

**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: Raising 150 Tons of Food: Eagan, Minnesota's One of a Kind Sesquicentennial Celebration

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: Eagan, Minnesota

Jurisdiction population(s): 65,800

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: 2010

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: Thomas L. Hedges

Title: City Administrator Jurisdiction: City of Eagan, Minnesota

Name: Dianne E. Miller

Title: Assistant City Administrator Jurisdiction: City of Eagan, Minnesota

**SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact**

Name of contact: Dianne Miller

Title: Assistant City Administrator Jurisdiction: City of Eagan, MN

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**Raising 150 Tons of Food: Eagan, Minnesota's  
One of a Kind Sesquicentennial Celebration**

**Eagan, Minnesota  
Population: 65,800**



**1. Problem Assessment: the challenge or need that prompted the local government to develop the program (and summary of the effort)**

*An innovative sesquicentennial celebration with community in mind.* When Eagan, Minnesota set out to celebrate 150 years since its founding—our Sesquicentennial—the City and a City-appointed Eagan 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Volunteer Committee embarked on a remarkable goal of rallying the entire city to serve those in need by raising 150,000 pounds of food for those in our community who are hungry. All food, and any monetary donations, was to be donated to two local food shelves: Eagan Resource Center and 360 Communities, both serving residents of Eagan. Clearly, the people of Eagan recognized the role they could have to enhance the quality of life for the disadvantaged of our community.

*A gesture of hope in a time when many despaired.* At a community-wide birthday party and Sesquicentennial kickoff in early January 2010, Mayor Mike Maguire announced the 150,000 pound goal and encouraged all of Eagan – businesses, community members, schools, faith communities, service organizations, government and nonprofit agencies – to step forward to help eliminate hunger, a growing problem in what many would consider an affluent suburb of St. Paul.

*The time was right.* In 2010, there was a 16% jump in visits to food shelves in the 9-country Twin Cities metro area in 2010. Specifically in just one of the food shelves in Eagan, there were 7,750 people who were served with food in 2007, and by 2010, the number of people served had increased to 21,339. To meet the demand, the amount of food distributed to the hungry increased from 30,000 pounds in 2006 to 450,000 pounds in 2010. Clearly there was a need to feed the hungry of Eagan, and the community joined together to ensure that need was met.



## **2. Program Implementation and Cost**

*The Business Community Steps Forward.* Eagan has always been a fiscally prudent organization, and the leadership takes the ICMA Code of Ethics very seriously. As such, the City did not feel it was appropriate to allocate City financial resources to the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration or food drive. Rather, the only cost to the City was the staff support that was provided to the volunteer committee to assist with event planning and communication efforts.

To lead the Sesquicentennial efforts, the Eagan City Council selected a president of a local bank to appoint a volunteer committee made up of instrumental business leaders and residents of the community. Along with a \$25,000 donation from the Eagan Convention and Visitors Bureau, the volunteer committee sought partners and sponsors from the business community to fund the year's events and food drive efforts. By engaging over 100 businesses, community groups, schools, and churches, the volunteer committee raised over \$10,000 to fund the year's festivities without any funding allocation from the City itself. The funds were used for everything from volunteer t-shirts and 150<sup>th</sup> lapel pins to entertainment and advertising.

Given how the community—both businesses and residents alike—embraced the year and the food drive effort, many products and services were donated, resulting in limited financial resources being necessary. In fact, by December of 2010, after reimbursing the Convention and Visitor's Bureau for their remaining funds that were unallocated, the volunteer committee donated all of their remaining sponsorship dollars and 150<sup>th</sup> event proceeds to the two local food selves by presenting them each with check for nearly \$6,000.

### **3. Tangible Results or measurable outcomes of the program**

*The community responded.* Using innovative traditional and social media strategies, including [www.eagan150.com](http://www.eagan150.com), programming on local cable television, blogging and Facebook®, combined with food collection boxes at over 50 businesses, churches, and City facilities, the community and volunteers had rallied the community of Eagan to raise over 150,000 pounds of food *by March of 2010*. As a result of the tremendous generosity, the volunteer board and City stretched the goal to 300,000 pounds of food. The first 150,000 pounds was to honor the city's first 150 years and the second 150,000 pounds was to celebrate the 150 years to come.

*There were many milestones to remember.* There was the Eagan Fun Fest and 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, sprouting an 18-foot Cub Foods grocery cart and dozens of community volunteers, including the local food shelf, to collect food and raise awareness of hunger. Then Eagan went back in time with an old-fashioned base ball game and community picnic in early August with a team of local celebrities facing off against the Minnesota Quicksteps (a vintage base ball club) and against hunger with all proceeds benefiting the local food shelves. Also in August, the Eagan Police Department and Eagan Citizens Crime Prevention Association organized an unprecedented National Night Out event, with 176 neighborhood block parties raising 36,648 pounds of food and nearly \$8,000 for the hungry. September saw the Glacier Hills Elementary School students collect over 4,000 pounds of food and were rewarded with extra recess with the school principal and Eagan volunteer firefighters. As the sesquicentennial celebration began to wrap up in October, the first ever Taste of Eagan event was held at the City's Community Center. It seemed effortless for the city and volunteers to organize 27 local restaurants to donate

food and time to the event, which turned out over 400 people and raised \$6,000 for the food shelves.

*The goal was reached and surpassed, twice.* All totaled, over 110 groups—Eagan businesses, community groups, neighborhoods, schools, faith communities, service organizations, government workers and nonprofit organizations – responded to the rallying cry of city leaders and surpassed the second goal of 300,000 pounds of food by raising almost 400,000 pounds of food for those who are hungry in Eagan and Dakota County.

*Sustaining the 150<sup>th</sup> year.* The 150<sup>th</sup> goal elevated the issue of hunger to such a degree that the local Eagan food shelf was able to raise an additional \$81,000 in a special appeal to build a new space in the Eagan Cedarvale Business Center, tripling its space and changing the delivery of service in order to provide a more dignified, substantial experience for families in need of food support. The Sesquicentennial Volunteer Committee, City of Eagan and local food shelves developed an action plan early in 2011 to strategically engage the 2010 partners and the community to sustain the momentum of the successful campaign: 400,000 pounds of food equals 312,500 meals. That's the same as each Eagan resident giving 5 meals for hungry families. Remarkable!

#### **4. Lessons learned during planning, implementation, and analysis of the program**

*It takes a village.* Engaging volunteers to assist with such a large, community-wide effort was crucial to our success. Moreover, by getting the key Eagan businesses to join the effort on the front end through their service on the volunteer board, we had buy-in from day one and were able to maximize the financial resources and connections of those Board members to further engage the community as a whole.



Selecting the right citizen to lead the volunteer committee was likely the most crucial decision the City Council made for the year. They found a leader who was visionary, persistent, and enthusiastic, but always conscience not to be micromanaging. Likewise, the City needed a staff point person for the entire year that could organize and staff the volunteer board, motivate and encourage staff involvement in events and planning activities, and be a conduit between the City's management team, the volunteer board, and the City Council. The staff person selected had to be cognizant of the political dynamics and sensitivities of the community to make sure that the volunteer board, the volunteer chairman, and the City Council were always aware of each entities' expectations, interests, and actions.

By December of 2010, the City Council, community partners, Eagan businesses, the two local food shelves, and our 65,800 residents were filled with pride and satisfaction after such a phenomenal 12-month Sesquicentennial celebration. The City Council had a 2009-2010 City Goal to "strengthen our community through volunteerism and civic engagement". There is no better example of citizen engagement than an entire community—residents, businesses, churches, schools, and neighborhoods—joining together for a common cause as a way to honor our City's vibrant past and promising future.

