



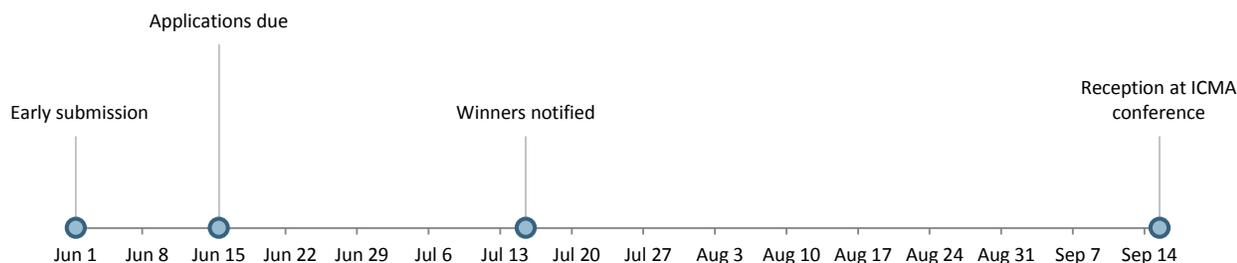
Award Criteria

A panel comprised of National Research Center staff and advisors will review each application for the following criteria:

- Identification of the step/s taken to impact positive survey results in the area for which the award is given. These might be very specific (i.e. Community Center built, community policing program put in place, town hall meetings held) or more general in nature (emphasis on customer service or a particularly successful budgeting process)
- Recognition of the importance of listening to one's residents as part of the decision-making process and action taken
- Clear linkage between action/s taken and past or current survey results
- Commitment to continual improvement using survey data, as indicated by future plans
- Creativity in story telling – we want you to wow us!

You may submit your application in any format you desire (Word, Powerpoint, PDF, video, etc). Photographs to supplement your application are greatly encouraged. Please limit your total application packet (including photographs) to no more than five pages or a video of no more than two minutes.

Award Timeline



- June 1 Early submission deadline (includes additional guidance and feedback from NRC staff members prior to final submission date)
- June 15 Applications due from finalists
- July 15 Winners selected and notified by NRC
- September Reception takes place at ICMA annual conference

The Facets of Livable Communities

Broadly, The NCS measures your community’s “livability.” Staff at NRC examined the extensive research that has been done about community livability and many of the models that have been developed to describe the components of livable communities. The facets of community livability were distilled from our synthesis of this research and include: Safety, Mobility, the Natural Environment, the Built Environment, the Economy, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement. These facets reinforce the Foundations of Livability, which make a community a place where people want to live.

The NCS questionnaire includes individual items that act as indicators of community quality within each of the facets. Voice of the People Award nominations are culled from the communities that represent the highest ratings and/or greatest improvement in ratings over time from each of the facets. A brief description of each facet follows to assist you in identifying the actions taken to influence these ratings.



The Six Es of Action

NRC researchers have identified six categories of action that can be considered as a response to your citizen survey results. These actions have been gleaned from studying how jurisdictions use their resident opinions to improve their communities. You may have used one or more of the below types of actions to navigate your survey results and take steps to improve your community. In your application, feel free to elaborate on your application how one or more of these types of actions helped you accomplish your goals.



- **Envision** Make strategic plans and set goals
- **Earmark** Alter budgets, personnel or services
- **Educate** Communicate and reach out to inform, educate and advocate
- **Engage** Partner with residents, other governments, private sector and community-based organizations
- **Enact** Create, alter and remove policies to promote strengths
- **Evaluate** Track strengths and problems, dig more deeply and evaluate progress

Envision

Every local government success story begins with a great plan. What did your community do to lay the groundwork for your achievements? What goals did you have and what was the framework you used to achieve them?

Earmark

With a plan in place, you have to make sure the right resources are available. How did you ensure that staff had the necessary time and tools to devote to the project? How did you find the funding? What other types of community resources (buildings, volunteers, technology) did you leverage to get the job done?

Educate

It's critical to share your vision both internally and externally. It's also important that you reach out to residents to inform, educate and advocate. Tell us how you publicized your service area or project – before, during, and after the time of the survey. Did you use social media? Mailings or e-mailings? Special events?

Engage

Here's the real meat of a quality community: the ability to engage effectively with residents. What types of partnerships – with nonprofit organizations, local businesses, or community members – helped solidify your success? Maybe you hosted a series of community meetings last year to discuss a particular issue, and had a diverse range of experts on hand for assistance. Perhaps your fire or police department hosts an event at the local church that nobody wants to miss. Whatever it is, we want to hear about it!

Enact

Effective government sometimes has to work from the inside out. What policies had to be changed, enacted, enforced, or deleted to get the job done?

Evaluate

You determine what success looked like - how did you do? How many hours did staff actually spend compared what you originally thought? Were you able to stay on budget? Was there a communication strategy that seemed to work better than others? What worked especially well and what were some of the obstacles you had to overcome? Are there any remaining obstacles? What would you do differently if you were to do it all over again?