



2025 Municipal Authority Community Engagement Award <Overview and Submission Guidelines>

Municipal Authorities are a success story that needs to be told. Each day, authorities implement innovative solutions to meet complex challenges, create opportunities for growth and enhancement, initiate solutions and adapt to changing conditions, and provide services to meet the basic human needs of Pennsylvania residents.

How does your Authority communicate **YOUR STORY** and the **VALUE** you bring to your customers?

The Municipal Authority Community Engagement Award is given annually to PMAA member authorities who are going above and beyond to effectively communicate the value of their authority to the community while providing exceptional service. These authorities use good management practices, along with innovative approaches to challenges, to demonstrate a comprehensive approach to community engagement.

Communications is a vital component of community engagement – do you share your story through websites, newsletters, annual reports, special community events, partnerships, internal messaging, staff development, or in other ways to be more visible and share the value of your authority?

Why submit?

Why not? You've put your time and talent into creating a memorable story that has proven results. Consider sharing with your colleagues and be recognized for the work you do on behalf of your authority!

- Select submissions will be showcased during the Annual Awards banquet (Monday, September 8, 2025) at the PMAA Annual Conference & Trade Show.
- Submissions that embody this year's conference theme (logo above) – **"Be the Change"** – demonstrating innovative, proactive, or forward-thinking concepts, are strongly encouraged.
- Select submissions will be offered to share a booth space in the exhibit hall at the PMAA Annual Conference & Trade Show (September 8 - 9, 2025) to showcase their projects.
- Select submissions will be showcased in a future issue of *The Authority* magazine.

Categories – How Do You Share Your Story?

How do you communicate the value of your authority to the community, local citizens, and your ratepayers?

Entries may be submitted under these categories – **no more than two entries may be submitted per eligible authority:**

1. **Print**
Printed materials such as annual reports, brochures, calendars, posters, bill stuffers, newsletters, magazines, editorials or feature articles, white papers, etc.
2. **Electronic**
Electronic materials such as social media campaigns, websites, webinars, e-newsletters, etc.
3. **Community Events**
Community programs or events such as festivals, educational events, groundbreaking ceremony or other special events showcasing the project, etc.
4. **Partnerships – Association, Intergovernmental Relations**
Efforts conducted in coordination with local, state or national groups or associations, or programs or events with government entities, local legislators or other public audiences.
5. **Internal**
Efforts to support personnel engagement and build authority strength internally such as rebranding, employee newsletters, special events for Board/staff, professional growth opportunities, internship programs, etc.

Multiple winners may be selected for each category based on authority size. An overall **Best of Show** recipient will also be named. The Best of Show entry will be awarded for engagements that cross multiple categories and that stand out as the best example of a comprehensive community engagement initiative.

Guidelines for Submission

Your awards entry must include:

1. Application Form
2. Submission Summary
3. Supporting Materials

The **Submission Summary** may include:

- An overview of your authority (500-words or less) including information on the size of your authority, the type of your authority, authority history, scope of work, who was impacted or reached by your communication (audiences), budget for the project, or anything else you want the judging committee to know, etc. If you prefer, you may submit a two-minute video instead of a written synopsis.
- Include an outline of any best management practices used (administration, finance, operations, personnel) and if you had defined goals/objectives, research/planning, or innovation/execution.
- Please provide results, i.e., what impact it had, or evaluation measures if available.

Please provide a description of any **supporting materials** you are submitting (articles, print projects/publications, photos, news clippings, audio or video files, etc.). We suggest submitting no more than three supporting materials.

**Your submission must consist of projects completed from January 1, 2024 through May 1, 2025.
Submit your entry no later than May 1, 2025.**

Committee Review/Scoring

Are you interested in knowing what the committee will be looking for and the components of the scoring system?

1. **Sharing Your Story – Submission Summary (25 points)**
Provide complete information on the application and share a detailed summary of your story and how you are engaging your community.
2. **Research and Planning (10 points)**
Identify the problem, project, and/or opportunities. Identify your audience, engagement strategies and your message. Indicate if you used best practices in administration, finance, operations or personnel. List resources available for budget, time, and personnel, if applicable.
3. **Innovation (10 points)**
Represent a new or innovative approach, initiate solutions or proactive actions, or undertake a new method of communication and share the purpose for doing so (i.e., use of new technology, solving a problem, leading by example, providing accessibility to customers, etc.)
4. **Evaluation and Results (10 points)**
Demonstrate how the program met or exceeded its original objectives. Outcomes can be measured using a variety of techniques such as surveys, attendance at events, community actions taken, strengthened relations with ratepayers, informal feedback, etc. (i.e., share supporting numbers: *How many people attended.*)
5. **Supporting Materials (20 points)**
Entries should include support materials used in your engagement such as publications, photos, news clippings, audio or video files, PDFs, etc. All materials must be submitted in electronic format.
Submit no more than three of the best supporting materials.
6. **Overall (25 points)**
Overall quality – is the story exceptional, unique, exemplary, and understood by your audience?

View past winning projects in the February 2025 issue of *The Authority* magazine (also found at: municipalauthorities.org, under Communications, select *The Authority* Digital Edition). For a list of all past winners, visit www.municipalauthorities.org/conf-awards.

**Submit your entry via email to case@municipalauthorities.org by May 1, 2025.
Please provide electronic submissions only; entries mailed to the PMAA office will not be accepted.**

If your submission includes multiple files or is too large to send via email, please contact Jennifer Case at case@municipalauthorities.org for assistance.



2025 Municipal Authority Community Engagement Award Application

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____

Authority: _____

Address: _____

City, State Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Please complete, where applicable:

✓ Type of Authority (water, wastewater, recycling, EMS, airport, etc.): _____

✓ Audience Reached (residents, government officials, public, etc.): _____

✓ Was Project Created: Internally by Authority Staff **OR** Third Party (i.e., Ad Agency or PR Firm)

✓ Annual Gross Revenues: _____ Percent of Budget Dedicated to Project: _____

This entry is being submitted for the following category (no more than two entries may be submitted per eligible authority – please use a separate application for each entry):

Print Electronic Community Events Partnerships Internal

Submit the following with your application:

- ✓ An **Executive Summary** including:
 - Overview of Your Authority (written 500 words or less, or two-minute video clip may be provided)
 - Outline of best management practices used and if you defined goals, research and planning, innovation, and explanation of results
 - Description of supporting materials included (no more than three supporting)
- ✓ Attachments, links, and samples of **supporting materials** (no more than three) such as photos, news clippings, audio or video files, publications, etc. Event and presentation outreach examples can be described in summaries with any accompanying pictures or images. All materials must be supplied electronically.

Submit your entry via email to Jennifer Case at case@municipalauthorities.org no later than May 1, 2025. Please provide electronic submissions only; entries mailed to the PMAA office will not be accepted.