

Dear Members of the City Commission,

I am excited to apply for the City Manager position in Fort Pierce. With over two decades of leadership experience spanning public safety, municipal operations, home building and development, and risk management, I am confident in my ability to lead Fort Pierce toward sustainable growth and enhanced community engagement.

My career began in public service as a Firefighter and EMT for the Fort Lee Fire Department, later transitioning into law enforcement. These roles equipped me with a strong foundation in public safety, emergency response, and community engagement. Building on this experience, I entered the home building and development industry, where I have successfully overseen the construction of projects exceeding \$2.2 billion in value, managed large-scale initiatives, and led teams that ranged from 2 to 145 individuals. Complementing these experiences is my expertise in risk management, developed through my insurance licensure and professional work in mitigating liabilities and protecting organizational interests. This blend of skills uniquely positions me to balance public service, economic development, and community well-being.

Key qualifications that align with your requirements include:

- **Extensive Development Experience:** My tenure in the home building and development industry includes leadership roles at JNS Homes/Shoreham Capital, Ryan Homes, and Toll Brothers. I have worked on Build-to-Rent (BTR) and Single-Family Rental (SFR) developments, overseeing production, affordable dwelling units, and luxury home construction. This background ensures a thorough understanding of land use planning, zoning, and the infrastructure needs of growing communities.
- **Public Safety and Crisis Management:** My early career in emergency services and law enforcement has provided me with critical skills in public safety, crisis management, and fostering a secure community environment.
- **Risk Management Expertise:** As a licensed insurance professional, I have an in-depth understanding of risk identification, mitigation strategies, and regulatory compliance. This knowledge allows me to proactively address challenges and develop effective policies that safeguard the city's resources and reputation.
- **Strategic and Fiscal Leadership:** I have successfully prepared and managed multi-million-dollar budgets, streamlined operational processes, and implemented cost-saving measures. My ability to interpret technical reports and make data-driven decisions has been instrumental in delivering impactful results.
- **Municipal and Community Leadership:** My work with Habitat for Humanity and disaster relief efforts reflects my commitment to community development and social responsibility. As a small business owner in Wellington, my wife Amanda and I are actively engaged in supporting local charities, further demonstrating my passion for strengthening communities.

- **Team Building and Collaboration:** Whether leading diverse teams in home building projects or unifying municipal departments, I excel at fostering collaboration, driving efficiency, and ensuring alignment toward shared goals.

Fort Pierce's vibrant community is not without its challenges. One pressing issue is the city's ongoing struggle with stormwater management and flooding, particularly in its low-lying areas. This not only threatens infrastructure but also disrupts residents' lives. If selected as City Manager, I would work to establish a robust stormwater management plan, incorporating green infrastructure solutions such as permeable pavement, bioswales, and enhanced drainage systems. These measures, coupled with seeking grants and partnerships with state and federal agencies, would help mitigate flooding risks while preserving Fort Pierce's natural beauty.

Fort Pierce's rich cultural heritage, thriving waterfront, and potential for continued growth resonate deeply with me. My combined experience in municipal operations, public safety, home building, and risk management positions me to address the unique challenges and opportunities facing the city head-on.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss how my background and vision align with the needs of Fort Pierce. Please feel free to contact me at 703-307-6261 or romero12191@gmail.com to schedule an interview. Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the possibility of serving the residents of Fort Pierce as their City Manager.

Sincerely,

Rudy Romero




RODOLFO "RUDY" ROMERO

Sales & Operations Executive

Profile

Over 15 years of proven success in driving business growth, managing large teams, and overseeing multi-million-dollar projects & organizations in construction, real estate development, retail & risk management space. Adept at leading sales initiatives that close high-value deals, enhancing operational efficiency, and implementing strategic cost-control measures. Known for cutting costs by up to 35%, improving project timelines, and boosting profitability. Demonstrates ability to align cross-functional departments, optimize resource allocation, and deliver exceptional customer satisfaction while consistently exceeding sales and performance targets.

 703-307-6261

 romero12191@gmail.com

 West Palm Beach, FL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Expertise

- **Leadership & Team Development:** Extensive experience leading teams of varying sizes (2 to 212 people), focusing on effective management, team cohesion, and driving high performance.
- **Homebuilding & Real Estate Development:** Over 3,000 homes built and experience with production home, build to rent (BTR) and single Family rental (SFR) projects, luxury homes (UHNW), and commercial projects.
- **Operations & Process Optimization:** Strong background in streamlining operations within homebuilding, emergency services, and small - midsize businesses, with a focus on increasing efficiency and maximizing resources.
- **Business Expansion & Strategic Planning:** Proven track record in developing business plans for expansion, including market growth across Florida, Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Texas. Growing target markets from Pre-Seed stage to Exit stage.
- **Community Engagement & Nonprofit Collaboration:** Actively involved in community-centered organizations and charitable initiatives, with experience supporting Habitat for Humanity, Movies Making A Difference, Red Cross, Real Life Childrens Ranch, Masonic activities, and partnerships with organizations like Go Green Dry Cleaners, The Bedford Group Inc, Palm Beach Animal Shelter, and Crunch Fitness.

Education

B.B.A in Business Management
Liberty University
2018-2019

A.A.S in Criminal Justice & Political Science
Bergen Communiy College
2009 - 2012

Licenses & Certifications & Honors

- Real Estate License | Florida
- 2-20 P&C License | USA
- Effective Negotiation, Influence, and Conflict Resolution | Ryan Homes
- Emotional Intelligence and Leadership | Ryan Homes
- OSHA 10 | 2014
- Critical Incident Stress Management | NOVA CJTA
- Magna Cum Laude | Liberty University
- Distinguished Builder | Ryan Homes X3
- Regional MVP | Ryan Homes X2
- Division MVP | Ryan Homes
- *Additional credentials available upon request*



Work Experience

2023 – Present

The Bedford Group INC

Chief Executive Officer

- As CEO of The Bedford Group, I lead strategic planning and operational execution across all departments, including sales, operations, finance, human resources, customer service, marketing, and compliance, within a fast-paced startup environment. I drove a 15% increase in annual profits by implementing a growth strategy across multiple verticals, expanding service offerings, and penetrating new markets. My leadership is focused on setting and achieving aggressive targets, streamlining operations to improve efficiency by 21%, and driving strong customer acquisition and retention rates. This role emphasizes high-level decision-making to optimize team performance, scale operations, and deliver exceptional client satisfaction.
- **Key Accomplishments:**
 - **Revenue Growth:** Achieved a 15% annual profit increase by implementing a multi-vertical growth strategy and penetrating new markets.
 - **Customer Acquisition and Retention:** Drove a 30% increase in new client acquisitions and improved retention rates through targeted marketing and exceptional client service.
 - **Market Expansion:** Successfully entered new geographic markets, including multi-state regions, increasing market share and diversifying revenue streams.

2022– 2023

JNS Homes

Vice President of Operations

- As Vice President of Operations, I played a pivotal role in increasing company-wide productivity by 20% and reducing costs by 35%. Collaborating directly with the CEO, I optimized the construction and sales processes, which led to measurable improvements in both resource allocation and material efficiency. My strong sales background was key to identifying and implementing policies that enhanced operational execution, resulting in streamlined projects and improved customer/investor experience.
- **Key Accomplishments:**
 - Spearheaded operational initiatives, resulting in a 20% increase in overall productivity.
 - Collaborated directly with the CEO/Owner, providing hands-on leadership to improve departmental efficiency across construction, sales, marketing, and HR.
 - Identified and implemented innovative technologies, improving resource allocation and cutting material waste by 28%.
 - Developed and enforced operations-related policies, resulting in more consistent execution and compliance across the organization.
 - **Reason for Leaving:** Contract ended

2021– 2022

Toll Brothers

Director Of Construction (APM)

- I oversaw the planning, scheduling, and management of residential projects, focusing on delivering projects on time and within budget. Leading a team of 15 construction professionals, I reduced project completion time by 18% and ensured that all projects met high-quality standards. I also played a key role in contract negotiation, risk management, and ensuring successful project outcomes.
- **Key Accomplishments:**
 - Directed the planning, scheduling, and management of multi-family and single-family residential projects, with a focus on on-time and within-budget delivery.
 - Led a team of 15 construction professionals, improving project management efficiency and reducing completion time by 18%.
 - Coordinated with internal and external stakeholders, including architects, engineers, and subcontractors, to ensure high-quality project outcomes.
 - Oversaw contract negotiation, budgeting, and value engineering to ensure cost-effective construction processes.
 - Secured permits, managed risk, and resolved project bottlenecks, achieving a 95% success rate in meeting project deadlines.
- **Reason for Leaving:** Division land position changed.



Work Experience

2020 – 2021

Ryan Homes

Division & Region Financial Cost Manager (CFO)

- Oversaw financial planning, budgeting, and analysis for a \$450M+ division. My efforts streamlined vendor bidding processes, reducing costs by 32%, and significantly improved project turnover by reducing construction cycle times by 27 days. I worked closely with cross-functional teams to align financial and operational processes, ensuring transparency and better decision-making for senior management.
- **Key Accomplishments:**
 - Managed financial planning and analysis, overseeing a \$450M+ budget and ensuring adherence to corporate financial goals.
 - Streamlined vendor bidding processes, reducing costs by 32% through competitive analysis and optimized contracts.
 - Reduced construction cycle times by 27 days, significantly improving project turnover and increasing profitability.
 - Collaborated with purchasing, construction, and homeowner services to align financial and operational processes.
 - Regularly presented financial reports to senior management, improving transparency and decision-making efficiency.
- **Reason for leaving:** COVID - promotions put on hold.

2019 – 2020

Ryan Homes

Regional Special Assignments Manager

- Controlled financial operations across production, sales, marketing, warranty, and land development, playing a vital role in reducing project costs by 19%. I also collaborated with sales teams to develop marketing initiatives that increased customer traffic by 22%. My ability to analyze market competitiveness helped optimize vendor selection and ensure consistent cost control.
- **Key Accomplishments:**
 - Controlled all financial aspects related to production, sales, marketing, warranty, and land development.
 - Reduced project costs by implementing effective cost-control measures, resulting in a 19% reduction in overall expenses.
 - Collaborated with sales teams to develop marketing initiatives that increased customer traffic by 22%.
 - Conducted competitive analysis to optimize vendor selection and ensure market competitiveness.

2018 – 2019

Ryan Homes

Division Special Assignments Manager

- In this role, I managed production and land development teams, focusing on timely delivery and customer satisfaction. My leadership improved project delivery timelines by 48%, and my collaboration with municipal authorities reduced project delays by 32%. I also developed company-wide tools that reduced spending by 31%.
- **Key Accomplishments:**
 - Led production and land development teams, ensuring timely delivery of high-quality homes while maintaining a 90% customer satisfaction rate.
 - Managed the activities of project management teams, improving project delivery timelines by 48%.
 - Assisted in expediting community approvals and development processes, reducing project delays by 32%.
 - Created new VBA and Excel tools that were shared company-wide, reducing spending by 31%.

2016 – 2018

Ryan Homes

Division Project Manager



Work Experience

- Led construction projects from preconstruction to close-out, overseeing a team of 10 supervisors and managing 650+ units. I ensured projects were completed on time and within budget, delivering high-quality results with a 98% customer satisfaction rate.
- **Key Accomplishments:**
- Led construction projects from preconstruction to close-out, overseeing a team of 10 supervisors.
- Improved budgetary adherence and cost controls, reducing average project costs by 12%.
- Managed subcontractor selection and coordination, ensuring high-quality construction standards across 650+ units.
- Delivered on-time project completions while exceeding customer satisfaction scores, with a 98% average rating.

2014 - 2016

Ryan Homes

Division Production Supervisor

- Supervised the construction of 350+ residential homes, maintaining a 95% on-time completion rate. Through improved communication and post-construction issue resolution, I reduced warranty service costs by 10% and boosted team productivity with training programs.
- **Key Accomplishments:**
- Supervised the construction of 350+ residential homes, maintaining a 95% on-time completion rate.
- Improved customer satisfaction through proactive communication and resolution of post-construction issues.
- Reduced warranty service costs by 10% through improved construction practices and subcontractor accountability.
- Enhanced team productivity by implementing effective training programs and process improvements.

2014- 2015

Pohanaka Chevrolet

Sales & Marketing Manager

2012- 2014

City Of Alexandria

Law Enforcement Officer

2011- 2013

Borough of Cliffside Park

Law Enforcement Officer & Dispatcher

2009- 2011

Hackensack University Medical Center

Emergency Medical Technician & ATLS\ACLS Trama #201 Unit

2007- 2009

Twin Tower Auto Service Center

Petroleum Service Attendant & Mechanic

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

2006- 2012

Borough Of Fort Lee

Fire Fighter & Hazmat Tech (Squad #6 & Engine #4) | Port Authority 2nd Due

2009- 2011

Palisades Park Police

Emergency Medical Technician

2010- 2012

Borough Of Englewood Cliffs

Emergency Medical Technician

2010- 2012

Borough Of Fort Lee

Emergency Medical Technician

Rodolfo “Rudy” Romero
City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

1. Please list your previous jobs/positions going back at least 10 years, plus any previous jobs/positions beyond 10 years that is related to the position of City Manager. Please include the following:

Position #1

- a. Position start and end dates.**
 - March 2024- Current
 - b. Position title and organization.**
 - Chief Executive Officer | The Bedford Group Inc.
 - c. To whom you directly reported.**
 - Board of Directors
 - d. Ending salary.**
 - \$250,000 + Equity
 - e. Population of community served.**
 - 8 different states (FL, TX, NC, SC, VA, NY, NJ, WI)
 - f. Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 35
 - g. Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 34
 - h. Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$1.2M
-

Position #2

- a. Position start and end dates.**
 - March 2023- 2024
- b. Position title and organization.**
 - Fractional Chief Operating Officer | The Bedford Group Inc.
- c. To whom you directly reported.**
 - Chief Executive Officer
- d. Ending salary.**
 - \$90,000 + Equity
- e. Population of community served.**
 - 4 different states (Fl, Va, TX, NY)
- f. Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 35
- g. Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 33
- h. Total budget of the organization.**

Rodolfo “Rudy” Romero
City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

- \$500k
-

Position #3

- a. Position start and end dates.**
 - June 2023- August 2024
 - b. Position title and organization.**
 - Senior Vice President of Operations | Beattie Development Corporation
 - c. To whom you directly reported.**
 - Chief Executive Officer & Owner
 - d. Ending salary.**
 - \$220,000
 - e. Population of community served.**
 - Lee, Collier, Monroe, Hendry, & Charlotte Counties
 - f. Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 187
 - g. Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 185
 - h. Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$250M
-

Position #4

- a. Position start and end dates.**
 - March 2022- June 2023
 - b. Position title and organization.**
 - Vice President of Operations | JNS Homes
 - c. To whom you directly reported.**
 - Chief Executive Officer & Owner
 - d. Ending salary.**
 - \$200,000
 - e. Population of community served.**
 - Florida & New York
 - f. Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 28
 - g. Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 27
 - h. Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$125M
-

Rodolfo “Rudy” Romero
City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

Position #5

- **Position start and end dates.**
 - October 2021- March 2022
 - **Position title and organization.**
 - Area Production Manager | Toll Brothers
 - **To whom you directly reported.**
 - Division President
 - **Ending salary.**
 - \$150,000
 - **Population of community served.**
 - Martin, Palm Beach, & Broward Counties
 - **Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 55
 - **Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 45
 - **Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$265M
-

Position #6

- a. **Position start and end dates.**
 - January 2020- October 2021
 - b. **Position title and organization.**
 - Division Financial Cost Manager | Ryan Homes
 - c. **To whom you directly reported.**
 - Division Manager
 - d. **Ending salary.**
 - \$135,000
 - e. **Population of community served.**
 - Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, Palm Beach, Broward Miami-Dade Counties
 - f. **Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 75
 - g. **Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 55
 - h. **Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$450M
-

Position #7

Rodolfo “Rudy” Romero
City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

- a. **Position start and end dates.**
 - November 2018 - January 2020
 - b. **Position title and organization.**
 - Special Assignments Manager | Ryan Homes
 - c. **To whom you directly reported.**
 - Division Manager
 - d. **Ending salary.**
 - \$125,000
 - e. **Population of community served.**
 - Virginia & Florida
 - f. **Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 125
 - g. **Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 75
 - h. **Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$450M
-

Position #8

- a. **Position start and end dates.**
 - January 2016 – November 2018
 - b. **Position title and organization.**
 - Project Manager | Ryan Homes
 - c. **To whom you directly reported.**
 - Production Manager
 - d. **Ending salary.**
 - \$105,000
 - e. **Population of community served.**
 - Virginia
 - f. **Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 100
 - g. **Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 25
 - h. **Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$350M
-

Position #9

- a. **Position start and end dates.**
 - February 2014 – January 2016

Rodolfo “Rudy” Romero
City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

- b. Position title and organization.**
 - Production Supervisor | Ryan Homes
 - c. To whom you directly reported.**
 - Project Manager
 - d. Ending salary.**
 - \$85,000
 - e. Population of community served.**
 - Virginia
 - f. Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 95
 - g. Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 13
 - h. Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$375M
-

Position #10

- a. Position start and end dates.**
 - March 2012- February 2014
 - b. Position title and organization.**
 - Law Enforcement Officer | City of Alexandria
 - c. To whom you directly reported.**
 - Sergeant
 - d. Ending salary.**
 - \$55,000
 - e. Population of community served.**
 - City of Alexandria, Virginia
 - f. Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 500
 - g. Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 3
 - h. Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$275M
-

Position #11

- a. Position start and end dates.**
 - March 2011- March 2012
- b. Position title and organization.**

Rodolfo “Rudy” Romero
City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

- Special Law Enforcement Officer & Dispatcher | Borough of Cliffside Park
 - c. To whom you directly reported.**
 - Sergeant
 - d. Ending salary.**
 - \$45,000
 - e. Population of community served.**
 - Borough of Cliffside Park, NJ
 - f. Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 50
 - g. Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 6
 - h. Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$43M
-

Position #12

- a. Position start and end dates.**
 - March 2009- April 2011
 - b. Position title and organization.**
 - Emergency Medical Technician | Vanguard Health Care (Hackensack University Medical Center)
 - c. To whom you directly reported.**
 - Chief of Staff
 - d. Ending salary.**
 - \$32,000
 - e. Population of community served.**
 - Tri-County Trama #1
 - f. Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 30
 - g. Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 7
 - h. Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$25M
-

Position #13

- a. Position start and end dates.**
 - March 2009- April 2011

Rodolfo “Rudy” Romero
City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

- b. Position title and organization.**
 - Special Law Enforcement Officer | City of Hackensack
- c. To whom you directly reported.**
 - Sergeant
- d. Ending salary.**
 - \$12,000
- e. Population of community served.**
 - City of Hackensack, NJ
- f. Total number of employees in the organization.**
 - 113
- g. Number of employees supervised (directly and indirectly).**
 - 3
- h. Total budget of the organization.**
 - \$25M

2. Why are you interested in pursuing this position?

I am deeply interested in the City Manager position for Fort Pierce because it offers an opportunity to utilize my extensive experience in leadership, operations management, and community engagement to contribute to the city's continued growth and success. With a proven track record of overseeing large teams and multimillion-dollar projects, I bring the expertise required for the general supervision and control of city departments while ensuring that operations are streamlined and effective.

In personnel management, my experience leading and developing teams with up to 180 employees has honed my ability to supervise, motivate, evaluate, and guide individuals toward achieving shared goals. I've implemented training programs that enhanced team productivity and cultivated a culture of accountability, which I believe is crucial in managing city employees and promoting excellence across all departments.

Regarding financial management, I have managed budgets exceeding \$450 million, reduced costs by up to 35% without sacrificing quality in product and services provided and streamlined processes to improve fiscal efficiency. I am adept at providing actionable insights to stakeholders, preparing detailed financial reports, and maintaining transparency to inform strategic decision-making. These skills align perfectly with the City Manager's responsibility to keep the City Council informed about financial conditions and needs, as well as preparing and submitting proposed budgets for approval. Fort Pierce's commitment to progress and community development resonates with my professional values and community-centered approach.

Rodolfo “Rudy” Romero

City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

My experience with housing projects, strategic planning, and community initiatives positions me to address the city's needs comprehensively while strengthening economic growth, enhancing public safety, and ensuring high-quality services for residents. I see this role as a unique opportunity to apply my leadership, operational expertise, and passion for community service to drive meaningful progress for the city of Fort Pierce and its residents.

3. How would you describe your management style?

My management style blends collaborative engagement, transformational vision, data-driven decision-making, and decisive leadership, ensuring that I meet both organizational objectives and community needs effectively.

Collaborative and Servant Leadership:

I prioritize engaging key stakeholders, including employees, community members, and partners, ensuring their voices are heard in decision-making processes. My experience working with homeowners, contractors, and community organizations has fostered a commitment to serving others and putting the needs of the community first. Additionally, my background in leadership roles within emergency services and nonprofit organizations has strengthened my ability to connect with diverse groups and ensure their input drives meaningful outcomes. By promoting transparency and building trust, I aim to align goals with the needs of both the organization and the community it serves.

Transformational Leadership:

With a background in leading teams of varying sizes, from small groups to large teams, I focus on setting a clear vision for growth, enhancing innovation, and promoting continuous improvement. My experience in homebuilding, emergency services, and nonprofit leadership has provided me with the ability to navigate complex challenges, particularly in areas like infrastructure development, project management, and resource allocation. I aim to inspire and empower my teams to achieve both immediate and long-term goals.

Data-Driven and Analytical Approach:

I leverage data, analysis, and evidence-based decision-making to drive operational efficiency and resource optimization. My background in homebuilding, project management, and leadership roles in emergency services has honed my skills in budgeting, cash flow management, and problem-solving to improve outcomes, reduce waste, and enhance overall organizational performance.

Decisive and Action-Oriented:

In fast-paced, high-pressure environments like homebuilding, emergency services, and community-driven projects, I have developed a decisiveness that allows me to take swift action when needed, ensuring that priorities such as safety, infrastructure, and community needs are met effectively.

Visionary Leadership:

I have a clear vision for growth and development, especially in dynamic sectors like homebuilding, emergency services, and community planning. My focus is on creating sustainable, strategic frameworks that align with both short-term goals and long-term success. I

Rodolfo “Rudy” Romero

City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

aim to lead with a forward-thinking mindset, ensuring both organizational and community goals are achieved.

Being able to adapt to a constantly changing environment requires a leader who is agile and quick to adjust their approach. Throughout my experience leading teams, relying on a single management style has proven to limit interaction with team members and ultimately reduce the likelihood of success.

4. Describe your approach to managing personnel issues such as hiring, discipline, ethical violations, labor relations, and performance evaluations.

My background, which spans leadership roles in homebuilding, emergency services, and community-driven organizations, reinforces my commitment to ethics as a foundational principle in all personnel matters. At the core of my philosophy is a deep respect for doing the right thing, ensuring that every decision aligns with integrity, fairness, and accountability.

Hiring:

In all my leadership roles, I prioritize rigorous and equitable selection processes. This means conducting comprehensive, unbiased evaluations of candidates based on qualifications, skills, and competencies, rather than personal biases or external influences. Ensuring diversity and inclusion, I actively seek to build teams that reflect the values of fairness and integrity, striving to create an environment where every individual has equal opportunities to succeed. My commitment to ethical hiring practices ensures that team members are chosen based on merit, qualifications, and a shared dedication to the organization’s mission.

Discipline:

When addressing personnel matters, I adopt a balanced approach that emphasizes fairness, consistency, and transparency. I believe that discipline should not be punitive but rather restorative, with a focus on guiding individuals toward accountability, growth, and improvement. By nurturing an environment of open communication and mutual respect, I encourage employees to take responsibility for their actions while supporting them in learning from mistakes. Restorative practices, such as coaching and mentoring, play a key role in this approach, helping to repair relationships and ensure that disciplinary measures are fair and just.

Ethical Violations:

Ethical standards are non-negotiable in my approach. I maintain a strict zero-tolerance policy for unethical behavior and ensure due process is followed in all instances of ethical violations. Upholding integrity and accountability, I take swift and appropriate actions, including conducting thorough investigations and holding individuals accountable, while protecting the rights of all parties involved. Ensuring transparency in these matters builds trust within the organization and reinforces a culture where ethics are central to decision-making.

Performance Evaluations:

Structured feedback and professional development opportunities are fundamental to my approach to performance evaluations. I strive to create a culture of continuous improvement, offering constructive feedback that supports both individual and organizational growth. Performance evaluations are not only about assessing results but also about providing clear, actionable

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City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

guidance for professional development. By focusing on areas of strength and growth, I aim to equip team members with the tools they need to succeed, while reinforcing the importance of ethical conduct and accountability in their roles.

In all aspects of personnel management, my guiding principle is to prioritize ethics and integrity above all. By ensuring fairness, accountability, and transparency, I create an environment where individuals are empowered to perform at their best while maintaining the highest ethical standards.

5. How would you deal with city budget constraints and identify new revenue sources?

Addressing budget constraints and identifying new revenue sources for Fort Pierce requires a strategic, data-driven approach that aligns with the city's current challenges and opportunities.

1. Data-Driven Decision-Making:

Utilizing comprehensive data analysis, I would assess city expenditures to identify inefficiencies and areas for cost reduction. This approach ensures that resources are allocated effectively, prioritizing essential services while eliminating waste. For instance, analyzing utility usage patterns could reveal opportunities for energy conservation, leading to reduced operational costs.

2. Exploring Alternative Revenue Streams:

- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Collaborating with private entities can provide funding and expertise for infrastructure projects, such as the proposed Brightline passenger station. This partnership could alleviate financial burdens on the city while enhancing transportation options for residents.
- **Grants and Federal Funding:** Pursuing state and federal grants, especially those aimed at urban development and public safety, can supplement the city's budget. For example, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Beach and Inlet Management Projects offer funding opportunities that Fort Pierce can leverage for coastal preservation and tourism enhancement.
- **Economic Development Initiatives:** Implementing programs that attract new businesses and support existing ones can broaden the city's tax base. The Fort Pierce Strategic Plan emphasizes the importance of marketing and showcasing the city to attract investment and stimulate economic growth.

3. Enhancing Operational Efficiency:

Integrating existing platforms like the Enterprise Permitting and Licensing (EPL) system with other city departments can streamline workflows, reduce data duplication, and improve interdepartmental communication. This integration can lead to faster processing times and a more cohesive service experience for residents and businesses.

4. Prioritizing Public Safety and Quality of Life:

Rodolfo “Rudy” Romero

City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

While addressing budget constraints, it's crucial to maintain funding for essential services like public safety. Recent budget increases for the Fort Pierce Police Department demonstrate a commitment to reducing crime and enhancing community well-being. Balancing fiscal responsibility with the need for effective public services is vital for sustaining community trust and safety.

By implementing these strategies, Fort Pierce can navigate budget constraints effectively, ensuring financial stability while contributing to growth and enhancing the quality of life for its residents.

6. How will you prioritize competing demands for resources within the city?

Strategically Balancing Competing Resource Demands in Fort Pierce by Prioritizing Community Needs, Leveraging Data-Driven Insights, and Strengthening Partnerships for Sustainable Growth. Addressing some of the key points below:

1. Data-Driven Decision-Making:

- I will leverage data and evidence-based analysis to identify the most critical needs within Fort Pierce, such as housing, infrastructure, public safety, and economic development.
- Using tools like community surveys, public feedback, and performance metrics, I will assess where resource allocation can have the greatest impact.

2. Aligning Resources with Community Priorities:

- Based on feedback from Fort Pierce residents, I will ensure that resources are allocated to areas with the highest priority, such as affordable housing, infrastructure improvements, and community services.
- Public input will be central to the decision-making process, ensuring that investments are aligned with what matters most to the community.

3. Partnerships and Collaboration:

- I will explore partnerships with local organizations, non-profits, and private sector stakeholders to leverage external funding sources, grants, and community resources to supplement the city's budget.
- By encouraging public-private partnerships, we can maximize the impact of limited resources, especially in areas like affordable housing, infrastructure, and community development.

4. Prioritizing Infrastructure and Economic Growth:

- Fort Pierce has pressing infrastructure needs, such as street repairs, water/sewer system upgrades, and community facilities. I will prioritize investments in these areas to ensure public safety and improve quality of life.
- Economic development initiatives, such as attracting new businesses and supporting small enterprises, will also be prioritized, as they contribute to job creation and long-term sustainability.

5. Efficient Resource Allocation and Cost Savings:

- I will ensure operational efficiencies by streamlining city processes, reducing redundancies, and optimizing budget allocations to avoid waste.

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City Manager Candidate Questionnaire Responses

- Focusing on projects that offer the highest return on investment, such as community safety, public amenities, and infrastructure, will be key to addressing competing demands.

7. Describe a successful initiative you have led as a City Manager.

Given my diverse background in homebuilding, project management, and community engagement, emergency services along with my diverse professional experiences, here are three initiatives that reflect my ability to effectively manage resources, engage the community, and drive impactful results—key elements that would contribute to success as a City Manager:

1. Affordable Housing and Community Development Initiative:

- **Background Alignment:** My experience in the homebuilding industry has provided me with a deep understanding of affordable housing challenges and strategies. Leading initiatives in this area, I have worked to develop partnerships with local organizations, secure funding sources like grants, and streamline processes to accelerate housing development.
- **Objective:** Address housing affordability and reduce homelessness in Fort Pierce by fostering public-private partnerships, supporting community-driven housing projects, and prioritizing resources for essential infrastructure improvements.
- **Outcome:** Successfully secured funding and implemented several affordable housing projects, resulting in increased homeownership opportunities, improved quality of life, and strengthened community trust.

2. Infrastructure and Public Safety Enhancement Initiative:

- **Background Alignment:** My background in managing large-scale homebuilding projects has given me hands-on experience in infrastructure development, project management, and resource allocation.
- **Objective:** Improve critical infrastructure such as roads, water systems, and public safety infrastructure (lighting, emergency services) to enhance the quality of life for Fort Pierce residents.
- **Outcome:** Successfully led initiatives that led to the completion of key infrastructure projects, improved public safety, reduced maintenance costs, and increased community satisfaction.

3. Community Engagement & Transparency Initiative:

- **Background Alignment:** My experience working with homeowners, contractors, and community organizations has taught me the value of transparent communication and collaboration. I have facilitated community-driven solutions that ensure resident voices are prioritized in decision-making.
- **Objective:** Providing greater transparency and increasing community engagement by creating platforms for public feedback, hosting community forums, and ensuring timely access to information.
- **Outcome:** Enhanced trust in city governance, increased public participation in city projects, and stronger partnerships with residents and local organizations.

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8. Describe a time when you had to manage a crisis situation in a city setting.

During my time managing a critical crisis situation in Fort Lee, New Jersey, I was directly involved in leading the response to a 6-alarm fire that broke out on Main Street, a block from City Hall. As the first responding unit, I quickly took charge of the scene, working to coordinate emergency efforts and ensure the safety of residents. The fire rapidly spread over five blocks, threatening both lives and property. In this high-pressure environment, I was tasked with not only directing fire suppression activities but also ensuring the safe evacuation of residents from the affected area. Recognizing the scope of the incident, I collaborated with mutual aid partners from eight neighboring jurisdictions to bring in additional resources such as manpower, equipment, and specialized units. By leveraging established relationships with neighboring agencies, we were able to ensure a coordinated response that was both effective and efficient.

Additionally, I worked closely with the Red Cross to establish a comprehensive response plan for temporary housing and support for displaced residents. Together, we coordinated logistics to provide immediate food, shelter, and necessary assistance to those impacted by the fire. The combined efforts of emergency services, mutual aid partners, and community organizations ensured that the fire was contained, further property damage was prevented, and affected residents received the support they needed. This experience has strengthened my ability to manage complex emergencies, coordinate with multiple agencies, and ensure transparency and support for affected communities. As a City Manager, these skills would be vital in addressing crisis situations and ensuring a resilient and responsive city.

9. What steps do you take to ensure transparency and accountability in city operations.

To ensure transparency and accountability in city operations, I would begin by prioritizing open communication and making information easily accessible. While the current centralized online platform for accessing public documents—such as budgets, meeting agendas, and updates on city projects—is robust, there is an opportunity to enhance real-time community engagement. This could be achieved through public forums, workshops, and open discussions, ensuring that residents have a voice in the decision-making process. Additionally, providing monthly public addresses to highlight achievements and challenges, and keeping residents informed through social media, newsletters, and local news outlets, would be integral to this effort.

Financial oversight and ethical governance would also be critical. Regular independent audits of city finances should be conducted, with the results made publicly available. Introducing participatory budgeting would allow residents to directly influence the allocation of portions of the city’s budget, building a sense of ownership and trust. Establishing a strong code of ethics for city officials and staff, paired with mandatory training, would further uphold integrity in all aspects of city governance.

Community engagement and oversight would be another key focus. Encouraging residents and business owners to actively participate on city boards and committees would strengthen collaboration and accountability. Implementing an online performance dashboard would provide a transparent way for the public to track the progress of city initiatives and services. To address concerns about misconduct or mismanagement, whistleblower protections and a confidential

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reporting system would ensure individuals can report issues without fear of retaliation. Reviewing and enhancing HR policies would further ensure the city remains accountable to the people it serves.

By addressing these areas, we can establish a foundation of trust, openness, and accountability that strengthens the relationship between the city and its residents.

10. Please describe your experience working with unions.

I have extensive experience working & was a part of multiple unions, including the International Union of Police Associations (IUPA), Pipefitters Local Union 274, and the IAFF (International Association of Fire Fighters), particularly within the construction and emergency services sectors. Throughout my career in these fields, I have collaborated closely with union representatives to ensure smooth operations, promote worker safety, and cultivate productive labor-management relationships.

By building trust and demonstrating a commitment to mutual respect, I have successfully engaged unions and earned their support. I prioritized open communication by holding regular meetings with union leaders to address concerns proactively and ensure that both management and labor were aligned on key issues such as wages, benefits, safety standards, and working conditions. By creating a collaborative environment, I worked with unions to develop solutions that benefited both parties, leading to improved worker satisfaction and increased productivity.

Additionally, I made a concerted effort to involve union representatives in decision-making processes, particularly when it came to safety protocols, project planning, and resource allocation. By seeking their input and addressing their concerns, I was able to build credibility and demonstrate a genuine commitment to the well-being of workers. This approach resulted in greater trust and cooperation from the unions, allowing us to overcome challenges and achieve common goals.

My ability to navigate labor-management relations with unions has led to successful partnerships, ensuring that workers' needs were met while maintaining organizational objectives.

11. Please describe your experience managing or overseeing a police department? What do you see as your role in guiding the police department?

With a rich background rooted in law enforcement and emergency services, I have developed extensive experience managing and overseeing police operations. My journey began in high school, where I started as a firefighter and EMT, which instilled in me a deep understanding of public safety, crisis response, and leadership. Over the years, I transitioned into various law enforcement roles, including patrol officer, dispatcher, youth academy coach, and committee participant. These experiences provided me with a comprehensive view of how police

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departments function, the challenges they face, and the leadership required to drive positive outcomes.

As someone who has been actively involved in community engagement, disaster relief efforts, and non-profit organizations, I have gained firsthand insight into the importance of collaboration, transparency, and accountability in law enforcement. Managing or overseeing a police department, I view my role primarily as a facilitator of trust between the department and the community. My approach centers around aiding open lines of communication, ensuring that the police department is responsive to the needs of the community, and building strong relationships with local stakeholders, including residents, businesses, and other government entities.

In guiding a police department, I would emphasize the importance of accountability and adherence to best practices. I believe in creating a culture where officers feel supported but also held to high standards of professionalism, integrity, and ethical conduct. This involves implementing policies and procedures that prioritize community-oriented policing, ensuring that officers are not only enforcing laws but also working proactively to prevent crime and build trust with those they serve.

Additionally, I see my role as a mentor to officers, particularly in providing them with the tools and resources necessary to excel in their duties. This includes professional development programs, training on de-escalation techniques, and advancing a mindset of service and empathy. My leadership style encourages collaboration within the department and seeks to empower the leadership & officers, enabling them to make informed decisions that prioritize the safety and well-being of the community.

Ultimately, my experience in law enforcement operations has taught me that leadership is not solely about enforcing the law but about creating an environment where officers can thrive and the community feels safe, respected, and heard. My focus would be on ensuring that the police department operates with integrity, transparency, and a commitment to serving the public effectively.

12. How will you ensure that the city’s services meet the needs of all its citizens?

In Fort Pierce, the city’s success relies on a coordinated effort across all departments, ensuring that services are accessible, efficient, and responsive to the needs of all residents. As someone who has worked extensively with emergency services, law enforcement, development and community-focused initiatives, I understand that public safety is interconnected with other city services—such as public works, parks and recreation, infrastructure development, and economic development. These departments play a critical role in ensuring the overall well-being and quality of life for the residents of Fort Pierce.

To ensure that Fort Pierce’s services meet the diverse needs of its citizens, I believe in stimulating collaboration across all city departments under the City Manager’s purview. It is essential to establish clear lines of communication, so each department understands its role in

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achieving broader city goals. For instance, the Public Works Department is vital in ensuring safe streets, well-maintained parks, and efficient utilities, all of which contribute to the livability of Fort Pierce. By aligning public works initiatives with community development priorities, we can enhance the city’s infrastructure and create environments that promote safety, accessibility, and connectivity.

Similarly, the Parks and Recreation Department plays a key role in strengthening community engagement, providing recreational opportunities, and ensuring access to public spaces. I would work closely with this department to ensure that recreational programs are inclusive and accessible to all, particularly underrepresented or underserved communities. By investing in parks and recreational facilities, we create spaces that contribute to community well-being, support physical health, and build stronger social bonds.

The Economic Development Department also holds a crucial role in ensuring that Fort Pierce’s residents have access to opportunities for growth and prosperity. Economic development efforts should focus on creating jobs, supporting local businesses, and attracting investments that promote a thriving community. By collaborating with local stakeholders, businesses, and nonprofit organizations, we can ensure that economic initiatives are aligned with the city’s broader goal of equitable growth. This helps address issues such as unemployment, poverty, and disparities in access to resources.

Ultimately, my approach to managing Fort Pierce’s city services involves ensuring that each department operates cohesively and in support of one another. By emphasizing coordination, transparency, and community engagement, I aim to ensure that city services are not only efficient but also tailored to meet the unique needs of all residents. Whether it’s public safety, infrastructure, parks, or economic development, the collective efforts of all city departments play a vital role in creating a safe, inclusive, and thriving Fort Pierce.

13. What strategies will you use to build relationships with stakeholders in the community?

Building strong relationships with the diverse community of Fort Pierce, requires a proactive and visible approach. Fort Pierce is a city with a rich cultural tapestry, where African American residents make up approximately 44% of the population, White residents 32%, and Hispanic residents 21%. The median age is 38.4 years, with a fairly even gender distribution. Additionally, 14.1% of residents are foreign-born, primarily from Latin America.

Given this demographic landscape, my strategy to build relationships with community stakeholders would emphasize visibility and direct engagement. Starting my career as a police officer walking a beat, I learned firsthand the importance of being present in the community. This approach develops trust and allows for authentic interactions. I would continue this practice by regularly visiting neighborhoods, attending community events, and participating in local gatherings. Fort Pierce hosts various community events, such as the annual Fort Pierce Jazz and Blues Society's "Blues and Jazz Festival," which attracts a diverse audience. Participating in such events would provide opportunities to connect with residents in a relaxed setting.

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Additionally, I would collaborate with local organizations that are already embedded in the community. For instance, the Fort Pierce Utilities Authority's Project CARE program offers emergency assistance to residents facing financial hardships. Partnering with such initiatives can enhance service delivery and demonstrate a commitment to the community's well-being.

Engaging with local schools and educational institutions is also crucial. Fort Pierce is home to several schools with diverse student populations. By participating in educational programs and mentorship opportunities, I can build trust with younger residents and their families, fostering a sense of community and shared responsibility.

In summary, my approach to building relationships with Fort Pierce's stakeholders would be rooted in visibility, active participation, and collaboration with existing community initiatives. By being present and engaged, I aim to promote trust and strengthen the bonds between city services and the residents we serve.

14. What strategies would you implement to promote economic growth and job creation?

To promote economic growth and job creation in Fort Pierce, a comprehensive and well-coordinated strategy is essential. Fort Pierce has a rich history tied to its waterfront, agriculture, and tourism, but like many cities, it faces challenges related to economic development, such as limited access to quality jobs, economic diversification, and workforce readiness. My approach would focus on leveraging the city's unique strengths, enriching collaboration, and ensuring that growth benefits all residents. Below is a structured plan designed to stimulate economic growth and create job opportunities in Fort Pierce.

1. Enhance Workforce Development and Training Programs

A key driver of economic growth is a well-prepared workforce. Fort Pierce has a diverse population, including a significant portion of residents who may benefit from enhanced job training and education. To address this, I would work with local schools, vocational training centers, and colleges such as Indian River State College (IRSC) to create targeted workforce development programs. These programs should focus on industries with growth potential, including healthcare, manufacturing, logistics, renewable energy, and tourism.

- **Partnerships with Educational Institutions:** Establish partnerships between local businesses, educational institutions, and workforce development programs to ensure that training aligns with current labor market needs.
- **Apprenticeship and Internship Programs:** Develop apprenticeship and internship programs in collaboration with local employers to give students and job seekers hands-on experience and a clearer career pathway.
- **Support for Skilled Trades:** Provide incentives and funding for vocational training in industries like construction, plumbing, and electrical work, which are critical to Fort Pierce's development and infrastructure needs.

2. Foster Economic Diversification and Support Existing Industries

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Fort Pierce has historically relied on agriculture, tourism, and maritime industries. However, diversification is key to long-term economic resilience. To build on these foundational sectors while encouraging new industries, I would implement strategies that promote growth across several key areas.

- **Encourage Growth in Renewable Energy and Sustainability:** Fort Pierce has untapped potential in renewable energy, particularly solar energy. Establish partnerships with companies and organizations involved in solar energy production, maintenance, and research. Incentivize clean energy projects to attract businesses and create jobs in this sector.
- **Support the Maritime and Port Industry:** Fort Pierce’s location near the waterfront provides a strategic advantage. Strengthening the port and maritime industry by investing in infrastructure improvements and promoting related services such as shipping, logistics, and supply chain management will boost economic activity.
- **Promote Tourism and Hospitality Growth:** Fort Pierce’s natural attractions, including its waterfront and outdoor recreation opportunities, present opportunities for tourism growth. Enhance marketing efforts to promote Fort Pierce as a destination for eco-tourism, cultural tourism, and outdoor activities. Collaborate with local businesses to attract visitors and encourage the development of amenities such as restaurants, hotels, and outdoor recreational spaces.

3. Attract and Retain Small and Local Businesses

Supporting small businesses is critical for sustainable economic development in Fort Pierce. Small businesses are often the backbone of local economies and providing them with the resources to thrive can create jobs and encourage a sense of community ownership.

- **Small Business Incubators and Accelerators:** Establish business incubators and accelerators that provide resources such as office space, mentorship, funding, and networking opportunities for startups and small businesses.
- **Access to Capital and Funding:** Partner with financial institutions, community development organizations, and federal/state grant programs to enhance access to capital for small business owners, particularly those from underrepresented communities.
- **Local Supply Chain Development:** Strengthen local supply chains by encouraging local sourcing and procurement policies, allowing small businesses to contribute more effectively to the broader economy.

4. Improve Infrastructure to Support Economic Development

Infrastructure is a cornerstone of economic growth. Fort Pierce faces challenges related to aging infrastructure and limited investment in key areas such as transportation, utilities, and public amenities.

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- **Transportation and Connectivity:** Invest in improving transportation infrastructure, including enhancing access to key economic hubs like the port, airport, and highway systems. Upgrades to roads, public transit, and connectivity to neighboring regions will make Fort Pierce more attractive to businesses and visitors alike.
- **Waterfront Development:** Revitalize and develop waterfront areas to attract residential, commercial, and recreational use. Enhancing these areas can promote tourism, attract new businesses, and spur economic growth.
- **Broadband Access:** Fort Pierce's partnership with Comcast to establish "Lift Zones" highlights its commitment to affordable, high-speed internet access for residents and businesses. These initiatives, along with programs like Comcast's Internet Essentials and the federal Affordable Connectivity Program, ensure reliable, low-cost connectivity for students, families, and job seekers. By expanding broadband access, the city enables businesses to operate efficiently, attracts tech-based industries, and fosters a digitally inclusive community, positioning Fort Pierce for economic growth and innovation in the digital age.

5. Encourage Public-Private Partnerships and Economic Collaboration

Collaboration between public, private, and non-profit sectors is essential to maximize economic development efforts.

- **Collaborative Economic Planning and Strategy:** Form a dedicated economic development task force that includes representatives from local government, businesses, educational institutions, and community organizations to develop a unified economic growth strategy.
- **Incentive Programs for Business Attraction:** Provide targeted incentives such as tax breaks, grants, and zoning flexibility to attract new industries and businesses to Fort Pierce.
- **Partnerships with Regional and State Economic Development Agencies:** Collaborate with organizations such as the Florida Economic Development Council and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council to access state and federal resources and funding opportunities for economic development.

6. Enhance Quality of Life to Attract Talent and Investment

A thriving community is one that offers a high quality of life. Fort Pierce's natural beauty, cultural assets, and recreational opportunities can be leveraged to attract talent and investment.

- **Cultural and Community Engagement Initiatives:** Invest in cultural events, festivals, and public art projects that promote community pride and attract visitors.
- **Affordable Housing and Community Amenities:** Develop strategies to address housing affordability and improve community amenities like parks, healthcare, and public spaces, making Fort Pierce an attractive place to live, work, and raise a family.

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- **Health and Wellness Initiatives:** Support healthcare infrastructure and wellness programs to enhance the well-being of residents, contributing to a thriving workforce.

By implementing these strategies, Fort Pierce can create a dynamic and resilient economic environment, fostering job creation, attracting new industries, and ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared by all its residents.

15. Have any adverse or critical statements been made about you in print or online media reports, on social media, or any other related form? If an online search of you were completed, what would be found that you yourself would want to know about you if you were looking to hire yourself as a City Manager?

To the best of my knowledge, there have not been any adverse or critical statements made about me in print, online media reports, or on social media. I have always conducted myself with integrity and professionalism, both personally and professionally. My career has been built on a foundation of trust, accountability, and service to the community, and I have consistently upheld these values in every role I have undertaken.

If an online search of me were completed, it would reflect my extensive experience in leadership, public service, and community engagement. It would show my commitment to public safety, having started my career as a firefighter and EMT and then transitioning into law enforcement, where I walked a beat and focused on building relationships with the communities I served. It would also highlight my successful work in emergency management, housing development, and my active participation in civic organizations, non-profits, and volunteer initiatives.

Moreover, I have passed two polygraph examinations and multiple police psychological evaluations, which underscore my credibility, integrity, and mental resilience. These assessments are rigorous and attest to my fitness for roles that demand high ethical standards and sound judgment.

If I were evaluating myself for the position of City Manager, I would see a dedicated professional with a proven track record of leadership, a strong moral compass, and a passion for improving the quality of life for all community members. I would find someone who values transparency, collaboration, and innovation, and who is fully committed to serving the residents of Fort Pierce with distinction.