

Reinventing Government: Implementation At The Local Level 1997

There has been extensive discussion about “reinventing government” in the media and at conferences around the country. The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) conducted this survey to identify how the principles of reinventing government are being applied at the local level.

The survey was mailed to 2,858 municipalities with populations 10,000 and greater and 1,276 responded for a response rate of (44.7%).

For more information on the *Reinventing Local Government* survey, please contact [Survey Research](#).



[Click here to buy the complete dataset from bookstore.icma.org.](http://bookstore.icma.org)

Following is the survey text with the aggregate results shown in bold next to each answer. Each answer represents the percentage reporting for that question, except where noted.

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1a. How often do you present recommended budget to legislative council for adoption?	95.7	2.7	.6	.5	.6
1b. How often is the municipal budget used as the primary vehicle to implement programs that support municipal policies?	43.0	50.9	5.4	.6	.2
1c. How often could programs be implemented without some funding?	.4	1.5	35.4	51.5	11.3
1d. If municipal policies are to be successfully implemented, how often must funding be provided?	24.4	63.5	11.6	.4	
1e. How often do you view the budget as means to accomplish policy ends?	33.7	54.7	10.0	1.3	.4

Indicate which best reflects your opinion:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No opinion
2a. Taxpayers are customers, are should be treated as such.	76.9	21.1	1.3	.6	.1
2b. Municipal govt. employees should be the	.8	5.4	63.7	29.1	.9

providers of services offered by local governments.					
2c. It is acceptable to use 3 rd party contractors to provide municipal services.	36.2	59.3	1.6	2.5	.5
2d. Local gov should steer but not necessarily row the boat	13.7	64.6	14.0	1.4	6.2
2e. Community groups should be empowered to make decisions	13.1	57.9	20.8	1.9	6.3
2f. Competition should be introduced into public service delivery	20.5	66.9	8.0	.9	3.7
2g. Municipal depts should bid against 3 rd party contractors	9.7	48.9	29.9	2.2	9.4
2h. Having a mission statement for local government	40.4	47.1	7.3	.8	4.5
2i. Local government should be entrepreneurial	32.6	56.9	7.0	.5	3.0
2j. Local government should develop non tax revenue sources	42.0	53.2	2.8	.5	1.6
2k. Financial incentives for municipal employees to be entrepreneurial	20.3	56.5	15.5	.9	6.9
2l. A traditional administrative model with appropriate controls in LG	4.0	40.4	37.7	4.9	13.1
2m. Accountability problems when municipal services are provided	6.3	59.5	28.6	3.6	2.0
2n. Service fee increases are more acceptable to public than are tax increases.	9.7	65.3	20.7	1.2	3.0
2o. Competition plays an important role in moderating cost of government services	10.5	63.8	19.8	.6	5.3
2p. The aims, structure, activities, responsibilities of government are unlike those of business.	13.0	47.4	33.0	4.6	1.9

	No	Yes	
3. Included funds for customer service training for municipal employees	23.8	76.2	
	Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Were funds approved by the council	77.1	22.1	.7
b. Was the program implemented	71.0	28.6	.4
4. Included funds to help train neighborhood org in decision making	79.1	20.9	
	Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Were funds approved by the council	62.4	27.1	10.6
b. Was the program implemented	62.0	32.3	5.7
5. Included funds to help train employees in decision making skills	24.9	75.1	
	Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Were funds approved by the council	76.1	22.9	1.1
b. Was the program implemented	69.5	30.3	.1
6. Recommended contracting out municipal service to 3 rd party vendor	21.2	78.8	
	Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Were funds approved by the council	59.9	38.3	1.8
b. Was the program implemented	65.4	33.6	.9
c. Anticipated cost saving reflected in budget categories	46.3	49.8	3.9
7. Recommended a fee increase instead of tax increase to fund services	14.0	86.0	
	Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Were funds approved by the council	54.9	44.0	1.1
b. Was the program implemented	62.8	36.6	.5
8. Change your budget format to funding outcomes	66.1	33.9	
9. Recommended the use of enterprise funds	24.7	75.3	
	Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Were funds approved by the council	78.5	20.3	1.2
b. Was the program implemented	79.5	19.3	1.2
10. Recommended partnering with a private business	29.0	71.0	
	Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Were funds approved by the council	67.0	32.0	1.0
b. Was the program implemented	67.8	31.6	.6
11. Recommended setting aside funds for employee incentives	56.4	43.6	
	Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Were funds approved by the council	67.2	26.2	6.6
b. Was the program implemented	65.7	28.1	6.2
12. Recommended programs that make LG more entrepreneurial	53.7	46.3	
	Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Were funds approved by the council	58.0	39.7	2.3
b. Was the program implemented	57.2	41.0	1.9
13. Anticipated non-tax revenues derived from entrepreneurial efforts	48.7	51.3	
14. Recommended funding citizen surveys to determine expectations	41.3	58.7	
	Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Were funds approved by the council	73.0	22.1	5.0
b. Was the program implemented	72.6	22.5	4.9

15. Which of the following services are provided by your municipality

Police	98.7
Fire (paid/volunteer)	90.4
Refuse collection	65.5
Water/Sewer	83.7
Inspection (bldg/zoning)	98.4
Leisure (parks/recreation)	92.3
Library	55.3
Cultural and arts	44.5

16 How many full time employees are employed the municipality?

1000+	8.5
750-1000	3.7
500-750	7.8
250-500	21.8
100-250	41.4
50-100	15.0
Fewer than 50	1.7

	No		Yes	
17 Is any of the workforce unionized	26.6		73.4	
	Less than 25%	Between 25-50%	Between 50-75%	More than 75%
17a Percentage of workforce unionized	10.5	24.0	30.7	34.7
18 Are there collective bargaining agreements	5.6		94.4	
19 Unionized employees collectively bargain for	Yes		No	
a. Wages	99.7		.3	
b. Benefits	99.3		.7	
c. Job security/protection	77.3		22.7	
d. Limiting unit work	47.6		52.4	
e. Work rules that limit performed work	53.6		46.4	
f. Minimum staffing	43.9		56.1	
g. Shift beginning and end times	70.5		29.5	
20a. Are there personnel rules for limiting the contracting out	2.8		97.2	
20b. Are there personnel rules for limiting certain work	4.7		95.3	

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	
21. How would you classify the economic health of your municipality	1.9	13.4	27.1	36.4	21.2	
	Urban	High density suburb	Low density suburb	Central city	Rural	
22. What best describes your municipality	15.2	24.2	32.0	14.8	13.8	
	High income		Moderate to middle income		Low to moderate income	
23. What are the economic characteristics of your residents	15.0		63.4		21.7	
	Increased more than 10%	Increased between 1-10%	Stayed the same	Decreased between 1-10%	Decreased more than 10%	
25 In the past 10years has your municipality population changed	39.4	36.0	14.6	9.3	.7	
	Greater than 7%		Between 5-7%	Between 3-4.9%	Under 3%	
26. Most recent unemployment rate	7.6		19.8	42.4	30.1	
	20,000 and above	15,000-19,000	10,000-14,999	Under 10,000	Don't know	
27. Average per capita income of your community	48.9	24.0	12.9	1.3	12.9	
	Increased in value		Stayed the same		Decreased in value	
28. Total taxable value of real estate during the past five years	85.7		6.3		8.0	
	4% or more	3-3.9%	2-2.9%	1-1.9%	0-0.9%	Don't know
29. Fund balance measure as a percent of revenues	70.4	6.5	6.2	5.9	4.7	6.3
	City/Town/Village Manager	CAO	Finance Director	Dept. Head	Assistant Manager	Other
30. What is your title/position	67.5	11.6	6.5	.9	4.2	9.3
	More than 15 yrs		Between 10-15 yrs	Between 5-9 years	Between 2-4 years	Less than 2 years
31. Number of years in current position	11.1		15.2	28.8	22.3	22.6
	More than 20 years		Between 15-19 years	Between 10-14 years	Between 5-9 years	Less than 5 years
32. How many total years have you served in this position?	41.8		19.6	17.1	12.0	9.6
	Male		Female			
33. What is your gender?	89.4		10.6			

	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+		
34. What is your age range?	5.2	54.8	37.6	2.5		
	Less than 4 years of college	4 year college degree	MPA MBA or graduate degree	JD or equivalent	Ph.D. or equivalent	
35. The highest level of education completed	5.6	23.4	68.0	1.4	1.6	
	African-American	Asian-American	Caucasian	Hispanic	Native American	Other
36. Racial/ethnic category	1.7	1.2	93.9	2.4	.6	.3
	Very conservative		Moderately conservative	Neutral	Moderately liberal	Very liberal
37. Political philosophy	4.2	42.5	34.3	17.9	1.1	
	ICMA	State/reg managers association	ASPA	Other professional Association		
38. Professional associations	82.7	72.9	12.2	30.7		