



City of Gainesville

Office of the City Manager

November 12, 2019

Statement from City Manager Lee Feldman:

The City of Gainesville recently learned that members of our local Legislative Delegation will be asking the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee (JLAC) on Thursday to conduct a comprehensive audit of our operational practices and managerial oversight.

Transparency is the hallmark of good governance and at the heart of projects like the city's open data portal, which allows our neighbors to see in detail our annual budget, spending and long-term capital improvement plans.

It is concerning that this request, initiated via a letter from a former Charter Officer to members of Gainesville's local legislative delegation, appears to be nothing more than a refutation of his dismissal. However, whatever the impetus of this request, our residents must have confidence in our ability to serve as good stewards of their financial resources.

Last year, during a time of great transition and turnover in the finance department, city management secured an external auditing firm, with the former City Auditor's full knowledge, to conduct a full analysis of our financials and to ensure that we identified oversights and inefficiencies in our internal control system.

The city implemented the recommendations received and less than a year later, the city's finance department is now fully staffed and running at optimal capacity and working on the Fiscal Year 19 audit on schedule.

As your City Manager, it is my obligation to inform you of unnecessary actions that will result in a burden on staff time and an inefficient use of your taxpayer dollars.

I have served as a professional local government administrator for more than three decades, and am troubled by the inflammatory language included in the former City Auditor's audit request, and his unfounded inferences of fraud and theft.

That said both our doors and our books are open. We have nothing to hide, and welcome any and all reviews of our financial operations as we continue to serve Gainesville.