

## News Release

### Hastings Highlands wins national municipal professional development award for its Succession Planning Program

**Fredericton, NB** (May 11, 2021) – The Municipality of Highlands Hastings, ON has received national recognition for its **Succession Planning Program** from the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA). The Municipality was presented with the 2021 CAMA Professional Development Award, in the Under 20,000 population category, during a virtual Awards of Excellence Ceremony held today.

“CAMA is pleased to recognize the Municipality of Hastings Highlands for its succession planning program,” said Jake Rudolph, outgoing president of CAMA and Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Nanaimo, BC. “With so many employees due to retire, Hastings Highlands was in a crisis situation. Identifying existing employees that have the potential to fill key leadership positions, and investing in their training, is a great idea.”

As part of the municipality’s Strategic Plan, Council approved a succession planning program that is experiencing significant success not only for Hastings Highlands, but for the entire municipal sector.

The program itself -- created in-house -- has been shared with audiences across Ontario and North America, and continues to gain ground across the sector. The program reinforces that employees are critical municipal assets and recognizes them as investments in the municipality’s future.

The goal of the succession planning program is to identify people with the potential to fill key leadership positions. The program was created to address an immediate staffing crisis in Hastings Highlands and the entire municipal sector as the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS) released data that 118,000 of the 180,000 current members could retire as of 2020.

The program has been documented into a formal guidebook. This document compiles the best practices as determined by Hastings Highlands, with the intention that it could be used by other municipalities to get started with implementing succession planning.

Succession planning in Hastings Highlands signals a significant change in how human capital is managed in the municipal sector. It also brings life to a new program for municipal councils to invest in. Investing in people is what continues to drive success in Hastings Highlands.

“There were 35 submissions from across the country entered in to this year’s CAMA Awards of Excellence program,” said Marc Melanson, Chair for the 2021 CAMA Awards Jury, CAMA representative for New Brunswick and City Manager for the City of Dieppe, NB. “The scope of projects, from municipalities both large and small, was impressive and I extend my congratulation to the winners, as well as those who took the time to enter a submission.”

To find out more about the Municipality of Highlands Hastings’ District of Muskoka’s award, as well as the other 2021 CAMA Awards of Excellence winners, visit [www.camacam.ca/awards](http://www.camacam.ca/awards) and look for the award recipients link.

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#### About the Professional Development Award:

The Professional Development Award recognizes a community that has developed a unique and innovative program for their staff and can be replicated in other communities. Applicants should include documentation which outlines the program in all respects, and also shows evidence that the program has been successfully implemented.

**About CAMA:**

The Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) is a national, non-profit association open to all Chief Administrative Officers / City Managers and any person employed in a senior management position that reports directly to a CAO. With a membership of over 650 senior municipal employees, from all parts of Canada, CAMA collectively represents more than 80% of the nation's population. [www.camacam.ca](http://www.camacam.ca)

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