

## 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: Capital Regional District

Complete Mailing Address: 625 Fisgard St,  
PO Box 1000, Victoria, BC V8W 2S6

Contact Person: Signe Bagh

Position: Senior Manager,  
Regional and Strategic 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:**

People Power: The Active Transportation and Healthy Communities Program

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

People Power, a two-year Active Transportation pilot program, delivered 16 diverse capacity-building projects to support residents to safely walk, roll and cycle more often for commuting and recreation.

The Capital Regional District (CRD) coordinated structured partnerships with local institutions and non-profits, secured funding, and used a “collective impact” approach to harness the skills, knowledge and networks of partner organizations.

The purpose of the program was to encourage the behaviour change required to deliver on the CRD Regional Transportation Plan objective of increasing sustainable transportation use.

By encouraging more people to use active transportation, People Power helped shift transportation mode split, reduce congestion, improve transportation safety, enhance belonging, create community connections, improve physical literacy, reduce community isolation, protect air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**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.

People Power demonstrated excellence by using an innovative collective impact model to harness the momentum, skills, knowledge, credibility and connections of partner organizations. In choosing this approach, the CRD filled a leadership gap in delivering diverse active transportation programming.

Collective impact is essentially a structured form of collaboration – an intentional partnership to advance solutions. This approach responds to the reality that no single policy, government department, organization or program can tackle or completely solve complex social, environmental and economic issues - such as increasing the use of active transportation. The concept first emerged in 2011 in an article by John Kania and Mark Kramer ([https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective\\_impact](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact)), premised on the belief that organizations wishing to create lasting solutions to social problems need to coordinate and align their efforts to achieve clearly defined goals. Collective impact differs from isolated impact approaches where organizations primarily work alone to solve problems. It is also unlike collaboration or partnership: collective impact has a centralized infrastructure – a backbone organization – with staff specifically dedicated to helping participating organizations shift from acting individually to acting collectively. Project partners can include government, business, institutions, philanthropists and non-profit organizations. The collective impact model allows many players to take a role in both funding and delivering a complex project, with no single entity having exclusive jurisdiction.

More widespread deployment of the collective impact approach could help overcome the implementation inertia facing many local governments. It is a promising practice for others to follow because the framework can be scaled and effectively applied to many issues local governments are currently facing - not only to active transportation. It is a novel approach not previously used by BC local governments that could benefit from aligning efforts with partners to more effectively deliver programs and create change in our communities.

#### **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.

**Actual production and provision of goods and services to the community:** People Power partners provided active transportation programming to the community.

**Integrated with community plans and aligned with financial plans:** People Power was conceived to respond to the CRD Board's strategic priority to "enable the CRD, local governments and other agencies to advance active transportation infrastructure and programming (including active and safe routes to school)" The CRD's contributions were as provided for the in budget.

**Provide effective services in a proactive manner:** CRD led the way to bring partners together and secure funding to deliver People Power. We initiated the program to respond to local needs across the region. This effort was effective as we successfully shifted travel modes at local participating schools, secured additional funding to build on early successes, and concluded the program with satisfied partners and clients.

**Demonstrated benefit to the community:** People Power provided active transportation programming to key target audiences that are often under-represented in larger, more homogeneous programs. Key target audiences included new Canadians, children and families, seniors, and residents from every part of our region. People Power contributed to an increase in active transportation, with positive impact on public health, better air quality, and increased road safety. On a micro scale, after a family cycling skills course, a mother stated that she was now comfortable with her children riding to school and that they planned to do it together the very next Monday. On a larger scale, the collective impact approach benefits the community by effectively leveraging financial and community resources and fostering self-sustaining partnerships between organizations.

**Utilize performance measures, benchmarks and standards to ensure sustainable service delivery:** The goal of People Power was "To encourage, motivate, and support increased use of cycling, walking and rolling among residents in the Capital Region." This goal directly supports the Regional Transportation Plan's vision of "A future where transportation is sustainable, offers choice, enables smart growth and makes livable communities possible". The goal also aligned with a Board strategic priority to enable the CRD, local governments and other agencies to advance active transportation programming.

**In addition to overall program evaluation, each participating organization identified project evaluation criteria.** First, each organization was asked to develop a project charter that ensured alignment and clarity of goals. By signing the project charter, each organization agreed to the project goal and developed customized project evaluation criteria. Criteria included project outputs such as the number of events, document distribution or equipment installations. Project outcomes were also evaluated. Outcomes included participant feedback, mode share change and attitude changes. Regular program meetings helped reinforce the overall program goal. Each organization completed a final report and evaluation.

**Set evaluation criteria monitored success on an ongoing basis.** For example, the Walktober project had participants walking over 8,000 km in the first year and over 11,000 km in the second year. In the Active and Safe Routes to School program,

participating schools had a 4% point decrease in parents driving and a commensurate increase in the use of active transportation as the usual form of school travel.

**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.

People Power also meets the criteria for the Excellence in Sustainability award.

People Power used a collective impact approach because of the sustainability benefits. While active transportation is in many ways inherently sustainable, People Power was designed to amplify sustainability by consciously seeking to maximize multiple bottom line benefits. The program was designed to increase all forms of active transportation both in the short-term through the project components and in the long-term through building community capacity. By strategically teaming with others, we were able to effectively leverage not just the environmental benefits typically associated with active transportation projects, but also significant social, cultural and financial benefits. Benefits were mutually reinforcing.

Specifically, People Power delivered extraordinarily well on sustainability:

- **Environmental sustainability** – With increased use of active transportation, individuals reduced air pollution and Greenhouse Gas emissions. To reduce the vehicle use in neighbourhoods and around schools, People Power provided capacity-building resources such as the Living Streets Handbook and Drive to 5 toolkit. With planning and programming, some participating schools in the Active and Safe Routes to School program decreased their vehicle traffic by up to 1/3. This has a substantial impact on GHG emissions and air quality surrounding the schools.
- **Economic sustainability** – Increased use of low cost transportation options saves individuals money. Economic savings were especially critical to those in underprivileged socio-economic positions including seniors and new Canadians. Program benefit to these groups also increased social equity. By aligning efforts across partner agencies, we were able to increase efficiencies and deliver more services for less money than would have been the case had each partner not cooperated under one banner. Thus, collaboration led to financial savings that, with continuation of the program could be sustained.
- **Social sustainability** – Active transportation encourages social interaction and reduces social isolation. The Active and Safe Routes to School program enabled more students to socialize with their classmates while walking or biking to school. The StoryWalk project brought families together in nature. Those using active transportation enhanced their physical and mental well-being. The Intercultural Association's walking group for seniors who were new to Canada enabled physical activity and social connection.
- **Cultural sustainability** - The Active and Safe Routes to School's Think of Me campaign integrated art with education to encourage behaviour change.

People Power incorporated sustainability in original ways by enabling organizations that did not traditionally provide active transportation programming. In particular, the Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiative Roundtable (CRFAIR) and the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria incorporated active transportation into their work in a way that aligned with their other priorities around food security and immigrant integration, respectively.

People Power is a sustainable program as impacts will continue after CRD involvement ends. Legacy components include ongoing projects, documents and partnerships.

People Power also meets the criteria for the Excellence in Governance award.

Governance excellence requires being responsive to needs, being willing to innovate and delivering services in a way that others will want to follow. People Power delivered on all counts. By using a collective impact model of service delivery where we coordinated partners and transparently communicated learnings, each partner was able to learn from and be inspired by others' efforts. This allowed participants to refine and strengthen their programs and make service delivery more effective. People Power not only engaged partners; it immersed them in project delivery. People Power was both collaboratively conceived and delivered. Project partners were co-creators, co-funders, and co-owners. People Power provided active transportation programming to key target audiences that are often under-represented in larger, more homogeneous programs. The collective impact approach effectively leveraged financial and community resources and fostered self-sustaining partnerships between organizations. People Power was open and transparent, was completed on-budget, delivered impressive outcomes and enhanced community capacity to continue implementation following project completion. By deploying a collective impact approach, People Power maximized efficiency, magnified results and extended impact. To our knowledge, this approach has not been previously used in British Columbia by a local government and therefore required leadership on the part of the CRD Board and staff.

#### **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.

Leadership requires being responsive to needs, being willing to innovate and delivering services in a way that others will want to follow. People Power delivered on all counts.

People Power was conceived to respond to the CRD Board's strategic priority to "enable the CRD, local governments and other agencies to advance active transportation infrastructure and programming (including Active and Safe Routes to School)". The Board approved funding for the People Power program on November 18, 2015. The project was successfully implemented through 2016-17.

For People Power to be effective, the CRD had to take the lead at the beginning stages: conceiving the project, securing approval, providing seed funding, and attracting additional funding contributions. Once funding was in place, the CRD continued to lead development of a project framework and to identify partner contributions. The program framework ensured accountability and transparency. Individual organizations were required to develop and commit to a project charter, attend meetings, meet funding requirements and complete a project evaluation. The CRD led the way by coordinating operational requirements and facilitating the sharing of information and experiences between partners. The CRD's leadership was critical for identifying opportunities to coordinate efforts and leverage resources to support project efficiencies.

By strategically teaming with others, we were able to effectively leverage not just the environmental benefits typically associated with active transportation projects, but also significant social, cultural and financial benefits. Benefits were mutually reinforcing. The program was designed to increase use of all forms of active transportation both in the short-term through the project components and in the long-term through building of community capacity. Leadership is especially powerful when it leads to sustainable change.

CRD leadership facilitated collaboration and garnered results that would not have been realized without the involvement of a coordinating 'body'. People Power was flexible and resilient enough to respond to challenges, was completed on-budget, delivered impressive outcomes and enhanced community capacity to continue implementation following project completion. By deploying a collective impact approach, People Power maximized efficiency, magnified results and extended impact. To our knowledge, this approach has not been previously used in British Columbia by a local government and therefore required leadership on the part of the CRD Board and staff.

**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.

People Power was both collaboratively conceived and delivered. Although the CRD initiated conversations, the program was fleshed out with input from program partners and funders. A collaborative design process was used to maximize impact while minimizing cost. It was important to ensure that program partners were on board to deliver specific projects that aligned with their individual mandates but also aligned with overall program goals. It was equally important that the partners could work well together and could complement each other's efforts. The collaborative design process helped us select partners and projects and expedited program delivery.

Active transportation planning typically involves engineering, education, engagement, enforcement and evaluation components – thus requiring intense collaboration between many disciplines. People Power took things to the 'next level' of collaboration by involving not only professionals within the government and consulting world, as is the case for many such projects, but also by working hand-in-hand with lay people, volunteers, non-profit partners and professions (recreation, health, schools) that don't typically interact so intensely to deliver projects – thus introducing many players to each other. Project leaders met regularly to problem solve and share success stories, which allowed all participants to benefit from the expertise, experiences and networks of others. This also enabled rapid spread of innovations and quick resolution of issues, creating a very solid program.

By using a collective impact model of service delivery where we coordinated partners and communicated learnings, each program partner was able to learn from and be inspired by others' efforts. This allowed participants to refine and strengthen their programs and made service delivery more effective. People Power not only engaged partners; it immersed them in project delivery. Project partners were co-creators, co-funders, and co-owners.

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

People Power used an innovative collective impact model to harness the momentum, skills, knowledge, credibility and connections of partner organizations. While working towards the same goal of increasing active transportation, 16 different organizations implemented specialized projects that aligned with their diverse mandates and audiences. The program employed a structured form of collaboration – an intentional partnership to advance solutions.

With People Power, the CRD worked across jurisdictions and sectors to increase the use of active transportation among residents of the Capital Region. The project implemented priority actions from the Regional Transportation Plan to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use and the associated negative social, environmental and financial impacts.

Until we introduced People Power, program partners typically dealt with niche audiences and were not able harness the efficiencies that can result from working together. By teaming up, we were able to harness partners' expertise to deliver programs that met unique needs. Collectively, the result was responsive programming with minimal program effort spent on identifying audience needs. This was a more effective use of resources than if the CRD had proceeded to deliver programs on its own 'from scratch'. Instead of developing outreach campaigns to reach our target audiences, we were able to tap into already established communication networks. As a result, a majority of resources could be directed towards project delivery, which enabled rapid implementation. The funding of this program was unusual. A significant share of the funding and in-kind support came from non-profit foundations and organizations, but the program was delivered by government – a reversal of the way many local governments in BC deliver programs. The diversity of projects was able to attract multiple funders with interests in land use, road safety and health.

The 'collective impact' approach is an intense type of collaboration and engagement not typically used by local governments. By drawing on the strengths and leveraging the work of each contributing organization, the impact exceeds that which individual partners could have achieved alone. For the collective impact approach to work, there must be a "backbone organization" to coordinate and help participating organizations shift from acting individually to acting collectively. Taking on those roles is relatively novel for local governments and represents an innovative approach to service delivery/implementation.

The 'thorniest' issues are often those that transcend responsibility of any one agency or level of government. This can result in stalled action while each 'bit' player waits for others to take the lead. The collective impact model allows many players to take a role, in both funding and delivering a project, thus overcoming implementation inertia.

**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.

People Power directly engaged 27,369 people through programming, information and outreach activities. By using a collective impact model of service delivery where we coordinated partners and communicated learnings, each program partner was able to learn from and be inspired by others' engagement efforts. This allowed participants to refine and strengthen their programs and made for more effective service delivery.

People Power was both collaboratively conceived and delivered. Although the CRD initiated conversations, the program was fleshed out with input from program partners and funders. A collaborative design process was used to maximize impact while minimizing cost. It was important to ensure that program partners were on board to deliver specific projects that aligned with their individual mandates but also aligned with overall program goals. It was equally important that partners could work well together and complement each other's efforts. The collaborative design process helped us select partners and projects and expedited program delivery.

We encouraged each partner to use the engagement method that worked best for their organization and audience, to great success. Two examples are noted below:

- The Freedom 55+ project delivered customized cycling education for older adults. To engage with this population they used focus groups and a survey to identify specific barriers and motivators. They partnered with a local seniors centre to go to their target audience. Finally, they used traditional media - the local newspaper - because this was the best communication channel to reach their audience.

- The Way2Go program partnered with schools participating in the Active and Safe Routes to School program and with the Inter-Cultural Association, conducting focus groups to identify the unique challenges faced by girls in active school travel. To implement a social marketing campaign, they used Instagram to influence their audience in the social media space.

During the initial development of the program, we designed a unique program identifier to unify the diversity of projects. The distinctive People Power brand represented the shared contribution of all the participating organizations and portrayed all types of active transportation. The brand is time and place neutral to ensure its longevity and ability to be used in other locations. The brand was used for newsletters, a website and social media.

The region's role in communications was to create program branding to serve as a unified banner under which all projects aligned. This branding was used by all program partners and conveyed a message of "unity in diversity" that gave profile to the program, garnered media attention and attracted funding. The consistent branding ensured the public understood the link between the component projects and also created an identity that helped attract further funding. Finally, it was designed to be used beyond the pilot project as a stand-alone identifier, as needed.

The collective impact approach allowed each organization to use their experience and expertise to engage with their communities, tailoring messages to best reach their audience. For example, the Active and Safe Routes to School program required material that excited kids and spoke to parents. A range of relevant materials was developed and distributed, such as bookmarks with active transportation safety messaging, reflective snap bracelets with the People Power logo, stickers, and school newsletter content. The "Think of Me" campaign invited students to create drawings about traffic safety in school zones. These were printed on postcards and issued as 'tickets' by the RCMP to unsafe

drivers near participating schools. The drawings were also turned into lawn signs to increase the visibility of the school. Finally, the work of each school culminated in a School Travel Plan celebrating the school's achievements in the program and identifying future actions.

The Inter-Cultural Association (ICA) welcomes new Canadians to the Victoria region. To introduce their clients to the local cycling culture, they developed English learning curriculum that incorporated cycling terms and information. ICA also transformed a Cycling Handbook into plain language to be used by new Canadians learning English.

One of the benefits of the collective impact approach was access to much more free publicity than would have been the case if partners delivered the same projects in isolation. This was because we could take advantage of cross-promotions. Individual delivery of the projects would likely not have garnered much attention or funding, but with the collective approach we were able to attract earned media and funding.

Each program partner engaged with niche communities using their experience and expertise to tailor communications to their target audience. They used their established communications channels to cost-effectively reach project participants.

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

Those working in local government are always looking for better and more efficient ways to address the complex challenges facing our communities. The collective impact approach, demonstrated through People Power, is an effective tool municipal and regional staff can replicate and grow. There is an opportunity for local governments across the Province to act as community facilitators to bring people and projects together. The approach can be applied to many community needs and challenges. Collective impact programs can harness community energy, networks and expertise to effectively deliver on Council and Board priorities. We hope others will be inspired by our experience and identify other opportunities that can benefit from this approach.

This is a program that can be replicated and scaled to different contexts across the Province. The structural framework and partnership model could be applied to a few projects with limited seed funding and staff time in a small village or rural area, or to a much larger comprehensive city or region-wide initiative.

The collective impact approach is flexible. It is not limited to any one regulatory or legislative environment. Neither is it limited to any particular subject matter. The collective impact approach can be used to tackle a wide range of environmental, social, economic, and land-use planning challenges.

The collective impact approach can be tailored to priorities and limitations (including mandate, regulatory requirements or capacity) of participating organizations. Upfront identification of priorities and limitations garners best results.

The collective impact approach used by People Power can be applied to diverse community challenges by any size of community and in any regulatory/legislative context. Initiatives can be scaled to respond to available resources/capacity and can be adjusted as necessary to align with the mandates of participating organizations. As a result, the approach is highly replicable and scalable across British Columbia and beyond.

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**SECTION 5: Additional Information**

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

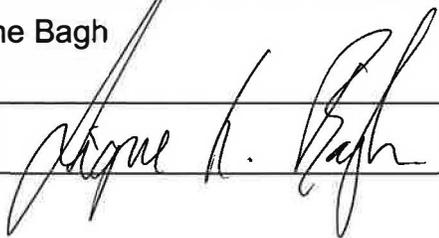
**SECTION 6: Signature**

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

Name: Signe Bagh

Title: Senior Manager, Regional and Strategic Planning

Signature:



Date: May 25, 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](mailto:awards@ubcm.ca)

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