

**STRATEGIC PLANNING
WORKSHOP**

CITY OF GAINESVILLE

JUNE 7, 2010

**Facilitated by
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INTRODUCTION

The Gainesville City Commission held its annual Strategic Planning Workshop on June 7, 2010. Ms. Marilyn Crotty, Director of the Florida Institute of Government at the University of Central Florida facilitated the session.

The Mayor, Commissioners, and senior staff set ground rules and then assessed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the city.

The elected officials reviewed the existing goals and initiatives, eliminated one goal, moved some initiatives to different goals, and added four new initiatives. This report is a summary of the discussions and conclusions of the workshop.

GROUND RULES

The following ground rules were agreed upon by the participants as guidelines for the day:

- Be concise
- Be open-minded
- Don't interrupt
- Maximize participation of Commission – limit comments to two for each issue

The Commission and staff then identified what they perceive as strengths and weaknesses of the city and its government. They also identified opportunities and threats that the city faces. The following chart is a compilation of these ideas. The number in parens () next to each comment indicates how many participants made this comment.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Staff (7) (knowledgeable, well educated, educational level of dept. heads, committed, excellent at all levels, majority are hard working and dedicated to the organization, leadership/experience within the workforce)	Tax/revenue base (2) (80% from 4 sources with little control of those sources)	Innovation Gainesville (5) (alignment of vision and synergy of action with community partners, economic partnerships opportunities with UF, SFC, chamber, etc. economy, buy-in from business community on potential for economic development, corners)	Economy/Budget(8) (more jobs, federal and state budget constraints, growing federal debt, economic conditions, international, decreasing tax base, competition for dwindling resources, dwindling revenues, reduced revenues)
Citizen engagement (3) (engaged community, dedicated and passionate citizens, high engagement over public issues)	Funding (2) (availability of financial resources, capital funding needs)	Fiscal issues (2) (forces evaluation of the current service level to align revenue/ expenditures, review local priorities in light of reduced revenues)	Retiring knowledge-staff (3) (able staff that must be replaced and trained, losing institutional knowledge in workforce, loss of perspective)
Fiscal policies (2) (reserve policy, debt coverage, address recurring problems with recurring solutions, accountability)	Need to be more customer friendly	UF/ community partnerships (2) (and community organizations, Shands, involvement in community)	Policies from state government (2) (additional restrictions)
Committed elected officials	Lack of employee loyalty due to budget constraint	Public transportation (2) (improve, increase ridership and use as tool to shape city form)	Unincorporated County (2) (influence of developers on city and county growth management, unstinted growth)
High level of interest by many citizens/organizations to partner and consult on local problems	Collaboration, duplication of resources	Environment (2) (increased national and international focus on sustainability and the environment, climate change issues)	Florida Legislature (2) (changes which impact GRU transfer could be catastrophic)
GRU transfer provides necessary revenue diversification	More comprehensive local affairs coverage needed	New residents (2) (academics enhance diversity, inflow)	Declining property values (2)
Successful utility enterprises that diversify revenue base and provide diversified professional staff	Working togetherness of city departments	Robust cultural/artistic community	Unfunded federal and state mandates (2) (clean water programs, traffic signs, ADA compliance, underfunded)
Staff participation in the budget proves	Budget- declining revenues and property values, 50% of property off tax rolls	Social services- need more of	Limit on growth of UF-main economic engine

Thoughtful, intelligent, compassionate commission	Pension, insurance funding requirements	Private state and federal funding for higher ed and research	Other governments refusing to honor monetary commitments
Open mindedness of commissioners	Administrative fidelity to land development regulations	Excellent natural resources	Divergence into human services (homelessness, hunger, senior services) without the organizational structure to support such services
Collegial attitude of city commissioners	A large number of potential workers lacking sufficient education and training	Incorporating technology into operations/decision making	Single member county commission districts
City commission's desire to address all issues	Low morale as we continue with hiring freezes, salary freezes, training cutbacks	Juvenile crime reduction	Creating a vision for our city
Fairly open government protecting against undue interest group influence	Publicizing the city and all it has to offer	Financial hardship is forcing us to re-examine what we really need to do vs. what we want to do	Relationship with the county seems to be strained, becoming more adversarial
Strong national education and medical institutions that create vibrant community and jobs	Staffing/workload capacity	Maximizing opportunities for our youth	Superfund site, clean up standards
Quality of life in Gainesville	City organizational structure not streamlined	Problem solving by academics at UF	Distrust of city hall by citizens
City and county governments work well together because commissions work well together	Clarity of land development regulations	Fire assessment may provide additional revenue diversification	Florida legislature's revenue restriction and infringement on home rule
Structure of the charter provides checks and balance	Division of natural and financial assets among private city, county and university that limit access to some citizens	Buy-in from business community	Private, state and federal funding for higher education and research
Positive community spirit and identity	The city does not have sufficient revenues to support the desired services for the future	Re-write land development code (in progress)	Lack of buy-in from business community
Partnerships with educational institutions (UF, SFC)	Eco. Development	Institutional economy	Attitude that city is wasteful, unresponsive to citizen input
Beautiful, natural setting	Scarcity mentality as discussed in innovation Gainesville	Gainesville is a beautiful place to live	State mandates
Strategic planning @ GRU	Lack of urgency to encourage private investment	Community participation in decision making process	Large percentage of children and youth in low socioeconomic status families

Open government	Significant percentage of citizenry uninformed about causes and complexity of public concerns	Working togetherness of city departments	Risk that innovators, businesses and individuals will move away or be lured away rather than grow locally
New focus/leadership of GPD	City's revenue base needs further diversification	Good citizen population for promoting high and green technology business and jobs	Legislative actions (labor, etc.)
Utility	Dependent on large state and medical institutions that pursue their own objectives without counsel from governments	New technology center near downtown that will be a type of economic engine	Critical letters/editorials that contain misleading or inaccurate information about city government
Legal department	Cooperation and consistency between charter officers	Streamline internal procedures	Deteriorating/aging public infrastructure
GRU- the value of having a MOU	Consistency in application of codes, comp. plan	Embrace new technology	Declining share of regional population
Emphasis on diversity	Large amount of property not on the roll that require local government services	Evaluation of operating efficiencies- cost savings opportunities	Streamline process for business development
Can-do spirit of citizen service			Contraction of UF or Santa Fe will impact the city employment and tax base
Good mix of revenue sources for city			Loss of home rule powers in generating public revenues

GOALS

At this point, participants were asked to affirm, delete, or modify the eight goals in the current strategic plan. The Mayor and Commission agreed to continue seven of the goals and to delete the Partnership goal. The initiatives under that goal were moved to other goals. The 2011-12 goals are:

- Public Safety
- Economic Development and Redevelopment
- Human Capital
- Government Effectiveness and Fiscal Responsibility
- Infrastructure and Transportation
- Neighborhoods
- Environment and Energy

GOALS AND INITIATIVES

GOAL 1. PUBLIC SAFETY

Initiatives

- 1.1 Develop and continue programs to reduce the causes of crime
- 1.2 Coordinate the effort to bring a center that promotes family safety to the City of Gainesville
(previously an initiative under Goal 3 – Human Capital)

GOAL 2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT

Initiatives

- 2.1 Continue the implementation of the South East Gainesville Renaissance Initiative (SEGRI Project)
- 2.2 Continue implementation of the strategic redevelopment plan for Depot Park
- 2.3 Continue implementation of the strategic redevelopment plan for GRU area – identify initial development area

- 2.4 Ensure transparent, efficient, and consistent regulation of land development in furtherance of the comprehensive plan
- 2.5 Continue to position City to take advantage of innovation economy and identify plan for innovation zone near University
- 2.6 Increase the amount of affordable and low cost housing throughout the City – address quality, access, and distribution as well
- 2.7 Develop a new strategy or approach (re-formalize the process) to the County in order to plan for Gainesville’s urban reserve area
- 2.8 Formalize relationships to build key partnership opportunities with UF and SFC (*previously an initiative under former Goal 8 – Partnerships*)
- 2.9 Develop strategies to support local small businesses * (new initiative)

GOAL 3. HUMAN CAPITAL

Initiatives

- 3.1 Continue implementation of the 10 year plan to end homelessness – determine County’s continuing interest in partnering on this initiative
- 3.2 Explore the role of the city in the provision of senior services
- 3.3 Analyze the availability and accessibility of child and youth programs and identify a role for City government including addressing the harmful effects of child and youth poverty
- 3.4 Facilitate broader community support to improve the educational and other opportunities for city youth (*previously an initiative under former Goal 8 – Partnerships*)

GOAL 4. GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS and FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Commission directed staff to reword the existing goal statement to include measuring and improving the cost effectiveness of government services. The preferred title should include “governance”

Initiatives

- 4.1 Continue annexation effort in the urbanized area in order to maintain social, economic, and financial diversity – develop new strategies for successful annexations
- 4.2 Improve communication through increased use of internet and other tools
- 4.3 Increase opportunities for civic engagement – measure and track participation in Citizen Academy and service on advisory boards

GOAL 5. INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION

Initiatives

- 5.1 Complete capital projects at parks and continue land conservation and acquisition
- 5.2 Support the reconstruction of transportation facilities to encourage redevelopment of 6th street
- 5.3 Support the reconstruction of transportation facilities to encourage redevelopment of Depot Avenue
- 5.4 Bring existing roadway stock up to a 70 or better rating * (new initiative)
- 5.5 Implement improved transit as described in RTS Premium Service Report * (new initiative)

GOAL 6. NEIGHBORHOODS

Initiatives

- 6.1 Develop creative ways to measure progress in code enforcement
- 6.2 Assess neighborhoods to determine need for infrastructure and other improvements for bicycle and pedestrian usage * (new initiative)

GOAL 7. ENVIRONMENT AND ENGERY

Initiatives

- 7.1 Protect the quality of drinking water and integrity of neighborhoods in Gainesville by actively participating in the clean-up and redevelopment of the Cabot/Koppers Superfund site
- 7.2 Review the status of commercial recycling ordinances and enforcement thereof, and determine if changes are needed
- 7.3 Refine the coordinated response at the local level to address energy policy and climate change
- 7.4 Improve the energy efficiency of modest-income homes through weatherization and educational programs

