

# 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 Pitt Meadows	Complete Mailing Address: 12007 Harris Rd., Pitt Meadows, BC V3Y2B5
Contact Person: Don Jolley	Position: Fire Chief
Phone: 604-465-2401	E-mail: djolley@pittmeadows.bc.ca

### 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:

Pitt Meadows Integrated Fire & Life Safety Risk Management Model

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

Fire prevention is the key focus across the City of Pitt Meadows. The fire service itself provides excellence in prevention and education programming as well as operational response through a volunteer paid on call service model. A bylaw requiring fire sprinklers, an exemplary water supply and hydrant system, traffic control devices, and fire safety conscious development procedures are key components that other city departments directly manage. The Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) of Canada recently recognized these outstanding city-wide efforts by presenting Pitt Meadows with a Public Fire Protection Classification (PFPC or "business line insurance") Grade of 2. Pitt Meadows is one of only three communities in Canada with a population under 25,000 to receive a PFPC Grade of 1 or 2, and is the only one with a volunteer-based fire service. Only one lower mainland community of any size has a better PFPC rating from FUS than Pitt Meadows.

**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.

The Pitt Meadows Integrated Fire & Life Safety Risk Management Model demonstrates a commitment from the community to both service excellence as well as fiscal responsibility and organizational management. The involvement of resources City-wide, led by the fire service, ensures that all aspects of community safety are considered and addressed. Engagement with stakeholders, public and business "clients", and other government agencies permits a broad scope of tools to exist to educate, analyze and enforce compliance. Pitt Meadows has an exceptional safety record related to the occurrence of fire, property loss as a result of fire, as well as fire-related injuries and death; both for civilians and firefighters. The new Fire Underwriter Survey Grade will facilitate lowered insurance costs and will contribute to enhancing opportunity for commercial growth, jobs and community prosperity. It provides our small community with a bit of a competitive advantage.

**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 Pitt Meadows Integrated Fire & Life Safety Risk Management Model exemplifies the category of Excellence in Service Delivery in every respect. It is based upon the use of business analytics and performance measures to ensure planning and proactive measures are in place to reduce the need for, and costs of, more traditional and resource heavy emergency response activities. The program provides diverse and substantial community benefit through enhanced public safety, controlled taxation, community-wide engagement and buy-in, and now a decreased financial burden for local business and public through lower insurance premiums. The use of local and provincial legislative tools provide guidance and enforcement, ensure both accountability and consistency, and demonstrate strong use of local government initiative, sustainability and transparency.

**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.

Numerous aspects of this program, as described previous, are applicable to the Excellence in Governance category. The Pitt Meadows Integrated Fire & Life Safety Risk Management Model exemplifies the benefits of non-silo organizational management in local government. Without the engagement and support of numerous City departments, as well as outside agencies and the public, this program would not achieve its goals, nor the benefits to the community; both financially and operationally.

#### 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.

The City of Pitt Meadows, and specifically the Pitt Meadows Fire & Rescue Service, have been leaders in local government innovation for many years. Related to this submission, the fire service and City are widely recognized leaders in North America through the use of residential fire sprinklers. In addition, the fire department has developed numerous operational and administrative processes that have been recognized and/or adopted within BC and beyond. The fire department leadership has, for many years, been engaged at the highest level both provincially and nationally advancing performance measures, innovation, enhanced safety methodologies, and legislative change. The Pitt Meadows Integrated Fire & Life Safety Risk Management Model exemplifies these activities and is applicable to any local government regardless of size.

- 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.

For fire safety to work there must be recognition, education and commitment from the public and businesses within the community. Fire staff have purposefully and professionally worked with vendors and service technicians to provide education on City requirements toward our goal of a fire safe community. The fire department has implemented a False Fire Alarm Reduction Strategy to reduce the demand, cost, and risk associated with unnecessary responses to false alarm incidents. Critical to the success of this program is the partnership with the local businesses, stratas and service technician personnel. They all must manage the risk and systems local to their buildings and work with alarm companies to ensure that response requests are legitimate. There is incentive - false alarm responses result in billing for fire department response being levied against the property owner or service provider. This program has resulted in a significant reduction in false alarm calls, and in turn, risk reduction and cost saving for the fire department and public/businesses. With few exceptions the response has been both positive, and in many cases responsive with citizens, businesses, vendors and technicians contacting the department for advise even on issues beyond our borders.

Internal City partnerships are strong. The water system, including hydrants, is maintained to an exceptional level by City Operations staff. Apparatus and equipment maintenance is performed, or overseen, by the City Mechanic. The traffic management



and pre-emption systems are solely managed by Engineering, but never in isolation from fire. Bylaw Enforcement and Building Officials assist with inspection programs and participate in educational and enforcement activities which benefit the fire protection model. Senior management, and especially City Council have been very supportive and demonstrate leadership and advocacy whenever possible when engaging with our community or other local governments. Relationships with the Katzie First Nation, the Pitt Meadows Regional Airport, and CP Rail's Vancouver Intermodal Facility are all strong and professional with regular engagement and communication. Numerous positive fire safety initiatives have arisen from these relationships. Neighbouring communities participate with Pitt Meadows in a Mutual Aid Agreement for fire services that is very effective for all involved. All told, fire safety in Pitt Meadows is corporate-wide as well as community-wide and has achieved success and acclaim for that reason.

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

In Metro Vancouver, Pitt Meadows is the sole remaining volunteer-based fire service in a City of any size, yet it has now received a Fire Underwriters Survey PFPC grade that is better than, or equivalent to, most larger communities with full-time fire services. This has occurred almost exclusively through very hard work, creativity and innovation. For decades the fire department has been making operational and administrative decisions, including staffing, based upon performance measures and evidence-based practices. Innovations include: fire sprinkler requirements by bylaw (2<sup>nd</sup> community in BC to have it, and now one of only 30); pre-incident planning (among the first and most detailed in BC); a comprehensive water supply/hydrant system that encompasses nearly 80% of the community (unique in BC for a largely rural area); a False Fire Alarm Reduction Strategy; detailed and regular fire & life safety inspections (timing mandated by bylaw); and, an efficient and highly effective paid on call volunteer fire model that meets or exceeds operational requirements and measures both locally and/or within the fire service industry.

- 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.

Through long-standing and highly engaged education programs, pre-incident planning, and regular fire & life safety inspections - all performed by fire personnel - the public engagement level is very high. All school children in the community have exposure to fire department delivered fire & life safety education programs annually in elementary school and at least once every few years in high school. Ultimately, this has resulted in a young adult and child age population with a very high level of fire safety knowledge. In addition we annually run a Youth Academy for high school grade 11/12 students. The fire department is present and participates at virtually every community event in the City year round, regardless of the events nature. Fire department engagement with the Katzie First Nation is strong, including Katzie cultural events and implementation of a joint home smoke alarm installation program. The last Public Engagement/Satisfaction Survey done by the City gave the fire department very high marks.



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

The concept, components, and programming of the Pitt Meadows Integrated Fire & Life Safety Risk Management Model are all 100% transferrable to every other community, regardless of size, as long as they recognize the commitment and energy that it requires. The core aspects of the model are documented to ensure they live on. In our opinion, and certainly that of many in the public and within provincial government, initiatives brought forth by Pitt Meadows have wide application and should receive strong consideration if not adoption. During times of political and financial challenge in local government, programming that encourages, administers and enhances operational readiness and response, as well as corporate and fiscal sustainability, should be sought out. The City of Pitt Meadows has achieved success that is within fairly easy grasp of many others as a result of partnerships, engagement and innovation. There is nothing unique about our community or our government aside from a willingness to challenge the norm.

## **SECTION 5: Additional Information**

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

The previous Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) grade received by the City and its fire & rescue service was a 5 and was done in 2009, prior to many of the programs described in this document becoming fully implemented. The FUS staff stated that a grade improvement from 5 to 2 is very impressive and unusual and is a strong testament to the value of both corporate-wide and community-wide engagement and commitment to fire prevention, safety and response delivery.

A number of the programs identified in this document that form part of the Pitt Meadows Integrated Fire & Life Safety Risk Management Model have been individually recognized.

Pitt Meadows and its use of residential fire sprinklers has been recognized provincially and nationally by fire chief associations, all levels of government, the Fraser Institute, fire service publications, and within National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) documents and research from the United States.

The False Fire Alarm Reduction Strategy has been published in fire service journals and is being presented at the September 2018 Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC) Conference in Ottawa.

The Home Smoke Alarm initiative, as part of a national program, was recognized locally, provincially and nationally for its impact on First Nations fire safety.

The paid on call volunteer service delivery model is quite unique in Metro Vancouver. All firefighters receive identical training to those in the career fire service, and many undertake advanced programs well before they would be afforded such opportunity in a career department. The entire community benefits from the tremendous operational and administrative success of the current model and its sustainable, positive impact on municipal taxation. Programs like the Pitt Meadows Integrated Fire & Life Safety Risk Management Model clearly demonstrate that smaller communities, especially those

using volunteer-based fire service models, can achieve great results if targeted programs are properly managed and supported. Efficient, effective and sustainable fire safety can be achieved by any community using evidence-based decisions, best practice measures, partnerships and innovation.

#### SECTION 6: Signature

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

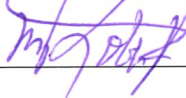
Name:

MARK ROBERTS

Title:

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Signature:



Date:

MAY 24, 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