



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

2011 Annual Awards Program

Program Excellence Awards Nomination Form

Deadline for Nominations: March 11, 2011

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: Community Wellness Plan

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: City of Fayetteville, NC

Jurisdiction population(s): 200,564

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, 2010, to be eligible. The start date should not include the initial planning phase.)

Month: January Year: 2009

Name(s) and title(s) of individual(s) who should receive recognition for this award at the ICMA Annual Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, September 2011. (Each individual listed MUST be an ICMA member to be recognized.):

Name: Dale Iman

Title: City Manager Jurisdiction: City of Fayetteville

Name: Doug Hewett

Title: Asst. City Mgr. Jurisdiction: City of Fayetteville

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact

Name of contact: Tom Bergamine
Title: Police Chief Jurisdiction: City of Fayetteville
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Problem Assessment

When Dale Iman arrived in Fayetteville, NC as the new City Manager in 2006, the city was a prosperous community with one major concern – crime. Violent crime grew by 13 percent from 2005 to 2006 and property crimes were up 24 percent in the same time frame. Violent crime was up again, by 1.6 percent, in 2007 and 22.8 percent in 2008. Property crimes increased by 7 percent from 2007 to 2008.

To address the issue, Mr. Iman appointed Police Chief Tom Bergamine in 2007 and charged him with the difficult task of reversing the crime trends. In response to the rising crime statistics, Chief Bergamine rolled out the Community Wellness Plan in 2009. With a concerned citizenry and City Council, Mr. Iman directed Chief Bergamine and the Fayetteville Police Department to look at innovative ways to reduce the crime level and make the city safer. Simply hiring more officers was not the only solution that needed be addressed.

While the Police Department continues to utilize traditional law enforcement practices, the Community Wellness Plan focuses on key components of public safety and community outreach. The plan was also management friendly as it included measurable objectives. Mr. Iman, Chief Bergamine and police staff recognized the need for a more efficient police/community partnership to combat crime in Fayetteville.

After meetings with Council members, department heads, officers, citizens, community watch groups, university officials, social workers and other community figures, Chief Bergamine and his team designed and presented the Community Wellness

Plan to the community. The plan focuses on the root causes of crime, which is a more comprehensive approach than the typical “arresting our way out of crime” philosophy.

During the course of the initial presentation, Chief Bergamine outlined how the department would utilize small unit tactics in designated sectors throughout the city. The Community Wellness Plan also detailed how officers would team up with court officials, housing inspectors, social workers, firefighters, planners and youth groups. Crime Prevention Specialists would work with neighborhoods to increase the number of Community Watch Groups, adding eyes and ears to assist the police force. Essentially, the plan called for help from the community. “It takes hard work, it takes perseverance, moving together as one,” Bergamine said.

Program Implementation and Costs

Since the majority of the Community Wellness Plan relates to grassroots efforts, there wasn’t a great amount of new cost associated with the program implementation, but more of a reallocation of existing resources. However, to ensure that the Police Department continued to operate near its authorized strength, the City Council continued to support a pre-approved police officer pay plan designed to strengthen the Police Department’s ability to recruit and retain employees.

The Police Department has been successfully meeting the established staffing needs highlighted in the Community Wellness Plan, and continues to operate at full staff. The department has 373 budgeted positions and hired 10 additional over hires set to replace outgoing officers. With the encouragement of Mr. Iman, City staff applied for funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and the police force was augmented by the hiring of 17 additional officers. Funding for those positions totaled

\$2.5 million that was provided from the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program.

An additional \$708,976 from stimulus funding, via the Justice Assistance Grant Program, provided the following tools needed to implement the Wellness Plan: forensic technicians with associated vehicles and equipment; crime prevention specialists with associated vehicles and equipment; tactical robot for the emergency response team; laser scene scanner system for forensics; important updates to photo lab; miscellaneous officer and staff training; bicycles for patrol use; laptop computers for detectives; vehicle crash data recorder and associated training for traffic unit; and tactical assault entry vests.

Tracking repeat offenders, via a GPS bracelet tracking system, also aided the Police Department in the cases where a “repeat offender” was found to be a viable suspect. The Police Department realized productivity increases to enhance efficiency, which saved money and accomplished more with less. The department received grant money for the training, education and prevention of domestic violence. Additional Civilian Crash Investigators were hired to lessen the accident response burden on patrol officers and allow them to concentrate on crime related hot spots within the city. Another new element that has gained popularity with police departments across the nation is the use of free social media sites to fight crime. The use of Nixle, Facebook and Twitter has proven to be a valuable tool for disseminating crime information to the public. In one case, social media tools assisted with the apprehension of a suspect within 30 minutes of the initial wanted alert posting. In an effort to coordinate the new Community Wellness initiatives and to discuss the most effective way to deal with individual neighborhoods within the city, the department sponsors a monthly community crime meeting.

Additionally, the Police Department continued intelligence led policing efforts by holding monthly focus meetings to look at crime mapping. These meetings highlight hot spots in the city and give personnel a glimpse of the bigger picture. Intelligence led policing has certainly contributed to the city realizing reduced crime levels.

Tangible Results

After one year of working the Community Wellness Plan, in 2010 Fayetteville had the lowest crime index rate since 1991. This included the lowest violent crime index rate, down 74.8% from 1991, and the lowest property crime index rate, down 47.1% from 1991.

Violent crime was officially down 21.4% in 2009. In 2010, violent crime decreased an additional 14.2% and property crime decreased by 7.1%. Reductions were also seen in: Assault (-24.1%), robbery (-25%) and homicide (-8.7%) for the year 2009. In 2010, assaults decreased 18.1%, robberies 5% and homicides 23.8%. These numbers were compared to the previous year. As a result, Fayetteville is a safer city and the Community Wellness Plan has proven to be an effective roadmap to crime reduction.

Since the Community Wellness Plan was implemented, 46 additional Community Watch Groups have been developed and continue to operate. The addition provides hundreds of additional eyes and ears to assist the Police Department. Additionally, several of the community crime meetings have attracted more than 250 citizens, eager to hear about crime related activity in their community.

It's obvious that putting the Community Wellness Plan into motion and the resulting reduction of crime have produced tangible results and made Fayetteville a much safer, desirable city for citizens to enjoy a higher quality of life.

Lessons Learned

The Fayetteville Police Department and City of Fayetteville learned several lessons during planning, implementation and analysis of the Community Wellness Plan. One of the lessons learned is patience. Thankfully, the City Council and citizens gave the City and Police Department time to implement the plan. It would have been easy to ask the City Council to hire 50 more officers. But more personnel without a plan to efficiently execute is pointless. By listening to Mr. Iman and Chief Bergamine's recommendations, the City Council showed trust in its staff, and the results are translated as success.

Another lesson learned was communicating to a great police staff how the City needed them to produce better results and work more efficiently. Personnel were already working hard, but by asking them to go the extra mile to make the plan work was a difficult thing to do. The addition of 17 police officers, two forensic technicians, two crime prevention specialists and more civilian crash investigators, as well as all of the extras that Stimulus funding provided, made the transition easier.

Overall, in analyzing the success of the Community Wellness Plan, it's evident that the program, with Iman's and Bergamine's direction, has been successful. The amount of collaboration among community organizations, the City, the Police Department, colleges and citizens is staggering. This has truly been a collaborative community effort that took everyone coming to the table and rolling up their sleeves to produce a positive outcome. The City and Police Department hope that ICMA agrees that this program is very deserving of a Community Health and Safety Award. This would be yet another tangible result of the Community Wellness Plan's effectiveness.