

OCCMA

Oregon City/County Management Association

A State Affiliate of **ICMA**



Welcome to Oregon Local Government Management

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VALUABLE WEBSITES



OCCMA
Oregon City/County
Management Association
A State Affiliate of ICMA

Oregon City County Management Association

www.occma.org

Please consider joining OCCMA as soon as you can. The mission of OCCMA is to support professional management in local government. Their objectives are: 1) to provide professional development; 2) to provide personal support to managers and facilitate communications; and 3) to represent and promote the profession. During the year, managers can stay connected with and ask questions of fellow managers on the OCCMA listserv. Many members have found this valuable when they need to do a quick survey of what other cities are doing with a particular issue. There are several conferences each year. The summer conference is held in July and is very family oriented. The fall conference is a half-day professional development opportunity held in conjunction with the LOC Annual Conference. OCCMA membership also offers access to the [ICMA Coaching Program](#).



League of Oregon Cities

www.orcities.org

The LOC is an important service for you, city staff, and elected officials. The LOC has many reference documents, and the Topics A-Z page has a plethora of information contributed by member cities that link to useful websites and information you can use in your work. You'll find city officials "steal" regularly from each other to develop sound programs and ordinances they recommend to their elected officials. [The Oregon Municipal Handbook](#) is a comprehensive resource providing city officials, from elected representatives to essential employees, an understanding of the purpose, structure, authority, and nuances of municipal governance in Oregon. It is continuously being revised and recommended that you bookmark this site to see the updated materials as they become available.

The LOC also sponsors the [Small Cities Program](#) which encourages elected and appointed officials from cities with populations of 7,500 or less to attend quarterly meetings in their region. The meeting location rotates each quarter, and each meeting is scheduled for two hours from 11:00 am-1:00 pm. Meetings include a presentation, lunch, and a roundtable discussion.



International City County Management Association

www.icma.org

The ICMA is a professional association for local government administrators. ICMA provides technical and management assistance, training, and information resources in areas of performance measurement, ethics education and training, community and economic development, environmental management, technology, and other topics to its members and the broader local government community. ICMA also maintains and enforces a code of ethics to which all managers are asked to adhere, whether they are ICMA members or not. A copy of the ICMA Code of Ethics is included in this welcome packet.



Oregon Budget Law



oregon.gov/dor

All local governments are obligated to adopt a budget by June 30 of each year or by June 30 of the second year of a biennial budget. There are videos, manuals, and training announcements available on the [local budget law](#) website. Here you can sign up to receive email announcements from the Department of Revenue (DOR) so you can keep up to date on changes in regulations and training opportunities. Oregon's budget law requires a citizen-based Budget Committee to review and recommend the budget to the governing board prior to adoption. Often the City Manager/Administrator is the designated Budget Officer for the community even if most of the responsibilities are delegated to other staff.



Land Use and Transportation Planning

oregon.gov/lcd

Oregon has a unique land use and transportation planning system requiring each local government be in compliance with the [19 Statewide Planning Goals](#). Not all goals apply to each community as there are goals which pertain only to the coast or the Willamette River Greenway. The rigorous process of making most land use or transportation decisions are fact based and the respective decision-making body must make "findings of fact" to support the decision.

Other Professional Organizations

Most of the professional organizations of local government officials have a statewide group in Oregon. You can ask your Senior Advisor or city staff for more information about those groups which include:

- Oregon Association of Municipal Recorders: www.oamr.org
- Oregon City Planning Directors Association: www.ocpda.org
- Oregon Government Finance Officers Association: www.ogfoa.org
- Oregon Economic Development Association: www.oeda.biz
- Oregon Association of Counties: www.oregoncounties.org

OCCMA MEMBERSHIP

OCCMA is the leading organization in supporting and encouraging careers in local government professional management in Oregon.

Benefits of OCCMA Membership

1. Support from Senior Advisors.
2. Active, affiliate, retired, honorary, lifetime, and student members have access to the association's listserv, which is an invaluable tool for discussion of current topics. Through email, members can access the expertise of professional peers by simply posting a question or commenting on a previous post.
3. Networking opportunities with your peers at various conferences offered throughout the year, including the annual summer conference held in July (members receive a discounted registration fee), the Northwest Regional Managers Conference held in the spring, and the fall training workshop during the League of Oregon Cities' Annual Conference in October.

How to Join

Dues vary depending on membership classifications and for those new members joining mid-year, the dues are cut in half after July 1st each year.

Visit www.occma.org/join-us to access membership dues forms, mid-year forms or to renew your membership online.



Managers participating in a Cornhole Tournament during the 2019 Northwest Regional Managers Conference.

OCCMA MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS

ACTIVE: Any person who is an appointed manager or administrator, or an assistant city or county manager or administrator, or an assistant to a manager or administrator of a general purpose local government or council of governments in the State of Oregon, or a corporate member of the International City/County Management Association who serves in Oregon, or while in transition from such a position and actively pursuing other eligible employment in Oregon, shall be eligible for active membership in the Association. Active members shall comply with the ICMA Code of Ethics and the Declaration of Ideals. Any active member of this Association, who has resigned or been removed from a position in local government, may retain active membership status for a period of two years, or for a longer period if authorized by a majority vote of the Board, provided the member continues to pay dues. If it is shown to the satisfaction of the Board that the member's resignation or removal was for a cause that violates the ethical standards of the International City/ County Management Association, the membership in the Association shall be terminated immediately. The Board may consider requests for refunding dues. The decision of the Board shall be final.

AFFILIATE: Any person who fills a position in a general-purpose local government or council of governments and has obtained a statement co-signed with their current chief executive officer indicating a continued interest in pursuing a career in city/county management or an appointed administrative official reporting to a mayor/city council. Affiliate members shall hold no office or vote.

COOPERATING: Individuals who work for an employer who does business with and has close ties to one or more units of local government. Cooperating members shall hold no office or vote or have access to the OCCMA listserv or members-only website.

STUDENT: Any person registered as a student in a college or university public administration program or is currently working in a career in public management.

RETIRED: Any person who was previously an active member and has qualified for benefits under a local government retirement plan shall be eligible for retired membership by providing written notice to the Secretary-Treasurer and payment of the membership fee, if any, for the current year. Retired members shall hold no office or vote.

An individual who was not previously a member of OCCMA but who now resides in Oregon and has had a career in local government management that would have made them eligible as an active member in OCCMA may become a retired member upon approval of the majority of the Board.

HONORARY: Honorary members shall be chosen based on their contributions to the Association and/or to the field of city or county management in Oregon. Honorary membership shall be conferred by a Board vote at any regular meeting. Honorary members shall pay no dues, hold no office, or vote. Honorary membership is bestowed for an indefinite period.

LIFETIME: Lifetime membership shall represent the highest honor afforded to retired members. Lifetime members shall be chosen because of distinguished service in the field of city or county management during his or her management career and lasting and meaningful contributions to the OCCMA and the profession of local government management. Lifetime members shall pay no dues, hold no office, or vote.

To be eligible for lifetime membership in the Association, the person must have been an active member of the Association for a minimum of five years and is currently retired from the profession or no longer employed in the profession. Following a written letter of nomination signed by at least three active members of OCCMA, the Board will consider conferring lifetime membership to the nominee at any regular business meeting. A lifetime member shall be elected only upon recommendation of the Board. In making this recommendation, the Board shall consider contributions to the profession at a level greater than the organizations served by the nominee; contributions at a national level; contributions to the profession as a whole, including teaching or publication; and any other relevant service. Once a recommendation has been approved by the Board, lifetime membership shall be conferred upon an individual after a majority vote of the membership present at a general membership meeting. Lifetime members shall comply with the ICMA Code of Ethics and the Declaration of Ideals.



OCCMA Board Presidents passing the lantern.

OCCMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The [OCCMA Board](#) consists of the president, president-elect, immediate past-president and eight directors who are active members of OCCMA. The board's role is to provide policy and operations guidance in carrying out the Association's purpose.

OCCMA COMMITTEES

OCCMA relies on a combination of standing and ad hoc committees made up of local government managers to accomplish its goals and strategic aims for the year. OCCMA usually solicits volunteers for committees in the fall and makes appointments in early November. Active OCCMA members may participate on the following committees.

Standing Committees

Nominating. Recommend candidates for the OCCMA Board of Directors for the following year at the Annual Membership Meeting. Consists of not less than three members. The Immediate Past-President, or other active members appointed by the President, shall chair the committee.

Ethics. Monitor OCCMA and ICMA member compliance with the ICMA Code of Ethics. The Committee also serves as the local fact-finding body inquiry. Work with other committees to help educate members about the ICMA Code of Ethics. The President shall chair the committee.

Support for Managers. To connect our members with the network of opportunities to gain knowledge, insight, experience, and perspective through developing other professionals in the field.

Bylaws & Policy. Review Bylaws and Constitution and recommend amendments as requested by the President and Board of Directors.

Audit. Meet with the Secretary-Treasurer to review all financial transactions and provide a report to the Board after the close of the fiscal year. Select and guide auditor for OCCMA financial review. Consists of the President-Elect, and two other directors appointed by the President.

Professional Development. Enhance and promote professional development and training opportunities to help advance the professional capabilities of OCCMA members. The President-Elect shall chair the committee.

Ad Hoc Committees

Communications. Maintain and enhance multimedia member communication and information exchange programs

ICMA Liaison. Identify and recommend actions in relation to the ICMA/OCCMA Affiliation Agreement and provide updates on international issues.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion. Advancing diversity, equity and inclusion of and for the Membership of OCCMA.

SENIOR ADVISOR PROGRAM

A significant benefit of OCCMA membership is access to the [Senior Advisor Program](#). This ICMA-OCCMA program makes available to members, the experience, advice, and support of respected, retired managers of the profession.

The ICMA Senior Advisor program is a joint activity of ICMA and OCCMA established by the ICMA Executive Board in 1974 to make the counsel, experience, and support of respected, retired managers of the profession available to members. Currently 8 Senior Advisors provide service by volunteering their time to offer confidential professional and personal support and advice in Oregon.

Senior Advisors are selected jointly by OCCMA and the ICMA Executive Director. Although they are expected to be visible, accessible, and responsive to members and association needs, Senior Advisors are unpaid volunteers who pursue other activities while in retirement and thus are not “full time.” Expenses are shared by ICMA and OCCMA.

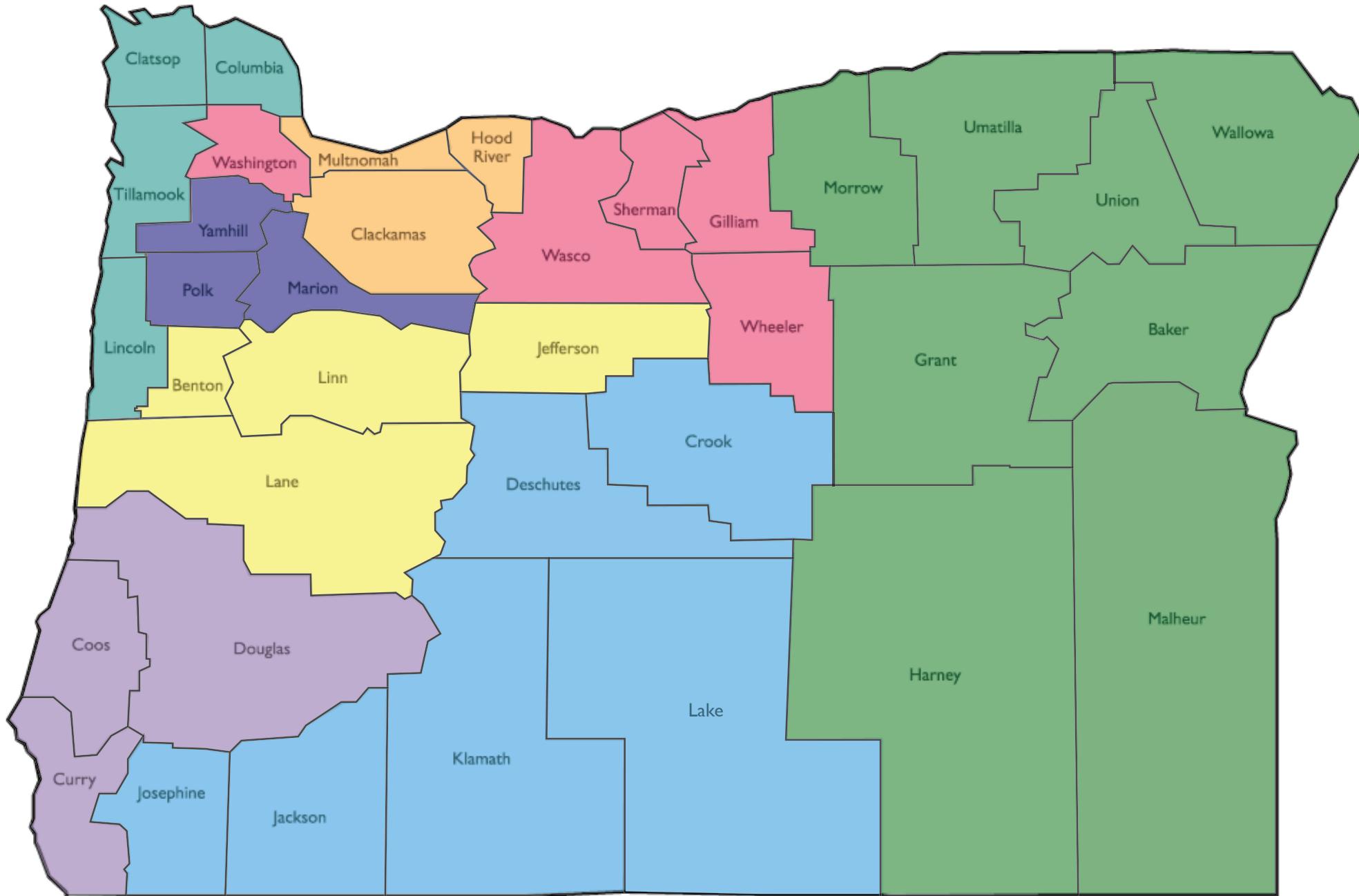
Senior Advisors are available to meet periodically with members in their areas to discuss the profession and their concerns as members. Discussion topics range from relations with elected officials, overall management questions, relations with OCCMA, ICMA, responses to local controversies such as referenda on the council-manager plan, to career development.

Senior Advisors are friends, colleagues, and advisors to the profession—not consultants. The Senior Advisor program is designed to help with personal and professional issues, not to provide technical assistance or solve substantive problems in a local government. However, Senior Advisors may consult with local governments as individuals, on a part-time basis, if the consulting does not impair the effectiveness of the Senior Advisors. Senior Advisor guidelines contain advice for Senior Advisors who do part-time consulting.

Senior Advisors may also help communities interested in creating a professional local government management position, including adoption of council-manager government.

Senior Advisor	Counties Served
Dan Bartlett	Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln, Tillamook
Sheila Ritz	Clackamas, Hood River, Multnomah
Larry Lehman	Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa
Wes Hare	Benton, Jefferson, Lane, Linn
Dave Kanner	Crook, Deschutes, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake
Gary Milliman	Coos, Curry, Douglas, City of Cave Junction
Dave Waffle	Gilliam, Sherman, Wasco, Washington, Wheeler
David Clyne	Marion, Polk, Yamhill

OCCMA SENIOR ADVISORS



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Oregon City/County Management Association Bylaws and Policy Annex

BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1

Name

The name of this Association shall be the Oregon City/County Management Association (referred to herein as OCCMA).

ARTICLE 2

Organization

Section 1. OCCMA is an unincorporated association of general-purpose local government or council of governments, managers and assistants in the State of Oregon.

Section 2. OCCMA shall be based at the League of Oregon Cities located at 1201 Court St. NE, Suite 200; Salem, OR 97301

ARTICLE 3

Purpose

The purpose of OCCMA shall be to:

- Support professional management in local government by increasing the knowledge and ability of administrators and managers;
- Promote the exchange of information between the members;
- Offer personal support to members; and
- Sustain the functions, principles and goals of the International City/County Management Association.

ARTICLE 4

Membership

Section 1. Membership in OCCMA shall be in one of seven categories defined below as Active, Affiliate, Cooperating, Student, Retired, Honorary, or Lifetime. A person shall become a member by submitting an application on a form approved by the Board certifying that they meet eligibility requirements for one of the membership categories for OCCMA, and also submit the payment of annual dues to the Secretary-Treasurer.

Section 2. **ACTIVE MEMBERS:** Any person who is an appointed manager or administrator, or an assistant city or county manager or administrator, or an assistant to a manager or administrator of a general purpose local government or council of governments in the State of Oregon, or a corporate member of the International City/County Management Association who serves in Oregon, or while in transition from such a position and actively pursuing other eligible employment in Oregon, shall be eligible for active membership in the Association. Active members shall comply with the ICMA Code of Ethics and the Declaration of Ideals. Any active member of this Association, who has resigned or been removed from a position in local government, may retain active membership status for a period of three years, or for a longer period if authorized by a majority vote of the Board. Annual membership dues will be waived for up to three years while the member remains in transition and actively pursuing other eligible employment in Oregon. If it is shown to the satisfaction of the Board that the member's resignation or removal was for a cause that violates the ethical standards of the International City/County Management Association, the membership in the Association may be terminated immediately by the Board. The Board may consider requests for refunding dues. The decision of the Board shall be final.

Section 3. **AFFILIATE MEMBERS:** Any person who fills a position in a general-purpose local government or council of governments and has obtained a statement co-signed with their current chief executive officer indicating a continued interest in pursuing a career in city/county management or an appointed administrative official reporting to a mayor/city council. Affiliate members shall hold no office or vote.

Section 4. **COOPERATING MEMBERS:** Individuals who work for an employer who does business with and has close ties to one or more units of local government. Cooperating members shall hold no office or vote, or have access to the OCCMA listserv or members-only website.

Section 5. **STUDENT MEMBERS:** Any person registered as a student in a college or university public administration program, or is currently working in a career in public management.

Section 6. **RETIRED MEMBERS:** Any person who was previously an active member and has qualified for benefits under a local government retirement plan shall be eligible for retired membership by providing written notice to the Secretary-Treasurer and payment of the membership fee, if any, for the current year. Retired members shall hold no office or vote.

An individual who was not previously a member of OCCMA but who now resides in Oregon and has had a career in local government management that would have made them eligible as an active member in OCCMA may become a retired member upon approval of the majority of the Board.

Section 7. HONORARY MEMBERS: Honorary members shall be chosen based on their contributions to the Association and/or to the field of city or county management in Oregon. Honorary membership shall be conferred by a Board vote at any regular meeting. Honorary members shall pay no dues, hold no office, or vote. Honorary membership is bestowed for an indefinite period.

Section 8. LIFETIME MEMBERS: Lifetime membership shall represent the highest honor afforded to retired members. Lifetime members shall be chosen because of distinguished service in the field of city or county management during his or her management career and lasting and meaningful contributions to the OCCMA and the profession of local government management. Lifetime members shall pay no dues, hold no office, or vote.

To be eligible for lifetime membership in the Association, the person must have been an active member of the Association for a minimum of five years and is currently retired from the profession or no longer employed in the profession. Following a written letter of nomination signed by at least three active members of OCCMA, the Board will consider conferring lifetime membership to the nominee at any regular business meeting. A lifetime member shall be elected only upon recommendation of the Board. In making this recommendation, the Board shall consider contributions to the profession at a level greater than the organizations served by the nominee; contributions at a national level; contributions to the profession as a whole, including teaching or publication; and any other relevant service. Once a recommendation has been approved by the Board, lifetime membership shall be conferred upon an individual after a majority vote of the membership present at a general membership meeting. Lifetime members shall comply with the ICMA Code of Ethics and the Declaration of Ideals.

Section 9. REFUSAL OF MEMBERSHIP: The Board reserves the right to examine the qualifications, evaluate the prospective member, and deny membership in the Association to anyone.

ARTICLE 5

Membership Meetings

Section 1. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS: The Association shall hold at least one general meeting each year at the same time and place as the annual meeting of the League of Oregon Cities. Additional meetings may be called by the President or a majority of the Board.

Section 2. NOTICE: Membership meetings shall be noticed in the OCCMA Newsletter, and/or the OCCMA website, and/or the OCCMA list-serve at least 30 days before the scheduled meeting.

Section 3. QUORUM: Those active members present at any meeting of the Association shall constitute a quorum. A majority vote of those active members present and voting shall be necessary for approval of any question before the Association. Voting by proxy is not permitted.

ARTICLE 6

Offices and Terms of Office

Section 1. GENERAL POWERS: The business and affairs of the Association shall be managed by its Board of Directors (referred to herein as the "Board").

Section 2. STRUCTURE: The Board shall be the Officers and eight Directors.

The terms of all Officers and Directors shall start as of January 1 following their election and end on December 31 of the year the term ends.

Section 3. OFFICERS: The officers of this Association shall be President, President Elect, and Immediate Past President who shall each have a term of one year. In addition, the Secretary-Treasurer (non-voting) shall be the League of Oregon Cities Executive Director, or designee.

Section 4. DIRECTORS: Eight directors shall be elected for a term of three years. The terms shall be staggered with three (3) members elected in the first year following adoption, two (2) members being elected in the second year, and three (3) members being elected in the third year, with the same rotation continuing in the future.

Section 5. OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES: The officers of the association shall be as follows:

- The President shall be the chief executive officer of the association, shall serve as chair person at all meetings of the Board of Directors, and shall be authorized to call special meetings of the Board whenever he or she shall deem it proper to do so. The President may sign and execute all authorized contracts, and other instruments or obligations in the name of the association. The President shall do and perform such other duties as described in the bylaws, policies, and as may be assigned to him or her by the Board.
- The President Elect shall perform such duties that from time to time may be authorized by the Board of Directors. The President Elect shall have the powers and perform all the duties of the President in case of the absence of the President, and shall assume the Presidency in case the office of President is vacant.
- Immediate Past-President shall serve as a member of the Board. Immediate Past-Presidents shall perform any duties that are described in the bylaws, policies, or as requested by the Board.

- The Secretary-Treasurer shall transact the necessary financial business of the Association, keeping a complete record of all transactions, which shall be submitted for auditing at the annual meeting of the Association. If the Board desires, the Secretary-Treasurer shall be bonded in such form and amount as may be determined by the Board. The Secretary-Treasurer shall keep written minutes of the Board and Membership meetings.

Section 6. PROMULGATION OF POLICIES: The Board is empowered to enact policies from time to time to govern the operations of the Association. Policies are enacted by a vote of two thirds of the members of the Board present at a regular meeting after they have been introduced at a previous Board meeting, and after at least thirty (30) days' notice has been provided in the OCCMA newsletter; and/or the OCCMA website; and/or on the OCCMA list serve. Policies will remain in effect until they are rescinded by future action of the Board or by the membership. Policies shall be compiled and provided as an annex to the Bylaws. Any modification of rules during the year will be presented to the General Membership at the Annual Meeting. Policy changes can be repealed by the membership if a motion is made and supported at the membership meeting to repeal a policy made by the Board if a majority of the membership at the annual meeting votes to repeal that policy.

Section 7. RESIGNATION: Any Board member may resign at any given time by giving written notice to the Board. The resignation of any Board member shall take effect upon receipt of notice thereof, or at such later time as shall be specified in such notice; and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. The vacancy shall be filled in accordance with Article 7, Section 6.

Section 8. COMPENSATION: The Board shall serve without compensation except that reasonable reimbursement relating to operation of the Association may be provided per the Association's policies.

Section 9. TERM LIMITS: A member shall be eligible to serve two (2) consecutive terms as Director. In the event a Director is appointed to fill a partial term, that Director is eligible for election to a full term on the Board of Directors. Members are eligible to serve additional non-consecutive terms. A member who is elected to serve as President Elect, and who then assumes the offices of President and Past President is not eligible to serve consecutive terms as President Elect, President, and Past President.

ARTICLE 7

Nomination, Election of Officers and Directors, and Removal from Office

Section 1. ELECTION OF OFFICERS & DIRECTORS: At each annual meeting, the Association shall elect the President Elect and members of the Board in accordance with adopted election policies. The President's position shall be filled by the previous President Elect, and the Immediate Past President shall be filled by the previous President. The Secretary-Treasurer shall be filled by the

Executive Director of the League of Oregon Cities, or designee. Together these officers and directors shall constitute the Board of Directors of the OCCMA.

Section 2. **NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** Nominations to the Board of Directors for the President Elect and Directors shall be made by the Nominating Committee made up of not less than three (3) members. The Immediate Past President, or other active member appointed by the President, shall Chair the Nominating Committee. The other members shall be appointed by the President. The nominations committee shall strive to nominate candidates, at the time of election, which includes a minimum of one county member, one assistant manager or one assistant to a manager, and one member from a community of 5,000 or less population. In addition at least one Board member should represent, at the time of election, each of the following generally described state regions: Metropolitan Portland; the Willamette Valley; Coast; Eastern; and Southern.

Section 3. **NOTICE OF ELECTIONS:** Notice to fill regularly scheduled vacancies for the position of President Elect and Directors shall be made in the OCCMA Newsletter; and/or on the OCCMA website; and/or, on the OCCMA Listserv in accordance with any adopted policies.

Section 4. **ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE:** Any active member, as defined in Article 4, Section 2, having at least one-year's membership in the Oregon City/County Management Association, may make application to the Secretary-Treasurer for a vacant position by the deadline stated in the Notice of Vacancy. In addition, active members applying to serve as President Elect of the Association shall have a minimum of one-year of service on the OCCMA Board. All applications for vacant positions will be reviewed by the Secretary-Treasurer for completeness and eligibility to serve.

Section 5. **ELECTION:** The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of qualified, acceptable candidates to the Board for approval in accordance with any adopted policies. Once approved by the Board, the slate will be presented to the membership by the Board for a vote. The Board may leave slot(s) open for nominations from the floor. Nominations from the floor of qualified members for election will be considered, in addition to the proposed slate of candidates.

Section 6. **VACANCIES:** Appointments to fill Board vacancies may occur from time to time due to a seated Director, or President Elect not being able to fill out the full length of their term. The appointment to fill vacancies shall be made by the Board after having first published notice of said vacancies in the OCCMA Newsletter; and/or on the OCCMA website; and/or on the OCCMA Listserv at least 30 days prior to appointment. Any member meeting eligibility requirements of Article 7, Section 4 may make application to the Secretary-Treasurer for a vacant position by the deadline stated in the Notice of Vacancy. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the President Elect will fill the remaining term of President, and will continue to serve as President during their full term as well. If a vacancy occurs in the term of the Immediate Past President, the most recent Past President who is available and willing to serve shall resume service on the Board of Directors. All applications for vacant positions will be reviewed for completeness and eligibility to serve by the Secretary-Treasurer. The Board of Directors shall fill the resulting vacancy on the Board by majority vote of those Board members in attendance at the meeting.

Section 7. REMOVAL FROM OFFICE: Officers or Directors of the Board may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board at a regular or special meeting for one or more of the following reasons:

- Neglect of the duties of office;
- Any violation of the ICMA Code of Ethics, Oath of Office, or Bylaws;
- Misrepresentation to outside parties of the Association and its officers;
- Unauthorized expenditure, or misuse of Association funds;
- Two consecutive unexcused absences from Board meetings.

Formal complaints to request an Officer or Director be removed from office will be submitted to the President or President Elect. The President or President Elect will notify the Board that a complaint has been made, and shall forward background information provided in the complaint. The President or President Elect will advise the Board in writing of the formal complaint and schedule a meeting to hear the complaint. The President or President Elect shall notify the Officer or Director whose conduct is at issue and name the allegations and provide the Officer or Director the opportunity to provide the Board additional information relating to the allegations. Such notice shall occur at least four (4) weeks prior to the meeting at which the allegations will be discussed. The Officer or Director may provide the board information orally, in writing at least four (4) days prior to the meeting, or both. After considering all the information received, the Board may by majority vote do the following:

- Find that no violation occurred;
- Suspend the membership, and Board participation for a specified period;
- Remove the Officer or Director from office, effective immediately.

Should an Officer or Director of the Board be removed from office, that vacancy shall be filled according to Article 7, Section 6 – Vacancies.

ARTICLE 8

Board Meetings

Section 1. REGULAR MEETINGS: The Board shall approve an annual meeting schedule including the time and place, either within or out of the State of Oregon, for the holding of regular meetings without other notice. This schedule shall be posted in the OCCMA newsletter; and/or the OCCMA website; and/or the OCCMA list serve.

Section 2. SPECIAL MEETINGS: Special meetings of the Board may be called by or at the request of the President, or any two Directors at any place within the State of Oregon.

Section 3. MEETINGS CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY: The Board may meet electronically in accordance with any adopted policies. Notice and quorum requirements are required to be met with all meetings.

Section 4. NOTICE: Written notice of any special meeting, or rescheduled regular meeting of the Board shall be given by mail, telephone, telecopy, or e-mail to each Board member at least three days prior to the meeting. The regular meeting schedule and any special meeting notices shall be posted in the OCCMA newsletter; and/or the OCCMA website; and/or the OCCMA list serve shall be posted at least three (3) days in advance of the meeting.

Section 5. QUORUM: A quorum of six voting Board members shall be required for the Board to conduct business.

Section 6. ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION: A Board member shall be deemed to be present in person at the meeting of the Board if such Board member participates in the meeting by a conference telephone or by other similar communications equipment through which all persons participating in the meeting may communicate with each other and all participants are advised of the communications equipment and the names of the participants in the conference are divulged to all participants.

Section 7. MANNER OF ACTING: Except as otherwise required by law or by these Bylaws, the act of the majority of the Board at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board. The President shall rule on all matters of procedure in the conduct of the meeting. Voting by proxy is not permitted.

ARTICLE 9

Membership Committees

Section 1. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: The President shall make appointments to the following standing committees: Nominating; Ethics; Support for Managers; Bylaws and Policy, Audit Committee and Professional Development. All members of the Association are eligible to serve on committees. Each committee shall be chaired by an Association member appointed by the President.

Section 2. AD HOC COMMITTEES: The President shall create, with the approval of the Board, such ad hoc committees as the majority of the Board may deem advisable. The President shall make the ad hoc committee appointments. The ad hoc committees shall provide an annual report at the annual meeting, or as otherwise directed at the request of the Board. The ad hoc committee shall be disbanded once the committee has completed its work.

Section 3. LIAISONS TO COMMITTEES: The President shall assign Board members as liaisons to the standing committees to monitor committee activities and provide reports to the Board and at the annual meeting.

ARTICLE 10
Fiscal Affairs

Section 1. FISCAL YEAR: The fiscal year for the Association shall be from January 1 to December 31. Dues and subscriptions as determined by the Board shall be payable annually in advance, on or before January 1 of each year.

Section 2. ANNUAL BUDGET AND FINANCIAL REPORTS: The Board shall adopt a budget annually at the first meeting of the Board of Directors in accordance with any adopted policies. The Secretary-Treasurer shall present a financial report to the members of the Association at the annual meeting of the Association. The Secretary-Treasurer shall compile an annual financial report after the close of the fiscal year for presentation to the Audit Committee.

Section 3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: The Board shall enter into a contract for services to provide for administrative and financial support services with the League of Oregon Cities, or other qualified provider, to assist with the administration of conferences, maintain Association finances, and for contractual authority to support various endeavors of the Association as directed by the Board. Any contract for services shall be included in the Policy Annex.

Section 4. AUDIT COMMITTEE: An Audit Committee shall consist of the President Elect, and two other Directors appointed by the President. The committee shall meet with the Secretary-Treasurer to review all financial transactions, and provide a report to the Board after the close of the fiscal year. The report will be reviewed and accepted by the Board. The Audit Committee can recommend to the Board that an independent review, or audit of the Association finances, be conducted by a qualified firm.

Section 5. DUES: Active and affiliate members shall pay dues as provided by the Board. Honorary members and Lifetime members shall be exempt from dues. Any active member whose dues are in arrears for a period of six months shall be suspended from membership and notified in writing of the suspension.

ARTICLE 11
Code of Ethics

Section 1. ICMA CODE OF ETHICS: The association has adopted the ICMA Code of Ethics as a requirement to maintain Active Member status in the Oregon City/County Management Association. All active members are required to govern their conduct in accordance with the ICMA Code and its associated guidelines. Active members are further required to submit to a peer-to-peer review of any allegations of unethical behavior.

Section 2. DISCIPLINARY ACTION: The Board shall have the authority to take disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the Association, against any member which, in its judgement, may be appropriate in order to maintain the professional standards of the

Association. Disciplinary action may include public censure wherein notice is given to other members of OCCMA, the governing bodies of appropriate cities and counties, and/or news media outlets that a violation of the code has taken place and that OCCMA strongly disapproves of such conduct.

ARTICLE 12

Nondiscrimination

All members, officers and persons served by the association shall be selected entirely on their qualifications and on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected status.

ARTICLE 13

Indemnification

The Board shall obtain insurance on behalf of any agent of the Association (including a director, officer, employee, or other agent of the Association) against liabilities asserted against, or incurred by the agent in such capacity. A summary of the current liability coverage shall be included in the Policy Annex. The Secretary-Treasurer shall maintain a complete copy of the insurance policy.

ARTICLE 14

Amendments

The Bylaws may be amended or repealed by two-thirds vote of the active members of the Association present at the annual meeting, provided proper notice of the membership meeting has been provided in accordance with Article 5, Section 2. Amendments may be initiated by the Board, or five active members of this Association may, by a petition to the Secretary-Treasurer, initiate a desired change. The Board may also utilize a letter ballot for purposes of amending the Bylaws. Voted letter ballots will be canvassed by two members of the Board appointed by the President on, or after, the sixtieth day after the ballots have been mailed to the membership by the Secretary-Treasurer. The Bylaws will be amended by a majority of active members voting thereon.

History of amendments to the OCCMA Governing Documents

Constitution and Bylaws originally adopted November 16, 1958. Includes amendments approved March 13, 1965, November 17, 1970, November 14, 1971, November 16, 1975, November 12, 1978, November 12, 1983, November 8, 1986, November 10, 1991, November 15, 1992, November 6, 1998, November 9, 2001, November 15, 2003, November 10, 2005, October 2, 2008, October 1, 2009, September 29, 2011, September 27, 2012, September 24, 2015 and September 29, 2016. On September 28, 2017 the Constitution and Bylaws were repealed and replaced with Bylaws and a Policy Annex. Includes amendments approved on September 27, 2018 and October 21, 2021.

OREGON CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION POLICY ANNEX

ARTICLE 1

Purpose

Section 1. Article 6, Section 6 of the Oregon City/County Management Association Bylaws provides that the Board may enact, amend or repeal policies to govern the operations of the Association. Policies are enacted by a vote of two thirds of the members of the Board present at a regular meeting after they have been introduced at a previous Board meeting, and after at least thirty (30) days' notice has been provided in the OCCMA newsletter; and/or the OCCMA website; and/or on the OCCMA list serve. Policies take immediate effect upon the Board adoption. The Bylaws and Policies Committee will give a report at the annual membership meeting which will include any policies approved, amended or repealed since the last annual meeting. A majority of the membership may reverse or repeal any action taken by the Board of Directors following the report of policy changes at the annual meeting.

Section 2. The policy annex shall include a date indicating when policies are adopted and revised.

Adopted 9-28-2017; Amended 9-27-2018

ARTICLE 2

Meetings / Conferences

Section 1. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: Article 5 of the Bylaws provide that an annual Membership meeting be held at the same time and place as the League of Oregon Cities annual meeting. The OCCMA President is the Chair of the annual Membership meeting. At the annual Membership meeting of the Association, an agenda shall be available that includes the following:

- Call to Order;
- Roll call;
- Minutes;
- Correspondence;
- Financial Report;
- President's Report;
- Announcement of the Board meeting schedule;
- Bylaws or Policy Amendments;
- Committee Reports;
- Election of officers;
- Other business;
- Adjournment.

Section 2. PARLIAMENTARIAN. The President shall appoint a parliamentarian for the annual Membership meeting. The parliamentarian shall advise the President on any questions of order. The President shall decide all points of order, including interpretations of the By-Laws and the Policy Annex, which decisions shall be final and not subject to appeal.

Section 3. CONFERENCE AND BOARD MEETING DATES: The Board and the Board elect shall meet annually in November to establish the Association’s goals and Board meeting dates for the upcoming fiscal year. The Spring Conference, if hosted by the Oregon City/County Management Association, shall be set by the Board of Directors, and shall be held during the spring. The Summer Conference, if held, shall be on a Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in July, and shall be in various locations as determined by the Board. The annual Membership meeting shall be held in conjunction with the League of Oregon Cities Conference. The Board may approve changes in this schedule and report any changes to the membership.

Section 4. BOARD OF DIRECTOR’S MEETINGS CONDUCTED VIA EMAIL:

- A. Any board member may make a motion via email.
 - 1. The subject line should include the word “Motion.”
 - 2. The first line of the body of the email should include the words “I move that the board approve/authorize/recommend ...”
 - 3. The motion shall be forwarded to the Secretary-Treasurer for distribution to the Board members, and to provide notice to the membership of the meeting being conducted via e-mail.
- B. All board members, including the President, may vote. Board members should include the words “I vote No” or “I vote Yes” in the first line of their response. A member may vote “No” and indicate that deliberation is suggested on that motion.
- C. A majority of Board member votes are required to decide an email motion. The member who proposed the motion is automatically counted as an affirmative vote.
- D. Email motions can only be voted up or down and cannot be amended.
- E. The motion will expire in seven calendar days or at the start of the next board or membership meeting – whichever comes first. If the motion doesn’t receive the required majority vote by the deadline it fails.
- F. The member who proposed the motion may withdraw it at any time prior to approval.
- G. The s Secretary-Treasurer is responsible for tallying the votes and informing the board of the outcome. If a member fails to cc: other board members on his vote, the Secretary-Treasurer should forward the email to the others.

Adopted 9-28-2017; Amended 9-27-2018.

ARTICLE 3
Elections

Section 1. ELECTION OF DIRECTORS AND PRESIDENT ELECT: Article 7 of the Bylaws provides for a nominating committee to be appointed by the President to present a slate of candidates including Directors and a President Elect for the Association. Once approved by the Board, a final slate of candidates will be presented to the membership for a vote. Nomination of qualified members can also be made from the floor to fill the position of Director or President Elect. For qualifications, see Article 7.4 of the Bylaws.

Section 2. ELECTION PROCESS: The election process will be as follows:

- A. At the first meeting of the Board in the new calendar year, the President appoints no less than three individuals to serve on the Nominating Committee, with the Immediate Past President to serve as Chair.
- B. On, or before July 1, the Secretary-Treasurer will publish a notice indicating which positions must be filled in the upcoming election and invite members who are interested to apply for open positions. Notice to fill regularly scheduled vacancies for the position of President Elect and Directors shall be made in the OCCMA Newsletter; and/or on the OCCMA website; and/or, on the OCCMA Listserv in accordance with any adopted policies
- C. July 30 is the deadline for applications.
- D. The Secretary-Treasurer will review the applicants to determine whether the member is in good standing, and has the required years of service in OCCMA, and meets any term limitations. The Secretary-Treasurer will provide all applications, and a report on any ineligible candidates to the Chair of the Nominating Committee.
- E. At least forty-five days before the annual meeting, the Nominating Committee will provide a report to the Board, including the names of all applicants and the recommended nominees for election.
- F. At least thirty days prior to the annual meeting, the President will call a special meeting (via email or telephone) to vote to forward a list of nominees for election to the membership
- G. Notice of the nominees will be provided in the agenda packet distributed approximately ten days prior to the annual meeting via the OCCMA website and/or OCMMA list serve.
- H. In the event that the Board does not forward a candidate for all open positions, a call for nominations from the floor will be made by the President at the annual meeting.
- I. At the annual meeting, the President will present the list of nominees approved by the Board to the membership.
- J. The President will call for any other nominations of qualified candidates from the floor for election to vacant positions. If there are no nominations of other candidates from the floor, the President will call for a motion and support to elect the candidates as a slate as presented by the Board of Directors, and a voice vote on the motion will be made.
- K. If other qualified candidates are nominated from the floor, and there are more candidates than open positions, the President will conduct voting through a paper ballot with the Secretary-Treasurer and Immediate Past President charged with counting the election ballots. The candidates with the highest vote totals will be elected.

Adopted 9-28-2017; Amended 7-13-2018.

ARTICLE 4
Annual Budget

Section 1. BUDGET PREPARATION: In accordance with Article 10.2 of the Bylaws, the Board shall adopt an annual budget at the first meeting of the newly seated Board. The draft budget shall be developed by the Secretary-Treasurer in consultation with the President Elect.

Section 2. BUDGET CALENDAR:

- A. The Secretary-Treasurer shall prepare a draft budget in consultation with the President Elect for presentation at the annual Board retreat in November.
- B. At the annual Board retreat, the current Board and Board-Elect will review the draft budget and provide comments to the Secretary-Treasurer and President Elect on any suggested modifications to the draft budget.
- C. At the first meeting of the Board in the new calendar year, the Board will review, modify, and formally adopt the budget.

Adopted 9-28-2017; Amended 9-27-18

ARTICLE 5
Reimbursement and Financial Policies

Section 1. TRAVEL EXPENSES:

- A. When used in this policy, the term “travel expenses” means and is limited to:
 - 1. The costs of a rental car, or mileage for private automobile travel at current IRS-approved rates, whichever would be less;
 - 2. Coach/economy class airfare, airport parking, and ground transportation to and from the departure and destination airport, when traveling out of state and travel by air is least cost to the Association;
 - 3. Hotel or motel accommodations at an amount that does not exceed the federally established Government Service Administration lodging per-diem rates (excluding local taxes) for the locality where the event or meeting is held;
 - 4. Actual expenses for meals including gratuities in an amount not to exceed the federally established per-diem rate for the locality in which the meal was consumed;
 - 5. Registration fees for ICMA Annual Conference, Northwest Regional Conference (when held outside of Oregon), and the ICMA West Coast Regional Conference; and
 - 6. Incidental expenses, to include but not limited to, long distance telephone charges, copy charges, transportation and luggage handling tips, dry cleaning, at an amount not to exceed \$5/day.
- B. President Travel Expenses: Within 30 days of travel, the President may request reimbursement for travel expenses to attend the ICMA Conference, Northwest Regional Conference (when held outside of Oregon), ICMA West Coast Regional Conference, ICMA committee meetings, and Field Visits (when the field visit was approved by the Board). No reimbursement shall be provided for attendance at the annual League of Oregon Cities conference. The President may designate a

board member to attend meetings on the President's behalf and receive reimbursement pursuant to this policy.

- C. Board Member Travel Expenses: For all membership events, including the annual Board retreat/business meeting, all expenses shall be paid by individual Board members. Provided however that any meals provided as part of the meeting, facility/meeting room and audio-visual equipment costs shall be paid by the Association.
- D. ICMA Committee Member Travel Expenses: Active Association members (including Board members) may request, by petition to the Board, up to one-half of their travel expenses for out-of-State participation on national committees including but not limited to Conference Planning Committee, Strategic Planning Committee and Small Community Task Force.
- E. Travel Expenses for Members in Transition: Board Members or Active Association members appointed to an ICMA Committee who are in transition may make requests to the Board for reimbursement of travel expenses incurred to attend Association business meetings.
- F. Procedure for Expense Reimbursement: The OCCMA Secretary-Treasurer (or designee) will develop an expense report form that is consistent with this policy for persons to use when submitting a reimbursement request. A person who is eligible for reimbursement under this policy shall send the request for reimbursement along with the expense report, which must include receipts substantiating the expense, to the OCCMA Secretary-Treasurer (or designee) within thirty days of the last day of travel in which the expense was incurred. All reimbursements are subject to sufficient funds being allocated in the Association budget to pay for the expenses. Any disputed reimbursements shall be reviewed and settled by the Board.

Section 2. DUES: The OCCMA membership year runs January 1 through December 31. A new member's initial dues may be prorated by 50% if the member joins after June 30. On a regular basis, the OCCMA Secretary-Treasurer (or designee) will verify that all applicants for membership have paid dues within thirty-days of application.

Section 3. FINANCIAL CONTROLS: All check payments shall require two signatures: that of the OCCMA Secretary-Treasurer (or designee), and the President (or the President's designee).

Section 4. AUDIT: The Association shall budget for and hire an independent auditor to review the Association's financials on a periodic basis not to exceed five years.

Policies on League Reimbursement, Expense Reimbursement, and Proration of Dues adopted 9-28-2017; combined and amended 9-27-2018.

ARTICLE 6

Member Directory and Member Communications

The Association will maintain a directory of members on the website that includes all active members of the Association. The Association newsletter and recruitment information to the Association shall be provided just prior to the start of the fiscal year to all public officials of an eligible organization who serve in a chief executive capacity. All managers new to the state shall receive a letter from the President welcoming them and providing membership information.

Adopted 9-28-2017; Amended 9-27-2018.

ARTICLE 7
Coaching Program

Section 1. PURPOSE: The purpose of the Coaching Program shall be to create an opportunity to bring together a new member or member new to Oregon, with an experienced member. The experienced member, or Coach, provides assistance, advice, counsel and support to the new member. OCCMA has an affiliation with International City Managers Association (ICMA) who will assist the member to obtain a coach. Every effort will be made to obtain a coach who is also an Oregon manager.

Section 2. ASSIGNMENT OF COACHES:

1. Register on "CoachConnect" at <https://icma.org/icma-coaching-program>. You do not need to be a member of either ICMA or OCCMA to participate.
2. You will be invited to choose a prospective coach. Once completed, the system will connect coaches and prospects by email.

Section 3. OCCMA's Role. OCCMA will support the ICMA coaching program for its members by identifying adequate numbers of coaches who are familiar with being a manager in Oregon. Coaches will be appointed by the President, prior to and announced at the annual meeting. A minimum of 3 coaches will be appointed with an emphasis on diversity.

The association will also support the program by promoting the program to its membership. A web page will be created which points members to the ICMA coaching program and the association will write an article about the program in its magazine at least annually.

Adopted 9-28-2017; Amended 10-13-2020

ARTICLE 8
Senior Advisor Program

Section 1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Oregon Senior Advisor Program is to provide the counsel, experience and support of respected, retired managers of the profession to city, county and COG chief administrators and to their chief assistants. The program is intended to primarily help with personal and professional issues of managers and not to provide any extensive form of technical assistance nor to solve substantive problems in a local government.

Section 2. APPOINTMENT OF SENIOR ADVISOR:

- A. Qualifications
 1. A resident of Oregon at the time of appointment.
 2. At least ten years' experience as an appointed chief administrative officer (CAO) and/or an assistant/deputy CAO in local government.
 3. Recognition as a respected manager in Oregon and/or another state.

4. A willingness to participate in the program for at least nine months each year throughout the duration of the appointment.
5. A current member of OCCMA and ICMA at time of appointment and to maintain such memberships during service as Senior Advisor.
6. A commitment to follow the outline of responsibilities for Senior Advisors and the ICMA Senior Advisor Program Guidelines and Manual.
7. Have an active phone number and email address.
8. Substantially retired and/or not engaged in a business that could create a conflict of interest.

B. Appointment Process

1. When there is a vacant Senior Advisor position created by a decision of the OCCMA Board declaring a vacancy as a result of the resignation or removal of an incumbent or a decision to increase the total number of Senior Advisor positions, notice of that vacancy will be given in the OCCMA Newsletter or by email to all members.
2. Members shall have 30 days from the date of the notice to apply for the position or recommend a candidate to the OCCMA President. Potential candidates shall submit a letter of interest and a resume to the President. The final selection process shall be determined by the Board.
3. Initial appointments shall be made jointly by the President of OCCMA, with Board concurrence, and the Executive Director of the ICMA.
4. Reappointments do not require declaration of a vacancy and may be made by the President. Senior Advisors must continue to meet the program's qualifications in order to be considered for reappointment.

C. Terms of Appointment

1. The term of an initial appointment shall be one year.
2. After the first term, the Board will conduct a review to assess whether expectations are being met. Senior Advisors must continue to meet the program's qualifications in order to be considered for reappointment. Reappointment can be made for up to two years with a review conducted at least every two years.
3. 30 days before a review the membership shall be notified and may provide comments to the President.
4. ICMA, OCCMA Board or the Senior Advisor may terminate an appointment with written notification.

Section 3. SENIOR ADVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Make contact by phone, email or in person with each OCCMA or ICMA member and other local government chief administrators in the Senior Advisor's assigned region within one year of appointment as a Senior Advisor. Also, make contact within one month of receipt of notice of appointment of a new manager, assistant, chief administrator or COG director.
- B. Meet with members in the assigned region as frequently as possible. Meetings may take place at the manager's office, at OCCMA events, at regional managers' meetings, or any other venue that affords the Senior Advisor an opportunity to develop meaningful rapport with the individual manager.

- C. Contact members who are in transition within five days of learning of this development and as frequently thereafter as the situation indicates to assure the awareness of continued OCCMA support.
- D. Provide confidential counseling/support to all ICMA and OCCMA members on personal and professional issues when invited to do so by the member, within a 48-hour response time, if at all possible.
- E. Offer support in a private manner directly to members who may be experiencing problems with their elected officials, staff or community groups.
- F. Attend at least one meeting or social event annually of the managers' group within the Senior Advisor's assigned area, if possible.
- G. Attend meetings of the Board, OCCMA business meetings and other OCCMA sponsored events, as time permits.
- H. Refrain from direct or indirect public criticism of any member and uphold the standards of the profession as embodied in the ICMA Code of Ethics.
- I. Provide, at least quarterly, a statement of expenses to the Secretary-Treasurer (or designee) accompanied by a chronological report of activities to the President and ICMA Senior Advisor Coordinator.
- J. Contribute information for use in the OCCMA Newsletter.
- K. Encourage participation by members in OCCMA, ICMA, LOC and AOC activities.
- L. Provide support for the Council-Manager Plan when requested.
- M. Assist in recruitment of ICMA and OCCMA members and other joint activities and programs with ICMA when requested.
- N. Keep informed about current municipal affairs by reading *PM*, the LOC and ICMA newsletters and other publications.

Section 4. ANNUAL BUDGET:

Each year the Board shall consult with the Senior Advisors at the November Board meeting to determine eligible expenses and approve an annual budget for the Senior Advisor Program. ICMA will provide 50% reimbursement to the Association for eligible and budgeted Senior Advisor expenses. Any changes to the budget shall be communicated to ICMA for approval by ICMA in accordance with the ICMA/OCCMA Sponsor Agreement.

Section 5. SENIOR ADVISOR EXPENSES:

- A. Senior Advisors shall be reimbursed for certain expenses in fulfilling the responsibilities outlined in this policy as follows:

1. Meeting with members within their assigned region.
 2. Attending membership meetings within their assigned region.
 3. Attending meetings of the association board or general membership and association sponsored events and conferences.
 4. Attending the Northwest Regional Managers Association Conference.
 5. Attending the ICMA Annual Conference when that conference is in the ICMA West Coast Region.
 6. Other activities as specifically requested by the Senior Advisor and approved by the Board.
- B. The following expenses are eligible for reimbursement:
1. Mileage for private automobile travel at current IRS-approved rates for in state travel for business expenses.
 2. Hotel or motel accommodations at a conference hotel for a basic room, or at an amount that does not exceed the federally established Government Service Administration lodging per-diem rates (excluding local taxes) for the locality where the event or meeting is held.
 3. Actual expenses for meals in an amount not to exceed the federally established per-diem rate for the locality in which the meal was consumed at moderate prices and at meeting events.
 4. Registration fees unless waived by the hosting organization.
 5. Long distance telephone charges, postage, miscellaneous supplies and copying costs and similar expenses incidental to performing Senior Advisor duties.
 6. Coach/economy class airfare, airport parking, and ground transportation to and from the departure and destination airport, when traveling out-of-state and travel by air is least cost to the Association.
 7. Reimbursement shall not be provided for out-of-state travel (except for the Northwest Regional Managers Meeting, and the ICMA Annual Conference), unless authorized by the Board.
 8. Reimbursement for attendance at the ICMA Annual Conference is subject to having adequate funding appropriated by the Board in the Senior Advisors' budget for the purpose.
- C. In accordance with the ICMA Senior Advisors Program Manual, complimentary registrations shall be provided to Senior Advisors as follows:
1. The Association shall provide complementary registrations for the attending Association sponsored events.
 2. ICMA shall provide complementary registration for attending the ICMA Annual Conference.
- D. Procedure for Expense Reimbursement:
1. Once a quarter Senior Advisors shall send the request for expense reimbursement along with a report of activity required in Section 3 to the OCCMA Secretary-Treasurer (or designee) for the preceding quarter.
 2. The OCCMA Secretary-Treasurer (or designee) shall authorize payment for expenses incurred by the Senior Advisor(s) in conformance with this policy and shall submit, at least quarterly, a request to ICMA for 50% reimbursement.

Section 6. OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES:

- A. Senior Advisors may engage in part-time consulting or comparable professional activities as private entities and/or sole proprietors. They may also engage in teaching, consulting, or interim services with state agencies, quasi-public entities, local governments or regional agencies. Such

part-time activities shall be in accordance with ICMA Senior Advisor Guidelines. Senior Advisors shall advise the President before accepting any consulting agreement with a local government. In no instance shall a Senior Advisor accept a consulting assignment with a community without the expressed consent of the senior ICMA or OCCMA member at the same entity.

- B. Senior Advisors may engage in interim manager positions and shall notify the President before the acceptance of any such position. Such an assignment should not detract from the Senior Advisor's attention to his/her Senior Advisor responsibilities.
- C. Retired administrators who commercially advertise as consultants are not eligible for Senior Advisor appointment. Senior Advisors may be employed by a consulting firm on a part-time basis or as an independent contractor if the focus of the work is on providing technical expertise on individual projects and there is no responsibility for soliciting business or for client development/maintenance for purposes of future business.

Section 7. ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN RECRUITMENT OF A MANAGER/ADMINISTRATOR:

- A. Senior Advisor involvement in placement work for a local jurisdiction should be the exception rather than the rule as the main focus of the Senior Advisor Program is member support and advocacy of the Council-Manager Form and other forms of professionalism in local government management. Generally, placement work is best handled by a search firm or by the jurisdiction on their own, especially in cases where there are divided governing bodies or there are complex local issues. In cases where a jurisdiction lacks resources and seeks the assistance of the Senior Advisor Program in a placement process for the chief administrative officer, basic guidelines are presented below.
- B. Senior Advisor placement assistance to a local jurisdiction may include some or all of these items:
 - 1. Discussing the placement process with elected officials at public meetings. This includes the option for a jurisdiction to use a search firm.
 - 2. Providing information to the local governing body on the benefits of seeking an experienced public manager or assistant, preferably an ICMA member.
 - 3. Working with the local governing body on determining position requirements, KSAs (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities) and compensation.
 - 4. Working with the jurisdiction to prepare a position summary and advertisement based on local charter or code provisions.
 - 5. Review resumes and application materials and assist the local jurisdiction in developing a list of those applicants meeting the requirements set forth by the governing body. Note: if more than one Senior Advisor is involved with the application review process, the Senior Advisors should be aware of any restrictions in state law that might prohibit discussion outside the public meeting.
 - 6. Assist the local governing body in developing the interview process.
 - 7. At the request of the governing body, facilitate the selection of the finalists for interview. The local governing body is solely responsible for selection of finalists for interview purposes. This should be done in accordance with applicable state or local laws regarding open meetings.
 - 8. Assist the local governing body at the interview process but not participate in the actual interview.

- C. What the Senior Advisors SHOULD NOT do in a placement process are as follows:
 - 1. Perform background checks on candidates.
 - 2. Be involved in the selection of the candidate by the governing body.
 - 3. If involved with a placement project for jurisdiction, offer to serve as or accept permanent appointment as chief administrative officer.
 - 4. Be involved in negotiation of terms of employment for the selected candidate.

Section 8. SUPPORT FOR AND REVIEW OF SENIOR ADVISOR PROGRAM

- A. The Board shall serve as the Oversight Committee for the Senior Advisor Program and accepts by reference the ICMA Senior Advisor Program Guidelines.
- B. The Board shall enter into an agreement with ICMA for Joint Support of the Senior Advisor Program. In addition, the Board shall review this Statement of Policy and all aspects of the program at least every two years and shall meet with the Senior Advisors at the Spring or Summer conference to discuss the Senior Advisor Program. At least every two years there shall be a formal review and assessment of the performance of all parties in meeting their responsibilities and expectations.
- D. The President shall recognize the contributions of the Senior Advisor at the annual meeting of the association.

Adopted 9-28-2017; Amended 9-27-2018.

ARTICLE 9

Policy Annex Attachments

Section 1. Article 13 “Indemnification” of the Oregon City/County Management Association Bylaws provides that a current summary of insurance coverage be included as part of the policy annex. The current certificate of coverage will suffice for this purpose. A change in insurance coverage or a new certificate of coverage, does not constitute a change of policy with the notice requirements as outlined in Article 6, Section 6 “Promulgation of Policies” of the Bylaws.

Section 2. Article 10, Section 3 “Financial Management” provides that the agreement for administration and financial support services with the League of Oregon Cities, or other qualified providers, be included in the policy annex.

Section 3. Any multiyear agreements, memorandums of understanding, affiliate agreements, or other similar types of agreements approved by the Board of Directors shall be attached in whole or as a summary in the policy annex. The Board’s approval of these types of agreements do not constitute a policy change, in accordance with Article 6, Section 6 “Promulgation of Policies”, and can be approved by majority vote at the meeting in which the agreement is introduced.

Adopted 9-27-2018.

ARTICLE 10

Managers in Transition

Section 1. MEMBERS IN TRANSITION: OCCMA provides that active members who have resigned or been removed from a position in local government, may retain Active Membership in accordance with Article 4 Section 2 of the Bylaws subject to provisions in the bylaws.

Section 2. OCCMA CONFERENCES AND TRAINING SESSIONS: Registration fees for conferences and training sessions offered by OCCMA will be waived for active members who are in transition at the time of registration for that OCCMA conference or event.

Section 3. TRAVEL AND LODGING STIPEND: Active members in transition who are appointed to an ICMA Committee may request reimbursement of travel expenses from the Board to attend meetings on behalf of OCCMA.

Section 4. SENIOR ADVISORS: Active members in transition will be contacted by a senior advisor upon notice of separation from their employer. A senior advisor will be assigned to contact the member in transition on a monthly basis to offer advice and guidance during the transitional time.

Section 5. COUNSELING SERVICES: OCCMA will provide up to three visits to a pre-selected counseling service for managers in transition.

Section 6. REPUTATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES: OCCMA offers reputation management services to its members. OCCMA provides online reputation management services to prevent and repair threats to a manager's online reputation. The OCCMA will provide a reduced cost of fees for these services to managers in transition.

Adopted 10-20-2021.

OREGON CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION POLICY ANNEX ATTACHMENTS

A. Required Attachments per Bylaws:

1. ARTICLE 13 of the Bylaws: Certificate of Insurance from C.I.S.
2. ARTICLE 10 Section 3. Financial Management: Contract for Services with the League of Oregon Cities.
Effective Date: July 1, 2021
Termination Date: June 30, 2024.

B. Board Agreements, Memorandum of Understandings, and Affiliate Agreements:

1. Affiliate agreements between ICMA and OCCMA:
Effective Date: July 19, 2019
Termination Date: Indefinite.
2. Joint support of the Senior Advisory Program with ICMA:
Effective Date: May 9, 2018
Termination Date: Indefinite.
3. Affiliate relation between the Alliance for Innovation and OCCMA:
Effective Date: May 1, 2018
Termination Date: April 30, 2019, but automatically renews unless a written notice is provided.
4. OCCMA Host Committee Memorandum of Authorization:
Effective Date: September 29, 2018
Termination Date: December 31, 2021.

Mission

The LOC supports city leaders and state legislators in building a strong Oregon by connecting with all Oregon cities, sharing vital information, and advocating on their behalf.

Vision

All Oregon cities effectively govern, provide municipal services, and freely exercise their home rule authority to build vibrant, resilient communities that Oregonians are proud to call home.

Our Values

The LOC:

- Respects our cities' geographic, economic, and political diversity.
- Appreciates public service.
- Performs its work with professionalism.
- Is committed to accuracy, thoroughness, and facts.
- Values collaborative problem-solving.
- Is optimistic about Oregon's future.

FY 2019-2020 Strategic Plan

The LOC Board of Directors worked with a consultant in December 2018 to develop a strategic plan that would guide the organization over the next 3-5 years. The plan was adopted by the board in January 2019. From there, LOC staff worked to develop actions for each of the strategies identified in the plan. The board will review progress on an annual basis with staff and determine whether adjustments need to be made for recent developments.

The Board is planning to hold a Strategic Planning Session on December 9, 2021.

[View the FY 2019-2020 Strategic Plan](#)

Oregon Municipal Handbook

The LOC's *Oregon Municipal Handbook* is a comprehensive resource providing city officials, from elected representatives to essential employees, an understanding of the purpose, structure, authority, and nuances of municipal governance in Oregon.

LOC staff is in the process of performing a comprehensive review and update of the *Oregon Municipal Handbook*. As chapters are revised and new chapters are created, they will be added to the LOC webpage.

[View a list of all Handbook chapters](#)

LOC SMALL CITIES NETWORK

Cities in Oregon range in size from a population of two to over 600,000, with small cities comprising more than 70% of all Oregon cities. The LOC’s Small Cities program was created in the early 2000s and provides cities with the population of 7,500 or less the opportunity to meet, network, and discuss issues or solutions that are most relevant to small cities in their regions. These meetings are held quarterly in each region and all elected and appointed officials are welcome to attend. The meetings are scheduled for two hours and include a presentation, lunch, and a roundtable discussion. The host city rotates around the region.

Small Cities Network Regions	
Region 1	Astoria, Bay City, Cannon Beach, Clatskanie, Columbia City, Garibaldi, Gearhart, Manzanita, Nehalem, Prescott, Rainier, Rockaway Beach, Scappoose, Seaside, Tillamook, Vernonia, Warrenton, and Wheeler
Region 2	Banks, Barlow, Durham, Estacada, Gaston, Johnson City, King City, Maywood Park, North Plains, Rivergrove, and Wood Village
Region 3	Amity, Aumsville, Aurora, Carlton, Dayton, Detroit, Donald, Dundee, Falls City, Gates, Gervais, Hubbard, Idanha, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lyons, Mill City, Mt. Angel, Scotts Mills, Sheridan, St. Paul, Sublimity, Turner, Willamina, and Yamhill
Region 4	Adair Village, Brownsville, Coburg, Drain, Creswell, Gates, Harrisburg, Idanha, Junction City, Lowell, Lyons, Monroe, Mill City, Millersburg, Oakridge, Philomath, Scio, Sodaville, Tangent, Veneta, Waterloo, and Westfir
Region 5	Depoe Bay, Dunes City, Lincoln City, Newport, Siletz, Toledo, Yachats, and Waldport
Region 6	Bandon, Brookings, Coquille, Gold Beach, Lakeside, Myrtle Point, North Bend, Port Orford, Powers, and Reedsport
Region 7	Butte Falls, Canyonville, Cave Junction, Drain, Elkton, Glendale, Gold Hill, Jacksonville, Myrtle Creek, Oakland, Phoenix, Riddle, Rogue River, Shady Cove, Talent, Winston, and Yoncalla
Region 8	Antelope, Arlington, Cascade Locks, Condon, Dufur, Grass Valley, Lonerock, Maupin, Moro, Mosier, Rufus, Shaniko, and Wasco
Region 9	Culver, Fossil, La Pine, Madras, Metolius, Mitchell, and Spray
Region 10	Bonanza, Chiloquin, Malin, Merrill, Lakeview, and Paisley
Region 11	Adams, Athena, Boardman, Cove, Echo, Elgin, Enterprise, Helix, Heppner, Imbler, Lone, Irrigon, Island City, Joseph, Lexington, Lostine, Milton-Freewater, North Powder, Pilot Rock, Stanfield, Summerville, Ukiah, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, and Weston
Region 12	Adrian, Burns, Canyon City, Dayville, Granite, Greenhorn, Haines, Halfway, Hines, Huntington, John Day, Jordan Valley, Long Creek, Monument, Mt. Vernon, Nyssa, Prairie City, Richland, Sumpter, Seneca, Unity, and Vale

OREGON GOVERNMENT ETHICS COMMISSION

[ORS 244.050](#) requires individuals holding certain public positions to file a Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) report with the Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGEC). In general, persons who hold the following city positions are required to file:

- Elected city or county officials;
- Members of city or county planning, zoning or development commissions;
- Managers or principal administrators of a city or county; and
- Judicial officers.

SEI filers are required to file an annual SEI report if they are seated and hold their position on April 15th of any given year. The information to be reported reflects activity from the preceding calendar year; for instance, if seated on April 15th of 2020, the SEI report would include information relating to the 2019 calendar year. This applies even if the person did not hold their position during the preceding calendar year.

SEI reports are due on or before April 15th of each year. In mid-March of each year, an email will be issued from the Commission's Electronic Filing System (EFS) to all persons required to file an SEI report, advising that the filing window is open. The notification is sent based on information the Jurisdictional Contact and the SEI filer accounts provide. There is no grace period or extension allowed if the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday. The EFS is available 24-7.

Each public body has a Jurisdictional Contact (JC). The JCs are responsible for providing instruction to and explaining the requirements of ORS 244.050, ORS 244.060, and ORS 244.090 to each newly elected or appointed public official serving in the public body, in which they are employed. This assistance includes, providing the OGEC with current contact information for their jurisdictional members by establishing and maintaining an accurate and up-to-date listing of their jurisdictional members in the EFS. JCs must ensure that the listing of their jurisdictional members, within the EFS, are accurate and up to date by February 15th of each year.

Additional information, resources and training materials are available in the [Training Section](#) of the OGEC website. The OGEC has also produced an [Electronic Filing System Instructional Handbook](#) to assist filers as well.

ICMA CODE OF ETHICS

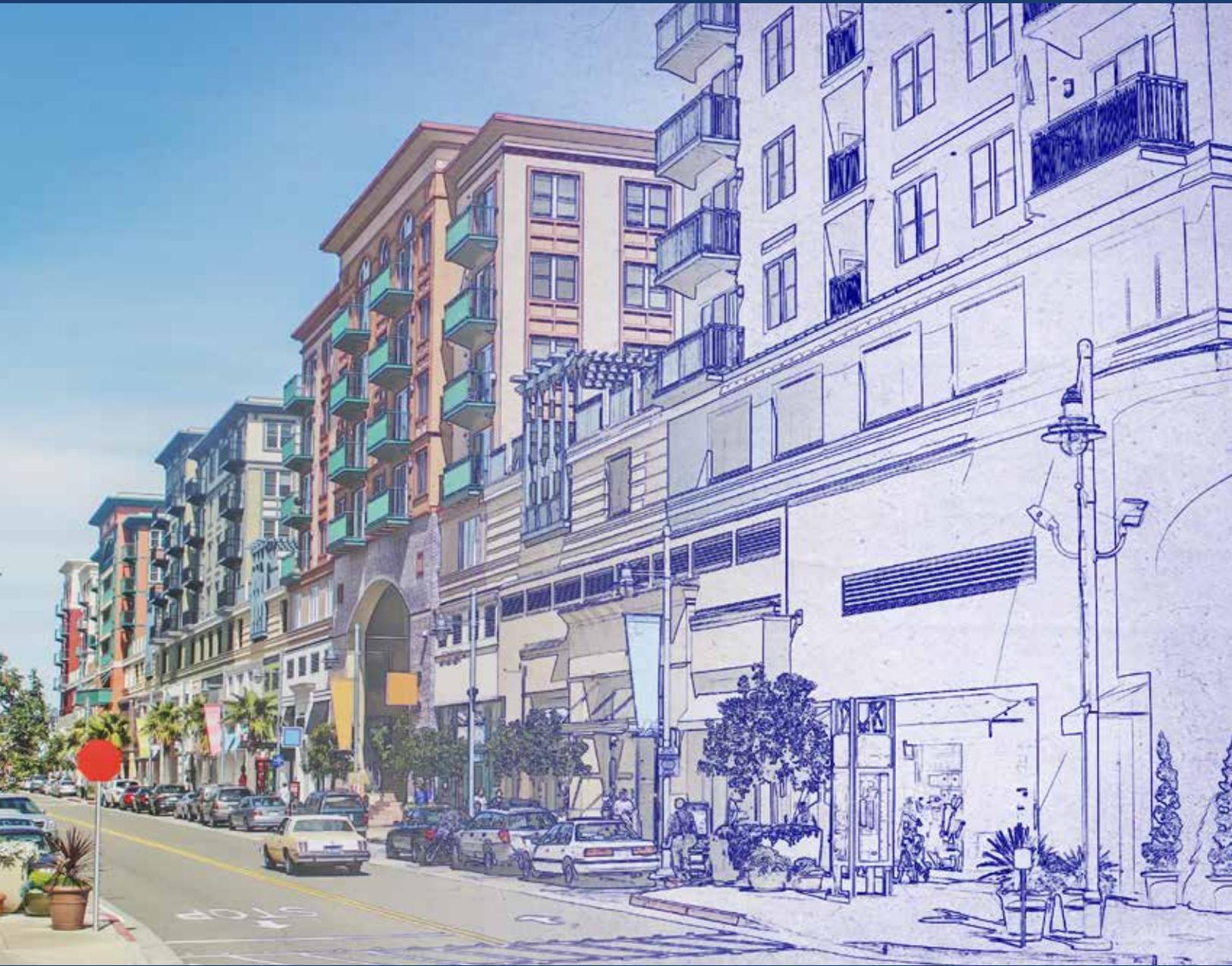
The mission of ICMA is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional local government management worldwide. To further this mission, certain principles, as enforced by the Rules of Procedure, shall govern the conduct of every member of ICMA, who shall:

1. We believe professional management is essential to efficient and democratic local government by elected officials.
2. Affirm the dignity and worth of local government services and maintain a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant.
3. Demonstrate by word and action the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in all public, professional, and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the trust and respect of the elected and appointed officials, employees, and the public.
4. Serve the best interests of the people.
5. Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts, and technical and professional advice about policy options; and collaborate with them in setting goals for the community and organization.
6. Recognize that elected representatives are accountable to their community for the decisions they make; members are responsible for implementing those decisions.
7. Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators. Refrain from participation in the election of the members of the employing legislative body.
8. Make it a duty continually to improve the member's professional ability and to develop the competence of associates in the use of management techniques.
9. Keep the community informed on local government affairs; encourage communication between the citizens and all local government officers; emphasize friendly and courteous service to the public; and seek to improve the quality and image of public service.
10. Resist any encroachment on professional responsibilities, believing the member should be free to carry out official policies without interference, and handle each problem without discrimination on the basis of principle and justice.
11. Handle all matters of personnel on the basis of merit so that fairness and impartiality govern a member's decisions pertaining to appointments, pay adjustments, promotions, and discipline.
12. Public office is a public trust. A member shall not leverage his or her position for personal gain or benefit.

Adopted by the ICMA Executive Board in 1924, and most recently revised by the membership in June 2020.



First-Time Administrator's Handbook



First-Time Administrator's Handbook

Prepared by Kevin Carter

July 2010

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About ICMA

ICMA advances professional local government worldwide. Its mission is to create excellence in local governance by developing and advancing professional management of local government. ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, provides member support; publications, data, and information; peer and results-oriented assistance; and training and professional development to more than 9,000 city, town, and county experts and other individuals and organizations throughout the world. The management decisions made by ICMA's members affect 185 million individuals living in thousands of communities, from small villages and towns to large metropolitan areas.

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Original Preface

Two years ago, the ICMA Executive Board and President Gary Gwyn appointed 25 members from all areas of the country to serve on the First-Time Administrator’s Task Force. This group was asked to put together information that would be useful to individuals who were about to serve in their first administrator/manager position. This booklet, a product of that effort, is also designed to be of value to individuals who are in the position of serving as the first manager or administrator of a community.

Over the years, many articles have pointed out essential steps to follow, or suggested “do’s and don’ts” for an administrator’s consideration. Whether in a new job as a first-time administrator or in a first-time professionally managed local government, this collection of tips from administrators across the ICMA membership will prove to be a useful guide.

Over two years, the committee met at three ICMA conferences—Vancouver, Orlando, and Portland—to work out the details and guide the effort. Correspondence and e-mail were important to the finished result, as was contact with several state management organizations. The final product is not meant to be viewed as an absolute blueprint for success or an all-inclusive list of what to do to be successful. Rather, it illustrates items that should be considered before an interview, during an interview, before accepting a position, and before starting the new position. It goes on to describe what might be important for first week, month, three to six months, and beyond.

While this document is recommended reading for emerging professionals, a review of the contents suggests that there is much to be relearned by the veteran manager who may have served in several professional positions. Suggestions are offered that are relevant regardless of age or experience.

Finally, appreciation for the invaluable assistance in producing this publication goes to the 25 committee members who worked so hard to assemble and produce this document. The work could not have been completed without the assistance of Betsy Sherman of ICMA, and Carol Zar of the Center for Governmental Studies at Northern Illinois University. It was a pleasure to serve as chairperson of this effort!

Jim Berzina
City Manager
Wichita Falls, Texas

Preface

In 1998, the ICMA Executive Board and President Gary Gwyn appointed twenty-five members to serve on the First-Time Administrator's Task Force. They were asked to draft a document that would be beneficial to individuals who were about to serve or were already serving in their first administrator position or as the first administrator/manager for a local government.

The initial *First-Time Administrator's Handbook*, published in 2000, has been of great benefit to many of our members. It has provided numerous suggestions, backed by personal testimonies, of steps that a first-time administrator/manager should or should not pursue. Many of us wish this guide had been available when we assumed our first administrator/manager positions.

After almost ten years, realizing that the handbook needed to be revised and updated, the ICMA Executive Board and President Darnell Earley appointed a twelve-member task force to review the *First-Time Administrator's Handbook* in 2009. We on the task force leaped at the opportunity. Perhaps as a sign of the times and the advance of technology since the original task force, we were able to revise the entire handbook without ever meeting in person. We used conference calls, webinars, and the ICMA Knowledge Network to share the advice and stories that became part of this handbook. We added new sections to reflect the changes and trends in our profession, such as persons entering local government management directly out of MPA programs or from the military or private sector, as well as advances in technology and communication.

The advice you find in these pages is not ours alone. We sought out recommendations and revisions from our colleagues, mentors, and state associations. This handbook is both for ICMA members and a product of their dedicated work. While recommended for emerging professionals, it is, like its predecessor, a valuable source of information for veteran managers who may have already served several jurisdictions.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my fellow task force members, who diligently worked on and produced the revision of this document. Special appreciation is also due to ICMA staff, especially Kevin Carter, for their assistance, guidance, and patience during this process.

Let's promote and distribute this handbook to emerging professionals to strengthen them in their role as first-time administrator/manager or as the first administrator/manager for a community. In doing so, we will have encouraged and mentored others in this great profession we have chosen. It has truly been a professional honor and privilege to have served as chairman of this task force and effort.

Sam S. Gaston
City Manager
Mountain Brook, Alabama

September 2000

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the world of the first-time local government administrator! You are embarking on a journey that is yours to determine and filled with challenges and opportunities at every turn. We hope that this publication, written by current management professionals for new administrators, leads you in the right direction.

We understand the exhilaration you feel as you assume a new managerial position. Be assured that you are not alone on this journey; you have colleagues who share your zeal, passion, and concern. Remember: the information contained in this handbook is just one example of the professional resources available to you from your colleagues and ICMA.

Whether the position is a first for you or a first for your community, colleagues who have preceded you in such positions have experience and wisdom to share. We hope that this publication is useful to you, identifying pitfalls and trouble spots, suggesting useful resources, and sharing the experience and stories of a variety of managers.

In July 1997, ICMA president Gary Gwyn appointed ICMA members to a First-Time Administrator's Task Force. Discussion began at the 1997 ICMA Annual Conference in Vancouver, where it became obvious that there was more to this issue than initially suspected. Some task force members had been promoted to their first managerial positions from within; others were fresh faces to the community; and still others were first-time administrators because they filled newly created managerial positions. Given this diversity of experience, task force chair Jim Berzina divided the discussion into four areas: first administrator in the community, first-time position as an administrator, promotion to administrator from within, and resources. All these topics are covered in this publication, along with tips and checklists for the first-time administrator.

In 2009, ICMA president Darnell Earley, recognizing changes in the field of public administration, tasked ICMA members to review, update, and expand upon the original document. The Task Force to Review the *First-Time Administrators Handbook* determined that although certain aspects of public service remain

the same, significant changes in the field warrant additional thought and discussion if we are to help newly appointed managers successfully navigate in their new positions.

For example, the task force discovered, through its own research and colleagues' anecdotal accounts, that a number of jurisdictions were appointing administrators from private sector, military, and academic backgrounds. Some members even shared stories of being appointed right out of graduate school. Thus, this revised handbook includes a section for managers coming to the profession from nontraditional backgrounds; the goal is to equip them with the skills they need to succeed and to provide advice from others who have made the same transition.

Whichever category you fit into, you'll find helpful ideas in every section of this publication. While each person's experience is different, similar advice for the first-timer emerges from the differing experiences of the administrators who wrote these chapters:

- Gain the trust of council, community, and staff
- Meet with department heads as soon as possible
- Be yourself
- Get to know other local government managers
- Be ethical, visible, and fair
- Establish good relations with local media.

The Administrative Balancing Act

As a local government administrator, you are the narrowest point of an hourglass. You are caught in the middle by the nature of your job, and aside from peers in other communities, you are the only one in this position. Above you is a funnel into which your elected officials pour every conceivable idea, criticism, and belief. Below you is a staff for whose actions you are held accountable, whose talents you must maximize, and whose professionalism you must defend to the elected officials.

While you are sorting out these responsibilities, the hourglass is tipped upside down, and you become the person who must filter proposals from staff to council, resolve employee grievances, and ensure internal

equity. Meanwhile, the other half of the hourglass is now looking for expert advice and recommendations on solving community problems. Elected officials want to know why things are done in a particular way, how a service could be improved, and how responsiveness to the citizenry can be increased.

In his keynote address at the 1993 ICMA Annual Conference, Stephen Covey noted that trust is your guiding principle. Trust, which you must earn, is due north on the compass and what you use to navigate the complex territory of municipal management. Elected officials must trust that your advice is honest and complete, and corresponds to community values. Employees must trust that you are impartial, responsive, and there to lead them.

The best tool upon which to build trust with both employees and elected officials is the ICMA Code of Ethics—one of the membership benefits rated as “most important.” Our Code of Ethics separates the professional from the pundit and, combined with the ICMA Declaration of Ideals, provides a solid foundation upon which trust can be built. (Both documents can be found on ICMA’s website, icma.org.)

Creating trust between you and your staff requires a variety of skills, particularly the ability to maintain internal equity. Equity in budgeting, promotions, grievance resolutions, and the allocation of your time will be tested regularly. Remaining impartial while achieving the goals of elected officials also earns employee trust.

While the principles of trust and equity are your most powerful allies, your knowledge, skills, and abilities are what brought you to this position. However, they all will be challenged daily. While small-town managers may be more frequently called upon to have technical knowledge of accounting, engineering, or utilities, all managers are expected to have immense interpersonal skills. Remaining isolated from the community to avoid the perception of political activity was once accepted and even encouraged, but today’s administrators must remain connected to the communities they serve. They may be called upon to broker competing interests in the community—perhaps interacting with parents, students, and school officials to address youth violence or meeting with minority groups to ensure that services, employment practices, and policies incorporate the diverse needs of the community.

This interaction necessarily alters the traditional policy–administration dichotomy of the council–manager relationship. The straight line that once separated

these two areas of local government now must bend and flex to provide the best government, not just the most efficient one. To make the most complete recommendations on policy matters as a manager, you must have a solid understanding of the values, demographics, and personalities of the community you serve. Recommendations that take into account only the most efficient solution to a problem may overlook critical value issues that jeopardize a proposal, divide a legislative body, or alienate the citizenry.

Moreover, today’s manager must not only protect his or her staff, but also serve as the conduit for elected officials to know the daily operations and the staff responsible for them. For the council to make informed decisions, its members must have a solid understanding of a department’s makeup, direction, and services.

The budgeting process is perhaps the most visible area in which the policy–administration dichotomy emerges. The budget is both a policy and an administrative document. As the manager prepares a recommended budget, he or she must have a connected, well-informed understanding of the community. For example, a law enforcement budget that emphasizes correctional services, such as jails, halfway houses, and more judges, may efficiently address the issue of crime, but the community may be looking to allocate those resources for a policing program that specializes in conflict resolution, neighborhood relations, and youth intervention.

Similarly, an elected body that is not familiar with an organization’s use of technology may have a difficult time justifying large budget increases for the information services department. Who is using what software and why may be a purely administrative issue, but the elected officials must see how the issue is relevant to the citizens they serve, or the proposal is doomed.

An excellent book on the topic of today’s new manager is *Professionalism in Local Government: Transformations in the Roles, Responsibilities and Values of City Managers*, by John Nalbandian (Jossey-Bass, 1991).

Function Follows Form

Form of government is always a hot topic within the management profession. As a first-time administrator, you may find yourself in a hybrid or modified council–manager form of government. The pure form is established by a charter that calls for a council of legislators, elected at large, with the mayor or presi-

dent of the council elected from among the council or commission. A majority of the governing body may appoint and remove the manager; the manager has the sole authority to appoint and remove all other personnel, to prepare a recommended budget, and to make policy recommendations to the board. Many variations of this pure council-manager form exist, particularly on the council side of the equation, where members often come from districts or wards. Many communities have directly elected mayors, and many establish the position of manager by ordinance rather than by charter.

This last variation calls attention to the fact that new administrator positions are frequently found in jurisdictions, such as counties and small municipalities, that do not have home rule. Opportunities for a first-time administrator often occur as counties search for a better way to govern or as small communities outgrow the capabilities of volunteer management by elected officials. Such situations open the door to professional advancement and enable ICMA to demonstrate the superiority of the council-manager form of government.

As the first administrator for a new form of government in a community, you may face many situations that managers in established governments may not face. You may have to deal, for example, with commission members who were once responsible for entire departments, with staff who are used to multiple chiefs and feel accountable to none, and with citizens who are accustomed to getting a project done simply by calling a friend who was in charge of a particular department.

The job picture also is colored by today's longer tenure of many administrators, including deputy and assistant managers. Why are people staying longer? One explanation may be the characteristics of younger professionals, who often are part of dual-career marriages. Since moving might impair the career advancement of an administrator's spouse, the administrator may look for promotional opportunities within a single community. The result is twofold. First, metropolitan areas with multiple local governments are attractive since an administrator can find promotional opportunities within a reasonable distance while the spouse remains with a single company. Second, assistants may be more content to wait for promotional opportunities within their organizations since dual careers means dual incomes, and the monetary gain from promotion may not be as important as the stability of family life. And since promotional opportunities in metropolitan areas are extremely competitive, the advantage may well go to an assistant who is familiar with the organization.

Consequently, small communities (less than 10,000 people) and rural communities (more than sixty miles from a metropolitan area of 100,000 or more) may be more likely than large metropolitan areas to offer opportunities for first-time administrators. Moreover, as these administrators refine their skills and acquire more experience, they tend to move to metropolitan areas, so that turnover in these more remote locations is also more frequent.

Those individuals who are promoted to an administrator position from within face their own challenges. How do they implement the new management techniques necessary to fit the position? How do they deal with peers who may have competed for the job? How do they deal with colleagues who are close friends without playing favorites or betraying a friendship?

As the 2009 task force reviewed the handbook, they identified additional career paths to first-time administrator positions, and the challenges and opportunities associated with those paths became apparent. Learning organizational culture and institutional practices is always an obstacle, but it is especially so when one comes from a different background or field. However, this also offers opportunities to do things in a new way and learn from on-the-job training. Hopefully this document will help you answer: How do I reconcile differences with the new organization's culture and develop a strategy for implementing needed change? How do I foster change and implement the latest trends in an established organization unwilling to change?

For those who move into public administration directly from college, the private sector, or the military, learning the laws concerning the operation and oversight of local governments is vital. The way an organization is managed affects its ability to meet the community's needs and satisfy the council's priorities. A better understanding of public administration can improve the quality of life for the citizens you serve (as well as your own).

We hope that your questions and many others asked by first-time local government administrators are answered in this publication.

Note: Professional managers go by many labels, including administrator, manager, and chief operating officer. The types of the organizations where they work vary as well: they are cities, towns, villages, boroughs, townships, parishes, and counties. For ease of effort, this publication uses the terms manager and administrator, and council and board interchangeably.

2. Tips from the Trenches for First-Time Administrators

Many local government administrators hold the **M**only such position in their communities. They lack a group of peers with whom they can sit down and obtain practical advice. We hope that the following information substitutes for such a gathering. This advice evolved from a brainstorming session at the committee's first meeting and from subsequent thoughts of committee members.

Assess Yourself

- Determine if you are ready for the top job. Have you had broad enough experience and learned from good mentors? Many successful managers describe the managers they have worked under as their best teachers.
- Check out chemistry to discover if you are a good match with the council, staff, and community.

Administrators suggest asking these questions: What is critical to you in a community? Which factors are essential to you? Is it important to you that the community be in a good financial position, or can you deal with resulting problems? What do you want in your relationship with the mayor and council? Do you like staying behind the scenes (are you internally oriented), or do you prefer speaking to groups and being at the forefront (are you externally oriented)? Be sure that you know what the council expects since misunderstandings can grow into major points of contention later if, for example, a council feels a manager is getting too much press or is not visible enough in the community.

- Realize that those with clear management and moral philosophies succeed more easily as leaders and managers. Knowing whether this accurately describes you enables you to better gauge a good community match.

As one manager put it, "Most of us have core values about how we do business that are not negotiable. Do they match with the community and organizational culture?"

- Determine if you can easily adjust to unexpected circumstances. Managers often fail either because

they could not adapt to surprises or because they were not a good match with the community or organization.

- Don't wear rose-colored glasses. Too many people go into a position blindly, not really knowing what faces them. Taking any job, just to have a job, is not necessarily the road to success in local government management.
- Do not underestimate the potential for problems. First-time management positions may well be in communities with problems or conflicts. Perhaps the vote to hire was a split vote; or maybe there is political unrest, controversy in the community, or financial problems.

Before the First Interview: Evaluating the Community and the Organization

- Gather as much general information as possible in order to identify the community culture.
- Learn the goals of the community, and determine which are real and which are merely political.
- Read the local newspapers, including back issues that reflect on campaign issues, council member profiles, and results of the last election.
- Become familiar with the demographics and socioeconomic profile of the community.
- Determine the political stability of the community. Get a political history and find out what happened to former managers, council members, and mayors. Is this a settled community, or is it in flux?
- Research the credibility, process, and time frames if an executive search firm is involved in your recruitment. Do not be afraid to question them thoroughly about council and community issues.

One manager was a finalist for a position in a rapidly changing city, so he visited the community for several days before his interview with the council. After thoroughly investigating the community and completing the interview, he concluded that there were more negatives than positives in the situation and decided to withdraw from the process. The executive search

firm called him to say that he had received the highest scores from the council interviews and asked for details about what had led to his decision to withdraw. The candidate and the search firm were able to honestly discuss shortcomings and problems in the community, providing the candidate with new information. As a result, the candidate accepted the position and found substantial success in the new community.

- Discover local rules of the game and determine whether you are willing to play by them.
- Get copies of as many publications, brochures, and handouts produced by the local government as you can, and evaluate their quality and what they say.
- Visit the local government’s website.
- Review copies of all adopted plans. Which ones are in place? How old are they? Are they being followed?
- Read council minutes.
- Gather information about the community’s financial situation. Read the annual reports, review budgets, review audits, and talk to the auditor.
- Talk to relevant people. The school superintendent may be your single, most informative contact. Get perceptions from community members. If public opinion about the local government is not the best, are you prepared for the challenge of changing that perception? Touch base with neighboring managers, mayors, and former managers, if possible. Talk to business people, the head of the local council of governments, and Range Riders in the state. Also talk to consultants who have worked in the local government and read their reports, particularly if they deal with organizational issues. Talk to state league or county association officials.
- Visit the community. Plan to arrive at least one day before the interview to do research.
- Arrange a tour or do a self-tour.

One manager says, “I did not realize the time and effort it would take to establish trust and credibility. During the interview process, the fact that this was a problem never came up. In retrospect, I should have broadened my efforts to get information about the community from outside of city channels. I should have spent more time in the community before and after the interview. I should have done more of my own legwork.”

- Decide whether your personality and goals are compatible with those of the community.

One manager put it this way: “What I tell people is that there are no perfect jobs, there are no perfect commu-



nities, and there are no perfect fits. Some are just better than others. So be honest with yourself. What do you really want, and what can you put up with?

- Understand council dynamics.
- Understand the government structure. Read statutes, the charter, etc., and understand the authority that goes with the administrator’s position. What legal authority establishes the city or town? What establishes the role of the manager? Who reports to the council and who reports to the manager?
- Understand the legal aspect versus the functioning of the position.
- Find out the dates of the next election, the terms of office of the current council, and the intentions of those who are up for reelection.
- Try to get a handle on the issues—for example, has the political culture changed since the last election? Are there explosive issues festering?
- Determine the governing board’s level of involvement and influence in the day-to-day operations of individual departments.
- Ask about the political activity of employee unions.
- Explore quality-of-life issues for your family.
- Be alert to what is expected of your family, such as community involvement.
- Understand residency requirements and be sensitive to this issue even if residency is not required.
- Get a sense of the housing market, including the social dynamics of “who lives where.”

You’ve Made the First Cut, Now for the Second Interview

- Continue your fact finding; talk to the people you didn’t have time to talk to before the first interview.

- Explore with the council their expectations of you—not just in terms of technical issues but also in terms of time commitment. Explore their views on family time and their understanding of the pressures of two-career families. Try to ascertain if your lifestyle will fit with their conception of the manager’s time commitment. Discuss in greater depth their expectations of your spouse and family.
- Learn all you can about the governing board members: their backgrounds, terms of office, how they get along, who does the agendas, who runs the meetings, etc.

Managing the Job Offer

- Negotiate a good contract; you will never have a better opportunity to determine a favorable package, including severance provisions.
- Remember ICMA Code of Ethics Tenet 3’s guideline: “Oral acceptance of an employment offer is considered binding unless the employer makes fundamental changes in the terms of employment.”

Administrators suggest that you get good advice on your contract since contract law varies from state to state. Work with your state association if you can. Be sure that the move is something you can afford as a family.

After You’ve Accepted the Job but before You Arrive

- Send a memo to all staff introducing yourself.
- Learn about your staff, and try to get a handle on their skills. Ask each management staff member to describe his or her position and its role in the organization.

As one manager puts it, “Staffing will make or break your ability to succeed.” Budget and human resources are a top concern, especially for a new organization. If you do not have the skills you need on your team, who can you borrow help from temporarily? Will a neighboring city, university, or large business help? Is human resources set up to recruit fairly and to attract the best candidates?

- Start working with the council to establish performance goals if they were not included in your contract negotiations. Be sure that all parties are clear about their expectations.

One manager asks each council member to prepare a confidential memo to him before he begins work-

ing in the community. He assures them that he will not reveal to anyone else what is in the memo. He asks that the memo include the council member’s answers to these questions: What is the community doing right? What should the community stop doing? What should the community start doing? What is the most important problem or project that needs to be addressed? This approach also could be used with department heads.

- Investigate any pending legal actions by or against the city. Get details of what is brewing and what is hot. Learn about past legal issues, and check if there is a pattern to legal problems.

What to Do the First Day/Week

- Show up ahead of time.
- Plan to spend most of your time *listening* to people.
- Establish a relationship with your new administrative assistant, if you have one. Let him or her know how you want to operate, and discuss office procedures.
- Schedule time with the assistant manager, if there is one, and start to build rapport.
- Wander around and introduce yourself to people. Don’t wait in your office for everyone to come to you.
- Make sure that you have all the right keys, security codes, and pass cards; make sure that you know the location of the bathrooms.
- Bring something personal into your office to help set the tone and define your style.

Some managers have family photos and their degrees and awards displayed on the walls, while others suggest displaying something to open communication and define personality. One administrator has artwork representing his hobby of sailing. Another displays a childhood photo so that employees can see a more human side of him. Another administrator brings in toys, such as miniature basketball hoops and balls. Another hangs a model of the Starship Enterprise in one corner of his office.

- Establish a system for tracking your activities and accomplishments.
- Establish a regularly scheduled meeting time with the mayor and, if possible, with council members to facilitate communications.
- Put your listening skills to good use and sound out your mayor and council to understand their visions

for the community. Then talk to your auditor, attorney, accountant, clerk, treasurer, engineer, and department heads to get their take on the current status of the community. Figure out where people agree and disagree, and then search for your own answers. Go talk to the local newspaper editor or to citizens down at the local coffee shop. This will give you the best view of what you are getting into, where there are potential conflicts, where there are potential collaborations, and what your priorities should be.

- Meet the news media to introduce yourself and begin to develop a relationship.
- Set up quarterly get-togethers, such as luncheons, with the local newspaper editorialist(s). The point of the meetings is not to steer any particular editorial; rather, it is simply to establish a good working relationship, informally discuss the community's issues of the day, and provide for a better understanding.
- Determine which ad hoc boards and commissions are influential and which are council members' pet projects.
- Identify the processes used by the council to conduct its business.
- Schedule time to meet with each of your department heads. Review the memos you asked them to prepare and discuss your management style and expectations.

One manager tells each department head to schedule a tour. "Show me what you think I should know about the community and your area. You make up the agenda; I want to see it through your eyes."

- Hold a staff meeting during which you discuss your management philosophy.
- Demonstrate to your staff in everything that you do that you care about their concerns.
- Prepare a memo to the council at the end of the week about things that happened during your first week.

Continue sending a memo each week that updates the council about community issues. Try to keep it brief and interesting enough to be entertaining. Share the memo with department heads and staff, and encourage them to suggest things to add to the memo. Depending on the size of the community and the attentiveness of the press, this memo could become something that the media asks to see each week as they search for story ideas. Keep that in mind when choosing what to say.



What to Do the First Month

- Work to make personal contact with employees, members of the business community, and community and neighborhood activists. Get the "lay of the land."
- Start to meet with the mayor and each council member on a regular basis or at least twice monthly.
- Schedule regular department head meetings. Ask department heads to list their departmental priorities, plus major projects and problems in other departments and the community.
- Summarize this information and keep it handy; plan to use it at the council retreat. (One manager stresses the need to review these lists with a grain of salt, given that some department heads are jockeying for position.)
- Meet with the head of the chamber of commerce and other community leaders. Ask your staff to prepare a list of community leaders, formal and informal, and arrange to visit with each of them.

One manager schedules lunch and dinner meetings to create a less formal mood and to help build rapport. At these meetings, spend a lot of time listening. "This strokes people's egos and, in the long run, helps build the support system that a manager needs," one manager explains. "A lot of people wait and just let this happen, assuming it will occur as a matter of course. But what if it doesn't?" The manager follows each meeting with a short note thanking the people with whom he met.

- Consider setting up informal monthly meetings with reporters.
- Wander around as much as you can.

"This is the time you get to ask any dumb question you want and it will be okay," one manager notes.

“This is the time you can spend learning, meeting people, and interacting . . . and you will never have this chance again.”

- Use a list of projects and priorities created by the department heads as a starting point for goal setting by the council. Translate these goals into tasks and measurable accomplishments and assign them to your staff. Hold each department head responsible for these accomplishments.
- Meet with the treasurer or auditor immediately.

“I made the mistake when I came to [the county] of not asking about audits, and it took me about a month to figure out that they were three years behind on their audits. I have spent the last two years riding my auditor to get caught up. I might even suggest [you] ask to see the audit before [you] take the position.”

- Develop a schedule of half-day quarterly retreats with department heads to plan the first quarter of activity. Be clear about who is responsible for accomplishing the council’s goals.
- Work to define a few quick wins: things that can be fixed, improved, or accomplished during your first few months. Then celebrate these successes.
- Schedule a council retreat for the near future to set goals and objectives for the community and the manager.

If the council is reluctant to participate in a retreat, sell its importance by pointing out that everyone has different needs and priorities, but there are limited resources. By using the retreat to set goals, members are guiding the work plan for the community and setting priorities for the next budget. One manager stresses the importance of putting the council through this exercise early “while they still love you.”

- Involve a facilitator to help. If the council is fairly healthy and works well together, this should not be a difficult process. If the council is not healthy, include some leadership training to benefit each individual and to assist in teaching teamwork and decision-making skills.
- Spend time with the police chief and the fire chief.
- Attend civic club meetings to introduce yourself to the community. Be open to speaking to clubs and using other opportunities to become known in the community.

One manager took a community survey and set up a table outside the busiest local grocery store. Just by standing at that table, he was able to introduce himself to hundreds of people, reinforcing the percep-

tion that he cared about the citizens. He also collected dozens of complaints about potholes and other neighborhood problems that had been irritating people for a long time.

- Hold a general meeting for all employees and consider having them monthly.
- Develop a network with nearby local government managers.
- Decide if you are going to make immediate changes.

Two opposing philosophies exist on initial changes. One says that a new administrator should do nothing more than paint curbs and stop signs in the first four to six months, since it takes that long to learn the culture and values of a community. The other approach favors changing something, no matter how small, immediately to show that you are in charge. “On your first day, move the potted plant by the front door,” suggests one manager. Other ideas include changing titles, the council communication process, or the arrangement of furniture in the lobby. One manager relates how he changed where the manager sits during council meetings, moving off the dais and to the staff table.

- Review all human resource processes. Are the processes fair, impartial, and working to ensure that you hire the best staff?

“The importance of good staff cannot be overestimated,” notes one manager. He overcame pressures to hire well-connected locals by setting up a multipart screening process that tested for skills. While locals had a chance to participate, only candidates with good skills made it through the process with scores high enough to be considered for hiring.

- Evaluate the benefits of an employee survey, keeping in mind that a survey raises expectations that things will be changed. Are you really prepared to make changes?
- Prepare a rough plan for your first six months. Check off goals as they are accomplished.

What to Do the First Quarter

- Attend a retreat with the council—unless an annual retreat is already scheduled. Assist the council in setting goals for the year. State these goals in public, involving the staff.
- Plan for making changes, with buy-in of council, department heads, and employees.
- Create teams to develop, market, and implement

changes in the organization.

- Plan to attend one meeting of every local government board and commission, introducing yourself to members and learning the role that each board and committee plays.
- Do quarterly performance checks with department heads. Are they accomplishing goals set by the council?
- Decide in which community organizations or activities you will participate, taking into account your understanding of the community's culture and values.

Some managers join a local professional service club; others coach youth sports or work with the United Way. You should become involved in something in the community, allowing people to know you as a person in a capacity other than as manager. Remember that choosing what to join is an opportunity to position yourself and to define how you are perceived by the community.

Marking Your First Year

- Measure progress against goals.
- Celebrate and publicize successes. Be sure the council gets credit for accomplishments and progress.
- Set up another retreat to establish next year's goals.
- Arrange for the council to conduct a performance appraisal of the manager. Few people enjoy this process, and more councils avoid it than actually do it annually. However, it is the best way to document successes and needed changes.
- Review your personal and professional success. Is the match with the community going well?
- Consider if you want to stay past the minimum two-year commitment or whether you need to begin to gear up for another job search.

Making the Right Moves

- Always remember to put people first. This means being keenly aware that every person has a story, every person has an opinion, and every person has a voice. Hear them out whether you agree with them or not. This is the most valuable thing that you can do as a new administrator. It shows them respect and it will result in them respecting you as well. Mutual respect can lead to collaboration and compromise rather than to obstruction and con-

flict. In a world that is not black and white, putting people first can create many more success stories.

- Never surprise the council. Never let them look foolish in public because they did not know something. Continually communicate with each council member, being sure that each gets the same information. Stress to your staff that "don't surprise the council" is a top priority and that they can ensure that the council is not surprised by making sure that the manager is never surprised.

One manager says, "Although I sometimes disagree with a council member's thoughts, expressions, and/or actions, that person was elected by a majority of those that voted in his or her district. I sometimes know I'm 'right' on an issue, but, theoretically, the voters knew what they were doing when they elected him or her and I can't justify questioning the will of the voters. Since council sets our policies and I administrate them, I usually don't enter discussion on agenda items in public session unless I am asked my opinion. However, in some particularly unique or critical situations, before the meeting starts, I will ask a member of council if he or she will request my thoughts on a matter during open session."

- Encourage continual communication throughout the organization.
- Keep the council together. Help them succeed as a team. Be open, available, and responsive.

At the first one-on-one meetings with council members, one manager tells each that "the council is supposed to be a team—let me help you." Others stress the need for honesty and explain that they are committed to ensuring that all council members get the same information. Emphasize your intention to implement the policies set by the council, explaining that you do not have a personal agenda on political issues.

- Work on council relationships. Communicate every chance you get, realizing that council members vary in how much communication they expect and need. Some members do not see communicating as a two-way street and expect regular calls from the manager. Learn their comfort levels and then use that to stay in contact.
- Stress customer service and building a positive work environment—teamwork and the golden rule—over and over when meeting with department heads.

One manager not only tells this to each department head but also stresses it at larger meetings with employees. He also ensures that he is the first person

that every new employee meets the first day on the job, and he explains these two values at that time.

- Never underestimate the fishbowl. You are in the public eye and people are watching and talking. Never write anything or do anything that would not look good on the front page of the newspaper. Prepare your family for whatever level of public scrutiny will exist; you cannot expect them to be anonymous and must help them develop coping mechanisms.

In a small community, you are a big fish in a small pond. You can expect people to interrupt your dinner at a restaurant or call you at home late at night. You need to find humor in that, or it will drive you crazy. One manager tells the story of a university neighborhood plagued by late-night student parties. The neighbors set up a phone tree so that whenever there was a late party, dozens of them called the manager at home to say, “I can’t sleep, so neither will you.” It was effective. The manager changed the police priorities regarding such complaints. Seeing the humor in the situation helped him keep the issue in perspective.

Another manager relates how the media followed her to the hospital when she went into labor and pushed cameras in her husband’s face when they left the hospital with their baby. She later moved from that small city to a very large city and was struck by the change. Her family was relieved to find that they were mostly unknown and that they could go to a park, for example, where no one would recognize or interrupt them.

- Keep to the high road. When mud starts flying, it’s tempting to lob some back, but don’t.

“Getting dirty undermines your credibility and undercuts a sense of professionalism,” one manager says. “It’s better to take the high road whenever you can.” However, don’t ignore everything. Correcting misinformation is always a good idea.

- Expect that your role includes being a contact point for people who are upset and sometimes abusive. Learn to defuse anger and get to the real problem. Learn to search for win-win solutions. Take time to study the issues so that emotions have time to settle and all options are exposed for consideration.
- Stay neutral, treating all council members similarly. Taking sides with parts of council leads to divisions.

Most managers stress the importance of treating all council members the same, working to develop an equal rapport with each, and ensuring that they always

get the same information. One manager explained how he has had to insist, more than once, that he would not enter a confidential relationship with a council member, stating that any information given to one council member goes to all council members.

- If there are outright confrontations between council members and the manager is pulled in, rifts are created that make it impossible for the council to function as a team.
- Learn about council-staff relationships. Are there staff people who are in constant contact with council members? Be aware of any special relationships that exist and understand how that communication works to assist or undermine your work with council and staff.
- Remember that not everyone is cheering for you.

No matter how good you are, how deserving or hard working, you will not be able to please all the people all the time. It cannot be done. It is impossible. One manager suggests, “Keep your antenna out for criticism. You need to be aware of who is not working for your success.”

- Keep your sense of humor, have patience, and keep things in perspective. When job pressures and stresses get to the point where you can no longer laugh, this is a sign of trouble.
- Take care of yourself; you’re no good to anyone else if you don’t.

“Remember, the job is not about you; it’s about doing what’s right,” explains one manager. Another says, “The manager needs to be the one person in the organization who can walk away. You need to care, but not care too much, not become obsessed. You can’t be afraid to be fired.” Yet another notes, “If every manager could go into the job with the idea of being independent, it would be easier to take what comes and do the best you can.”

Avoiding Pitfalls and Trouble Spots

- Don’t work too much. Most managers spend far more time with work than they do with their families. Find a healthy balance.
- Don’t bluff or cover up.

One manager observes that the first-time administrators who get in trouble usually are those who bluffed, who tried to be know-it-alls, or who tried to cover up mistakes. “That destroys credibility fast,” he says. Managers who insist on doing something their way rather than listening to the community also end up

in trouble. “You need to be a chameleon. The council hires you for your expertise and experience, but it will still want to do things its own way. It needs to do things its own way.”

Another manager advises, “Don’t do things you’re not qualified to do.” He tells a story of a manager who tried to save his community money by running a street improvement project himself, even though he was not an engineer. It was a disaster.

■ Beware of hidden agendas.

On the first day, meeting one-on-one with the council, one manager was stunned when the vice mayor said, “The first thing you need to do is fire the police chief, and I have the council votes lined up to make this happen.”

The manager convinced the vice mayor that more research as well as legal advice was necessary. Buying time allowed the manager to learn that the chief had never been through a performance evaluation. Discussions with other members of the council showed that an incomplete understanding of the issue existed. In the end, the manager had the support of the majority of the council to deal with the situation another way. While these actions temporarily created a rift between the vice mayor and the new manager, they clarified who had responsibility for personnel matters and defined a strong role for the new manager.

“There is a perception that you are there to do what the council wants,” this manager says. “But we are hired for our expertise as well.” In this instance, I explained that there was a need to document performance and explore the legality of the options. I asked, “Why do you want the chief fired?” When the vice mayor told me, I asked if the council had ever told the chief this. It had not. Then I explained that it is my job to oversee personnel. I stuck to my guns, and I stuck to the process. Sticking to the process will keep you out of trouble.

■ Undertaking too much change too fast equals failure.

Managers need to remember that they are not brought to the community to change its values. The manager’s business is to reflect the policy objectives and values of the community. As one manager puts it, “You need to resist the temptation to change the world. I’ve heard of managers eager to impress, who show up with a ten-point plan to make changes. That’s a big mistake. You need to listen to the community, and let change come from within. At the same time, you do have people watching you who are expecting you to do something. So be sure to identify some short-term achievable successes.”



■ Don’t develop personal friendships with council members, a situation that may be more likely in smaller communities where social circles are smaller. Maintaining a unified council that can successfully work together as a team is more difficult when friendships with the manager interfere.

Council-administrator friendships “always lead to heartache,” one manager explains. “Others on the council suspect that the friend gets additional information and favoritism.” Another manager points out that if the friend on the council falls out of favor with the community, the manager falls as well. The flip side also is true. If the manager becomes the focus of controversy, the friend on the council suffers as a result. One manager says that even though he had known the new mayor for years and had been friends socially, once the mayor was elected he stopped calling him by his first name and always referred to him as “Mayor” or “Mr. Mayor,” emphasizing the change in roles. He also stopped socializing with him.

■ Don’t get too isolated. Administrators vary in their comfort levels when it comes to relations with staff and council members. Conflicts of interest can arise from personal relationships, but it is possible to err by becoming too isolated. Managers who develop no personal relationships and are not seen as part of the community can become targets more easily than those who build networks of support within and outside their organizations.

One manager reminds us to be decent and respectful to people. When there is a close call on budget or other items affecting your employees, always give them the benefit of the doubt. “You don’t have to overpay your employees but you need to look out for them to the extent possible. You will be surprised the dividends in loyalty it will pay. Employees can make you or break you. Some administrators treat them as the enemy, and that is suicide.”

- Realize that you cannot know the pressures and stresses until you are on the job. It is impossible to have insight into all that will be demanded of you until you are the top administrator. Even managers who were promoted from within make this observation.

One manager calls himself naive for having offered to continue doing his job as finance manager as well as being the city manager. “But the council was smart enough to know that I would have to hire someone before long, and they were right.”

- Don’t forget the media.

One manager talks about the importance of understanding the two levels of media. The beat reporter, who covers the local news, is only one level, he explains. The second level is composed of the editors and publishers who write editorials and direct coverage. “This second level sways public opinion,” he says. “They are the policy and opinion makers. You need to cultivate a relationship with these people too, so that when they have a question, they feel comfortable calling you. They are, to some degree, influenced by who they know and who they talk to, just like anyone else.”

This manager says that he learned the importance of this the hard way when, despite a good relationship with the local beat reporter, the local paper’s editorials were constantly negative toward the city. He came to realize that since he did not know the people writing the editorials, he had little chance of affecting what was written. “I was too aloof and felt I did not want to muddy my hands. Now I know you need to build that relationship. You cannot assume that they will give you the benefit of the doubt if you do not know them,” he notes.

- Remember that politics is the number one killer.

One manager laughingly describes his job as “keeping the three council members who don’t like me away from the four who have not made up their minds.” The bite of truth in that joke is that the future of any manager always hangs by just one vote. The multitude of facts, rumors, and perceptions that affect any vote is what is usually meant by politics. It is never possible to be entirely in control of the politics, but successful managers keep a finger on the pulse of local rumors and opinions and work hard to be perceived as impartial and fair. In the end, it might make no difference. But as one manager puts it, “If you believe what you are doing is right, then you can take comfort in that.”

Moving to the Top of the Class: On Becoming the Chief Local Government Administrator

Joseph S. Portugal, city manager, McGregor, Texas

Written in 2000 when Joseph was city manager of Weatherford, Texas

You may have asked yourself why anyone would want to become a local government manager. Or perhaps you have settled that question and believe that the real issue is how to survive as a manager. With twenty years of public service at the time of my initial appointment as manager, twelve of which were in local government, I sometimes wondered if such an event would ever happen. When I finally was hired as manager, I was thrust into almost every imaginable situation. Relying on previous experience, insight gained from veteran managers, and divine guidance, I learned to measure my steps judiciously yet responsively.

As a new manager, I assumed responsibilities in a community of approximately 6,000 people in north-eastern Texas. The community seemed to provide ample opportunities for residential and commercial development. The surrounding landscape included three major highways, a natural rolling terrain with two creeks, and foliage that highlighted the change of seasons. The climate was mild by most standards.

However, I soon found out that the political climate was anything but calm. Prior to my arrival, the city had employed four managers in seven years. With the revolving door, there was a prevailing wind of no growth, accompanied by an aging infrastructure, the absence of a comprehensive plan, dwindling economic development prospects, and numerous missed opportunities.

The new council had been united in its belief that the community needed to move forward, and it wanted a qualified manager to lead it and the citizens in creating a vision for the twenty-first century. So the council hired a professional search firm to find a professional manager, a search that resulted in my hiring.

Along with this history, I also had to manage a situation where the previous manager and his wife worked at the senior center. This person had spent only one year as manager, was not a dues-paying member of either the state or national associations, and apparently had no previous managerial or other local government experience. Yet, as a former manager, he was seen as credible by some in the community, and since day one, almost every decision I made was questioned.



Following a brief assessment of the overall situation and the legacy of the previous managers, I decided that the first order of business was gaining the respect of the council and the staff. So I listened to the commentary and watched the behavior of those involved to learn about the key issues.

Initially, I pledged to the council that minimal changes would be made during my first six months, especially where personnel was concerned, so that I could fully evaluate staff members' capabilities. I also told the council that operational guidelines, procedures, and processes would be revised only if needed to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in delivering services.

Then, a survey of the city limits revealed infrastructure needs that required attention. Generally, the community had been allowed to proceed on its own without much direction or thought about the future. The zoning and subdivision regulations, such as they were, had not been enforced. Streets and drainage suffered from the absence of an identified capital improvement program.

General concerns, noted by the consultant hired to recruit the new manager, included allegations of micromanagement by the previous council, low morale among the employees due to pay and benefits issues, council meddling in operational areas, deteriorating equipment and resources, and favoritism toward certain citizens.

Given the revolving door for managers, the consultant asked the current council whether it wanted to lead or be led in developing a plan for the future. The council responded that it was willing to be led by the right manager to create consensus among interest groups to better serve the community. Their ideas included preparing a comprehensive plan, annexation plan, park plan, and thoroughfare plan, and completing a major highway project.

I retained a professional consultant to lead the council and the staff through a strategic planning session in which both groups met on separate days to discuss their feelings, needs, and ideas about where the community was headed. Following the administration of a personality inventory and various team-building exercises, each group developed its own mission statement.

To the surprise of both council and staff, the independently developed mission statements were virtually identical. Thus, the council and staff were similarly motivated to move the community forward and to begin delivering what many citizens had expected when they elected the new council.

Upon becoming manager, I learned that the city would be receiving a state-funded comprehensive planning grant. This grant was the catalyst needed to help the council and staff capitalize on their newfound momentum and work together to develop a plan for the future. Their actions let the community see that the council, staff, and new manager were working together for the benefit of the citizens.

Challenges to the administration always occur within a first-time administrator's initial six months. Citizens who feel displaced, those who actually were displaced by election results, and others who believe that they have an ax to grind mount assaults on city hall. Sometimes a reason for their concerns exists; at other times individuals are merely testing the mettle of the new manager and how she or he responds. Whatever the case, this is a critical period.

Achieving consensus is sometimes particularly difficult in smaller communities, where everyone seems to know one another. In these circumstances, gaining the confidence and respect of the council and staff may be especially important. Once that has been accomplished, a new manager needs to cultivate influential community members who can provide insight and background information about particular situations. Because this process is tenuous and can be full of land mines, the new manager is best advised to respect and maintain confidentiality.

As a new manager, you are somewhat alone and should therefore establish a network of neighboring managers who can be of assistance. Within two months of my employment, I had already visited with the managers of the four largest cities in the county. We agreed to meet monthly for lunch and to participate in an information exchange.

Regardless of coursework, professional seminars, management conferences, association meetings, and networking with professional managers, new administrators can still find themselves in precarious situations. As large and diverse as our profession is, no single individual can possibly have all the answers to every situation. Therefore, it is important to have another source of support when times become difficult, as they frequently do.

For me, an abiding personal faith and quiet time for reflection are beneficial in dealing with tough situations. In the management profession, relying on faith is a known quality although it is not often the subject of articles or seminars. When days seem trying, a manager needs an outlet for feelings. I have been well served by quiet time for reflection at home or in the office, before anyone else arrives at work. While such respite does not guarantee that your tenure as manager will be free of challenges, it may provide you with peace of mind. Whatever mechanism you choose for reflection, I submit that it is a necessary component of the managerial temperament. Ultimately, it sustains the hallmarks of our profession: honesty, integrity, and professionalism.

After two years on the job, I see employees who believe that government can control growth and development in an orderly manner. In place is a visionary outlook that is based on a comprehensive plan, complete with zoning and subdivision regulations. Water and sewer infrastructure, street improvements, and a new sports complex that provides much-needed recreational opportunities all speak to the community's quality of life. A new beautification board and park board ensure that local citizens are stakeholders in their community and provide a new generation of appointed leaders to maintain the momentum. While there are always issues to address, the community has discovered its identity and has a plan for the future.

In learning about their own needs for self-respect, the employees have become a culturally diverse, yet singularly focused work unit that draws praise from citizens and council alike. They have benefited from a council-approved, two-step compensation plan; an annual awards luncheon; and the development of

a city manager's advisory committee (CMAC) that provides constructive commentary to management. Employees who participate on the CMAC address customer service requests and have established a peer review system to celebrate their success. Their articulated mission and tangible contributions to the community provide evidence of their newfound strength.

As a new manager, I realize that above all else, I am the center of public opinion. While at times it seems that there is more criticism than praise, it is important to never underestimate the silent majority who support progress in all its manifestations.

Time, experience, and faith have taught me to be persistent and purposeful. Ultimately, the challenge of public service offers its own intrinsic rewards.

The following suggestions may help you become oriented in your new position:

1. Assess the expectations of the council by canvassing members' opinions concerning the job you were hired to do, and determine the benchmarks for measuring your success in meeting their expectations.
2. Engage a professional consultant to assist you in conducting a strategic planning session with the council and staff to ferret out concerns and develop an overall vision for the community.
3. Determine the infrastructure needs of the community and, if necessary, retain a professional planning consultant to prepare a comprehensive plan.
4. Attend various community functions and interact with people to gain insight into the attitudes, beliefs, and concerns of citizens.



5. Visit with neighboring colleagues, where feasible, to establish a network of support and a sounding board for situations you may encounter.
6. Establish a personal regimen of quiet time to reflect upon issues before you and to determine the directions in which you should travel.
7. Celebrate the success of the organization in a way that allows the council and staff to participate and enjoy the moment, reinforcing continuity and consensus.
8. Inform the public of progress being made and of benefits to their overall quality of life.
9. Cultivate the mission of the organization through efficiency and effectiveness in delivery of services to citizens.
10. Rejoice in the opportunity to make a positive contribution to local governance.

3. Handling a Promotion from within an Organization

When an opportunity to seek the manager's position within the organization arises, some assistants are hesitant to take the next step. However, you may already have many of the necessary core skills. You probably have knowledge of and experience with key services, documents, and related management concerns (e.g., capital projects, financial plans, economic development strategies, personnel issues). Recognizing that you have this foundation and the value it brings to your organization should mitigate any hesitancy you might have in seeking to become the new manager. Tim Wiberg, village administrator of Lincolnwood, Illinois, suggests that "when you start questioning the decisions made by the manager and you think you can do the job better, it is probably time to step up."

When you make the move to the manager's position in your organization, there are positives and negatives to consider. You have an advantage in that you don't have to figure out how to navigate the organization, learn who the players are in the community, fathom the personalities of your elected officials, and deal with related challenges that arise with the unknown. In some cases you can hit the ground running much faster than a counterpart from outside the community.

However, a newly arrived manager may benefit from a more forgiving learning curve because, as one manager notes, there is "no honeymoon period when you are an internal promotion." The negatives include the need to define your new role and authority with department heads, former peers, and community members. One manager found that dealing with personnel issues could be one of the biggest challenges facing an internally promoted candidate. Several managers advise that when it comes to the organization and staff, you have to "make your expectations known early on." Others found that using performance goals to create a new culture is helpful; such goals made it clear that former peers would have to change and

adapt because "your first responsibility is to the organization." For those employees who are resistant to change, deliberate strategies to encourage them to adapt and succeed must first be applied. Then, if they still appear unable to adapt, it is in the best interest of your organization for them to find positions elsewhere that are more aligned with their goals.

In your new position, you will also lose the insulation you previously had from the elected officials. This has been a particularly difficult lesson for some new managers to learn. Ryan Spitzer, town manager of Glasgow, Virginia, advises recent MPA graduates to "remember that each day is new, and just because the council did not like an idea one day does not mean that it will not back you up on an idea the next day.... Take each day in stride, forget battles lost, and work toward the next issue. Do not take defeats personally.... Remember, you were hired to be the professional among politicians, and you should conduct yourself in this manner."

Having been part of the organization already may make you anxious to make changes right away. Several managers advise being patient. They caution not to set unrealistic goals for yourself or the organization, to itemize what you want to accomplish, and to prioritize the list. Art Osten Jr. of Fox River Grove, Illinois, provides this advice for the new manager: "Never miss an opportunity to keep your mouth shut. Don't feel you need to fill every silence during a committee or public meeting. People need time to absorb your ideas and 'come along' with you. Don't drag them."

A final advantage that the promoted-from-within manager has is a preexisting support network. Seek advice through the mentors and the networks of other colleagues with whom you already have relationships. As the stress level increases and the stakes get higher, these relationships are not just a lifeline professionally; they can benefit your personal well-being, too.

The following perspectives are from managers who were promoted from within.

Heads or Tails? Moving from Assistant Manager to Manager in the Same Organization

Kelly Arnold, town manager, Windsor, Colorado

Written in 2000 when Kelly was city manager of Laramie, Wyoming

Like the traditional assistant manager, I had always aspired to be a manager. Mind you, during my seven-year tenure as assistant in Laramie, Wyoming, there were many times when I thought that the assistant manager position was just fine. My predecessor was manager for over fifteen years, and I witnessed the trials and tribulations of a long-tenured manager. I often thought that being the tail of the manager's office was not all that bad.

When my predecessor left the manager position, I had to decide whether I was willing and ready to flip the coin and become the head of the organization. Of course, everyone wanted to know that answer as soon as the manager's resignation was announced. Even though I knew deep down in my heart that it was a position that I wanted, I was noncommittal and assumed the interim manager reins.

What was most important during the interim phase was my business-as-usual posture. The main priority and focus of the council was filling the manager's position, so council members did not want to deal with change or any other major organizational issues. During this phase, I had time to evaluate the organization, develop my interest in the position, and determine what I would do as a manager. As an interim manager, you are thrust into the spotlight, which allows you to immediately evaluate how you will do in the long run of being in the light that brightly shines on every manager. Staying politically neutral and showing the true professionalism that you have developed as an assistant are important during this time.

Spending time with your family to make sure that they are committed to the life of a manager is also important. So many changes occur, particularly in relations with friends and in everyday occurrences, such as grocery shopping. In addition, we had to be sure that we were committed to at least another three to five years in a community in which we had already lived for over seven years.

In Laramie, a consultant was hired to do a search-and-interview process. During this period, I established my relationship with the council and organization as the interim manager, allowing them time to evaluate my performance and personality as a manager. When the search process was completed, the council concluded that I was the best person for the position. I was fortunate to have a council that trusted me and with whom I had developed a positive relationship.

I have witnessed similar processes in other communities where different decisions were made about hiring the interim manager as the new manager. In the long run, the best decisions for all parties are usually made.

From here on out, your life as a former tail to a head changes immensely. Just by the stature of the position and title, your relationships from the past change, and new relationships are established. Even though I was prepared, such occurrences were the most difficult thing about the position change. After about two and a half years as manager, I have finally accepted the changes and am totally comfortable in my position. Although there are still times that I long to be a tail in the organization, the desire to be a good manager and provide the best service to my community quickly banishes any longing for the past.

Even though the transition of an internal candidate to manager is not the norm, I would encourage all assistant managers to seriously consider the opportunities that abound with making the transition to manager when the opportunity arises. We have great insight that can provide the community with a smooth and quick transition. Most importantly, moving from assistant manager to manager within the same organization allows you time to mature as a manager in a familiar organization before taking on new challenges later in your career.

Surviving the Transition from Assistant Manager to Manager

Allan Weegar, city manager, Hurst, Texas

Preparing for a job interview when you are the inside candidate is really no different than when applying for a manager's position in another community. In both cases, the aspiring assistant must make sure that he or she is familiar with all the issues that face the community before sitting for any interviews with the council. Do not approach the interview with the attitude of "I already know everything" or "They already know what I can do, so I do not have to prove myself."

The preparation required depends on how closely you were in the loop on major issues and decisions facing the organization. The council expects more insight from an assistant who has been privy to the issues. An outside candidate may speculate on how a situation might be handled, but the expectations are high for an assistant who has probably been involved in addressing the issues with the manager.

Do not take preparing for the interview lightly. Since you may have the inside track, or even inside information regarding hot issues, make sure that you are prepared to answer questions regarding local concerns. The council will critique your answers very carefully because you have been part of the management team trying to solve them. Even if you were close philosophically to the previous manager and learned your managerial style from him or her, make sure that your own philosophy and individuality come out when you are responding to interview questions. "I would handle the issue like so-and-so" is an interview turnoff.

You may be offered the job and then asked what you believe is equitable compensation. Because you already are an employee, the council may look at your appointment as a simple promotion or grade change. Do not allow yourself to be hired below market value because of your assistant position; instead, seek a fair starting salary and benefits package, and try to get a commitment for future growth. This can be done by written or verbal agreement, with a written agreement the preferred way to document the commitment to future salary and benefits. Most councils are open to discussing an employment agreement, so if you desire such an agreement, take advantage of their willingness.

Since you are a current employee, some of your bargaining power may be lost, but look at this as an opportunity and seek future, instead of immediate, compensation and benefits. Examples of negotiations that might make the council feel more at ease could include agreeing to an additional salary increase after six months or additional future benefits, rather than asking for everything immediately upon appointment. You will find that the council appreciates your commitment and the knowledge that you expect to be learning and developing throughout the first year of your management tenure.

What happens on your first day, in the first week, in the first six months? Besides gaining the respect and confidence of the council, you need to work on gaining the respect, trust, and confidence of the organization. Change always generates insecurity and trepidation, so gain your management team's confidence and respect immediately.

Begin setting up meetings with each department or division head to review your management philosophy and style. They may have worked with you throughout your tenure in the organization, but they still need to hear from you what your management style is going to be. This step also is important because you can find out what concerns others have and gain insight into their management styles. These are two-way discussions, and your managers need to come prepared to discuss their work program and goals for their departments.

Visit as many operating departments as you can and be visible to your employees. Any time there is a transition, questions abound, so be available and open to discussing these areas as needed. If you have employee groups, set up meetings and provide your thoughts on key issues.

The impression that you convey during the first year is the key to your success in gaining the respect of your employees. Be visible, open, and genuine.

Besides interacting with your organization, get out and visit in the community. Be available to meet with neighborhood groups, the business community, the chamber of commerce, and other organizations. This provides an opportunity for them to review your goals and objectives for the organization and see how

they may fit into their own needs. Moreover, these organizations need to see you in action and develop their own opinions about your skills, leadership, and personality. Many times these groups have perceptions of city hall, either good or bad, and you are being measured by how the previous manager handled situations. Building upon or overcoming past impressions takes time.

Do not present yourself as a clone of the previous manager, however popular she or he was. The organization and community are looking for individuality. Even if you were very close to the administrator and he or she was your mentor, you still have your own personality and your own management and leadership style. You cannot be someone you are not, and the community, elected officials, and your organization will quickly discover if you try to be someone other than yourself.

Do not come in and reorganize just to put your stamp on the organization. Areas may need to be changed or tweaked, but take your time and do your homework. The organization is expecting change, but the quickest way to alienate everyone is by jumping in quickly without laying the groundwork for organizational change. Defuse any uncertainty by studying all options. Visit again with your departmental managers to see what their thoughts and needs are and how their departments may fit into any possible reorganization. Provide them with your thoughts on where you see the organization is headed and how they may play a part. Also, keep your council informed about any changes.

Develop a list of your organizational goals and objectives see how they relate to the current work program. As soon as you can, present your list to the council for its ongoing evaluation of your performance. Keeping the council informed about your attainment of these goals is important; do not wait until your annual evaluation, which may be a year later. It is always good to get the council's feedback so that you are not caught unaware when problems arise.

Remember that the council will inevitably measure you against the previous manager. If the previous manager was very popular and respected, your task

in gaining the confidence of the council may be more difficult. You will find that the council soon accepts your leadership style and personality only if you are yourself. Do not try to imitate others' styles; develop your own.

As an assistant, you may not have had many opportunities to visit with other managers. Even if you are active in professional organizations, develop peer relationships with other managers in the area or within your local city management organization. These relationships can provide you with a wealth of support, advice, and counseling and can serve as a peer network to assist you in your professional and personal growth.

Taking care of yourself is a critical component of the entire process of moving up to the manager's position. A lot of stress occurs in the first year, arising from the transition and the extra demands as you develop your management team. Demands on your time come from the council, the staff, and the community. Typically, as an assistant manager, you already live in the community, so the stress of moving does not compound the transition. You also are probably active and known in the community, so developing community and business relationships do not take as long as when you were new to town. Use the extra time for stress reduction and family participation.

Along with the normal transitional stress that you face in changing jobs, your family also undergoes the stress of the transition. The number of meetings that you must attend increases, and the demands on your time go up dramatically. Don't give up the things that you like to do because of these additional demands. Continue to provide time for your family and yourself. Take time off as needed to rejuvenate yourself and gain perspective. If you are working yourself hard, it takes a toll on you mentally and physically. You have to make time for personal endeavors and not let the job be the driving force of your existence. Elected officials usually realize that you may be spending more time at the office because you are in the development and learning process; they should also be supportive of your personal needs.

Assessing Whether You Want the Top Spot

Joe Casey, deputy county administrator, Hanover County, Virginia

A passion for public service is an inherent trait for employees who are promoted toward the ultimate post of manager. In many cases such promotions arise in one of two ways: (1) a supervisor is given an acting or permanent position, which creates a vacancy in his or her prior position, or (2) an opportunity is provided that may not be in the direct chain of command (e.g., director in one department, given responsibilities over different departments). Both pathways can lead you toward accession to assistant manager (the “number 2 spot”). However, once you achieve this promotional stature, a different promotional path may emerge when the managerial position becomes vacant.

While in the assistant spot (which may be one of several assistant administrator positions), a manager has the opportunity to develop managerial traits (e.g., experience, maturity, networking ability). This is also a critical point in the employee’s career in which personal development traits and time commitments (e.g., family, hobbies, volunteering) also need to be recognized and respected. Achieving this balance between personal and professional life can help ensure that workplace stress is managed and mitigated, and that quality aspects of life can be attained and fully appreciated. In many cases, those in the number 2 spot may have greater freedoms to enjoy personal activities than the manager, so long tenures in such positions may actually be a wise investment of time. The by-product of such time is a person who is able to share in his or her children’s lives, become further vested in the community, and be further sought out as a knowledgeable and respected source.

From a personal finance standpoint, the number 2 spot may also improve retirement planning as “years of service” factors in with the job security that is sometimes associated with the assistant position. In some cases, the concern of financial security or desire to keep the children in the same school system deters assistants from seeking the manager’s position too quickly. The timing may be best when children are in their later school years, college education costs are funded, and base retirement financial security goals are reasonably met. Ideally, the manager will gracefully retire at a point when the assistant is best positioned professionally and personally to easily assume



an acting position and is, by default, the recognized manager by elected officials, the workforce, and the community.

Even the best-laid plans become disrupted when the manager’s timeline ends abruptly as a result of unanticipated career moves, political pressures, or personal reasons. When this happens, it is incumbent for the assistant to strategically assess whether rising up to meet the challenge of first becoming an acting manager and then seeking the position of manager is what is best for all concerned. In making this assessment, there are a few key aspects to recognize:

- Your current relationships with friends and colleagues may change when you’re in the top spot.
- You need to have the emotional strength and self-esteem to handle being rejected for the full-time position or living with the possibility of being fired. Both are common concerns that managers face in our line of work.
- Remembering the passion and commitment to public service that likely brought you to local government, you need to determine how or if seeking the manager position will help you leave your legacy.

Final Words

- Remember the positive: You already know the community, the organization, and the challenges.

- Accept the challenge that department heads, former peers, and community members have to adjust to your new role and authority. Meeting with them and outlining expectations helps to ease the transition.

“There is no honeymoon when you are an internal promotion,” declares one manager. Another points out that being an insider means that you may know about staff members who are not doing their jobs or who are in the wrong positions. Dealing with personnel issues could be one of the biggest challenges facing an internally promoted candidate.

“Remember, your first responsibility is to the organization,” another manager suggests. “I found that, in some instances, my former peers made it difficult for me to be the boss. I had to learn to bite the bullet, even if that meant stepping on the feelings of my former peers. I had to buckle down and be the bad guy, doing things such as correcting a former peer in

public. Once I did it, it got easier.” Another manager describes setting up performance goals that made it clear that former peers would have to change and adapt or choose to leave the organization.



4. Handling a Newly Created Position

Before Accepting the Position

- Determine the intended objectives and political circumstances around which the position was created.
- Do a self-evaluation: Am I patient enough to start from scratch? Do I have a vision for the community? Can I be content to implement that vision over a period of time?
- Clarify, as much as possible, your position in the chain of command both with council and with staff—a particularly important step for a first-time administrator position without benefit of “the plan.”
- If no office space exists (not uncommon in a newly created position), create some without stepping on anyone’s toes.
- Identify core staffing needs since you may be starting from scratch, and develop access for recruiting for these positions as soon as possible.

After You’ve Been Offered the Job

- Determine how the elected body conducts business. You may need to assess whether current procedures are complying with state law, including open-meeting laws and open-records requirements.
- Assist the council and mayor in educating the public on the administrator’s role in their community.

Once on the Job

- Fill previously elected positions made vacant by the change in government structure; this provides needed support as long as it is clear that you are now in charge.
- Honor the past. Empathize with problems that the council was trying to deal with that led to your hiring. Solicit the council’s version of what the issues were and how it attempted to resolve them.
- Remember that a 60–40 referendum vote means that four out of every ten people in town didn’t want a manager.

- Remember that the elected officials are used to being in charge. Solicit their advice whenever possible to ease the transition to this new form of government.
- Remind yourself that the best part of being a first-time administrator is creating a new organizational structure and building a team. Properly approached, the efficient operation of the organization can’t help but increase.
- Get to know managers in the area both as a personal support network and because they are likely to know what the issues were that led to the change in government.

Avoiding Pitfalls and Trouble Spots

- Realize that you represent change to a lot of people; their negative reactions to you are not necessarily personal but reflect their fear of change.
- Beware of having “savior” expectations. At the same time, remember that many believe that this new person (you!) will quickly solve all problems.
- Take time and patience to create a management team and instill a team philosophy. Employees have been used to running their own show; a new person overseeing and coordinating things is not always a welcome addition.
- Be alert to potential conflicts of interest that are particularly prevalent in small towns where relatives of elected officials often work for the local government. Managing these situations can be tricky.
- Work on roles and relationships. Council members and employees may be used to working together closely with employees and routinely lobbying elected officials for pet projects.
- Don’t be afraid to admit mistakes.
- Don’t get discouraged. You want to win the war, so a few strategically chosen losses are okay.
- Consider that being the first administrator means that your public style defines the community’s perception of an administrator’s role and function. You carry the weight of your profession and its professional association on your shoulders.

You're Number One: The First Administrator in the Community

Richard Hierstein, retired city manager, first administrator in Knoxville, Iowa; Owatonna, Minnesota; and Pekin, Illinois

The first administrator in a community has opportunities greater than most administrators enjoy. Since altering the form of government was a call for change, people generally are willing to be helpful and supportive if they are asked for their input before changes occur. However, any first administrator in a community that has changed its form of government needs to follow the same practices as other new administrators, gaining understanding and information during the initial weeks on the new job. For example, like your colleagues, you must approach and listen to elected officials, employees, and the public. A goal-setting session with elected officials and department heads is especially helpful.

But the first-time administrator encounters several special situations. The community needs to know what to expect with the change in form of government: that elected officials are responsible for setting direction and policy, with the administrator strengthening the effectiveness of the mayor and council. Elected officials need to have the changes reinforced. Department heads and employees need to learn that they are truly a team whose cohesiveness and cooperation can make a tremendous difference for everyone in the community.

To strengthen effectiveness, the administrator must be fully in charge of operations, given that undercutting her or his responsibility has serious consequences for effectiveness. We know that the lines between policy and administration are certainly not crystal clear, but we need to impress the community with the importance of the distinction, and opportunities to demonstrate that distinction present themselves early on. Handling the first opportunities properly should minimize future problems since no matter how discreetly situations are handled, word quickly gets around.

In my first experience as a first manager, that initial opportunity came in the first few weeks. A department head went to the outgoing mayor with a request that his personnel be given an extra day off at Thanksgiving. The mayor granted the request without conferring with me—the city manager—or with the council, an action that went beyond the mayor's authority and contrary to established policy. By the time I became



aware of the situation, several employees had planned trips around the expanded time off.

I first confirmed with council members that such action was not done with their knowledge and consent, and that none of them was aware of anything like this happening in the past. Next, I talked to the department head to confirm what had happened. Since he had been used to the mayor occasionally granting requests that violated policy, he claimed to see nothing unusual with the mayor's actions. We discussed proper procedure and the problems that could arise. He was given the opportunity to inform his people that the extra holiday had not been properly granted and would therefore not be possible. We arranged to allow persons who would be inconvenienced by the change to take the day off and make up the eight hours within the pay period.

In each of the three communities where I have been the first manager, I have dealt with violations of policy by elected officials. Although these violations usually involve policies that existed before the position of manager was established, the new manager inherits the continuing problems created by the violations. In one case, a council committee chair had taken actions that should have had approval by the full council. In another, the mayor issued a letter exempting the police and fire departments from a personnel policy approved by the full governing body.

Ensuring that basic policies are properly recorded and followed is a related priority for the first-time administrator. This process can involve team build-

ing with department heads: having them assist with the assembly or review of a personnel policy has a number of significant benefits. Their participation allows them to find out that other departments knew about the preferential treatment that their departments had received in the past and also shows them the hard feelings that were generated by such activities. All are given a stake in working together for policies that are in everyone's best interest. It also gives the manager a chance to learn that some different treatment can be appropriate and accepted.

Team building with department heads is generally a rewarding process for a first-time administrator. I

had one situation in which the department heads had never met as a group prior to my arrival. At least two of the heads had significant problems dealing with each other. While the occasional conflict between them could be frustrating, the results of their cooperative efforts were far better than either could have achieved alone. When the group completed its work on the initial five-year capital improvement plan, all department heads were genuinely satisfied with the finished product. They had openly discussed conflicting interests and arrived at compromises that everyone agreed were in their own long-term best interests as well as those of the community.

A Rural Perspective on Breaking the Barriers to Professional Management as a First Administrator

Ann K. Capela, city manager, Inkster, Michigan

Written in 2000 when Ann was administrative coordinator of Walworth County, Wisconsin

For both the administrator and the community, taking on the first-time administrator challenge can range from being extremely rewarding to being very unproductive. For me, it has been very rewarding, with my greatest pleasure coming after I had served slightly more than two years in the community: a local newspaper's editorial said, "Capela moved the county forward."

But what do you do in the beginning? What do you do after visiting the community, attending the regular getting-to-know-you events, finding a small office in the basement of the building, and scrounging up a few pads of paper from a somewhat skeptical staff? My advice: contact your nearest professional manager and acquire some frame of reference on who is who in the community and what events led to the decision to bring on a professional manager.

Building trust is the most difficult task in a rural community that tends to be close-knit and skeptical of new ways of doing things. No magic formula exists. The process requires time, being diligent in the organizational restructuring of the governing body (how the business of the body is conducted), and, above all, being prudent and ethical in your dealings with all who come to you for help or advice.

You quickly need to answer three major questions:

- How is the business of the governing body conducted?

- What is the internal organizational structure?
- How does the organization interact with the community?

Encompassing all of the above is your relationship with the local media.

So, first you need to identify how the governing body is structured and how its business is conducted. In the case of the rural county where I worked, the county was governed by twelve standing oversight committees in management, which recommended action to the full board. The board then acted by resolution, simple motion, or ordinance.

I found a problem in how the meetings were conducted—notably, in their timing and sequencing. Committee meetings were set for whenever those present decided it was convenient for the majority to meet, or whenever it was the "custom and practice." (Note this phrase: it became the explanation to many of my queries of "why are we doing this?") I established a consistent business cycle for the governing body by getting members to agree to a simple calendar of scheduled committee meetings, with the board meeting as the anchor. I accomplished this by sending a calendar at the end of the month to all members of the board and those requesting public notification, and by posting all notices on the bulletin board outside of the administrator's office.

Within a year, I was receiving phone calls from

spouses who were planning ahead and wanted to know what was on the calendar for the month. Moreover, the business cycle allowed department heads to plan ahead in providing information requested at previous meetings. The media were pleased that there was some assurance of consistency and that they could plan news coverage.

In retrospect, the second issue—understanding the internal organizational structure—was my greatest challenge. How do you map out a structure where there is no formal structure? When the statutes are silent, there is only custom and practice. An organizational chart outlining the relationships and the flow of authority is a must, and fitting the professional manager into this chart and flow of authority is crucial to every first-time administrator. In county government, the governmental structure is trifurcated and those officials who are elected or appointed vary from state to state; thus, making this fit is the first course of action for a first-time administrator in determining the organizational structure. The next step is determining which county functions are musts (legally mandated), which are optional, and which are custom and practice.

Third, you must always figure out how the organization's functions relate not only to each other internally but also to the larger community. Important external bodies often include other governmental bod-

ies and agencies with which your organization has financial relationships; for counties, this often includes university extension offices.

The relationship between you and the media can be your greatest asset and a link to the community in building needed trust. An open relationship with the local media is essential to spreading the good news about how the new, professionally managed structure works for the community and benefits residents. For me, media contacts included a monthly half-hour radio show after every county board meeting.

Know thy open-meetings law! An open-door policy should be the rule, not the exception. Remember, unless issues are exempted by the open-meetings law, they are matters of public record.

The three questions that I posed above, when answered, help to produce the trust needed by the new first-time professional administrator in a rural community. In addition, when you look back as a professional, you will be rewarded by knowing that you have changed how the governing body does its business, changed the internal structure of the functions, changed how the functions relate to each other, and changed how the community receives your successor. Following my tenure, the county chose to hire another professional and to this day is still operating with a professional administrator.

Being First: We've Created a Position Just for You

Drew Corn, town administrator, Northlake, Texas

For the community that creates an administrator position for the first time, expectations run the gamut. Contrary to what I originally thought when accepting the job as first administrator of Northlake, the first and foremost expectation of the council was for operational consistency. The greatest frustration on the part of the town's elected leaders was the lack of follow-through. I was quickly reminded that most elected officials are part-time volunteers; this is even more the case in smaller towns. Often their work and family obligations conflict with meeting deadlines, attending intergovernmental meetings, and completing seemingly endless paperwork. For the most part, the Northlake council had a clear vision of where it wanted to go and what it wanted to be. My role was to assist the community in reaching this vision through

day-to-day oversight and administration.

My own expectations were more focused on my technical abilities. I was recruited from a mid-sized city, where I had served as budget director, and I had assumed that I was to bring this very complicated and award-winning budget process to the small town of Northlake. I soon realized that my time was split between so many different activities that I was unable to concentrate on the budget as I had been able to do in my previous city. This brings up another important expectation. You may have been recruited for a particular area of expertise, but you are obviously expected to handle all areas related to administering a city or county. In order to accomplish this, you must analyze your organization: what areas of expertise do you have covered, and to what areas must you bring in additional support?

If you are in a small community with limited resources, you will not have all the necessary staff positions to cover all areas. And as I realized almost immediately, you cannot cover all areas at once. So you need to develop a plan for adding professional staff as resources become available. And because you can seldom hire part-time employees in more specialized fields, you must wait for adequate and reliable resources to become available before you can hire a full-time position. Often consultants can help you bridge the gap while you are waiting for adequate resources. However, consultants often work for many different entities; they cannot always drop everything to assist you, and they are seldom down the hall. As mentioned, part-time employees are a possible interim (and often long-term) solution. In the case of Northlake, our needs were much greater than our resources, and we had to work hard at keeping the hours of part-time employees within budget. Part-time employees were right down the hall, but some creativity and consideration were needed to work around their schedules.

Developing and growing your staff involves another expectation that the council and the community has of you: professionalism and ethics in your actions and those of your staff. You, of course, must exhibit these traits, but you must also ensure that they are strengthened by your hiring decisions. Because of the newness of your position, you are often thrust into a role of defending and justifying the council-manager form of government even if, as was my case, the position was created by ordinance and not by charter. Administrators in newly created positions are often under increased pressure because an unsuccessful administrator may cause the elected officials to reconsider their move to create the position. Whether you want to or not, you serve as trial run for a community's foray into professional administration. Your actions and, by extension, those of your staff become evidence for the community's decision to continue along this path or reverse course. Communities with long traditions of professional management do not have quite the same pressure when it comes to hiring decisions.

Another expectation held by my council that really caught me off guard was to grow and develop my network and associations. I had previously worked in organizations that viewed professional associations as nonessential, and when budget constraints arose, as they invariably do, conferences, workshops, and memberships were the first things to be cut and the last to be reinstated. I was very fortunate that my council understood the importance of networking, especially for a small community with limited resources and

for an administrator who had never held the position before. Another surprise was the assistance and advice I received from administrators in the area—often from managers who were in neighboring communities that were competing for the same developments, grants, and projects. I was made aware in my first months at the helm that other administrators must first carry out the goals and directives of their governing bodies, but barring no conflict with this primary directive, assistance to fellow colleagues was freely given (and, on my part, eagerly accepted).

Even though your community has created an administrator position and you are the first individual to sit in the chair, there are obviously other individuals within the organization who had been providing various levels of administration and oversight. In Texas, typically the first employee is the town secretary, and this individual will have been there long before you arrived. In many situations the secretary will not report to you. Understanding the secretary's role in the organization as it was prior to your arrival is crucial in the sharing and ultimate transitioning of many administrative duties. And there may be other staff members who were already with the organization before you came, such as a police chief or public works director. As with any organization, you should spend time and effort developing trust and rapport with existing staff, but you should also realize that, like the council, these employees are not used to having an administrator in the organization, let alone a new boss. In addition, where they once may have reported directly to the council, you have now come between them and the council in the hierarchy. You also must take into account the personal and professional relationships among members of the governing body.

Your relationship with the elected body must be constantly monitored and assessed. Communication, both formal and informal, is crucial to your success. As a management assistant in the Dallas City Manager's Office, I was often frustrated by the painstaking wording and numerous rewrites of council agenda items until Mary Suhm (at the time an assistant manager) commented that the council agenda and the annual budget were the two most important methods of communication that a manager had with council. Simply speaking, the budget shows the governing body your plan to enact their policies within the resources given, and the agenda shows them how you will accomplish this through their approval of certain actions. But even within these formal communication processes, informal communication is necessary. Being available to individual council members for questions they may have on an

agenda item or a budget request could avoid misunderstandings. Every manager I observed dropped everything to take a call from a council member, not only because that was his or her boss but also because a few minutes of conversation could save hours of debate during budget hearings or council meetings. You always want to be on the same page as your elected officials from day one. In a newly created position, you and the council will need to develop a system that works best for each party; one size does not fit all. Each council member may prefer a very different communication method. Know their preferred methods and use them.

However, during the transition of day-to-day operations, the most important individual in the organization to communicate with is the chief elected official. This transition can be very complex because the official is going from serving in both a policy and administrative role to serving in just a policy role. I was very fortunate to have a mayor who worked with me and was very forthright and communicative. In hindsight, I was frankly not ready to take over all town activities at once, and there were many ongoing projects for which I did not have the luxury of time to be “caught up to speed.” I was given authority in bite-sized pieces. In my case, the mayor was the chief executive prior to my arrival, and we evolved into a power-sharing transition. As a wise, now-retired manager once told me, the mayor can be your best friend or your worst enemy.

In the end, what helped me the most in transitioning from a manager in a very large city to a director

in a mid-sized city to an administrator in a small town is that I had very few preconceived notions. A peer in a neighboring community who was Roanoke’s first administrator, Jimmy Stathatos, put it succinctly, “I think it really helped me that I hadn’t been a CM before. I had worked for council-manager cities, obviously, but I didn’t have any habits that I needed to change.” Communities that are creating an administrator position are, in a sense, starting fresh. But they are also taking a risk, and they want (and possibly need) somebody who has an open mind or, at the minimum, a very flexible and adaptable personality.

You will most likely be the highest-paid individual in the organization working for an elected body of unpaid volunteers. You may also have the highest level of education among the staff. Many on staff and in the community will be looking for you to fix problems or to give you their problems, often one and the same. At the end of the day, you are a public servant hired to provide administrative oversight and leadership. Everyone will have certain expectations of you, which will possibly conflict with those of others. You might be asked to settle old scores, take risks no one else would take, or go in directions opposite to that of previous council policy. While the staff and your peers are always important to your success as an administrator, especially if you are a first-time administrator, ultimately you work directly for the elected body as chosen by the community at large. Implementing the council’s policy will be the measure of your success.

5. NONTRADITIONAL ROUTES TO MANAGEMENT

Ten years ago ICMA appointed a First-Time Administrator's Task Force to research and prepare a handbook designed to serve as a guide for newly appointed administrators. The result of that effort has provided those new to the profession with a practical, commonsense outline of testimonials and how-to's in the interest of helping these individuals assimilate into their positions.

Today ICMA has once again asked a task force of local government professionals to examine the handbook and determine what revisions are needed to bring the document up-to-date for today's newly appointed administrators. Since the development of the original effort, the local government profession has experienced many changes. Among them is the emergence of nontraditional appointees to the profession from a host of different backgrounds, trades, and experience levels.

Given that phenomenon, we would be remiss not to account for this new nontraditional avenue to the profession. When I first entered local government, the

standard path to becoming a manager was administrative assistant, to assistant to the manager, to assistant or deputy manager, and, finally, to manager. While this is still a route that those entering the profession may take, nontraditional entrance into the management field is becoming more a consequence of the retirement of veteran managers.

Accordingly, this section documents the entrance of these nontraditional managers into the profession. Examples include individuals from the military, public education, the private sector, and, most notably, recent MPA program graduates. Whatever the path, the time-honored traditions of ethical service, commitment to democracy, and an understanding of the delicate balance of council-manager relations are still keys to a successful management career. It is for this reason that the handbook acknowledges the nontraditional managers' ascendancy to the top position and the challenges that they have experienced.

—Joseph S. Portugal, city manager,
McGregor, Texas, ICMA-CM

From the Classroom to the Manager's Office

Ryan Spitzer, town manager, Glasgow, Virginia

College has undoubtedly taught you all you need to know about searching for information and critically and rationally putting that information together for the betterment of a community. However, as I have found out, college stops short there and cannot teach you about the intangibles about a job. Here are some recommendations from what I learned in my first year on the job:

- Know the community before you take the job. You should do research on the locality about the way of life of its people, what services they expect, any issues that may be present at the time, etc.
- Once you get the job, form relationships with your council members. This is important because you have to work with these people on a regular basis. It is also important to understand their mentality and thought processes on issues.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions. Asking questions is very important because, as a new manager, you will not know everything. Local knowledge that longtime employees and council members have will be invaluable. Also, talk with other managers in your state or region because they have all been through the same ordeal, maybe just on a different scale. If you do not reach out to others, you will not be able to grow in the profession.
- Form expectations up front with council members. This is important. Have a meeting with each one when you get to the locality, and then meet with the entire group so that you can learn what they expect from you and what you expect from them. They should set the policy while you manage the operations to get them there.

- Stay above the politics. Probably one of the best and worst aspects of the job is that every day there is something new coming across your desk. This is good because it makes each day worth coming in to work and keeps your brain stimulated. However, you also have to remember that each day is new, and just because the council did not like an idea one day does not mean that it will not back you up on an idea the next day. Do not get discouraged if they reject an idea of yours; it is your job to just present the different options and what you think is the best recommendation. This does not

mean that they have to agree with you, and they will not agree every time. Take each day in stride, forget battles lost, and work toward the next issue. Do not take defeats personally. This was one of the hardest lessons that I had to learn, especially since I was not used to getting ideas shot down. Remember, you were hired to be the professional among politicians, and you should conduct yourself in this manner. Do not get caught up in each battle; look at it in the long term and make your collective actions better the community.

Youngest Employee and Town Manager

Reid Wodicka, town manager, Elkton, Virginia

I graduated from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia, in May 2009 with a BS in public policy and administration. In certainly nontraditional fashion, my graduation was five weeks after I started my position as town manager of Elkton, Virginia. During college, I had worked for the local county fire department part time, and until later in my college career, my goal had been to work full time as a firefighter and, maybe eventually, as a fire chief somewhere. In my junior year, Bob Holton, the town superintendent (many towns in the area call the manager “superintendent”) of Bridgewater, Virginia, was my professor in the program’s public personnel management course. During that semester, we developed a friendship, and he asked me to consider a career in local government management. So that I could learn more about what it took to be a local government manager, Bob asked me to intern with him and eventually work toward a paid part-time position as my skills developed. I did that, and about nine months later, the town manager position opened up in nearby Elkton. I am twenty-three years old and, currently, am the youngest employee in the organization.

Prior to the current mayor, there was a mayor who did not believe in the council-manager form, even though the charter clearly stated that that was how the local government was to operate. Therefore, there had been no manager here for nearly two years. There was no true organizational structure, no established goals for the town, no planning; the budget was an unsolved mystery; and the town and county could not agree on any issue. Despite the warning of everyone in my life that Elkton was just “too much for *anyone* to handle,” I interviewed for the job and was offered it a few days later at the unthinkable high salary of \$45,000 per year. To say the least, it has been a roller coaster since. While it is difficult to categorize all the challenges that a first-time administrator will meet, I have generally grouped what my major challenges have been since I started here.

I will say that overall I have an excellent, dedicated staff, the vast majority of whom have the best interests of the community in mind and support me in the decisions that I make. However, there have been a number of holdovers who are less than enthusias-

tic about working within the system that I am slowly developing. Two individuals in particular have created an especially challenging environment for my new career. These two individuals were department heads who had gotten used to not being accountable for their actions or for the performance of their departments. Simply put, since there was no manager, there was no one looking at the job they were doing to determine if it was satisfactory. Each had become complacent, used to accomplishing tasks on his own timeline, making decisions that may have been easier rather than right. I believe that every action should be accomplished with excellence in mind and confess that I think mediocrity is unacceptable.

Some run-ins occurred during the first couple of months, as a result of which, one of the department heads has left the organization and one is still here but is slowly beginning to become a team player. Especially for a person who is entering the profession in a nontraditional manner, it can almost be assumed that you will have at least one or two employees who are not completely accepting of the idea that you are here to stay and that you can be a legitimate advocate for the locality. Although these individuals will cause problems, sleepless nights, and general headaches, it is imperative that you continue to treat them with the same respect that you treat other employees. While it may seem easy (and maybe even logical) to lash out against them, doing so will only reduce your ability to lead the other staff. If you show that you are interested in working with these disgruntled individuals, one of two things will occur. First, and this is the one we hope does not happen, the person will not be able to adapt, at which point either he or she will leave or you may be forced to dismiss the person. Second, and this is a better choice, the person will see that you are a fair and honest individual and will begin to be a productive member of the staff.

In a similar light, you may also be tempted to ignore such employees, giving in to their negative attitudes and letting them do whatever they want. It is important that rebellious employees be held to the same standards that other employees are held to, even though it causes problems. Showing that you are a fair manager will help you build relationships with

other members of your staff, earn legitimacy with the council, and build a reputation as an honest professional. Personnel issues can be particularly troublesome because personal relationships can be difficult to handle as a new manager. While you should strive to have a friendly relationship with every employee, you must at the same time maintain a professional distance. Recognize that these people are working for you and that you must hold them to the expectations that you set forward. Be flexible, but do not allow yourself to be run over by what we in Elkton refer to as “temper-tantrum kids.”

Elkton tends to be the town in the region that the media find most entertaining to watch. Recently, however, one of the other towns in the area has received some negative press. The manager has been there for about twenty-five years but has a new set of council members who are causing some pretty serious issues. I tell this story because regardless of how much experience you have, it is always possible that the citizens will elect council members who are less than easy to work with. The fact that you are coming from a non-traditional background only compounds the challenge of working with some of these people. While we hope that most people run for elected office for the good of the community, we all know that there are some people who run simply for some personal need to be important. You have to deal with these people just as much as you deal with those who are easy to work

with, and it is important that you are able to meet their needs.

Particularly if you are coming from a nontraditional background, it is likely that some will be skeptical about your ability to do the job. In fact, when I was hired in Elkton, a council member resigned over my appointment, stating that I did not have enough experience to handle all the problems. He was probably right at the time, but several months later, this former council member spoke to me and expressed that he was, in fact, pleased with the job I was doing. I tell this story to convey that while there will be some people who do not want you to succeed or do not think that you are capable of succeeding, you must continue forward with what you and the council think is the right direction. You will probably be right in the long run, and while people may give you some negative feedback at the start, if you are making fair and honest decisions and if you are responsible, most people will see that you should, in fact, be in the position for which you were hired. Simply speaking, you are going to have to weather the storm. You will have to do so many times during your career as different issues arise, so be aware and do not allow the tornadoes to overwhelm and defeat you. Public management is a difficult job, and it is not for the fainthearted. Your name will be cursed regardless of your decision, but you must always hold your head high and be the bigger person.

From the Military to the Manager's Office

Roger Mumby, city manager, Gatesville, Texas

Everybody entering the exciting field of public administration enters with a unique background and educational experience. I started a second career in public administration after serving in the military, and I have been asked to describe this transition process. Each transition from the military to local government is also unique. *All military service is different, so there is not a cookie-cutter model for making the change in employment.*

I entered the army in 1966 during the draft and the Vietnam war. I graduated from San Diego State University with a bachelor's degree in business administration and a major in accounting. This education was certainly helpful years later in local government. I attended Officer Candidate School and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Armored Corps. I attended flight school in 1972 and was a rated aviator for the remainder of my career. In 1979 I attended the University of Missouri in Kansas City and received a master's degree in public administration with a major in organizational behavior. In addition to the normal public administration subjects—for example, governmental accounting, revenue and general obligation bonds, etc.—we studied extensively in organizational behavior. This education was key to my success in the remainder of my army career and was certainly critical in the transition to my new career after the army.

I served in various military assignments, in both armor and aviation, for thirty years. When I retired from the army in 1997, I was able to be selective with the positions offered and to make the transition to local government management. I served in my first community for nine years, and have now served in my second community for over three years.

If you are considering moving from the military to public administration, your military experience makes you qualified for the move. Whether you served as an officer or an enlisted person, and whether you served for three years or thirty, your leadership experience in the military directly translates to working for the citizens in our communities.

The following is a list of suggestions for anybody considering moving from the military to local government. Some of these can be inferred from the previous discussion:

- Join the state local government management association and ICMA, and actively participate in their educational programs. Most organizations want their managers to be active and will pay the dues.
- Read and study your charter and the state constitution that governs general law communities.
- Read the complete code of ordinances.
- Have your governing body define your priorities and then jointly develop a performance plan for you. Ask for a performance review each year to ensure that you are meeting its expectations.
- Meet with all your department heads within the first two weeks of employment. Have each one take you to his or her office for a tour, and meet as many of the employees as possible. I told my department heads to show me “the good, the bad and the ugly.” Ride along with the police department, fire department, utility department, etc. Be visible. Visit work sites where your people are fixing water leaks, operating your water plant, having classes in your fitness center, and wherever else your people are serving the community.
- Schedule a weekly meeting with department heads. If you have a volunteer fire department, include the fire chief if he or she is willing.
- Have the council set the priorities for the next year's budget, and actively involve the department heads in its development.
- Make a point of visiting businesses, the school superintendent, and managers of other organizations (hospital, county judge, etc.). Introduce yourself, ask how the local government is serving them, and ask for recommendations. Do repeat visits every year or so.
- Speak to any organization that asks. Develop a “State of the Community” presentation that describes what the local government is doing. Many of these things are basic to leadership, but most are a different way of operating than what you experienced in the military. The challenges that you will face in transitioning from the military to local government will depend on the jobs that you performed in the military. The main challenge that I faced was understanding how the council-manager form of

government works and how I, as the manager, work with an elected body to perform the missions. It is important that you understand your role and the role of the elected officials, and develop a good working relationship.

I am proud of my service in the army, and I enjoyed working with the great soldiers and civilians for the thirty years that I served. I am equally proud of the great people with whom I have been lucky to serve in communities for the past twelve years.

Adjusting Your Leadership Style

Bruce Harrill, city administrator, Waynesville, Missouri

I feel that my service as a military officer prepared me very well for the local government administrator role. The army taught me good, sound leadership skills that I put to use on a daily basis. The planning and decision-making process that the military teaches can be applied very successfully to local government projects. The military process to determine and evaluate different courses of action is a very useful tool for local government planning. The professional values that are instilled by military service, such as dedication to duty, integrity, and more, can be critical keys to success in managing local governments.

One important note is that my military education emphasized adjusting the leadership style to suit the

situation. Sometimes former military service members may not adjust their leadership styles to suit the civilian world. A “drill sergeant” approach normally does not go over very well with civilians. The military approach tends to be bottom line up front, discussed in a straightforward manner; however, I find that a less direct approach is more useful.

Many military jobs are similar to positions found in local governments, such as public works director and planner. The garrison commander has a role similar to that of a local government administrator. Experience in those military positions helps to prepare for the job in the civilian world.

Appendix A: PM Bulletin Board

The following answers were received in response to the *PM Bulletin Board* question posed in the March 1998 issue of *Public Management*:

If you have served as the first administrator or manager of a local government, what tips do you have for colleagues who might accept a similar position? What helped you with the local government's transition to a new form of government?

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- If the position is as an administrator, you should insist, before accepting it, that the administrator will be able to call the shots on a daily basis. Department heads who are out doing their own thing without reporting to the administrator can only cause confusion. Someone has to be in charge.
 - Establish a plan of goals and objectives if one doesn't already exist. The local government may have struggled along without any vision prior to establishing the position. A plan can be useful in documenting that the transition was effective and that things are being done.
 - Get out of the office into the local coffee shop, and get to know the residents. Sell the plan there.
 - Visit with your supporters frequently, but don't ignore those who aren't big supporters. Winning over the latter can be helpful.

What helped me with the transition was previous experience in establishing two other positions in Kansas, and the base of support from a council majority and other individuals in the community who were in favor of the change.

Best of all, if you last more than two years, you're doing great!

—Rick Shain, city administrator,
Medicine Lodge, Kansas

I was the first city administrator of a city in 1967, which was also my first position as a city administrator. While

that was a long time ago, there are certain things about that experience that still are vivid in my memory:

- Try to ascertain in advance whether all the elected officials were supportive of establishing the new form of government. If a significant minority were opposed, or if a key player, such as the mayor, did not favor the change, then you might want to consider not seeking the position.
- Before you decide to take a first city administrator position, check to see where the local news media were on the issue during the decision-making process to change forms of government. If there are strong local media, they can be useful during the initial stages of your tenure if they have supported the professional administrator concept, because they will want you to be successful.
- In my case, there were some elected administrative positions—city clerk and city collector—that remained as elected positions even after the city administrator form was adopted. The people in these positions were difficult to work with because they saw the city administrator and the new form of government as a potential threat to their tenure.
- If a city has been managed without professional assistance for a number of years, don't expect to be able to correct all its management problems immediately. It may be difficult to get department directors to become part of the team, and they may see proposed changes as criticism of their previous management.

—Kent Leichter, city manager,
Crestwood, Missouri

In response to the question, I offer the following thoughts after having been the first administrator in three communities:

- Be prepared. Learn as much about the community, its elected officials, and your employees as quickly as you can. Do your own assessment. Don't buy into someone else's opinions about people or needs.

- Be pleasant. Don't begin by dictating how things are going to be. Transition is always difficult, but when you have existing employees who have been "in charge" prior to your arrival, it will be easier to adapt if your attitude is one of cooperation rather than control.
- Be thorough. Know your role. Know your business. See that good policies and procedures are put into place and then follow them. Treat everyone fairly.
- Lead gently but forcefully. This is a big change for everyone, and even the elected officials who hired you are not really prepared for what you will be doing.
- Be patient. Things will smooth out and progress will be made.

There is a special challenge in serving in the role of first administrator, and I really enjoy that challenge. Hopefully, those who have followed me have found a good base established.

—Ann Daniels, *city administrator, Riverside, Missouri*

It is critical, above all else, to ensure that the council, staff, and administrator fully understand their representative roles in the organization. This goes beyond the drafting of a job description; your role must be understood, believed, and supported. In exchange, you must be willing to take command; fear of failure must not be used as an excuse for a lack of leadership on your part. As a first-time administrator/manager, you have the opportunity to build a strong organization that will reap benefits far beyond the next budget for years to come.

—Scott A. Botcher, *city administrator, Delafield, Wisconsin*

As the first village manager of Waynesville, Ohio (the antiques capital of the Midwest), I offer the following tips:

- Pay attention to history. Find out what motivated the community to choose a manager/administrator form of government in the first place. This will tell you a lot about the community's expectations of you.
- Develop your listening skills. As you are introduced in the community, listen carefully to what is said (and not said) about the community's needs and desires.

- Pay close attention to developing management systems. Try to develop a consistent way of approaching people, problems, and concerns. Remember, the next manager will have to make sense out of the systems you put in place. Take time. Think ahead!
- Enjoy your unique position! There can be only one first manager in a community. It can be fun to blaze your own trail.

—Kevin Harper, *village manager, Waynesville, Ohio*

When serving as the first administrator or manager, I have some suggestions that could prove useful in assisting a municipality in its transition from the government of the past to the new form. Underlying, overriding, and permeating all the suggestions are the twin concepts of patience and understanding.

It is critical to keep in mind that the "rules of the game" have changed for elected officials, government employees, and the people of the community. The rules have changed for everyone. Everyone, that is, except you. You are familiar with the new form; you are the professional, potentially a leader of the new form. But community members need your understanding of the new rules and your patience as they become accustomed to the changed environment. They also need your ability to educate, inform, and eventually lead the community toward acceptance and enthusiasm for the professional management of local government.

—Melinda R. Carlton, *county administrator, Kent County, Michigan*

As the first full-time administrator of Rochester (population 4,300), I offer this response. Prior to accepting a position as the first administrator, go through a "feeling-out" process with your prospective employers. Explore every potential issue, including lines of authority, and, most important, develop a set of written, measurable expectations. What is your employer's expectation of you in the management position?

On what level is the elected leadership prepared to delegate decision-making authority? Are they willing to hand you the reins, or are they more likely to stand over your shoulder, micromanaging? Do they firmly believe in the policy-versus-administration dichotomy? If there is a new charter, do they understand the role of the administrator?

As the first administrator, you need to understand these perceptions before taking a position. There is a good chance that if you are the first-time administrator, the elected leadership may not know what they want. In the absence of a charter or other legislative document, it is your job to define the position. Just remember that, in some cases, this information can be difficult to come by.

—Russell J. Dean, executive secretary,
Rochester, Massachusetts

Tips for the first-time administrator:

- Realize that you represent change to a lot of people; their negative reactions to you are not necessarily personal but reflect their fear of change.
- Plan on speaking to as many civic clubs and organizations as possible in your first three to six months; people will relax if they think they're getting to know you and if you appear to be a "reasonable" sort.
- Assemble the town staff in one place as soon as possible; introduce yourself, and tell them to continue doing exactly what they are doing now. Tell them that you don't plan to fix what isn't broken but that you do need some time to look at the entire organization. Have a question-and-answer period so that they can start to get some idea of the kind of person you are. Rumors and fears will flourish if your employees are kept in the dark about you. On the other hand, the town's employees can be some of your most important supporters.
- Make a point of going to each volunteer organization that supports the town and meeting with them. The most important could very well be the volunteer fire department, but all the volunteer organizations have a significant impact on the well-being of your town.
- Meet the mayor and each council member at his or her place of business. You don't need to get into heavy details on what you will be doing; the point is that they see another side of you outside the office.
- Strive to keep your family life as normal as possible; make it clear from the interview that your

home life is key to avoiding burnout and that your family will be a part of the community but are not to be put under the same public scrutiny as you will encounter.

- Find a local church that you and your family can attend; you will be tested in many ways, and your church can be one of your best supports when your character and integrity are questioned and trashed by people of ill will.
- If your town has not done goal setting before, set up a special meeting to get the mayor and council on board as to what they see as the top ten goals for the town in the coming year and what they will do to support these goals. These top ten goals will then become the guide for you and the staff in the first year, helping you focus your attention and efforts. Moreover, the inevitable complaints will be more easily seen as the special pleadings for the well-connected inner cliques that they are.
- Keeping focused on the town's goals is vital to your long-term effectiveness and success.
- Seek out every reasonable savings in conducting town business and every appropriate grant that would support town business or goals. At the end of the year, these savings can be considerable. Add together all savings and grants, and express that figure as a "return on investment" in your salary. For instance, if your salary is \$50,000 and you save and/or bring in a total of \$1 million, then the return on investment is 20-to-1.
- Cultivate good relationships with members of the press. They can be among your most consistent supporters. One way to do this is to set up a press table at the location of council meetings. It need not be elaborate, but a table—with its own lights, writing pads, supplies, and folders containing all the documents and materials being discussed during the meeting—will make reporters' jobs much easier and ensure that major points raised in the meeting will be reported correctly.
- Develop your own long-term list of what you think needs to be done, but realize that timing is everything.

—Tom Cannon, town administrator,
Dandridge, Tennessee

Appendix B: Additional Advice

The following answers were received in response to the same questions posed, more than ten years later, to state associations and over social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter:

If you have served as the first administrator or manager of a local government, what tips do you have for colleagues who might accept a similar position? What helped you with the local government's transition to a new form of government?

My bit of advice to those who are going to become the first professional manager/administrator is to act with a bit of humility and grace.

As the first administrator in a city, I often found myself being approached by many people who simply lacked a reference point or came with a predisposition on the position. When explaining what the position is and what the position does, remember that you are the spokesperson for the entire profession.

Explain what the city council is getting with someone full time handling the little things, such as checking to see if the bonds can be refinanced and interfacing with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regarding brownfield grants that your city has just received. Remember to not present yourself as the know-it-all and to accept with grace when people want to argue against professional management. Often these arguments seem to be personal attacks, and it is easy to bring the rapier out and start a duel, but instead try and do a little active listening. See if you can find out their fears, as often these arguments are from the standpoint of a fear of the unknown, and see if you can address them, or at least restate them back to the person, so that he or she knows that you are listening. I would also encourage you to hand out business cards to let people know that they can contact you with questions. People have come to accept that government will be closed and unavailable. Change that perception: be willing to listen.

—Richard Downey, city administrator,
Rock Falls, Illinois

Communication with the city council and your department heads is both critical and a valuable two-way street. Building a strong working relationship with your peers in nearby communities can also be extremely helpful.

In addition, you need to keep in mind that your position is also new to your city council and department heads. They may not know how to work with you, nor how to work through you in order to get things done. You will need to be patient, and to teach everyone how things need to work. The current book for first-time administrators will be helpful to you and can be very helpful to them.

—William Cooper, city manager,
Hamtrack, Michigan

My first job as a city administrator was with a city where I was the first administrator. My chief objective was to “do no harm to the profession.” After I was hired, I determined that I wanted to be the first in a long line of professional managers. The council that hired me did not give me full authority over all the departments. They still wanted some control.

My first months were devoted to helping the department heads get things done. I needed to gain their trust so that they would recognize the city administrator as someone to whom they could go for help. Once they recognized that I wasn't about to “get them,” they figured that we were working for the betterment of the city and they put themselves under my authority. I made mistakes, and the council and staff were gracious as I learned to be a manager.

I stayed five years and got itchy feet. The community still has professional management.

—Larry Paine, city administrator,
Hillsboro, Kansas

Appendix C: The ICMA Code of Ethics: A Commitment to Integrity

Martha Perego, director of ethics, ICMA

The success of any leader rests largely on his or her ability to be a person of high integrity. For the administrator leading a local government, it's critical that your actions, in both your personal and professional life, build trust with those you serve. The ICMA Code of Ethics, first written in 1924, sets the ethical standard for local government managers and professionals. The values imbedded in the code define your responsibility and obligation to the elected officials, your community, your employees, and even to your profession.

New to the role as an administrator, you will certainly encounter and need to deal with a wide range of ethical situations. Much of the advice you have read thus far is actually grounded in the core values and principles of the ICMA Code of Ethics. The importance of treating governing body members equally and staying out of politics is a bedrock principle of the profession (Tenet 7). Treating employees fairly, making all personnel decisions based on merit, and actively creating a diverse workforce is vital to building a strong, ethical culture in the organization (Tenet 11). Maintaining transparency in decision making and actively sharing information helps to build trust and confidence with the public we serve (Tenets 4 and 10). Being alert to potential conflicts of interest, gifts, or investments that can undermine your credibility is key to upholding the universal principle that true leaders seek no favor (Tenet 12). Please take the time to read the ICMA Code of Ethics and put a copy of the code on your office wall to remind yourself daily of your obligation as a professional.



ICMA members agree to hold themselves to the high standard set by the ICMA Code of Ethics and to submit to a peer review of their conduct should any allegation of improper conduct be raised. By joining ICMA and committing to the code, members truly distinguish themselves from others who may hold the title of administrator but do not adhere to high ethical standards.

One of the best member services that ICMA provides is ethics advice. Regardless of the issue, you can contact an ICMA ethics expert for reliable advice and strategies for resolving ethical dilemmas. It's confidential and for a new administrator, priceless! *PM Magazine's* monthly "Ethics Matter!" column, the Knowledge Network, ICMA conference sessions, and Web events are more resources for ethics advice and inspiration for building strong individual and organizational ethical standards.

Appendix D: Resources

Books

“Green Books” (ICMA).

For over fifty years, these textbooks have been the authoritative source on local government management for practitioners, teachers, and thousands of cities and counties in the United States and abroad. With titles that deal with the entire range of local government functions, each book is an indispensable reference in its field, offering authoritative managerial coverage.

Analyzing Your City: An Orientation Plan for New City Managers, rev. ed., James Thurmond (Texas City Management Association, 2002).

An indispensable guide for the new city manager and an essential refresher for the city manager who is relocating.

Hitting the Beach: A Survival Handbook for the Job-Changing Public Manager (ICMA, 1994).

Designed for managers at every career stage, this handbook covers a number of topics relevant to managers early in their careers.

Job-Hunting Handbook for the Local Government Professional (ICMA, 1997).

This handbook focuses on career planning, résumé writing, the interview process, and compensation negotiation. It is an excellent resource for young professionals seeking their first manager’s position.

Local Government Management: Is It the Career for You? (ICMA, 2001).

Providing insights into the local government management profession, this is a good resource for anyone considering a career as a manager or administrator.

Managing Local Government: Cases in Effectiveness, 3rd ed., ed. Charldean Newell (ICMA, 2009).

As the perfect complement to ICMA’s bestselling *The Effective Local Government Manager*, 3rd edition, this book challenges the reader with real-life dilemmas and sticky scenarios.

Managing Local Government Services, ed. Carl W. Stenberg and Susan Lipman Austin (ICMA, 2007).

The practical, comprehensive guide for meeting the

new demands in today’s world and ensuring the best service possible. Includes a valuable collection of more than sixty-five online supplemental materials.

The Profession of Local Government Management, Roy E. Green (Praeger, 1989).

This book offers an in-depth look at the roles played by professional local government managers within the changing circumstances of American community life. Using data from three extensive surveys of recognized professional administrative officers, Green analyzes the local government profession over a thirteen-year period. He focuses on the changing roles and functions of local government managers, covering such topics as trends in professional roles, career mobility patterns, the values of professionalism, the impending impacts from a spouse’s career options, and public constraints on professional associations.

Professionalism in Local Government: Transformations in the Roles, Responsibilities and Values of City Managers, John Nalbandian (Jossey-Bass, 1991).

An excellent book for today’s new manager that highlights the evolution of local government management, the merging of the policy–administration dichotomy, and the debate over professionalism of the individual versus the strict council-manager form of government.

The Public Executives Complete Guide to Employment Agreements, Ron Holifield (ICMA and The Innovation Groups, 1989).

This guide discusses the merits of an employment agreement, how to evaluate if a particular job makes sense, and more.

Survival Kit for Local Government Managers, Jenifer Gilliland and Don Morrison (Local Government Institute, 2010).

The intent of the survival kit is to provide the local government manager with the tools and resources to deal with every aspect of public employment. The kit contains useful information on negotiating employment agreements; handling the interview process; managing relationships with elected officials, staff, media, and citizens; and coping with employment separation.

Newsletters

ICMA Newsletter, ICMA.

A biweekly newsletter containing local government job openings and information on ICMA activities and the profession.

Job Opportunities Bulletin for Minorities and Women (J.O.B.), ICMA.

A biweekly newsletter that features local government job vacancies, career planning tips, and more. The newsletter is targeted toward women and minorities but has information of interest to all.

Periodicals

PM—Public Management, ICMA.

A monthly magazine featuring concise, timely articles on the profession of local government management.

Governing, Congressional Quarterly, Inc.

A monthly magazine with a primary audience of state and local government officials that features articles on a wide range of local government issues.

PA Times, American Society for Public Administration.

A monthly newspaper with articles covering issues in public management.

Professional Resources

ICMA Code of Ethics

The ICMA Code of Ethics, adopted in 1924, provides a set of professional standards to guide and assist local government administrators and is an essential resource for every local government administrator, particularly first-timers. ICMA assists members with ethical dilemmas and enforces the ICMA Code of Ethics. The program is an excellent resource for new administrators who face uncertain ethical situations.

ICMA Fund for Professional Management

The ICMA Fund for Professional Management is committed to educating students and citizens alike about the role and benefits of professional local government management. Established in 1985, the fund has supported communities as they organized to adopt or retain professional management, as well as broader civic education initiatives such as statewide civic education textbooks for students.

ICMA Range Rider Program

The ICMA Range Rider Program draws upon the expe-

rience of a volunteer group of retired local government managers to advise members who may be in transition or seeking career advice.

ICMA University

The ICMA University is a professional development program available to all members of ICMA. In this program, ICMA members can self-assess their professional skills and knowledge, and design continuing education programs tailored to their unique needs. The program takes advantage of resources offered by universities, institutes of government, state and regional organizations, national organizations (including ICMA), and other providers of training for local government managers.

ICMA's Voluntary Credentialing Program

The ICMA Voluntary Credentialing Program is a means of defining and recognizing an individual ICMA member who is a professional local government manager qualified by a combination of education and experience, adherence to high standards of integrity, and an assessed commitment to lifelong learning and professional development. Managers are recognized by ICMA through a peer review credentialing process, and this self-directed program offers an opportunity for interested ICMA members to quantify the unique expertise they bring to their communities.

Members in Transition

When a member is fired, forced to resign, or otherwise involuntarily separated from local government service as a manager/administrator or senior staff member, ICMA provides an array of personal and financial support.

State Associations

Most states have professional associations that provide assistance and resources to local government managers and administrators. State associations can provide a local support network for the first-time administrator as well as offer educational and professional development opportunities.

Organizations

International City/County Management Association, 777 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20002; 202-289-4262; icma.org

ICMA is the professional and educational organization representing appointed managers and administrators in local governments throughout the world.

Alliance for Innovation, 502 E. Monroe Street, Suite C 124, Phoenix, AZ 85004; 888-496-0944; transformgov.org

The Alliance for Innovation is an international network of progressive governments and partners committed to transforming local government by accelerating the development and dissemination of innovations.

American Society for Public Administration, 1120 G Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC, 20005; 202-393-7878; aspanet.org

ASPA is the professional association of public administrators, representing over 10,000 practitioners, scholars, teachers, and students.

Local Government Institute, 4009 Bridgeport Way West, Suite E, Tacoma, WA 98466-4326; 800-277-6253; lgi.org

LGI is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of local government.

National Forum for Black Public Administrators, 777 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 807, Washington, DC 20002; 202-408-9300; nfbpa.org.

As the association of black public leadership, NFBPA's mission is to strengthen the capabilities of black public administrators and to promote the appointment of black Americans to executive positions in local government.

National League of Cities, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004-1763; 202-626-3000; nlc.org.

NLC is the country's largest and most representative organization serving municipal governments.

ABOUT ICMA

ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, advances professional local government worldwide. The organization's mission is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional management to build better communities.

ICMA identifies leading practices to address the needs of local governments and professionals serving communities globally. We provide services, research, publications, data and information, peer and results-oriented assistance, and training and professional development to thousands of city, town, and county leaders and other individuals and organizations throughout the world. The management decisions made by ICMA's members affect millions of people living in thousands of communities, ranging in size from small towns to large metropolitan areas.



INTERNATIONAL CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Practices for Effective Local Government Leadership

ICMA delivers the latest research in the 14 core areas critical for effective local government leadership and management.

ICMA University is the premier resource for local government leadership and management training. Our programs are designed to advance your career, enrich your community, and contribute to your professional fulfillment. ICMA's online workshops and programs bring the latest research from leading experts to your office. Our conferences and in-person workshops allow you to network with colleagues and exchange ideas. All ICMA University programs are drawn from the 14 core competencies that members have determined are essential to local government leadership and management.

ICMA's professional development programs encourage local government professionals to think in terms of leading the organization and not just managing the organization. Leadership is engaging with and inspiring others to participate in developing, achieving, articulating, and embodying a shared set of values, shared sense of purpose, and shared vision of the desired community outcome. Leadership requires professionals who are highly interpersonally competent as well as self-aware.

ICMA also recognizes the leadership role of local government managers in creating and maintaining resilient and livable communities. Through the responsible stewardship of public resources, our communities will retain the economic, environmental, and social capital needed to prosper for future generations.



1. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY

Being fair, honest, and ethical in all personal and professional relationships and activities

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Fostering ethical behavior throughout the organization through exemplary personal actions
- Ensuring the decision-making model reflects integrity, honesty, and openness.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Conducting professional relationships and activities fairly, honestly, ethically, and in conformance with the ICMA Code of Ethics and the policies of your local government to maintain public confidence in the profession and local government
- Performing official and personal affairs in a manner that clearly conveys that you cannot be improperly influenced
- Fostering ethical behavior throughout the organization through staff training on administrative ethics and the ICMA Code of Ethics
- Holding staff accountable and instilling accountability into operations
- Communicating ethical standards and guidelines to others.

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Ensuring and managing community involvement in local government to support good decision making

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Building relationships among local, state, and federal elected and appointed officials to advocate for the community
- Ensuring robust public outreach in the policy-making process
- Respecting the governing body's role in setting direction and vision, and helping staff and the community understand the governing body's role in the democratic process
- Working to promote civility in public discourse
- Advocating for diverse viewpoints to be considered and helping the organization seek them out when they appear to be missing.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Understanding the perspectives of elected officials and being mindful of competing public values in policy recommendations
- Learning and respecting a community's history with various political, social, and economic issues
- Engaging with and understanding the viewpoints of key stakeholders in the community; committing to ongoing communication about expectations, decisions, and outcomes
- Understanding emerging technologies that are designed to promote open dialogue between local government and constituents
- Employing a range of engagement, positive communication, and conflict resolution methods.

3. EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Creating an environment of involvement, respect, and connection of diverse ideas, backgrounds, and talent throughout the organization and the community

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Authentically bringing everyone, including traditionally excluded individuals and groups, into processes, activities, and decision making
- Taking a proactive approach to service delivery and decision making that accounts for underlying differences in opportunities, burdens, and needs, in order to equitably improve the quality of life for all.

Management dimensions that contribute to this content area are:

- Driving measures, goals, and plans around diversity, equity, and inclusion within your organization and community; communicating the vision for why and how achieving these goals will improve the organization and service delivery
- Understanding and championing sustainable support mechanisms such as affinity groups, mentoring programs, and cultural celebrations
- Educating the organization on common behaviors that advance diversity and inclusion efforts and address implicit biases
- Being aware of and acknowledging culturally significant events and holy days for employees and community members
- Creating opportunities for employees and community members to learn about each other's cultural backgrounds, lives, and interests; building relationships through increased understanding.

4. STAFF EFFECTIVENESS

Taking responsibility for the development, performance, and success of employees throughout the organization

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Energizing the team to reach a higher level of performance
- Providing the team with a sense of direction and purpose, and balancing the big picture framework with day-to-day operations
- Prioritizing collaboration and efforts that create a shared sense of success
- Being a role model and demonstrating behavior expected by others
- Developing an environment where staff are encouraged to learn new skills and try new ideas
- Developing meaningful connections with people at all levels of the organization
- Facilitating teamwork.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Setting clear expectations for the organization and work groups
- Creating an empowering work environment that encourages responsibility and decision making at all organizational levels
- Delegating: assigning responsibility to others and relying on staff
- Coaching and mentoring: providing direction, support, and feedback to enable others to meet their full potential
- Conducting effective performance evaluations, reviewing success and opportunities for achievement of goals and work objectives, providing constructive feedback, and identifying others' developmental needs and available ways to address those needs
- Creating a positive atmosphere where interactions are based in respect and professionalism.

5. PERSONAL RESILIENCY AND DEVELOPMENT

Demonstrating a commitment to a balanced life through ongoing self-renewal and development in order to increase personal capacity

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Modeling healthy work habits to your employees
- Modeling a healthy lifestyle to your employees
- Actively encouraging a personal and professional growth and development mindset throughout the organization
- Seeking and providing support when career setbacks occur.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Periodically establishing personal development goals

- Successfully integrating work and personal responsibilities; periodically assessing yourself and seeking input from trusted others on their assessment of your work-life balance or integration
- Continually practicing mindfulness of your stress levels
- Identifying areas where you would like to gain knowledge or skills and developing a plan to acquire those skills and knowledge.

6. STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Defining and communicating a vision and leveraging all resources and tools to achieve it

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Creating, conveying, and instilling a unified vision and purpose by illustrating and providing examples of what the future will look like
- Fostering a safe place to take risks and initiative; serving as an example to others by applying lessons learned to future initiatives, decision making, and risk taking
- Examining the full scope of factors that influence an issue, determining calculated risks, and developing and using relationships and interpersonal skills to build consensus
- Implementing integrated solutions to complex problems that address the needs of all stakeholders
- Creating new and innovative strategies to deal with rapid change by assessing the environment, synthesizing strategies and plans, ensuring organizational direction and alignment, generating excitement in the workforce, and celebrating new ideas
- Thinking and acting to instill a culture of continuous improvement; moving the organization forward through consistent examination of methods and integration of new and innovative business trends
- Demonstrating high interpersonal competence and educating yourself on fundamental concepts such as self-awareness, judgment, emotions, power, resistance to change, and trust.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Sharing, supporting, and advocating the organization's mission and vision by developing and communicating the vision to staff and others
- Creating an environment through coaching that encourages others to address complex problems using a strategic approach
- Providing resources and training to support creative innovation and problem-solving and seeking opportunities for improvement as well as new initiatives.

7. STRATEGIC PLANNING

Developing a plan of action that brings the community together, provides clarity of purpose and priorities, and guides the organization's actions in achieving its goals and objectives

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Ensuring the organization is focused on the core mission, plans are implemented, and resources are available to achieve the plan's goals and objectives.
- Ensuring that the social responsibility of the organization is well understood and forms part of the planning process
- Making sure the plan ties all parts of the organization together and that everyone sees themselves in the plan and is invested in the plan
- Making sure that the planning process is highly participative, involves all levels of the organization, has strong support from the elected officials and the community, and coalesces everyone around the plan
- Building an integrated planning system that begins with the community and flows to corporate, operational, and individual plans. Plan examples include short- and long-term financial, human resource and workforce, enterprise-wide technology, capital improvement and asset management, and community.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Carrying out the planning process incorporating the needs of all stakeholders, including input from the community, elected officials, and staff
- Completing an environmental scan and assessment of organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats including major economic, social, and competitive factors
- Developing a vision and mission for the organization that are aspirational and reflect the organization's social responsibility
- Ensuring that organizational values are incorporated into strategy and plans at all levels
- Determining goals and key strategic objectives and indicators
- Completing a strategic planning document
- Implementing the strategic plan
- Assessing the results of the planning effort through data collection and measurement and benchmarking of performance
- Ensuring necessary improvements to processes and systems so that attainment of goals and objectives is possible.

8. POLICY FACILITATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Engaging with elected officials and other community stakeholders to create and execute policies that achieve common goals and objectives

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Assessing the environment to determine the best approach or style for championing a project to success
- Maintaining perspective and focus on both short- and long-term outcomes
- Listening to identify core interests and build cooperation and consensus among and within diverse groups
- Helping diverse groups identify common goals and act effectively to achieve them
- Energizing a group: acting as a stimulus for group action
- Demonstrating courage and taking responsibility for advancing the policy discussion
- Knowing when to lead others and when to follow the lead of others
- Accepting and implementing elected officials' decisions that run counter to your recommendations
- Being politically savvy: recognizing and navigating relationships to influence and achieve positive results
- Understanding the political environment and the impact of decision making on diverse groups.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Helping elected officials develop a policy agenda that can be implemented effectively and that serves the best interests of the community
- Understanding the policy cycle, including problem definition, data gathering, development and analysis of alternatives, and ranking and recommendations
- Communicating sound information and recommendations
- Developing fact sheets, issue briefs, and other materials to provide information to decision makers and other stakeholders
- Respecting the role and authority relationships between elected and appointed officials
- Recognizing interdependent relationships and multiple causes of community issues
- Anticipating the consequences of policy decisions and their link to strategy
- Acting as a neutral party in the resolution of policy disputes; using mediation and negotiation techniques
- Identifying core initiatives, long-term trends, and policy issues to support and enhance the success of local government
- Participating in national, state, provincial, regional, and local policy discussions.

9. COMMUNITY AND RESIDENT SERVICE

Discerning community needs and providing responsive, equitable services

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Convening, encouraging, and ensuring that all facets of the community are represented and have physical or technological access to engage in and be informed about community discussions and issues
- Celebrating participation and engagement of the community
- Building a culture of transparency throughout the organization
- Making difficult funding recommendations and building consensus when needed, taking service equity into consideration
- Understanding that different approaches are needed to account for different needs.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Adopting a variety of data collection methods to determine community and resident needs and to inform decision making
- Using technology to build an open and engaging relationship between residents and their government
- Employing various communication methods, including social media, to ensure transparency and to tell the story of local government services and performance
- Providing complete, accurate, and timely information.

10. SERVICE DELIVERY

Understanding the basic principles of service delivery, using strategic decision making and continuous improvement to serve the organization and community, and influencing the components and relationships between operational areas

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Championing and supporting comprehensive plans and quality standards for service delivery and efficiency
- Anticipating the probability and impact of external influences on the organization, community, and individual service levels; initiating change to harness positive impacts and mitigate negative impacts
- Identifying strategic decisions required to pivot current resources and policies to achieve a desired future state
- Holding managers and staff accountable for measuring performance, using data to improve services, sharing data with other communities, and using data to communicate with constituents and tell a story
- Building a culture that values high performance and continuous improvement.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Understanding the basic principles of service delivery in functional areas
- Systems planning: Understanding the processes by which functional and operational systems can impact the ability to grow jobs and improve the economy, to control cost of government, and to improve quality of life; recognizing that systems are interrelated and interdependent and must work in a coordinated fashion in order to maintain long-term community vitality
- Asking the right questions of functional experts to ascertain service delivery needs and corresponding solutions
- Understanding the roles and responsibilities of all levels of management and aligning those with the broader mission and vision of the organization
- Identifying the interconnectivity within the organization and with other levels of government—horizontal integration and collaboration—to create opportunities to improve service or efficiency
- Identifying, gathering, and reporting performance measures in a manner that is meaningful, understandable, and efficient; using data to lead and manage the organization and deliver results.

11. TECHNOLOGICAL LITERACY

Demonstrating an understanding of information technology and ensuring that it is incorporated appropriately in service delivery, information sharing, and public access

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Remaining future oriented to anticipate how new developments in technology can be applied to local government
- Being a change agent, role model, and advocate for technology innovation that improves the organization and community
- Engaging the users of technology in decision making about the tools they use to serve the community and accomplish tasks
- Sharing data and technology with other communities to improve delivery of service and, ultimately, quality of life.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Identifying the organization's technology needs and devising strategic plans to meet those needs
- Managing technology resources to maintain up-to-date systems, software, and infrastructure; establishing a business continuity plan
- Ensuring security of information technology systems
- Continually exploring work process and process improvements; automating only effective processes.

12. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND BUDGETING

Implementing long-term financial analysis and planning that integrates strategic planning and reflects a community's values and priorities; preparing and administering the budget

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Supporting transparency in financial planning and budget development by involving the community to identify goals and prioritize spending
- Building financial resiliency by analyzing risk, anticipating future trends and challenges, and planning for the unexpected
- Using the budget to tell a story and as a vehicle to connect with and inform the community
- Understanding the community and governing body's priorities and advancing them through the budget and short- and long-term financial planning and management
- Communicating and working collaboratively with departments and stakeholders throughout the budget process and through ongoing financial management
- Ensuring the governing body is well informed about its fiduciary responsibilities.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Implementing short- and long-term financial analysis and planning
- Preparing accurate and understandable capital and operating budgets
- Providing information for effective budget and financial planning decisions by elected officials and other stakeholders
- Administering the adopted budget and ensuring accountability for spending
- Taking responsibility for preventing fraud in the system
- Engaging in strategic planning to direct the development of goals and the budget document
- Engaging employees across the organization in strategic planning, budget development, and ongoing budget management
- Measuring performance and assessing the results of spending
- Understanding investments and best practices of government finance officers
- Interpreting financial information to assess the short- and long-term fiscal condition of the community, determine the cost-effectiveness of programs, and compare alternative strategies.

13. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

Ensuring that the policies and procedures of the organization are applied consistently and fairly, and motivating and engaging the workforce to its highest potential

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Encouraging each employee to be focused on personal growth; proactively providing professional and leadership development opportunities for staff
- Modeling the organization's values
- Building a culture of trust and inclusiveness in which employees understand the big picture and how their positions fit within it
- Ensuring that hiring practices are open and transparent and that diversity goals are acted upon
- Actively engaging employees in the development of a high-performance organization
- Forecasting the needs of the workforce and institutionalizing succession planning.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Understanding the organization's policies and procedures, making sure that they remain current, and ensuring that they are applied consistently
- Understanding the collective bargaining process
- Keeping current on trends in human resources management
- Understanding employee and employer rights and responsibilities and applicable laws and regulations
- Providing for continuous education and improvement, including coaching, mentoring, and access to professional and leadership development
- Recruiting, retaining, and developing a talented workforce
- Aligning the organization's human capital with the strategic objectives of the governing body.

14. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

Effectively facilitating the flow of ideas, information, and understanding

Leadership dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Articulating personal support for policies, programs, or ideas that advance organizational and community objectives
- Practicing emotional intelligence, including understanding and managing your own and others' emotions and harnessing emotions to apply them to tasks like thinking and problem solving
- Using verbal and nonverbal communication and cues to inspire and motivate
- Effectively communicating with elected officials
- Maintaining poise and composure while presenting in emotionally charged and crisis situations
- Understanding your environment; knowing when to engage and when not to engage
- Building a culture of transparency in the organization that facilitates effective information sharing across the entire organization and community
- Strategically supplementing the organization's communication tools to provide the most effective outreach opportunities.

Management dimensions that contribute to this core content area are:

- Clearly and articulately conveying a message to diverse audiences who have different levels of understanding of the content
- Selecting the most effective communication methods and using interesting and compelling tools to share information, including story telling
- Communicating and sharing information respectfully, credibly, and confidently
- Communicating complex material in a nontechnical way

- Anticipating things that can go wrong and preparing accordingly
- Demonstrating a solid grasp of the subject matter
- Understanding, appreciating, and interacting with persons from cultures or belief systems other than one's own
- Providing accurate information in a timely manner
- Training staff on how to appropriately and effectively communicate with various stakeholders, including traditional and social media, with one message and one voice, and in compliance with community protocols
- Preparing a crisis communication protocol
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Local Budgeting in Oregon





Local Budgeting in Oregon

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Local Budgeting in Oregon is a supplement to the *Local Budgeting Manual* (150-504-420), hereafter called the *Manual*. This booklet will introduce you to the requirements of Oregon's Local Budget Law, but it is not a substitute for the *Manual*. Before you take any formal action in the budget process, consult the *Manual*.

First, the basics

What is the law?

Most local governments in Oregon, from the smallest cemetery district to the largest city, must prepare and adopt an annual or biennial budget. (The only exceptions are a few types of local governments specifically exempted.) Schools, counties, cities, ports, rural fire protection districts, water districts, urban renewal agencies, and special districts are all subject to the same budget provisions.

This is not unusual. Many states have specific laws which require units of local government to prepare and adopt annual operating budgets. Yet, Oregon's budgeting system is considered one of the most progressive in the nation. Why?

Look at Oregon's Local Budget Law. (You'll find it in Chapter 294 of the Oregon Revised Statutes.) The law does two important things:

1. It establishes standard procedures for preparing, presenting, and administering the budget.
2. It requires citizen involvement in the preparation of the budget and public disclosure of the budget before its formal adoption.

Many people rely on you, as an elected or appointed official, to see that the annual budget is prepared correctly. State officials check to see that the budget is prepared and administered according to law, and citizens in your district check to see that programs they want and need are adequately funded. This makes budgeting in Oregon a joint effort between the people affected by the budget and the appointed and elected officials responsible for providing the services.

To give the public ample opportunity to participate in the budgeting process, local budget law requires that a budget officer be appointed and a budget committee be formed. The budget officer draws together necessary information and prepares the first draft of the budget. The budget committee then reviews and revises the proposed budget before it is formally approved. Notices are published, budgets are made available for public re-

view, and at least two opportunities for public comment are provided. These requirements encourage public participation in the budget-making process and give public exposure to budgeted programs and fiscal policies before their adoption.

Naturally, citizen involvement varies from one community to the next. If the patrons in your district are active and involved, you may find citizens asking for information not specifically required under local budget law. It is up to your local government to prepare a budget that clearly outlines its fiscal policies and is satisfactory to the voters of the district. If you can make your budget clear and concise, you'll find that taxpayers have a better understanding of the purposes for which their tax dollars are spent. You may also find the citizen input informative and beneficial.

What is a budget?

A budget is a financial plan containing estimates of expenditures and revenues for a single fiscal year (July 1 through June 30).

Note: Local governments have the option of budgeting on a 24-month "biennial" budget period or by fiscal year. For the differences entailed in biennial budgeting, see page 8. Throughout this booklet, we refer to "fiscal year" but if a local government adopts a biennial budget, the period referred to is a 24-month period.

Besides outlining programs for the coming year, the budget controls the local government's spending authority. Since the budgeting process encourages citizen input, the budget is also a vehicle for obtaining public opinion about proposed programs and fiscal policies of your district.

The content and detail of each budget will vary substantially because of differences in the purpose, size, and complexity of local governments.

Who is on the budget committee?

The budget committee consists of the members of the local governing body (such as county commissioners or school board members) and an equal number of citizens at large. The citizens are appointed by the governing body and serve terms of three years. Terms are staggered so that about one-third of the appointed terms end each year.

Note: For most of the districts in Multnomah County, because the Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission (TSCC) holds the budget hearing, the governing body is the budget committee and there are no appointive members. These districts should consult with the TSCC about their processes. This publication addresses the budget committee process for all other districts in the state.



The budget cycle

The nine steps

Budgeting is not something you do once a year. It's a continuous operation, and it takes 12 months to complete a cycle. The budgeting process is actually in three parts: The budget is prepared, approved, and finally adopted. Your budget must be prepared far enough in advance so that it can be adopted before June 30. After adopting the budget, the governing body will make the necessary appropriations and certify the tax levy to the county assessor.

To simplify this rather complex process, we've divided budgeting into nine steps.

Preparing the budget

1. **Budget officer appointed.** Each local government must have a budget officer, either appointed by the governing body or designated in the local government's charter. The budget officer is under the supervision of either the executive officer or the governing body.
2. **Proposed budget prepared.** The budget officer is responsible for preparing or supervising the preparation of the proposed budget for presentation to the budget committee.

Approving the budget

3. **Budget officer publishes notice.** When the proposed budget and the budget message are ready, the budget officer publishes a "Notice of Budget Committee Meeting." If notice is only published in a newspaper of general circulation, it must be published at least twice, five to 30 days before the scheduled budget committee meeting date. The notice may be published once in a newspaper (five to 30 days prior to the scheduled budget committee meeting) as long as it is also published on the local government's website at least 10 days before the meeting. The newspaper notice must include the website address. If notice is hand delivered or mailed, only one notice is required not later than 10 days prior to the meeting.
4. **Budget committee meets.** At least one meeting must be held to 1) receive the budget message and budget document, and 2) hear the public. The budget officer provides a copy of the proposed budget to each member of the budget committee. The copies may be distributed any time before the advertised bud-

get committee meeting. It is also acceptable to wait and distribute the budget at the advertised meeting. When the budget is given to the budget committee, it becomes a public record and must be made available to the public.

The budget committee members cannot get together in person, by telephone, or email before the advertised meeting to discuss the budget. All budget discussions must be held at public meetings.

At the budget committee meeting, the budget message is delivered. The budget message explains the proposed budget and significant changes in the local government's financial position. At this meeting, the budget committee may provide members of the public the opportunity to ask questions about or comment on the budget. If public comment is not allowed at this meeting, the budget committee must provide the public with the opportunity at subsequent meetings.

After the initial meeting, if needed, the budget committee may meet as many times as needed to revise and approve the budget. If two or more meetings are held to take comment from the public, only the first meeting to do so must meet the publication requirements explained in step 3. Notice of additional meetings for this or any other purpose may be provided in the same time frame and manner as notices of meetings of the governing body. Notice of other meetings of the budget committee must be provided as required by Oregon public meeting law. All meetings are open to the public.

5. **Committee approves budget.** When the budget committee is satisfied with the proposed budget, including any additions to or deletions from the one prepared by the budget officer, the budget is approved. If the budget requires an ad valorem tax to be in balance, **the budget committee must approve an amount or rate of total ad valorem property taxes to be certified to the assessor.**

Advertising and holding hearings

6. **Budget summary and notice of budget hearing published.** After the budget is approved, a budget hearing must be held by the governing body. The budget officer must publish a summary of the budget approved by the budget committee and notice of budget hearing five to 30 days before the scheduled hearing. This information must either appear in a newspaper of general circulation, be mailed, or be hand delivered.

If no newspaper is published in your district and estimated expenditures for the ensuing year do not exceed \$100,000, you may provide the budget summary and notice of budget hearing by posting it in three conspicuous places within the district for at least 20 days prior to the date of the hearing.

See the *Manual* for details on publication requirements.

7. **Budget hearing held.** The budget hearing must be held by the governing body on the date specified on the public notices.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive citizens' testimony on the budget approved by the budget committee. Additional hearings may be held. All hearings are open to the public.

Adopting the budget

8. **Budget adopted, appropriations made, tax levy declared and categorized.** By law, the governing body may make changes in the approved budget before or after it is adopted, but no later than the beginning of the fiscal year to which the budget relates. However, without first publishing a revised budget summary and holding another budget hearing:

- Taxes may not be increased beyond the amount approved by the budget committee, and
- Estimated expenditures in a fund may not be increased by more than \$5,000 or 10 percent, whichever is greater.

After the budget hearing, and after considering relevant testimony, the governing body adopts the budget. **It should not be formally adopted until the latter part of June** so last-minute revisions to revenue or expenditure estimates can be incorporated.

The governing body must enact a resolution or ordinance to 1) formally adopt the budget, 2) make appropriations, and if needed, 3) levy, and 4) categorize any tax. The budget is the basis for making appropriations and certifying the tax levy. The resolution or ordinance must be adopted no later than June 30. See the *Manual* for the format of the resolution or ordinance.

9. **Budget filed and levy certified.** The final step in the budget cycle is to certify any necessary property tax levy.

Districts levying a property tax must submit to the county assessor's office on or before July 15:

- Two copies of notice of levy and the categorization certification, and
- Two copies of the budget resolution or ordinance.

Each local district that does not levy a property tax must send a copy of the resolution adopting its budget and making appropriations to the Department of Revenue on or before July 15. All local districts send a copy of the complete budget to the county clerk on or before September 30. School districts also submit a copy of the budget to the county education service district office and to the Oregon Department of Education.



The budget document

All budgets must meet certain minimum requirements, outlined here. For specific examples consult the *Manual*.

Under local budget law the budget must follow a basic format. Expenditures generally are broken down first by fund, then by organizational unit or program, and then, more specifically, by object classification and object. Revenues are broken down by fund, at the least.

What is a fund?

A fund is a fiscal and accounting entity with self-balancing accounts set aside to carry on a specific activity or to meet certain objectives in accordance with a specific regulation. The requirements and resources of a fund must always balance. Every budget has at least one fund (commonly called the General Fund) which is used for everyday operation of the local government.

Depending on the size and complexity of your local government and the services it provides, your district may also have a number of special funds. The most common reason for establishing a special fund is to account for a revenue source whose use is limited to a particular kind of expenditure. Examples include: debt service funds, construction funds, reserve funds, street funds, water funds, and sewer funds.

What is an organizational unit?

Some funds are broken down to account for one or more organizational units or activities, which are merely subdivisions of a fund. An organizational unit might be a department, office, or division. What you call these units is up to your local government.

What is a program?

Budget requirements may be prepared by program. Programs are groups of activities to accomplish a major service or function. Schools use programs in budgeting.

Budget format

Your budget detail sheets for expenditures and revenues must show in parallel columns:

1. Actual expenditures and revenues for two years preceding the current year.
2. Budgeted requirements and revenues for the current year.

- Estimated requirements and revenues for the coming fiscal year. Upcoming fiscal year estimates should be broken into three columns: proposed, approved, and adopted, showing estimated amounts as they are considered through each step of the budget process.

Information in each column must be itemized to show all estimated or incurred requirements and revenues.

Revenues

Budget revenues are divided into two types: ensuing year property tax and nonproperty tax revenues. Property taxes shown in your budget will not be the same as the property tax “levy” you submit to the assessor.

There are three reasons for this. First, not all taxpayers pay their taxes in the year billed. Second, discounts are given for timely property tax payments. Third, the Oregon Constitution sets a limit on the amount of taxes that can be collected from an individual property.

You must estimate the amount of taxes to be lost because of the “constitutional limits” and “discounts allowed and other uncollected amounts.”

The total of these amounts plus estimated taxes to be received cannot exceed your district’s taxing authority, which includes its rate limit, voter approved local option levies, and levies to repay bonded debt. This total is the amount of tax levy that is certified to the assessor.

The amount estimated as “loss due to constitutional limit” will vary from district to district. Late in October or early November each year, the tax collector sends the district a report on the amount of taxes that will actually be billed for the district. This is called the taxes imposed.

“Discounts allowed and other uncollected amounts” normally will represent only a small percentage of the property tax levy. Contact your county tax collector for help in determining this percentage.

You next need to calculate how much tax revenue can be raised using the district’s permanent rate limit.

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Rate Limit} \\ \text{times} \\ \text{Estimated District Assessed Value} \\ \text{equals} \\ \text{Amount Raised By Rate Limit} \end{array}$$

This amount plus any local option taxes or bond levies, less the estimate of taxes to be lost, is the amount of tax revenue estimated to be received. If this amount is less than the amount needed for the budget, requirements must be reduced, other sources of revenue found, or additional taxing authority approved by voters.

Expenditures and requirements: by fund

Under the law, budget expenditures and other requirements must be itemized to show all estimated expenses. The estimates may be prepared either by program or organizational unit. Within any fund each expenditure must be detailed and identified, arranged by organizational unit if applicable, and put into one of these major object classifications:

- **Personnel services** includes all salaries, fringe benefits, and miscellaneous costs associated with salary expenditures.
- **Materials and services** includes contractual and other services (example: audit or legal services), materials, supplies, and other charges.
- **Capital outlay** includes acquisition of land, buildings, improvements, machinery, and equipment.

Some special expenditures and requirements do not fit logically into one of these three object classifications. These are put in special categories. The most common special categories are:

- **Debt service** includes repayment of principal and interest on bonds, interest-bearing warrants, and short term loans.
- **Transfers.** An amount to be given as a resource to another fund in the budget.
- **General operating contingencies.** A special amount set aside in the upcoming year for unforeseen expenses.
- **Unappropriated ending fund balance.** A special amount set aside in a budget for use as a resource in the beginning of the next fiscal year after it was budgeted.

Expenditures and requirements: program budgets

Program budgets are prepared differently. Estimates for each program must be arranged by activity and then put into separate object classifications, as already described.



Taxes and budgeting

Many local governments rely heavily on property taxes to finance services they offer. In some cases, services are paid for entirely by property taxes.

The amount and type of tax a local government may levy is limited by the Oregon Constitution and Oregon law. The constitution allows a local government to levy annually the amount that would be raised by its permanent rate limit without further authorization from the voters. Revenue from the permanent rate-limited levy can be used for any purpose.

When a local government has no permanent rate limit or when the rate limit does not provide enough revenue to meet estimated expenditures, the government may request a local option levy from the voters. These levies are in excess of the rate limit and require voter approval. Currently, ESDs cannot use the local option tax. Schools and community colleges can use the local option tax, but the amount they may request is limited.

A local option can be used for general purposes or a specific activity. The levy may be stated as a total dollar amount or rate to be levied uniformly for a period. If the levy is for an operating purpose, the period cannot exceed five years. If the levy is for a capital project, the period cannot exceed 10 years or the life of the capital asset, whichever is less.

A debt service levy is used only to pay principal and interest on bonds. The constitution does not require voters to approve this type of levy each year. That's because voter approval of a bond issue is considered approval of levies necessary to repay bond interest and principal.

By law, some local governments are limited on the total amount of tax they may levy. These limits are computed as a percentage of a local government's property value. For specific examples, consult the *Manual* or the Department of Revenue, Finance and Taxation Unit.

Tax levies not made according to law may be voided by an appeal to the Oregon Tax Court. Appeals can be made by the county assessor, county court, board of commissioners, Oregon Department of Revenue, Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission, or 10 or more interested taxpayers. An appeal must be submitted within 30 days after the local government certifies the tax levy to the county assessor.

In addition, since 1991, the Oregon Constitution has limited the amount of taxes that may be imposed on any property. For any property, the maximum amount of taxes to support the public school system is \$5 per \$1,000 of real market value. The maximum amount of taxes to support other government operations is \$10 per \$1,000 of real market value. Certain types of taxes may not be subject to the limit. See the *Manual* for further information.



Elections and budgeting

Many local governments find that available revenues, including revenue from levies made under the permanent rate limit, are not enough to finance proposed expenditures. In this case, there are two alternatives:

1. Lower the proposed expenditures to equal available revenues, or
2. Schedule a tax levy election to obtain voter approval to levy a local option tax.

All local governments that decide to schedule a levy election are limited to four election dates each year. The levy election must be on one of these dates.

See your county elections officer for more information. The county elections officer publishes election notices, sample ballots, and a list of polling places.

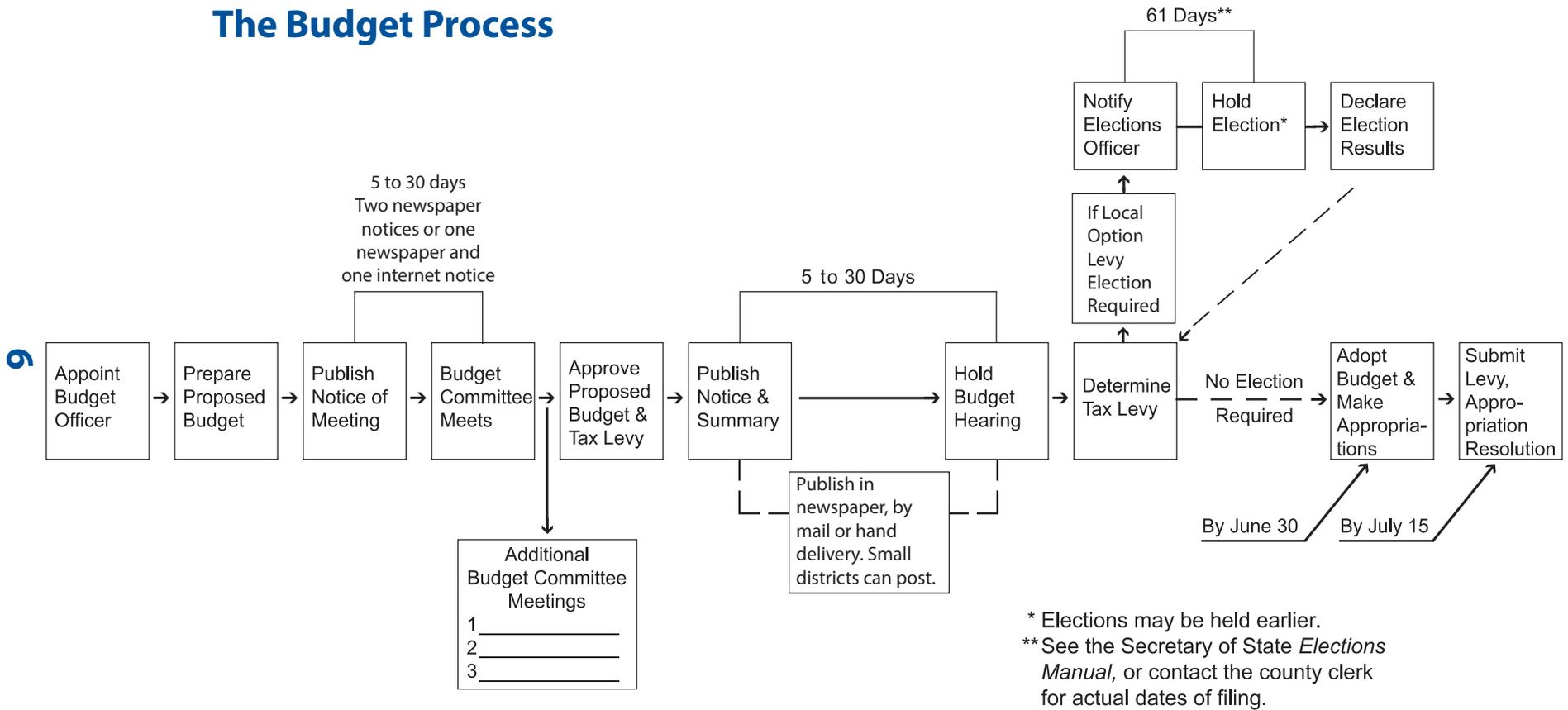
Election dates

- Second Tuesday in March
- Third Tuesday in May
- Third Tuesday in September
- First Tuesday after the first Monday in November

Even if the voters have not yet approved the tax levy before the end of the fiscal year, the governing body must adopt the budget and make appropriations by June 30 to lawfully spend public funds in the new fiscal year. When the district is planning on a tax levy election in September, it must request in writing from the county tax assessor an extension to certify its tax levy. When the tax levy is finally determined, the governing body adopts the resolution to levy taxes and submits its final levy certification to the assessor. If the late levy election failed, the governing body must reduce its budget appropriations to reflect the amount of taxes it actually has authority to levy.

Tax levy ballot language sometimes must contain certain wording or statements required by law or must not exceed other limits. For more details, see the *Manual*, or download a copy of the *Tax Election Ballot Measure Manual* (150-504-421).

The Budget Process





Appropriations and their use

When the nine budget steps are completed and the new fiscal year begins, the governing body works from appropriations. Amounts listed in the appropriation resolution provide authority to spend public funds in the next 12 months. However, appropriations may be made in broader categories than the detail presented in the budget.

District spending is limited to the schedule of appropriations. But what if it is necessary to exceed original appropriations? This may be done after transferring appropriations or preparing a supplemental budget. There are special provisions for exceeding appropriations due to civil disturbance, fire, flood, earthquake, or other calamity.

Appropriation transfers

The governing body's spending authority in existing appropriations may be changed by 1) transferring amounts among existing appropriations in the same fund, or 2) transferring from an existing appropriation in one fund to an existing appropriation category in another fund.

Whenever you need to transfer an appropriation, the governing body must enact a resolution or ordinance providing for the transfer. This enactment must be made before any overexpenditure is incurred. Once a transfer is authorized, the expenditures can be made.

Supplemental budgets

By transferring appropriations, a governing body usually has enough flexibility to carry out the programs prescribed in an adopted budget. But there will be times when an adopted budget gives no authority to make certain expenditures or when revenues are received for which the governing body had no previous knowledge. In these cases it is possible to use a supplemental budget to authorize expenditures or spend additional revenues in a current fiscal year. (There are a few special revenues which may be spent without a supplemental budget.) Supplemental budgets cannot be used to authorize a tax levy.

Local budget law does not contemplate the involvement of the budget committee in adopting supplemental budgets. The governing body may adopt a supplemental budget at a regular public meeting if prior notice is given and the expenditures in the supplemental budget are 10 percent or **less** than of the budget fund being adjusted. If the expenditures are more, the governing body must

publish a summary of the changes in the supplemental budget and hold a special hearing.

Public officials who spend money unlawfully, in excess of authorized amounts or for purposes not provided by law, are civilly liable. The district attorney or a taxpayer may file suit for return of the money.

For more details, see Oregon Revised Statute 294.471 or the *Manual*.



Audits

The final phase in the budgeting cycle is an audit of the previous fiscal year. This usually is done soon after a new fiscal year begins. Most local governments are subject to Oregon's Local Budget Law. Most of these governments are required to have their accounts and fiscal affairs audited and examined annually.

An audit must be done by the Secretary of State or an auditor certified by the Oregon State Board of Accountancy to conduct municipal audits. The auditor examines financial statements, books, records, and other financial data of your local government. The auditor also will look at any activities that relate to collection, receipt, custody, handling, expenditure, or disbursement of public funds.

Contact the Secretary of State's office, Audits Division for further explanation or questions.



Biennial budgeting

Local governments may budget either on a one-year (fiscal year) or a two-year (biennial) cycle. The governing body may, by ordinance, resolution, or charter, provide that the budget be prepared for a period of 24 months. The biennial budget period begins July 1 and ends June 30 of the second following calendar year. In brief, the differences between fiscal year budgeting and biennial budgeting are:

1. Members of a budget committee who prepare a biennial budget are appointed to four-year terms. The terms of the members should be staggered so that one-fourth of the terms end each year.
2. The budget estimate sheets containing the estimates of resources and expenditures in a biennial budget must show:
 - Actual expenditures for the two budget periods preceding the current budget period,
 - The estimated expenditures for the current budget period, and
 - The estimated expenditures for the ensuing budget period.
3. The summary of the budget as approved by the budget committee that is published along with the notice of the budget hearing will show the proposed budget for a two-year period.
4. If a taxing district adopts biennial budgeting, the budget committee must approve the amount or rate of ad valorem property taxes for each year of the biennium.
5. After the budget committee approves a biennial budget and before the budget is adopted, the governing body may not increase the amount of estimated expenditures for the biennium in any fund by more than \$10,000 or 10 percent, whichever is greater, and may not increase the amount or rate of the tax levies approved by the budget committee for either year of a biennial budget unless the amended budget document is republished and another budget hearing is held. Once the budget is adopted, the tax amount cannot be increased in the second year.
6. If a district adopts a biennial budget, then after the budget hearing and before the June 30 that precedes the start of the budget period, the governing body must pass a resolution or ordinance to adopt the budget and make appropriations for the ensuing 24-month budget period. The governing body must also pass a resolution or ordinance to levy and categorize property taxes for each year of the ensuing budget period.

7. Whether a budget is for a fiscal year or for a biennium, certification of property tax levies and a copy of a resolution or ordinance levying and categorizing taxes for the ensuing year must be submitted to the county assessor every year by July 15.
8. Districts that must submit their budgets to the Department of Revenue or to the Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission must do so only during the first year of a biennial budget period.



Questions and answers

What is a budget committee?

The budget committee is the district's fiscal planning advisory committee. The committee consists of the elected governing body members and an equal number of qualified district voters appointed by the governing body.

Who can serve on a budget committee?

Any qualified voter of the district appointed by the governing body except officers, agents, or employees of the district.

Are budget committee members paid for their work?

Budget committee members cannot receive any compensation for serving as committee members. They may be eligible to receive reimbursement for travel or meal expenses that are incurred as a result of meetings or other authorized committee functions.

How long do members serve?

Citizen budget committee members are appointed by the governing body for three-year terms. Terms are staggered so that approximately one-third of the terms expire each year. Members may be re-appointed for successive terms. If a member resigns, becomes ineligible, or is unable to serve out his or her term of office, the governing body appoints a replacement to complete the term. There is no provision in the law for "alternate" members.

What if no one will serve on the budget committee?

If the governing body is unable to appoint qualified individuals to vacant positions, the budget committee may function with a reduced number of members. For example, if a five-member governing body, after making a good faith effort to seek qualified citizen members, can fill only three of the appointed positions, the budget committee can function with eight members rather than ten. A majority would then be five instead of six. The membership may not be reduced because governing body positions are currently vacant.

Who are the budget committee officers?

Only a presiding officer position is required by law. The presiding officer's duties are to chair budget committee

meetings. The chair can be either an elected or appointed member. Some districts may elect a vice chair to conduct meetings in the presiding officer's absence. The committee should also designate someone to be responsible for keeping an official record of its proceedings. All members of the budget committee have the same degree of authority and responsibility.

What is the budget committee's main function?

In a series of public meetings the budget committee meets to review, discuss, make additions or deletions, and approve the proposed budget presented by the local government's budget officer. Upon completion of its deliberations, the committee approves the budget and sets the tax rate or amount needed to balance the budget.

What are the rules about budget committee meetings?

Budget committee meetings are open to the public. A quorum is required to conduct committee business. A majority of the budget committee membership is required to approve any motion.

Minutes of each meeting are kept. The minutes are the official record of budget committee meetings. It is important that minutes are accurate. The budget process is required by law and districts may need to document that the process was in compliance with state statutes. The approval of the final budget document and the rate or amount of tax to be imposed, in particular, should be in the form of motions with the votes recorded in the minutes.

What happens at the first budget committee meeting?

Generally, the budget committee elects a chair and other officers, receives the budget message, hears patrons, sets dates for future meetings, and adopts rules of order. These rules should establish an operating procedure for the budget review process. The committee may adopt Robert's Rules of Order or establish its own. In any event, the budget committee needs to discuss and agree upon a procedure. The committee may not adopt any rule which would allow it to take official action with approval of less than a majority of its members in agreement.

What happens at subsequent budget meetings?

Generally, the second and other subsequent meetings take place at least one week after the first meeting. This practice allows budget committee members to review the proposed budget document. Budget committee members may wish to make arrangements with the district administrator and/or budget officer to visit district operations during this week, make inquiries about specific budget items, request additional information, or indicate areas of interest they believe should be highlighted at future

meetings. In subsequent meetings, the entire budget is reviewed fund by fund and/or section by section.

At least one meeting must provide the opportunity for the public to ask questions and make comments about the budget. Notification of the first budget committee meeting in which public questions and comments will be heard is required in a newspaper of general circulation, by a first-class mailing to every street address or P.O. box in the district, or by hand delivery to every street address. See Chapter 9 of the *Manual* for more detail on publication requirements.

How many meetings are required?

The number of meetings required varies from year to year and with the unit of government. Some districts meet only once, others may need to meet several times. Factors such as the detail in the budget documents, size of the district, number of funds, presentation of the budget, and the personalities of individual budget committee members will result in various numbers of meetings.

When will I get a copy of the budget?

The budget officer provides copies of the proposed budget at or before the first budget committee meeting, when the budget message is presented by the executive officer.

What other information is available to the budget committee?

The budget committee may request any information required during consideration of the proposed budget from any district officer or employee. The budget committee may also require staff members to attend budget committee meetings. Such requests by the budget committee should be made through the chief administrative officer of the local government and/or budget officer.

How is the material that is presented by the budget officer at the first meeting prepared?

The budgeting process is a continuous cycle that generally begins long before the budget committee meets. Each district has its own procedures for budget review and development. In larger districts, each part of the organization may have its own budget preparation process, in which funding requests for the upcoming fiscal year are developed and then "rolled up" into the total agency budget requirements. By the time the budget committee receives the budget message and budget document, many hours of work have been put into budget development. The budget officer coordinates these efforts with district staff and other administrators.

What is a quorum? What happens if we don't have a quorum at a budget committee meeting?

A quorum is one more than half the total number of the members. If a quorum is not present, the members who

are present may discuss committee business, but no action may be taken.

What if we have a quorum, but cannot get a majority of the members of the budget committee to approve the budget?

Any action by the budget committee requires approval by a majority of the entire committee. For example, if the budget committee has ten members, six are present at a meeting (a quorum), but only five of the six present agree with a motion to approve the proposed budget, then the motion does not pass. It is up to the budget committee to negotiate a budget and tax that is acceptable to a majority of its members.

May I ask questions other than at budget committee meetings?

It could be very helpful and a courtesy to other budget committee members if inquiries are not restricted to committee meetings. Checking with the administrator and/or budget officer between meetings allows members to explore budget items of interest in greater detail than might be practical during committee meetings. Questioning also assists the administration/budget officer by giving an indication of concerns, making it possible to highlight issues that may be of interest to the entire budget committee.

Can I consult with other budget committee members about details in the budget other than at budget committee meetings?

Discussion of the budget committee must always take place in the forum of a public meeting. One of the reasons Oregon uses the budget committee process is to ensure public comment and full disclosure of budget deliberations. It is much better to abide by the spirit of the law and hold **all** discussions at budget committee meetings.

Can the budget committee add or delete programs or services?

Generally, the budget committee's role is not to directly establish or eliminate specific programs or services. Standards and budget parameters established by the governing body give the budget officer and administrative staff general guidelines for budget development. The budget officer then prepares a budget which reflects the governing body's parameters. This proposed budget is what the budget committee considers during its meetings. Budget committee influence on programs and services is most often exerted at a higher level, when it approves the overall budget and establishes the tax levy.

Having said all that, if a majority of the budget committee agrees, it can add or delete funding for specific services. Public participation at budget committee meetings may

influence budget committee decisions. However, final authority for administration rests with the governing body. The governing body can make changes after the budget committee has approved the budget, although they may have to re-publish the budget and hold another public hearing to do so.

Can the budget committee determine how much an employee is paid?

The budget committee does not approve new personnel, employee contracts or salary schedules, nor does it negotiate salary contracts.* However, the adopted salary schedules, negotiated contracts, and other materials that have a fiscal impact on the budget document may be requested for review by the budget committee. Through its authority, the budget committee may direct the administration to make dollar adjustments (increases or decreases) in the proposed budget.

What happens after all the sections of the budget are presented?

After all presentations are made, all patron input received, and all other related issues discussed, the budget committee approves the budget. The approved budget recommends a level of spending for the year. The approved budget document also specifies the full amount of the property tax levy authority that may be certified to the tax assessor. The governing body may reduce the levy, but the rate or amount of the levy approved by the budget committee cannot be increased without republishing the financial summaries. Approval of the tax levy and the budget should be in the form of a formal motion, with the vote recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Does the budget committee have any other duties?

At the end of the final meeting where the budget is approved, and the tax levy rate or amount is established, the committee's work is finished as far as local budget law is concerned. Local charters may have additional duties. Frequently, budget committee members express a desire to assist the governing body and administration in any public meetings or appearances concerning the budget. The budget committee may be reconvened by the governing body at a later date in the event the financial conditions in the district change. A meeting for this reason is called at the discretion of the governing body and is not a requirement of the local budget law.

*Note: ORS 204.126 says the county budget committee or TSCC approves changes in the salary of elected county officials.

After the budget is approved by the budget committee and recommended to the governing body, what action does the governing body take?

The governing body must publish a financial summary of the budget that was approved by the budget committee. The notice of the budget hearing is also published with the financial summary. At the public hearing, the governing body hears any citizen input on the approved budget. The governing body may make additional adjustments to the budget that was approved by the budget committee. Following the hearing and no later than June 30, the governing body must adopt the budget, make appropriations, and set the property tax levy rate or amount. If a property tax is required, the governing body must certify the tax to the county assessor no later than July 15.

What if the governing body changes the budget approved by the budget committee in ways that the budget committee does not approve?

The governing body has that right. However, the amount of the estimated expenditure for each fund may not be increased more than 10 percent unless a summary of the revised budget is again published and another public hearing is held. In addition, the total property tax to be levied may not exceed the amount or rate shown in the budget that was approved by the budget committee and published with the notice of the budget hearing without once again publishing the revised budget and holding another public hearing. Of course, budget committee members are free to attend that hearing and voice their opinions of the changes made by the governing body.

What is a supplemental budget?

Districts may find it necessary to prepare a supplemental budget at some point during the fiscal year. Circumstances under which a supplemental budget is authorized are:

- An occurrence, condition, or need arises which was not known at the time the budget was adopted.
- Additional funds are made available after the budget was adopted.

Although the budget committee is usually not involved with supplemental budgeting, the procedures for supplemental budgets are similar to those for the annual budget. If estimated expenditures are being changed by more than 10 percent, these procedures include a public hearing and publishing a notice and budget summary five to 30 days prior to the hearing.

Where can I find the law that governs the creation and operation of budget committees?

Budget committees are required in Oregon's Local Budget Law. This law is found in the Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) beginning at ORS 294.305.

These statutes as well as additional information can be found on the Department of Revenue website at www.oregon.gov/DOR.

Where can I direct my questions regarding budget committees?

Oregon Department of Revenue
Finance, Taxation and Exemptions
PO Box 14380
Salem OR 97309-5075

Telephone: 503-945-8293
Fax: 503-945-8737
Email: finance.taxation@oregon.gov



Administration Checklist

- ✓ Gather budget requests.
- ✓ Evaluate budget requests and develop proposed budget.
- ✓ Develop estimates of revenue.
- ✓ Prepare budget proposal.
- ✓ Estimate ad valorem taxes in budget document.
- ✓ Prepare budget message.
- ✓ Publish required notices and budget summary.
- ✓ Provide citizens with information about approved budget.

Budget Committee Checklist

- ✓ Establish a meeting calendar.
- ✓ At first meeting, elect presiding officer (required) and vice chair (optional).
- ✓ At first meeting, establish budget committee procedural rules.
- ✓ At first meeting, receive budget message and proposed budget.
- ✓ Request information.
- ✓ Make budget documents available to any person.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for citizens to ask questions.
- ✓ Approve motion setting the rate or amount of taxes necessary to balance budget.
- ✓ Approve budget and recommend to the governing body.



Glossary

Here are some terms you will use as you work on your budget.

Adopted budget. The financial plan adopted by the governing body which forms a basis for appropriations.

Ad valorem tax. A property tax computed as a percentage of the value of taxable property. See “Assessed value.”

Appropriation. Based on an adopted budget, an authorization for spending specific amounts of money for specific purposes during specific periods of time. Presented in a resolution or ordinance adopted by the governing body.

Assessed value. The portion of value of real or personal property that is taxable. It is the lesser of the property’s real market value or the constitutional value limit (maximum assessed value—MAV). The value limit may increase 3 percent annually unless qualifying improvements or changes are made to the property. These improvements or changes allow the value limit to increase by more than 3 percent.

Biennial budget period. A 24-month period beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of the second succeeding year.

Budget. Written report showing the local government’s comprehensive financial plan for one fiscal year. Must include a balanced statement of actual revenues and expenditures during each of the last two years, estimated revenues and expenditures for the current and upcoming year.

Budget committee. Fiscal planning board of a local government, consisting of the governing body plus an equal number of legal voters from the district.

Budget message. An explanation of the budget and local government’s financial priorities. Prepared by or under the direction of the executive officer or presiding officer of the governing body.

Budget officer. Person appointed by the governing body to assemble budget material and information, prepare the proposed budget, and oversee the budget process.

Capital outlay. Items which generally have a useful life of one or more years, such as machinery, land, furniture, equipment, or buildings.

County elections officer. County clerk or registrar of elections.

District. See “Local government.”

Expenditures. Decreases in net financial resources if accounts are kept on an accrual or modified accrual basis; total amount paid if accounts are kept on a cash basis.

Fiscal year. A 12-month period beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

Fund. A division in a budget segregating independent fiscal and accounting requirements. An entity within a government’s financial plan designated to carry on specific activities or to reach certain objectives.

Governing body. County court, board of commissioners, city council, school board, board of trustees, board of directors, or other governing board of a local government.

Line-item budget. The traditional form of budgeting, where proposed expenditures are based on individual objects of expense within a department or division.

Local government. Any city, county, port, school district, public, or quasi-public corporation (including a municipal utility or dock commission) operated by a separate board or commission.

Municipality. See “Local government.”

Ordinance. Written directive or act of a governing body. Has the full force and effect of law within the local government’s boundaries, provided it does not conflict with a state statute or constitutional provision. See also “Resolution.”

Organizational unit. Any administrative subdivision of a local government, especially one charged with carrying on one or more specific functions (such as a department, office, or division).

Payroll expenses. Health and accident insurance premiums, Social Security and retirement contributions, and civil service assessments, for example.

Permanent rate limit. A district’s permanent ad valorem property tax rate for operating purposes. This rate levied against the assessed value of property raises taxes for general operations. Permanent tax rate limits were either computed by the Department of Revenue for districts existing prior to 1997–1998 or are voter-approved for districts formed in 1997–1998 and later.

Program. A group of related activities to accomplish a major service or function for which the local government is responsible.

Property taxes. Amounts imposed on taxable property by a local government within its operating rate limit, levied under local option authority, or levied to repay bonded debt.

Proposed budget. Financial and operating plan prepared by the budget officer, submitted to the public and budget committee for review.

Real market value. Value at which a property would be sold by an informed seller to an informed buyer on the appraisal date. Value set on real and personal property as a basis for testing the (Measure 5) constitutional limits.

Reserve fund. Established to accumulate money from one fiscal year to another for a specific purpose.

Resolution. A formal expression of will or intent voted by an official body. Statutes or charter will specify actions that must be made by ordinance and actions that may be by resolution. (For cities, revenue raising measures such as taxes, special assessments, and service charges always require ordinances.) See “Ordinance.”

Resources. Estimated beginning fund balances on hand at the beginning of the fiscal year, plus all anticipated revenues.

Revenues. Monies received or anticipated by a local government from either tax or nontax sources.

Supplemental budget. Prepared to meet unexpected needs or to spend revenues not anticipated at the time the regular budget was adopted. Cannot be used to increase a tax levy.

Tax levy. Taxes imposed by a local government unit through a rate or amount.

Transfers. Amounts distributed from one fund to finance activities in another fund. Shown as a requirement in the originating fund and a revenue in the receiving fund.

Unappropriated ending fund balance. Amount set aside in the budget to be used as a cash carryover to the next year’s budget, to provide the local government with a needed cash flow until other money is received. This amount cannot be transferred by resolution or used through a supplemental budget during the fiscal year it is budgeted unless there is a significant calamity or natural disaster.

Where to get help preparing your local budget

Finance, Taxation and Exemptions..... 503-945-8293
Emailfinance.taxation@oregon.gov

Each year the Department of Revenue makes available a booklet that contains forms and instructions for summarizing your district's budget for publication and certifying the tax levies to the assessor. These forms meet the minimum requirements of local budget law and are free of charge.

The forms are available each year beginning in January on the department's website at www.oregon.gov/dor.

The booklet is available upon request by contacting the Finance, Taxation and Exemptions Unit by telephone, email, or at the address below. If you would like a copy sent to you, please request your copy no later than November 15.

Finance, Taxation and Exemptions Unit
Oregon Department of Revenue
PO Box 14380
Salem OR 97309-5075

Your district may also computer-generate the budget detail and publication forms based upon your district's own computer formatting.

Have questions? Need help?

General tax information www.oregon.gov/dor
Salem..... 503-378-4988
Toll-free from an Oregon prefix..... 1-800-356-4222

Asistencia en español:

En Salem o fuera de Oregon..... 503-378-4988
Gratis de prefijo de Oregon 1-800-356-4222

TTY (hearing or speech impaired; machine only):
Salem area or outside Oregon 503-945-8617
Toll-free from an Oregon prefix..... 1-800-886-7204

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Call one of the help numbers above for information in alternative formats.