

# 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.

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

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

x

Name of Individual Nominated Mike Anderson  
Nominated by City of Fort Walton Beach  
(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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

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

[ OVER ]

**Public Information Officer Nomination Form**

Please print or type.

Name Cam Johnson

Title Public Information Officer

Government City of Fort Walton Beach

Address 107 Miracle Strip Parkway SW, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548

Telephone Number (850) 833-9505

Fax (850) 833-9640

E-mail Address cjohnson@fwb.org

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

Signed *Helen G. Spencer*  
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.

**For Judges**

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.

**Supportive Information**

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:**

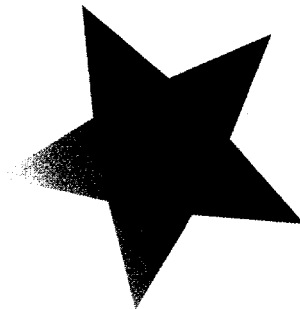
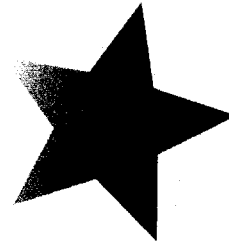
Florida League of Cities, Inc.

Attn: Florida Cities of Excellence

301 S. Bronough Street, Suite 300 (32301)

P.O. Box 1757

Tallahassee, FL 32302-1757



**Florida League of Cities  
Cities of Excellence  
Mayor of the Year Award**

Name: Mike Anderson  
Title: Mayor  
Jurisdiction: City of Fort Walton Beach

When Mike Anderson ran for Mayor of Fort Walton Beach in 2005, he knew exactly what he was getting into; in fact, what he was “getting into” was the reason he ran for mayor. For the four previous years, he represented the City of Fort Walton Beach as Council Member in Seat 7. His experience as a council member led him to run for mayor because he believes the position offers more opportunities to represent the citizens throughout the county and in Tallahassee, especially through League of Cities participation, of which he is actively involved. Mayor Anderson believes that as mayor he can better promote issues important to the citizens, such as traffic needs, growth management, and bridge alternatives. As a recently retired senior program analyst for Eglin Air Force Base’s Air Armament Center and a retired Air Force officer, he is also an excellent liaison with the military installations in Okaloosa County. However, his real passion is the City’s youth, and how to engage them in local government to become active civic leaders now and in the future.

To this end, Mayor Anderson has worked to bring a variety of youth programs to Fort Walton Beach, including the Summer Youth at Work Program, the Student Award for Civic Excellence, and a new Student Council program. In addition to these programs, he is a mentor in the Take Stock in Children program, and works closely with the City Changers program, a new program to engage local and out-of-area youth in projects to

better the Fort Walton Beach community (i.e. roofing projects, painting projects, and yard maintenance of residents in need of assistance).

The City's Summer Youth at Work program was developed several years ago after Mayor Anderson read about a program to engage city youth in an Ohio town in meaningful summer work within the municipal government in the National League of Cities newspaper *Nation's Cities Weekly*. He felt the program was something that the City could and should do, and pitched the idea to other City officials. For the third year in 2006, the City offered eight City youth, ages 14 – 18, the opportunity to participate in the Summer Youth at Work program, which provides meaningful work experiences in the City's Parks and Recreation Department during summer vacation and weekly career development sessions. The sessions include visits to a bank and college, and seminars on interviewing skills and resume writing, among others. The program has been very successful, with many students returning the following year to work in the program again. It was through Mayor Anderson's talent to read about a program in another jurisdiction and imagine it in Fort Walton Beach that this successful program was developed.

In the same way, Mayor Anderson heard about a successful program in Hampton, Virginia to provide youth a voice in city government while at a National League of Cities conference in Washington, D.C. this spring. The Hampton Youth Commission is a city funded Commission composed of high school aged youth which has a voice in city planning, places representatives on city boards and commissions, awards funds for

projects created by and for youth, and which has rewritten the city's bicycle ordinance and assisted in the development of a city-wide bikeway system. After hearing the youth speak, Mayor Anderson obtained a video produced by the Youth Commission entitled "How to start or improve your youth commission." With the video in hand, he returned to Fort Walton Beach and began discussing the development of a youth commission with City and school officials, and most importantly with students. While still in the planning phase, there was great enthusiasm on the part of the students attending initial meetings to develop a council representing the ideas and opinions of Fort Walton Beach youth, in order to have a more formal role in the City's planning and decision making.

Starting in the fall semester of 2005, Mayor Anderson began presenting the Student Award for Civic Excellence (Student A.C.E.) to two students each month – one from each of the City's high schools – at City Council meetings. He wanted to develop an award which would reward students not for academic or athletic success, but rather for leadership within their school and the Fort Walton Beach community. Twelve students received the awards during the 2005-06 school year, and the program is slated to continue this fall. The school administrators are very excited about the program, which rewards students for their willingness to take on leadership roles. Mayor Anderson is also excited about the program as it sparks interest in students to become future leaders in the community.

In addition to youth activities, Mayor Anderson has taken a lead in several issues of undeniable importance to the Fort Walton Beach community. At the top of this list is the

possible placement of a new bridge within the city limits of Fort Walton Beach. He has led the way in advocating alternative solutions which would lessen the devastating impact to a variety of Fort Walton Beach neighborhoods which a proposed toll bridge would have. In a "Second Opinion" article written by Mayor Anderson and published in the March 5, 2006 issue of the Northwest Florida Daily News, he suggested, "Many people in our community hope to find a solution to traffic issues other than building a new bridge. Citizens, as well as public and private firms, through carpooling, van pooling, alternative work schedules and other alternative transportation tools can reduce the number of vehicles on the road." He believes that looking at out-of-the-box alternatives will provide a better solution.

Mayor Anderson is a devoted public servant, taking on a variety of roles at the local and state levels. He is currently the Vice-Chairman of the Florida League of Cities Transportation and Urban Administration Legislative Policy Committee, President of the Okaloosa County League of Cities, and Second Vice-President for the Northwest Florida League of Cities. With these positions, Mayor Anderson spends a considerable amount of time in Tallahassee discussing issues important to municipalities with legislators. In addition, he is a member of the Advisory Board and Government Committee of the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce, and is on the Board of Directors of the Emerald Coast Marine Institute, Shelter House, and the Okaloosa School Foundation (Take Stock in Children). As a liaison between the City and the military community, Mayor Anderson is a member of Vision 2015 and the Base Realignment and Closure Environmental Impact Statement Committee.

While Mayor Anderson has many heavy responsibilities on his plate, he always takes a moment to share his sense of humor with an unsuspecting citizen. His sense of humor is probably his most endearing leadership quality, while his commitment to public service is his strongest. A combination of all of his leadership traits allowed him to win his mayoral election with 72% of the vote, and that was before he began working on behalf of the citizens as mayor! Mayor Mike Anderson is deserving of the Florida Cities of Excellence Mayor of the Year Award because he advocates for the people of Fort Walton Beach everyday – exactly what a mayor is elected to do.