



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: Beyond Business Friendly

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: Village of Elk Grove Village

Jurisdiction population(s): 33,127

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: July 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: Josh Grodzin

Title: Director of Business Development Jurisdiction: Village of Elk Grove Village

Name: Ray Rummel

Title: Village Manager Jurisdiction: Village of Elk Grove Village

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact

Name of contact: Josh Grodzin

Title: Director of Business Development Jurisdiction: Director of Business Development

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Elk Grove Village, IL



ICMA Awards Program Entry

Village of Elk Grove Village

March 31, 2015

Beyond Business Friendly Campaign

Financial Challenges

The economic instability caused by the Great Recession of 2007-2008 negatively impacted the fiscal statuses of local governments all across the United States. Industrial and commercial activity was in a decline, which meant that the fiscal health of the business park in the Village of Elk Grove Village was deteriorating. Elk Grove Village is home to the largest consolidated business park in the United States, and the industrial park also acts as a crucial source of revenue for the Village. The Village industrial vacancy rate in 2010 peaked at 12.48% which reflected the difficulties of the economy.

Faced with these constraints, Elk Grove Village took significant steps to adjust to lower revenues by cutting costs. The recommended budgets for fiscal years 2010 to 2012 presented remedial methods in light of the financial pressures which included: reducing more than 12% of the workforce, eliminating departments, providing cross training, implementing numerous process improvements, utilizing technological advances for productivity gains, and otherwise right-sized services to current service levels.

In withstanding the economic downturn, Elk Grove Village recognized the importance to develop a plan to strategically revitalize the finances of the Village. The answer for professional

Village administrators was an innovative marketing and process improvement campaign entitled “*The Exceptional Community for Business: The Most Business Friendly Community in America.*” The vision entailed facilitating the growth of economic development in the Village through a customer-service oriented philosophy. Subsequently, the community branding campaign adopted a tagline – Beyond Business Friendly – in July 2013 to further promote the campaign.

Program Implementation

In preparation for a proactive approach to address the financial challenges Elk Grove Village was experiencing, administration budgeted for two key pieces to implement the plan. In 2010, the Village created a new full-time position, Director of Business Development and Marketing, entirely devoted to promoting local business activity and growth in the industrial park. The new position would play a major role with the campaign and was budgeted for an estimated \$100,000 salary.

Then in 2012, under the direction of the Village Manager, the concept of the Beyond Business Friendly campaign took shape after it contracted with a private marketing firm to assist the Village in its vision. The services of the marketing firm was budgeted for about \$143,000 which included social media services, search engine marketing, public relations strategies and other Beyond Business Friendly campaign projects. Both expenses derived from the General Fund and laid the groundwork towards actualizing the economic goals of the Village. Two notable projects include the design of www.egbizhub.com, a resource guide created to address or assist issues for existing and potential businesses in Elk Grove Village, and www.elkgrovesites.com which is a convenient up-to-date property database for businesses looking to expand or relocate into the Village.

In addition, a major component to the campaign was the coordination of the first ever Made in Elk Grove Manufacturing & Technology Expo. The Expo, hosted by the Village, is a unique business, social and professional event that unites the manufacturing community to connect,

collaborate and cultivate relationships with other local manufacturers at no cost to them. The annual one-day event showcases the manufacturing diversity of Elk Grove Village-based companies through various booths that featured videos, literature and other promotional materials. Members of the Fire, Police, and Community Development departments of the Village were present to support the Beyond Business Friendly campaign and present their services to the business community. The inaugural Expo took place on October 21, 2013. The budget for the event was \$60,000.

Outcomes

Since the full implementation of the Beyond Business Friendly campaign, the Village of Elk Grove Village has enjoyed remarkable success. Since the industrial vacancy rate peaked at 12.48% in 2010, it has since decreased every year up to its current vacancy rate of 6.21% at the end of 2014, which included an absorption rate of 1,353,692 square feet in 2014 the highest of all communities in the O'Hare Industrial Real Estate Market.. Elk Grove Village regained its status as one of the hottest locations in the Chicago region for industrial properties. The success can be greatly attributed to the marketing campaign efforts initiated by the Village.

In 2014, several notable awards and recognition were issued to the Village for its business development excellence including: being named a 2014 Best American City for Global Trade by Global Trade Magazine which noted that the Village offers an optimal setting for globally minded companies that are looking to strategically locate, grow, and expand operations. The Village business focused website www.egvbizhub.com won the gold Communicator Award which is one of the leading international awards programs recognizing big ideas in marketing and communications.

The www.egvbizhub.com website also received a Silver Award in the category of new media in 2014 by the International Economic Development Council. Additionally, the regional Daily Herald newspaper awarded the Village's Beyond Business Friendly Marketing Campaign the Daily

Herald Business Ledger's Annual Award for Business Excellence.

The Made in Elk Grove Expo was received with great fanfare by the local business community. The 2013-2014 Expos drew about 200 exhibitors, over 2,000 registered attendees, and included a Business Excellence Awards that recognized businesses for their innovation, sustainability and charity to the community. A post-show survey indicated that over 84% of the exhibitors rated the show great and stated they would exhibit next year, over 80% would recommend other companies to exhibit, and many of the exhibitors reported making contact leads. Gary Stern, CEO of world-famous pinball manufacturer Stern Pinball, was so impressed with the support and effort of the event that when he decided to expand his business in 2014 he chose Elk Grove Village as the new home for his manufacturing operations.

Lessons Learned

Elk Grove Village administration recognized that to navigate the effects of the Great Recession and maintain the high-quality exceptional services to the community it had to exercise one of its greatest muscles, the industrial park. Through innovation and a proactive approach to addressing its financial constraints, the investments to creating a business-friendly climate to attract and retain businesses has led to a healthy vacancy rate and robust tax base.

The Beyond Business Friendly campaign demonstrated how strategic leadership can identify and target its key assets and implement a plan to achieve economic excellence. Although Elk Grove Village is unique in location and character, other communities can potentially use the same approach to address economic issues. Additionally, the customer-service approach is a readily available strategy that does not require substantial resources, but having a position of Director of Business Development and Marketing who interacts with the business community on a constant basis is a major asset to the campaign. That is also the core of being "Beyond Business Friendly." Informal

public-private partnerships are mutually beneficial when done correctly.

The significance of the Made in Elk Grove Expo is that it demonstrated to the business community that the Village is looking to partner and form relationships with local business leaders. The event was a display of unification between government and businesses to reach mutual goals. With great strategic leadership and initiative, desired outcomes can be produced in a matter of years especially when one considers the benefits of positively engaging with key stakeholders.