

2006 Florida Cities of Excellence Awards Program ▶

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

Name of Municipality Nominated _____

Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Municipality Nominated _____

Nominated Project _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____

Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____

Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____

Title _____ Department _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____

Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____

Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____

Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated Joseph Safford

Nominated by City of Delray Beach
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____

Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

finance official

[OVER]

Please print or type.

Name Douglas E. Smith
Title Assistant City Manager
Government City of Delray Beach
Address 100 NW 1 Avenue, Delray Beach, FL 33444
Telephone Number 561-243-7010 Fax 561-243-7199
E-mail Address smithd@ci.delray-beach.fl.us

This nomination has been voted on and approved by a majority of the city council/commission.

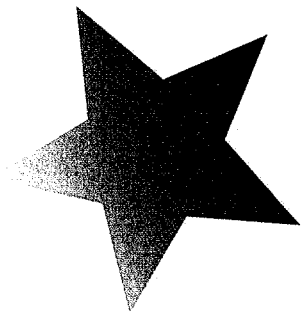
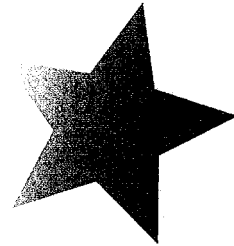
Signed 
City Clerk

The judges will use the narrative and supportive information to select the award winners. Nominators/nominees are asked not to contact the judges directly.

In the narrative, please be clear and concise, using the Award Criteria to support the selection of your nominee. Please type (or print in black ink), up to 1,200 words, double-spaced on white 8-1/2" x 11" paper.

Up to 10 pages of supportive information (newspaper clippings, photographs, letters from constituents, etc.), on 8-1/2" x 11" paper (single-sided) may be provided. Please do not include videotapes, DVDs, CDs or Power-Point presentations.

Submit nominations by **August 18, 2006**:
Florida League of Cities, Inc.
Attn: Florida Cities of Excellence
301 S. Bronough Street, Suite 300 (32301)
P.O. Box 1757
Tallahassee, FL 32302-1757



CITY OF DELRAY BEACH



1993
2001

100 N.W. 1st AVENUE

DELRAY BEACH, FLORIDA 33444

561/243-7000

Florida League of Cities Florida Cities of Excellence Awards City Finance Official of the Year – Nomination Narrative

Finance Director Joe Safford, City of Delray Beach

Joe Safford has served as Finance Director of the City of Delray Beach since 1990. His previous work experience includes eight years as Finance Director for the City of Deerfield Beach. Joe is responsible for a total of forty-six employees in the areas of finance administration, purchasing, pension administration, information technology, utilities customer service, and meter reading. During Joe's tenure with Delray Beach, the City has experienced exceptional financial management. Furthermore, during the past year Joe has exemplified the qualities of judgment, integrity, initiative, commitment, innovation, citizen relations, professionalism, and professional involvement.

Judgment and Integrity

Joe Safford's professional judgment is evident in the sound financial management of the City. The Finance Department is responsible for managing the \$89 million General Fund and additional funds including the Water/Sewer fund. The City's ad valorem tax rate was not increased for fiscal year 2005-2006, continuing a decade long trend. As the 2006-2007 budget is being finalized, the City plans a substantial reduction in the tax rate. During the past year, the City adopted the annual update of the five-year Capital Improvement Program, a program that was created previously by Joe Safford. The City maintains a healthy reserve for emergency

expenditures which proved to be critical for hurricane expenditures. The City has maintained its underlying bond ratings of A1 for General Obligation Bonds, A for Utility Tax Bonds and an A+ for Water & Sewer Bonds. All have insured ratings of AAA from Standard & Poors and an Aaa from Moody Investors Service. Joe believes in the importance of integrity and exemplifies integrity in the management of the City's finances. The City received an unqualified audit opinion for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005 which is an indicator of the integrity and professional judgment of Joe and his staff.

In 2004, City residents passed a \$24 million Parks & Recreation Bond Issue to finance new parks, improvements to existing facilities, a large municipal parking garage adjacent to Old School Square and the addition of a Western Community and Senior Center. The implementation of this bond issue has continued during the past year. In 2003, when the measure was being formulated and prepared for the ballot, no one could have foreseen the rapid escalation of costs for land, building materials and construction; however, the City has continued to implement the program without an increase in taxes assisted by the sound financial leadership of Joe and his staff.

Initiative and Commitment

Joe Safford's initiative and commitment are exemplified in the hurricane reimbursement process. FEMA recommends that all hurricane paperwork be funneled to one person within a City. For the City of Delray Beach, that person is Joe Safford. Through Joe's hard work, the City has a tremendous track record of being reimbursed for hurricane expenses in a timely manner. The City was impacted by Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne in 2004. Joe worked diligently through the reimbursement process for these storms, and final federal and state reimbursements were received for Hurricane Frances and Hurricane Jeanne during the past year.

Federal and state reimbursements totaled over \$3.85 million for Hurricane Frances and over \$305,000 for Hurricane Jeanne.

While Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne impacted the City, Hurricane Wilma had a much more significant impact in October 2005. Joe took the initiative to lead the reimbursement process. He displayed a high level of commitment by spending countless hours reviewing load tickets, preparing FEMA reimbursement forms, and tracking repair projects. As of August 2006, the City has submitted over \$9.5 million in FEMA claims and received over \$9 million in reimbursement. Funds that are remaining funds to be received are for uncompleted projects. Joe's dedication and commitment to the reimbursement process led to the City receiving such a high percentage of funds within 10 months after the storm. In addition, the City has been reimbursed for 100% of Federal Highway Administration claims in the amount of \$287,000 and additional funds in insurance reimbursement.

Innovation

An example of innovation under Joe's leadership is the Information Technology Division's FY 2005 – 2009 Enterprise Technology Plan. The plan is featured on the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) website (publicized by ICMA in August 2005). This plan includes the MIS Strategic Plan, MIS Tactical Plan, MIS Business Interruption/Business Continuity Plan, and MIS Project Work Plan. Joe initiated and designed the original technology plan that preceded the FY 2005 – 2009 plan.

Joe issued the Finance Department's first Financial Trends Monitoring Report in July of 2006. The report contains ten years of historical financial information which is displayed in a graphic format in order to visually evaluate historical trends.

Citizen Relations

The City conducts a Resident's Academy (twice per year) which provides an opportunity for learning about the various functions of government. Joe provides a presentation to the academy explaining the various elements of the City's financial operations. During the past year, Joe also spoke to a citizen's group regarding the City's finances.

The Financial Trends Monitoring Report is available for the public to review on the City's website along with the Annual Budget, Budget Summary, and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The City's Annual Report, also available on the City's website, includes a summary of City Finances. The Annual Report is distributed at the Annual Town Hall meeting.

Professionalism and Professional Involvement

The numerous awards received by the Finance Department are a testament to the professionalism of Joe and his staff. During the past year, the City received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officer's Association (GFOA) for the 22nd year consecutive. The City also received the GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 20th consecutive year during the past year. Joe has been a member of the GFOA since 1990.

The Finance Department's Information Technology Division also displays a high level of professionalism. This past year, the City was awarded first place in the Digital Cities survey by the Center for Digital Government in the 30,000 to 75,000 population category. The City was presented with the award at the 82nd Annual National League of Cities Congress and Exposition in Charlotte, NC. Contributing to Delray Beach's top ranking were the linking of City facilities through a fiber optic network, advanced planning and adherence to standards in network

infrastructure, a restructuring of license agreements that resulted in impressive cost savings, the large volume of information available on the City's website, and the City's Enterprise Technology Plan. In 2006, the City's Chief Information Officer was named the winner of the Florida Local Government Information Systems Association (FLGISA) Technology Achievement Award for Leadership in Management of Information Technology. This award recognizes both leadership (technical and/or organizational) and innovation in a community within the FLGISA membership. Nominees were judged on the basis of vision, leadership and support of Information Technology (IT) throughout the department or agency.

Joe Safford provided exceptional service to the City of Delray Beach during the past year, and the City of Delray Beach recommends him for the Finance Official of the Year Award.