

*Mission  
Statement  
Review*

by  
**Leadership General Government III**

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## Introduction

In February 2001, the Leadership General Government Class III (LGG III) expressed a desire to develop a program to better convey the City Commission's adopted mission statement, goals and objectives to the operating departments as its group project. In order to accomplish this, LGG III decided to focus on the City's mission statement in an attempt to revitalize departmental efforts toward achieving the overall mission of the City. On May 14, 2001, the City Commission gave LGG III permission to perform a review of the City's current Mission Statement.

### I. Development of a Mission Statement

What is a Mission Statement? Various definitions include:

"describes the overall purpose of the organization."

"an enduring statement of purpose for an organization that identifies the scope of its operations in product and market terms, and reflects its values and priorities."

"captures an organization's unique and enduring reason for being, and energizes stakeholders to pursue common goals."

Why have a well-developed Mission Statement?

A well-developed mission statement offers several potential benefits. These benefits include direction, focus, policy, meaning, challenge, and passion.

- **Direction** states what the organization does and what it wants to be successful in.
- **Focus** concentrates on the organization's strengths and competitive advantages and tells people how to obtain them.
- **Policy** is a guideline of what an organization finds acceptable and unacceptable and states organizational values.
- **Meaning** shows what an organization strives to achieve and why they wish to do so.
- **Challenge** is the setting up of goals and measurements of achievement for employees.

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- **Passion** makes everyone involved with the organization show feelings of enthusiasm, pride, and commitment ("Thinking Ahead," 1998).

What should be included in a Mission Statement?

A review of current literature isolated a number of key considerations that are normally used in the development of a mission statement. They include:

1. A mission statement should define who you are, what you do, what you stand for and why you do it.
2. A mission statement is not a slogan, goal, business plan, or public relations piece.
3. An effective mission statement is best developed with input by all the members of the organization.
4. The best mission statements are only 3-4 sentences long.
5. Effective mission statements take time to develop.
6. Examining mission statements of other municipalities and organizations is helpful but make certain your statement is unique (and not from some other organization) in order to maintain credibility and integrity.
7. Avoid statements inferring how great you are, what great quality and what great service you provide.
8. Effective mission statements are direct, powerful and avoid lofty statements having little meaning.
9. Make certain you believe in your statement.
10. Make certain all in your organization get a copy of the statement and that it is used in your personnel manual, business meetings and posted in your workplace.

**II. The LGG Review Process**

Initially, LGG III met several times just to learn about mission statements and their development. Ron Behar provided a training session on how to create a mission statement. He shared samples of mission statements from other organizations. LGG III then obtained mission statements from many other

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municipalities and reviewed them for inclusion of the key elements noted above.

In an effort to gather ideas and suggestions from all City employees, LGG III developed a survey to gauge their perception of the City's current mission statement and to ascertain their desire for any change. On August 21, 2001, a survey was sent to all employees of General Government and GRU. (Copy attached as Exhibit A.)

**III. Survey Results**

**Surveys distributed: ~2,000**  
**Responses received 201 (10%)**

A.) The first part of the survey dealt with the adequacy of the City's current mission statement. The results are listed below:

<u>Category Description</u>	<u>Responses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1) The current mission statement is adequate.	110	55%
2) The current mission statement is OK but could use some minor modifications.	58	29%
3) The current mission statement is inadequate and should be totally rewritten.	17	8%
4) Other	16	8%

B.) The second part of the survey dealt with whether or not values should be added to the mission statement.

<b>Yes</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>54.5%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>45.5%</b>

C.) Employee preferences from a choice of values were determined by the survey. The results were:

<u>Value</u>	<u># Responses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1) Integrity	80	40%

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2) Diversity	64	32%
3) Teamwork	52	26%
4) Customer Satisfaction	48	24%
5) Quality	48	24%
6) Financial Accountability	46	23%
7) Safe	42	21%
8) Innovation	41	21%
9) Continuous Improvement	39	19.5%
10) Trust	36	18%
11) Efficient	36	18%
12) Courteous	35	17.5%
13) Mutual Respect	33	16.5%
14) Cost Effective	24	12%
15) Good Stewards	22	11%
16) Economic Development	21	10.5%
17) Pristine Environment	17	8.5%
18) Character	17	8.5%
19) Sustainable Development	15	7.5%
20) Active, passive opportunities	1	0.5%
21) Partnerships	1	0.5%
22) Collaboration	1	0.5%
23) Community	1	0.5%
24) Communication	1	0.5%
25) Prompt	1	0.5%
27) Professional	1	0.5%

**IV. Analysis of Survey Results**

Of the survey responses received, 84% felt the City's current mission statement was adequate or needed only slight modifications. The other 16% felt that the City's current mission statement should be rewritten.

Additionally, the responses showed 54.5% were in favor of adding values to the mission statement.

**V. Options and Recommendations**

Based on these results, LGG III proposes three options to the City Commission for consideration.

1. Adopt new mission statement with the top six (6) values added based on the survey results.
2. Retain the current mission statement.
3. Slightly modify the current mission statement.

It should be noted that the three (3) Options are presented in order of preference by LGG III. Even though a slight majority of City employees (55%) indicated that the City's current mission statement is adequate, LGG III feels very strongly that because 45% felt it should be modified or written, that this indicates enough lack of "buy in" to support a change.

**Option #1) Adopt A New Mission Statement With Values**

We are committed to providing exceptional services that enhance the quality of life for the Gainesville community.

Our Values:

- Integrity - We will be open, honest, and honor our commitments.
- Diversity - We will maintain a viable work force that reflects our community.
- Teamwork - We will work cooperatively to build and maintain productive working relationships.
- Customer Satisfaction - We will strive to meet our customers' needs in a professional and courteous manner.
- Quality - We will aspire to the highest level of excellence in our products and services.
- Financial Accountability - We will provide responsible stewardship of the City's assets and resources.

**Option #2) Retain the Current Mission Statement**

We will make Gainesville the most livable and best managed city by providing courteous and quality services through teamwork, innovation, and a total Commitment to Excellence.

**Option #3) Modify the Current Mission Statement**

The City of Gainesville's mission is to be the most livable and best managed city by providing courteous, cost effective, and quality services through diverse teamwork, innovation and a commitment to excellence and to our unique environment.

**Conclusion**

LGG III very much appreciates the City Commission's support of our review of the City's current mission statement. We hope that this information will be helpful to the Commission in deciding whether or not to make any changes.