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**OAKLAND PARK CITY MANAGER JOHN STUNSON
HONORED WITH AWARD FOR CAREER EXCELLENCE**

(Eds: JPG photo attached)

OAKLAND PARK, Fla...(September 19, 2006) – Oakland Park City Manager John Stunson has received his share of accolades and awards during a distinguished career with the municipal governments of Oakland Park, Fort Lauderdale and North Lauderdale.

But he was still humbled on September 10th when he was awarded what is considered the pre-eminent honor in his profession – the “Mark E. Keane Award for Career Excellence” by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) at their 92nd annual conference in San Antonio, Texas.

According to the ICMA, Stunson’s award “recognizes an outstanding local government administrator who has fostered representative democracy by enhancing the effectiveness of local elected officials and by consistently initiating creative and successful programs.”

For Stunson, who began his second stint at Oakland Park’s City Manager in 2001, the award is an affirmation on the entire City and something he feels compelled to share with the City’s elected officials, employees and residents.

“The last five years have not been easy for any of us, but we managed to get Oakland Park back on firm financial footing and positioned the City for some exciting growth and redevelopment,” Stunson said. “It may be a cliché, but the fact is I am only as successful as the people around me and with our Mayor and City Commission, the city’s employees and the involvement of our residents, Oakland Park would never be considered for such a prestigious award.”

PAGE TWO – Oakland Park City Manager John Stunson

Oakland Park Mayor Steven R. Arnst spoke about Stunson's relationship with the City and of the reputation he has earned amongst elected officials at Oakland Park City Hall, the Broward County Governmental Center, the State Capitol in Tallahassee and United States Congress in Washington, D.C.

"Not only is John a tremendous asset to our City Commission, but also to the community our Commission serves," said the three-time Mayor. "He strives to attain the vision of Oakland Park which is a friendly small town with the opportunities of a big city."

The ICMA Conference Program recognized some of Stunson's successes in Oakland Park, including:

- Developing Oakland Park's vision and mission statement, as well as the city's values of Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence
- Securing funding for capital improvement projects
- The City's Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) in the prime area between Interstate 95 and Federal Highway
- The successful annexation of North Andrews Gardens, Twin Lakes South and the Sartori area of Mira Lago and Montage-by-Lake which increased the City's population by more than 10,000
- A transit-oriented ordinance to help redevelopment of the North Dixie Highway corridor
- The Federal Highway Business and Entertainment District ordinance that also promotes green building
- Upgrading the City's cable system and adding an AM radio station
- Became active with the National League of Cities
- Applied for and received record funding and grants to solve drainage issues and create more park and recreational facilities – including the City's first Dog Park opening this Saturday
- Increasing citizen involvement through a Local Government Academy (LGA) and a community volunteer program

Ross Marinaro – an Oakland Park resident and member of the City's inaugural Local Government Academy – gives Stunson high marks for his efforts.

"Having been annexed into the City of Oakland Park just a short one year ago, John has made the transition seamless and his desire to not only address the issue being presented he always looks to the future with thorough answers that not only will fix the problem but foresee how it can be eliminated from reoccurring," said Marinaro, who serves on the Board of Director for the North Andrews Neighborhood Association (NANA). "A man of his word, John can be trusted to first analyze a situation, construct options on how to proceed, and follow up to see that it has been done."

PAGE THREE – Oakland Park City Manager John Stunson

Stunson wasted little time in getting back to work in his office on the second floor of City Hall when he returned from San Antonio on Wednesday.

“Our mission is far from complete, but we have a clear vision of where we are heading,” Stunson said. “People are beginning to refer to Oakland Park with positive adjectives and taking a more active role in shaping the future our community.”

Stunson, who has resided in South Florida for approximately 50 years, graduated from Miami Edison High School and received his Bachelor’s Degree from Florida Atlantic University. He is currently completing his Doctorate in Public administration from Nova Southeastern University.

According to a growing legion, Oakland Park is “a city on the move” and Stunson clearly appears to be a man on a mission who is leading city to new heights.

About ICMA

The **Award for Excellence** was originally established in 1984 in honor of former ICMA Executive Director Mark E. Keane.

ICMA is the premier local government leadership and management organization. Its mission is to create excellence in local governance by developing and advocating professional management of local government worldwide. ICMA provides member support; publications, data, and information; peer and results-oriented assistance; and training and professional development to more than 8,200 city, town, and county experts and other individuals throughout the world.

The leadership and management decisions made by ICMA's members affect more than 400 million individuals in thousands of communities, from small towns with populations of a few hundred to metropolitan areas serving several million.

About Oakland Park

The City of Oakland Park was incorporated in 1929 and has grown to its current population of 42,421. Oakland Park’s “Main Street” downtown district revitalization project has led to a substantial increase in commercial and residential development. Oakland Park is poised for significant growth with the convenient access of its eastern Broward County location. By 2008, Oakland Park will be recognized as a friendly “small town” with safe and attractive neighborhoods, quality schools, outstanding parks and exceptional recreation programs, with the social, cultural and business opportunities of a big city.