



# 2017

VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

# INNOVATION AWARDS

Recognizing Excellence  
in Virginia Local Government

# CALL FOR ENTRIES

## 2017 VML Innovation Awards

THE 2017 VML INNOVATION AWARDS celebrate your hometown successes and all that you do to make your city, town or county a great place to live.

The Innovation Awards recognize outstanding achievements in local governments across Virginia. Formerly known as the VML Achievement Awards, the program is 40 years old and is recognized as Virginia's highest honor in local government management.

Don't miss this opportunity to spotlight programs that have made a big difference to your residents – to celebrate innovative solutions that address emerging needs.

The awards are presented at a banquet at VML's Annual Conference in early October.

## Criteria

Projects and programs are judged on how well they demonstrate the following:

**Innovative problem solving**

**Improved quality of life**

**Excellence in management**

**Making the most of local resources**

**Increased citizen participation**

**Commitment to higher levels of service**

**Long-term value to the community**

**Adaptability to other communities**

Award-winning projects typically demonstrate innovative ways of delivering services, address a community need, or significantly improving an existing service.

## Categories

Award categories are based on the field of work with local governments of all size populations competing within these categories. Our panel of judges have years of experience in local governments of all sizes and will judge the scope and impact of the project in relationship and proportion to the community's size, thereby putting localities of all sizes on a **level playing field**.

We recognize that many projects relate to more than one category. When deciding what category best fits your project, consider what the primary goal of the project is and what aspect of it demonstrates the greatest innovation.

Localities may submit in as many categories as they like. The categories are:

### **Community Health**

includes building healthy community environments through active lifestyle programs, nutrition education and improving access to healthier food choices.

### **Infrastructure**

includes public works, transportation, public utilities, stormwater, customer service enhancements, environmental preservation, sustainability, resiliency planning, structures and facilities, libraries and other projects.

### **Economic Development**

includes business development, historic preservation, tourism, workforce development, housing, community events, strategic planning and visioning, public-private partnerships, consumer and financial literacy, public art, museums and similar projects.

### **Public Safety**

includes police, fire, rescue services, emergency planning and coordinated response, building code enforcement, jails, health and mental health related to public safety.

### **Working with Youth**

includes civics education, pre-k-12 education, summer programs, parks and recreation, and literacy programs.

### **Communications**

includes promotional campaigns, branding campaigns, crisis plans, events, customer service programs; media can include online, video, print, social and other formats.

# President's Award for Innovation

One winning project from the category winners will be selected for the top prize – the President's Award – and will receive this top honor in addition to the award in their category. The President's Award can come from any of the categories.

## Deadline

**All entries must be received via e-mail by 5 p.m., Monday, Aug. 14, 2017.**

## Rules for entering

- New this year, **all entries must be submitted electronically via email.** Localities must download the entry form at [www.vml.org/education/innovation-awards](http://www.vml.org/education/innovation-awards) and fill in all of the requested information directly on the form. The completed form must then be e-mailed to [mtimbreza@vml.org](mailto:mtimbreza@vml.org).
- The competition is open to all VML local government members.
- Entries must cover new projects or programs completed between Jan. 1, 2016 and May 1, 2017, or – for existing projects – entries must cover major enhancements that occurred between Jan. 1, 2016 and May 1, 2017.
- Each entry form must be fully completed and must be signed by the local government's chief administrative or elected official.
- A local government can submit entries in all of the six categories. The President's Award is not a separate category.
- Supporting materials totaling no more than 10 pages, including photos, brochures, charts, or other information, can be included in a separate document. This document must also be e-mailed. If you wish to submit one video as part of your supporting materials, contact [mtimbreza@vml.org](mailto:mtimbreza@vml.org) and we will send you the link to a secure FTP site where you can upload your video. Maximum length of video is five minutes.

## Questions?

For more information about completing your entry or other details, contact VML's Manuel Timbreza at [mtimbreza@vml.org](mailto:mtimbreza@vml.org) or call 804-649-8471.

## The judging

Entries are screened by VML staff and judged by a panel of three judges chosen for their expertise in local and state government. They generally represent a variety of communities – from small towns to large cities and state agencies.

## The winners

Awards will be presented at the VML annual conference in Williamsburg, October 1-3. All winning entries will also be featured in articles in the VML magazine *Virginia Town & City*.

Don't miss this premiere opportunity to spotlight innovative programs that make your town, city or county a great place for people to call home!





# Official Entry Form

*This is an electronic fill-in-the-blank form. You may save it to your computer as a working document. Once completed, simply e-mail this form as an attachment following the instructions below.*

## Select one category:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Health     | <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Youth   | <input type="checkbox"/> Communications |

Name of Locality \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

Main Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Title/Position \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

*All entries require the endorsement of the locality's chief elected or appointed official. By typing your official's initials in the space provided below, you certify that this entry is endorsed by the official.*

Chief Official's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Type initials here to serve as the official's signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Tell us about your project

Please answer all eight questions about your project. Answers should be specific and concise.

**Each response must be no more than 300 words.** *Note: double spacing and extra returns can increase your word count.*

1. **Provide a brief summary of your project or program.**
2. **Describe the need or challenge that prompted the program.**
3. **How does this project demonstrate (an) innovative solution(s)?**

**4. How did the project make efficient and effective use of local resources?**

**5. How does this project impact the long-term quality of life for citizens in your community?  
(please provide quantifiable, measurable results)**

**6. How does this project use citizen participation?**

7. **How does this project demonstrate excellence in municipal management and commitment to higher levels of service?**

8. **How could this project be adapted for use in other cities, towns or counties?**

## Supporting documents and instructions for submitting your entry

Please compile all supporting materials into a **single Word or PDF document** of no more than 10 pages total. Supporting materials may include photos, brochures, charts, maps, or other data. One supporting video can be uploaded to VML's secure FTP site. To request the FTP link, e-mail Manuel Timbreza at [mtimbreza@vml.org](mailto:mtimbreza@vml.org).

**Deadline:** This entry form and any supporting documents must be e-mailed to [mtimbreza@vml.org](mailto:mtimbreza@vml.org) by **5 p.m, Monday, July 31**. **Paper entries are not permitted.**

**Questions:** Please contact Manuel Timbreza at [mtimbreza@vml.org](mailto:mtimbreza@vml.org) or by calling 804-649-8471.