

City of Penticton wins international Gold Quill communications award

(Penticton, BC – July 23, 2024) – The City of Penticton has been awarded a prestigious Gold Quill Award from the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), which recognizes the top communications initiatives around the world.

The City's Communications team won an Award of Merit for the communications work related to Penticton's new book recycling program. Working with the Sustainability team, the campaign informed residents of a new to recycle old or damaged books through the launching of a pilot project to collect the books before they hit the landfill.

"I'm honoured to accept this award on behalf of the City of Penticton and the entire team, spanning several departments, which helped make the campaign a success," says Communications project lead Katya Irwin. "While Penticton may be a small city, the work we are doing is being recognized on a global scale, which speaks to the magnitude of skill and passion our staff bring to this organization. And most importantly, it's rewarding to see a campaign succeed, with the community embracing book recycling."

In 2022, Penticton's overall recycling contamination rate reached a new height of 13.3 per cent, despite ongoing education campaigns. The Communications team realized that if it was going to make an impact to bring down that number, it would have to narrow its focus to one "major offender" at a time – starting with books.

Working together with the Sustainability department, they identified books as an ongoing item being placed in recycling carts, which are not accepted by Recycle BC and count as contamination.

By the end of 2023, 51,000 pounds of books were diverted from the landfill – and the number of books found in residential recycling carts was reduced by half, to 0.8 per cent. Since this time, other municipalities throughout the province have replicated the program. To learn more about the books recycling program, visit penticton.ca/books.

This year, the Gold Quill Awards panel received entries from 17 countries around the world. This award recognizes work that is innovative, strategic and delivers significant results – identifying "the best of the best" communication efforts in the world. For more information and a full list of winners, visit gq.iabc.com.

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