



2016 McGredy Winder SOLGM Local Government Excellence Awards®

ENTRY FORM

Please complete this form if your council is entering a project in one of the five Award categories. Entries for the Emerging Leader of the Year Award should refer to the nomination form for that Award.

Conditions of Entry:

1. Entry is open to any New Zealand local authority or council controlled organisation (CCO). There is no limit on the number of times a single local authority or CCO may enter.
2. Awards will be presented at the 2016 SOLGM Gala Dinner being held in Wellington on 14 April 2016. There is no entry fee, but it is a condition of entry that the organisation purchases at least one ticket to the Gala Dinner, per entry.
3. The judges' decision on the award winners is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
4. From time to time SOLGM invites selected entrants to present their entries at various SOLGM learning and development events. It is a condition of entry that the entrant organisation agrees that it will make itself available to present at up to two such events (prior to 31 December 2016) if called upon with SOLGM covering any required travel costs. SOLGM will endeavour to give reasonable notice in respect to this requirement.
5. Entries must include:
 - a completed registration for the Gala Dinner – see Clause 2 above.
 - a completed and signed written entry as prescribed in this Form.
 - a PowerPoint slide describing the entry for display at the Gala Dinner. These must be supplied in the widescreen 16:9 format, not the default size.
 - your organisation's logo in a high resolution format suitable for print.
 - a 2-3 minute video on your project suitable to display at The Marketplace – the exhibition space being provided for Award entries prior to the Gala Dinner. Organisations entering projects in these Awards may also choose to take an exhibition space with representative/s in attendance who can talk about the entry.
6. All organisations that enter provide SOLGM with assurances that all material included within their entry is theirs to use. It is a condition of entry that entrants agree to indemnify SOLGM from any financial or non-financial consequences in the event that their entry contains intellectual property that belongs to a third party. SOLGM reserves the right to request amendments or reject an entry under this clause.
7. SOLGM reserves the right to reject entries that significantly exceed the word limits prescribed.
8. Entries must be submitted by email to Raymond Horan – raymond.horan@solgm.org.nz by 5.00pm on 3 February 2016. Entries that are incomplete as at this date and time (i.e. those that are missing one or more of the items listed in clause 5 above) will be returned to the entrant without entry into the Awards.

Please Complete


Please refer to the [guidelines](#) for information on completing this form

Entry Category (please tick one only for each entry – refer to the information on categories here)	<input type="checkbox"/> Innovation in Council-Community Relations
Name of Organisation submitting entry	Hamilton City Council
Name of Project	Community transforms a city dump
Project Summary (word limit – 150)	<p>Today the Hamilton Gardens is a must see visitor destination and internationally significant tourist destination in NZ, with over a million visitors a year.</p> <p>Over the last 35 years, an old landfill site has transformed into the 'International Garden of the Year 2014'. It's predicted to bring a direct economic benefit to Hamilton's economy of \$14.5 million per year - \$5.6 million more than today.</p> <p>This world-class garden has been achieved through hard work, vision, buy-in, partnerships, 18 independent trusts and strong community support.</p> <p>As a result, the equivalent of approximately \$14 million has been raised for Gardens development; the community has a strong sense of ownership and pride - reflected in the overwhelming support for an additional targeted rate for Gardens development and the Hamilton Gardens is getting national and international recognition as an internationally significant garden. All of this has led to the enhancement of the positive image of Hamilton.</p>
Strategic Context (word limit – 300)	<p>Forty years ago Hamilton didn't have a significant garden like older New Zealand cities. However, a riverside site that had been the city dump had been set aside as the future city gardens site. In 1980 a Reserves Act Management Plan for the park proposed a theme inspired by modern European museums and galleries rather than traditional botanic gardens.</p> <p>The 'story of gardens' theme for Hamilton Gardens is truly unique in the world.</p> <p>The plan was approved; however, no resources were set aside to develop this new and exciting concept.</p> <p>Over the following 30-years development was achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the community to raise funds, particularly through the establishment of a series of independent trusts. • Volunteer and community groups dedicating thousands of hours and resources to transform 54 hectare site into a free public park with five garden collections and 21 themed gardens. • Government subsidised work schemes • Donated, discounted and waste material. • Plants were grown in the on-site nursery. • Ingenuity and smart thinking. <p>The Gardens has four strategic plan objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamilton Gardens is a "must see" visitor destination. • The 12 garden designs are completed and the unique themes understood and appreciated. • Hamilton Gardens delivers increased value and enjoyment to the local community. • Hamilton Gardens is supported by a sustainable business and funding model, including the protection of its conservation values.

	<p>As the city's major attraction Hamilton Gardens will play a significant role in promoting the regional visitor industry, which is currently worth \$1 billion p.a. and is projected to grow to \$1.35 billion by 2025.</p>
	<p>The Hamilton Gardens has a current \$7 million development project including four themed gardens, Information Centre and jetty upgrades, plus more parking. This development project will further support the strategic vision for the city, the growing economy and visitor industry.</p>
Project Management (word limit – 300)	<p>Since 1980 the overall garden concept for the old dump site has been defined in an evolving series of four Reserves Act management plans each involving widespread public consultation. From that broad plan each project is managed independently. There have been roughly 70 sponsored development projects, most of the larger ones involving the establishment of a trust.</p> <p>With most development funds expected to come from outside Council, each garden project has started with the risk that there would be insufficient resources for completion. To date, all projects have been finished.</p> <p>This is thanks to the partnerships between local government, central government and the community.</p> <p>The quality and outcomes of each project have largely been managed through the following systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scope of the project and extent of trust involvement is usually defined in a trust deed. • The Gardens' director has managed all but one of the projects ensuring they comply with the overall vision and have a high level of design integrity. • Aside from sponsored items and artwork, projects have been competitively tendered with quality standards defined in contract documents. <p>External audits by Telarc, Qualmark, Green Flag and Parks Forum have identified the Hamilton Gardens quality system as industry best practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It defines and measures the standards of most Hamilton Gardens operational activities. • Customer feedback, surveys and user patterns are constantly monitored. • A programme of constant improvement. <p>Further to this, a key focus of the Gardens has been securing the funding to build new and exciting Gardens. The Hamilton Gardens development plan identified that \$7 million was needed to create four new gardens. A sponsorship manager was recruited in 2014/5 to focus on fundraising and sponsorship opportunities and this dedicated attention has reaped huge benefits, including securing \$2.5 million through a Lotteries Grant.</p> <p>Through robust project management practices, collaborative working and strong contractor relationships, Hamilton Gardens has flourished.</p>
Relationship Management (word limit – 300)	<p>Bringing together different communities of interest and identifying potential key individuals to support a project can be assisted by an extensive network of contacts, the credibility of those making approaches and a high level of ongoing community engagement.</p> <p>Each year about 90 volunteers contribute at least 6700 hours towards the Gardens.</p> <p>Engagement often takes the form of speaking engagements, on-site events, newsletters, social media, publicity and invitations to 'see behind the scenes'.</p> <p>Originally engagement focused on garden groups with projects like the Camellia, Rhododendron, Cactus, Rose and Herb Gardens; then, through the 'Hamilton Gardens Building Trust', the combined horticultural groups raised funds for the central events centre.</p> <p>Local ethnic communities were involved through the 'Indian Char Bagh Garden Trust', 'Japanese Garden Trust', 'Russian Bell Tower Trust', the Hispanic Group and the 'Te Parapara Garden Trust'. There was little contact within the local Chinese community until the 'Chinese Garden Trust' brought many together to subsequently form a strong cultural club.</p> <p>However, most development projects haven't had an obvious or large relevant community so</p>

	<p>recruitment has focused on individuals who've expressed support. Examples include: The 'Modernist Garden Trust', Italian Renaissance Garden Trust', 'French Rose Garden Trust', 'Cloud Court Trust', 'Hamilton Gardens Development Trust'.</p> <p>Other trusts were established to promote the gardens including 'The Hamilton Gardens Entertainment Trust', 'The Gardenworld Trust', the 'Friends of Hamilton Gardens' *, 'The Hamilton Gardens Opera Company', 'Waikato Garden Festival Trust', 'Hamilton Gardens Summer Festival Foundation'* and the Pacific Rose Bowl Festival Trust' *. (*Trusts that still exist.)</p> <p>Finally, one of the key relationships and partners is the community. The annual operating and maintenance costs for Hamilton Gardens are met by the Hamilton City Council. There is funding for this in the 10 year plan and there is a high level of community support and pride in the Gardens which comes through in the 10 year plan consultations.</p>
Continuous Improvement (word limit – 300)	<p>Hamilton Gardens wouldn't have achieved its 'International Garden of the Year 2014' recognition if the staff at the Council didn't have their eye on constant improvement opportunities.</p> <p>There are many improvement projects underway which are all integrated into the Gardens operation. At present the focus is on utilising new technology for park interpretation, developing additional income streams to offset costs, improving the standards of customer service in the Café and Information Centre and developing new gardens and visitor facilities.</p> <p>Continuous research has gone into creating a range of historic garden types with a level of authenticity that's been internationally recognised. Adding inappropriate detail or maintaining these gardens in the wrong way could easily destroy that integrity. So one of the biggest challenges is to record how each type of design works, what is significant and how each type should be maintained in order to transfer that institutional knowledge across generations of gardens staff.</p> <p>Each month the gardens and most other assets and services are audited and marked against specific quality standards. High scores are achieved, but there is a constant focus on addressing those scoring below 80 per cent. The team at the Gardens works tirelessly to create, build and maintain a complex spider network of paths and courtyards, as well as Gardens and river frontage.</p> <p>Hamilton Gardens has been driven by harnessing the passion of individuals. Supporting the Gardens staff are approximately 90 volunteers at any one time. These volunteers and each staff member has an approved 'Passion Project' where they undertake projects beyond their normal duties. By having projects that they are collectively passionate about, the Gardens works in an environment of innovation, thinking outside the box, strong ownership and empowerment to constantly improve.</p>
Project Success (word limit – 900)	<p>Older Hamiltonians can remember the Hamilton Gardens site as the city's dump when it was covered in mud and household rubbish. Over the past 40 years it has been transformed into a world class garden, not through a massive Council budget but through a sustained community effort.</p> <p>And today, a million visitors walk through the Gardens every year – with numbers only increasing. Half of the visitors are Hamiltonians and this truly has become a city asset, loved and appreciated by its community.</p> <p>Over the past 18 months major improvements have been made to speed up the fundraising with a \$7.03 million development programme underway. A professional fundraising position has been established within Council and the political involvement and support for the whole fundraising process, has put a focus on accessing the funds to keep delivering fantastic Gardens.</p> <p>Hamilton Gardens is gaining increasing national and international recognition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are approximately one million visitors to Hamilton Gardens each year, half

	<p>from outside the district, including about 200,000 international tourists. Most people visit because of recommendations from friends or acquaintances. Over the past two years visits to the themed central garden area have increased by 23 per cent. With more parking, improved access and new gardens that trend is likely to continue so that by 2018 there are likely to be more visits to Hamilton Gardens than to Te Papa Museum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earlier this year Lottery made a \$2.5 million grant towards the next stage of the development of Hamilton Gardens. Lottery representatives who visited the site indicated that this was Government recognition of the growing national significance of Hamilton Gardens. • Hamilton Gardens has been awarded the international 'Green Flag Award', the Qualmark 'Gold Award' for sustainable management and is currently rating at 99 per cent on TripAdvisor. The Rose Garden has been recognised as one of the world's best by the International Federation of Rose Societies. • It is rare for a New Zealand council to receive international recognition for innovation. However, in 2014, in Metz near Paris, the International Garden Tourism Network announced that Hamilton Gardens was the winner of the 'International Garden of the Year Award' with specific mention of the innovation shown. Nominees for this award are selected by the well travelled members of the organisation. <p><i>"The Concept is, by far, the most exciting I have seen in my 20 year career as a researcher in the field of garden tourism. Hamilton Gardens should join the ranks of the five international destination gardens ... this is because the vision, as stated, is indeed unique in the world and visually spectacular."</i> - Professor Richard Benfield, Central Connecticut University - world authority on garden tourism.</p> <p><i>"It's unlike anywhere else in New Zealand or in the world. I have not been to a garden as good anywhere, and I mean anywhere. Immaculately presented. Just stunning. They've quietly created a revolutionary new garden under everyone's noses."</i> - Lynda Hallinan, New Zealand's leading garden writer.</p> <p>What has set this programme apart is the extent and scale of community involvement, the extensive use of independent trusts, the different systems to manage community involvement and the unique concept of the Garden itself.</p> <p>Indicators of community engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous sections have already given some idea of the extent of local sponsorship and voluntary involvement. They also give some idea of the wide range of community engagement from local businesses and individuals to every imaginable performance group and various ethnic groups. These days the Gardens are regularly used for Hispanic, Chinese, Cambodian, Dutch, Maori, Italian, Russian, Iranian, Samoan cultural events. • In 2007 Hamilton Gardens was selected as the venue for a (BGANZ) Congress on the theme of 'Partnerships' because it was seen as the leading example of community involvement in a park operation. (There were about 50 overseas delegates.) • Social media engagement across platforms such as Facebook and Instagram continues to increase. For example November 2015 Facebook had a reach of 501,000 (people who saw posts). • In 2014 significant support was expressed from the public when the Mayor announced an annual \$10 targeted rate for the development of Hamilton Gardens. • Measured visitor statistics (year to date average to November 2015) show that 97.25% of visitors are satisfied with their visit to the Gardens. And for 7% more people compared to 2014, their visit to the Hamilton Gardens was their only reason for visiting Hamilton. • To November 2015, there were 3.2 million views of direct mentions of the Hamilton Gardens in the media, and 2.2 million views of associated mentions (media related to events or when the Gardens is used in the backdrop). • The Hamilton Gardens has a 99% satisfaction rating on trip advisor with some fantastically positive comments, from 'world-class to 'beautiful and free'.
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	<p>We are proud of how we've responded to the challenges of building a world-class Gardens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rather than just responding to offers of voluntary assistance, individuals and groups are invited to become involved in a specific project that has a clearly defined purpose, outcome and timeframe. • Individuals are keen and excited to be involved in Hamilton Gardens committees and boards. • We believe it's important to celebrate milestones.. • Being able to offer a sneak preview of plans or progress behind the scenes has always been a useful tool in engaging potential sponsors and a certain degree of mystery is consciously created. <p>The processes behind our approach have been outlined at Botanic Gardens of Australian & NZ (BGANZ) regional meetings and other major gardens are utilising some of what we've learnt.</p>
Support Material	<input type="checkbox"/> Link to a 2-3 minute video uploaded on YouTube <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint Slide in the correct 16:9 widescreen format <input type="checkbox"/> An electronic file of your Organisation's Logo (in a format suitable for print, preferably an EPS with transparent background) <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation that a ticket has been purchased for our Gala Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe):
Requesting a space at The Marketplace (please note that space is limited – SOLGM will advise if the requested space is available shortly after entries close)	<input type="checkbox"/> Please tick if your organisation wishes to book a Booth at The Marketplace to showcase your project. The booth must include at least one representative from your organisation being available at The Marketplace from 12pm to 6pm on the 14 th of April (allow extra time before and after these times for set up and pack up) to talk about your project. The booth measures 2.4m wide and 1.2m deep and the surrounding panels can be used to for displaying project collateral. The booths will come with power, a small plinth and a stool.
Contact Details (The person to contact at your organisation in respect to this entry)	<p>Name: Lance Vervoort General Manager, Community Hamilton City Council Phone: 07 838 6404 Email: lance.vervoort@hcc.govt.nz</p>
Signature of your organisation's Chief Executive or Nominee	<p>Signature: </p> <p>Name: Richard Briggs</p> <p>Title: CHIEF EXECUTIVE Date: <u>2/2/16</u></p>
Entry Instructions:	<p>Once completed please print, sign, scan and email this Entry to Raymond.horan@solgm.org.nz to reach him no later than 5pm on 3 February 2016. Please also attach to the email your support material as noted above. If you have not already done so please purchase at least one ticket (required as a condition of each entry) to the Gala Dinner.</p>

Guidelines to completing the Entry Form:

Project Summary

This should be a high level overview or Executive Summary of the project.

Strategic Context – Scored out of 20

Applicants need to identify the rationale for the project and the proposed outcomes. This should include:

- The level of need and the evidence base that demonstrated the need
- The anticipated outcomes, and the causal impact of outputs
- The relationship to council's strategic direction
- The risks for the project and how they were mitigated

Project Management – Scored out of 10

Applicants need to identify how the project was managed. This should include:

- The key issues from the project plan - scope, timeframes, resources and governance
- The evaluation framework
- Examples of where feedback was used to inform continuous improvement
- What quality assurance systems were utilised

Relationship Management - Scored out of 10

Applicants need to identify their communication and relationship management with stakeholders:

- The different communication tools used
- The different audiences the project engaged with
- How it communicated with "hard to reach" groups

Continuous Improvements - Scored out of 10

Applicants need to demonstrate the project is sustainable. This will include:

- Lessons learnt from the programme
- How learning will be shared across the organisation
- Plans to integrate the project into business-as-usual

Project Success - Scored out of 50

Applicants need to identify how the project was successful. This should include:

- Before and after
- Barriers traversed
- Steps being taken to improve the programme
- Why the project was innovative or original
- What about the project outcomes, lessons etc. is this transferable to other local authorities and why?

2016 Categories

Innovation in Organisation and People Development

Is your local authority effectively developing its people and culture?

This category recognises innovative approaches to building an exceptional organisational culture or capability through the application of transformational leadership. Entries in this category might be multi-year programmes or one-off projects but they will involve organisational redesign, human resource management, capability development or related aspects. The approach must be capable of transfer to other local authorities.

Transforming Service Delivery

On-going fiscal constraints, increasing regulatory standards and increasing community expectations on the part of our communities are challenging us to find new ways of delivering a better service experience.

This category is for programmes or projects that result in an exceptional service experience through innovative delivery models or the redesign of business processes or practices. The programme or project can relate to any area of council activity which is about delivering improved value for money to ratepayers. The approach must be capable of transfer to other local authorities.

Innovation in Council -Community relations

Are your council's community relationships delivering results?

This award recognises programmes, projects or initiatives that demonstrate outstanding results through innovative means of community engagement or community empowerment. Entries may come from any area of local government activity, but must have community engagement, empowerment, or partnership as a key aspect. Entries may include successful collaboration with private or community organisations. The approach taken must be transferable to other local authorities.

Collaborative Government Action

What benefits has your community achieved through your council working with other local or central government agencies?

This award recognises outstanding results that have been achieved through local authorities working with other government agencies. This category could include programmes or projects from any area of local government activity, provided there is a demonstrable community benefit, and the approach is transferable to other local authorities.

Innovation in policy and regulatory development

Is your policy development or regulatory development cutting edge?

This award recognises the development of robust and effective evidence-based policy or local regulatory initiatives. Any policy, plan or regulatory initiative is eligible for this award. Entrants will be expected to clearly demonstrate their initiative was based on the application of the principles of effective policy or regulatory design and implementation, development of an evidence base and that the initiative is transferable to other local authorities.