



**Monday, October 7, 2024, 5:30 p.m.**

**GRU Administration Building**

**301 SE 4th Avenue**

**Gainesville, FL 32601**

Authority Directors

Eric Lawson - Chair

David Haslam - Vice Chair

Craig Carter

Jack Jacobs

Robert Skinner

If you have a disability and need accommodation in order to participate in this meeting, please call (352) 334-5051 at least two business days in advance. TTY (Text Telephone Telecommunication Device) users please call 711 (Florida Relay Service). For Speech to Speech (STS) relay, please call 1-877-955-5334. For STS Spanish relay, please call 1-877-955-8773. For STS French Creole relay, please call 1-877-955-8707.

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Agenda Statement: The Gainesville Regional Utilities Authority encourages civil public speech. The Gainesville Regional Utilities Authority expects each person entering this chamber to treat others with respect and courtesy. Speakers are expected to focus on agenda items under discussion. Signs, props, posters, food, and drinks should be left outside the auditorium.

**B. ROLL CALL**

**C. INVOCATION**

**D. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**E. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**  
(Regular and Consent)

**F. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. **Approval of Minutes from the September 4 2024 Meeting**

**G. CHAIR COMMENTS**

**H. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**  
(for items not on the agenda, not to exceed 30 minutes total)

**I. CONSENT AGENDA**

1. **2024-748 Fort Clarke Blvd. Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main Improvements Project (B)**  
**Department:** Gainesville Regional Utilities/Water WasteWater

**Description:** This item is seeking approval to proceed with a construction contract for Fort Clarke Blvd. Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main Improvements Project.

The new gravity sewer main will be 24-inch diameter PVC pipe that will replace a 16-inch ductile iron pipe that has exceeded its service life. The overall project length is roughly 2,500 feet of new gravity sewer main and will include three trenchless jack and bore pipe crossings under existing Alachua County roadways. The existing 16-inch ductile iron main will either be removed or abandoned/grouted in place. The proposed gravity sewer main will be replaced all the way to the existing Lift Station 21, located at 1920 Fort Clarke Blvd.

GRU Procurement issued an Invitation To Bid (ITB) for the improvements to prospective firms and posted on OpenGov on August 20, 2024. Two (2) responses were received on September 24, 2024. The contract award will be made to the lowest, responsive, responsible Respondent as GRU's CEO determines to be in GRU's best interest. The Intent to Award is attached.

**Fiscal Note:** The funds for this project are included in the FY25-FY26 Water/Wastewater budget and partially funded by the Resilient Florida Grant Program.

**Recommendation:** GRUA authorize the CEO, or his designee, to negotiate and execute a contract with Commercial Industrial Corporation of Ocala, FL for the Fort Clarke Blvd. Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main Improvements Project for the price of \$6,101,879.00, subject to legal review and approval.

- J. CEO COMMENTS
- K. ATTORNEY COMMENTS
- L. RESOLUTIONS (Roll Call Required)
- M. BUSINESS DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. **2024-750 Informational presentation on the 2019 and 2023 Integrated Resource Plans (IRP) and their significance to GRU operations and planning (B)**

**Department:** Gainesville Regional Utilities/ Office of the CEO

**Description:** Once every three to five years, GRU's Energy Supply group conducts a complex study called an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) through which the utility analyzes alternatives to meet the electrical energy and demand requirements of its retail electric customers over a long-term planning horizon (typically 20 to 30 years).

Over the past five (5) years, GRU is fortunate to have completed two (2) IRPs – one in 2019 and the other in 2023 – to consider. The span of time and information are invaluable in evaluating GRU's energy future.

Taking the form of a complex long-term generation expansion production model, the IRP simulates production cost and market interactions in arriving at Net Present Value of Revenue Requirements (NPVRR) based on a select set of operating scenarios with a magnitude of assumptions. Each scenario and each assumption are impacted by future risk – regulatory, financial, market, operating, and prospects of emerging technology.

GRU's 2019 and 2023 IRPs identified the best path forward given the evolution of energy resource technologies along with the risk surrounding each scenario. Completed just 4 years apart both IRPs identify different, yet somewhat similar paths forward.

This presentation highlights the differences, similarities, and trends in the two IRPs as the basis for developing the best action plan for GRU's future power generation needs

**Fiscal Note:** None at this point in time.

**Recommendation:** The GRU Authority consider the agenda as information only and participate and ask questions as needed.

2. **2024-751 Launch of Customer Advocate Program (B)**

**Department:** Gainesville Regional Utilities/Community Relations

**Description:** As part of GRU's overall Customer First initiative, the first program being implemented is our Customer Advocate Program under the supervision of our Community Relations Department.

The Vision of the program is to foster and maintain:

A thriving atmosphere and culture of trust where our customers are empowered to pursue their issues and complaints with confidence knowing that they have a reliable partner who will ensure their matters will be heard and addressed.

The programs goals and objectives are to:

- Expand Community Relation's Ombudsman role to develop a strong partnership with and on behalf of GRU customers, and
- Ensure that our customers are aware of resources and services that are available and assist them in accessing payment assistance through GRU's ProjectShare and other agencies, and
- Be responsive and timely in addressing customer issues, and
- Explore programs and opportunities to assist customers for utility payments, and.
- Improve customer dissatisfaction through positive customer interactions, and
- Ensure that customers are aware that their voices are heard and their issues are resolved fairly, and
- Make recommendations for improvement of internal customer service processes based on customer interactions, and
- Provide multiple points of contact for customers to be heard – surveys, drop boxes, social media presence, etc., and
- Reduce communication/language barriers by establishing a pool of employees to assist when needed.

GRU plans to launch the Customer Advocate Program on September 30, 2024.

**Fiscal Note:** No additional personnel changes or other expense budget modifications are anticipated with the program.

**Recommendation:** The agenda item is for informational purposes to inform the GRU Authority of the steps being taken to further GRU's positive presence in the community.

**N. DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

**O. ADJOURNMENT**



September 4, 2024, 5:30 p.m.  
GRU Administration Building  
301 SE 4th Avenue  
Gainesville, FL 32601

Directors Present: Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Haslam  
Craig Carter, Jack Jacobs, Robert Skinner

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

**B. ROLL CALL**

**C. INVOCATION**

Director Carter led the invocation.

**D. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**E. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

**1. 2024-666 Oath of Office for New Authority Director (NB)**

City Clerk Kristen Bryant swore in new GRU Authority Director Jack Jacobs.

**Recommendation:** The City Clerk Kristen Bryant administer an oath of office for the new director of the Authority.

Heard

**F. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**Public Comment:** Jim Konish

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Vice-Chair Haslam

Aye (5): Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Haslam, Craig Carter, Jack Jacobs, Robert Skinner

Approved (5 to 0)

**G. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Public Comment:** None

**1. Approval of Minutes from the August 7 2024 Meeting**

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Robert Skinner

Aye (5): Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Haslam, Craig Carter, Jack Jacobs, Robert Skinner

Approved (5 to 0)

**H. CHAIR COMMENTS**

Chair Lawson shared a few updates with the board and public.

**I. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Debbie Martinez, Chuck Ross, Angela Casteel, Jim Konish, Donald Shepherd, Richard Schwab, Eddie Hodge

**J. CONSENT AGENDA**

**1. 2024-631 SW 24th Avenue Sanitary Sewer Force Main Improvements Project (B)**

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Vice-Chair Haslam

**Recommendation:** GRUA authorize the CEO, or his designee, to negotiate and execute a contract with Commercial Industrial Corp. for SW 24th Avenue Sanitary Sewer Force Main Improvements Project for the price of \$4,965,360.00, subject to legal review and approval.

Approved On Consent

**2. 2024-637 Jacob Rodgers v. William Stormant and City of Gainesville, d/b/a Gainesville Regional Utilities; Case No. 2016-CA-659; Eighth Judicial Circuit, in and for Alachua County, Florida. (B)**

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Vice-Chair Haslam

**Recommendation:** The Gainesville Regional Utilities Authority 1) approve the terms of the proposed settlement; and 2) authorize the City Attorney settle the claim of Jacob Rodgers v. William Stormant and City of Gainesville, d/b/a Gainesville Regional Utilities; Case No. 2016-CA-659; Eighth Judicial Circuit, in and for Alachua County, Florida.

Approved On Consent



3. **2024-665 William and Eulajeon Malphurs v. City of Gainesville; Case No. 2023-CA-4832; Eighth Judicial Circuit, in and for Alachua County, Florida. (NB)**

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Vice-Chair Haslam

**Recommendation:** The Gainesville Regional Utilities Authority 1) approve the terms of the settlement; and 2) authorize the City Attorney settle the claim of William and Eulajeon Malphurs v. City of Gainesville; Case No. 2023-CA-4832; Eighth Judicial Circuit, in and for Alachua County, Florida.

Approved On Consent

**K. CEO COMMENTS**

The CEO, Ed Bielarski, spoke to some of the items brought up during general public comment.

**L. ATTORNEY COMMENTS**

**Public Comment:** Jim Konish, Jeffrey Shapiro, Chuck Ross, Donald Shepherd, Angela Casteel, Debbie Martinez, Bobby Mermer, Elizabeth Hill

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Robert Skinner

**Motion:** For the GRU Authority Board to authorize Folds Walker to work with GRU CEO to draft language to prepare for a lawsuit to file against the City of Gainesville, if necessary, without waiting for another GRUA board meeting.

Aye (5): Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Haslam, Craig Carter, Jack Jacobs, Robert Skinner

Approved (5 to 0)

**M. RESOLUTIONS (Roll Call Required)**

1. **2024-557 Resolution Authorizing the Amendment of Resolution No. 2024-557 Adopted by the GRU Authority on August 7, 2024 (B)**

**Public Comment:** Jim Konish, Ernesto Martinez

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Robert Skinner

**Recommendation:** The GRU Authority adopt the proposed resolution.

Aye (5): Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Haslam, Craig Carter, Jack Jacobs, Robert Skinner

Approved as Recommended (5 to 0)

2. **2024-632 A resolution eliminating the twenty-five percent surcharge imposed on Gainesville Regional Utilities water and wastewater connection charges to entities and consumers located outside of the corporate limits of the City of Gainesville. (B)**

**Public Comment:** Jim Konish, Bobby Mermer, Chuck Ross, Angela Casteel, Debbie Martinez, Jeffrey Shapiro, Donald Shepherd

The board discussed the item.

CEO Ed Bielarski commented on the item.

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Vice-Chair Haslam

**Recommendation:** The GRUA adopt the proposed resolution.

Aye (5): Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Haslam, Craig Carter, Jack Jacobs, Robert Skinner

Approved as Recommended (5 to 0)

3. **2024-633 A resolution authorizing Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) to obtain a Utility Attorney who shall be a legal advisor to and attorney for (GRU) free from the direction and control of another legal entity, such as the City Commission. (B)**

**Public Comment:** Jim Konish, Debbie Martinez, Jeffrey Shapiro, Donald Shepherd

CEO Ed Bielarski shared that the utility attorney is no longer with the City of Gainesville, and added that there is representation at the meeting from the City Attorney's Office.

Director Carter spoke to the item.

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Robert Skinner

**Recommendation:** The GRUA adopt the proposed resolution.

Aye (5): Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Haslam, Craig Carter, Jack Jacobs, Robert Skinner

Approved as Recommended (5 to 0)

4. **2024-634 A resolution requesting reinstatement to the previous provision in the City Code of Ordinances exempting Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) from applicable right-of-way regulations and permit fees other than to the extent GRU is acting as a com**

*\*Abbreviated Title of Item exceeded character limit. Should say "as a communications services provider".*

**Public Comment:** Jim Konish, Chuck Ross, Brian Singleton, Angela Casteel, Bobby Mermer, Donald Shepherd

CEO Ed Bielarski spoke to the item, and addressed some public comments that were made.

Director Skinner and Carter inquired about the item.

Water/Wastewater Officer Debbie Daugherty spoke to a question from Director Skinner.

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Vice-Chair Haslam

**Recommendation:** The GRUA adopt the proposed resolution.

Aye (5): Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Haslam, Craig Carter, Jack Jacobs, Robert Skinner

Approved as Recommended (5 to 0)

5. **2024-636 A resolution requesting City of Gainesville’s Ordinance No. 2024-352 and Ordinance No. 2024-448 placing a referendum on the November ballot be rescinded and taking all necessary actions to ensure the ballot measure shall not appear therewith. (B)**

**Public Comment:** Jim Konish, Bobby Mermer, Chuck Ross, Angela Casteel, Elizabeth Hill, Jeffrey Shapiro, Kristen Bryant

Folds Walker Attorney Kiersten Ballou addressed a question from City Clerk Kristen Bryant.

Director Skinner made an inquiry of GRUA Attorney Folds Walker.

Folds Walker Attorney Scott Walker addressed the question from Director Skinner.

Director Carter spoke to the item at hand.

**Moved by** Craig Carter

**Seconded by** Robert Skinner

**Recommendation:** The GRUA adopt the proposed resolution.

Aye (5): Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Haslam, Craig Carter, Jack Jacobs, Robert Skinner

Approved as Recommended (5 to 0)

**N. BUSINESS DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**O. DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Director Skinner discussed some of the challenges with customer service and the improvements that are taking to place to improve the service.

Director Carter discussed the assistance from several staff members with different concerns brought forward from the community.

Director Jacobs shared the intent of the board to make things better for everyone.

Director Haslam shared that the utility has a lot of wonderful people working for it.

Chair Lawson shared that he will bring forward an item in the future regarding customer service as well what the next steps are for the IRP.

**P. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Lawson adjourned the meeting at 7:39pm.



**Gainesville Regional Utilities Authority  
Agenda Item Report**

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**File Number: 2024-748**

**Agenda Date:** October 7, 2024

**Department:** Gainesville Regional Utilities

**Title: 2024-748 Fort Clarke Blvd. Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main Improvements Project (B)**

**Department:** Gainesville Regional Utilities/Water WasteWater

**Description:** This item is seeking approval to proceed with a construction contract for Fort Clarke Blvd. Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main Improvements Project.

The new gravity sewer main will be 24-inch diameter PVC pipe that will replace a 16-inch ductile iron pipe that has exceeded its service life. The overall project length is roughly 2,500 feet of new gravity sewer main and will include three trenchless jack and bore pipe crossings under existing Alachua County roadways. The existing 16-inch ductile iron main will either be removed or abandoned/grouted in place. The proposed gravity sewer main will be replaced all the way to the existing Lift Station 21, located at 1920 Fort Clarke Blvd.

GRU Procurement issued an Invitation To Bid (ITB) for the improvements to prospective firms and posted on OpenGov on August 20, 2024. Two (2) responses were received on September 24, 2024. The contract award will be made to the lowest, responsive, responsible Respondent as GRU's CEO determines to be in GRU's best interest. The Intent to Award is attached.

**Fiscal Note:** The funds for this project are included in the FY25-FY26 Water/Wastewater budget and partially funded by the Resilient Florida Grant Program.

**Recommendation:** GRUA authorize the CEO, or his designee, to negotiate and execute a contract with Commercial Industrial Corporation of Ocala, FL for the Fort Clarke Blvd. Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main Improvements Project for the price of \$6,101,879.00, subject to legal review and approval.



# Fort Clarke Blvd. Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main Improvements Project

GRUA Meeting Project Overview  
October 7, 2024

# Project Overview

- Replacement of gravity sewer trunk main along Fort Clarke Blvd. from NW 90<sup>th</sup> Terrace south to Lift Station 21.
  
- Details:
  - Installed parallel to active, existing 16-inch gravity sewer main
  - ~2,500 feet of new 24-inch PVC gravity sewer main, including three trenchless jack and bore pipe crossings under roadways
  - Working hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  - Partially funded (40%) by the Resilient Florida grant program and must be under contract by Dec. 31, 2024, to meet grant requirements







# Procurement Overview

- Invitation to bid released via OpenGOV on August 20, 2024
- Non-mandatory pre-bid meeting held September 10, 2024 at GRU Eastside Operations Center and Site Visit.
- Awarded to lowest, responsive, responsible respondent
- Proposals received September 24, 2024 via GRU e-Procurement Portal.
- Recommend award to Commercial Industrial Corporation

# Recommendation

- GRUA authorize the CEO, or his designee, to negotiate and execute a contract with Commercial Industrial Corporation for Fort Clarke Blvd. Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main Improvements Project for the price of \$6,101,879.00, subject to legal review and approval.

**GAINESVILLE REGIONAL UTILITIES  
PURCHASING DIVISION**



**NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD  
ITB# 2024-084**

~Via OpenGov~

October 1, 2024

**To All Respondents of ITB No. 2024-084  
Fort Clarke Blvd. Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main Improvements Project (Grant Funded)**

Gainesville Regional Utilities has completed its review of the responses submitted to the above referenced ITB and is recommending award, pending FDEP funding approval, to **Commercial Industrial Corp.** as the lowest Responsive Responsible Respondent based on the line items listed below.

VENDOR NAME	ITEMS INCLUDED	BID AMOUNT
<b>Commercial Industrial Corp.</b>	<b>Total Base Bid Price (Items 1-47) Not to Exceed</b>	\$ 5,732,479.00
	Owner Allowance Items:	
	Item# 48	\$ 97,000.00
	Item# 49	\$ 60,000.00
	Item# 50	\$ 120,000.00
	Item# 51	\$ 92,400.00
	<b>Total Bid Amount</b>	<b>\$ 6,101,879.00</b>
<b>SanPik, Inc.</b>	<b>Total Base Bid Price (Items 1-47) Not to Exceed</b>	\$ 5,966,375.00
	Owner Allowance Items:	
	Item# 48	\$ 20,000.00
	Item# 49	\$ 60,000.00
	Item# 50	\$ 200,000.00
	Item# 51	\$ 66,500.00
	<b>Total Bid Amount</b>	<b>\$ 6,312,875.00</b>

Thank you for your time participating on this ITB and for your interest in doing business with Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU). If you have any questions, please contact me via email at [veleza1@gru.com](mailto:veleza1@gru.com).

Prepared By: Annie Velez  
Procurement Specialist III



**Gainesville Regional Utilities Authority  
Agenda Item Report**

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**File Number: 2024-750**

**Agenda Date:** October 7, 2024

**Department:** Gainesville Regional Utilities

**Title: 2024-750 Informational presentation on the 2019 and 2023 Integrated Resource Plans (IRP) and their significance to GRU operations and planning (B)**

**Department:** Gainesville Regional Utilities/ Office of the CEO

**Description:** Once every three to five years, GRU's Energy Supply group conducts a complex study called an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) through which the utility analyzes alternatives to meet the electrical energy and demand requirements of its retail electric customers over a long-term planning horizon (typically 20 to 30 years).

Over the past five (5) years, GRU is fortunate to have completed two (2) IRPs – one in 2019 and the other in 2023 – to consider. The span of time and information are invaluable in evaluating GRU's energy future.

Taking the form of a complex long-term generation expansion production model, the IRP simulates production cost and market interactions in arriving at Net Present Value of Revenue Requirements (NPVRR) based on a select set of operating scenarios with a magnitude of assumptions. Each scenario and each assumption are impacted by future risk – regulatory, financial, market, operating, and prospects of emerging technology.

GRU's 2019 and 2023 IRPs identified the best path forward given the evolution of energy resource technologies along with the risk surrounding each scenario. Completed just 4 years apart both IRPs identify different, yet somewhat similar paths forward.

This presentation highlights the differences, similarities, and trends in the two IRPs as the basis for developing the best action plan for GRU's future power generation needs

**Fiscal Note:** None at this point in time.

**Recommendation:** The GRU Authority consider the agenda as information only and participate and ask questions as needed.



# Reconciling GRU's Energy Future

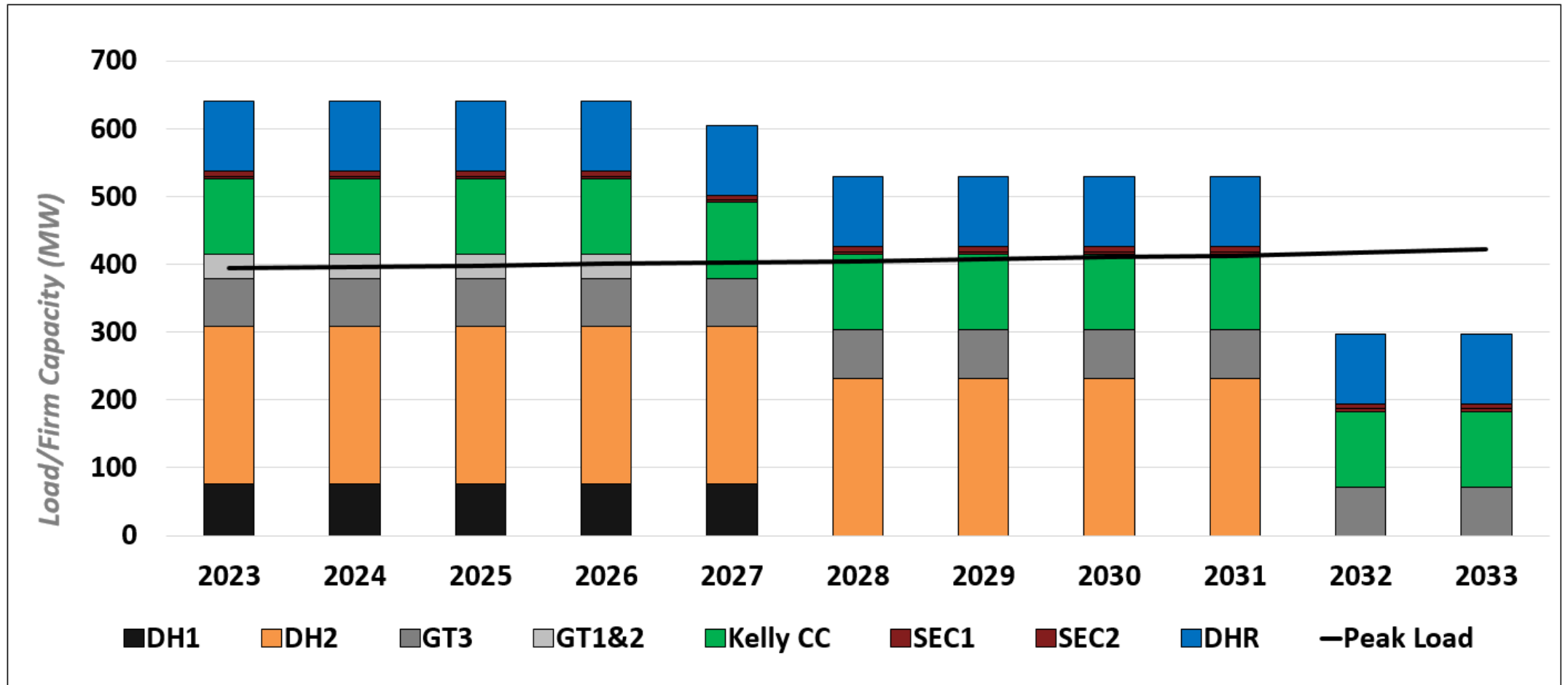
## 10/7/24



# The Plan - “Optionality”

- Run our existing assets as long as we can
- History of success in doing so:
  - 2017 – Biomass PPA was bought out & plant modified to run more efficiently
  - 2021 – Kelly plant was repowered
  - 2021 – DH2 was converted to dual fuel capability
  - 2022 – DH1 life extension undertaken
- Firm up natural gas supplies and transport to end reliance on coal
- Pursue additional generation when the opportunity arises
  - Solar
  - Battery
  - RICE – Natural Gas plant
  - Long-term PPAs
- Pursue transmission and generation alliances

## GRU Generation and Load Forecast (as of 2023)



- **At least once every five years, GRU (and most electric utilities) conducts an integrated resource plan (IRP) analysis to evaluate future energy demands and resource options**
- **GRU has had two IRPs performed over the past five years (2019 and 2023)**
- **IRP is a financial model through which future energy supply costs are calculated using a selected set of inputs and variables**
- **Output of the model is only as valuable as the reliability of the inputs (future cost of gas, solar, etc.)**
- **The IRP provides the broader strategic path for the utility, not the specific plan**
- **The specific plan is defined within the confines of GRU's budget, capital plan, and long-term plan**



- There are several key differences between the 2019 and 2023 IRPs

Factor	2019 IRP	2023 IRP	Differences
<b>Years Evaluated</b>	2019-2039	2023-2050	Time horizon
<b>Planning Reserve Margin</b>	15%	N-1 (up to 45%)	N-1 is more stringent
<b>Unit Retirements</b>			
DH1	2022	2027	Deferred Retirements
GT1 & GT2	2026	2031	
DH2	2031	2036	
<b>Fuel</b>			
DH2	coal	gas	DH2 converted to gas
fuel prices	2018 forecast	2023 forecast	
<b>Economic Factors</b>			
Cost of Debt	3.9%	4.5%	Higher cost of debt
Discount Rate	3.0%	4.5%	Higher cost of inflation
Capital Costs	2018 prices	2023 prices	Higher prices

# Baseline Scenarios

Scenario / Sensitivity	Revenue Requirements		Capacity Added Over Next 10 Years				
	Net Present Value (Millions \$)	Nominal Cost (Millions \$)	Total (MW)	Solar (Nameplate/Net)	Natural Gas	Capacity PPA	Battery Storage
2019 IRP	\$1,961	\$2,723	253	80/28	225	0	0
2023 IRP	\$1,652	\$2,701	159	150/54	0	80	25

- 2019 IRP baseline selected solar in 2021; a large gas unit in 2032; and reciprocating gas engines in 2032
- 2023 IRP baseline selected solar in 2029; batteries in 2029; varying levels of capacity PPAs (beginning in 2027); and deferred the retirements of CT1, CT2, and DH2 by five years

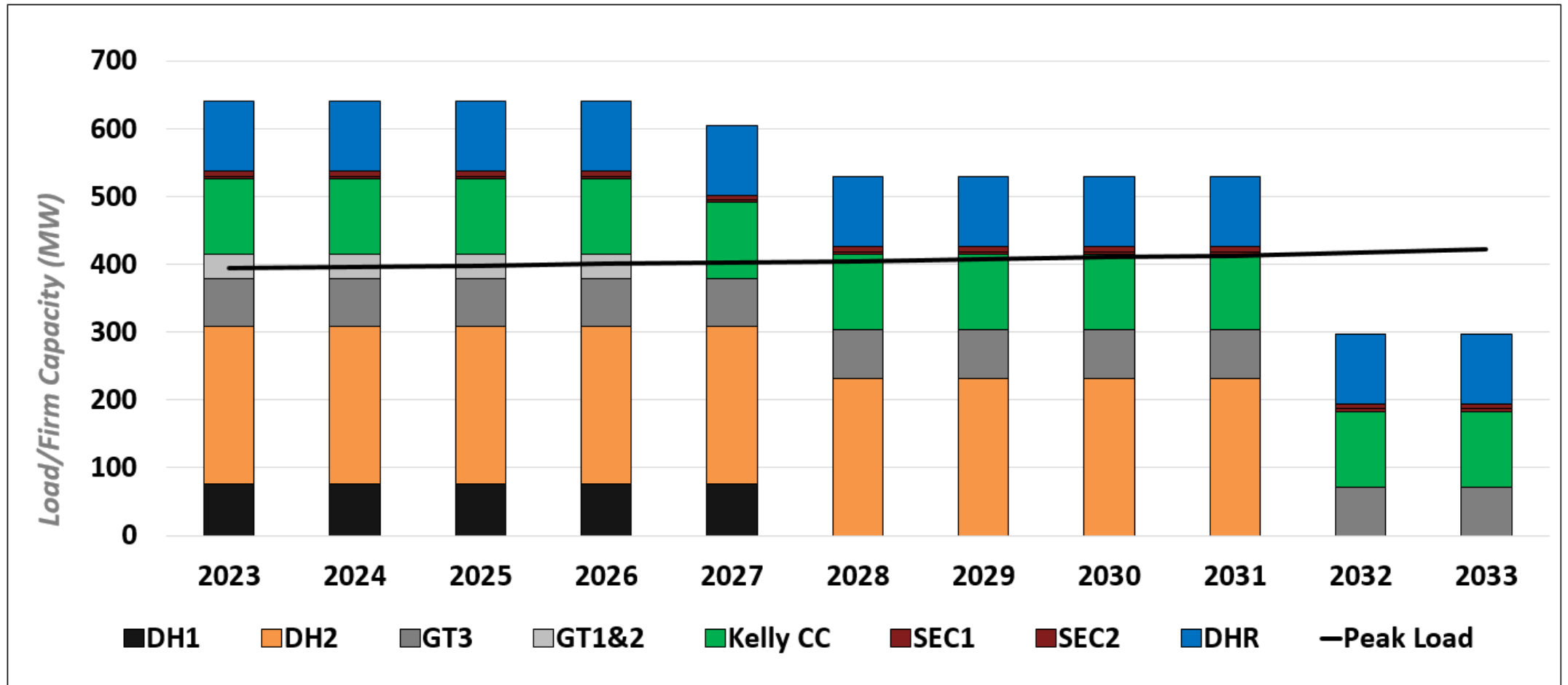
\*For comparison purposes, the 2023 IRP baseline scenario was truncated to 20 years

# Other 2023 IRP Final Scenarios

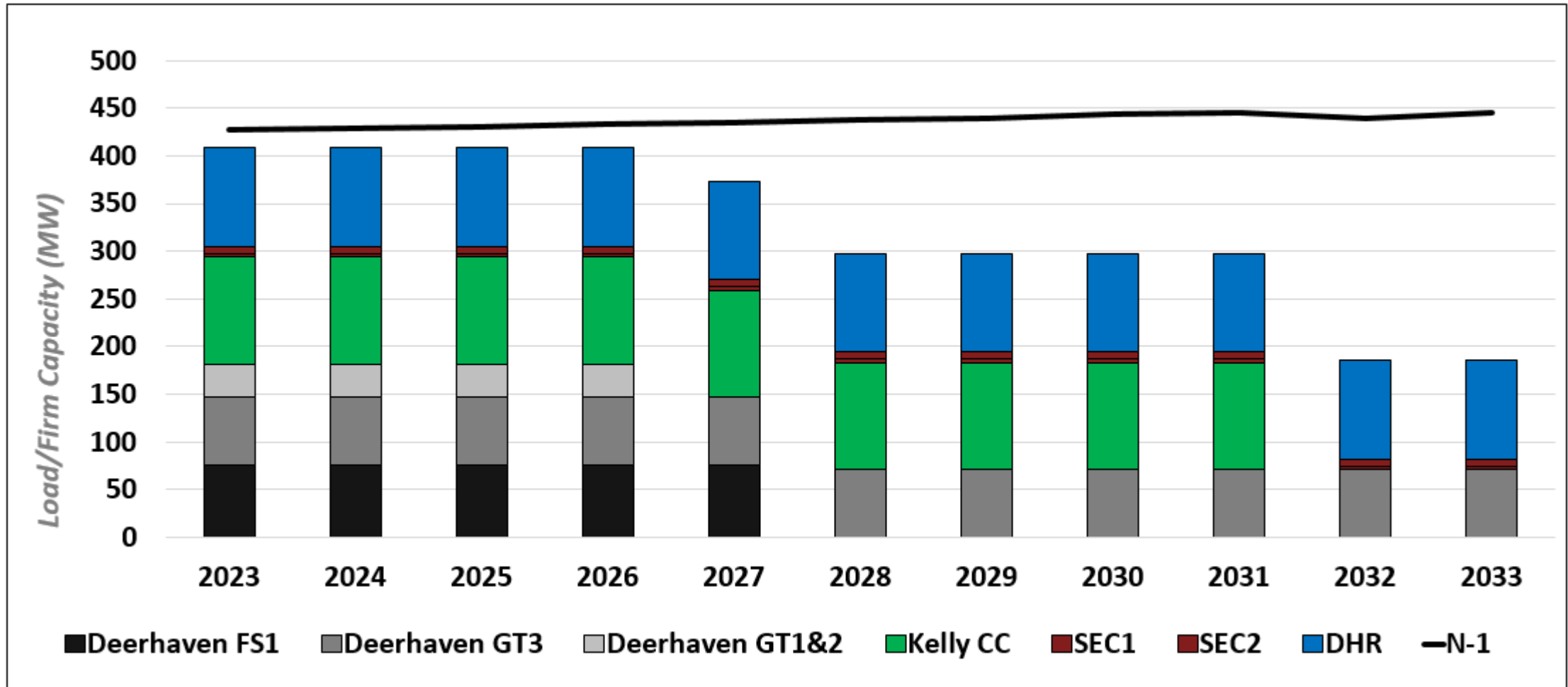
Scenario / Sensitivity	Resource Plan Cost		Capacity Added Over Next 10 Years				
	Net Present Value (Millions \$)	Nominal Cost (Millions \$)	Total (MW)	Solar (Nameplate/Net)	Natural Gas	Capacity PPA	Battery Storage
Baseline	\$1,652	\$2,701	159	150/54	0	80	25
Baseline with 2028 CT	\$1,655	\$2,706	159	150/54	30	50	25
Baseline (DH FS2 Retires 2032)	\$1,664	\$2,720	291	150/54	0	110	100
Market Reliance until 2032	\$1,686	\$2,760	162	75/27	0	110	25
Full Market Reliance beginning 2032	\$1,921	\$3,241	412	75/27	0	385	0
Baseline (No Sand Bluff)	\$1,658	\$2,704	159	150/54	0	30	75
Market Reliance until 2032 (No Sand Bluff)	\$1,687	\$2,754	162	75/27	0	110	25

\*For comparison purposes, the 2023 IRP baseline scenario was truncated to 20 years

## GRU Generation and Load Forecast (as of 2023)

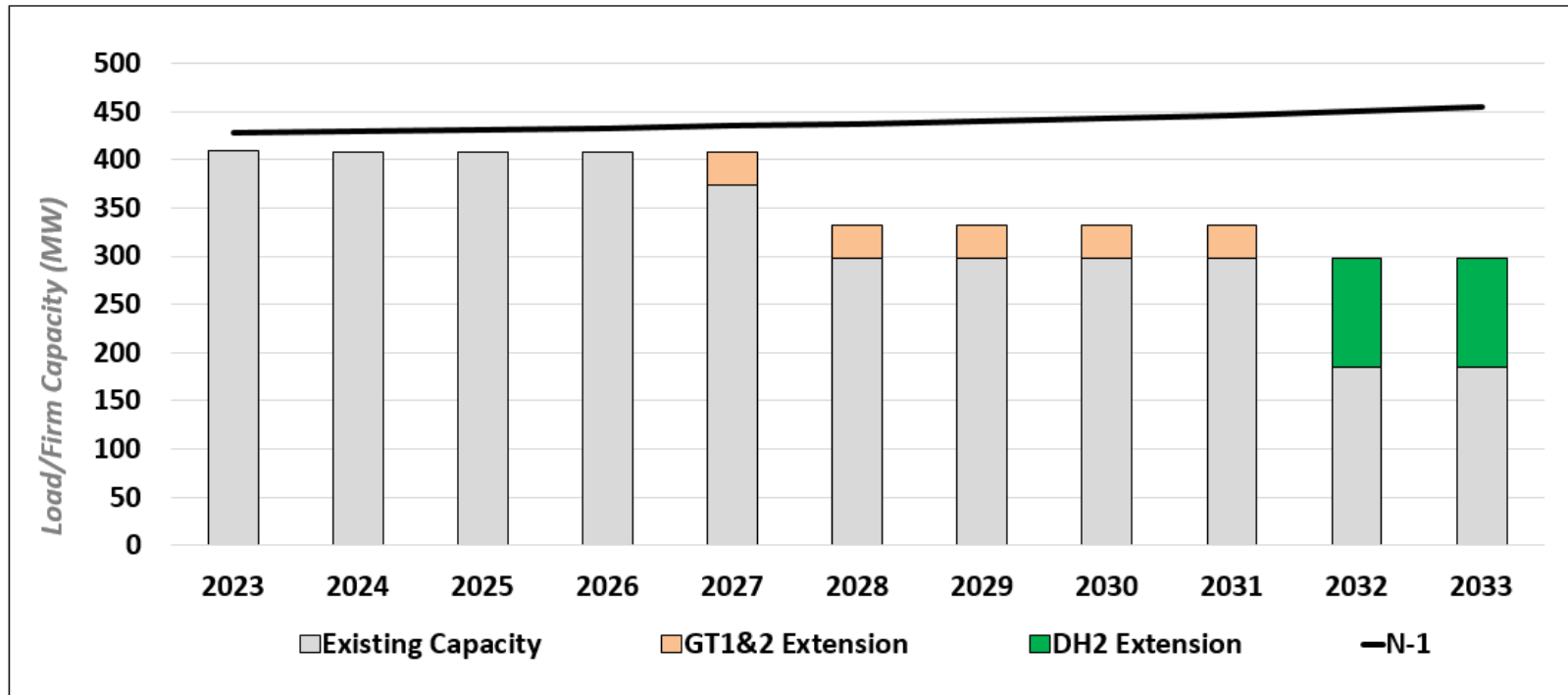


## Looking at the N - 1 Criteria

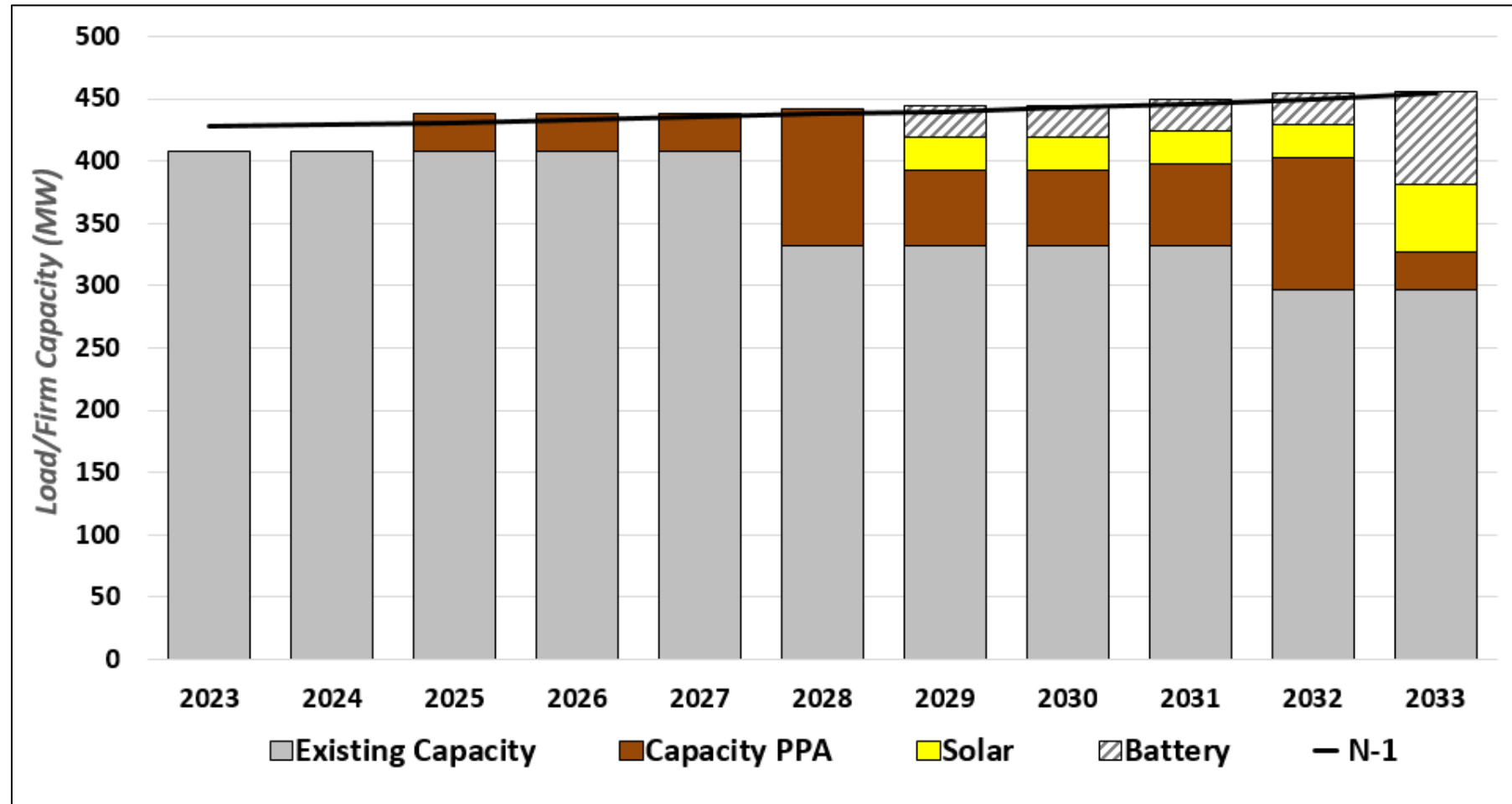


# Deferring Unit Retirements

- Generation units must ultimately retire, but their useful life may be longer than previously planned
- Deferring existing unit retirements can decrease future capacity needs (and future costs)
  - Deferring GT1 & GT2's retirements by five years delays near-term capacity needs by 35 MW (through 2031)
  - Deferring DH2's retirement by five years delays ~100 MW of capacity need from 2032 through 2036



## Baseline (No Sand Bluff)



## Solar Price Escalation

- Original Sand Bluff price: \$31.52/MWh (July 2020)
- Renegotiated Sand Bluff price: \$40.56/MWh (February 2023)
- Current Price: likely greater than \$50/MWh

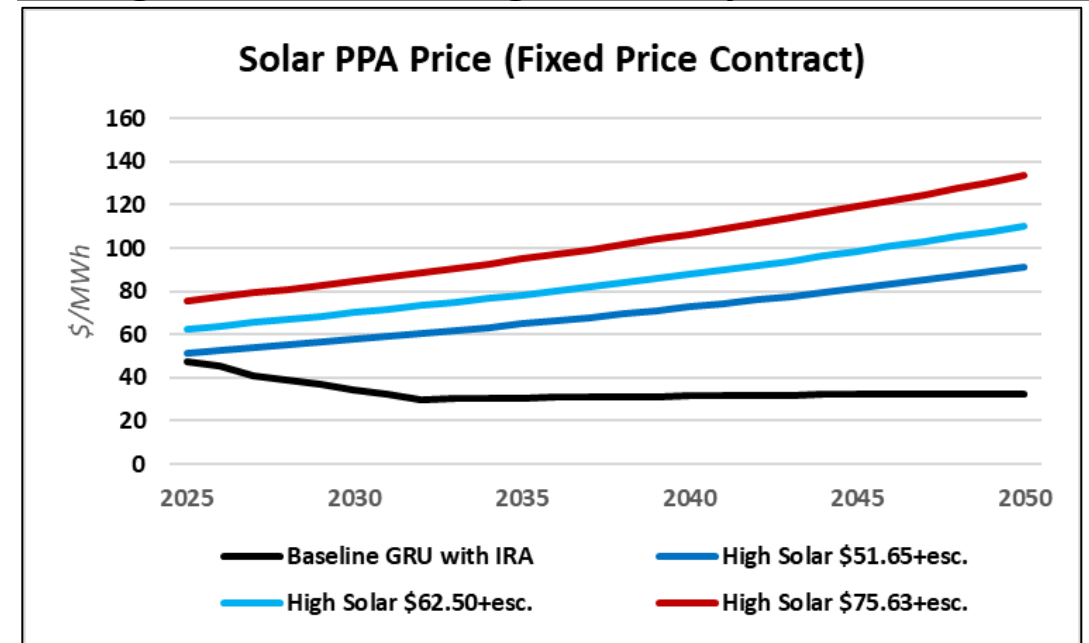
### Solar PPA Price Sensitivity Evaluated in 2023 IRP

Scenario	Modeled 2025 Price \$/MWh	PLEXOS Result	
		Tier 1 MW	Tier 2 MW
Baseline	\$47.35	275	200
A	\$51.65	275	25
B	\$62.50	275	0
C	\$75.63	0	0

current pricing already near here

- Result of sensitivity analysis was that solar price would have to increase substantially before model stops selecting Tier 1 solar

### Pricing Used in Evaluating Sensitivity of Solar PPAs Cost

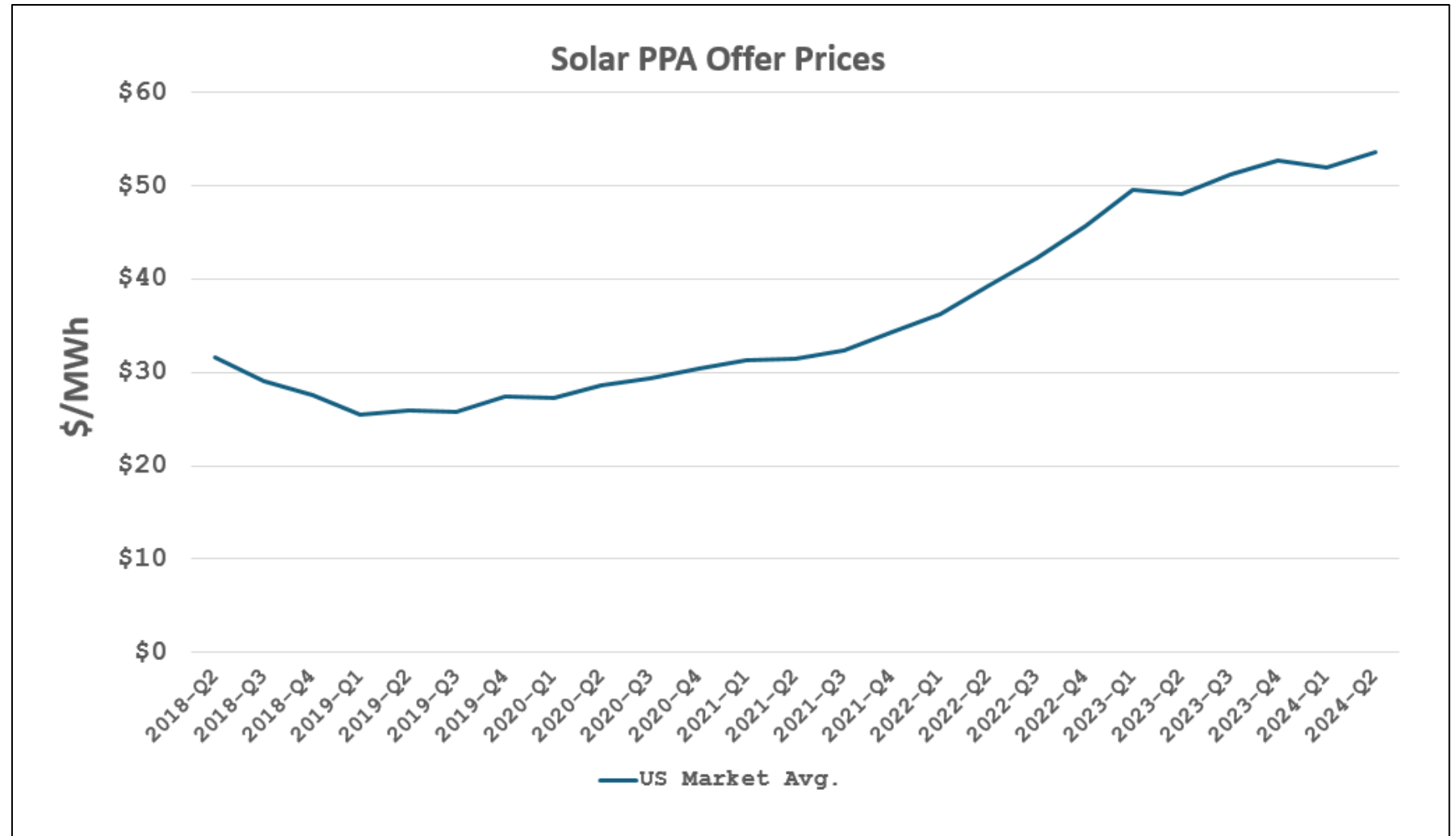


\*Tier 1 solar is locally connected to GRU's transmission system; Tier 2 solar is imported via GRU's existing transmission system; Tier 3 solar is imported via a new transmission line. Tier 2 & 3 solar is subject to other utilities' transmission charges.



# Surge in Utility-Scale Solar Costs

- There has been a surge in utility-scale solar pricing in the last three years
- Inflation, the data center industry, and demand have been drivers



Source: Level 10 Energy

# The Optionality Plan

- Run our existing assets as long as we can
- Firm up natural gas supplies and transport to end reliance on coal
- Pursue additional generation when the opportunity arises
  - Solar
  - Battery
  - RICE – Natural Gas plant
  - Long-term PPAs
- Pursue transmission and generation alliances



**Thank You!**



**Gainesville Regional Utilities Authority  
Agenda Item Report**

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**File Number: 2024-751**

**Agenda Date:** October 7, 2024

**Department:** Gainesville Regional Utilities

**Title: 2024-751 Launch of Customer Advocate Program (B)**

**Department:** Gainesville Regional Utilities/Community Relations

**Description:** As part of GRU's overall Customer First initiative, the first program being implemented is our Customer Advocate Program under the supervision of our Community Relations Department.

The Vision of the program is to foster and maintain:

A thriving atmosphere and culture of trust where our customers are empowered to pursue their issues and complaints with confidence knowing that they have a reliable partner who will ensure their matters will be heard and addressed.

The programs goals and objectives are to:

- Expand Community Relation's Ombudsman role to develop a strong partnership with and on behalf of GRU customers, and
- Ensure that our customers are aware of resources and services that are available and assist them in accessing payment assistance through GRU's ProjectShare and other agencies, and
- Be responsive and timely in addressing customer issues, and
- Explore programs and opportunities to assist customers for utility payments, and
- Improve customer dissatisfaction through positive customer interactions, and
- Ensure that customers are aware that their voices are heard and their issues are resolved fairly, and
- Make recommendations for improvement of internal customer service processes based on customer interactions, and
- Provide multiple points of contact for customers to be heard – surveys, drop boxes, social media presence, etc., and
- Reduce communication/language barriers by establishing a pool of employees to assist when needed.

GRU plans to launch the Customer Advocate Program on September 30, 2024.

**Fiscal Note:** No additional personnel changes or other expense budget modifications are anticipated with the program.

**Recommendation:** The agenda item is for informational purposes to inform the GRU Authority of the steps being taken to further GRU's positive presence in the community.



# Gainesville Regional Utilities Customer Advocate Program



## Some of What We Do Now



## Enhanced Services

- Community Relations serves as the Ombudsman to the community on behalf of the utility.
- Community Relations investigates and collaborates with Customer Service staff to resolve customer issues.
- Community Relations keeps customers abreast of the progress of their reported issue and its ultimate resolution.
- Community Relations serves as GRU's liaison with GRU's ProjectShare Partners.
- Community Relations partners with other local agencies including the Community Action Network to provide community outreach events to facilitate customers obtaining assistance with their utility bills.
- Ensure that our customers are aware of resources and services that are available to them.
- Expand Community Relations' Ombudsman role to facilitate a strong partnership of advocacy on behalf of our customers regarding their utility bills and services.
- Assist customers in accessing help for payment assistance.
- Stay abreast of programs and opportunities available to our customers for utility payment assistance.
- Be responsive and timely to address customer issues.
- Improve customer dissatisfaction through positive customer interactions and the adoption of and adherence to GRU's WE Motto.
- Make recommendations for review and analysis of internal processes based on issues, complaints, and insights obtained through this process.



GRU's Customer Advocate Program

## Awareness and Accessibility

1. Dedicated phone line and email address
2. Flyers and retractable sign in the lobby
3. Availability of a Customer Advocate in the lobby.
4. CAP intake form: <https://forms.office.com/g/skiywW9z1v>
5. GRU website – jot form: <https://www.gru.com/Our-Community/Customer-Advocates>



## Advocate Services:

- Assistance with setting up reasonable, affordable payment arrangements
- Assistance with appealing decisions on behalf of the customer
- Help the customer to understand billing process and the specific details regarding their “case”
- Keep customers abreast of the status of their “case”
- Help the customer with applying to programs for utility payment assistance
- Follow up with customers to ensure they are able to honor their payment arrangements
- Be more accessible (dedicated phone line, daily presence in the lobby, GRU website)

# GRU Customer Advocate Contact Information

Phone Number:

352-393-1020

Email:

[CommunityRelations@gru.com](mailto:CommunityRelations@gru.com)

A customer advocate will have a daily preference in GRU’s lobby as follows:

Mondays	9:00am – 12:00pm
Tuesdays	12:00pm – 3:00pm
Wednesdays	9:00am – 12:00pm
Thursdays	12:00pm – 3:00pm
Fridays	1:30pm -4:30pm



**Thank You**



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# Gainesville Regional Utilities Community Relations: Customer Advocate Program

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- An Abbreviated Business Plan & Strategy





## Vision Statement

A thriving atmosphere and culture of trust where our customers are empowered to pursue their issues and complaints with confidence knowing that they have a reliable partner who will ensure that their matters will be heard and addressed.





# Today's Situation

1. Community Relations serves as the Ombudsman to the community on behalf of the utility.
2. Community Relations receives and processes customer complaints and issues that escalate to GRU's CEO.
3. Community Relations investigates and collaborates with Customer Service staff to resolve customer issues.
4. Community Relations keeps customers abreast of the progress of their reported issue and its ultimate resolution.
5. Community Relations maintains a log of referred matters and ultimate resolutions.
6. Community Relations serves as GRU's liaison with GRU's ProjectShare Partners.
7. Community Relations partners with other local agencies including the Community Action Network to provide community outreach events to facilitate customers obtaining assistance with their utility bills.
8. Community Relations serves as a clearinghouse for fielding customer inquiries and referring them to the appropriate source for assistance.



# Goals and Objectives

1. Expand Community Relations' Ombudsman role to facilitate a strong partnership of advocacy on behalf of our customers regarding their utility bills and services.
2. Ensure that our customers are aware of resources and services that are available to them and assist them in accessing help for payment assistance through GRU's ProjectShare and other agencies or programs.
3. Stay abreast of programs and opportunities available to our customers for utility payment assistance.
4. Be responsive and timely to address customer issues.
5. Improve customer dissatisfaction through positive customer interactions and the adoption of and adherence to GRU's WE Motto.
6. Ensure that customers are keenly aware that their voices are heard and their issues will be resolved fairly and timely.
7. Make recommendations for review and analysis of internal processes based on issues, complaints, suggestions and insights obtained through this process.
8. Provide multiple avenues for customers to relay information regarding their concerns including surveys, drop boxes, etc.
9. Reduce communication/language barriers by establishing a pool of employees to assist where needed.

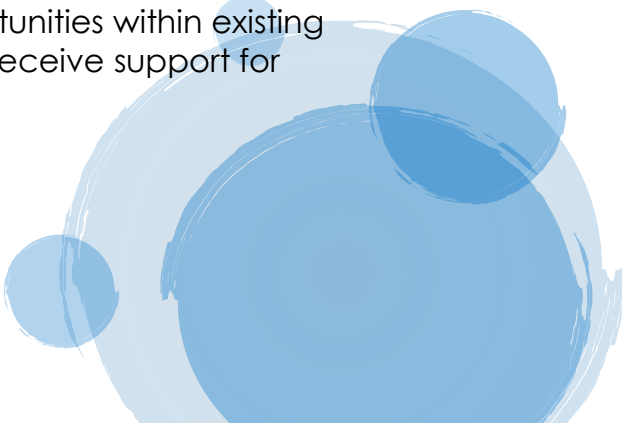


# GRU's 'WE' Motto

## GRU Customer Advocate

**WE** are here for you.

### **We** statements:

- We bring together case management expertise to help our customers
  - We are here to help
  - We provide 1:1 support to our customers
  - We help customers understand their options
  - We provide a quality experience to every customer; it's our top priority
  - We provide in-depth, hands-on support required to address and resolve issues
  - We help the customer navigate customer service with confidence
  - We utilize appropriate communication lines in relaying problems, concerns, questions, and potential resolutions
  - We facilitate effective communication between the customer and utility professionals
  - We always maintain a courteous demeanor
  - We demonstrate effective, empathetic and professional communication
  - We identify and address existing gaps and opportunities within existing customer service processes to ensure customers receive support for their issues
- 





# Advocate Services

- Assistance with setting up reasonable, affordable payment arrangements
- Assistance with appealing decisions on behalf of the customer
- Helping the customer to understand billing process and the specific details regarding their “case”
- Keep customers abreast of the status of their “case”
- Helping the customer with applying to programs for utility payment assistance
- Follow up with customers to ensure they are able to honor their payment arrangements



# Proposed Implementation

1. Define the role of Community Relations/Customer Advocate to internal stakeholders/partners:
  - a) Meet with the leaders of the internal stakeholders (i.e., Customer Service Director, Customer Service Managers, Customer Experience Manager, etc.) to provide information regarding the expanded role of Community Relations as the Customer Advocate.
  - b) Express the importance of each stakeholder's role and partnership in the successful facilitation of this program for our customers.
  - c) Ensure that front line customer service staff are aware of how to escalate issues to Community Relations by referring customers directly to an Advocate or contacting the Advocate via e-mail or phone on behalf of the customer.
  - d) Provision of literature that provides program guidelines and contact information
  - e) Referring customers to the lobby phone to contact a Customer Advocate for an immediate consultation or to schedule a consultation for a later date (dependent upon the severity of customer's issue).
  
2. Collaborate with Communications to develop and implement a plan for notification of the availability of this resource internally and externally, creation and provision of collateral, etc.
  - a) Flyers posted in the lobby and at the customer service stalls
  - b) Notification about the program on the utility bill



# Proposed Implementation (cont.)

- c) Message regarding the program on the television in GRU's lobby
  - d) Literature/handouts that explains the program and provides contact information to be used at events GRU attends or coordinates.
  - e) Exploration and consideration of other avenues as recommended by Communications
3. Determination of the collaborative roles of the Customer Experience Manager, Customer Service Manager, etc.
- a) Customer Advocate may regularly schedule meetings with the CS Manager or CE Manager for consultation with and on behalf of the customer.
4. Designation of private office/meeting location for in-person meetings with customers:
- a) Assignment and utilization of the glass encased office for impromptu and scheduled meetings.
  - b) Provide schedule in lobby that customers can use to schedule a meeting. Also make business cards easily accessible in the lobby.



# Recommendations

Most of the Customer Advocate work is currently within the scope of Community Relations' responsibility as the utility's Ombudsman for the community. Expanding Community Relations' role as described herein would entail the following recommendations\*:

- Meet with the Chief Customer Officer to discuss the incorporation of Community Relations at an increased level.
- Discuss and determine level of interface and partnership with other managers of customer services (e.g., Customer Experience Manager, Customer Service Manager, etc.) if deemed appropriate.
- Work with Communications to devise and implement plan to bring awareness about this service, create collateral, etc.
- Revise internal processes for expanded level of service.
- Develop an implementation schedule to include a rollout schedule for each phase of this program.

\*Note: With the exception of the rollout schedule, each of these items have been discussed in detail under the Proposed Implementation section.