to eliminate coal tar, petroleum and arsenic contaminants at the park. Initial tests showed contamination levels higher than previously speculated, potentially raising costs by as much as \$10 million or forcing the city to abandon plans for thermal treatment of the soil. In that case, the city might be forced to ship the soil to a landfill. "I hope this does nothing but reinforce the time line that the CRA and the City

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Commission approved a few months ago," **Lyons** said. "This is a phenomenal opportunity for the city and we should do everything to ensure that this gets built and (the contamination) gets remediated." Additionally, the Depot Park project is about \$5.5 million short of being fully funded. "Yeah, it's a concern, but I'm hopeful that collectively we'll be able to address it," **Lyons** said, adding that the CRA will consider contributing \$1.5 million toward the deficit and possibly more.

Adams said, "We have been assured by the city that their completion plan will be in concert with ours." Between the landscape architect designing Depot Park, the architect of the Cade Museum building, the design company creating the museum exhibits and the interested members of the community, Adams said there is a lot of planning and coordination left to work out. The exhibits of the museum itself are still being planned, Adams said, but will likely include a replica of Cade's laboratory where Gatorade was invented in the 1960s to hydrate the UF football team. "My father is probably best known for inventing Gatorade, but his greatest thrill came from inspiring and mentoring others from all walks of life," said Phoebe Cade Miles.

The museum likely will have rooms or "creativity cubes" dedicated to different eras and the key inventions during that time period. "It's a hands-on opportunity for kids," Adams said. "We're thinking this will be a great supplement to the local schools." Additionally, each era will be marked and identified with a car from Robert Cade's personal collection of cars. "Take the 1940s," said museum director Adams. "In that case we would have one of our Studebaker military vehicles. He said vehicles were " a great way for people to connect with a time in history."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Independent Florida Alligator

June 19, 2008

Gainesville homeless soccer team has trouble recruiting players

Author: Christopher Myers

The soccer cleats are new, and the uniforms are clean. But no homeless people have volunteered to wear them. **Anthony Lyons**, manager of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency, has been trying to start a local homeless soccer program since early fall 2007. However, **Lyons** is facing a major problem: getting local homeless people to participate.

"I first wanted to take the approach that I needed uniforms, socks, shoes, a place to play and a soccer ball," **Lyons** said. "Things of that sort were all things I was able to accomplish, and the last piece was getting the actual players. I actually thought that would be the easiest thing, and it's turned out to be the hardest thing."

Lyons has worked on this project in his spare time without any help from the city. He said the soccer program is a nontraditional way to get the homeless feeling healthier and more confident. "It brings people together," he said. "It has people working as a team. It gives them a place to go on a regular basis, and it will allow them to travel around the country or, frankly, around the world." **Lyons** has worked on the project with the help of the Homeless World Cup, an annual international soccer tournament featuring more than 60 participating nations. The tournament was first established in 2003.

A study conducted by the Homeless World Cup found that of the 2006 tournament participants, 35 percent have secured regular employment and 44 percent have improved their housing situations since the competition. Local homeless man Byron Woods said that **Lyons** is having trouble getting players because the program is not offering what homeless people really need. "How I look at it, money needs to be spent on more important things, such as adequate shelter," Woods said. It would be hard for the homeless to participate in a team sport while they are struggling to find long-term employment and permanent shelter, he said.

Woods said most homeless people can get shelter for a week or two and a temporary job, but when that ends, they wind up back on the street. He added that these issues are more important than just providing the homeless a sport to play. "It's like if you're in school," Woods said. "A sport is not a necessity to graduate in school, so other things are more important."

Kent Vann, the executive director of St. Francis House, said organizers of the soccer program need to look for homeless people in permanent programs. The one offered at St. Francis House for single, homeless working men and women could be a prime target for the team, he said. "That's basically the way we are in our lives," he said. "Our extracurricular activity comes after we've done our work." Vann also said the sport would teach the homeless valuable skills, like showing up on time, being part of a team and working hard toward a common goal. He said it would be a good way to get away from a daily routine and focus on something enjoyable.

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Local homeless advocate Pat Fitzpatrick said the program is a brilliant idea. "It brings them back to something normal," Fitzpatrick said. Local homeless man Robert Bell said the program would be a big help for the younger homeless population. The soccer program could help people get off the streets and become more physically fit, Bell said. "Most people in the streets just aren't really healthy," he said. "If you started getting them into physical activities, it could be good."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The Gainesville Sun
December 18, 2006

Ready to revitalize

Author: Anthony Clark

Nevermind the resume. **Anthony Lyons** has a town to showcase his work. **Lyons** became manager of Gainesville's Community Redevelopment Agency in November after three years as the planning development director in Claremont, N.H. Before that, he spent three years as the first executive director of the town's Main Street program. **Lyons** described Claremont, a town of 13,000 people, as a once-thriving mill town left dormant for 40 years when the industries and jobs went away. He built the town's Main Street nonprofit downtown revitalization organization. During his tenure, he said downtown vacancies decreased from 80 percent to 30 percent, saw several million dollars in investments and in 2003 the town won Community of the Year. That year, the city created the planning development director position and **Lyons** oversaw previously separate departments of planning, codes and economic development.

In that position, he brought in \$11 million in grants and oversaw \$90 million in investment and 1.2 million square feet of new commercial space. **Lyons** said his pitch to investors, developers and businesses was not to "pull on the heartstrings and help a poor down-and-out community," but to show them they could do well in a community with inexpensive real estate to offer. "We had old building stock that could be rehabbed with financial funding and tax credits and a city government that was streamlined, getting ready for a day when developers would come."

A publicity campaign to sell a suite of old buildings for \$1 made the national press and the town's progress was featured on National Public Radio. The move to Gainesville Tom Saunders, Gainesville Community Development director, said **Lyons** stood out among an impressive field of candidates for the job. "**Anthony** has extensive experience in streetscape projects, implementing public improvements, negotiating agreements with developers and in ensuring the urban design quality is high in all projects." He replaces Karen Slevin, who left in May to be executive director of Catholic Charities in Gainesville. Kate Parmelee served as interim manager.

Lyons said in the early going he's trying to get a handle on the CRA's districts and projects, budgets and inner workings before deciding how to proceed. He said he noticed some things right away that he'd like to address - more public art, a neighborhood on the edge of downtown "that has tremendous potential." "The city has done remarkable things and it's growing in a very thoughtful manner," he said. "There's still a lot of opportunity to do some very thoughtful, very progressive and I think very cutting edge sorts of things. How they piece together with the fabric of the community and how to push that along, we'll see."

The CRA oversees four districts - Downtown, Fifth Avenue Pleasant Street, College Park University Heights and the newly created Eastside. They are funded as separate tax increment districts, the taxes generated from increased property values. This year's total budget is \$4.1

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million, a significant increase, **Lyons** said. Projects in the works include the Commerce Center Building, historic street signs and NW 17th Street reconstruction.

Start in art

After growing up in Manchester, N.H., **Lyons** studied art history at the University of Indiana.

He said his major was not so far off from his current profession. His specialty was Greek art and architecture. "Studying Greek architecture and those old cities is where a lot of it started. How they dealt with, for instance, aqueducts in the middle of the city. We have sewers. They have central courtyards. Urban planning is not some new idea." **Lyons** spent his last semester in Greece, where he met his wife of 13 years. He moved to Holland, where he worked as a roller-skater for hire, passing out promotional items for businesses at events. He also sold phone cards, which he said were hugely popular as collectibles in Europe. That gave him the idea for his first business, selling retail, promotional and collectible phone cards in the Boston area and later in Woodstock, N.Y. All the while, he said he had been helping small businesses on a volunteer basis.

He said that although he was successful, he was not fulfilled. "I decided to do something a little more soulful." His goal was to make life better for himself and others. That's when he saw the ad for the Main Street job. "At the end of the day, the accomplishments are often something you can visualize," he said. "Those accomplishments often translate into neighborhoods or communities that can feel better about where they are."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

New Hampshire Union Leader
May 9, 2003

Downtown Claremont gets honor

Author: Stephen Seitz

CLAREMONT -- Three years ago, many would have characterized downtown Claremont as an economic sinkhole. No more. When Claremont became a Main Street community in 2000, the downtown commercial center district had a 70 percent vacancy rate and many buildings were for sale. But on Monday, Claremont took the top prize as Main Street Community of 2002. Economic Development Director **Anthony Lyons** said many serious obstacles had to be overcome. Some 50 new businesses and 150 new jobs have been added downtown since 2000. "At that time, the city had gone through five city managers, it had no head of public works, no economic development director, and there were vacancies at the top of several city departments," **Lyons** said.

Local Main Street Chair Kyle Messier said the Main Street program provided the necessary motivation. "Claremont has many talented, creative and caring people," she said. "They all knew that something needed to be done, but didn't know quite what to do. The Main Street program provided that framework; it's citizen empowerment at its best." Claremont has some rare advantages, said **Lyons**: The high school, the middle school, the courthouse and city hall, for instance, are all downtown. "Downtown Claremont has nearly every service that people need, and that just doesn't exist anymore," he said.

Taking advantage of location, the Main Street program is developing a downtown coffee shop run by Stevens High School students, with adult supervision. "We've had requests for proposals from building owners, we'll see about space, and put a plan together," **Lyons** said. "This will give the students an opportunity to learn about business skills. The high school's downtown location makes the project possible and sustainable. "It's also developing leadership for years to come. It's to be hoped that some of the students will open their own businesses in Claremont down the road."

In the meantime, downtown buildings are being refurbished and prepared to attract new tenants. The owners of one building, for instance, have received a \$1.6 million development grant. **Lyons** said the plan is to not only bring new business downtown, but new residents, too -- by including apartments in the buildings being renovated. "The main goal is to give people a reason to come downtown every day," he said. "They need to see their lawyer, or would like to go to a restaurant, do some shopping. So one of the buildings we're renovating includes six one-bedroom units. Housing is a problem here, and we're addressing it downtown."

Parking downtown is not a problem, said **Lyons**, but he'd like it to be. "I'll be elated when we have a parking problem," he said. "If you don't have a parking problem, you're not doing something right. We could manage our current spaces better, but the idea is to fill the parking spaces with cars, and have people walking downtown."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

The state Main Street Program is a comprehensive revitalization program that promotes the historic and economic redevelopment of traditional business districts in New Hampshire. "The idea is to have economic development in the context of historic preservation," said **Lyons**. "You take an old building, and adapt it to the present day. The National Trust for Historic Preservation started Main Street as a preservation program, but it evolved into economic development. The two go hand in hand quite nicely."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Anthony Lyons***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

New Hampshire Sunday News

May 19, 2002

Where has Claremont's money gone? The Claremont Suit: legal landmark at a glance. For city government, it's hands off school aid

Author: John DiStaso

For the past three years, Claremont has received millions of dollars in state "adequate education" financial assistance, but there is no clear evidence it has funded significant improvement in the city's schools or long-term relief for local taxpayers. Those dollars have paid for one teachers' raise, some minor school building improvements and allowed a small, one-time tax cut. Assessment test scores are still subpar.

Leaders of this city of 13,000 still debate whether the state funding has been enough to make a difference or whether the \$20 million received since the 1999-2000 school year has been used effectively. A school board member and the assistant superintendent say the state windfall barely turned out to be a breeze. They say nearly all of it went to offset property tax hikes. They and the head of the Claremont teachers' union say any improvement in the school system over the past three years has had little, if anything, to do with the extra money received from the state. A taxpayer watchdog says Claremont has received more than enough money to have made noticeable improvements, but that city leaders opted instead to use the money to keep taxes as low as possible.

"Has winning the Claremont lawsuit accomplished what we expected? No," said Candace Crawford, a school board member for 12 years. "In a nutshell, there still isn't enough money to reach adequacy." Tax bills and budget numbers and line items can be measured and compared. But what effect has Claremont's victory in the school funding suit had on how the students are performing in Claremont? If state assessment test scores are any indication -- and many argue that they are not -- the extra funds have resulted in little improvement, with Claremont remaining below the state average almost across the board. (Editor's Note: The district's scores and ranking, and the scores and rankings of all school districts, are available on line at www.measuredprogress.org/nhprofile/.)

Still, says Assistant Superintendent Allen Damren, "I'm a native of Claremont, as was my dad was, and people in Claremont have always done their darn level best on education and education funding." Claremont's name has become synonymous with the historic state Supreme Court decision in December 1997 holding the state responsible for guaranteeing all public school students an adequate education and ensuring adequate funding. As a result of the 1997 plaintiffs' victory in the state Supreme Court, the Legislature in 1999 passed an \$825 million funding plan anchored in a statewide property tax.

Where the money went: A Sunday News review of the Claremont school district budget shows its windfall from that plan in 1999 was about \$3 million, as state funds to the district went from about \$3.9 million to \$6.9 million. A total of \$6.36 million of the \$6.9 million of the state money

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came as a result of the Claremont II decision in the form of adequate education grants. Local taxpayers that year raised \$5.4 million in local school property taxes and another \$2.9 million in the new state property tax. That combined total of \$8.3 million was about \$2 million less than the \$10.4 million raised in local school property taxes the previous year. The school tax rate had been \$19.17 per \$1,000 in the 1997-98 school year and \$20.21 in the 1998-99 school year. When the new state plan took effect, the school tax rate dropped by \$3 to \$17.24, but then jumped backed up to \$19.90 in 2000-01 before dropping by \$1 to \$18.91 in the current school year.

Crawford, a former school board chair, recalled only token debate in 1999-2000 over what to do with the state money. "We decided we would turn some money back to the taxpayers, who had been paying more than their fair share for so long," she said. "That relief was long overdue." Since then, the budgets have grown by about \$1 million a year -- from \$16 million in 1999-2000 to \$17.4 million in 2000-01, to \$18.2 million in 2001-02. Crawford and Damren, the assistant superintendent, attribute the bulk of those hikes to inflation and special education. Damren said special education will cost the district \$4 million in the 2002-2003 school year.

In 2000, a special warrant was presented to voters seeking \$322,000 for unanticipated special education costs. Damren said the article was defeated, forcing the district into a budget freeze. In the first year the new state money arrived, the school board proposed, and the voters approved, a two-year teachers' contract that contained increases of 5.1 percent for 2000-2001 and 4.8 percent for 2001-2002 at costs of \$340,400 in the first year and an additional \$361,400 in the second year. Damren said negotiations are under way for a new contract in 2002-2003.

Below the average: Despite the contract, Claremont teachers' pay lags behind others in the area, says Julianna Stevens, a president of the Sugar Hill Education Association. According to the state Department of Education, Claremont teachers made an average minimum salary of \$36,142 in the 2000-2001 school year, as compared to a statewide average of \$38,301. "We've put in new curricula and worked hard as a school district to fund those curricula, and teachers have been doing a phenomenal job," Stevens said. "But all of that has not a thing to do with the state." "When anyone gives you more money, you say 'thank you,'" said Damren, "but if you look at the way this funding plan is structured on a two-year basis, it's quite clear that in the first year of new funding, we get our budgets passed because the tax rate goes down a little bit. Then, in the second year, when the amount of state money stays the same and the tax rate goes up, it doesn't pass."

Crawford said, "People often say that things must be better in Claremont. And they are better in the sense that we haven't had to raise as much from the local property tax and have been able to cut the tax rate twice." Allen Whipple, a Democratic former state senator who has been a key spokesman for the Sullivan County Citizens for Tax Relief, said the school district has received plenty of money from the state. He said Claremont continues to suffer from a lack of planning by leaders who held office 20 and 30 years ago. Whipple said they did not aggressively try to expand the city's tax base after its traditional key employer, Joy Manufacturing and its successor firms, shrank during the 1980s and 1990s before shutting its doors completely. He said they

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decided to hike tax rates to try to pay for schools. "They have pretty much everything they need in the schools," he said.

According to the state Department of Education Web site, Concord spent \$6,770 per pupil in the 2000-2001 school year, while Claremont spent \$8,215. "Instead of making the changes necessary to take care of it locally," Whipple said, "they are looking for someone else to pay the bill. And so who gets hurt? The communities throughout the state that have been managing themselves right and expanding their tax bases all these years."

A Claremont comeback? Whipple said, "So, now we've had this lawsuit. The city has given its name to this lawsuit and when people think of Claremont, they think of a community that's poor, with sub-standard education. It isn't true." Still, said Whipple, the result has been that people and businesses are reluctant to move to Claremont, while others moved out, depleting property values and shrinking the tax base even further. But Claremont is working on a comeback. For the past two years, Claremont has been among 1,700 downtowns across the country and 20 in New Hampshire involved in the federal Main Street USA program.

Anthony Lyons, executive director of Main Street Claremont, said his city has had the highest downtown job growth in the past two years of any of the New Hampshire participants, with 40 businesses expanding or relocating there. "It shows that people have confidence in Claremont, and what we do downtown will hopefully have reverberations throughout the city," said **Lyons**. "It certainly is the hope to expand the tax base and generate new revenue." He said a downtown building has been chosen for rehabilitation initiative under a program by the state's planning office and economic development agency as well as the Community Development Loan Fund and the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority. "We hope this will be a cornerstone for showing people what can be done with rehabilitated housing and commercial units," said **Lyons**, "and the result will be an increased value for the building, which will ultimately turn into tax revenue."

They will spend it: Whipple say that new tax revenue is only as valuable as how well spending is managed. "My experience has been that you cannot give a school district enough money," he said. "They'll spend it. Whether they spend it wisely is often a matter of opinion. "If you run the community right," said Whipple, "you expand your tax base, you get more tax revenue and you can spend more on your schools." But Thomas Connair, an attorney and chairman of the Claremont Lawsuit Coalition, says that regardless of how the community got where is, the constitutional rights of taxpayers are still being violated by the state. "The problem that existed in 1989, when we started this, hasn't gone away," he said. "The contributions by our taxpayers are beyond their means. We've had the Claremont decisions. We won the case, but we've yet to see the fruits of those decisions."

The Claremont Suit: legal landmark at a glance.

The Claremont school funding lawsuit is both an education case and a tax case. At the root of the arguments by lawyers for Claremont and its fellow property-poor plaintiffs -- Allentown, Franklin, Lisbon and Pittsfield -- is that low property values in those districts force residents to

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be taxed at extremely high rates in order to raise money to pay for local schools. Even with those high rates, the plaintiffs argued, they cannot raise enough money to pay for an education system on par with the quality enjoyed by communities with large tax bases and low rates.

Tax rate disparities of 30 to 1 were cited during the trial. Disparities remain, which is why plaintiffs may go to the trial court to argue that the state's funding plan has not fulfilled the high court's Claremont II mandate. The State House has seen Claremont-related action every year since 1998. A funding plan passed in May 1999 was designed to close tax rate disparities and bring more money to property-poor school districts. The plan, enacted three years ago this month, is anchored by a statewide property tax and topped with a collection of business tax and tobacco tax hikes and fee hikes and use of one-time sources of revenue. Though it has been tweaked occasionally in the past few years, its structure has not changed.

The initial plan's price tag was \$825 million. About half was new money. All but about \$24 million of the more than \$400 million in statewide property tax revenue was produced simply by renaming the first \$6.60 per \$1,000 of equalized assessed valuation that property owners would have paid anyway. That rate has now dropped to \$5.80 per \$1,000. The \$24 million in "excess" funds were sent to Concord by about 28 "donor communities" for distribution with the rest of the so-called "adequate education grant" money.

-- John DiStaso

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New Hampshire Union Leader

April 5, 2002

Main St. shows progress

Author: Stephen Seitz

CLAREMONT -- For years, the deserted storefronts of Claremont were thought to symbolize what was wrong with New Hampshire's downtown economy. But thanks to the city's participation in the Main Street economic development program, that is changing, according to economic development officials. "Claremont is on the move," said City Manager Guy Santagate. "One of the things I'm most impressed with is the spirit that made this possible. It illustrates the need for this program and the positive results it can bring."

In the last two years, downtown Claremont has made a net gain of 26 new businesses, and the Main Street program is credited with making that possible. The New Hampshire Main Street Center chose Claremont to announce its 2001 progress yesterday. The Main Street program is part of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and promotes economic development of downtown districts through historic preservation. In other words, it focuses on redeveloping downtowns so that they are vital economic centers of their communities, while still retaining their historical character.

Main Street programs do not provide grants; they provide advice and direction. The money is mostly raised by the communities through grants and private investment. "A healthy downtown makes for a healthy and vibrant community," said Kathy LaPlante, the director of New Hampshire's Main Street program. "Almost \$31 million in private sector investment has been made in the last five years." The 17 New Hampshire Main Street communities, said LaPlante, "have seen 320 new businesses open, creating 789 new jobs." Overall, LaPlante said, the Main Street program is reaching about 25 percent of New Hampshire's population, and every dollar invested in the program yields a return of \$39.22.

The momentum continues, according to Claremont Main Street Director **Anthony Lyons**. "We've added seven new businesses since January," he said. "We've added restaurants, boutiques, hair places, a nice mix. One good indicator is that 12 buildings have been sold locally, to people who live here. This is better than with out-of-town or out-of-state landlords. It's a good indicator of confidence that things are turning around."

Dennis Belanger, who founded the 18th Century Shoppe where the old Corner Bookstore used to be, tried to restore the building to what it had been in 1897. Drop ceilings were removed to reveal the high tin ceilings underneath, and hardwood floors were put back in. "Business has been good," Belanger said. "We have these beautiful buildings that should be used. The old buildings have character. People remember the way it used to be, and they want it to stay that way."

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Henry Tunkel, owner of the Pleasant Street Auction Center, said he is moving his store from Claremont's commercial strip on Washington Street for practical, as well as aesthetic, reasons. The new store is expected to open around Memorial Day. "I'm right on a municipal parking lot, and the rents are lower here," he said. "That helps keep costs down." Nationally, about 1,700 communities in 45 states participate in the Main Street program. Soon, there will be a convention in Fort Worth, Texas, to recognize one of them with the Great American Main Street Award. Two New Hampshire Main Street communities, Milford and Littleton, are among the semifinalists for this award.

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