



FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES

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Florida League of Cities Announces 2020 Florida Municipal Achievement Award Winners

Sunny Isles Beach, Palatka and Bonita Springs all recognized for innovation and excellence

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – The **Florida League of Cities**, the united voice for Florida’s municipal governments, today announced this year’s winners of the Florida Municipal Achievement Awards. Hosted annually, the Florida Municipal Achievement Awards program provides municipalities the opportunity to receive deserved recognition for superior and innovative efforts in three award categories: City Spirit, Florida Citizenship and Environmental Stewardship.

This year’s winners and their projects are:

- **City Spirit Award** – City of Sunny Isles Beach, “Pedestrian Safety Strategy.”
- **Florida Citizenship Award** – City of Palatka, “Race Issue Study Circles.”
- **Environmental Stewardship Award** – City of Bonita Springs, “Felts Avenue Bioreactor Project.”

“Every year, the Florida Municipal Achievement Awards program recognizes cities that are paving the way for innovation and excellence in municipal government,” said **Florida League of Cities President Isaac Salver, council member** for the **Town of Bay Harbor Islands**. “This year’s award winners are no exception. Revolutionary, resourceful and adaptable, these programs are transforming the way local governments operate and provide services. On behalf of the League, we’re very proud to recognize this year’s award winners.”

The **City Spirit Award** recognizes a specific citywide effort that successfully addresses a local need. The **City of Sunny Isles Beach** winning entry, **Pedestrian Safety Strategy**, included several transportation and construction initiatives aimed at improving pedestrian safety while connecting residential, commercial and recreational areas within the city. The initiatives were created in response to residents’ needs, which were identified through a series of town hall meetings and input from the city’s Fact-Finding Committee and the city commission. The plan aligns with the city’s vision that focuses on promoting quality-of-life and quality-of-place initiatives and prioritizing the safety of the community. The city has received positive feedback from residents and seen tremendous success with the strategy.

The **Florida Citizenship Award** focuses on city projects or programs that increase civic awareness and education and promote active participation in city government among residents. This year’s award goes to the **City of Palatka** for **Race Issue Study Circles**, a volunteer program that provides a way for residents

to participate in a series of open discussion meetings and social activities. The city launched the program in 2017 with the goals of providing valuable insights, opportunities and connections between participants; fostering open and honest dialogue; and encouraging a better understanding of race relations, empathy and diversity throughout the community. The program has had over 2,300 participants to date.

The **Environmental Stewardship Award** focuses on city programs that promote conservation, improve and protect environmental conditions, and/or provide environmental education and outreach programs. The **City of Bonita Springs'** winning entry was the **Felts Avenue Bioreactor Project**. The project is aimed at reducing the amount of nitrogen along the Imperial River, which runs directly through the city, and ultimately improving its overall water quality. The project is reported to be the first of its kind of Florida. In addition to successfully reducing nitrogen levels and effectively improving overall water quality, the city praises the project for its ease of scalability, low aesthetic impact and cost-effectiveness.

All three winning cities will receive a trophy and be featured in the League's award-winning magazine, *Quality Cities (QC)*, as well as on the League's website and social media outlets.

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Founded in 1922, the Florida League of Cities is the united voice for Florida's municipal governments. Its goals are to promote local self-government and serve the needs of Florida's cities, which are formed and governed by their citizens. The League believes in "Local Voices Making Local Choices," which focuses on the impact citizens and city leaders have in improving Florida's communities. For more information, visit flcities.com.