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Spring Hill's Victor Lay receives City Manager of the Year Award

NASHVILLE, Tenn. --- In less than four years of service, Spring Hill City Administrator Victor Lay has provided solid leadership and demonstrated the significant value of professional management in local government. Lay was named City Manager of the Year by the Tennessee City Management Association (TCMA), and was presented the award Tuesday, June 25, 2013, during the 74th Annual Conference of the Tennessee Municipal League (TML) at the Memphis Cook Convention Center.

The award is presented by TCMA each year to acknowledge Tennessee managers, administrators, or assistants who have made exceptional contributions to their profession.

The "every cloud has a silver lining" adage certainly rings true in Spring Hill, where a financial cloud muddied the waters temporarily in 2008, prior to the arrival of Victor Lay, the new city administrator. Audit findings left no doubt that Spring Hill's general fund and adequate facilities fund would be required to repay the water/sewer department more than \$3.9 million, after it was discovered that funds had been transferred improperly in previous years. Also, after a three-year hiatus, the city needed to enact a property tax --\$.60 per \$100 of valuation. To make matters more complicated, the prior city manager left the position after less than a year of service. During this dark time for the city, meeting Spring Hill's payroll had become a grave concern.

Upon Lay's appointment, he immediately began to work with the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to address the many challenges facing Spring Hill's government, including key community concerns such as transportation and water/sewer infrastructure. First, he engaged in the MPO process, focusing on strategic investment opportunities for the city, such as the completion of a TDOT transportation plan advocating for a new I-65 interchange at Buckner Road. He also focused on expediting through TDOT and the MPO process, much needed upgrades to a key thoroughfare, Duplex Road. Through his leadership, Spring Hill has put a Transportation Advisory Committee in place to

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continue to chart the city's course for important roadway investment to serve the growing community.

Just recently, Lay spearheaded efforts to expand capacity at the city's wastewater treatment plant, securing highly favorable financing through the State Revolving Loan Fund. The project will increase treatment capacity from 2 million gallons per day to 5 million gallons per day. Along with favorable interest rates, the city was able to obtain \$2 million of principle forgiveness on this \$16 million project.

All these investments are critical for a community that is experiencing dramatic growth. From 2000 to 2010, the city's population grew from 7,700 to 29,030. Lay has provided guidance to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen as they work to strengthen Spring Hill's financial position, placing solid budgeting and fiscal planning in place. As a city that once needed to issue more than \$2.5 million in tax anticipation notes between FY09 through FY11, Spring Hill now has more than \$16 million in cash on hand, all funds, including a five-fold increase in the general fund reserves. The city has not issued any tax anticipation notes in FY12 or FY13. Through his guidance, Spring Hill has separated state street aid funds from the general fund to improve management and accountability for these intergovernmental resources.

As a city much more removed from its neighbors in the region, Lay recognized the importance of building Spring Hill's professional relationships. He has conscientiously sought opportunities to partner with other local governments and state agencies.

"Victor Lay has built positive relationships with other local governments and leaders within the region, as well," said Kirk Bednar, Brentwood city manager. "He has provided solid leadership and demonstrated the significant value of professional management in local government."

Lay has been an active member of TCMA for many years, having previously served on the board and as president and has shown his commitment to continuing his own professional development through various training and certification courses, including attending the two-week Senior Executive Institute at the University of Virginia. His commitment to professional development for himself and his fellow local government professionals is evident by the fact he currently chairs the TCMA Professional Development Committee.

"Victor Lay has exemplified the values of professional management, serving with

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considerable skill and integrity,” observes Eric Stuckey, Franklin city administrator. “Because of his efforts, the Spring Hill community has experienced firsthand the benefits of professional management. He is a deserving recipient of the TCMA City Manager of the Year award.”

“Victor Lay has brought stability and professionalism to his community, leading with humility and a dedication to the highest ideals of public service,” adds Mike Walker, TCMA’s executive director. “It is TCMA’s honor to name him as 2013 City Manager of the Year.”

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The Tennessee City Management Association is an organization of administrators and managers dedicated to professionalism in the management of local government in Tennessee. Its membership is 120 members strong.