



## City Manager Marco Island, FL

Apply by August 2, 2013

If you are looking for paradise, you have come to the right spot. A sun-drenched jewel on the edge of the Gulf of Mexico, Marco Island features six miles of beach and over 100 miles of waterways. It is both popular vacation spot and an idyllic place to call home. Roughly 100 miles west of Miami and 180 miles south of Tampa, the City is off the beaten path, and the community prefers it that way. It is easy to feel as if you are in a secluded place and away from the hurly-burly – because you are.

For those who love the water, few places on earth are as beautiful as Marco Island. It is surrounded on all sides by rivers, bays, and finally the Gulf of Mexico. The water

provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities including leisure boating, fishing, water skiing, wakeboarding and scuba diving. The community additionally has its own beach dedicated exclusively to Island residents and that provides an opportunity to enjoy fun in the sun away from the crowds.

Best of all are the people and the sense of community. It is in many ways a friendly, small town (particularly in the off-season) where you can get to know your neighbors, and people take care of each other. On the other hand, it is not so small that everyone knows everyone else's business. If you have children, the schools are excellent and offer



education K-12, including Montessori. Marco Island Charter Middle School is widely regarded as one of the best in the state, and a new charter high school has opened recently.

The Island consists of condominiums, which comprise 40% of the dwelling units, and single-family homes, three quarters of which are located on man-made canals affording easy boating access to the Gulf of Mexico. Condo and house prices are high, but that is what you would expect in an island paradise. At least for now, the economic downturn has brought them to more manageable levels. The Florida market has started to rebound. A typical 3-Bed/2-Bath home sells anywhere from \$250,000 to well over a million dollars (depending on amenities and location) with the median price being about \$550,000. The community is very safe as well – Marco Island prides itself on protecting its residents and on having very little crime. The Police Department is professional, fully equipped and well trained. The Fire-Rescue Department is completely paramedic-qualified. On-Island are two walk-in urgent-care clinics, and nearby are two national-class hospitals offering state-of-the art care for heart, stroke and cancer matters.

Marco Island has a vibrant social community, with two private country clubs and a yacht club. There are nine churches on the Island, several City parks and tennis courts. The business community is heavily committed to the Island as well, and Marco Island features vibrant hotels and a variety of restaurants and shopping centers.

For additional cultural activities, Marco Island boasts an energetic Center for the Arts and produces a Shakespeare festival annually. Nearby Naples, 15 miles to the North, has its own Philharmonic Orchestra and Center for the Arts. Among its other offerings, the Center features



Broadway plays (West Side Story and Evita will both be performed in upcoming season), dance and opera performances. The Patty and Jay Baker Naples Museum of Art features paintings, sculpture, and fine glass exhibits. The Golisano Children’s Museum in Naples and the Naples Zoo and Conservancy are wonderful facilities for children.

For the sports fan, Southwest Florida is a popular site for Major League Baseball spring training with both the Red Sox and the Twins nearby in Fort Myers. A bit further away are the Miami Heat, Dolphins and Marlins. The NHL’s Florida Panthers are also located near Florida’s east coast. Furthermore, the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, Buccaneers, and Lightning are located 180 miles to the north. The City also has much to offer for runners and bikers, as well as two golf courses. Nearby are the All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Park and Aquatic Sports complex as well as many youth leagues (basketball, football, baseball, and others). For travelers, the Fort Myers International Airport is approximately 45 minutes away.

In short, Marco Island is a beautiful community and offers an excellent position for any municipal management professional – a great place to be for the rest of your life.

## History

Prior to the modern era, Marco Island was the domain of the fierce Calusa Indians and hardy pioneers. When Christopher Columbus set sail to explore the new world, the Calusa had been flourishing on the lower Gulf coast for 3,500 years. Some of Spain’s most celebrated navigators and conquistadors were eager to tackle the virgin shores of La Florida in the 1500s.

Table I: Historical Populations

Census	Population
1980	4,679
1990	9,493
2000	12,879
2010	16,413

Source: U.S. Census

Juan Ponce de Leon, searching for the fountain of youth, led the first European exploration of Florida in 1513. After rounding the Florida Keys and in search of fresh water, he is said to have made landfall at the southern end of Marco Island. Two artesian springs were located and the island became a favorite spot for the Spanish to refill their water casks for the return trip to Spain. Relations between the Spaniards and the Calusa, however, were seldom friendly. Explorers were often ambushed the instant they waded ashore. In 1521 Ponce de Leon was fatally wounded by a Calusa spear. He died a few days later in Cuba.

Due to the diseases spread by the Spanish explorers and the slave hunters from Europe, the Calusa were annihilated by the mid-1700s and Seminole Indians gradually took their place. Hardy pioneers, willing to live in the raw mosquito-infested mangrove swamp, settled the island and farmed, fished, hunted, and shipped surplus crops to Key West. While well-cultivated plantations were observed in 1824, W.T. Collier and his family are credited with the founding of Marco Island when they arrived at the north end of the island in 1870. By the early 1920s, Barron Gift Collier (no relation to W.T.) had purchased over one million acres of Southwest Florida real estate, including ninety percent of the island, which he and his heirs planned to develop.

During the subsequent Florida land boom, Collier County was created. The area’s growth increased significantly after World War II. Development began in earnest when the Mackle brothers discovered Marco Island in 1962. After falling in love with the sandy white beaches and warm gulf breezes, they developed a vision of Marco Island as a full community. After lengthy negotiations with the Collier family, the Mackle brothers were able to move forward. They began with a master plan involving 10,839 home sites along with additional areas for apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels. The plan also called for a maze of canals that would make three-fourths of the lots waterfront property. A golf course, yacht club, and additional 275 acres for commercial development, along with five schools and 17 churches, were slated to create an idyllic community. Working from that master plan, Marco Island developed into the community it is today. It is still not fully built out, with approximately 1,700 undeveloped lots available for single-family homes.

In an effort to control their own destiny, the residents decided to incorporate and officially form the City of Marco Island in 1997. While the City has grown a great deal, it has



Table II: Age Distribution

Age Bracket	Percent
Under 10	4.7 %
10 to 20	5.7%
20 to 30	4.6 %
30 to 40	4.8%
40 to 50	8.7 %
50 to 60	13.9%
60 to 70	24.8 %
70 +	32.8 %

Median Age	63.6
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Source: U.S. Census

worked diligently to maintain the serene island atmosphere and the upscale feel that are both so integral to its appeal.

## Geography

Marco Island is the largest barrier island within Southwest Florida’s Ten Thousand Islands area (which extends from Marco Island to Cape Sable). This area forms the transition between the Everglades and the Gulf of Mexico from Naples to Miami. The community covers 24 square miles and varies from four to seven feet above sea level.

## Demographics

Although Marco Island’s official population is a little over 16,000, from December through March it increases to as many as 40,000. In 2030 the

permanent population is anticipated to reach 20,000 with a peak population of 48,270. The more than doubling of the population during the winter season has a significant impact on the services the City delivers.

The Island is home to a much older community than the national average. The median age is 63.6 per the 2010 US Census, whereas the median for the United States as a whole is 37.2. See Table II.

The Island’s racial breakdown is 95.9% of the population is Caucasian, 1.1% Asian, 0.5% African American, and the remainder being people of other races or more than one race. In terms of ethnicity, Hispanics of all races make up roughly 7.1% of the population.

Of those over 25, 3.7% have not graduated from high school, 27.6% have only a high school diploma, 21.5% have attended some college, 6.2% have an associate’s degree, 26.0% have earned a Bachelor’s degree, and 15.1% have completed a graduate or professional degree. The median household income per year is \$72,418 (compared to a statewide median of \$47,827). The Census put the median value of an owner-occupied housing unit at almost \$550,000.

## Climate

Marco Island is typically warm and humid although the gulf breeze helps somewhat. The climate is classified as tropical with distinct wet and dry seasons. Most rain falls between June and October.

Hurricanes do strike the area, and this is reflected in relatively high insurance rates and the need for wind insurance.

## Government

Marco Island follows the Council-Manager form of government. The City Council is comprised of seven members serving staggered terms with elections in November of even-numbered

Table III: Climate Data for Marco Island

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average High °F	75	76	80	83	87	90	91	97	90	87	82	76	84
Average Low °F	54	54	58	62	67	72	73	73	73	68	62	56	64

Source: NOAA

years. Members are limited to two terms or 8 years. The Councilors are all elected at large, and each year they elect a chairman and vice chairman from among their members. Last November four new Council Members were elected into office. Of the other three, one will complete his second term in November of 2014, and the other two are considering whether to run for a second term.

The Council Members are all very bright and successful in their own right, serving because they truly want to make Marco Island a better place. Generally, they are fiscally conservative but not afraid to spend money when it can be definitively demonstrated it will benefit the community. They do disagree – sometimes strongly – and discussions can sometimes get a little testy, but the Councilors are always respectful of each other. They are analytical, ask good questions and are data-driven. Staff members working for this group know they should come prepared.

The City is financially strong but property values (and the resulting revenues from property taxes) have been volatile in the past ten years. The City's Total Assessed Taxable Value in 2004 was \$6.4 billion. With the recent explosion of Florida real estate prices, it climbed to \$12.1 billion in 2007 and then fell an average of 8% per year until reaching \$7.4 billion for 2013. The decline is projected to reverse itself this year, with values estimated to increase by 1.82%. The City's total millage rates have been almost a mirror image with a minor lag. In 2004, the millage was 1.6200. It declined to 1.2833 in 2008 before climbing to the current level of 2.0804 (or 1.96 before debt-service millage). The current millage reflects the rollback rate.

The City's 2013 general fund budget is just over \$20 million and its water/sewer utility enterprise fund budget is a few million dollars larger than that. The City's charter does have one unusual provision, the only such provision in the State of Florida, which states that with some exceptions (such as capital and grants), the annual increase in the City's operating expenses cannot increase more than 3% plus the CPI. The City has a total of 210 full time equivalent employees. The highest staffing levels are Water/Sewer (75 FTE), Police and Fire Rescue (each with 38 FTE), and Parks and Recreation (15 FTE). Every other department has a fewer than 10 FTE. Although there are several prominent business entities on Marco Island, principally the hotels and shopping centers, the primary tax revenues are generated by ad valorem taxes on homes.

## The Challenges

While Marco Island is a true gem, it is not without challenges. As a relatively young community that has grown rapidly, it is still seeking its identity. The community needs to create a vision that the Island's disparate groups can rally around. In the past families, retirees and those interested in tourism have all had different ideas of what is best for the community. At the same time, the Island is also divided in seemingly equal parts by property type (those that own single family homes, condominiums and businesses), each with their own vision and interests. Then there are the original retirees who bought their homes when prices were reasonable, the very wealthy retirees and the families. While the interests of these groups will never be fully congruent and some in the community will always be negative, these groups need to be brought together to develop a vision and strategic plan so everyone agrees on what they want the Island's future to be. Marco Island's leadership can then go forward with a direction and confident it is doing what the community as a whole wishes.

Second, although the City currently has a strong staff, the community's trust in the City government is not what it could be. Prior City Managers have not always communicated well with the elected officials and the public. Mistakes have been made. "Customer service" to the citizens from the City has not always been friendly and helpful. Quality of life issues such as code enforcement and rowdy renters have not always been addressed. In other words, the City government has fallen short from time to time, and it has been noticed. Then perception overtakes reality. The next City Manager will need to play a leading role in restoring the public's confidence in the government.

Third, the City government is financially strong and has already done a great deal to reduce costs. Still some wonder if more can be done. The next manager will be expected to review the operations and determine if the right levels of service are being provided and if additional efficiencies can be achieved. It is also possible that resources could be better allocated. Marco Island does have some costly projects on the horizon. A fire station renovation that could cost \$2.5 million is being discussed. A \$9 million bridge needs to be redone, and a \$2 million community



center project has been put to bid but not approved yet. The latter was previously proposed but at a significantly higher price. Any cost savings that can be found could help finance these projects.

Finally, Marco Island owns a state-of-the-art water and sewer utility. It was not always that way. The City purchased a utility that was not in very good condition and had to spend a great deal of money upgrading it. Nonetheless the utility is faced with a number of concerns. For example, it offers reuse water at \$1.54 per 1,000 gallons versus \$3.85 per 1,000 gallons of potable. Those that do not have reuse lines nearby to tap into for lawn watering are not happy. Further, septic tanks were common on the Island. The City, foreseeing likely future environmental mandates, extended the sewer system and required everyone to connect. Residents found that to be very costly (up to \$20,000 per home) and that was another factor in the loss of trust in the government and helped pit the homeowners against the condominium owners (who were on sewer, and many of whom can take advantage of re-use water). With about a third of the City's employees being in the Utility, the next manager will want to take a tough, hard look at both its operations and the rate structure. City Council is looking for strong experience in this area.

## The Ideal Candidate

Marco Island is a community with high expectations and is looking for an outstanding, competent professional who can partner with the Council in meeting those expectations. The ideal candidate will be a leader who is honest and ethical, one who inspires confidence and has a very professional demeanor. The individual will also know how to build relationships with Council Members in order to foster unity and cohesion at all levels of municipal government. He or she will be responsive,

## City Manager



value transparency and work diligently to insure the elected officials and the community are all well informed. The manager will also recognize that he or she works for seven individuals with different needs and expectations. Nonetheless, the successful City Manager will treat them all the same, provide them with the information they need to make good decisions and work diligently to carry out the direction of the elected body as a whole. At the same time he or she will have a strong sense of self and not be afraid to say “no” or push back when that answer is in the best interests of the community. The ideal candidate will understand politics but not participate in them. Instead, he or she will act as an advisor and focus on helping the Council make Marco Island a better place to live, work and play. The individual will also have a firm understanding of the roles of the Council and the Manager in this form of government. He or she will know how to manage expectations and deliver results so that Council Members do not see a need to micromanage.

The individual will be very analytical and a visionary who can see into the future and create an internal governmental structure/operation that will meet the long term needs of the community. The individual will genuinely like people and care about them. He or she will place a high priority on outstanding customer service and excel at it, while also having extremely high expectations for City staff. Residents are not always right, but if a request must be denied, they do deserve a good explanation of why. They also deserve advice concerning how they might achieve the same result by different means.

The next City Manager will be an excellent communicator and as comfortable talking to a Fortune 500 executive as to an employee in the trenches. The individual will have outstanding listening skills and be analytical – always seeking ways to improve how the City does business. At the same time the Manager will realize that frontline staff members often have the best ideas for optimizing processes. The individual will motivate and mentor staff so that they can reach their peak potential.

The ideal candidate will be a manager who will chart a course and provide direction. Then, after insuring the staff members have the resources they need, the individual will step back and allow them to do their jobs. As projects progress, he or she will stay informed of their progress, and if a project is going astray, the individual will step in – but only if necessary. It will be important to the individual

that deadlines are met and projects are accomplished within budget. Staff members will be held accountable and those who consistently fall below expectations will be asked to find other employment.

Finally, the Manager will understand that his or her credibility will depend on an attention to detail. As noted, the Council is very bright and believes in using data to make decisions. The next Manager will need to be thoroughly prepared and expect the Council to ask many good questions. One who has not done his or her homework, or who fails to communicate, simply will not succeed.

The ideal candidate will have at least seven years’ experience as a City Manager, Deputy City Manager or Assistant City Manager. Alternatively, someone from the private sector should have experience leading a multifaceted organization and reporting to a board. A Bachelor’s degree in business administration, public administration, urban planning or a related field is required, and a Master’s degree is preferred. In terms of competencies, the City Council would prefer a manager who has a strong financial background and a solid understanding of municipal utilities. Experience in Florida and in a coastal community are pluses.

## Compensation

The anticipated salary range is \$130,000 to \$180,000, and the actual salary will depend on qualifications. Additionally, the City offers an extremely attractive benefits package, which will be described as the process unfolds.

## The Most Recent City Manager

The most recent City Manager is retiring after 3 years of service as the City Manager.

## Appointment, Evaluation and Removal

The City Manager is appointed by an affirmative vote of 5 of the 7 Council Members. Removal requires a majority vote. The City Council will review the City Manager annually and the City Manager conduct annual performance reviews of all those reporting to him or her. Furthermore, the City Manager will ensure that all other employees are evaluated at least annually.



## Residency

The City Manager is required to reside in the City, although the City Charter allows the City Council to waive the requirement.

## How to Apply

Resumes should be e-mailed to [Recruit35@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit35@cb-asso.com) by August 2, 2013. Hard copy and faxed resumes will not be accepted. Questions should be addressed to Sean Baenziger at (561) 351-9350 or Colin Baenziger of Colin Baenziger & Associates at (561) 707-3537.

## Confidentiality

Under Florida law, all applications are a public record once submitted. As a practical matter the media generally do not show interest until after the close of the recruitment period and often even later in the process.

## The Process

Candidates will be screened between August 3 and September 15. Interviews will take place October 3 and 4 with a selection shortly thereafter.

## Other Important Information

The City of Marco Island is an Equal Opportunity Employer and strongly encourages minorities and women to apply. It is a drug-free workplace. A Veteran's Preference will be awarded if applicable under Florida law.

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES  
EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

City Manager  
Marco Island, FL