



Cape Coral, Florida

(Population: 154,300)

Located in Lee County on Florida's Gulf Coast, Cape Coral ranks 152nd in the nation in terms of population and 64th largest in terms of land area (covering approximately 120 square miles). The latter makes it larger than such better known places such as Baltimore, Boston, Orlando, Sacramento, Seattle and St. Louis. The City is approximately 12 miles west of Fort Myers, 130 miles south of Tampa, and 150 miles (by road) northwest of Miami and Fort Lauderdale.

Cape Coral is a peninsular city lying between the scenic Caloosahatchee River, Charlotte Harbor and the Intracoastal Waterway. In 2007, the U.S. Census Bureau ranked the City as the fourth fastest growing city in the nation among cities with a population exceeding 100,000. Since then, with the economic downturn, growth has slowed dramatically. Approximately 1/3 of Cape Coral build-out population is estimated at 400,000. When fully built-out, Cape Coral will likely rank among the top 50 cities in the nation in terms of population. Needless to say, Cape Coral is a community

with incredible potential and, with building at a virtual standstill, now is the time to chart its course into the future.

In terms of amenities, Cape Coral definitely has them. The climate is temperate – with 355 days of sunshine. Yes it does rain here – the City actually gets rain 145 days of the year – but at least it is not snow and the sun generally pops out soon after the rain stops. So what is there to do in Cape Coral? If you like the water, Cape Coral is paradise on earth. Let's start with its over 400 miles of canals (more than any other city in the world) and most are navigable - some have access to the Gulf of Mexico. So boating and fishing are well established activities in the City. A sandy beach and fishing pier on the Caloosahatchee River can be found at the Yacht Basin & Club. With its slides and lazy river, the 12 acre Sun Splash Water Park is a great place for the family. The City has seven golf courses within its boundaries and 19 more lie within a 10 mile drive of the City's center. Culture and festivals? The Historical Museum,

the Art Studio, the Cape Coral Art League, and the Cultural Park Theater (a 187-seat performing arts facility that serves as home to community actors) are all within its boundaries. In nearby Fort Myers the Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall (1,763 seats) is home to all kinds of entertainment from Broadway quality plays, nationally known artists including musicians, comedians, and so on, not to mention being home to the Southwest Florida Symphony. Naples, with its cultural attractions, is 35 miles south and Sarasota, 85 miles north. The Cape Coral Festival takes place in mid-January drawing around 300 artists and crafts people as well as over 100,000 visitors. A number of major league baseball teams appear in the area every spring and soon thereafter the minor leagues start so it is easy to catch a game if you like. If cruises are something you enjoy, many depart for the Caribbean, Mexico, and Central America from the Port of Tampa (130 miles north). Air Travel? Southwest Florida International Airport in Fort Myers is 30 minutes away and offers good service. A bit further away are Sarasota, Tampa, West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Miami and Orlando International Airports.

Since the economic downturn, housing in Cape Coral has become very affordable. Further, the variety is very good. You can buy a townhouse or a 10 acre spread at a reasonable price and still be within the city limits. In fact, parts of the City have a very rural feel. Elementary and secondary education is provided by the Lee County Board of Education (eight elementary schools, six middle schools and eight elementary schools) and by a city-owned charter school system (two elementary schools, one middle school and a high school). Overall, a child can get a very good education in Cape Coral. Finally, neither the City nor the state has an income tax.

But what makes Cape Coral truly different from other cities its size is that it retains a small town sense of community. It is a clean, safe city that is, in many ways, a melting pot within a melting pot. While English is the first language of 87% of the residents, for 8% it is Spanish, for 2% it is German. The others are primarily Italian, French and Tagalog (spoken typically in the Philippines). More importantly, residents care about their neighbors and when they need help, they pitch in. The City's



undeveloped property provides a feeling of open space – and opportunity.

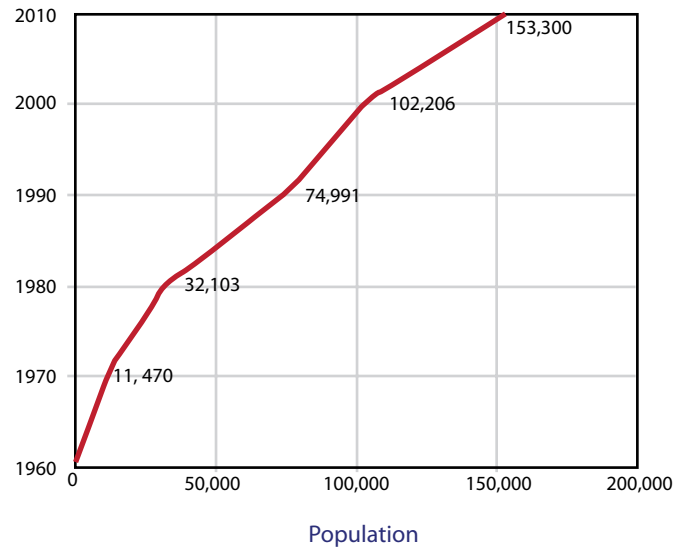
History

The Calusa (“shell people”) Indians were the first significant inhabitants of the area establishing communities in the area 3500 years ago. They thrived until the first Europeans arrived with their diseases (such as small pox and measles) and the Indian population was decimated. The area’s next inhabitants were the Seminoles.

The area became part of the Spanish territory of Florida and was ceded to the United States in 1819. Florida became the 27th state in 1845. Even so, for the next 100 years the Cape Coral area was largely uninhabited and undeveloped. By the 1950’s its only prominent features were pine trees and grazing cattle, aside from an uninhabited hunting camp.

Cape Coral, as it exists today, began as the brain child of Leonard and Jack Rosen, the owners of Gulf American Corporation in the early 1950’s. In 1957 they purchased 103 square miles of land for \$678,000

Table 1: Cape Coral Population Growth



and began planning their “waterfront wonderland.” Their project was one of the first master planned communities (and the largest) in the United States with over 135,000 platted lots. In the first five months, the Rosens sold over \$5 million worth of land and in 1958 ground was broken for the first home. The idea was to sell lots to retirees so they would have time to build the amenities later. The area incorporated as a city in 1970 – about the same time the Rosens sold out to General

Table II: Principal Cape Coral Employers, 2010

Rank	Employer	Number of Employees	% of Total City Employment
1	Lee County School District	2,318	3.36 %
2	City of Cape Coral	1,786	2.59 %
3	Publix Super Market	1,665	2.41 %
4	Lee Memorial Health System	900	1.30 %
5	Wal-Mart	600	.87 %
6	Home Depot	420	.61 %
7	A Direct Dish Satellite	300	.43 %
8	The Breeze Corporation	260	.38 %
9	Lowes	250	.36 %
10	Gulf Coast Village	250	.36 %

Acceptance Corporation (GAC). In 1975, GAC filed for bankruptcy. That did not stop the area from continuing its rapid growth, however. (See Table I on pg 3.)

Commerce

As with many Florida pre-platted communities with an anticipated population of retirees, business and commerce (aside from that which was to serve the retirees) was an afterthought in Cape Coral. As such the economy is largely service driven and is still seeking to establish an appropriate commercial base. (See Table II on pg 3.)

Geography

Cape Coral lies approximately 130 miles on Florida’s Gulf Coast. It is flat, approximately 5 feet above sea level and just inland from the Gulf Coast. The City covers approximately 120 square miles (110 square miles are land and 10 are water).

Climate

The average high in the summer is 92°F and the average low is 74°F. In the winter, the high averages 76°F and the low 55°F. (See Table III.)

Cape Coral is impacted from time to time by hurricanes. Most category one (75 to 95 mph) and two (95 to 110 mph) level storms cause damage but are not overly significant events and are recovered from relatively quickly. Further, the greater the distance

from the eye, the less damage that is done. 40 miles generally makes a significant difference, for example. Over the past 50 years, southwest Florida has been hit by three major storms – Hurricanes Donna (category four – 1960), Charley (category four – 2004) and Wilma (category three – 2005).

Demographics

Although the Rosens originally targeted retirees, Cape Coral is a relatively young community with a median resident age of 41.6. In fact, 25% of the community is under 20 years of age, 31% is between 20 and 45, 15% is between 45 and 64 and 20% is over 65. In terms of racial composition, 93% of the community is Caucasian with African Americans (2% overall) and other groups making up the remainder. Hispanics of all races constitute 8% of the total. The estimate median annual household income in 2010 was a little over \$43,400. Only 5.3% of the City’s families were considered to be below poverty level. Approximately 85% of the residents over 25 years of age are high school graduates, 17% have graduated from college and 6% have graduate or professional degrees. As of 2010, the number of residents attending elementary, middle or high school totaled 15,833. Another 3,442 were attending college or graduate school.

The Government

The City’s mission statement is, “We, the City of Cape Coral, will meet our community’s needs through the efficient and professional delivery of quality services,

Table III: Climate data for Cape Coral, FL

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Normal High °F	75	77	80	85	89	91	92	92	90	86	81	77	85
Normal Low °F	54	55	59	63	68	73	74	74	74	69	62	56	65
Rain in Inches	2.2	2.1	2.7	1.7	3.4	9.8	9.0	9.5	7.9	2.6	1.7	1.6	54.2
Avg. number of Rainy Days	7	8	7	6	10	18	22	22	20	11	7	7	145

with pride and integrity, in an open, honest spirit of teamwork, respecting the self-worth of the individual and the environment”

The City is governed by a elected Council composed of a Mayor and seven members (all of which vote). All are elected at large but the Council Members must reside in the district they represent. All serve staggered four year terms (limited to two consecutive terms). The most recent election was in November of 2011, three of the four incumbents were defeated. Those who were elected felt the City, under its prior majority, was headed in the wrong direction. For the previous four years, politics in the City had been controversial and an effort had been made to privatize major portions of the government. Since the election, a sense of calm has returned to City Hall. Media trucks are no longer routinely parked outside the building waiting for a story. Union relations, which were tattered, are being repaired. The City recently reached a contractual agreement with the police union leadership in less than an hour. It is anticipated the membership will approve it in spite of the fact that it calls for a pay cut of 2% and a pension cut of 3%. It is also hoped that an agreement will be reached quickly with the firefighters. Overall, eight union represent city employees.

The Mayor and Council appoint a City Manager to oversee the City’s day-to-day operations which include: planning, building and zoning, code enforcement, engineering, fire/rescue, parks and recreation, police, public works (including sanitation), utilities (water and wastewater), and stormwater. The City also oversees a yacht basin, golf course and water park. Overall, the City has approximately 1,600 full-time equivalent positions. The largest group is police employees (22% of the work force) followed by utilities (17%), fire (13%), parks and recreation (12%), general government (8%), stormwater (7%), public works (5%), and transportation (5%). The remaining 11% perform the other functions ranging from community development to operating the water park. The staff

is competent and largely committed to providing high quality services and customer service to the community’s residents and businesses.

The City has a millage rate for 2011/2012 of 7.9702. Its total funds budget is \$445.1 million. The general fund budget is \$135.6 million, special revenue funds of \$45.1 million, debt service of 2.5 million, capital projects of .7 million, \$223.7 million for enterprise funds (primarily utilities) and \$37.5 million for internal services.

The Issues

The first and foremost challenge is financial. From 2001 the City’s total assessed value grew from \$4.2 billion to \$21.7 billion in 2007. It is projected to be 8.7 billion in 2012, a drop of 60% since the 2007 peak. Part of that drop can be attributed to the economic downturn and the rest to actions taken in the state legislature, such as Amendment One to the Florida Constitution. As a result, even with raising the millage from 4.7698 to the current rate of 7.9702, property taxes receipts have decreased from a high of approximately \$103.5million in 2007 to a projected \$66.3 in 2012. Needless to say that decrease has placed a great deal of stress on the City’s budget, particularly given the residents are very sensitive to tax increases. Spending cuts have been made and staffing reduced. While the City is hopeful that the situation has been stabilized, the next City Manager will need to take a hard look at the budget and operations to, at a minimum, keep the City on track. Costs continue to rise but revenues are largely stagnant.

It should be noted that the revenue sources in Cape Coral are limited. The City has resisted imposing the utility taxes, fire assessments and so on that are common in many cities. An important aspect of this issue is post-employment benefits. Some of the cuts were done through early retirements and that is an on-going post-employment cost. Second, in the

long run, the City needs to focus on creating more jobs within its boundaries. At build-out, the City could have a population of over 400,000, and it would be best if the majority of its residents did not need to commute elsewhere. The City's downtown is limited as is its commercial / industrial base. Economic development is badly needed. Third, when the community was planned, it was anticipated that the amenities of water and sewer would come later. Thus, major portions of the City do not have utilities. The City, during the boom years that most did not see ending, made a major investment in its utilities. In fact, it has largely prepared for its build-out population in that area. Unfortunately, when the downturn occurred, it left the City relying on a smaller than anticipated base to cover the system's costs. The resulting financial situation led to financial stress and in part to a turnover in membership on the City Council. The good news is that the City is well prepared for its future in terms of utility capacity. Getting utility service to undeveloped areas of the City and into homes that are presently on wells and septic will be, however, costly and a major challenge. Fourth, work needs to be done to create / improve the City's image. Splits in the community and the controversy of the past two years have been hard on both the elected officials and staff. It has also led to a significant amount of media coverage. In some ways, Cape Coral exists in an area where there are more media than news to cover. A positive outlook and outreach – including consensus building, encouraging teamwork, earning trust (of the public and the employees) and increasing morale – are needed.

The Ideal Candidate

Cape Coral is looking for a quiet, unassuming leader – someone who thinks before speaking and who will help the City overcome the contentiousness of the past four years. The individual will build bridges and be outgoing, confident, positive, energetic, proactive, responsive and involved. He/she will be a people person – approachable and easy to talk to. The next manager will not be just someone who works for the City Council but someone who will partner with the Council Members to solve problems and rebuild the City's



image. The individual will also serve as an advisor to the elected officials and support them. She/he will keep the Council Members well informed and ensure there are no surprises. The Council is looking for someone who can lead by virtue of their knowledge, experience, demeanor, personality and training. The individual needs to be someone who thinks ahead and anticipates problems so they can be remedied before they become significant issues. He/she will be someone of high integrity and who is not afraid to be very straightforward (in the appropriate settings) while also being diplomatic. The Council is looking for a strong individual with a backbone. "Yes men" and "yes women" should not apply. The individual will also have a sense of humor and a thick skin. She/he will also be customer service oriented and recognize that while the customer is not always right, the individual does deserve a fair hearing and to be treated with dignity and respect. The customer also deserves an explanation even if the answer is no.

The next manager will need to quickly build trust. Being humble and willing to admit a mistake will be important to establishing credibility. The individual will be analytical always asking why and why not. In these times of scarce resources, he/she will always be looking for ways to improve efficiencies and encouraging the staff to do the same. The manager will also understand the need for transparency in government and have outstanding communication skills. The individual will listen carefully and be as comfortable talking to a company president as to a laborer in the field. The selected candidate will be friendly. She/he will not spend all his/her time behind a desk but will be a visible figure in the field, the departments and the community.

The next manager will understand the importance of the day-to-day but will not let it consume his/her attention and preclude preparation for the future and the City's long term success. He/she

will take the Council's priorities, whatever his/her own feelings, and implement them. The individual will have high expectations for the staff and set high standards. The next manager will realize one person cannot do it all and will utilize subordinate staff. He/she will further realize that everything all cannot be accomplished in one year. The individual will mentor and delegate appropriately. The next manager will demand accountability. She/he will also recognize the importance of being a buffer between the elected officials and the staff.

Skill in economic development, utilities, budget and finance will be important. Cape Coral needs to create an economic job base and encouraging businesses will be important. Intergovernmental relations will also be important.

The ideal candidate will have a minimum of ten years of progressively responsible experience in public or private sector management and at least two years as manager overseeing the efforts of at least 200 employees. A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, with a major in administration, management or a related field, is required. A Master's degree is preferred.

Finally, the next manager will recognize Cape Coral's tremendous potential and that now, while the economy is slow, is the time to prepare so the needed pieces will be in place when growth returns.

The Vacancy

Upon taking office, the newly constituted majority of the City Council opted to go a different direction and terminated the City Manager's contract. The process went relatively smoothly without any undue acrimony. The current interim is the Parks and Recreation Director. He has no interest in the position. He laughingly says he prefers volley balls to hand grenades.

Compensation

The salary range is from \$120,000 to \$195,000. Benefits are very good.

Residency

The City Manager can reside outside the City only with the express approval of the City Council.

Confidentiality

Under Florida's public records act, once an application is submitted, it is deemed a public record. As a practical matter, we generally do not divulge applicant names until after the closing date. We do expect significant media coverage of this search as it progresses.

How to Apply

E-mail your resume to RecruitTwo@cb-asso.com by January 27, 2012. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Direct your questions to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

The Process

Applications will be screened between January 27th and February 27th. Finalists will be selected in early March and interviews held on March 16th and 17th with a selection shortly thereafter.

Other Important Information

Cape Coral is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages minorities to apply. The City values its small town/ neighborhood feel and is committed to serving its residents and businesses in a cost effective manner.

