

Community Excellence Awards 2018 Application Form

Please complete and return the application form by Friday, May 25, 2018. All questions are required to be answered by typing directly in this form. If you have any questions, contact awards@ubcm.ca or (250) 356-5193.

SECTION 1: Applicant Information

Local Government: City of Coquitlam	Complete Mailing Address: 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC, V3B 7N2
Contact Person: Graham Stuart	Position: Manager, Corporate Planning
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SECTION 2: Category

- Excellence in Governance.** *Governance processes or policies that are outcomes-based and consensus oriented; support and encourage citizen participation in civic decision-making; are efficient, equitable and inclusive, open and transparent; and exemplify best practices in accountability, effectiveness, and long term thinking.*
- Excellence in Service Delivery.** *Projects/programs that provide effective services in a proactive manner, demonstrate benefit to the community, and utilize performance measures, benchmarks and standards to ensure sustainable service delivery.*
- Excellence in Asset Management.** *Projects/programs that demonstrate a comprehensive system of asset management policies and practices, meeting and/or exceeding accepted best practices.*
- Excellence in Sustainability.** *Projects/programs that incorporate a long-term sustainability lens by considering cultural, social, economic and environmental issues in planning, policy and practice.*

SECTION 3: Project/Program Details

1. **Name of the Project/Program:**
Coquitlam Strategic Governance Framework

2. Project/Program Summary. Please provide a summary of your project/program in 150 words or less.

Coquitlam's planning framework integrates three separate but complementary corporate plans to achieve excellence in city governance and drive results for citizens and Council. Through this process, the City of Coquitlam has had success in delivering high-profile, multi-partner projects on time and on budget, while maintaining a low tax rate and high citizen satisfaction.

3. Demonstrating Excellence. Please describe how your project/program demonstrates excellence in meeting the purposes of local government in BC and provides promising practices for others to follow.

Coquitlam's integrated planning framework comprises three separate, but complementary planning processes. These processes result in a set of integrated plans that support the overall vision and mission of the City, and that enable us to align activities and resources to achieve the strategic goals and annual business plan priorities set by Council. The City uses a continuous improvement approach to planning and management that integrates strategy, people, financial resources, processes and measurements to improve decision-making and ultimately drive results. We accomplish this through the development of annual labour, operating and capital budgets along with business plan priorities that identify specific initiatives and tasks. Progress is monitored on a trimester basis and an annual performance report reviews the accomplishments and key performance indicators.

The Strategic Plan is the highest-level statement of the City's aspirations for the future. It is developed with a long timeframe in mind and is updated every four years following the municipal election. The Strategic Plan articulates Coquitlam's vision, mission and values, and five broad strategic goals. We monitor our progress on the plan through an annual review of key performance measures.

Coquitlam's 2016-19 Strategic Plan is goal-oriented and includes the City's vision, mission, values, strategic goals and directions, and anticipated outcomes and results. This plan forms the foundation for all other long-range planning for the City, including the Official Community Plan, Business Plan, Financial Plan, and other targeted plans related to transportation, land-use, and parks and recreation planning.

In 2006, Coquitlam's City Council developed a Strategic Plan that included a 15-year vision, mission, values and goals for the entire organization based upon feedback from the community, employees and stakeholders. In late 2015 the Plan was reviewed; the next revision of the plan and vision will take place in 2019.

The Business Plan translates high-level strategic goals into tactical priorities for action. These priorities, and their associated work items, are established annually by Council. We monitor our progress on the business plan through reports to Council every four months and through annual reviews of operational performance measures.

The Business Plan, established in conjunction with the budget process, assists staff in focusing resources on the most important City initiatives. Specifically, the Business Plan links strategy with action by ensuring consistency between the Strategic Plan goals and directions and departmental work plan priorities, and links to the Financial Plan, including staff time and capital budgets, to those items identified as priorities.

The Financial Plan outlines the financial resources needed to support the Strategic and

Business Plans. Updated annually, the Financial Plan is a five-year plan that includes a budget for revenues, expenditures and capital projects.

The City of Coquitlam's Five-Year Financial Plan development process begins with strategic planning and includes public consultation, extensive background briefings for Council and comprehensive discussion sessions that culminate in a proposed Five-Year Financial Plan for Council approval. The process also includes a number of key budget assumptions. Using this as a framework, work plans are developed for each department, with resource needs identified. Major capital expenditures are identified on a five-year cycle, with annual reviews and updates. The Five-Year Capital Plan reflects projects consistent with corporate objectives and long-range plans. Together with the Strategic Plan and Business Plan, this approach to financial planning provides a thorough and strategic focus in the budget deliberations. In fact, the City of Coquitlam traditionally passes its budget bylaw before January 1 of budget year, allowing staff and Council to allocate resources in the most effective manner and secure funding well in advance of project delivery.

4. Category Criteria.

A. Please describe how your project/program meets the objectives of the category you have applied under. Refer to S. 3 of the Program & Application Guide.

The current iteration of Coquitlam's integrated planning process was initiated in 2016 with a renewal of the Strategic Plan and has provided direction to a number of high-profile projects, created a transparent and efficient governance process, and led to positive outcomes for the community.

One the largest impacts of Coquitlam's framework is the degree to which it aligns staff actions with Council priorities. The annual business plan is a Council-approved document, with input from staff, and forms the basis for Council agendas and financial decisions for the year. As a result, Council is not only well apprised, but directly involved in the tactical decisions and projects that the City undertakes, ensuring that the actions of staff align with Council directions. Moreover, staff have developed a simple, yet highly effective tracking system that is shared with Council, and outlines the timing of staff reports and how they relate to the annual priorities. This has further embedded a degree of transparency and accountable throughout the framework, and, together with formal trimester reporting, forms the basis of how staff report out to Council in a timely and efficient manner.

Having an established governance framework that is transparent and effective has allowed the City to take on high profile, complex projects throughout the community. Growth of nearly 2% per year since 2012, and the projected future growth figures for Coquitlam are driving changes in the housing make-up of our City. The increase in density and disproportionate growth in the number of residents living in townhouses and apartments leads to increased demand on communal spaces, and City recreational facilities and green spaces are no exception. We can see the impact of this in the rise in drop-in and membership card admissions to City recreational facilities from 2013-2017, and the sharp increase in attendance at event coordinated by the City's event office. Furthermore, the volume and sophistication of other City services has changed over the past half-decade: for instance, the number of units created by development applications and permits has increased by nearly half, as the mix of housing units moves away from single family homes towards apartments and townhouses.

In just the past two years, Coquitlam has celebrated its 125th anniversary, hosted the BC 55+ Senior Games, built a reservoir to service the needs of residents in the Northeast, completed road connections to neighbouring municipalities, and constructed or revitalized seventeen City parks. The years to come promise to be even more exciting as the City embarks on projects to enhance community amenity space in Maillardville and Burquitlam, build a commercial centre in the Partington Creek area of northeast Coquitlam and revitalize the City Centre through the adoption of a new Area Plan. While this new era of growth presents challenges, it also presents opportunities to build and shape the future of Coquitlam, sustaining a high-quality of living for both current and future generations.

This governance framework has proven effective for the City, not only in terms of the volume and complexity of projects that are completed, and in the community response to their local government. As part of our governance model, an annual survey is conducted through Ipsos Reid; this statistically-valid survey asks residents questions about quality of life, priorities as relates to local government, value for taxes, and overall satisfaction with city services. In the most recent survey (2017), Coquitlam residents are increasingly optimistic about how the quality of life has changed over the last five year and are more than twice as likely to say it has improved than worsened, which is double the regional and triple the provincial averages, respectively. What is more, Coquitlam scored higher than both regional and provincial averages in many key categories including overall quality of life, satisfaction with city services, and value for taxes. These results are a testament to the governance structure that manages city initiatives in an effective and outcome driven way.

B. In many cases projects may meet the criteria of more than one category. If applicable, please describe how your project meets the criteria of one or more other categories.

SECTION 4: Program Criteria

- 5. Leadership.** Describe the extent to which your local government acted as a local or regional leader in the development or implementation of the project/program.

Coquitlam's leadership in the area of governance begins with employee attraction as an employer of choice. Recognized as one of British Columbia's Top Employers in 2018, the City of Coquitlam's mission is to sustain Coquitlam's high quality of life for current and future generations, and having great employees is what makes that possible. Coquitlam's greatest asset is its people, and investing in their development and growth is a priority for the organization. In 2016, the City established a vision for how to support our people through the HR2020 People Management Strategy. This plan identifies a long-term vision, supporting success factors, and the most immediate priorities needed to achieve the City of Coquitlam's corporate and operational goals.

Central to our people management strategy is the City's leadership development philosophy, Leading with Purpose. Our philosophy and program, nationally recognized in 2017 by the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators, focuses on the importance of intentional leadership at all levels of the organization. Through formal opportunities, the Strategic and Core Leadership programs, and informal ones, our

Speaker Series and Reading with Purpose monthly leadership articles, the City of Coquitlam knows that employee development is central to achieving excellence in city governance.

6. Partnerships and collaboration. Describe the breadth and depth of community and/or regional partnerships that supported the project/program and the extent to which internal and/or external collaboration was evident.

Part of effective governance is forging partnerships and collaborative opportunities with those who live and work in the community and with other orders of government. Since 2016, the City of Coquitlam has leverage its relationships with community stakeholders to ensure that projects that are of benefit to all parties are pursued and come to fruition.

One of Coquitlam's signature accomplishments in this regard is our Housing Affordability Strategy (HAS). Approved in December of 2015, the HAS's objectives are to foster affordability through innovation, promote affordable living, leverage the City's Affordable Housing Reserve Fund (AHRF), and built strategic partnerships. The AHRF acts as the City's financial contribution towards increasing the supply of housing options for low and low-to-moderate income households; it is an important tool for contributing towards affordable housing solutions, a goal of Coquitlam's HAS. In this regard, the implementation of the HAS has led to some unique and innovative partnerships. For instance, in 2017 the City of Coquitlam partnered with the Talitha Koum Society to double the amount of transitional beds for women with addictions, and their children, in southwest Coquitlam. Outside of direct partnerships, the City has also collaborated with the development community to leverage rental and non-market rental housing in new developments throughout the City; in 2017 alone, over 700 dedicated rental units were approved.

Coquitlam's dedication to forging partnerships extends beyond housing affordability into other areas of City business. A prime example of this would be the activities of the Parks, Recreation and Culture department to deliver both capital projects and program services in conjunction with community partners. Through a partnership with the YMCA and Concert properties, the City will deliver a YMCA facility in the Burquitlam neighbourhood, and more than double the size of Cottonwood Park. This project includes of a 55,000-plus square foot YMCA facility, over 2.55 acres of additional space in Cottonwood Park, to create a 4.75 acre park and 1.5 acres of public open space. This innovative partnership recognizes the need for a community recreation facility in the Burquitlam area. By working in partnership, the City leverages and safeguards its land assets while still delivering a major recreation facility.

Regarding service deliver, the City of Coquitlam's Master Joint-Use Agreement with School District 43 guides the shared use of sports fields, parking lots and other facilities and amenities for the benefit of Coquitlam residents and students. The agreement, finalized in 2018, establishes principles and processes which support the cooperative working relationships between the City and SD43 and provides a formal framework to guide access to certain school facilities for recreation service delivery, shared use of sports fields by students and community sport groups, shared use of parking lots and other facilities/amenities, maintenance, repair and replacement of School District and City facilities, and allocation conditions to manage field usage. Through this agreement, the City has been able to reduce duplication of services and maximize

community access to facilities.

7. Innovation and promising practices. Describe the degree to which the project/program demonstrated creativity and innovation, and contributed to increased efficiency or effectiveness.

One of the guiding tenets that has come out of Coquitlam's governance framework, driven by the high rate of growth in the community, is that growth should be self-funding; it is the responsibility of the local government to ensure that current taxpayers are not burdened financially as a result of development in their City. Coquitlam employs this philosophy to secure benefits and amenities within the community in a number of different ways.

Coquitlam's comprehensive Bonus Density and Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) programs provide much needed amenities in development areas and ensure that taxpayers are not burdened to provide such infrastructure as a result that development. Of note, in 2018 Coquitlam embarked upon a Community Amenity Enhancement Program, whereby CAC and bonus density funds are being used to expand greenways, build public washrooms in parks, improve the City's trail network, and upgrade wayfinding around stations of the Evergreen Extension. Further, outside of the CAC and Bonus Density programs, Coquitlam's healthy financial position has allowed us to embark upon a number of other major neighbourhood improvement projects out of the Infrastructure Reserve. Since 2016, the City has improved or built new park infrastructure in 17 locations throughout the City, improving public open spaces for residents, and, in 2018, initiated a Neighbourhood Improvement Blitz to refresh areas of the city outside development corridors, supporting the City's Strategic Plan goals of strengthening neighbourhoods and enhancing sustainability of City services and infrastructure.

Part of being committed to innovation and promising practices is taking a hard look at internal processes and evaluating their functionality and usefulness. To this end, the City of Coquitlam has a formal business improvement process; the Staff Committee for Business Improvement and Customer Service, made up of management representatives from across the city, leads improvement initiatives through a formal work plan and the informal stop-doing list. The Committee provides a forum for the collection and discussion of suggested changes, a team to analyze larger issues, and overall project management for cross-departmental initiatives. The initial mandate has evolved into one of continuous improvement in which departments commit to making changes to particular bylaws, regulations, policies or procedures that improve the efficiency of operations and, ultimately, the quality of customer service. The Committee improves customer service by reducing unwanted "red tape" and streamlining business processes to be more efficient. The overall objective is to enable user-friendly and responsive ways of delivering City programs and services to the public as efficient and effectively as possible. The work of this committee is a priority for senior leadership and for Council, formalized by its inclusion on the city-wide annual Business Plan. Last year, the city completed 70 initiatives as part of this program.

8. Public engagement and communications. Describe the extent to which public engagement was foundational to the success of the project/program, including the use of communication tools such as social media.

An important component to the City's governance framework is the degree to which it involves the community in its decision making and consultations. The City of Coquitlam conducts a myriad of information gathering activities from community stakeholders prior to making a decision and firmly believes that those who are impacted by decisions should have a forum to provide input. This is done through a number of different channels to best gain a representative sample of the community.

Coquitlam's average age is younger than that of the other municipalities of similar size, with a well-educated workforce, and residents expect to interact with their City in ways that do not involve face-to-face contact. In the most recent Ipsos Reid Survey done by the City of Coquitlam, two-thirds of Coquitlam residents desired to participate in public consultation online, the same percentage who chose open houses or telephone surveys. This is further evidenced by the large increase in website and social media traffic: since 2016, traffic on the website has increased 16% and City's social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube) a further 30% on average. In response, in 2017 the City launched an online Community Engagement Research Panel (CERP) called Viewpoint. This panel is a group of fully profiled residents who are interested in providing input to various city initiatives. On average, participants receive up to two surveys per month, and can pick and choose how it is they provide input on any given topic. Moreover, because the anonymous profiles contain demographic information, staff can ensure that a representative sample is obtained and target key areas or demographics of the City that are underrepresented. Viewpoint now has 997 fully profiled members who provide input through this channel.

Further to our online engagement practices, the City also administers a robust Council advisory committee system. Advisory Committees are created to provide information, well considered advice, and recommendations for consideration by Council and staff on specific issues of civic concern and are made up of citizen representatives and one or two Council members appointed by Council. The City currently has nine advisory committees which provide advice to Council and staff on issues ranging from Culture Services, to Economic Development, to Sustainability and Environmental issues.

9. Transferability. Describe the degree to which the process or outcomes of the project, or other learnings, could be conveyed to other UBCM members.

Coquitlam's Strategic Planning framework involves individual pieces that are transferable to any size of organization; strategic planning and reporting out on accomplishments is an industry best practice in local government, and the tools that Coquitlam uses can be adapted to fit a simple or complex organization. For example, many municipalities already develop annual priorities, but may not communicate them in a manner that is integrated with the strategic and financial plans. By aligning planning processes along similar timelines, it is easier to identify the various project requirements, eliminating the need to ask for budget or staff at a later date.

Furthermore, by keeping a tracking system outlining staff intentions, Council becomes well apprised of what they can expect and when, decreasing individual requests of staff.

For any municipality looking to enhance their reporting and business processes, beginning with a cyclical approach to annual business planning would provide a

framework to add other pieces at a later date. Coquitlam's process is duplicable; establishing annual priorities and reporting out on a trimesterly basis to Council outlining progress in a number of key areas can be done by any size of organization. Moreover, the open and transparent sharing of staff intentions with Council and the public further increases bonds of trust between the various parties, enabling residents to input into the process and ensuring that Council is not caught off guard.

SECTION 5: Additional Information

10. Please share any other information you think may help support your submission.

SECTION 6: Signature

Applications are required to be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant.

Name: Graham Stuart

Title: Manager Corporate Planning

Signature:



Date: May 23, 2018

All applicants are required to submit:

- Signed application form. Applications should be submitted as Word or PDF files.
- Five representatives photos of the project. Photos should be submitted as JPEG files.

If you choose to submit your application by e-mail, hard copies do not need to follow.

Submit applications to Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: awards@ubcm.ca

Mail: 525 Government Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 0A8