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Columbus has beefed up its resume recently, winning 24 awards in the past year and a half.

City officials will tell you it's because Columbus is simply awesome. But they'll also acknowledge that they go out of their way in their quest for awards, urged on by Mayor Michael B. Coleman.

"The mayor wants our departments and employees to be recognized for the great work they do," said Dan Williamson, Coleman's spokesman. "He strongly encourages his departments to brag about themselves and what they do well."

The Division of Fleet Management was named the top fleet in North America by the group 100 Best Fleets. The division also won the 2011 top "green" fleet distinction.

"It's kind of a way for our employees to puff up their chests and say, 'I'm really good at what I do,'" said Kelly Reagan, the fleet administrator.

An impressive application and strong leadership at all levels are crucial to winning the competition, Best 100 Fleets founder Tom Johnson said. In these areas, Columbus is "awesome."

"Columbus is so good with their accountability and how they get support from the mayor," Johnson said. "A lot of cities can't make it (in the competition) because they don't have support from up above."

The Department of Technology also encourages its employees to apply for awards, said department director Gary Cavin.

"We actually have a couple of people on staff where part of their job is to seek out opportunities to apply for awards to recognize the mayor and our employees," Cavin said. "To be honest, I ask everyone to do it."

The city's My Columbus mobile application won the 2014 Consumerization of IT in the Enterprise (CITE) award for Best Customer App. The app helps users report potholes, find recreational opportunities and locate city services, among other things.

Coleman's drive for recognition in his departments brought him his own award. *Government Technology* magazine named him among their Top 25 Dreamers, Doers and Drivers, calling him "a mayor who can get things done."

These awards expose facets of the city that are succeeding but would otherwise go unnoticed, Williamson said. And not all of them are solicited.



BROOKE LAVALLEY | DISPATCH FILE PHOTO

Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman accepts an award last year from Experience Columbus.

“I think the city of Columbus does a lot of things extremely well and is very innovative and effective in a lot of different areas,” he said, “and we should be recognized for those things.”

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