

# RICARDO JOSE MENDEZ, MBA, PE, CGFM, ICMA-CM

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## SUMMARY

Provide innovative leadership helping county and municipal governments improve management operations, achieve financial stability, compliance with regulatory agencies, and increase trust and confidence in the administration. Ability to manage resources under budgetary constraints allowing effective and efficient delivery of vital and necessary services, including public safety, utilities, and infrastructure projects. Possess skills in analyzing highly complex issues and providing solutions in fast-paced political environments. Delivered a \$2B Capital Improvement Program on time for the first time in years leading to voters' approval of additional bonds.

I led the implementation of one of the most successful Municipal Financial Recovery Plans in the country with over 130 revenue-enhancing and management improvement initiatives in all City Departments and Bureaus; therefore, helping the City avoid further default of financial and contractual obligations and bankruptcy. These accomplishments not only placed the City on a fiscal recovery track but led the City out of State Receivership in less than three years. I have 25 years of professional experience and developed expertise in the following areas:

- Strategic Management
- Collective Bargaining & Labor Relations
- Operations Management & Improvement Process
- Organizational Analysis & Development
- Project & Program Management
- Building, Zoning, Permitting & Code Enforcement
- Community Planning & Redevelopment
- Financial Analysis & Budget Development
- Capital Improvements & Bond Programs
- Sustainability & Environmental Management
- Public Safety & Emergency Management
- Conflict Resolution & Team Building
- Stormwater & Utilities Management
- Water/Sewer Plants Operations & Compliance

## RELEVANT LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

### **CITY OF WEST PALM BEACH, FL, 2020-2021**

*Assistant City Administrator*

Population served: 125,000    Budget: \$800M    Employees: 1,700

Brought on board to oversee the City's daily management operations with direct oversight responsibility for multiple departments and bureaus, including infrastructure and development. Serve as Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, providing leadership and management supervision to over 1000 municipal employees, including development services, planning, building, zoning, code enforcement, information technology, utilities, engineering, parking administration, public works, and the support services department. Also, I led the planning and implementation of the City's multimillion-dollar capital improvement plan. Additionally, I had direct oversight responsibility for management operations, maintenance, rehabilitation, and environmental compliance of the City's water & wastewater treatment plants providing water & sewer services to Palm Beach County and multiple municipalities. Advised the Mayor and City Commission on fiscal policy, financial management, budgetary matters, capital improvements, resource management, improvement process, and compliance with State and Federal regulatory agencies.

Other responsibilities include planning, design, construction, rehabilitation, and modernization of Citywide public infrastructure and facilities, e.g., land development, transportation-roadways, water, sewer, drainage, stormwater, water & wastewater treatment plants, utilities, environmental, parks, and municipal buildings. Also, responsible for preparing and

administering budgets, coordination of Board-appointed committees, personnel, community planning, litigation coordination, risk management, purchasing, grants, construction-program management, and projects coordination with local, state, and federal regulatory agencies. Directly supervised department directors, including senior local government managers, career administrators, accountants, professional engineers, registered architects, and professionals handling City Agenda tasks and operations.

The City faced multiple challenges during my tenure, crippling cultural institutions, service industry, tourism, and hospitality. By August, the County had lost more than \$48 million among 33 cultural organizations, impacting almost 600 jobs hurting the City as the County's cultural capital. Additionally, tourists' visitation to the palm beaches was down 30% and tourism spending down 20%, hurting the City with more tourism-dependent households than any City in the County with 4,300. The City also lost significant business from big stores at major shops and destinations to mom-and-pop stores. Therefore, significant financial impacts were felt at City hall, where choices were narrow, and sacrifices were made across the board. Notwithstanding, thanks to a great deal of teamwork where I had the honor and privilege to lead and provide executive management oversight, we made the following **remarkable achievements**:

- Improved the City's management operations and administration by identifying priorities, stressing accountability, implementing performance measures, and establishing a professional management system in every department.
- Addressed underlying chronic issues challenging the City for years while curing audit findings, e.g., IT department.
- Significant accomplishments made in financial management, reporting compliance, budgeting, revenue, cost containment and reduction while balancing the City's budget amid meaningful environmental and internal challenges.
- Improved service levels while providing all vital and necessary services to City and County residents, notwithstanding all significant budgetary challenges.
- Amid unprecedented declining state revenues, increasing operating expenses, and facing a \$10M budget shortfall, by working together and being creative, we passed a Balanced \$194M General Fund Budget keeping the millage rate the same without layoffs to full-time employees.
- Elevated our game, avoiding the fiscal storm now plaguing major Cities across the country. Became more frugal and vigilant to future impacts to the budget from current initiatives as part of the plan to address future budget challenges.
- Despite pandemic challenges, we put neighborhoods first by completing 42 infrastructure improvements projects totaling \$45M in FY2020, including filling potholes, adding streetscapes, and hardening the City's utilities.
- Fiercely and successfully protected the City's source of its drinking water supply, Grassy Waters, and opposed to the lowering of Lake Okeechobee, which can adversely impact the source of the City's water supply.
- Helped the City achieve economic success during pandemic providing the executive oversight to planning, building, zoning and code enforcement operations obtaining the highest collection of business tax revenue in its history or \$3.3M.
- Provided all municipal development services required by the private sector to maintain \$700 M in ongoing construction projects on schedule amid the pandemic.
- Helped the City remain fiscally responsible, notwithstanding reaching an impasse with police and fire unions.
- Helped transform downtown by prioritizing and accelerating over \$20M in stormwater and drainage projects and made significant progress completing streetscapes, e.g., Banian St., also completed \$20M in improvements to Clematis St. and renovations to centennial fountains, a City Landmark, including lights, water, and music shows.
- Revamped City's customer services infrastructure, i.e., personnel/software, as part of the Neighborhood First initiative.
- Rapidly advanced plans for the new golf park working in partnership with PGA of America and for multiple infrastructures, land development and facilities projects becoming a reality in 2021, e.g., the new South Olive Park Tennis Center.
- Injected new vitality into City areas and neighborhoods historically overlooked and ignored, e.g., the north end, Heart and Soul Park, The Sunset Lounge, and the Styx Promenade.
- Helped attract economic development and improved quality of life by investing-enhancing public safety and public infrastructure while accomplishing a 9% decrease in overall crime rate and a 30% decline in the homicide rate.

**Achievements City of West Palm Beach Cont.**

- Recommitted help and energy in making target areas vibrant, economic, cultural assets, and a central focal point of outreach and opportunity, e.g., Latin Quarter helping the City rank among the top 20 cities in the nation for inclusivity and among the top Cities in the world for climate leadership.
- Achieved 92% of the City's goal to complete 300 affordable workforce housing units within three years by completing 277 units in 2020 ahead of schedule. Therefore, increasing the goal to 500 units in three years impacting the City's future.
- Brought new life into communities by facilitating badly needed workforce housing projects, e.g., the Grand, a \$71M land development project, and the most significant private investment in the City's northwest history.
- Helped provide a lifeline to the business community through expanding sitting for dinners, marketing support, and facilitating 47 small business microloans (\$443,000) with the help of the DDA; some were one payment from going out.
- Exceeded the City's goal by awarding ~\$13M in contracts through the office of economic opportunity and procurement to small businesses amid the pandemic.
- Assisted in fostering a business-friendly City climate, accelerating a trend of people and businesses escaping the high tax northeast in favor of the City's business-friendly environment, sunshine, and low taxes.
- Relentless efforts contributed to attracting over 230 financial services firms to the City, including hedge funds, small boutique firms, private equity funds, and family offices, e.g., Paul Singers Elliot Management, a \$41B company, is relocating its headquarters to the City. A letter of intent signed with another firm expected to bring 600 jobs to the City.
- Our executive team remained committed to taking care of All the City's residents, including the homeless, by helping through the challenges they face, e.g., addiction, mental illness, financial setbacks, and other hardships. Our homeless coordinators and street engagement team made significant progress in providing access to mental health services and offering placement in emergency housing – All while respecting the rights of all residents to enjoy public spaces and good quality of life.
- Thanks to our executive team leadership and our PD sensible approach, we were able to facilitate the peaceful demonstrations of more than 4,000 people without a single injury, avoiding the kind of violence that put too many other Cities in the headlines.
- Contributed to the logistics and implementation of the Mayor's Tasks Force for Racial and Ethnic Equality, the first of its kind in the City's history, taking a data-driven, systematic, and thorough approach to make policy recommendations to the Mayor and the Commission.
- Did my best as a professional city manager and leader to leaving the City as a civic beacon of openness and standing as an example of what it's possible when everybody comes and works together to overcome adversity that no one saw coming.
- Embraced challenges and responsibilities, making the City stronger more vital than before in many ways – safer, more economically resilient, more equitable, more perseverant facing challenges, kinder, and closer as a community.

**CITY OF HARRISBURG, PA, 2012-2013**

*Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer*

Population served: 250,000 Budget: \$170M Employees: 500

Brought on board to implement the City's Financial Recovery Plan, improve management operations, and avoid bankruptcy. I served as the City's Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Financial Officer, providing leadership and management supervision to 20 departments and bureaus, including public safety. I improved the City's management operations and administration by identifying priorities, stressing accountability, implementing performance measures, and establishing professional management systems in every department that addressed underlying chronic issues challenging the City for years. Consequently, under my leadership, significant accomplishments were made in the City's financial management and reporting compliance, budgeting and revenue, cost containment and reduction, tax administration, building and housing, economic development, infrastructure sustainability, stormwater management, public works, capital improvements, facilities and fleet management, public safety, sanitation, IT, and workforce and collective bargaining. Advised Mayor and Council on fiscal policy, financial management, budgetary matters, capital improvements, resource management, improvement process,

and compliance with State and Federal regulatory agencies. I also served as the Business Administrator and Chief Negotiator for the City's three labor union contracts, chaired labor-management committee meetings, and heard final step grievances. I had direct oversight responsibility for management operations, maintenance, rehabilitation, and environmental compliance of the City's water & wastewater treatment plants providing utility services to six municipalities within a region of 550,000.

### **Achievements as Chief Operating Officer & Chief Financial Officer, City of Harrisburg, PA**

- Successfully led the City's recovery and operations during times of great turmoil and uncertainty. Arrived after a new City Administration was in the throes of working out a Recovery Plan, a Receiver had been appointed by the Governor, and many City employees had left, creating a dearth of knowledge. Notwithstanding, I was able to make a difference and work with the City Receiver, Elected Officials, staff, private sector, State and Federal government officials to turn the situation around and implement a comprehensive Financial Recovery Plan, improve management operations in every department, stabilize the City's financial management and avoid one of the largest municipal bankruptcies in the nation
- Placed the City in full compliance with the Securities & Exchange Commission avoiding significant penalties
- Completed four years of past-due Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports within 13 months after taking over, allowing the City to complete its 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 audits and fast-track the financial recovery process
- Developed the City's in-house capacity and processes to assure the completion and delivery of future audits on time
- Identified and addressed priorities in every department, enhancing the City's overall administration
- Led the City's recovery and improvement process providing a clear path to a fiscally solvent future
- Demonstrated the efficacy of bankruptcy versus implementing a strategic recovery plan
- Allowed public officials to foresee challenges and put a timeline on the City's progress and fiscal recovery
- Avoided bankruptcy's devastating effects on public safety, pensions, and cost to taxpayers
- Made significant early progress in the Financial Recovery Plan implementation, helping eliminate the City's debt over time, clarify the stranded debt remaining after City asset transactions were in place, and provide clear options following those transactions in the coming months, not years
- Placed the City on track to eliminate the structural deficit over time, allowing a financially stable and efficient future
- Established priorities, identified responsible parties, phases, and set milestones and deadlines to complete 130 initiatives across departments, past due audits, and all City projects and programs, eliminating all chronic delays
- Implemented over 50% of the Financial Recovery Plan in 13 months, accelerating the City's recovery process
- Improved chart of accounts enabling the City to monitor grants and meet auditing requirements effectively and timely
- Completed every assignment from the City's Receiver, including four past due Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports, corresponding audits, and development of strategic plans for every Department and Bureau
- Worked cooperatively and collaboratively with City and State officials towards achieving all recovery goals
- Set strategic course of action utilizing planning tract under new State legislation accomplishing a clear path to fiscal solvency and reduction of a structural deficit that had challenged the City for more than 20 years
- Reduced personnel and operating costs while maintaining levels of service combining-consolidating-sharing City resources
- Identified new revenue sources and restructured City operations reducing the structural deficit and balancing the budget
- Streamlined City operations consolidating department functions, and implementing outsourcing strategies—sanitation
- Eliminated chronic delays and delivered City budgets on time, enhancing trust and confidence in the administration and winning the GFOA Budget Excellence Award in 2013
- Led the City out of distressed status and emerge out of State Receivership in record time
- Improved City communications and established a transparent administration
- Accomplished the most significant management progress, transparency, and openness in the City's recent history
- Earned public recognition and praises for achieving significant early progress and completion of the City's recovery plan from the Financial Recovery Committee, Receiver, Elected Officials, Chamber of Commerce, and State Officials
- Negotiated with Federal & State regulatory agencies such as EPA, DOJ, and State EPA, avoiding significant penalties and accomplishing suitable plans for environmental compliance of the City's water & wastewater system-treatment plants
- Negotiated City overcharges in the water & sewer rates with six municipalities avoiding costly litigation

**Achievements as Chief Operating Officer & Chief Financial Officer, City of Harrisburg, PA, Cont.**

- Negotiated CBA with three Unions, FOP, IAFF, AFSCME, and eliminated the long-standing backlog of grievances
- Brokered important agreements with union leaders eliminating costly unfair labor practice claims
- Expanded the fire contingency adding nine firefighters and reducing the Fire Bureau's overtime
- Worked closely with the business community, State Department of Community & Economic Development, and Business Advisory Council in the implementation of an integrated long-term economic development plan
- Streamlined the City's residential and commercial construction permitting process, helping redevelopment plans
- Accelerated demolition of blighted buildings in targeted areas around the City, helping economic development
- Enhanced City ordinances allowing faster condemnation of disruptive properties and recovering demolition expenses
- Engaged real estate developers with planning, building & zoning plans attracting multimillion-dollar investments
- Worked hand in hand with private sector developers and community partners to break ground on several projects helping job creation while increasing minority participation
- Oversaw investment of Federal CDBG funds in home construction and community projects, enhancing the quality of life, reducing the City's unemployment, and revitalizing neighborhoods
- Boosted parking revenue by implementing handheld IT devices and addressing scheduling, supervision, and training
- Enhanced education, accessibility, and enforcement efforts improving the City's recycling
- Increased revenue by developing and monitoring an enforcement process of the City's loan portfolio
- Empowered law enforcement to improve criminal investigations and decrease homicide rate accomplishing a 90% clearance rate and overall crime decrease with a 47% decline in homicides since 2010 and a 13% decline in robbery
- Facilitated implementation of the City's illegal gun reward program netting over 100 handguns
- Increased public access to law enforcement holding weekly public safety briefings and increasing walking patrols
- Improved communications between police and citizens by walking and biking targeted neighborhoods with officers
- Worked with safety council engaging citizens in programs to assist law enforcement and promote crime prevention
- Enabled utilization of modern technology like computerized crime mapping allowing police to aggressively and proactively address areas of concern, improving safety and quality of life
- Forged key relationships aiding law enforcement coordination with County District Attorney's Office, Federal Prosecutors, ATF, County Response Team, and Capitol Police
- Able to leverage State Police personnel, equipment, and financial resources for the City's special events
- Facilitated integration of the City's prisoner booking center into the County's booking center, saving significant resources while enabling additional police officers for street patrol duties
- Oversaw establishment of four police sub-stations and deployment of mobile police sub-station vehicles
- Oversaw reinstatement of the Police Athletic League program providing safe mentoring to City youth
- Coordinated installation of new surveillance cameras around the City to help reduce crime and illegal dumping
- Made significant improvements to the health and safety of City residents by improving illegal dumping operations and developing an effective pickup schedule resulting in 536 tons of bulk waste
- Oversaw storm inlet and potholes repairs saving the City significant financial resources
- Developed and implemented the City's Capital Improvement Program, including all infrastructure and facilities
- Reorganized the City's Engineering operations and implementation of the City's water & sewer and transportation projects, including street widening, ADA compliance, decorative crosswalks, streetlights, and sign installations
- Upgraded the City's handling of building & zoning permits, inspections, complaint citations, and condemnations by implementing a strategic plan enhancing site inspection and establishing project control measures
- Managed planning, design, construction, operations, maintenance, and rehabilitation of City facilities improving interior structure, security, ADA compliance, overall maintenance, and installing energy-efficient HVAC systems
- Made the highest and best use of City land by partnering with the public and private sector to implement the Right-the-Blight initiative and constructing a state-of-the-art City Health Center helping economic development and paving the way for the City to build a newly designed Industrial Manufacturing Park

**Achievements as Chief Operating Officer & Chief Financial Officer, City of Harrisburg, PA, Cont.**

- Promoted Green Economic Development Plans including implementing the use of alternative fuel in City vehicles (natural gas & electric), green infrastructure, and improving efficient lighting in buildings and streets
- Pioneered enhancement of stormwater quality and purchasing energy in bulk (electricity, natural gas, and fuel), generating significant cost savings, helping to balance the budget, and eliminating the structural deficit over time
- Worked with community partners and identified the highest and best use of City-owned vacant lots to create green parcels that absorb storm run-offs and allow portable outdoor fresh markets
- Administered Right-the-Blight initiative calling for the removal of blight through an aggressive demolition plan, enhancing sanitation routing systems, code enforcement, and conducting quarterly bulk cleanups
- Identified and recovered lost revenue by improving discovery, enhancement, and audit services generating over 100 additional business licenses per year and a significant increase in City revenue

**City of Sweetwater, Director, Finance Department, Sweetwater, FL, 2014-2016**

After implementing the City of Harrisburg Financial Recovery Plan that enabled the City to emerge from State Receivership and avoid filing for bankruptcy, I was selected by a newly appointed Mayor with the approval of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, including the State Attorney's Office, FBI, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and Miami-Dade County Ethics Commission. They asked me to help the City in distress avoid financial default; a Governor State Oversight Board; and stiff penalties from creditors and agencies, including the IRS. Furthermore, renegotiate collective bargaining agreements; ensure compliance with federal, state, local laws and regulations; serve in the capacity of deputy administrative officer and finance director; organize the City finances; reopen the Finance Department; and prepare the City's budget within weeks of Charter's deadline, among other critical tasks, needs, and priorities.

**Achievements as Finance Department Director, City of Sweetwater, FL**

- Reorganized and reopened the finance department earning praises from elected, county, and state officials
- Implemented a successful vendor-repayment plan reopening most of the City accounts which had been closed
- Prepared and delivered the City budget to the Commission after only a few weeks since appointment meeting Charter's deadline
- Negotiated collective bargaining agreements with police (PBA) and employee (IUPAT) unions avoiding costly labor litigation
- Saved the City significant financial resources in contract negotiations with health care providers and vendors
- Developed/implemented a financial recovery plan tailored to City-specific needs avoiding default and a State Oversight Board
- Obtained approval and earned praises from Governor's financial team and State Auditor General after conducting financial recovery plan oral presentations to Tallahassee Officials
- Completed all pending City audits, including federal, state, and local grantor agencies
- Pioneered implementation of new IT systems enhancing productivity, accounting, and reporting enabling checks and balance
- Realized significant savings negotiating a settlement agreement with the Internal Revenue Service and an achieved compliance
- Saved the City significant financial resources while addressing all grant eligibility compliance issues with State and local officials
- Led section heads, division managers, department directors, and elected officials in budget development and control techniques
- Developed a high-performance financial team capable of safeguarding City assets and completing City budgets/projects on time
- Implemented planning and programming to develop the City's financial goals, objectives, and budget based on critical priorities
- Accomplished continuity of vital and necessary services during the worst cash flow-financial challenge in the City's history
- Developed in-house capacity to complete audits on time, earning praises from external auditors, federal, state, local officials
- Eliminated significant bank statement reconciliation backlog developed over the years curing chronic audit findings and delays
- Pioneered implementation of a central accounting system enhancing operations, accounting, and reporting
- Achieved reliability, consistency, and compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and best practices
- Gathered, analyzed, prepared, and presented critical financial information timely, enabling prompt/critical decision making
- Eliminated chronic delays and led annual audit process preparing/providing all required information to external auditors timely
- Successfully led the City budget development and approval process producing multiple budget documents on time
- Prepared multiple budget revisions while conducting periodical budget analysis and fulfilling all City Commission requests
- Established a General Ledger monthly account reconciliation process completing over 1000 GL accounts
- Fostered a priority-based spending culture by addressing operations performance, budget control, and cash flow management
- Addressed encumbrances and vacancies, making sure everyone understands spending priorities and adheres to the budget
- Prioritized and managed the City's cash flow, effectively avoiding financial default and disruption of vital and necessary services

**Achievements as Finance Department Director, City of Sweetwater, FL Cont.**

- Implemented financial reporting system adhering to contract billing and collection schedules helping steady cash flow to support critical operational requirements
- Updated all necessary business policies and accounting practices strengthening the City's policies and procedures
- Effectively worked with Mayor, Commission, Auditors, Auditor General, and Governor Office helping consensus building
- Enhanced grant management activities and ensured eligibility requirements compliance with federal, state, and local agencies
- Implemented new financial system training for City employees maximizing individual and organizational goals
- Fostered communication and achieved internal integration among departments, divisions, and sections
- Researched and organized all City investment activities, including money market and simple interest-bearing accounts
- Negotiated new capital leases for property, plant, and equipment, including new vehicles
- Mentored City employees reinforcing professional development and standards from ICMA, GFOA, and AGA Code of Ethics
- Balanced overwhelming workload while assisting human resources every step, including all finance-staffing issues
- Forecasted City revenue accurately, helping balance the budget and eliminate multiple budget revisions
- Effectively refined City goals and objectives to prepare the City budget according to the most critical needs and priorities
- Accomplished a professional operation, effective and efficient management of resources, and overall compliance
- Prepared and delivered all-important annual financial reports timely, including insurance and workers compensation
- Maintained accounting, reporting, auditing, and administrative policies and procedures up to date
- Conducted facility assessment and capital assets inventory curing chronic audit findings and achieving GAAP compliance
- Accomplished consolidation and sharing of City services and assets, further enhancing financial resources
- Sought maximum efficiencies in the City's banking relationships and opened several accounts to bring the City in compliance
- Eliminated all chronic delays addressing public records requests
- Negotiated all city insurance policies realizing savings in new premiums and avoided lapses of coverage at any time
- Established a management system that allowed maximum productivity, safeguards assets, and addresses future needs
- Enhanced integrity of all cash management functions, including daily cash deposits, transportation, and logistics
- Eliminated chronic delays in completing filings with government agencies timely, including the State Auditor General
- Eliminated chronic delays submitting reports timely, e.g., FHWA-536/Local Highway Finance Report and FDLE grants reports
- Pioneered new culture embracing financial and purchasing policy and procedures, deadlines, and agency compliance
- Successfully led the City's financial recovery thru extenuating circumstances avoiding significant tangible/intangible losses
- Despite financial distress, the City never stopped providing vital and necessary services and started to build reserves
- Established internal controls to ensure future compliance with GASB, human resources legislation, and the law
- Implemented performance evaluations following ICMA, GFOA, and AGA guidelines
- Led the RFP process, negotiating with vendors, and outsourced payroll operations
- Negotiated existing loans and capital leases with financial institutions achieving fair and balanced rates, terms, and agreements
- Saved the City significant financial resources correcting errors on pay scale tables required to process employee retro payments
- Achieved quality control, accuracy, transparency, and improved overall City management, earning praises from the Governor's Office, State Auditor General, City Auditors, Miami-Dade County Ethics Commission, federal officials, and elected officials

**SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA, HOLLYWOOD, FL 2009-2009**

*Chief Administrative Officer*

Population: 5 reservations    Budget: \$100M    Employees: 6,000

Brought on Board to lead and improve management operations in several departments, including planning, building, zoning, public works, environmental resources, and construction management, and oversee completion of \$300M investment in 8 water & wastewater treatment plants. Ensured Council adopted policies, resolutions, and ordinances were enforced and implemented. Direct oversight responsibility for utility management, preparation and administration of budgets, personnel, community planning, litigation coordination, risk management, grants, economic development, and growth management. Led multimillion-dollar negotiations with private and public entities and coordinated lobbying efforts with the Federal government.

**Achievements Seminole Tribe of Florida**

- Built high-performance professional management team eliminating costly errors and omissions in public infrastructure planning, development, operations, maintenance, and rehabilitation
- Conducted water & sewer plant operations assessments holding vendors accountable and saving financial resources
- Implemented improvement plans allowing savings in water & wastewater treatment plant projects
- Restored financial integrity in the handling of utility construction, operations, and maintenance
- Pioneered integration of technology streamlining financial and budget development operations
- Developed a Quality Management Program increasing productivity, morale, and customer satisfaction

**PALM BEACH COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT, 2006-2007**

*Director, Program Management Department*

Population: 1.4M Budget: \$2B Employees: 27,000

Brought on board to reorganize the department, implement policies and procedures, improve operations, and lead the implementation of a \$2Billion Capital Improvement Program including planning, design, construction, rehabilitation, and modernization of Countywide public infrastructure and facilities. Oversaw the completion of over 100 projects, including land development, transportation, environmental, water & sewer, utilities, stormwater management, parks, and school buildings. Direct oversight responsibility for preparing and administering budgets, coordinating board-appointed committees, personnel, community planning, litigation coordination, risk management, purchasing, grants, construction management, and coordination with local and state regulatory agencies.

**Achievements:**

- Delivered all projects on time and received praises from Oversight Committee and The Palm Beach Post
- Saved millions of dollars by enhancing project control operations and improving contract negotiations
- Reorganized department operations, developed and empowered staff improving morale and productivity
- Delivered CIP on time which the previous two administrators had not accomplished
- Developed a records management system enhancing the ability to defend against multi-million-dollar claims
- Avoided substantial monetary damages by achieving sound financial resolutions during mediation and arbitration
- Implemented professional training and developed policy and procedures safeguarding District's assets
- Established new payment approval system handling \$1M/day and ensured vendor's performance
- Eliminated budget disparities and streamlined budget development process
- Crossed-trained support staff; therefore, the department no longer relied on one individual
- Opened lines of communication among staff and stakeholders, achieving internal integration
- Successfully met all permitting challenges with state and federal agencies avoiding significant penalties and delays
- Achieved consistent operational guidelines, established internal controls, and accomplished a professional management operation enhancing trust and confidence in the Administration

**CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FL, 1999-2001**

*Assistant Director, Public Works Department*

Population: 100,000 Budget: \$34M Employees: 250

Served in the capacity of acting director. Brought on board to reorganize department operations and oversee a \$250M Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and a \$92M General Obligation Bond program. Direct oversight responsibility for municipal utility services, budget preparation, administration (projects, program, and department budget), coordination with oversight committees, community planning, litigation coordination, risk management, purchasing, grants, personnel, and construction management.

**Achievements:**

- Saved millions of dollars implementing a Quality Management Program increasing productivity and morale
- Led implementation of \$250M CIP leading to the issuance of a \$92M GO Bond to address public needs
- Restructured department operations and developed high-performance management teams
- Developed and implemented a financial system and guidelines improving the handling of capital expenditures
- Pioneered integration of IT systems enhancing department financial and management operations
- Led City operations through complex challenges during change and enhancement of community assets



- Reduced city liabilities and ensured vendors' performance by amending contracts
- Appointed as an emergency manager and coordinated efforts with local, state, and federal government
- Implemented fee schedule saving the City significant financial resources in contract negotiations
- Performed job audits, reclassifications addressing inequities and granting over 20 promotions for the first time in years

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FL, 1993-1999***Special Administrator*

Population: 2.5M Budget: 100M Employees: 1000

Started as County Civil Engineer, earned promotions to Special Administrator and appointments to several County essential Committees. I played a lead role in reviewing and approving the most prominent residential, commercial, and industrial land development projects in Miami-Dade County, such as The Airport Expansion and The Beacon Trade Port. Developed expertise in administration of multiple public infrastructure-related services and facilities, including planning, design, construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation of traffic & transportation, water & sewer, environmental, and stormwater management projects. Responsible for budget preparation and implementation. Also led a team of senior County professionals. Conducted negotiations with local, state, and federal agencies. I accomplished the County's Supervisor Certification Program, learning multiple departments' operations and from senior professional County Administrators with up to 40 years of tenure with Miami-Dade County.

**Achievements:**

- Accomplished significant savings in County's financial resources while negotiating essential agreements with the federal, estate, and local officials, including FAA, DOT, EPA, South Florida Regional Planning Council, and the School Board
- Appointed as County emergency manager and able to coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies successfully
- Ensured developers fair share contributions to public infrastructure, saving substantial County financial resources
- Completed County projects timely while leading a senior team of professionals during the fastest growth and development
- Pioneered implementation of County information technology systems eliminating a 5-yr backlog in the data processing

**OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE****Sr. Civil Engineer/President – RA Consulting Engineers/Civil Infrastructure Corporation, Miami, FL, 2008-Present**

- Served as chief operations officer and work directly with city and county officials
- Oversaw implementation of Capital Improvements, General Obligation, and Storm Water Bond Programs
- Negotiated, executed, and managed multimillion-dollar contracts and prepared/administered budgets
- County/municipal management consulting - planning/implementation of state, county, and municipal projects and programs

**Project Executive, Roger Development / Keyes Company, Coral Gables, FL, 2002-2005**

- Served as director of operations
- Oversaw construction, land development, and project management operations
- Accomplished all project requirements with local and state government agencies regulations
- Coordinated project development with utility companies, government agencies, consultants, and banking officials

**EDUCATION****Master of Business Administration – magna cum laude – Finance & Management**

University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL

**Bachelor of Science Civil Engineering**

Florida International University, Miami, FL

**LICENSURE / REGISTRATION / CERTIFICATES**

- ICMA–Credentialed Local Government Manager
- Certified Government Financial Manager
- Registered Professional Civil Engineer
- Certified Quality Control Manager
- Municipal Financial Reporting & Compliance, Securities & Exchange Commission

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION**

- International City/County Manager Association
- Government Finance Officer Association
- Association of Government Accountants

# RICARDO MENDEZ-SALDIVIA, MBA, PE, CGFM, ICMA–CM

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905 Brickell Bay Dr. Suite 323 Miami, Florida 33131 | (305) 924-2534 | rjmcivilpe@gmail.com

September 19, 2021

City of Palm Coast, Florida  
Human Resources

**Subject: City Manager**

Dear Personnel Officer:

I have attached my resume and references in support of my application for the subject-referenced position. I have over 30 years of professional experience in public and private sectors reorganizing departments, implementing strategic management plans, delivering complex infrastructure programs, implementing financial recovery plans, and helping distressed municipalities while saving local governments significant financial resources. I became a professional City Manager by accomplishing a complete career track in the county and municipal government serving in the capacity of Section Head, Division Manager, Assistant Director, Director of four Departments (Finance, Administration, Program Management and Public Works), Assistant City Administrator, Chief Operating Officer, and Chief Administrative Officer. Therefore, completing the entire protocol to become an ICMA–CM.

I have developed expertise in municipal planning, programming, budget development and control, operations management, accounting, reporting, and auditing. Thus, becoming a Certified Government Financial Manager experienced in every aspect of municipal financial management and proficient with GASB principles, practices, and compliance. As a professional City Administrator, I bring hands-on expertise in community affairs, planning, economic development, operational analysis, labor-management relations, collective bargaining, intergovernmental relations, IT, procurement, risk & bond management, real estate, building, emergency management, public works, and public safety. As a registered professional civil engineer, I would bring expert knowledge in program management, planning, and implementation of capital programs up to \$2 Billion, including facilities and public infrastructure, e.g., transportation, water & sewer systems–treatment plants, and environmental compliance.

As Chief Operating Officer for the City of Harrisburg, PA, I led the City's Financial Recovery Plan with 130 management improvement, cost containment, and revenue-enhancing initiatives across 20 Departments and Bureaus, including public safety. Under my leadership, the City completed the past due 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports and three audits within 16 months. After eliminating chronic delays, errors, and omissions, I developed the City's in-house capacity and processes in several departments to assure completion and delivery of future audits, budgets, projects, and programs on time; therefore, winning the GFOA Budget Award for excellence in financial reporting in 2013.

Additionally, following the City Receivers' direction, I developed and implemented strategic management plans for all City Departments and Bureaus. These achievements stabilized the City's financial operations and reorganized several departments, allowing significant improvements in morale and the overall City administration. Not only were we able to place the City on an economic recovery fast-track and avoid one of the largest municipal bankruptcies in the country, but help the City emerge out of State Receivership within three years as opposed to other cities in PA which have been under Receivership for 20 years. Our successful municipal recovery plan and management improvement model now serve as an example to help other financially distressed municipalities organize and rebuild management operations. Through these efforts, I was able to earn an outstanding performance evaluation from both the Mayor and the City Receiver, a retired US Airforce General, after my first year of service as City Administrator.

During my professional manager career, I ensured adopted policies, directives, resolutions, and ordinances implementation and provided recommendations on agenda issues, management operations, and policy implementation to elected officials. I have had direct oversight responsibility for hiring, firing, development, and performance of Department Directors, Bureau Chiefs, over 1,500 municipal employees, and served as Chief Negotiator with five unions: FOP, IAFF, AFSCME, PBA, and IUPAT. I also led the administration and implementation of numerous government programs and prepared multiple budgets for several Departments and Cities. Moreover, I have served as Chief Financial Officer in charge of assessing Cities' financial conditions, recommending policy alternatives, and implement cost-effective measures to enhance and deliver local government vital and necessary services.

Thanks for your kind consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Ricardo Mendez-Saldivia, MBA, PE, CGFM, ICMA–CM

# **RICARDO MENDEZ-SALDIVIA, MBA, PE, CGFM, ICMA-CM**

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905 Brickell Bay Dr # 323 Miami Florida 33131 | (305) 924-2534 | [rjmcivilpe@gmail.com](mailto:rjmcivilpe@gmail.com)

## **Professional References**

1. Major General (US Air Force) William B. Lynch, City Receiver, City of Harrisburg, PA
2. Fred A. Reddig, Head of Pennsylvania Governor's Office for Local Government Affairs
3. Faye W. Johnson, ICMA-CM, City Administrator, City of West Palm Beach
4. Alex Penelas, Mayor, Miami-Dade County
5. Arthur C. Johnson, Ph.D., Superintendent, Palm Beach County School District
6. John J. Ritsema, P.E., Division Chief, Miami-Dade County
7. Aristides Rivera, P.E., Assistant County Manager, Miami-Dade County
8. Matthew D. Schwartz, Assistant City Manager, City of Miami Beach
9. David Shen, Ph.D., P.E., Dean, School of Engineering, FIU
10. Luis A. Prieto-Portar, Ph.D., P.E, Chairman, School of Civil & Environmental Engineering, FIU

May 7, 2013

Recommendation: Ricardo Mendez-Saldivia

To whom it may concern:

Mr. Ricardo Mendez-Saldivia asked that I provide a letter of recommendation for him. I am most pleased to do so.

Mr. Mendez-Saldivia has served as the Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff for the City of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania for the last year. As the Receiver for the City of Harrisburg, I worked closely with him. Harrisburg is a city of 50,000 and is designated as a financially distressed municipality under Pennsylvania Act 47.

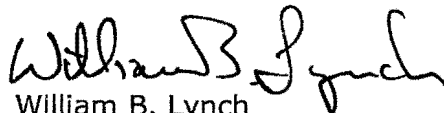
Mr. Mendez-Saldivia arrived during a time of great turmoil and uncertainty. A new City Administration was in the throes of working out a Recovery Plan. A Receiver had been appointed, and many city employees left, creating a dearth of knowledge. Mr. Mendez-Saldivia arrived and made a difference. He brought professionalism, knowledge and courtesy. He also brought organizational ability and detailed oriented planning that assigned responsibility and set milestones and deadlines.

He was particularly effective on the financial management side; a critical area of the City's operation. In large part because of his drive, the City completed overdue audits for 2009, 2010 and 2011. More importantly, in-house capacity was developed and processes instituted to assure an on time 2012 audit completion as well.

While, improvement in financial management was perhaps the most dramatic result of his engagement, he was also particularly effective with the City's unions. He instituted regular meetings and engagements, driving grievance numbers down to historic lows. Part of the Recovery Plan involves a complicated matrix of tasks and initiatives to be undertaken by City government. He set up a program management system to track progress on each initiative. Thanks largely to his systematic approach; we have completed nearly 50% of those initiatives.

Mr. Mendez-Saldivia arrived at a time when the City of Harrisburg needed him. His time here has been marked by success and beneficial change. He quickly realized that we needed more than a technocrat. We needed someone who could contribute to the change in culture that would be required if we were to really change persistent patterns of thought and old habits. He brought a professional manager's competence tempered with a human touch.

Best Regards,



William B. Lynch  
Receiver for the City of Harrisburg

May 23, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I would like to provide this letter of recommendation for Ricardo Mendez-Saldivia. I have had the opportunity to work with Mr. Mendez-Saldivia during his tenure as Chief Operating Officer for the City of Harrisburg from May 2012 to May 2013.

Ricardo's performance in this position was excellent. He was an asset to the City during a very critical time in its history. Under the direction of the Mayor he was responsible for implementing a Court confirmed recovery plan for the City and managing its various departments to insure the continuation of critical City services. One of his key accomplishments was addressing a backlog of City audits. Under his direction over the last year, the 2009, 2010 and 2011 audits were completed and work was started on preparation for the 2012 audit.

In his position, Mr. Mendez-Saldivia exhibited excellent communication skills, was extremely organized, and able to effectively multi-task to ensure that all projects under his purview were completed in a timely manner.

Ricardo was always willing to offer assistance and had an excellent rapport with the many individuals he worked with. I have been consistently impressed with his positive attitude and productivity during the time he worked for Harrisburg. I am confident that he will devote himself in a similar manner to other similar positions in the future.

He would be an asset to any employer in a senior level management position in local government. I would recommend him for any endeavor he chooses to pursue in that field.

Sincerely,



Fred A. Reddig  
Special Assistant for Act 47 and  
Local Government Affairs



City Administration

City Administrator's Office  
401 Clematis Street  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
Telephone: 561-822-1400

March 10, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter serves as a reference for Ricardo Mendez-Saldivia. Mr. Mendez-Saldivia served the City of West Palm Beach as an Assistant City Administrator. His portfolio of responsibilities included providing executive oversight and direction to Public Utilities, Public Works, Engineering, Information Technology, Support Services and other functional areas of the City. During his tenure, Ricardo served the City in an ethical and professional manner and was a contributing member of our Executive team.

Mr. Mendez-Saldivia possesses the skill sets and demonstrated talents to perform well and be a dedicated asset to any organization which he may be a part of in the future.

Sincerely,

Faye W. Johnson, MPA  
City Administrator, ICMA-CM





OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ALEX PENELAS  
MAYOR

July 23, 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation on behalf of Mr. Ricardo Mendez, who has applied for a position with your city.

I have known Ricardo for several years; he is intelligent, and is someone of great overall character and integrity. During his tenure at Miami-Dade County, Ricardo performed his obligations well and was a committed public servant. He proved to be efficient and effective within several departments he worked with, and gained experience in budgetary preparations and forecasts. I am certain he will bring these same principles and professionalism to your jurisdiction.

I have also known Ricardo to be a compassionate individual who takes a great interest in his community and the overall welfare of the people surrounding him. He works diligently at ensuring a positive working environment and people that have worked with him, speak very highly of him. I am confident that Ricardo will benefit the city, and carry out his responsibilities with the utmost care and distinction.

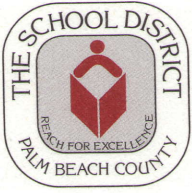
If you have any questions or need and further information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alex Penelas", is written over a horizontal line.

Alex Penelas  
Mayor





THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE  
3340 FOREST HILL BOULEVARD, C-316  
WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33406-5869

PH: 561-434-8200 FX: 561-434-8571

ARTHUR C. JOHNSON, Ph.D.  
SUPERINTENDENT

ANN KILLETS  
CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

JOSEPH M. MOORE  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

WILLIAM S. GRAHAM  
CHAIR

MONROE BENAÏM, M.D.  
VICE-CHAIR

PAULETTE BURDICK  
MARK HANSEN  
ROBERT J. KANJIAN  
DR. SANDRA S. RICHMOND  
DEBRA I. ROBINSON, M.D.

April 25, 2007

Ricardo Mendez  
905 Brickell Bay Dr, Apt 32  
Miami, FL 33131

Dear Ricardo:

On our inaugural **District-wide Employee Appreciation Week**, we want to express our appreciation for your contributions as: Director Program Management  
Program Management

In addition, we thank you for being a valued employee with the School District of Palm Beach County.

As an important member of the District staff, you contribute to our overall success in making a difference in the lives of over 170,580 children that we serve. Your talents, time and commitment to excellence helps us to attain the District's goals!

Sincerely,

Arthur C. Johnson, Ph.D.  
Superintendent

Ann Killets  
Chief Academic Officer.

Joseph Moore  
Chief Operating Officer.





**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
SUITE 1610  
111 N.W. 1st STREET  
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33128-1970  
(305) 375-2960

July 10, 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

Mr. Ricardo Mendez has demonstrated excellent ability to perform and engage in responsible level engineering and management work during his tenure in Miami-Dade County. I worked with Mr. Mendez during a five-year period ending in 1999. He is a well-qualified professional and has shown excellent management and leadership skills. Mr. Mendez has conducted himself with professionalism, effectiveness, and respect for his subordinates, peers, and supervisors. In addition, Mr. Mendez has an excellent educational background and interpersonal skills. He has always acted within the department's guidelines and procedures. He has an exceptional ability to see the big picture in complex situations and to proceed accordingly.

I am confident that he will succeed in future tasks which he undertakes with any organization within the public or private sector.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'John J. Ritsema'.

John J. Ritsema, P.E.  
Chief, Construction Division

JJR:nc



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
SUITE 1610  
111 N.W. FIRST STREET  
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33128-1970

March 29, 1999

Mr. Ricardo J. Mendez  
Construction Division

Dear Mr. Mendez,

It is a pleasure to present you with a 5 year Service Award in recognition of your continuous service with Miami-Dade County Government. It is the unselfish and conscientious effort of each employee that makes possible the successful operation of this department.

We hope you will remain with Dade County many more years and that they will be increasingly rewarding ones for you.

Sincerely,



Aristides Rivera, P.E., P.L.S.  
Acting Director

AR/gc



# CITY OF MIAMI BEACH

CITY HALL 1700 CONVENTION CENTER DRIVE MIAMI BEACH FLORIDA 33139



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

TELEPHONE: (305) 673-7010  
FAX: (305) 673-7782

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

During his tenure with the City of Miami Beach, Ricardo Mendez has demonstrated excellent technical, management, and interpersonal skills. Mr. Mendez hard work, dedication, knowledge, and experience added great value to the city's operations. He always complied with city rules, regulations, and handled himself with honesty and integrity. In addition, Mr. Mendez has shown progressive leadership. Definitely a team player, Ricardo is an excellent professional whose ability and skills will be a great asset for any organization within the public and private sectors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Matthew D. Schwartz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Matthew D. Schwartz  
Assistant City Manager



# FIU FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

*Hope, Knowledge, and Opportunity*

July 9, 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to strongly recommend that Mr. Ricardo Mendez, an excellent civil engineering administrator, be given the most favorable consideration in his job application.

Mr. Mendez received his BSCE degree from Florida International University (FIU), the Public University at Miami in 1987. He was one of the brightest students that have ever graduated from our program. In addition, he also received a MBA degree from University of Miami in 1996.

As Mr. Mendez's instructor in his Transportation and Traffic Engineering class, I can assure you that he has excellent educational training and great interpersonal skills. It is a great pleasure for me to recommend such an outstanding engineer for this prestigious administrative position. Mr. Mendez is the type of student that we wish all of our students could be.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (305) 348-3055. My FAX number is (305) 348-2802. My e-mail address is [shen@eng.fiu.edu](mailto:shen@eng.fiu.edu).

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "L. David Shen".

L. David Shen, Ph.D., P.E., T.E.  
Professor & Chairman  
Director, Lehman Center for Transportation Research





# FIU FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

*Hope, Knowledge, and Opportunity*

23 July, 2002

Subject: **Letter of Recommendation for Mr. Ricardo J. Méndez.**

Gentlemen:

I am writing to enthusiastically support Mr. Ricardo J. Méndez's application to your City Managers position.

I have known Mr. Méndez for about seventeen years. First as a student in our Civil and Environmental Engineering Program, from which he graduated in 1987. Subsequent to his graduation, I have followed his professional career with Gopman-Pepper, Miami-Dade County and the City of Miami Beach. These last few years I have been able to closely observe Mr. Méndez, because I frequented his Department of Public Works in relation to several large projects, wherein I participated as designer or consultant.

In all these positions, Mr. Méndez impressed all his colleagues and the general public by his charming and mature personality, always bright, and full of energy. He has a plethora of leadership skills and will immeasurably benefit your community with his enthusiastic management skills.

Given all these attributes, I have no hesitation in assuming that it will place him among the top candidates for any city manager position. I strongly recommend him to you, and am very happy to further amplify his qualifications to you. Please feel free to call me at the University at 305-348-2825.

Sincerely,

Prof. Luis A. Prieto-Portar, Ph.D., P.E.  
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering  
Florida International University  
Phone: 305-348-2825 ; Fax: 305-348-2802 ; E-mail: prieto@eng.fiu.edu