



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: Highland Park Public Access Television Center

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: Highland Park, IL

Jurisdiction population(s): 29,763

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: Jan 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: David Limardi

Title: City Manager Jurisdiction: Highland Park, IL

Name: Emily Palm

Title: Management Analyst Jurisdiction: Highland Park, IL

Name: Renee Helm

Title: Administrative Intern Jurisdiction: Highland Park, IL

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator / Primary Contact

Name of contact: Renee Helm

Title: Administrative Intern Jurisdiction: Highland Park, IL

Street address: 1707 St. Johns Avenue

City: Highland Park State/Province: IL

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ICMA Community Partnership Awards

Jurisdiction: City of Highland Park, Illinois

City/County Manager: David M. Limardi

Project Contact: Renee Helm, Administrative Intern

Project Title: Highland Park Public Access Television Center

Problem Assessment:

In 2008, Comcast of Illinois informed the City of Highland Park that it would be ceasing operation of its local public access studio on December 31, 2009. Prior to this, Comcast had provided funding for the public access studio for over 30 years. As a result of the funding, Highland Park and neighboring communities established a long tradition of utilizing and supporting public access television as a means of enhancing communication with are residents regarding news, events and local affairs. Recognizing that there was a tradition of support for public access television, the City of Highland Park worked cooperatively with Comcast and neighboring communities to preserve public access television and assumed responsibility of the previous Comcast studio.

The City worked with Comcast to relocate Comcast's studio to the Highland Park Police Station Headquarters ("Headquarters"). By utilizing the Headquarters, the City was able to reduce overhead costs and increase its capability of communicating directly with residents in case of an emergency.

The City also entered into intergovernmental agreements with the Village of Deerfield and Village of Winnetka, thereby making this resource accessible to the three communities. In January 2010, the Highland Park Public Access Television Center ("Center") began broadcasting municipal meetings and reopened for video production, editing and playback.

Program Implementation and Costs:

The Center was initiated in 2008 when Comcast informed the City that it would be ceasing operation of its local public access studio by the end of 2009. Understanding that there is support for public access television within the community, the City committed to assuming responsibility of the previous Comcast studio. The City worked cooperatively with Comcast and other neighboring communities to implement the Center. Between October 2009 and January 2010, a project team met on a weekly basis to discuss implementation and relocation of the Center. The project team consisted of staff from the City Manager's Office, Public Works, the Police Department and Comcast.

Additionally, the City met with neighboring communities and invited them to enter into intergovernmental agreements for the use and operation of the Center. To date, the Villages of Deerfield and Winnetka have entered into agreements with the City through December 31, 2011.

Comcast donated a majority of the equipment that was at the previous studio, as well as provided several hours of labor, both of which resulted in a cost savings of over \$200,000 for the City. During implementation and the remainder of 2010, the City spent \$47,000; however the City was able to recover 50% of the total through the intergovernmental agreements.

Program Results/Benefits:

Several organizations and individuals have benefited from the Center. First of all, the City of Highland Park, and Villages of Deerfield and Winnetka have benefited from the Center because they are able to continue broadcasting municipal meetings and programs for residents on each individual government access channel.

Secondly, the residents of the three municipalities benefit from the Center because they are able to continue viewing municipal and public programs. Additionally, residents and

employees of the three municipalities have the opportunity to utilize the Center's facility and equipment.

Finally, the producers who were utilizing the Comcast studio have benefited from the Center because they are able to continue broadcasting their programs on public access channel 19 and utilize the facility and equipment. One group that utilized the previous Comcast studio weekly was the Senior TV Production Team ("Team"). The Team is a group of members from the Senior Center of Highland Park that produces, edits and broadcasts programs through the Center. The Team also uses the Center as a means of socializing. Currently, there are over 60 producers, including the Senior TV Production Team, who utilize the Center to produce, edit and broadcast programs. Since the Center opened in 2010, over 1,000 municipal and public programs have been broadcasted through the Center regarding issues such as health, government, music, theatre, sports and home improvement.

The City hired two part-time staff members to manage the Center. The coordinator is responsible for the studio, equipment, and broadcasting schedules. The technician is responsible for coordinating the playback system and also maintains the equipment at the Center.

Lessons Learned:

The City learned several lessons while implementing the Center. The first lesson is that partnerships are beneficial to the success of programs and projects. The City partnered with Comcast and other jurisdictions to implement the Center. Through the City's partnership with Comcast, the City was able to learn the best practices of operating a public access studio, qualifications to seek in technical staff, and the best choices for equipment. The City was also able to reduce costs through this partnership because Comcast donated over \$200,000 worth of equipment and labor. The City's partnership with other jurisdictions allowed the City to continue

providing public access programming to the surrounding communities, which is a valued tradition, while reducing costs.

Another lesson that the City learned was that project teams are essential for successful implementation. The project team met regularly, which allowed members to track the progress of the program and keep communication open between the multiple stakeholders. Regular meetings also allowed the City to have an expedited turnaround from when the Comcast studio closed in late November 2009 to when the Center opened in 2010.