

Burlington wins national honor

U.S. Conference of Mayors names city 1 of 3 most livable

By Enrique Corredera
Free Press Staff Writer

Burlington's work to promote the arts for all people has placed the city on the map as one of the best three places to live in the United States.

The Queen City earned the recognition Monday from the U.S. Conference of Mayors during its annual meeting in Salt Lake City. Burlington tied for first place with Frederick, Md., among cities with populations of 100,000 and less. Portland, Ore., received the award for larger cities.

The award will be presented to Mayor Bernard Sanders for "his strong leadership in using the arts for economic development of a vital downtown, and in making the arts available to all citizens," according to the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Sanders said he was "proud" and "delighted" to have won the award.

"It reflects our goal of trying to have a diversity of activity in the city, including cultural activity that helps develop a sense of community and which makes people enjoy living in the

City's art efforts garner attention, 3A

city," Sanders said.

According to Kay Scrimger, director of development programs with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, an independent panel of judges appointed to review about 40 applications was impressed with Burlington's "strong sense of planning and strategy, and knowing where the city was going in the arts and culture."

Scrimger said the panel liked the fact that arts in Burlington are made available for people from all economic levels and not just the elite.

"I think the point that we are trying to make is that these are not luxuries," Sanders said. "Cultural activities ... are what the city is supposed to be about. And if anything, what this award means to me is that we are going to continue to press forward on those areas."

Susan Green, director of the Mayor's Council on the Arts, said it was events

such as the Discover Jazz Festival, which last weekend drew an estimated 25,000 to enjoy music, that helped Burlington win the award.

Free summer concerts at Battery Park, neighborhood festivals, the Children's Art Exhibit, the Sunday night foreign-film shows at City Hall, the monthly art exhibit at City Hall, and co-sponsorship of the Reggae Festival were described in the city's application.

"It's how we have progressed in the past four years, it's really what it boils down to," Green said. The city received an honorable mention from the U.S. Conference of Mayors in 1984.

"You can feel it when you walk into the city, it is so alive," Green said. "The arts is a very large part of what makes it come alive. People feel we really have a special place here."

The work of the Community and Economic Development Office and the Youth Office also were cited in the application as contributing factors to the use of the arts to enhance the quality of life in the city.

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Burlington takes best-city award

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CEDO Director Peter Clavelle said the award can have a positive impact on the city economy. "Burlington is a hot market and an event of this nature makes it an even hotter market," Clavelle said.

However, Sanders pointed out that the recognition will not be used to sell Burlington off to developers. "Our goal is to make Burlington as good a place for people to live as is possible," Sanders said. "We're not trying to sell the city so that some people in the real estate industry can make money."

Scrimger said a plaque with a picture of the city is being made and will be presented to Burlington in the near future.

Santa Fe, N.M., received the award for cities under 100,000 people in 1987.

City in good company

Burlington and Frederick, Md., were recognized as the most livable cities with populations of less than 100,000 by the U.S. Conference of Mayors Monday. Among larger cities, Portland, Ore., was honored. The awards will be presented to Burlington Mayor Bernard Sanders, Frederick Mayor Ronald N. Young and Portland Mayor J.E. "Bud" Clark.

Past winners are:

1987: San Antonio, Texas, Mayor Henry Cisneros (100,000 and above)

Santa Fe, N.M., Mayor W. Samuel Pick (100,000 and below)

1986: Charleston, S.C., Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr.

1985: St. Paul, Minn., Mayor George Latimer

1984: Seattle, Wash., Charles Royer

1983: Fort Wayne, Ind., Mayor Winfield Moses

1982: Chicago, Mayor Jane Byrne

1981: Baltimore, Mayor William Donald Schaefer

1980: Milwaukee, Mayor Henry W. Maier

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