



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

2015 Local Government Excellence Awards Program Program Excellence Awards Nomination Form

(All programs nominated must have been fully operational for a minimum of 12 months, prior to January 31, 2015)

Deadline for Nominations Extended to March 30, 2015

Complete this form (sections 1 and 2) and submit with your descriptive narrative.

SECTION 1: Information About the Nominated Program

Program Excellence Award Category (*select only one*):

- Community Health and Safety
- Community Partnership
- Community Sustainability
- Strategic Leadership and Governance

Name of program being nominated: Northwest Public Safety Building

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: City of Avondale, AZ

Jurisdiction population(s): 78,822

Please indicate the month and year in which the program you are nominating was fully implemented. (Note: All Program Excellence Award nominations must have been fully implemented for at least 12 months prior to January 31, 2015, to be eligible. The start date [on or before January 31, 2014] should not include the initial planning phase.)

Month: November Year: 2010

Name(s) and title(s) of individual(s) who should receive recognition for this award at the ICMA Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington, September 2015. (Each individual listed MUST be an ICMA member to be recognized.):

Name: David Fitzhugh

Title: City Manager Jurisdiction: City of Avondale

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact

Name of contact: Janice Simpson

Title: Grants Administrator Jurisdiction: City of Avondale

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ICMA 2015 Local Government Excellence Awards Program
Program Excellence Award Nomination for Community Partnership

City of Avondale Northwest Public Safety Facility

Introduction

The City of Avondale and the Maricopa Community College District developed a partnership to place a public safety building on the grounds of Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC). The Northwest Public Safety Facility provides significant and long-lasting benefit to the EMCC campus, its Administration of Justice, Fire Science and Academy students, and the surrounding communities. The 19,000 square-foot building, situated at the north portion of the EMCC campus, houses an Avondale Police Substation, public safety classrooms for EMCC instruction, campus security offices, and Avondale Fire Station 174.

Problem/Need

The City of Avondale's population had grown at such an alarming rate from the late 1990s to 2008 and continuing, that the ability to provide timely public safety service to the northern area of Avondale was becoming increasingly difficult. Avondale's population increased by more than one hundred percent in the period from 2000 to 2006, and was identified by *Forbes Magazine Real Estate* as the 9th fastest growing suburb in a 2007 article (2007, America's Fastest Growing Suburbs). Public safety facilities were located some distance away and growing congestion in the area posed challenges for police and fire units to respond in a safe and timely manner. Commercial

land along Dysart between Thomas and Indian School was limited and expensive. After an exhaustive search, an idea was presented through the fire department to work with the college. College officials noted that the college needed to relocate Campus Public Safety. In addition, they expressed the need for classrooms dedicated to training future public safety personnel.

Program Implementation and Costs

The City worked with the College District and established a long-term agreement to lease two acres of land at a campus location at a nominal cost, with the understanding that the building would serve the needs of Estrella Mountain Community College, Avondale Police Department, Avondale Fire Department and the broader community. Initial construction began on the Northwest Public Safety Building in 2009. The \$3.8 million facility was built by the City on a campus site provided by the college. The building was designed to have modern classrooms, Campus Public Safety, Avondale Police and Avondale Fire all housed under the same roof. Costs to implement secure information technology communications access for the college were covered by the college separate from facility construction costs. Also, costs to create secure public safety access have been provided through the school. The City undertook an approximate \$1.7 million second phase of construction during the latter half of 2013 to complete interior build-outs for the fire department substation. Build-outs were completed in December 2013 and the station became operational immediately in January 2014.

Results/Outcomes

During program planning, City and College Administrators sought a coordinated, cost-effective, sustainable solution for public safety response, academic instruction, and hands-on training. Objectives included constructing a building that would provide much-needed substations for Avondale Fire Department and Avondale Police Department, and house EMCC Public Safety and classroom space instruction, public safety training, and emergency medical training. These goals were achieved exceeding expectations. Representatives from each of the partnering entities report the program a resounding success.

Classroom space includes one large room with divided that may be utilized as two separate classrooms. The number of EMCC courses taught per semester has grown from four in 2010 to eight currently. The Fire Science Program and Administration of Justice Studies (AJS) taught on campus have gained significant exposure and have grown with the availability of the facility and hands-on instructional opportunities.

Enrollment continues to climb for both programs. The AJS program uses the facility for crime scene response and evidence gathering coursework. Fire Science focuses on emergency response operations, fire investigation, and fire officer leadership. In 2012 the EMCC Fire Academy was formed, expanding the community benefit of real world training and creating a pool of well-prepared, local candidates for area public safety departments.

Avondale Police Department has utilized the substation at NWPS building since its completion in 2010. Currently, this substation runs two patrol squads, which consist of 12 officers and two sergeants. The substation also houses the traffic bureau, which

includes four traffic officers and one sergeant. One Assistant Chief is housed in this building as well. The value of Avondale's police department presence at this location cannot be overstated. They have increased police visibility in the northern area of the city. This station serves as command post for at least four DUI task forces each year allowing expedient DUI processing and serving agencies other than Avondale.

Avondale Fire Station #174, completed in Dec 2013 and operational in January 2014, employs 18 assigned positions as six per day over three shifts. Response times from this station have been reduced from approximately nine minutes to less than five in its first year of operation. On-campus response times are even shorter, often less than three minutes and have provided life and health saving measures. The number of calls for service climbed by an approximate 1,800 upon station opening, while at the same time reducing response time.

Beyond the realized quantitative measures, cost savings, improved public service and community support, are the strong partnerships and sustained benefit to the immediate and neighboring communities.

Lessons Learned

Fire officials are extremely pleased with the physical and operational results of Station #174. They feel that the benefits may have been realized sooner if the initial construction would have included station build-outs. They would consider fund leveraging opportunities to allow for earlier completion. School and public safety officials state that school enrollment has grown faster than expected compelling officials to implement creative traffic solutions during peak attendance hours. An unexpected

lesson is that public safety administrators, when hiring, are often able to draw from the pool of candidates trained at the Northwest Public Safety building knowing the comprehensive training they have received, often through courses taught by their own officers and firefighters. It is a win-win-win!