

# 17 on 2017

*Predictions on Local Government from 17 Experts*



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Predictions on **Local Government** from 17 Experts

**ICMA**

*Leaders at the Core of Better Communities*

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# INTRODUCTION

## ***17 on 2017: Predictions on Local Government from 17 Experts***

Each year brings a new set of possibilities and predictions. In keeping with the spirit of acknowledging anticipated changes while surmising the unexpected, ICMA reached out to 17 leaders on topics important to local governments.

From succession planning to community race relations, their words and tips may inspire and surprise or even confirm your own thinking about the year ahead. Treat yourself to 17 unique perspectives that could jumpstart your planning.

Makes us wonder, where do you see new or renewed potential in 2017?





# Public Health

*Quote By: Paula Sanford, Ph.D.,  
University of Georgia,  
Carl Vinson Institute of Government*



Paula Sanford, Ph.D.

Dr. Sanford is a Public Service and Outreach faculty member for the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government. She has a specialty in public budgeting and finance but her work spans a variety of local government issues such as performance measurement, comprehensive financial and organizational reviews, and city-county consolidation.

*“With anticipated changes to federal health policy, keeping citizens healthy through exercise and general wellness will continue to grow in importance. Local governments will continue to play a critical role in helping citizens live healthier lives by creating healthy communities such as supporting parks and trails, sidewalks, and farmers markets.”*

## 2017 TIP:

Success in public health is a long-term goal but if we are focusing on 2017, I suggest local government leaders focus on the first step: creating a vision with citizens for how their community can be healthier. In the following years, the government can begin implementing that vision through its departments, ordinances, and the budget.



# Sustainability

*Quote By: Hilari Varnadore, STAR Communities*





Hilari Varnadore

Hilari Varnadore is the Executive Director at STAR Communities, a nonprofit organization that works to evaluate, improve and certify sustainable communities. We administer the STAR Community Rating System, the nation's leading framework and certification program for local sustainability.

*“Local leaders are evolving their approach to sustainability to be more comprehensive than the “greening” initiatives we have seen over the past 5-10 years. Residents and businesses are asking for safe, walkable neighborhoods, access to good schools, quality jobs, living wages and affordable housing and health care. Managers will be called upon to make decisions and investments that balance those needs for all.”*

## 2017 TIP:

Local leaders should be thinking about how to embed sustainability into their organization's DNA. A sustainable organization collaborates across departments, is innovative, efficient, and resourceful and approaches decision making and investment with social, economic, and environmental conditions in mind. Communities that lead with sustainability will be more attractive to business and will offer residents more value than their peer cities and counties.

looking  
for  
talent



# Succession Planning

*Quote By: Patrick Ibarra, The Mejorando Group*



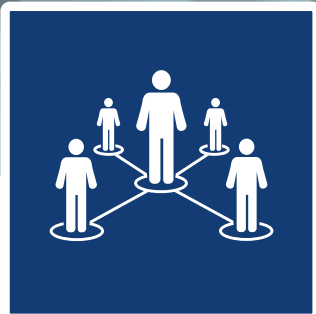
Patrick Ibarra

As Co-Founder and Partner in the Mejorando Group, Patrick Ibarra is an architect of innovation and entrepreneur of ideas who seeks to challenge the status quo thinking of “we’ve always done it that way” and replace it with a progressive approach to continuous improvement. Patrick brings organizations over 31 years of experience and in-depth expertise from serving as a Consultant and Manager in both public and private sector organizations, including as a city manager.

*“Every day in the United States, 10,000 people turn 65. And according to the Pew Research Center, millennials now outnumber baby boomers in the workplace, 76 million to 75 million, while millennials will make up 75 percent of the workforce just 10 years from now. As a result of the rapidly aging workforce, government organizations — small and large, rural and urban — are experiencing a brain drain that is placing their organizations at a critical juncture: The need for experienced and seasoned employees has never been greater, while those are the very workers who are most likely to be departing in the very near future. It’s clear that governments need to get serious about succession planning.”*

## 2017 TIP:

You must realize that you’re an employer competing for talent and to maintain your role as a credible community builder a targeted effort must be directed to increasing the caliber of talent joining your organization as well as strengthening the internal bench of potential successors.



# Leadership

*Quote By: Michael Huggins, Civic Praxis*





Michael Huggins

Mike Huggins (ICMA-CM) is a former city manager with over 30 years of executive experience in local government management and community planning. Huggins works with public leaders and local communities to strengthen the public engagement skills of everyday people to collaborate and do extraordinary and meaningful public work. He serves on the Boards of Directors for E-Democracy.org and Clear Vision Eau Claire, a 501(c)3 citizen leadership and public engagement organization he helped found in 2007. He teaches an undergraduate honors course at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire on “Doing Democracy: Building Civic Agency in Local Communities.”

*“In 2017 the local government leader’s world will be characterized by increased anti-tax and anti-government rhetoric, greater local public incivility, and continued reductions in financial resources and legislative flexibility for addressing local issues. Local managers will work in an environment increasingly shaped by the deep conflict between rural and urban place-based identities that express highly polarized perspectives about the exercise of power, allocation of resources, and choices about values and lifestyle. These conflicts will often play out in local communities over issues of immigration and racial justice and will reflect differing beliefs about fairness, who should get what, and willingness to pay taxes to support public systems and structures.*”

*There is an inherent tension between local government’s role in maintaining community stability, order, and the economic status quo and government’s role in supporting citizen engagement and building the capacity of everyday people to move from being consumers to producers of meaningful public*

*work and public solutions. Local managers will need to be especially mindful of how they manage that tension.*

*In 2017 local government leaders will find themselves operating more and more in the realm of wicked problems—i.e., complex, interdependent social and organizational issues that have no agreed upon problem definition, no clear solution, and involve the conflicting values and perspectives of multiple stakeholders. Local government’s traditional reliance on professional and technical expertise, or interest group politics will be ineffective at best. Local managers will need to hone their skills in doing deliberative problem-solving, engaging in face to face conversations with diverse groups about their values and fears, and building the multiple community connections needed to move from talk to sustained public action.”*

## **2017 TIP:**

Local government managers should do at least two, one-to-one relational meetings every week with individual community members. A one-to-one meeting is a 30-40 minute, face to face, open-ended conversation with another person to understand that person’s underlying self-interests and public narrative. Doing one-to-ones is simple to learn and highly effective in building the strategic public relationships around shared interests necessary for taking sustained public action. One-to-ones focus on “why” and “how” questions to explore another person’s interests, passions, stories, and possible connections to public issues. Archimedes is quoted as saying, “Give me a place to stand and with a lever I will move the whole world.” I can’t speak for the whole world, but the one-to-one is a lever with which local managers and leaders can help move their organizations and communities forward, and lead them successfully in 2017.



# Community Engagement

*Quote By: Mike Cohen, Peak Democracy*





Mike Cohen

Mike Cohen, MBA, is a co-founder of Peak Democracy Inc — the leading provider of online citizen engagement services that increase public trust in government. Peak Democracy has collaborated with hundreds of government agencies to power over 3,000 online forums that have attracted over half a million online attendees. These government collaborations have enabled Mike to develop an expertise in the best practices of how online civic engagement can be used to increase public trust in government.

*“Government agencies are increasingly using online technology to engage the public, and we see indications of this trend accelerating in 2017. Over the coming year, many agencies will be using online engagement to chart new territory in public policy—including everything from regulating marijuana, to rising sea levels, to drones—as well as budgets and planning.”*

## 2017 TIP:

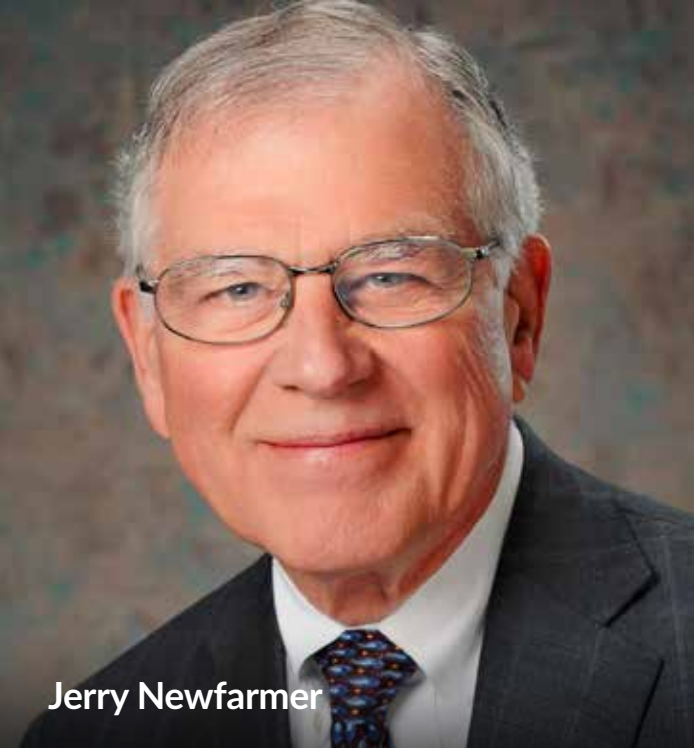
Public engagement shouldn't be centered on the occasional project. Instead, it should be part of an ongoing agency-wide effort to involve the community on all sorts of topics. That's the key to growing a diverse and invested stakeholder base.





# Community Crisis

*Quote By: Jerry Newfarmer, Management Partners*



Jerry Newfarmer


Jerry Newfarmer is president and CEO of Management Partners, a consulting firm that works with local governments. He has served as city manager in Cincinnati, Ohio and in San Jose and Fresno, California.

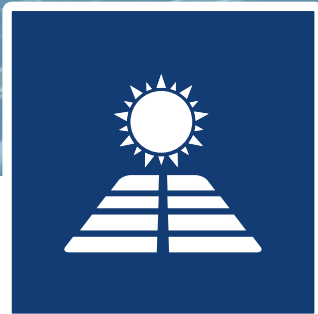
*“There are a number of issues that have prompted community crises in the last few years — police-community relations, pensions, lingering effects of the recession, natural disasters — that could confront local governments again in 2017. But one important fact about a community crisis is that it usually takes people by surprise. We can get ready for possible crises by systematically assessing each risk and identifying the key preparatory actions for each.”*

## 2017 TIP:

Be prepared. Each manager should assure that his/her government updates its risk assessment annually – and reviews it with key players every six months. Preparation is not a one-time thing. When a crisis hits, leaders should be ready to:

- Respond quickly. News spreads faster than ever, and a local government needs to get accurate information out to counteract rumors.

- 
- Keep the community, stakeholders and employees informed throughout the life of the crisis.
  - Anticipate reactions and what's likely to happen next.
  - Have a back-up plan in place for payroll, off-site storage of network files and other essential functions.
  - Keep the management team in the loop, because one person can't do everything and everyone needs an occasional break.
  - Make sure staffers take care of themselves physically and emotionally.
  - Do a post-crisis analysis to determine organizational strengths and weaknesses.



# Solar Power

*Quote By: Andrea Luecke, The Solar Foundation*





Andrea Luecke

Andrea Luecke is President and Executive Director of The Solar Foundation. The foundation is proud to work with ICMA to lead a federally funded program called SolSmart, which provides national recognition and no-cost technical assistance to help cities and counties make it faster, easier, and cheaper to go solar. You can learn more about the program at [SolSmart.org](http://SolSmart.org).

*“For local governments, solar energy will bring the promise of new opportunities for jobs, economic development, and sustainable communities. Our National Solar Jobs Census found that solar industry jobs are growing at a rate nearly 12 times faster than the overall economy, with 20 percent job growth in 2015 alone. As we begin the New Year, it’s clear that solar power is now the affordable, reliable way for millions of Americans to get their electricity. Cities and counties stand to benefit greatly by taking advantage of the economic growth that solar has unleashed.”*

## 2017 TIP:

Local governments should know that the solar jobs of the future will either be in their communities, or somewhere else. They have a huge role to play in making sure their communities are “open for solar business.” To help make this happen, community leaders should review their programs and practices to ensure they are not creating unnecessary barriers to solar energy development. That means reviewing programs on planning and zoning, permitting, inspection, and related areas.



# Public Safety

*Quote By: Leonard Matarese,  
Center for Public Safety Management*




Leonard Matarese

A veteran with over 39 years in city management and public safety, as well as a nationally prominent author and speaker, Leonard Matarese leads the ICMA Public Safety Services Team. After a distinguished career as a city manager, public safety director, police and fire chief, and human resources commissioner, Mr. Matarese now directs consultants, each with their own record of creating innovative, cost effective public safety solutions. Mr. Matarese has held state-wide office in a police chiefs association, been elected president of one of the largest regional police chiefs associations in the country, and served as the chair of a major federal anti-narcotics and counter terrorism strike force. He currently serves as ICMA's representative to advisory boards on U.S. Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security projects.

*“Definitely, with the new administration, there will be significant changes in the way the Department of Justice interfaces with local governments on public safety. Local government managers will need to closely monitor changes coming out of DOJ to make sure they are up to speed on changes that may affect local law enforcement.”*

## 2017 TIP:

It's increasingly clear that local government managers need to have a good understanding of law enforcement technology—especially body worn cameras, dashboard cameras and other types of surveillance equipment. An increasing number of communities are using surveillance cameras for shopping centers, roads, streets, and elsewhere to support policing. This is clearly the direction that law enforcement is going and this level of technology



is going to become more integrated into providing public safety services. In addition to adopting the technologies appropriate for their communities, city and county managers need to make sure that they have in place appropriate policies and procedures. There are potential liability issues related to privacy and civil rights. I would really encourage managers to take a look at some of the research that's been done to identify best practices. The Bureau of Justice Administration has created a body worn camera implementation tool kit that is helpful.

Changes to the Affordable Healthcare Act are another thing to managers need to keep their eyes on. Many communities have just gotten their procedures in place for delivery and reimbursement of medical transport and emergency medical services. It is likely that this may change and it's important to be aware of what those changes might bring to local governments.





# Smart Cities

*Quote By: Stuart Cowan, Smart Cities Council*



Stuart Cowan

Dr. Cowan works with cities and leading smart cities solutions providers around the world to advance strategic frameworks, tools, and knowledge models for smart cities. He has 20 years of experience with the use of systems sustainability models at scales ranging from buildings to cities to regions. He has worked extensively with real estate finance and development, including the long-term Economics of Change initiative to create software tools to properly value and appraise the benefits of smart and green technologies.

*"Local government will see opportunities to work across departments to maximize benefits from shared sensors, communications networks, data, and software. We will also see an increasing integration between existing comprehensive plans and city goals and smart technologies that can support them."*

## 2017 TIP:

Find ways to streamline procurement by working with other local governments, moving to performance-based specifications with delivery flexibility, and exploring public private partnerships.



# Technology and Innovation

*Quote By: Lisa Schoenfelder, City of Boise, ID*



**Lisa Schoenfelder**


Lisa Schoenfelder is a dynamic speaker with 32 years of experience in the technology industry with experience from both the public and private sector. Most of her experience has been in the university and local government area. Lisa is currently the Enterprise Project Manager and the Application Services Manager for the City of Boise but has had roles that included Training Coordinator and IT manager for customer service, infrastructure, and application/development teams.

*“The convergence of services, data and technology will be the biggest opportunity for local governments. Understanding the different systems that an organization uses to serve their internal operations and their constituents will help leverage these systems, their data and deliver tools for better decision making. Local governments need to fully embrace mobile technology for both their workforce and for their constituents to communicate directly to the government that serves them. In turn, better service delivery will evolve, creating better government efficiencies. Many local governments have started this journey but we all need to take it to the next level in 2017. Our constituents have come to expect the Amazon experience to be the new norm.”*

## **2017 TIP:**

Leverage experts in the area of technology and local governments to explore mobility, data analytics and convergence of systems and service. Also be open to learning much from the private sector. As we become more engaged





with our constituents and continue to think of them as customers/partners, we need to explore smarter, innovative connection with our customers. The private sector leaders, “the Amazons of the world”, have created this new and vitalizing culture of marketing and communication and so must we. Local governments have to transform the current culture to a more dynamic, connected world. That has to start internally with a culture change of collaboration and sharing between the internal agencies. Then, we, thoughtful leader of the future, must take that new cultural experience beyond our organization and employees to the constituents that we serve.



# Climate Change

*Quote By: Mary Walsh,  
Climate Change Learning and  
Information Consulting (Celic)*



Mary Walsh

Mary L. Walsh is principle associate of Climate Change Learning and Information Consulting (Celic) and former city administrator of Missoula, Montana. She currently develops climate change education materials for Cornell University's garden-based learning program and teaches climate change and sustainability courses at the University of Prince Edward Island.

*“This New Year 2017 will bring a fresh awareness to local governments of the need to include all the residents of their communities in climate change resiliency planning and decision-making. This will include giving voice to residents of poor neighborhoods, the elderly, the sick, the disabled, and the homeless.”*

## 2017 TIP:

A key tip for local government leaders to successfully manage climate change in 2017 is to democratize their climate planning process by helping all the members of their community understand the specific impacts of climate change for their region; and by providing opportunities for all of their community members to assist in the development of strategies to prepare for those impacts.



# Performance Management

*Quote By: David Ammons, Albert Coates Professor of Public Administration and Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*





David Ammons

David Ammons is the Albert Coates Professor of Public Administration and Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He writes and teaches about performance measurement, benchmarking, and productivity improvement in local government. His books on local government management include *Municipal Benchmarks* (M.E. Sharpe, 2012), *Tools for Decision Making: A Practical Guide for Local Government* (CQ Press, 2009), and *Leading Performance Management in Local Government* (ICMA, 2008). Professor Ammons is a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration. He served on the National Performance Management Advisory Commission and is currently a member of ICMA's Performance Management Advisory Committee.

*“The year 2017 will bring a continuation of slow but steady progress among local governments that are doing more with their performance information than just issuing reports to elected officials and citizens. Much of the performance management fanfare during the year will be focused on the development of dashboards and overarching systems that connect performance information to strategic plans and better inform decision makers at the top of these organizations; however, an even more noteworthy movement will be afoot among cities and counties having a more downward than upward gaze. These governments will be nurturing performance information use by another set of decision makers—department heads and mid-level managers empowered to make decisions down at the program level, where performance management already is yielding improved operations and better or more efficient services in many communities. Denver’s much-heralded Peak Academy is likely to be just one of the initiatives at the vanguard of this movement.”*

## 2017 TIP:

Many of the governments that construct elaborate frameworks for performance management never actually see the meaningful performance improvements the architects of these frameworks envision. Although performance reporting and accountability are enhanced by their efforts, other uses of performance information may rarely occur. Actual operating improvements and gains in service quality and efficiency—key objectives of performance management—may be few in number. Research shows that actual performance management, when it occurs at all, usually happens at the department or program level rather than at the top of the organization. So, what is the lesson? Accountability to decision makers at the top of the organization is important and should be continued. But to maximize the benefits of performance management, local governments must be sure to attend to the performance information needs of another set of decision makers—those making both major and minor operating decisions at the departmental and program levels—and nurture their use of this information. This may require many local governments to totally reorient the thrust of their performance management efforts.



# Women in the Profession

*Quote By: Kimiko Black Gilmore,  
Assistant City Manager for Kansas City, MO*



Kimiko Black Gilmore

Kimiko Capri Black Gilmore, assistant city manager for Kansas City, MO, has spent her career in jobs that are about helping people, and realizing that she can reach the most people and have the most impact in the office of the city manager.

*“As with every New Year we all look to improve on some aspect of ourselves and 2017 will be no different. I believe that 2017 will be a year of women taking a fresh look at how we should manage ourselves in the workplace. We are going to have the opportunity to implement the strategies we have learned, test them and revise them as needed. 2017 will be the year women in local government will move from preparation to action.”*

## 2017 TIP:

Women are going to need to focus on what is happening on the federal level, specifically how federal policy will impact our communities. It will be imperative that we are prepared to respond to any changes; good or otherwise in order to best serve our citizens.





1940s  
1960s  
1980s  
2000s

# Multigenerational Workplaces

*Quote By: Rebecca Ryan,  
NEXT Generation Consulting, Inc.*



Rebecca Ryan

Part futurist, part economist, Rebecca Ryan is one of America's most influential thought leaders, helping cities and companies think around the corner to what's next. Rebecca Ryan is the author of *ReGENERATION: A Manifesto for America's Future Leaders* (2013) and *Live First, Work Second: Getting Inside the Head of the Next Generation* (2007). As founder of Next Generation Consulting, Ryan leads the team that best-selling author Richard Florida calls, "One of the most reliable sources for leaders who want to attract and retain the next generation of creative workers."

Ryan is the Resident Futurist at the Alliance for Innovation and a Senior Fellow at CEOs for Cities.

*"More competition with the private sector for critical skills, e.g. tech, data analysis, etc. City Councils are going to have to get comfortable offering some positions more money, to retain the talent they need. We're seeing this across California and smart communities should be planning ahead."*

## 2017 TIP:

Stop looking at people's age and generation and start uniting them based on PURPOSE. Everyone wants to be involved in projects that matter. And local governments have that in spades.



# Race Relations

*Quote By: Ron Carlee, D.P.A,  
Strome College of Business School of Public Service,  
Old Dominion University*



Ron Carlee, D.P.A

Ron Carlee is a visiting assistant professor at Strome College of Business at Old Dominion University and the former city manager of Charlotte, North Carolina.

*“Unfortunately, 2017 may bring more conflict on race relations. Racial disparities that exist between residents and the public and private institutions that serve them will be increasingly apparent. There may be greater polarization growing out of the Presidential election and the reality that urban areas and people of color voted on the losing side. Even among diverse communities, the continued existence of overt discrimination or unintended implicit bias can occur within government and business. If undisciplined rhetoric and false news occur at the local level, expect exacerbation of the situation, as well as local reaction to national events. Social unrest from an incident in one city can become viral.*”

## 2017 TIP:

To mitigate these trends, leaders are compelled to proactively engage in honest discussions about race, including difficult conversations about white privilege. And, the talk must be coupled with tangible actions that demonstrate understanding, inclusion, and equity.





# Infrastructure

*Quote By: Justin Marlowe, Endowed Professor of  
Public Finance and Civic Engagement, and Associate  
Dean for Executive Education at the Daniel J. Evans  
School of Public Policy and Governance,  
University of Washington*



Justin Marlowe

Justin Marlowe is an Endowed Professor of Public Finance and Civic Engagement, and Associate Dean for Executive Education at the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Policy and Governance at the University of Washington, Seattle. Founded in 1962, the school is one of the top ranked public policy schools in the nation, and the oldest public policy school at a public university west of the Mississippi river. It enrolls approximately 500 students and employs 40 full-time faculty across three graduate programs, including the Master of Public Administration.

*“Infrastructure will face some real headwinds in 2017. Interest rates will rise, the tax exemption for municipal bonds will face its most serious threat in decades, and the federal government will continue to scale back its support for housing and economic development. These and other trends will make financing projects increasingly expensive. Meanwhile, President Trump will advance his plan to expand public-private partnerships for infrastructure, a plan that could move certain types of infrastructure projects forward, but not others.”*

## 2017 TIP:

Local governments can best navigate this new and uncertain environment by acting regionally, and by prioritizing their capital investment needs in a strategic, collaborative way.



# Violent Extremism

*Quote By: Joumana Silyan-Saba,  
Office of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti*





Joumana Silyan-Saba

Joumana Silyan-Saba currently serves in the Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Public Safety. In this capacity, Ms. Silyan-Saba is the Director of the CVE intervention and prevention strategy design and implementation.

*“The field of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) has evolved beyond the criminal space into a broader understanding rooted in a community-driven approach. Research shows that CVE prevention and intervention practices are most effective when applied by community groups that enjoy cultural understanding and trust. Local governments will continue to play a critical role in defining the local strategy and shaping a common vision with multiple stakeholders, and are most successful when supporting community efforts.”*

## 2017 TIP:

In a recent article I co-authored for the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), I highlighted four key principles for local governments. Local governments play a unique role in defining the local vision, convening multiple public and private partners, and facilitating support for community groups providing prevention and interventions services. My #1 tip would be for local governments to consider novel approaches in tailoring a local strategy that is unique to the needs of their communities.



# WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT PREDICTIONS FOR 2017!

What do you think the new year entails  
for the local government leader?

SHARE HERE!



## ABOUT ICMA

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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.



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