

**Florida League of Cities
Cities of Excellence
City Financial Officer of the Year Award**

Name: Mark C. Mason
Title: Director of Financial Services
Jurisdiction: City of Cape Coral

Financial Services Director, Mark Mason, has just completed his fifth year at the City of Cape Coral and during this past year he has played a critical financial role in the increasing growth the City has experienced. He brings to the Finance Department ten years of Director level experience and a Certified Public Accountant accreditation. He also holds a BA in Accounting.

Mark manages a \$500,000,000 Budget and works closely with Budget and Accounting to ensure that the Debt Management Policy is upheld to minimize cost to the taxpayers. During the period of January through June 2005, three major rating agencies (Moody's, Standard and Poor's, and Fitch) evaluated the City's financial management and the City scored AAA. Mark is also overseeing the 5-year Capital Improvement Plan that will allow certain projects within the city to be completed without impacting the operating budget. Mark is currently in the process of adopting the new 2009 budget and gearing up for the new fiscal year. Mark is also responsible for managing a \$500,000,000 bond for water and wastewater expansion in the City. He is working closely with Public Works on this effort to effectively administer the funds for this long-range utility plan. Mark's commitment is evident in ensuring that the financial standing of the City of Cape Coral is defended and sustained. An example of that commitment is receiving the

GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 17th consecutive year and also the GFOA published, *Preparing High Quality Budget Documents*, a book in which dozens of examples of outstanding budgetary documents were assembled. Several excerpts from the City's operating budget document were used.

Mark was instrumental in creating a deferred payment option for our Water and Sewer Expansion customers. Under this financing plan, the payment of principal and interest are deferred until the end of the assessment term of 20 years. This allows utility customers the flexibility of paying for their assessments in cases where they are unable to afford an amortized or total pay-off option.

Mark's traits not only exemplify professionalism but also a humanistic approach in dealing with the city's residents. Mark also oversees the Customer Billing Services division, which deals primarily with utility accounts and speaks often with the citizens if they are dissatisfied or have questions that need an immediate answer. His straight forward and encouraging approach to many uncertainties the citizens vocalize at Council meetings or when visiting City Hall lays to rest the miscommunication and lack of transparency that often exists in the public sector.