



TLG and LMC 2016 Case Study Application
Future Ready Communities

DUE: September 4, 2015



Email to: Ryan Spillers at rspillers@transformgov.org

COVER PAGE

1. Case Study Title: Livability Academy / Star Communities
2. Case Study Category (Select only one, selection identified by highlighting your choice):

Planning for Your Future	Creating an Inclusive Community
Reinventing Local Government	Community Networks
Blinders	
3. Jurisdiction Name: City of Evanston
4. Jurisdiction Population (US Census): 75,000
5. Would you like the application to be considered for our Rapid Fire Session? (Rapid Fire presentations are fast-paced, entertaining, interactive presentations. Each jurisdiction will have five minutes to make their presentations using 15 PPT slides set on auto-forward primarily containing photos/graphics. Participants will be seated at round tables to facilitate an energetic idea exchange. A cash bar will be available.)

YES

NO

6. Project Leader (Primary Contact for case study notification):
Name: Catherine Hurley
Title: Sustainability Manager
Department: City Manager's Office
Phone Number: 847-448-8069
eMail: churley@cityofevanston.org
US Mail Address, including zip code: 2100 Ridge Ave Evanston IL 6020
Twitter Account: @greenevanston

List additional presenters contact information below:

1. Presentation title and description of the innovation. *100 word maximum.*

Livability Academy Revitalizes Long-Standing Strategic Plan

The City created the Evanston Livability Academy to formalize and embrace the City's long-standing vision to "Create the Most Livable City in America." Until this time, the vision statement from the 2006 Strategic Plan was a lofty goal without a lot of details on "livability" and employees important role in making it a reality. Through 13 half-day workshops, all 800 full-time

staff attended cross-departmental sessions designed to define livability, explore each employee's role in making Evanston a more livable community and renew their shared enthusiasm towards supporting a high quality of life for all residents.

2. When and how was the program, policy or initiative originally conceived in your jurisdiction? *100 word maximum.*

The Academy was conceived and implemented in December 2014 following Evanston's certification as a 4-STAR Community from STAR Communities. Evanston was a pilot City applying for the new certification, which evaluates communities on economic, social and environmental factors contributing to community sustainability. In discussions around next steps, a cross-departmental committee identified staff engagement a top priority. Staff also commented that sustainability as a word is difficult to explain and often misunderstood. This is when the lightbulb went off for using "livability" as a way to communicate these efforts and connecting it back to the City Council adopted 2006 strategic plan that identified livability as a goal.

3. How exactly is the program or policy innovative? How has your innovation changed previous processes, products or services? *100 word maximum.*

The Livability Academy sessions included 75 people each with staff from all departments such as Police, Fire, Public Works, Administration, Health, Library and Parks Recreation. Attendees were assigned to tables that mixed staff across departments, putting people at all levels of the organization, in different departments together. The content was presented based on Livability Themes, which Evanston adapted from the STAR System Framework and required departments to collaborate on the content and presentation of each segment. The last third of the academy solicited input from staff on how to improve the City's livability. Those ideas Evanston is now using for on-going improvement projects.

4. Explain how the program or initiative substantially stretched or improved the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations. *200 word maximum.*

Governments prefer to be in control of project/program delivery. Open Edmonton is an exciting example of a citizen-led group that creates projects in collaboration with the city - projects that are not led by the City - . This requires the City to be flexible, and the City is accommodating to the lack of control because the tech-enabled citizens possess skills that the City appreciates: web scraping, interactive infographic creation, physical computing, crowdsourcing experience, and more.

The mentality of collaboration is as exciting as it is challenging of the status quo. Often, government searches for a solution to a problem; in Open Edmonton, we often have solutions and are looking for problems. We are able to match the skills and interests of citizen developers with City issues to create projects such as a best-in-class social service finder webapp, an SMS-based voting tool, low-cost Infrared Pedestrian Counters, a live-streaming recording device in a public piano, restaurant inspection data liberator, oral history collection and sharing, and much more. Implementation of the academy was the single largest staff-led collaborative project for the City of Evanston. Police and Fire Departments coordinated their shifts and regular training schedule to ensure their staff could participate. Staff in every department helped develop the 10-minute TED Talks that were used for the bulk of the presentation material. The presentations showcased staff's efforts from every level and in a way that focused on the major livability themes rather than updates from each department individually. The theme areas are

Built Environment; Climate, Energy & Natural Systems; Economy & Jobs; Equity and Empowerment; Education, Arts & Community; Health & Safety.

Connections were made during the Livability Academy that would not have otherwise been made. For example, the Youth and Young Adult program manager connected to Police staff who work with at-risk youth and realized they often work with same audience and could support one another. They exchanged cards and have a better connection now. In one effort, city staff were able to learn about what each other do on a daily basis and put a "face to a name" which might not have happened otherwise.

5. What individuals or groups are considered the primary initiators of your program? How does the innovation engage stakeholders or demonstrate high performance teaming? Were strategic partnerships and/or community networks developed as a result of the innovation? *200 word maximum.*

The program was initiated by the City's Sustainability manager, in collaboration with the Sustainable Communities working group, which had representatives from all City departments. This initiative was seen as a way to engage the wider Evanston city staff in embracing a long-standing vision for the city that had little implementation details. It took effort of all departments to work together on the planning and was done in a very short time frame (2 1/2 months planning before Academy was launched). This project was mostly an internal City staff initiative so no external relationships were formed; However the effort extended to all City departments beyond what is usual.

6. If a private consultant was used please describe their involvement, identify the consultant and/or firm and provide contact information. *100 word maximum.*

No private consultants or outside assistance was used. The Livability Academy was fully planned and executed by City Staff.

7. To what extent do you believe your program or policy initiative is potentially replicable within other jurisdictions and why? To your knowledge, have any other jurisdictions or organizations established programs or implemented policies modeled specifically on this project? Please provide verification of the replication. *200 word maximum.*

The framework for the Livability Academy is definitely replicable. The creative format of the presentations focusing on the Livability (STAR Communities inspired) theme areas rather than by department and approach to bring a broad number of departments and staff together could be repeated by any community. Staff have done presentations virtually (webinar) and at conferences talking about this approach and we have yet to find another community with a similar initiative.

8. What were the costs? What were the savings? *100 word maximum.*

The cost was limited to staff time and minimum costs for refreshments. Morning sessions included coffee, juice and bagels. The afternoon sessions included coffee, juice and granola bars. All the planning and meeting facilitation was completed in-house.

9. Please describe the most significant obstacle(s) encountered thus far by your program. How have they been dealt with? Which ones remain? *200 word maximum.*

The most significant obstacle was skepticism from some staff leadership and line staff. We dealt with that by having a very thoughtful program, providing engaging content, and snacks. Overall the feedback after all the academy sessions were complete was positive and we are currently working on a new series of staff education around this topic for fall of 2015-2016.

10. What outcomes did this program or policy have? What baseline data did you collect? How did you measure the change based on the intervention, and why do you believe in the credibility of this assessment? *200 word maximum.*

The outcomes are difficult to assess. Staff are now actively using the phrase "livability" in their work and understand the City's vision for creating a livable city. Staff were given a lanyard for their name badge to remind them of the City's 4-STAR Certification and vision to "Create the Most Livable City" and the majority of staff currently wear this lanyard. This program was more about celebrating success, creating awareness for individual's role in the City's livability goals and to better articulate the City's livability vision. We are actively working to better institutionalize the livability vision into other business processes, such as our Capital Improvement Program, and this training laid the groundwork for making it possible to do this.

11. Has the program received any press or other media coverage to date? If yes, please list the sources and briefly describe relevant coverage. *100 word maximum.*

We have written content for an article in Governing Magazine but it has not yet been published.

12. Please provide web links where the innovation can be seen/tested (in the case of something that is web-based) *100 word maximum.*

This is not a web based program but you can see the video that we created and showed to all staff as part of the academy: http://youtu.be/KVfcl_uG1NU

13. Please provide any key references and their contact information who can be interviewed/called to discuss the innovation and its impact. *100 word maximum.*

Catherine Hurley, Sustainability Manager - 847-448-8069 churley@cityofevanston.org
Wally Bobkiewicz, City Manager - 847-866(2936) wbobkiewicz@cityofevanston.org

14. You've been to a lot of conferences. TLG should be a unique experience for everyone. Describe how your case study presentation will be different than other conference presentations. *200 word maximum.*

- How will you make the session creative and unique?
- How do you plan to be both entertaining and educational?
- Include a description of how your session will facilitate group activities and/or interaction.

Our Livability Academy was engaging through multi-media and looking at information in a different way. We would propose doing the same thing with this presentation and including lots of pictures, video and testimonials from staff.

15. Anything else you would like to add? *200 word maximum.*

N/A