



Report to: General Committee

Report Date: October 27, 2008

SUBJECT: Community & Fire Services Commission Planning Session received Level 3 Award (Best-in-Class) Certificate of Excellence from 2008 Public Sector Quality Fair

PREPARED BY: Sara Tam, Manager of Business Planning & Innovation
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RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report titled "Community & Fire Services Commission Planning Session received Level 3 Award (Best-in-Class) Certificate of Excellence from 2008 Public Sector Quality Fair" be received for information;

AND THAT Council be presented with the Certificate of Excellence.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Not Required.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to communicate the external recognition conveyed by the Public Sector Quality Fair to Markham's Community & Fire Services Commission for its regular practice of holding an annual planning session. This recognition is aligned to Town of Markham's operational priority of attaining Level 3 organizational recognition from the National Quality Institute (NQI).

BACKGROUND:

The Public Sector Quality Fair (PSQF), www.psqf.org, has been held annually for the last 11 years to showcase and celebrate service quality excellence in the federal, provincial, and municipal sectors across Ontario. As noted by its organizing committee, "*The aim of the PSQF is to increase the awareness and use of accepted quality principles and practices by celebrating successes, sharing ideas, learning about best practices, and providing inspiration.*" PSQF recognizes public service initiatives through its award program, held at a one-day event each year.

The Public Sector Quality Fair award program evaluates all submissions against the same criteria that the National Quality Institute uses for the Canada Awards for Excellence. Since organizations are at various stages of the quality journey, PSQF uses a tiered approach in its award program, as described below.

<u>Level 1 Award</u> (Stable Formal Systems Approach)	Recognizes the efforts of an organization in its use of one of the major principles of the NQI drivers or another equivalent quality management system. This may apply to a specific project or the initial implementation of a quality system. The recipient project exhibits a systematic process based approach with early stages of systematic improvements.
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<p><u>Level 2 Award</u> (Continual Improvement Emphasized)</p>	<p>Recognizes an organization that is utilizing several elements of the NQI drivers or another equivalent quality management system, either in the ongoing management of the organization or during a long-term project. The recipient project will have an improvement process in use with good results and sustained improvement trends.</p>
<p><u>Level 3 Award</u> (Best-in-Class Performance)</p>	<p>Recognizes excellence in an organization that is following most of the major elements of the NQI drivers or another equivalent quality management system. Activities of the organization, either ongoing or project-based, embrace these principles in the execution of their work. The recipient project will have a strongly integrated improvement process and best-in-class benchmarking results are clearly demonstrated.</p>

The Community & Fire Services Commission submitted its annual Commission Planning Session to the Public Sector Quality Fair this year. It received a Level 3 Award Certificate of Excellence, the highest recognition available.

The PSQF Organizing Committee partnered with the federal and provincial governments, the Toronto District School Board, and the National Quality Institute (NQI) to hold this year's event on September 8th at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

The Community & Fire Services Commission has regularly held an annual planning session since 2004 with its senior staff. The practice started following the reorganization of its departments through the Core Services Review in 2003. The then newly created Strategic Services Department took on the planning session as an annual deliverable for the Commission. Each Commission within the organization organizes its own planning session to meet the needs of its business.

The Community & Fire Services Commission achieved Level 3 Award from this year's Public Sector Quality Fair by addressing the following areas:

1. **Strategic Direction Support** - It showed alignment to the strategic direction of Markham by contributing to organizational excellence and the pursuit of NQI's PEP Level 3 certification. Leadership involvement was demonstrated through the active participation of its Commissioner and Directors and General Managers.
2. **Sound Project Planning Practices** - A plan was developed for carrying out the Planning Session. The session was reviewed to evaluate delivery compared to the plan and whether expectations were met, and identify improvement opportunities.
3. **Customer Focused** - Strategic Services involved its Commissioner, Commission Leads (in 2008 only), Directors, General Managers, and participants (Internal Customers) to determine their needs and requirements and measured their satisfaction with the Planning Session. This year's session received an overall satisfaction of 85%, a 2% increase from 2007. There was 87% agreement that the meeting objectives were met.

4. **People Focused** – A team-based approach was used to plan and deliver on the Planning Session and the success of each annual session is a result of the collaborative team effort.
5. **Process is Managed** – A systematic and proactive process has been put in place to carry out the annual planning session. Aside from ‘planning before acting’, other elements of the process included continuous improvement, performance measurements, and putting checkpoints in place to ensure consistency and desired results.
6. **Supplier / Partner Focus** – The Planning Session involved its suppliers/partners to ensure a successful event. This year, the supplier was the venue provider and their involvement contributed to a 10% increase in satisfaction when compared to last year. Suppliers from past years included facilitators and guest speakers. The session organizer took on the facilitator responsibilities this year and the session format did not require guest speakers.
7. **Organizational Performance** – The practice of holding the Planning Session showed improvements in quality that are measurable and beneficial to our customers (internal for this project) while enhancing staff satisfaction and organizational results.

The Commission Planning Session was selected to demonstrate it is not the size of the project that matters but the manner in which they are undertaken to achieve service excellence. The seven elements noted above are consistent with NQI's quality framework and is a means for any organization and/or project team to achieve success.

FINANCIAL TEMPLATE


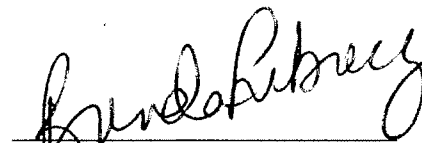
None.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Not applicable.

DEPARTMENTS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

None.

RECOMMENDED**BY:**
Peter Loukes, P.Eng
Director, Operations
Brenda Librecz,
Commissioner, Community
& Fire Services**ATTACHMENTS:**

None.

