

# 2006 Florida Cities of Excellence Awards Program ▶ Nomination Form

Category (Please check one) See Award Criteria for more information. Please print or type. One nomination per page.

**FLORIDA CITY OF EXCELLENCE AWARD**

Name of Municipality Nominated City of Coral Gables  
Nominated by City of Coral Gables  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY SPIRIT AWARD**

Name of Municipality Nominated \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated Project \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

**MAYOR OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

**COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_ Department \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY MANAGER OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY CLERK OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY FINANCE OFFICIAL (DIRECTOR OR OFFICER) OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY CITIZEN OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

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**FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES  
FLORIDA CITIES OF EXCELLENCE AWARD PROGRAM**

**FLORIDA CITY OF EXCELLENCE AWARD**

*City of Coral Gables*

**Governance/Administration**

The City of Coral Gables, located in the heart of Miami-Dade County, is a full-service municipality widely recognized for the exceptional services it provides to residents, businesses, and visitors. Commonly referred to as "**The City Beautiful,**" Coral Gables is a collaboration of old world charm, elegance, and top municipal services that sets the standards for other cities around the nation.

The residents of the City of Coral Gables elect a five-member City Commission, which is charged with providing community leadership and developing policies to guide the delivery of services. The Commission appoints the City Manager who is entrusted to implement the Commission's policies.

In order to gauge the effectiveness and efficiency of this local government, a yearly **Strategic Plan** is formulated that sets the priorities to be accomplished by City administration in a 12-month period. **Performance measures** are an integral part of the Strategic Plan, encompassing goals and objectives from each of the departments that must fit under the umbrella of enhancing the delivery of services, manage development, maintain a strong residential focus and ensure the quality of all City landscaping.

**City Leadership**

The City of Coral Gables has a collegial team of five elected Commissioners, including an elected Mayor and an appointed Vice-Mayor. The

City Commission appoints the City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk, whom with the support of more than 857 dedicated workers help fulfill the mission of the City of Coral Gables of ***“providing exceptional services to residents, business and visitors while preserving our heritage.”***

Administrative leaders of the City of Coral Gables were recognized in the past year for their outstanding contribution to public service. City Manager David L. Brown and City Attorney Elizabeth Hernandez were selected as the **2005 City Manager and City Attorney Of The Year**, respectively, by the Florida League of Cities. Brown was also honored by the weekly *Miami Today* as a top community leader during the **Seventh Annual Gold Medal Awards**.

A high caliber of professionals also lead the City of Coral Gables and are recognized among the best in the area of public management. As such, the City of Coral Gables has **Class One Building and Zoning and Fire Departments, accredited Police and Parks and Recreation Departments, nationally recognized Historical Resources Department and Emergency Management Program, and award-winning Communications Division and Finance Department.**

#### **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

This past year, the City of Coral Gables initiated an unprecedented partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools to establish a **Compact Agreement** to improve the level of education of Coral Gables students. This intergovernmental cooperation between the Miami-Dade County School District and the City of Coral Gables is designed to enhance the academic success of

Coral Gables students by providing opportunities to participate in internships, mentoring programs and parent/child activities.

Another similar joint program at the state level is the participation of the City of Coral Gables in the newly formed **Florida League of Mayors**. This year, the City of Coral Gables joined 19 other Florida cities to harness the collective leadership skills and discuss public policy issues.

### **Citizen Outreach and Involvement**

One of the City's main goals is to enhance the "**hometown quality of life**" by creating a sense of pride and citizen involvement in a variety of projects.

Citizens of Coral Gables can be part of any of the **29 Boards and Committees** that are appointed by the City Commission to provide input on a variety of projects. Approximately 200 Coral Gables stakeholders participate in these Boards and Committees, regularly providing input directly to members of the City Commission and City Administration on best practice measures and suggested policy implementation.

Also, as an example of active citizen involvement, the City of Coral Gables created last November a City Commission appointed volunteer group named the **Utility Service Reliability Task Force**, an advisory panel entrusted with evaluating issues related to electrical service that came to the forefront after last year's hurricane season. This group has advised City leaders about service response and communication following a natural disaster, service interruptions and abnormalities, system condition and maintenance, underground versus overhead utility systems and franchise agreements.

## **Technology**

The City of Coral Gables continues to implement new technologies in order to better serve employees and citizens. Last year, the City of Coral Gables introduced the first **Pay-by-Cellphone Parking Program** offering the service to pay for parking at Coral Gables meters through the use of a handy cellular phone. In June of this year, the United States Conference of Mayors awarded this innovative program an Honorable Mention in the City Livability Award Program for cities smaller than 100,000 people.

This year, Coral Gables Paramedics began using ground-breaking CPR technology that is expected to dramatically increase the chances of survival for heart attack patients. The new **AutoPulse CPR** device, featured in **ABC's "World News Tonight,"** sets up in just seconds to deliver perfect CPR compressions around a patient's chest to get more blood circulating to the brain and heart than with traditional methods. The arrival of this device, heralded as the best innovation in resuscitation equipment in the last 35 years, makes the City of Coral Gables one of only a handful of fire departments in Florida that are using this new technology.

## **Innovative Programs and Services**

The City of Coral Gables has one of the most innovative and influential historic preservation programs in the nation that contribute to the conservation of the City's most beautiful and historic properties from the early 1920s, 1930s and 1940s.

With this unique program, owners of local historically designated properties can request an exemption from increases to ad valorem taxes for qualified improvements to properties listed in the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places, for up to 10 years. The **Ad Valorem Tax Relief Program** encourages historic preservation by freezing ad valorem taxes on the home improvement portion at the rate residents were assessed before improvements are made.

### **Fiscal Management**

The City of Coral Gables has an operating budget of approximately \$127 million and has a strong financial outlook thanks to an increase in residential assessed value.

To ensure **fiscal management accountability**, the proposed yearly Budget Estimate is presented to the City Commission in a budget workshop in July of each year, followed by two public hearings in September before the final budget is formally adopted. During these public hearings, the public is encouraged to provide feedback and insight on the City's fiscal proposal.

Finally, the **Government Finance Officers Association** of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded the City of Coral Gables the GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. The award reflects the commitment of the City of Coral Gables to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting. In order to receive the budget award, Coral Gables had to satisfy nationally recognized guidelines such as policy documentation, financial planning, operational guide, and communications.