



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: Whitewater-University Technology Park and Innovation Center

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: Whitewater, Wisconsin

Jurisdiction population(s): 13,437

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: September 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: Kevin Brunner

Title: City Manager Jurisdiction: Whitewater, WI

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator / Primary Contact

Name of contact: Denise Ehlen

Title: Director Jurisdiction: Research and
Sponsored
Programs, UW-
Whitewater

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11 March 2011

International City/County Management Association
2011 Annual Awards Program
777 North Capitol Street, NE; Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002-4201

Dear Awards Evaluation Panel:

I am pleased to nominate the Whitewater-University Technology Park and Innovation Center for the Community Partnership Program Excellence Award.

I have had the distinct pleasure of working with Kevin Brunner, City Manager for Whitewater, Wisconsin, and Dr. Richard Telfer, Chancellor for the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater (UWW), over the last three years on a number of initiatives as Director of Research and Sponsored Programs at UWW. My office's mission is to enhance the research productivity of the University; provide key data and institutional research services to relevant stakeholders; increase internal and external support of scholarly activity; promote and facilitate technology commercialization, entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, and economic development; foster regional engagement; and celebrate the achievements of the campus community.

In 2006, the City of Whitewater Community Development Authority [CDA], under the vision and direction of Mr. Brunner and Dr. Telfer, began work on a new collaborative economic strategy that focused on business incubation. The UWW Small Business Development Center, in consultation with the CDA, Mr. Brunner, and Dr. Telfer, conducted a survey which found that the notion warranted further investigation. The CDA contracted with a private sector economic consultant who conducted a feasibility study that indicated that a technology-based incubator

would likely be successful in the city, given the close proximity and collaboration with UWW and the involvement of key leadership, notably Mr. Brunner and Dr. Telfer.

Following the feasibility report, in November 2008, both parties committed to the project in a memorandum of understanding and worked together to secure funding. The CDA served the lead applicant for a proposal submitted to the Economic Development Administration [EDA], which, in September 2009, was awarded a \$4.74 million grant to develop the 125 acre Whitewater-University Technology Park and Innovation Center, the later a 38,000 square foot business incubator.

Mr. Brunner and Dr. Telfer had several goals throughout the project. First, which has already been realized, was to forge a new, higher-level partnership with UWW administration and UWW faculty from various disciplines, including business, sciences, and education. The economic strategy was to leverage expertise at UWW to launch and build businesses based upon that expertise and to facilitate technology transfer. Second, following the subsequent EDA award, the goals related to the implementation focused on workforce development, talent attraction and retention, and encouraging entrepreneurship in Whitewater. The Innovation Center will provide incubator space to faculty to advance research in their specialties while providing internship and employment opportunities for students and graduates. In addition to the creation of new businesses, the CDA anticipates the attraction of technology businesses to the area due to the promise of opportunities to collaborate with UWW in a dedicated facility. Ultimately, the goal is to provide needed space for UWW and to generate increased economic activity in Whitewater, including the creation of better quality jobs.

This project has represented an unprecedented undertaking within our community under the leadership of Mr. Brunner and Dr. Telfer. University faculty, staff, business outreach

centers, students, city residents, schools and public works, and area business owners have all been engaged in the project from start to finish in an effort to increase the visibility of the City for the benefit of all. Faculty and staff will gain resources to further research and develop new technologies. Business outreach centers will have a larger presence in the community with increase awareness of the value of their services. Students in business, sciences, and humanities will gain high-quality internship and employment opportunities to develop critical professional knowledge and skills. City residents, including downtown business owners, will benefit from increased vitality in the city. Schools will benefit not only from increased tax revenue, but also enhancement of university resources and a closer location to the anchor tenant, CESA 2, the State of Wisconsin's largest Cooperative Educational Service Agency.

It takes the spirit of innovation to conceive of a project such as this in a city the size of Whitewater, Wisconsin. The reason this project is logical is not obvious based on size, but when location is considered (Whitewater is located within a triangle composed of points at Chicago, Milwaukee, and Madison), the city is positioned as a center for technology development. To add to the innovative, creative mentality that was the spark for this project, the Whitewater-University Technology Park Board, UWW, and the City endorsed the idea of using the most innovative technology possible in the Innovation Center building. The two-story Innovation Center has been designed as a green building with features that include solar panels and geothermal heating and cooling.

This is a project that can be replicated in communities throughout the United States—the challenges and opportunities that the City of Whitewater face are not unique. The Whitewater-University Technology Park Board, UWW, and City have learned numerous lessons throughout the project:

1. Close collaboration between the “town” and “gown” can benefit both entities.
2. A feasibility study conducted by a neutral, objective party is essential.
3. Having a professional grant writer is critical to convincing the funding source that the project is viable and that there is sufficient supporting infrastructure.
4. When working on inter-governmental cooperation, it is important for all areas of the local government to support the project; executive and council-level support is critical.
5. Broad community support for large projects is essential. Disseminating the benefits of the project can be challenging in a community without a newspaper, but other public forums suffice. Presentations at service clubs help citizens understand the promise of this project and how it would benefit the community as a whole. Citizens become engaged in the project and become active supporters.

This project is truly collaborative in that it meets goals and needs for both parties and in that both entities have contributed equally throughout the process, bringing this project from the idea stage through the groundbreaking. The collaboration, wide-ranging and comprehensive, has resulted in real estate development over 125 acres, community-related research and technical assistance provided by UWW to develop and apply for an EDA grant, development of economic strategy based upon university-city partnerships, workforce development for talent retention and attraction of technology-based businesses, and planned technology transfer activity as a result of the Innovation Center. This collaboration will continue for years to come.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the Technology Park occurred in September 2009, with groundbreaking for the Innovation Center in April 2010. The Innovation Center construction was completed in February 2011. This project will create an additional 40 jobs in the community through CESA 2 alone. Upwards of 50 people a day will travel to Whitewater to

attend meetings and training events at the Innovation Center. This project represents support from local, state, and federal governments to build the regional economy.

At the groundbreaking, Mr. Brunner stated, “Eighteen months ago we had nothing more than an idea for the technology park and business incubator, and it is remarkable to see how much we’ve done in such a short period of time. It has been a collaboration on every level of the community.”

In conclusion, the Whitewater-University Technology Park and Innovation Center epitomizes the very definition of the Community Partnership Award. Please provide this nomination with your full attention.

Sincerely,



Denise Ehlen
Director of Research and Sponsored Programs