

Date: April 9, 2025

To: **Select Committee on Citizen Recognition Program**

Name and title: Councillor Kyle Sampson, Committee member

Subject: Proposed Citizen Recognition Program

Attachment(s): Draft Medal Concept: Prince George Medal of Excellence and Good Citizenship

Recommendation(s):

That Select Committee on Citizen Recognition Program RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the plan in the report dated April 9, 2025 from Councillor Kyle Sampson titled “Proposed Citizen Recognition Program.”

Purpose:

To provide a launching pad to facilitate committee conversation on the topic of a Citizen Recognition Program based on the Notice of Motion and Council meeting held November 18, 2024, and discussions held at the March 27, 2025 committee meeting. The hope is that this report provides enough structure to guide us forward, and enough flexibility for the committee to make this program truly reflect our community.

Discussion:

Prince George is full of kickass people doing meaningful things, and we should be recognizing that. Every year, we see residents stepping up in big and small ways: helping their neighbours, leading new ideas, volunteering their time, or just showing up when it matters most. This program is about celebrating those efforts, and doing it in a way that is official, and rooted in civic pride.

The original Notice of Motion guided that we weren’t looking to create another sector-specific award that duplicates the work of groups already doing great recognition work in their own various fields. This was about creating something broader, a City-led honour that reflects Council’s strategic plan, highlights our communities’ values, and uplifts stories that might not otherwise be told. Whether it’s through philanthropy, volunteerism, social service, strong leadership, athletic or artistic achievement, acts of heroism, or other forms of excellence - the focus is on people making a real impact in PG.

The idea is to honour them with more than just a thank you. This program would honour deserving folks with a lasting and public recognition for their contributions, excellence, and good citizenship. A custom-designed medal and pin that recipients can wear with pride, as well as a tree planted in their name in a public park or space, and a permanent place in the City’s civic record, so that decades from now, people can still look back and see who helped shape this community.

To ensure the program remains fair, community-rooted, and free from political influence, and to keep it lean in terms of staff time and cost, I am proposing that we explore a delivery partnership with the Prince George Community Foundation (PGCF). I had early conversations with PGCF prior to submitting the Notice of Motion, and we've since had additional discussions surrounding this topic, as well as their previous community recognition program, Citizen of the Year. They've expressed potential interest in considering partnering, should Council choose to go in that direction. A model like this could offer a credible, cost-conscious approach to program delivery. The PGCF brings phenomenal experience in adjudication and community-based program delivery, and by pairing their expertise with the City's, we could build a program that's not only well-managed but insulated from political pressures and more sustainable in the long run.

Proposed Program Framework:

- **AWARD NAME:** Prince George Medal of Excellence and Good Citizenship
- **AWARD STYLE:** Custom-designed medal, ideally made of wood, with a ribbon in the colours of the Prince George flag. Worn on the right side in alignment with Canadian Honours protocol *Concept Medal Design Attached for visual reference*
- **AWARD ACCOMPANIMENT:** A customized matching lapel-pin that recipients can wear more regularly where wearing the medal may not be appropriate
- **RECIPIENTS/ELIGIBILITY:** Up to five recipients per year, with only Residents of Prince George, or in rare circumstances individuals who have positively impacted Prince George. Can be awarded posthumously. Active elected officials, and City staff, and are not eligible.
- **RECOGNITION SCOPE:** Broad-based community excellence, innovation, leadership, impact, courage, generosity, and more
- **LEGACY COMPONENT:** A tree planted in each recipient's honour in a City park or space, with a certificate noting its location, date planted, and the honouree's name
- **DELIVERY MODEL:** Potential third-party delivery partnership with the PG Community Foundation (to be explored in greater detail)
- **EXECUTION:** PGCF, if in agreement to be the service delivery partner, could manage the nomination intake, adjudication panel, and overall program coordination. The City would support promotion of program, and communications support. The two would collaborate to host the annual recognition event
- **CITIZEN OF THE YEAR:** The Committee could explore discussions with the PGCF to revive its previously paused "Citizen of the Year" program, potentially designating one of the annual medal recipients with that honour
- **PUBLIC ARCHIVE:** Recipients would be recorded in a permanent civic honours archive on the City website along with previous civic honours and the Freedom of the City
- **SUSTAINABILITY:** Distributing the honour through a ticketed event model could help seed a fund held by PGCF to support the long-term delivery of the program, with a goal of making it self-sustaining over time

Committee Input:

This Committee was struck to further shape the vision and recommend a strong, community-rooted version of this program to Council. With the proposed model above, the key building blocks are in place, but several critical details still need to be shaped.

COMMITTEE INPUT IS SPECIFICALLY NEEDED ON:

1. **MEDAL/ACCOMPANIMENT DESIGN** – Materials, format, size, and inscription
2. **ANNUAL CAP** – Should it remain up to five recipients? Should there be flexibility or minimums?
3. **RECOGNITION SCOPE** – Should the award focus on broad impact, with examples ranging from volunteerism, philanthropy, arts, sports, social service, heroism, or innovation? Or should the Committee recommend a more defined list of focus areas?
4. **DELIVERY MODEL** – Should the Committee recommend a third-party delivery model (e.g. PGCF)? If so, what should that partnership look like and what would it cost? If not, can the City handle this with current resources and what are the cost implications?
5. **ADJUDICATION FRAMEWORK** – Develop a rubric, and recommend the makeup and selection process for the adjudication panel
6. **ANNUAL EVENT FORMAT** – Timing, location, format, and whether the event is public or ticketed, and whether it is recommended it be a stand-alone event or in tandem with another event
7. **LEGACY FEATURES** – Confirm the inclusion of tree planting and explore any alternative lasting or symbolic components
8. **RISKS OR GAPS** – Identify potential gaps, concerns, or areas that may require additional Council direction or staff support
9. **ANY OTHER IDENTIFIED COMPONENTS THAT NEED COMMITTEE REVIEW**

Next Steps:

- Finalize a recommendation on the award structure, recipient cap, and eligibility
- Determine the preferred model of program delivery - including whether a formal partnership with PGCF or otherwise should be pursued
- Provide input on and develop the adjudication process, including rubric and panel composition
- Recommend the format, delivery, and location of the annual award ceremony
- Propose how the legacy and archiving component is delivered and maintained
- Identify any resourcing considerations or unresolved items that should be referred to Council

Recommendation:

1. That the Select Committee on Citizen Recognition Program APPROVES the Proposed Program Framework as the model to base the workplan off of, and;
2. That the Select Committee on Citizen Recognition Program REQUESTS that staff develop the required materials to support the proposed framework, and return to the committee with options and information within the 'Committee Input' section of the report to work towards a finalized report to Council.

Conclusion:

We all share a common goal, to create a recognition program that genuinely reflects the people and values of Prince George. One that shines a spotlight on residents doing great things, unique things, or achieving excellence in their field. We want this to be done in a way that is authentic, lasting, and celebrates civic pride.

My hope is that this proposed framework captures that spirit, as well as the intent of the original Notice of Motion, and that it gives the Committee a strong place to start. The next step is refining the pieces, confirming the direction, and shaping a final version we can bring to Council with confidence.

Timeline:

Phase	Timeline
Select Committee Established	Q2 2025
Program Framework Finalized	End of Q3 2025
Program Launch	January 1, 2025
Nomination Period	January 1 – March 31, 2025
Adjudication Period	April 2026
Award Ceremony	May 2026
Tree Planting and Recognition	May – September 2026

Respectfully submitted:



Councillor Kyle Sampson

Meeting date: 2025/04/24

MEDAL DESIGN CONCEPT DRAFT:

