CITIZEN RECOGNITION PROGRAM

COUNCIL POLICY

CMP-090

Effective Date: October 27, 2026

POLICY STATEMENT

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (the "Municipality") will recognize outstanding individuals, groups of individuals, and organizations that make a significant contribution or positive impact for residents in the Region through the Citizen Recognition Program.

The Citizen Recognition Program Policy (the "Policy"):

- recognizes behaviour that fosters a culture of home and belonging in the Region;
- provides a venue to communicate the achievements of residents in the Region;
- motivates residents to positively contribute to the quality of life in the Region; and
- ensures that Recipients are recognized in the presence of their peers.

DEFINITIONS

"Administration" means employees of the Municipality, as directed by the Chief Administrative Officer.

"Awards" means the Council's Excellence Awards as part of the Citizen Recognition Program and prescribed in this Policy.

"Council" means the collective group of elected officials who govern the Municipality.

"Nominee" means an individual, group of individuals, or organization who has been nominated to receive an Award or Key to the Region.

"Region" means the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo as the community.

"Recipient" means an individual, group of individuals, or organization who has either received or been selected to receive an Award or Key to the Region.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. The Awards may be presented annually.
2. Council reserves the right to not bestow an Award if there are no suitable Nominees.
3. The Key to the Region is awarded at the sole discretion of Council.

COUNCIL'S EXCELLENCE AWARDS

AWARD CATEGORIES

4. The following Awards may be rewarded under the Citizen Recognition Program:
    a. Community Impact;
    b. Business and Innovation;
    c. Leadership and Service Excellence;
    d. Indigenous Advocate; and
    e. Youth.

COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD

5. The Community Impact Award recognizes an individual, group of individuals, or organization whose dedication and contributions have made a meaningful and lasting difference in the community.
6. This Award celebrates those who enhance the quality of life of residents through efforts that strengthen community well-being, inclusion, safety, culture, recreation, volunteerism, social services, or community development.
7. Recipients demonstrate leadership, service, and a commitment to building a stronger, more connected Region through their positive impact on the lives of others.

BUSINESS AND INNOVATION AWARD

8. The Business and Innovation Award recognizes an individual, group of individuals, or organization that has demonstrated excellence, innovation, and leadership in business or economic development.
9. This Award celebrates those who drive positive change through entrepreneurial spirit, creative thinking, and contributions that support a thriving and resilient local economy.
10. Recipients inspire growth, create opportunities, and strengthen the Region through initiatives, services, or achievements that have a meaningful and lasting impact on the community.

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD

11. The Leadership and Service Award recognizes an individual, group of individuals, or organization that has demonstrated exceptional leadership, service, and commitment to the Region.

12. This Award celebrates those who inspire others through collaboration, accountability, and responsible stewardship while advancing initiatives that strengthen the Region.
13. Recipients lead by example, promote positive change, and make meaningful contributions that strengthen community connections, build trust, and improve the quality of life of those around them.

Indigenous Advocate Award

14. The Indigenous Advocate Award recognizes an individual, group of individuals, or organization that has made significant contributions to Indigenous Communities in the Region.
15. The Award celebrates those whose contributions include fostering meaningful partnerships and collaboration, advancing reconciliation, strengthening relationships between Indigenous Communities and non-Indigenous communities, promoting mutual respect and understanding, or creating positive outcomes that benefit the broader community.
16. Recipients demonstrate a commitment to cooperation, inclusion, and lasting community impact.

Youth Award

17. The Youth Award recognizes a youth or group of youths whose exceptional achievements have improved the quality of life in the Region or have brought positive recognition to the Region.
18. This Award celebrates youth who make a significant contribution to the Region through leadership, volunteerism, extracurricular activities, or community involvement.
19. Recipients must be 12 to18 years old at the time of nomination.

Eligibility for Council's Excellence Awards

20. An individual, group of individuals, or organization may only be nominated for one Award per year.
21. Individual Recipients must be current residents of the Region and must have resided in the Region for at least twelve consecutive months prior to their nomination.
22. Groups of individuals or organizations must be based in the Region or be a local branch of a national or international organization. They must have operated in the Region for at least twelve consecutive months prior to their nomination.

23. In addition to any other Recipient selected for an Award category, Council may, at its discretion, recognize a youth Nominee (12 to 18 years of age) within the same Award category, provided the youth Nominee meets all eligibility requirements and Award criteria applicable to that category.
24. Current and former employees, contractors, or elected officials of the Municipality are not eligible for an Award for contributions made as part of their role as an employee, contractor, or elected official of the Municipality.
25. Recipients must not currently hold elected office.
26. Nominees who are not selected as Recipients may be eligible for an Award in future years.
27. Notwithstanding section 26, past Recipients are not eligible to be nominated for an Award if:
    a. they have previously received an Award in the same category for the same achievements; or
    b. they have received an Award in any category within the past five years.

Nominations for Council's Excellence Awards

28. Administration will make the nomination package available to the public, including nomination forms, eligibility requirements, and the scoring rubric used in the evaluation process.
29. Nominations submitted after the submission deadline will not be considered.

Selection Process for Council's Excellence Awards

30. Administration shall create a panel for the review and scoring of nominations.
31. Administration shall present the panel's recommendations to Council for consideration and final determination.
32. Council shall review nomination packages, scoring summaries, and recommendations from Administration, and shall select Recipients during a Council meeting as a closed agenda item pursuant to the provisions of the *Protection of Privacy Act*.
33. Selecting Recipients for Awards requires majority support of Council prior to a recommendation being brought forward to a public Council Meeting.

Recognition of Award Recipients

34. Council will announce Recipients once each year.

35. Recipients shall be recognized at an annual Award ceremony and through various communications, as appropriate.

KEY TO THE REGION

36. The Key to the Region recognizes an individual, group of individuals, or organization that has enhanced the Region, the Province of Alberta, or Canada through:
    a. an act of humanitarianism, heroism, or bravery;
    b. outstanding educational, sporting, theatrical, or musical achievements;
    c. the process of Reconciliation; or
    d. provincial or national achievements.

ELIGIBILITY FOR THE KEY TO THE REGION

37. Recipients of the Key to the Region must be current or former residents of the Region.
38. Groups of individuals or organizations must be based in the Region or be a local branch of a national or international organization. They must have operated in the Region for at least twelve consecutive months prior to their nomination.
39. Current and former employees, contractors, or elected officials of the Municipality are not eligible for an Award for contributions made as part of their role as an employee, contractor, or elected official of the Municipality.
40. Recipients must not currently hold elected office.
41. An individual, group of individuals, or organization may only be awarded the Key to the Region once per lifetime.

SELECTION PROCESS FOR KEY TO THE REGION

42. The Mayor shall have the authority to select and present the Key to the Region in recognition of exceptional contributions, achievements, or service.
43. Members of Council may make confidential recommendations to the Mayor.
44. In making their decision, Council will assess whether the Nominee has:
    a. stood out as exemplary within the Municipality, the Province of Alberta, or Canada;
    b. enhanced the reputation of the Municipality;
    c. demonstrated acts of humanitarianism;

d. demonstrated outstanding educational, sporting, theatrical, or musical achievement;

e. made outstanding contributions to the process of reconciliation, including acts of inspiration or education of citizens;

f. demonstrated exceptional provincial or national achievement; or

g. carried out an act of heroism or bravery.

45. All selections shall remain confidential until the Key to the Region is presented or publicly announced by the Mayor.

RESCIND AND REPLACE

This Council Policy rescinds and replaces the Citizen Recognition Program Council Policy PRC-090, dated May 9, 2023.

APPROVAL

This Council Policy is approved by:

Sandy Bowman, Mayor

Jade Brown, Chief Legislative Officer

Oct. 27, 2026

Date

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

- Protection of Privacy Act, SA 2024, c P-28.5

DETAILS AND REVISION HISTORY

Date	Action	Description
January 12, 1999	Introduction	New Citizen Recognition Program Policy PRL-090
January 10, 2003	Revision	
March 13, 2007	Revision	
June 26, 2012	Revision	
May 9, 2023	Revision	Policy number changed to PRC-090, format and content revised, and Key to the Region added.
October 27, 2026	Revision	Policy number changed to CMP-090, format revised to align with new template, and content updated.