

City Manager's Self Assessment
September 2005 - September 2006

I. Relationship with the City Commission

Customer service to the City Commission is my number one priority. I work hard to ensure that each department and staff member is committed to providing an exceptional level of service.

The most effective tool for communication of direction from the City Commission to the City Manager and staff is the strategic planning process. In December of 2005, the Commission identified goals and objectives for a two year period. Under my direction, staff has aggressively developed plans to implement the goals and objectives of the Commission. A quarterly report describing progress in achieving the objectives has been provided to the Commission, and the FY 07/08 budget process was constructed around the priorities established in the adopted Strategic Plan.

It is my goal to treat all Commissioners equally well. I constantly monitor staff to ensure that employees treat the Commissioners with respect. I share information with the City Commission about the status of program implementation through a number of vehicles. On a weekly basis, I meet with each Commissioner to provide information on the Commission's upcoming agenda items. Background papers, *The City Managers Bi-weekly Report*, and financial status reports are all tools used to communicate with the Commission. The City Managers Bi-weekly Report was introduced this year to provide a detailed level of ongoing staff activity and project progress to the Commissioners. It is my direction to department directors that when requests for information are received, which are not specific to a district, that the response is to be in writing with a copy to all Commissioners. My objective in copying all members of the Commission is to provide information on a level playing field.

The agenda process constitutes the primary method of staff's communication of policy issues to the Commission. In partnership with the Clerk, staff reporting to the City Manager re-engineered the format for City Manager agenda items, and through the use of *Legistar* the Commission can now access the agenda in a paperless mode. As such, each Commissioner has been provided with a lap top computer, with the option to view agenda items through paper format, if so preferred.

In May 2006, Commissioners Henry and Mastrodicasa were seated on the Commission. To ensure that all Commissioners received a thorough overview of the process for reaching policy decisions, and possess an understanding of the services offered by the City, staff from the City Managers Office coordinated a New Commissioner Orientation curriculum. A behind the scenes tour of services was provided to the new Commissioners, including overviews of general government and other charter offices.

On rare occasions, an incident may occur that warrants a telephone notification and discussion with Commission members. I call each member and impart the same information thoroughly.

II. Relations with the Community

Since being selected as City Manager in 2005, I have worked with staff to improve service delivery and to enhance our outreach efforts to engage citizens in helping to improve City government services.

As your City Manager, I strive to be accessible to the organization and to the community. During the past year, I have attended and participated in community meetings, spoken before service organizations and neighborhood associations, and have personally met with a number of key businesses representatives within our community. Under my direction, staff attends and provides information to groups such as the Black on Black Crime Task Force, and an extensive list of service organizations and community groups. Through these visits and presentations, I am an advocate of the Commission's adopted policy.

A long term issue impacting Gainesville has been student intrusion into traditional single family neighborhoods. Through the combined efforts of Code Enforcement staff, the Police Department, the City Attorney's Office, and citizen advocates, the Commission has adopted policy direction to enhance our neighborhood preservation activities. The FY 07/08 budget includes funding for additional code enforcement officers and to further automate the process.

The City's television station, Cox Cable Channel 12, continues to grow. Expanded coverage of the Commission, Plan Board, and Development Review Board meetings have contributed to a quality, reliable line-up for the City's media outreach. In addition, citizens now have the ability to view digital video web streaming of City Commission meetings from the comfort of their homes, or conveniently from afar while vacationing out of town.

To be successful at public outreach, the City must employ a number of tools to assist in getting out our message. *The City Managers Bi-weekly Report*, letters to the editor, the Annual Citizens Report, and the Citizens' Academy are all vehicles that are used by the Commission and staff to help citizens understand the issues and services provided by City government.

On a personal note, I strive to be involved in our community not only as your City Manager, but also as an individual contributing to the growth and improvement of Gainesville. I serve on the United Way of North Central Florida Board, the Combined Communications Center Administrative Board, the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce Board, and I am a member of Rotary International.

III. Fiscal Management

The City continues to maintain an excellent bond rating, and indicators such as millage, debt per capita, and employees per capita are stable or improving.

Through our centralized Administrative Services Department, the City monitors fiscal health, purchasing actions, human resources, risk reduction, and budgeting. For the ninth year in a row, the City's FY05 Budget and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report have received the

Governmental Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget and Financial Reporting Awards. Only 2% of municipalities nationwide receive these recognitions.

As City Manager, it is my role to ascertain that the City has systems in place to ensure that purchases are acquired in a fair and cost effective manner, and that our budget is understandable to the Commission and to the public. In the fall of 2005, the Commission adopted fiscal policies, which guide financial action ranging from debt issuance to budget development. An element of the fiscal policies is the City's five year capital improvement plan, which consolidates all information technology and capital expenditures from departments into a single document that allows the Commission, and our citizens, to see and understand the expenditures that the City will make.

The City Commission is provided quarterly reports on the financial status of the organization including a detail of expenditures for each element of general government.

Prior to preparation of the biannual Budget, I requested guidance from the City Commission regarding anticipated expenditure levels. Achieving the Commission's objective of a no tax rate increase this fiscal year required discipline and sacrifice. In FY06, and within the FY 07-08 biannual budget, the Commission was able to achieve a millage rate reduction.

From a long term perspective the availability of high quality jobs, which pay more than the area average wage, is crucial to the City's financial well being. During the last year the City Commission identified and adopted the Innovation Zone as an area to target bioscience and technology development. In the ten months since adoption of the Innovation Zone, staff has publicly promoted the concept, linked financial assistance to the CEO to job creation in the Zone, and will present a Comprehensive Plan Amendment recognizing the Innovation Zone by policy in late October 2006.

An area of financial health in which the City has traditionally underinvested is capital improvements and maintenance. As a major initiative of the FY 07/08 budget, staff increased the amount of funds allocated toward capital. Also, staff recommended, and the City

Commission approved, a borrowing focused on capital asset maintenance and repair in the fall of 2005.

All of the City's financial indicators confirm that the City of Gainesville general government is financially sound. The City Commission has made decisions in the biannual budget that have increased service levels in areas such as fire and rescue, investing in capital, and establishing a set aside of funds for future purchase of environmentally sensitive lands, while maintaining a stable tax rate.

IV. Organization Management

Immediately upon being selected as Gainesville's City Manager, I initiated efforts to move the organization toward recognition as a high performing organization. Goals for this transformation include engaging employees and citizens in improving customer service, encouraging and rewarding teamwork, increasing efficiency through innovation, and measuring our progress. One of the first steps in this transformation involved identifying a vision for the organization. The organization's vision inspires the organization to provide high quality, innovative, cost effective urban services, and to be known as one of the top ten mid sized cities in the nation.

Strategic Planning is a pervasive theme throughout the City of Gainesville organization. Just as the City Commission adopted a two year Strategic Plan, each City department conducts a Strategic Planning Session that involves key staff members who assist the departments as they transition the Commissions' goals and objectives to departmental goals. The list of projects and objectives initiated and/or accomplished in the past twelve months is extensive. A few of the more significant accomplishments include:

- ❖ *Streamlining the development review process* - A cross functional team conducted a systems analysis of the development review process. Achievements of this review include fostering a better understanding of the roles of the various reviewers,

identification of, and focus on bottleneck areas, and adoption of a plan to automate the review and documentation process.

- ❖ *Approval of a new Fire and Rescue Station 8* - Staff proposed, and the City Commission approved, funding through the Capital investment debt issuance for land and the FY 07/08 budget for construction of a new fire and rescue station in the northwest section of the City.
- ❖ *Maintained the City's ISO rating* - The City Commission has authorized the purchase of a replacement station alerting station, which will maintain the City's ISO rating.
- ❖ *Creation of an Investing in Employee's Team* - An Investing in Employees Team has worked for the past eight months to develop strategies that recognize and reward employees, create continuous learning opportunities, and create a culture of high performance.
- ❖ *Adopted a Clean and Green Program* - An ongoing cross functional team has been established. Staff from key departments work as a team to improve community appearance, focusing on cleaner, better maintained public areas.
- ❖ *Aggressively worked to annex contiguous properties* - A high level annexation team and the Strategic Planning staff conducted an annexation referendum in the Sante Fe Community College area. Although the referendum did not pass, the attention on the benefits of being in the City may have spurred a number of voluntary annexations, including over 120 acres near 20th Avenue and a request to annex 1,300 acres by the Lanmar Corporation.
- ❖ *Airport Legislation* - Working with the City Attorney and The Economic Development Director, I spent countless hours reacting to legislation proposed by the Gainesville-Alachua County Regional Airport Authority. Although this legislation was not initially on my or the Commission's list of things to do, the legislative update ultimately reestablished the City Commission's role at the Gainesville Regional Airport.

- ❖ *Acquisition of the Hartman Property* - Through a unique public/private partnership the City will acquire the Hartman property located off N.W.13th Street. Partners in this transaction include Home Depot, the Alachua County Trust for Public Lands, and partial funding by the Florida Conservation Trust. I have proposed that the funding included in the FY 07/08 budget be continued beyond FY 08 as a source for future acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands.
- ❖ *Reorganization of departments* - Organizational efficiency and effectiveness was enhanced through the merger of the Facilities and Fleet Departments, creating the General Services Department. Also, the Cultural Affairs Department was merged with the Recreation and Parks Department to create the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department.
- ❖ *Web based interactive service availability* - Staff has initiated a plan to enhance citizen's ability to conduct business on the City's internet site. The first success occurred in September of 2006 with the initiation of an on-line parking ticket payment process. In FY 07, businesses will be able to renew occupational licenses on-line, and we envision the automation of the development review process in FY 08.

The past 12 months have been significant in the achievement and completion of a number of major capital improvements. Notable capital improvements completed in the year include the reconstruction of the Duck Pond Island, Glen Springs Road, and Phase I of the Depot Park.

A challenge facing the City of Gainesville organization is the tendency for departments to work independently, not recognize that the actions of one department impact others. During future years, I will do my best to foster an organization climate that is collaborative and team based.

V. Personnel Management

My vision for the workforce is of an organization which is professional, results-oriented, and focuses on providing a high return on investment to our taxpayers. Personnel decisions are made in an open and fair manner. Employees are encouraged and expected to participate in

the improvement of services, and their performance is reviewed annually providing a dialogue between supervisors and the employee. During the past year I have worked with department heads to lay the ground work for attainment of this vision.

As City Manager, one of my major emphases has been the continuous improvement of the skill level of our employees. Departments are encouraged to allow employees to participate in professional development sessions. Quarterly professional development sessions have been offered to all supervisors. The October 2006 session will focus on organization ethics.

Key staff members from GRU, general government, the City Attorney's office, CWA, and the Equal Opportunity Office have worked collaboratively to update the Pay and Classification Plan. The City Auditor has participated through out the process to identify issues which may cause concern to the City Commission. The Pay and Classification Plan will be presented to the City Commission in October of 2006.

To be accessible to our employees, each month I meet with employees within one of our major departments. These departmental meetings provide an opportunity for me to share information regarding City Commission priorities, to emphasize elements of the organization's vision, and to engage employees to share their concerns.

VI. Personal Qualities

A dominant characteristic of my approach to local government is a commitment to providing excellent service to the City Commission and the citizens of Gainesville. I believe to be successful; the organization must have a vision, set goals, live our values, involve stakeholders, act with integrity, and follow through.

As your City Manager, I bring to the City over thirty years of high-level governmental experience. I have learned, and I hope demonstrated, the importance of communication with the City Commission and the community. In part due to my tenure in other local governments, I know that services can be delivered in a variety of models. This knowledge of other local

governments has helped me to challenge the organization to innovate and change when needed.

VII. Relations to other Governments

The City of Gainesville is one of many governments within our region and state. Fortunately, or unfortunately, we have differing goals and approaches. On any given day or issue, the relationship between City and neighboring municipalities or the county can change. I have worked to help the City Commission to institutionalize communication with its neighbors. Joint meetings were held with the Alachua County Commission and the School Board during the last year. On a regular basis, I meet with the County Manager, with the objective of fostering better relationships in a more relaxed environment. Each month the City of Gainesville hosts a meeting with the local government managers throughout Alachua County. This monthly meeting provides managers with a vehicle to share and gain information from each other.

Through out much of the past year, I led the staff team negotiating with the County to adopt a Transition of Services Agreement. Although the City and County staff's were ultimately at impasse, City staff was able to articulate principles that we could support as property transitions from the County to City boundaries. Annexation Transition Policies were presented and adopted by the City Commission. I am hopeful these policies will ultimately provide the basis for a successful negotiation of City/County Transition Policies. A major point of contention during the negotiation of Transition Policies was the Designated Assistance Agreement. City and County staff have successfully negotiated a new Fire Services Agreement, which will guide the provision and reimbursement of fire and rescue services provided by either municipality.

I advocate that the City Commissioners adopt a legislative agenda, participate in the Florida League of Cities, and stress the need to lobby our issues at the state and national level.

Community Redevelopment Agency Executive Director

As Executive Director of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), I am pleased with the promising future for our redevelopment areas. Within the past twelve months, five major projects have been approved by the CRA: Gainesville Greens, University Corners, Jefferson at Second, University House, and the Hampton Inn. Each of these projects will positively impact the redevelopment areas.

CRA staff and the City Attorney continue to work on the South East Gainesville Renaissance Initiative. A purchase agreement has been negotiated for the purchase of the Kennedy Homes Apartment Complex, bringing to an end an ugly chapter in the history of low income housing in Gainesville. A team of City staff is in the process of evaluating proposals to prepare a master plan for the area.

In spite of a significant turnover of staff in the Community Redevelopment Agency, redevelopment projects and plans have continued to move forward as other members of the City team pitched in to continue with our momentum.

VIII. City Powers and Duties

The City of Gainesville is in compliance with, and exceeds, the requirements of City ordinances. Systems are maintained for finance, procurement, human resources, information technology, budgeting, property inventory control, and risk management.

The City budget process integrates capital, information technology, and operating expenditures and revenues in an award-winning document. A copy of the most recent Citizens Report is included in the Commission packet for this assessment.

As your City Manager, I attest that the City of Gainesville government is well run and in compliance with state statutes. Like any large organization, we have room for improvement. I am proud of the communication with the City Commission, but I believe communication can

always be improved. My commitment to the City Commission is to continuously improve my performance and the performance of the organization.