



2009 Annual Awards Program

Program Excellence Awards Nomination Form

Deadline for Nominations: March 13, 2009

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: CELEBRATE Program

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: City of Las Vegas

Jurisdiction population(s): 600,000

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 by or before January 31, 2008, to be eligible. The start date should not include the initial planning phase.)

Month: July Year: 2006

Name(s) and title(s) of individual(s) who should receive recognition for this award at the ICMA Annual Conference in Montréal, Québec, Canada, September 2009. (Each individual listed MUST be an ICMA member to be recognized.):

Name: Betsy Fretwell

Title: City Manager Jurisdiction: Las Vegas

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact

Name of contact: Brian Knudsen

Title: Administrative Officer Jurisdiction: City of Las Vegas

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ICMA Community Sustainability Award
CELEBRATE Program

Las Vegas, like the rest of the world, has increasing concern and alarm for climate change, magnified by its lack of local agriculture, dependence on arid western mountain snowpack for its water supply, and rising energy costs. To meet the needs of today's residents without compromising the needs of future generations, the City Manager began working with directors to incorporate sustainability into the fabric of the organization. Instead of creating another policy-driven initiative or a new division, sustainability was elevated to one of the City's top priorities and the "CELEBRATE" program was created.

CELEBRATE is an acronym for "City Employees Lowering Energy By Recycling And Tracking Efficiency." The program is a grassroots, employee-driven solution to integrating, educating, and practicing sustainability. Starting in the Planning & Development Department (P&D) in 2006, employees tracked paper and energy consumption, recycling, vehicle efficiency, and participation in the Club Ride program (alternative methods of commuting). Based on their analysis, the committee wrote an action plan (July 2006) to increase the sustainability of department operations. The committee focused on simple changes to increase the efficiency of departmental operations. The resulting little or no-cost recommendations were shared with department managers and the City Manager. Successes from the P&D Action Plan include:

- Purchasing paper and supplies with recycled content,
- Increasing recycling,
- Reducing overall energy consumption, and
- Increasing in the number of alternative commutes.

CELEBRATE functions with zero direct funding from the City. Each department must be resourceful and apply for grants, request appropriations, use capital improvement projects and develop partnerships to implement sustainable actions. The low-cost internal roll-out included

posters (made by Graphics), a personal cubical map of recycle stations, weekly e-mails, brown bag lunch series (videos), and office contests (Trick My Trash, Funky Gunk).

CELEBRATE embraces change organically, so sustainability becomes imbedded in the culture, “who we are” and “what we do.” In addition to Planning & Development, the City Manager’s Office increased recycling and stopped purchasing bottled water. Within two months of the launch CELEBRATE expanded to 12 departments and a city-wide CELEBRATE committee was formed to determine best practices and share information across department boundaries.

During 2007, CELEBRATE turned from a trickle to a river, as sustainability began flowing through the organization. Departments recycled more, purchased recycled-content supplies and paper, and conserved energy and fuels. The City Manager enacted the formal Sustaining Las Vegas Policy in July 2007 to promote environmentally-responsible and sustainable development, reduce overall energy and water consumption, and to encourage sustainability education and training:

The City is committed to incorporating consideration for long-term community sustainability as it prepares plans, makes procurements, enacts legislation, builds projects, manages budgets, and conducts daily operations.

As a result of CELEBRATE, the Development Services Center (DSC) has reduced energy consumption by 174,069 kWh over 2006. The City reduced total “Buildings” by one million kWh’s below 2006 usage, when the data is adjusted for the new buildings and facilities added during 2008 (see table 1). **

Table 1: Energy Consumption – City of Las Vegas (2005 – 2008)

	2005	2006	2007	2008
DSC (kWh)	798,724	1,038,802	915,916	864,733
All Buildings (kWh)	32,926,860	39,860,729	39,326,434	44,467,947**
City Organization (kWh)	124,830,605	139,894,627	137,971,006	152,770,942

In addition to energy, the City is making better fueling choices. The City’s vehicle fleet is over 90% converted to alternative fuels. The number of vehicles using Compressed Natural Gas and Bio-Diesel jumped from 42% (382,808 gals. in 2005) to over 51% (462,843 gals. in 2008). Departments are now requesting sustainable vehicles such as hybrids and alternatively fueled trucks.

The Planning & Development Department is leading the way in purchasing more efficient paper and supplies. Since 2006, the department’s sustainable purchases have soared from 1.7% to 87.1% based on reports from Corporate Express, City’s primary supplier. The Development Services Center’s sustainable purchases have increased by 44% and the City’s are up 18%, during the same time period. The Purchasing and Contracts Division is working to convert all paper products and cleaning supplies to greener products and is looking for other opportunities to integrate sustainability into contracts and purchasing.

Possibly the largest change in any single department is in Information Technologies (IT). The department began a new program as a result of CELEBRATE which *Powers Down* all non-essential computers, helping to save \$31,696 and preventing 240 tons of E-CO₂ annually. In addition, IT installed the SIRE program, which provides online access to documents, agendas and backup materials, reducing the amount of printing and the number of trips to City Clerks and

the Development Services Center. The “Sustaining Las Vegas” webpages (www.lasvegasnevada.gov/sustaininglasvegas) which share valuable information with the public and beyond couldn't have been done without IT Department. IT is helping the City to do more, using fewer resources, while providing enhanced services!

The CELEBRATE program is improving the quality of life for Las Vegas residents. As programs and policies are revised for efficiency; residents benefit from improved services and saved tax dollars, allowing the city to spend more money on essential programs for the citizenry. Residents are able to breathe easier as greenhouse gases are reduced from city operations.

CELEBRATE is also expanding into the community. In 2008, the Human Resources Department made CELEBRATE the theme of the employee Health & Safety Fair, with over 2,600 employees and vendors attending. Neighborhood Services is working with local charities to recycle more items collected at Neighborhood Clean-ups, reducing the amount of waste entering landfills. CELEBRATE participates in the annual University of Nevada – Las Vegas' (UNLV) Earth Day Fair, sharing sustainability information with elementary school children. During October of last year, CELEBRATE organized the city employee tree planting events to increase the urban forest canopy and provide educational outreach to the community. CELEBRATE partnered with the City Council, the Nevada Division of Forestry and Star Nursery to plant tree in parks across Las Vegas.

The CELEBRATE program has learned many lessons along the way and “Keeping it simple” is the most important. Las Vegas has found that employees don't want to participate in complex programs that add to their workload. “Reward, Reward, Reward.” Employees feel valued and validated when rewarded or recognized for their contributions as the city-wide CELEBRATE committee did when they won “Team of the Quarter” in 2008. Finally, “Have

realistic and flexible expectations.” Our results did not always come out as expected, but often after more analysis CELEBRATE committees could learn more about their departments from those experiences, than from situations when results were as expected.