

Nomination of Paul R. Stapleton for the ICMA Professional Excellence Award (Award for Career Excellence)

Biography

Paul is currently the City Administrator for the City of Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. Born and raised in St. John's, Newfoundland, Paul obtained his Bachelor of Arts (Economics) Degree from Memorial University of Newfoundland. He furthered his studies at the University of New Brunswick, where he obtained his Bachelor of Law Degree before returning to his native province.

His career spans over 30 years of public service through all levels of government, beginning in 1974 as Newfoundland's first Provincial Director of Legal Aid. From 1976 to 1979, Paul practiced law privately, and served as Clerk Assistant to the Newfoundland House of Assembly.

From 1979 to early 1992, Paul held the position of City Solicitor for the City of St. John's. During that time he served as Acting City Manager on a number of occasions and in March of 1992 he was appointed to that position on a full-time basis.

In December 1993, Paul assumed the position of City Administrator for the City of Fredericton. His focus has been the preservation and enhancement of the quality of life enjoyed by the citizens of Fredericton. To achieve this, he has worked to develop a strong management team and a corporate culture based on quality customer service while at the same time maintaining a healthy financial organization through prudent fiscal management.

Accomplishments

Paul has a special interest in organizational development – continuous improvement through planned change. His goal is to match the unique talents of individual employees to organizational objectives. He is an advocate of life-long learning and delights in seeing others achieve their potential. Paul would never accept credit for the information noted below, but his staff knows that his leadership style, support and encouragement are the reason that the City of Fredericton prospers. He supports risk-taking behavior that is intended to improve our services.

Leadership

- **Core Competencies** – Paul has ‘pushed’ training and education for City of Fredericton staff and as such has been instrumental in the development of core competencies for staff. The competency model is changing the way the city recruits, trains and promotes staff.
- **Fredericton has been a leader amongst Municipalities** in New Brunswick helping other communities with a multitude of projects. For example, Fredericton lead the charge to have the Unconditional Grant reviewed – the fiscal transfer between the Province of New Brunswick and the Municipalities of the Province. It has helped Campbellton (another NB Community) develop its strategic plan, it has offered its staff to other smaller municipalities in developing sound water practices, it also works closely with the Union of NB Municipalities (UMNB) and the Association of Municipal Administrators of New Brunswick (AMANB) in educating its members.
- **Minister’s Roundtable on Local Governance** – Paul was assigned as one of two staff representatives to the Minister’s roundtable on Local Governance. He was an integral part of that committee and is generally known as an expert on the unconditional grant formula.
- **Management Reference Model** – reorganized the structure of the City to better reflect a customer driven organization. Departmental silos have been removed, and all internal services centralized.
- **Partners for Climate Protection** – Fredericton was the second Municipality in New Brunswick to officially join the Partners for Climate Protection. This is a commitment the City has made to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions. In 2006, the City of Fredericton was honored with Council of Canadian Ministers of the Environment National Award for Green House Gas reductions (CCME). It has also completed Milestones 5 of 5 of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Greenhouse Gas reduction program placing the City within the top 5% of City’s in Canada within the program. Its Climate Change action plan was recently recognized by Institute of Public Administration of Canada by gaining a spot as a finalist in the Institutes’ Innovative Management Awards.
- **Partnering with Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)** – to assist a city in Thailand in improving their local governance model. Paul brought the idea to City Council in 2000 as a way the City could help 3rd world Municipalities. This program has been so successful that FCM has adopted Fredericton’s approach nationwide. The program has evolved to the point that Fredericton staff have teamed up with staff from the Thailand community we helped to assist another community in Vietnam (working as a team). This is a unique arrangement that should move towards a more sustainable

international effort. Additional work is being performed in Sri Lanka in helping rebuild the country as a result of the Tsunami.

Innovation and creativity

- **e-Novations** – The City of Fredericton has established a company to oversee the operation of the community network and private sector partnerships. This company operates without public funding and relies almost exclusively on the volunteer efforts of City staff and the partnerships with local firms. This company provides an outlet for innovation, experimentation and creativity amongst staff to develop new partnerships. For the past three years, the company has been able to pay off the loan it received from the City and is now self-sufficient.
- **Free Municipal WiFi** – The City of Fredericton was the first North American City to provide publicly funded Municipal WiFi to its Citizens. Installed in 2003, the City received glowing reviews from such prestigious news media outlets as CNN, the Globe and Mail and other national media. The City received a National Canadian Productivity Award for its WiFi program in 2004. The system continues to be expanded and now covers most of the City's developed areas and business corridors.
- **Private sector partnerships** – The City has established numerous partnerships with the private sector to help those companies develop new products. The City has opened its operation to allow companies to test new software and innovations in our environment prior to putting the products on the market. It is not unusual for City staff to host delegations on a weekly basis from all over the world. Staff has also traveled with local firms helping demonstrate the products to potential clients.
- **Senior Management training program** - When Paul first arrived in Fredericton; one of the first initiatives he implemented was a senior management-training program. In cooperation with UNB, this program presented formal managerial training, but more importantly assisted in breaking down barriers between the management of various City departments. This initial step contributed heavily to the changing organizational culture of the City of Fredericton.

Accomplishment and/or impact

In addition to all the initiatives noted above, Paul has been an integral part of the following efforts.

- **ISO 9001-2008** – The City of Fredericton achieved ISO certification in 2002. Normally in the realm of the private sector, Paul has challenged City staff to prove we can function in a business like manner and meets the high

standards of ISO. As far as we know, the City of Fredericton is the only North American City to achieve ISO certification for every section of the organization. The City was successful in recertifying its designation 2007 for another 3 years and again in 2010.

- ***The City of Fredericton has been twice named one of the Top 7 Most Intelligent Communities in the World*** by the New York based think-tank intelligent community's forum.

Community work

Paul has been actively involved in the community throughout his career holding executive positions in many local, provincial and national associations. He is past President and Honourary Life member of the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators and a past member of the Rotary Club here in Fredericton. He is a past board member of the Fredericton Regional IPAC Association and has encouraged many of his staff to retain memberships in IPAC, CAMA and ICMA.

In 2002, Paul was awarded the IPAC Lieutenant Governors Award for Excellence in Public Service in New Brunswick. A well deserving recipient, Paul is respected provincially by colleagues from all three levels of Government and is well known nationally by those active in Municipal professional organizations. In 2008, Paul was honored by the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators with an honorary lifetime membership, one of only a handful every awarded.

Summary

Paul Stapleton is deserving of this award because he is a change agent that brings out the best in his staff. He encourages risk-taking behavior and delights in the success of his staff. All the innovations and accomplishments that the City of Fredericton has achieved have taken the collective efforts of staff and City Council. However, the corporate culture must allow change to occur. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the common thread that has lead to our success. It is interesting to note that all of the accomplishments outlined in this submission have occurred since Paul Stapleton arrived with the City of Fredericton – that is not a coincidence.

Respectively Submitted:



Chris MacPherson, President of the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators.