

Tips to help make your Municipal Achievement Award narrative more effective

1. Make sure you tell your story well. What was the issue you were trying to address? Any data that supports that concern? What did you do to address the issue? What results were accomplished?
2. Don't write by committee – when 4 or 5 people write different parts of your application, it often doesn't flow. Let 4 or 5 people provide information to one person who writes the application. Find your best writer.
3. Measurement is key – what data demonstrates your success? How many people took part? What change in behavior or data was achieved? Simply reporting that people had a good time is not a good measurement.
4. Often the best entries have concepts that can be shared or implemented in other communities. Be sure to point out the transferability.
5. New, intriguing, innovative projects (or aspects of projects) excite judges, as well as others. Highlight ways of thinking and strategies people don't expect from their local government and the difference those strategies and thoughts brought about.
6. Read and follow ALL of the rules and instructions provided in the awards brochure and follow the application process – your application will be incomplete and incorrect if any items (number of copies, etc.) are missing.

Tips specific to the *Environmental Stewardship* award category

1. Find a project that could be applicable to a broader number of communities, versus a project that is unique to one community. Can it be adapted for use in other cities?

2. Select programs that create partnerships, resulting in active support from community organizations and citizens.
3. Measurable and verifiable results are weighted heavier than clippings of news articles that simply highlight the activity.
4. Projects that are simply “planned” and not yet executed are not good projects to submit.
5. Select programs/efforts that have a broad impact and encompass many sustainability issues, rather than a single sustainability issue.
6. Select a project that is truly innovative. If it’s something that may not be as unique, describe how your city implemented a new process, technique and/or measurement that presents the program/process in a unique way while also reducing the carbon footprint and/or improving the long-term sustainability of our natural resources.

Note: These tips were offered by judges who have judged the Municipal Achievement Awards at various times over the years.