



GOVERNMENT SERVICES GROUP, INC.

public sector  
*funding & service*  
solutions

## Firm Profile and Resumes

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GOVERNMENT SERVICES GROUP, INC. (GSG) is a stock corporation with offices in Tallahassee and Orlando, Florida. Our staff consists of 22 full-time professional and six administrative support positions. The professionals located in the Tallahassee office will provide all services described in this response. GSG is comprised of the following four major practice areas:

**Government Services Division.** This division is responsible for assisting cities, counties, state agencies, and special districts in the state with the development of alternative revenue programs, identification of enhanced revenue opportunities, and overall evaluation and long-term planning and financial growth. GSG is instrumental in this area, working with numerous cities and counties to develop alternative means of funding local government services ranging from fire/rescue to water and sewer. In addition to identifying additional funding sources in this practice area, GSG is called upon to maintain and provide many of the functions previously performed by cities and counties in revenue management and collection. Specifically, GSG maintains over 50 billing databases for clients on an annual basis and provides customer service functions that range from call center support to preparing and certifying annual assessment rolls for the Tax Collector.

**Capital Financing.** This practice area works with cities, counties, and state agencies in creating funding concepts for community infrastructure needs. Our focus in this area is on the issue of creating benefit-based funding solutions. These solutions are used to address capital facilities such as water, sewer, stormwater, transportation, neighborhood improvements and street lighting. GSG works with over 150 cities and counties in the state to create some of the most unique funding scenarios currently utilized. They range in size from an \$800 million dollar Exposition Center in Osceola County to routine road and street programs in other communities. The Capital Financing Team also works on many developer-driven projects in Florida ranging from commerce parks to economic development impact analyses.

**Information Services.** GSG's full-time Information Services Division provides support to all other practice areas and direct support to our clients. This practice area is instrumental in developing software solutions and database management techniques for the maintenance of over 50 statewide revenue management programs. In addition, the Information Services Team is currently working with clients throughout the state (including the City of Pensacola) in developing browser-based solutions for customer service needs, revenue management and stormwater utilities.

**Utility Management.** This practice area is focused on providing outsourced utility management services to local governments. This management concept allows local governments to examine other viable means of providing water and sewer infrastructure. This division provides on-site management of all operations, customer service and billing for clients in many areas of Florida. This division currently oversees 26 facilities serving 50,000 customers in five different counties.

## UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE EXPERIENCE and REFERENCES

GSG's expertise in assisting local governments address the funding and delivery of water and sewer infrastructure is based on over 25 years of experience by the project team. Because of our well-known and trusted experience in Florida, we are continually called on to help address some of the most challenging issues facing local government. That challenge is, of course, how do we provide critical infrastructure needs in the most cost-effective manner and the most equitable means of funding?

GSG, working with the client's engineers and bond counsel, craft some of the most innovative solutions in the state of Florida to fund major infrastructure investments. A few of our projects stand out to illustrate our diversity and creativity in addressing client challenges:

### **City of Pensacola**

Contact Person: George Maiberger, Assistant to the City Manager  
(850) 436-5057

**STORMWATER UTILITY PROGRAM:** In 1999, the City of Pensacola engaged GSG to develop and implement a stormwater utility program over a series of phases. These phases included, (1) financial plan; (2) a comprehensive review of the adequacy of the current stormwater management regulations for the City with regard to Escambia County and the Water Management District, (3) determination of its strategic plan of action to address issue raised; (4) development of a rate model and rates; and (5) Implementation of the stormwater utility program.

In 2001, GSG began providing ongoing annual maintenance service for the stormwater assessment database. GSG also provides a web-based application for the City's use in daily stormwater utility maintenance tasks.

### **Florida Government Utility Authority (FGUA)**

Contact: Ms. Lea Ann Thomas, Chairman of the Board  
(863) 534-6031

**MANAGEMENT SERVICES AND CIP FUNDING:** In April 1999, GSG was engaged by the FGUA to provide all executive-level services, operations, contract management, and capital improvement planning and funding. GSG is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). We have helped develop and fund over \$200,000,000 of infrastructure improvements to the FGUA utilities which currently consist of over 26 facilities in five counties. As part of this, we created some of the most innovative concepts in the utilization of benefit-based funding, thus reducing the impact on the operating revenues and rate-payers. In addition, we worked with developers' groups and builders to address the capacity demands placed on the utility systems and the creation of "capitalized capacity assessment," thus creating a pledgable source of revenue and spreading the cost over a multi-year period.

### **South Florida Water Management District**

Contact: Jane Bucca, Chief Economist  
(561) 682-6791

**FUNDING OF THE CENTRAL AND SOUTH FLORIDA COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW STUDY:** The South Florida Water Management District hired GSG to assist in the development and identification of alternative funding sources to fund an estimated \$7.9 billion dollars in capital projects associated with the Central and South Florida Flood Control Restudy Project (C&SF Restudy). The purpose of the study was to reexamine the C&SF project to determine the feasibility of structural or operational modifications to the project essential to restoration of the Everglades and South Florida's ecosystem, while providing for the other water needs of the region. GSG conducted this comprehensive study and identified all associated costs and those components with the greatest potential for being funded by sources other than by federal, state or district general revenue streams. The evaluation process first involved the initial grouping of the components based on the primary function of the improvements. Then, GSG

conducted a two-step evaluation. First, GSG determined each project objective. Based on these, we determined alternative revenue sources for each project. The alternative revenue sources would help fund the 50% local sponsor cost share required by the Water Resource Development Act of 1996. This step included three separate analysis based on:

- Extent of benefits.
- Extent of contribution to the problem.
- Potential cost share from the other non-district entities (not related by other non-industry entities).
- The final report presented results of the evaluation process and is still used as the mainstay for all funding alternatives.

## GSG STAFF

Robert E. Sheets, CEO of Government Services Group, Inc. and Camille P. Tharpe, Senior Vice President and the Division Director of Government Services Division for Government Services Group, Inc. will be the two main participants in this project. Together, they bring over 50 years of experience in providing local government revenue solutions.

### **Robert E. Sheets, Chief Executive Officer**

Mr. Sheets brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to this engagement. During a career that has spanned 30 years, he has become a respected and recognized authority on the topics related to service and capital projects within local government communities, including service delivery resolution, revenue enhancement, long-range strategic planning, and developing a community coalition in support of these recommendations. As such, he was an integral figure in the development and implementation of more than 200 local projects pertaining to the funding, development and management of water, sewer, stormwater infrastructure. As a project manager, Mr. Sheets engaged in major support roles to determine revenue maximization for numerous projects ranging from the fiscal recovery after Hurricane Andrew to the \$7.9 billion dollar Everglades Restoration Project. In addition, he works with over 140 cities, counties and special districts within the state of Florida.

Mr. Sheets has more than 20 years of experience in all aspects of water and sewer systems within the local government sector, serving as division director for one of the fastest growing utility systems in the state of Florida. During this tenure he developed a comprehensive knowledge of water and wastewater system, capital development, planning and forecasting. In addition, he managed all aspects and administrative functions for water, sewer and gas utilities in Texas, Virginia, and Florida. As CEO of Government Services Group, Mr. Sheets directs well over 100 successful revenue enhancement projects and helped pioneer the concept of capitalized capacity assessments for water and sewer infrastructure, thus eliminating the need to increase water and sewer rates.

As a respected authority on local government project management and funding issues, Mr. Sheets is called upon to deliver numerous presentations to city and county agencies throughout Florida and the nation, including The Florida Government Finance Officers Association, Association of Counties, League of Cities, Florida Sheriff's Association, The Florida City and County Managers Association, The Florida Association of Court Clerks and the Florida Association of Tax Collectors.

Mr. Sheets received his BA in political science from University of Texas, Arlington and an MA in urban management from the Institute of Urban Studies, University of Texas, Arlington.

### **Camille P. Tharpe, Senior Vice President**

Ms. Tharpe is the firm's senior vice president and, since 1995, is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of all service and capital funding programs by GSG. During this period, she has been involved with over 100 programs for clients ranging in size from the Town of Newberry to the City of Miami, Florida. She has extensive experience working in the Panhandle with clients such as the City of Pensacola, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Jackson and Washington Counties. In addition, she worked for the cities of Chipley, Destin and Fort Walton Beach. Ms. Tharpe has extensive background in alternative funding programs and was the project manager for several unique funding studies. She was the project manager for the South Florida Water Management District, Central and South Florida Flood Control Restudy Project (C&SF Restudy). She is the project manager for the City of Daytona Beach Economic and Financial Study of the General Fund. She was the project manager for the City of Pensacola Stormwater Utility Project; City of Tampa Stormwater Utility Project; and City of Cape Coral Water, Sewer and Reuse Capital Funding Study.

She is currently involved with a complete reassessment for the Florida Government Utility Authorities Capital Improvement Program. This study focuses on five major systems and includes over \$200 million dollars of infrastructure improvements scheduled for the next five years. Her charge is to develop a new funding concept that will eliminate the burden on the current rate payers for all infrastructure improvements not related to routine maintenance. In addition to these programs, she is involved in numerous water, sewer and other capital assessment programs in Alachua, Charlotte, Clay, Dade, Hardy, Hernando, Hillsborough, Martin, Polk and Sumter Counties and the Cities of Avon Park, Clearwater, Hollywood, Margate, Miami, North Lauderdale, Pembroke Pines,

Pompano Beach, Sunrise, Tallahassee, Tampa and Tamarac. She is currently working on a redesign of the entire stormwater funding project for the City of Tallahassee and the creation of a sophisticated database that will identify the benefit derived from all recipients.

Her experience in developing benefit-based programs includes developing protocol and procedures for efficiently and effectively updating and maintaining these unique revenue sources. Working with public officials at the city, county and special district levels, she is familiar with information that can be used to apportion costs and collect revenue for capital, operating and maintenance needs. She continually gives presentations on funding and service delivery issues to city, county and special district elected officials and staff in Florida. Her expertise also includes providing litigation support services regarding special benefit and fair apportionment issues related to special assessments.

Ms. Tharpe has both a BS and an MA in political science, along with a certification of administration from the University of Florida.