



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: Zen and the Art of Creating Community Sustainability: The Cedar Park Sculpture Garden

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: Cedar Park, Texas, U.S.A.

Jurisdiction population(s): 67,537

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: October Year: 2013

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: Brenda Eivens
 Title: City Manager Jurisdiction: City of Cedar Park

Name: Katherine Caffrey
 Title: Director of Community Affairs Jurisdiction: City of Cedar Park

Name: Kimberly Painter
 Title: Budget & Grants Jurisdiction: City of Cedar Park

Coordinator

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact

Name of contact: Jennie Huerta

Title: Media & Communications Manager Jurisdiction: City of Cedar Park

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Zen and the Art of Creating Community Sustainability:

The Cedar Park Sculpture Garden

The Cedar Park Sculpture Garden is a perfect example of a community sustainability project that demonstrates innovation, excellence and success in balancing our community's social, economic, environmental, and cultural needs.

The need

The citizens of Cedar Park had expressed a strong desire over the past several years to enhance our community with public art, but we did not have the necessary funding to start a traditional public art program. Unlike some other communities with robust public art programs, we do not have large corporate donors so we had to overcome this financial barrier and find a cost-effective way to introduce public art that could eventually rely on small donations made by residents and utilize existing City-owned land.

Program implementation and costs

In 2013, we came up with a cost-effective solution to bring public art to our community with the Cedar Park Sculpture Garden. The Sculpture Garden would be located on an empty lakeside lot adjacent to the Cedar Park Recreation Center, where City staff already perform the grounds maintenance and could design and build the garden. This location is a highly visible place, with 10,000-15,000 visitors to the Recreation Center annually.

The City would issue a call for artists to display their works, as a loaned piece in the garden. The works could be available for sale with the caveat that the artists agree to leave their works on display for the full year-long loan period. This allowed the City to display excellent art pieces at a fraction of what it would cost to purchase the pieces, and enabled local artists to gain publicity by display their works in a highly visible public location.

This creative solution allowed for our small amount of funding to be directed towards artist stipends, garden signage, promotional brochures, paid advertising, the concrete bases, landscape materials, equipment rentals and irrigation system installation. It cost \$26,000 to implement, and in its second year operates on a budget of \$5,500 for artist stipends, new garden signage, promotional brochures and advertising.

The Cedar Park Sculpture Garden is supported by the local hotel-motel tax (HOT funds) and by donations made by residents and businesses through their water billing statements.

Tangible results or measurable outcomes

The Cedar Park Sculpture Garden represents a significant creative contribution to professional local government management and increases public awareness of the ways in which professional management enhances the quality of life in our community.

An otherwise empty field has been transformed into a place of beauty

that now draws thousands of visitors each year. Our very own Parks and Recreation staff designed and our crews landscaped a beautiful limestone-edged, crushed granite walking path with twelve display areas along the way. Each display area is fully landscaped with native plants and features a concrete pad for the artist to display his or her work.

Our unique public-private partnership with local artists has given us the opportunity to showcase their work. Several Central Texas artists submitted their works for review by the City's Arts Advisory Board (now part of the Parks, Art and Community Enrichment "P.A.C.E." Board). The Board selected for display twelve works by a mixture of established artists, students and emerging artists. About 200 people attended the Grand Opening of the Sculpture Garden on October 27, 2013, to see the wide variety of items on display. That same night, one budding artist sold her work, entitled *Reflets du Lac*, or "Lake Reflections," inspired by the beautiful lake and landscape at the Sculpture Garden, and the City was able to later acquire one of the pieces for its permanent collection from a well-known Central Texas artist. "Life is a Balancing Act" by Cindy Debold now stands proudly in the center of the Cedar Park Sculpture Garden.

In its second year, 11 artists submitted a total of 21 works of art for possible display in the garden and 11 were chosen for display. For the unveiling of this year's loaned sculptures, the City of Cedar Park partnered with the Cedar Park Chamber of Commerce to host "A Taste of Cedar Park."

This event offered yet another Sculpture Garden-related community engagement opportunity allowing our citizens to sample a variety of culinary offerings by local restaurants while enjoying our new display of public art.

The display of public art is important to our community and the Cedar Park Sculpture Garden has positively affected their lives. Every day, at any time, there are a number of people strolling and enjoying the Sculpture Garden. We have heard nothing but positive feedback from our citizens, visitors and the artists, who have gained exposure to new audiences and even new business.

The Cedar Park Sculpture Garden demonstrates leadership and excellence, as it was created within our own City Council's Core Values of Community, Service, Innovation, Professionalism, Integrity, Leadership, and Fiscal Responsibility. Furthermore, it is aligned with the ICMA's Core Beliefs, especially those of representative democracy, the highest standards and integrity in local governance, and the value of professional management as an integral component of effective local government. With the Cedar Park Sculpture Garden, we fulfilled our citizens' desires and did so in a well-managed, cost-effective way.

Lessons learned during planning, implementation, and analysis

The most significant lesson learned is to "start small." We chose a project that could be feasibly accomplished. Also, we broadened our definitions of what art is. "Art" does not have to be created by famous or

established artists in order to be enjoyed by the community. For example, some of the most popular works in the Sculpture Garden were created by an instructor at a local community college and one of our own City employees who happens to be an amateur artist.

Our analysis has found the program to be highly effective. If we were to implement a public art project of similar magnitude without the leverage of our own resources and public-private partnerships, it would have been cost-prohibitive. This is a project that can and should be replicated in other communities that share a love of and desire for public art, but have minimal financial resources to devote to it.

For more information, visit www.cedarparktexas.gov/sculpturegarden.