

2007 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 _____

Nominated by _____

(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 PAMELA AKIN

Nominated by City of Clearwater, Florida

(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)

Contact Person

The following person will be the main contact if your city's nominee is selected as a finalist.

Please print or type.

Name DOUGLAS MATTHEWS

Title Director of Public Communications

Government City of Clearwater, FL

Address P.O. Box 4748, Clearwater FL 33758

Telephone Number 727.562.4661 Fax 727.562.4696

E-mail Address DOUGLAS.MATTHEWS@myclearwater.com

Nomination Certification

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

Signed Cynthia S. Anderson
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.

Narrative

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.

Please include a word count: 845
Number of words

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 10, 2007:**

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

Pam Akin
Florida League of Cities
City Attorney of the Year

Pamela Akin became Clearwater City Attorney in October of 1994. Before coming to Clearwater, she was with the City Attorney's Office in Tampa for 11 years, with the last 6-1/2 years as Tampa's City Attorney. She obtained her Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing from the University of Florida in 1975. She worked in neo-natal intensive care at the University of Illinois Teaching Hospital first as a staff nurse then as head nurse of the unit from 1975 to 1979. She obtained her Juris Doctor degree from Stetson University College of Law in 1982. At Stetson, Pam was a member of the Law Review.

Pam is a member of the Florida Bar Association, the Clearwater Bar Association, the Florida Municipal Attorneys Association and is admitted to practice in the Eleventh Circuit of the U. S. Court of Appeals, the Middle District of the Florida U. S. District Court and the U. S. Supreme Court.

As City Attorney for Clearwater, Pam is responsible for managing the law office, advising the City Council, the City Manager, departments of the City and boards of the City. Under her direction, the City has prevailed in several significant cases, including

Times Publishing v. City of Clearwater, a landmark public records law case decided by the Florida Supreme Court, involving public employees' personal email.

There have been numerous challenges to City ordinances and provisions of the City Charter in recent years. Although Pam has not had the luxury of picking her cases, since the City is virtually always the defendant, she has successfully defended such challenges in each and every instance.

One such suit became a landmark case for municipalities. In *Granite State Outdoor Advertising, Inc. v. City of Clearwater*, Granite State Outdoor Advertising Inc. challenged the constitutionality of Clearwater's sign ordinance. The company never actually erected any billboards, but instead sold the permits it won through its court challenges to billboard giants such as Clear Channel Outdoor, formerly Eller Media. U.S. District Judge James Moody Jr. did find a few problems with Clearwater's ordinance, but they were minor in comparison to Granite State's argument that the entire sign code should be struck down because it was unconstitutional.

The case went to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, in which a three-judge panel determined that Granite State lacked "standing" to mount a facial challenge to the entirety of the sign regulations, and only had standing to challenge the provisions that caused the actual injury. The Granite decision cited the "actual case or controversy" provisions contained within Article III of the United States Constitution to limit the type of suit recently described in a California Public Law Journal article as the

"sign code shakedown" scheme. Granite State petitioned for a Writ of Certiorari to the United States Supreme Court, but that petition was denied. In other communities, Granite State's tactics have proven successful. More than one hundred suits have been filed in recent years in federal courts seeking to strike down the entirety of a local government's sign regulations by alleging deficiencies with various provisions that have absolutely nothing to do with the provisions that led to the denial or rejection of applications to erect unlawful billboards. Many federal courts have followed the November 2003 *Granite State Outdoor Advertising, Inc. v. City of Clearwater* decision.

Clearwater has battled to reduce sign clutter and defend its sign ordinances against a determined sign industry for more than 17 years. Pam and her staff are extremely skilled and dedicated in drafting ordinances such as the sign ordinance that have withstood constitutional scrutiny.

There has been an unprecedented development boom along the west coast of Florida, and Clearwater has fully participated in the development activity. Not surprisingly, this has required the City to enter into several sophisticated development agreements with private developers who have spearheaded the redevelopment effort. Pam has developed a reputation for being extremely bright, and equally important, a true facilitator who stays focused on obtaining a productive outcome.

Pam was also instrumental in the success of the recent referendum to allow the building of boat slips in the downtown area. Pam was involved in drafting the ordinance

and the ballot question to ensure that the language was clear and understandable, and that it indicated specifically what would be allowed if the referendum was passed.

During Pam's tenure, the City Attorney's office has achieved remarkable productivity and stability. She has created an open environment in which employees feel comfortable asking questions, taking on new responsibilities, and developing both personally and professionally. In her interaction with Council Members and City officers and employees, she works diligently to provide legal advice that is accurate, timely and well researched. She also fully explains her legal opinions to her clients to ensure that they completely understand the applicable laws.

Pam was the President of the Florida Municipal Attorneys Association in 1994-1995. In 1999, she received the Paul S. Buchman award as the Outstanding Municipal Attorney of the Year for the State of Florida.