



2007/2008 Evaluation Form

Municipality: Prince George

Province/ Territory: British Columbia

Category: Over 50 000

The municipality is evaluated on the efforts of the community in the following criteria :

1. Festive Season Celebrations	90.5	/	100
2. Winter Pleasures	90	/	100
3. Visual Presentation	84.25	/	100
4. Goodwill Programs	88.5	/	100
5. Tourism/ Promotion	88.5	/	100
Total Marks :	<u>441.75</u>	/	<u>500</u>

Percentage : 88.35
 Star rating: 5 Stars

Special Recognition (An outstanding program or feature):

Spirit and Cooperation

WinterLights Community Representatives:

Name: <u>Trudy Swaan</u>	Function : <u>Chair</u> Phone: <u>250-563-8833</u>
Name: <u>Nancy Krushelnicki</u>	Function : <u>Member</u> Phone: _____
Name: <u>Cheryl Livingstone-Leman</u>	Function : <u>City of Prince George</u> Phone: _____

Judges:

Name: <u>Ivan Stinson</u>	Name: <u>Dorota Grudniewicz</u>
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Evaluation date: November 29, 2007

IMPORTANT NOTES :

*Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration as part of the evaluation process.
 Some aspects of the criteria might not be applicable; in such cases, scoring will be prorated.
 The 2007-2008 evaluation score may vary from the previous year based on the fact that the evaluation form is subject to modifications each year and that the evaluation is based on the perception of the current judges.*

General Comments and Suggestions

The city of Prince George (British Columbia's Northern Capital) and the WinterLights Celebrations Committee is to be applauded for their plan of action in its participation in the 2007/2008 program. The measure of success is related to the combined factors which include the leadership of the WinterLights chair, the WinterLights Committee, the Mayor, Council and municipal staff and the ability of the Committee to enlist various groups to support the program. It is heartening for the WinterLights Celebrations to have both financial and in-kind assistance from the Council and City staff. Of course, the judges commend the contributions of a team of dedicated volunteers.

For the judges, the visit to Prince George, which is a vibrant community, has been both a learning experience and a pleasure. The itinerary for the judges allowed them to view a good portion of the City. It is suggested that the itinerary leave a small block of time with no activities to allow the judges to make some change(s) in the itinerary.

The judges thank for your warm hospitality and for allowing them to be a part of your festivities. The judges hope to see a number of you in Saint John at the WinterLights Celebrations Awards and of course anticipate a wonderful time in 2009 when Prince George will host the WLC awards. Thank you for participating in the program. Congratulations on all of your accomplishments. Best wishes for all future endeavours.

FESTIVE SEASON CELEBRATIONS

The Festive Season Celebrations category evaluates indoor and outdoor events such as choir festivals, tree lighting ceremonies, concerts, sleigh rides, festive performing and visual arts programs, candlelight walks, Santa Claus parades, carol singing, heritage and family events during the holiday season.

		Max	Actual
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT			
⊗ Support-financial and /or in kind -for volunteer activities		10	9.5
⊗ Involvement in addition to financial and/or in kind in Festive Celebrations activities		10	9.5
⊗ Ideas and Initiatives		10	9
COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL			
⊗ Sponsorship-financial and/or in kind- of programs / activities		10	8.75
⊗ Involvement -in addition to financial and /or in kind- in Festive Celebrations activities		10	8.5
⊗ Ideas and Initiatives		10	8.75
SERVICE CLUBS, CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS			
⊗ Scope of Programming		10	8.75
⊗ Impact on the Community		10	9.5
PRIVATE CITIZENS			
⊗ Involvement in Festive Celebrations activities		10	9.25
⊗ Ideas and Initiatives		10	9
FESTIVE SEASON CELEBRATIONS		100	90.5

Comments and Suggestions - Festive Season Celebration:

It is evident that the City of Prince George and its citizens enjoy a variety of Festive Season celebration events. Citizens of all ages and from all sectors take pleasure in attending, organizing and/or supporting festive activities. The wide range of events includes the annual Christmas Light-Up at the Civic Plaza with its various family activities including skating on the outdoor rink. The Festival of Trees featuring beautifully decorated trees, wreaths, ginger bread houses... as well as family oriented events is truly a 'Winter Wonderland'. Other events which can be enjoyed by citizens and visitors include the Community Arts Council Studio Fair, Craft shows, Holiday Home Tours, Tour of the Railway and Forest Museum, Festivities at Exploration Place and choral performances by the Senior Choir. The very popular Candy Lane holiday tradition is a fine example of a neighborhood initiative. The foregoing examples serve to identify the presence of Festive Celebrations and do not diminish the importance of those not named.

City Council must be recognized for establishing the WinterLights Community Enhancement Grants. These matching aid grants administered by the WALK Committee, encourages various groups to celebrate the winter season.

Some suggestions for your consideration:

The judges would have been interested to learn more about events in the schools, example: concerts, choral performances, theatrical productions...

If Prince George does not have a "Town Crier", a competition to choose one could be organized. The use of a colourful Town Crier would be a fine way to formally open festive season events as well as other activities throughout the year.

Consider the feasibility of a night-time Santa Claus Parade culminating with Santa arriving on a sleigh and being available to greet children.

Consider establishing a drop in centre such as Santa's Coffee/Hot Chocolate Shop.

Possibly approach the school system for the possibility of composing a song that relates to activities in Prince George (lyrics and music).

WINTER PLEASURES- November 1st to March 31st

The Winter Pleasures category evaluates outdoor and indoors activities and events such as winter festivals, carnivals, ice sculptures, snow sculptures, ice skating, ice fishing derbies, winter sports competitions, family and youth activities and gourmet/game food events that promote outdoor and indoor activities that take place November 1st to March 31. Emphasis is placed on events that include a heritage / cultural component highlighting the cultural diversity of the community.

		Max	Actual
WINTER PLEASURES ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS AVAILABLE			
⊗ Organized and / or free sport		10	9.5
⊗ Cultural / Special Events – Indoor and Outdoor		10	9
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT			
⊗ Support-financial and/or in kind- for volunteer activities		10	9.5
⊗ Municipal recreation programs		10	9.5
COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL			
⊗ Sponsorship-financial and /or in kind- of programs / activities		10	8.5
⊗ Involvement -in addition to financial and /or in kind- in Winter Pleasures activities		10	8.5
SERVICE CLUBS, CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS			
⊗ Scope of Programming		10	8.5
⊗ Impact on the Community		10	9
PRIVATE CITIZENS			
⊗ Involvement in Winter Pleasures activities		10	9
⊗ Ideas and Initiatives		10	9
WINTER PLEASURES		100	90

Comments and Suggestions - Winter Pleasures:

Undoubtedly, Prince George strives to offer recreational and cultural opportunities for the entire winter season. The community of Prince George seems to really enjoy their long winter and the City takes full advantage of its northern geographic position to provide appropriate winter activities. For instance, very few communities could boast of having twenty five outdoor ice rinks - all operated and maintained by community minded volunteers.

The outdoor Ice Oval is a gem and provides a training facility for citizens and elite athletes. The new Charles Jago Sports complex has facilities to provide year-round recreational/sport opportunities. For example, its two indoor soccer surfaces have allowed soccer to be a twelve month activity. In addition, this complex has the facilities to provide suitable space for small group meetings/activities and cultural events. Prince George is positioning itself as a viable place for Olympic calibre athletes to train. Caledonia Nordic Ski Club with its lit cross-country trails are well used by individuals and families.

Other sporting events during the winter months include hockey, curling, speed and figure skating. In February, the 'Snow Daze Winter Festival' provides residents and visitors with a week of fun-filled activities. Best wishes to the organizers of the 'Coldsnap Winter Music festival. Such an activity adds another dimension of winter pleasures. Popular indeed, is the Teddy Bear Toss which is not only a fun event but one which supports the Hospital Foundation. Le Cercle des Canadiens Français de Prince George offers services to the francophone community well as providing opportunities for non-francophones to broaden their knowledge of French Canadian language and culture.

Prince George actively participates into the Winter Cities network and through the partnership with the province works on creating a liaison with the 2010 Olympic.

Other winter pleasures not mentioned does not diminish the importance of their contribution to the community.

If not already implemented, some suggestions for your consideration:

- A festival featuring ethnic art, dance food games....
- Consider the feasibility of adding a talent night or a Front Page Challenge on events, history... of Prince George and area.
- Consider organizing an old-fashioned 'Spelling Bee' with focus on words associated with winter and winter pleasures. Perhaps teams could be formed to compete e.g. seniors, school, church, Council...

VISUAL PRESENTATION [Indoor/outdoor, day time/night time]

The Visual Presentation category evaluates the illumination and decoration of public buildings, open spaces, institutional, industrial, central business and commercial areas, and a representation of illuminated and decoration of residential properties and streetscapes.

Judging will be based on the following:

- * Creative use of lighting
- * Theme lighting
- * Lighting enhancing the architecture of the building or home
- * Lighting and festive adornments complementing the historical integrity of the building or home
- * Festive adornments – use of natural local material, artificial material, wreaths and garlands
- * Animated exhibits, nativity scenes, festive art
- * Public open space enhancement through the use of lighting and decorations
- * Commercial store front window displays
- * Streetscapes

		Max	Actual
PUBLIC PROPERTIES AND STREETSCAPES			
⊗ Plan of action - Distribution in community		10	8.75
⊗ Concept, design and theme		10	8.5
⊗ Festive adornments including natural materials		10	7.5
⊗ Environment awareness, safety, and energy conservation		10	8.5
⊗ Citizens support and involvement in the public lighting program		10	9
COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL PROPERTIES			
⊗ Central business areas --- Participation, creativity and design in the lighting program		10	8.75
⊗ Commercial / Industrial Sector --- Participation, creativity and design in the lighting program		10	7.5
SERVICE CLUBS, CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS			
⊗ Participation, creativity and design in the lighting program		10	9.25
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES			
⊗ Quantity of residences participating in the lighting program		10	8.5
⊗ Themes, creativity and innovative ideas		10	8
VISUAL PRESENTATION		100	84.25

Comments and Suggestions - Visual Presentator

The judges are pleased to acknowledge the community effort to create the light displays. The municipality and businesses have developed a partnership that serves the community well e.g. the Tree of Hope on the roof of the local hotel presents a fine visual effect as well as being an incentive to pay for a light bulb on the tree with proceeds going to the Hospital Foundation. The decorations on the City Hall is another example of cooperative efforts. Some of the decorations were installed with the assistance of 'Youth at Risk'. What an admirable way of integrating these young people into the community and allowing them to appreciate their input into the community!

The light display and artifacts at the Railway and Forest Museum is a marvelous feature and demonstrates the exceptional dedication of volunteers. The judges suggest that as lights need replacing, consider installing energy efficient LED lights. This suggestion would apply to all sectors of the city.

Another example of community spirit is the 'Candy Cane Light" displays. This community effort takes in an area of several blocks and has proven to be an attraction for residents, visitors and bus tours.

The new Northern Lights Festival is an ambitious project and those involved in initiating it are to be commended. To fully capitalize on this project, refer to one of the suggestions about considering a designer(s).

The locale and amenities of the Civic Plaza provide an excellent location for the Light-Up. The visual effect is profound. To add another dimension to this event, the judges suggest some type of local entertainment prior to the lights being lit to further develop an air of excitement. Perhaps a mascot strolling through the crowd could be considered. A 'Town Crier ' could act as the MC for the festivities and lead in a countdown of the light-up. You may also consider having a citizen who has made a considerable community contribution along with the Mayor pull the light-up switch, e.g. a senior, veteran, student, citizen of the year...

The Festival of Trees along with the variety of crafts displayed is indeed a spectacular panorama. As well as providing family activities, this event raises significant funds for the Hospital foundation.

Some suggestions for your consideration:

It would be beneficial for the consistency of the displays to work with a designer being either a landscape architect or a lighting designer. The students of the Arts Department of the New Caledonia College or of the University could be a great help.

A different type of visual displays could be introduced through the city such as low-cost boughs of coniferous trees tied together with a ribbon. Promote the use of natural materials and using decor to accent a pleasing daytime exhibit. Other simple ideas such as projecting lights onto the building's facade can be an effective display.

Consider introducing competitions to encourage greater visual participation in all sectors. For example, a block competition, best decorated business, best display in the industrial sector, best decorated door...

GOODWILL PROGRAMS

The Goodwill Programs category evaluates the overall betterment of quality of life and enhanced lifestyles through the development and participation of goodwill programs by all sectors including the interaction and inclusions of seniors, youth, minorities and less privileged. Spirit of Giving and goodwill programs may include Food Bank support, turkey drives, fundraisers...

		Max	Actual
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT			
⊗ Support-financial and/or in kind- for volunteer activities		10	9
⊗ Involvement- in addition to financial- in Goodwill programs		10	8.75
COMMERCIAL			
⊗ Sponsorship-financial and/or in kind- of programs / activities		10	8.25
⊗ Involvement- in addition to financial- in Goodwill programs		10	8.25
SERVICE CLUBS, CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS			
⊗ Scope of Programming		10	9.25
⊗ Impact on the Community		10	9
⊗ Community Outreach programs that encourage participation of seniors, youth and minorities i.e. group tours, socials		10	9
⊗ Community Goodwill programs that are developed to assist the underprivileged		10	9
PRIVATE CITIZENS			
⊗ Involvement in Goodwill programs		10	9
⊗ Creative program ideas and Initiatives		10	9
GOODWILL PROGRAMS		100	88.5

Comments and Suggestions - Goodwill Programs

It is evident that Prince George is a caring community. Various groups/organizations undertake goodwill programs to serve the diverse needs of the community. The judges applaud the efforts of the Salvation Army for its considerable and varied efforts to assist the less fortunate. The Festival of Trees besides presenting a spectacular visual display has been successful in raising significant funds for the Hospital Foundation. Congratulations to the St. Vincent de Paul Society for not only providing free meals each day for the needy but also for its other goodwill programs. The staff and students of the College of New Caledonia are to be commended for their generous initiatives which include Dress the Tree, the Chili blanket event, Project Christmas Cheer...

The Tree of Hope resting on the roof of the Coast Inn is indeed eye catching but more important are the funds it raises (donate \$5.00 to light a bulb) for the Salvation Army's Christmas Cheer Fund.

It is heart-warming to learn that Prince George Cedars Christian School, Conception Elementary School and the Girls Guides were active in Operation Christmas Child.

The REAPS annual recycle toy drive and the Prince George Citizen newspaper Christmas programs are examples of a community that has a big heart. The judges recognize the contribution of other programs not named.

Several other programs and projects not mentioned do not in any way diminish the crucial goodwill role they play.

The principal challenge for the future of goodwill is to find ways to sustain the quality and quantity of programs. Engage/extend the involvement of youth on committees to assist or replace volunteers of senior age or with infirmities.

The need for goodwill programs does not end at Christmas and it is important that such programs extend over a twelve month period and those who provide this service are to be complimented.

It would have been useful for the judges to have received more information about goodwill programs in the high schools. Perhaps a competition between classes/grades of a festive display constructed from collected food bank items could be implemented. If not already doing so schools could visit senior and retirement homes to provide theatrical or musical entertainment.

Consider organizing a competition for the schools to construct a Christmas display from food/toys collected by the students for the food bank or some other charitable group.

TOURISM AND PROMOTION

The Tourism and Promotion category focuses on "Showcasing of your Community" to encourage participation by local residents and tourists to enjoy all that the winter season has to offer in your community.

		Max	Actual
COMMUNITY WIDE EVALUATION			
⊗ Event Planning --- Creativity, variety, success...		10	8.75
⊗ Local Promotion --- Regional, provincial and national		10	9
⊗ Promotion and Marketing Outreach --- Contests and innovative marketing ideas		10	9
⊗ Community Profile Book – effective ability to showcase your community. --- Showcasing your community through the Community Profile Book will be evaluated based on effectiveness and potential for other uses as a communication tool to recognize your community's special programs, people and demonstrate pride in your community.		10	9.5
⊗ Media Involvement --- TV, radio, newspapers, printed material and web		10	8.25
⊗ Partnerships --- Public, private and commercial		10	9
⊗ Development and Growth --- Networking with other municipalities and agencies		10	9
⊗ Tourism and Local Economic Impact --- Measurable growth of participation/visitation		20	17.5
⊗ Vision Future growth plans for sustainability		10	8.5
TOURISM AND PROMOTION		100	88.5

Comments and Suggestions - Tourism and Promotior

Prince George is certainly making concerted efforts to market itself as a year-round tourist destination. The City offers a number of winter activities such as skiing, tobogganing, public skating, snowshoeing, snowmobiling and sleigh rides. As well, the Northern Sports Centre has facilities to offer some of the usual summer activities during the winter season.

The 'Initiatives Prince George' is aggressively promoting Prince George as an excellent training centre for athletes competing in world tournaments and the 2010 winter Olympics. Also, the Prince George Spirit of Committee is taking a lead role to ensure that the City realizes benefits from the British Columbia being host to the 2010 Winter Olympics.

Continue to cultivate and foster a good partnership with all the media (newspapers, TV/radio, magazines...) to project Prince George as a destination city. The Community Profile Book (CPB) contained very little information regarding the media. Perhaps the City might consider an advertisement in the CIB magazine which is distributed across the country. Be certain that your focus extends to the provincial and national levels.

The judges were very impressed with the format of the Community Profile Book. Including a general table of contents and also one for each of the criteria, makes finding pertinent information quite simple. It is indeed user-friendly. This CPB could serve as a model for other communities. Your initiatives to having it posted on line and placing copies in libraries besides having it published in 'Yours to Explore' is a fine idea. It is suggested that a copy or copies be positioned in local and provincial Visitor Information Centres. Although the section on visual presentation includes fine photos, it would be useful to have incorporated some printed information on some of the features. eg. Candy Cane Lane, Festival of Lights...

In your tourist information, the judges recommend that you include data about the services of Le Cercle des Canadiens Français de Prince George. It could be a determining factor on the decision of a family to take up residence in Prince George.

Promote with possible financial aid from businesses the accommodations, restaurants, unique shopping, sporting and recreational opportunities... that Prince George has to offer. Continue to foster the fine partnerships that have been developed among the various sectors of Prince George and persist in networking with other municipalities and agencies.

Evaluation Checklist / Questions on organization:

Yes	No	N/A	
x			Was there adequate communication prior to the judges' arrival to maximize the WinterLights participation and evaluation process?
x			Were the judges given an Itinerary and Community Profile Book upon arrival?
x			Did the itinerary provide for seeing a cross section of lighting displays, community events and activities?
x			Was there an initial orientation meeting with introductions?
x			If so, was it with community representatives?
			and / or
x			With the WinterLights Celebrations committee?
x			Were the guides knowledgeable about the community and all the criteria?
x			Were the judges able to ask questions and modify the schedule if they thought that there was not enough time
	x		Did the judges meet with the media?
	x		Were the judges asked to give presentations?
x			Were the judges able to meet with and talk with the volunteers and organizers of the related activities?
x			Was there enough time allotted to view the community?
x			Was there enough time allotted to start the evaluation form in a quiet place?

2007-2008 EVALUATION

RECOGNITION / DESCRIPTION / SPECIAL PROJECTS

Municipality:	<u>Prince George</u>
Province:	<u>British Columbia</u>
Category:	<u>Over 50 000</u>
Star rating:	<u>5 Stars</u>
Recognition – Outstanding Feature/Program:	<u>Spirit and Cooperation</u>

Description of the Community or Feature or Program

The WinterLights Committee has demonstrated remarkable skill in integrating the various groups/organizations to work together for a common cause - the enhancement of the quality of life and generator of civic pride. This Committee, with its dedication, cooperative approach, enthusiastic leadership and varied skills, has been most successful in having a diverse group of individuals and organizations, not only embrace the program but actively use their particular aptitudes to support it. A prime example of spirit and cooperation is the Festival of Trees, which emanate beauty and generates significant funds for the Hospital Foundation. Keep up the exemplary work!

Special Projects

Festival of Trees
