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2018 ICMA REGIONAL SUMMITS



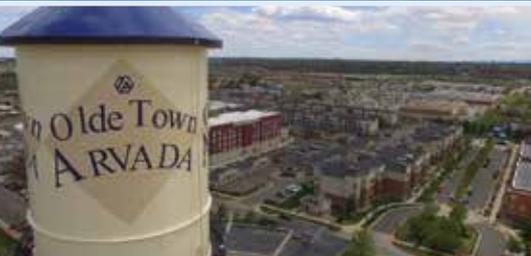
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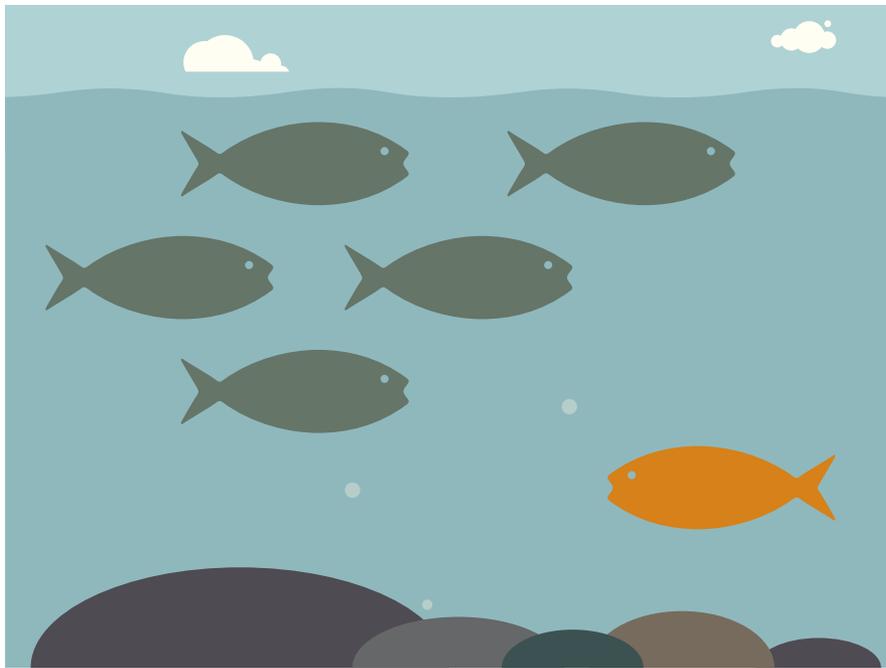
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BY MARTHA PEREGO, ICMA-CM

UPSTREAM CHALLENGES

What to do when the ethical dilemma involves your elected official

Any CEO, whether leading a private or public organization, knows that success can depend on first establishing a solid relationship with the governing body. The relationship, individually and collectively, must be built on a foundation of mutual trust and respect for the other's unique role and responsibilities. Local government managers face the added challenge of doing this publicly, despite competing interests and the pesky requirements of democracy.

When either party fails to understand its role or strays across boundaries, intentionally or not, the relationship can be strained or fractured. An elected official acting like a manager can create an ethical dilemma for the manager as well. Here are two real-world incidents that highlight ethical issues that can arise.

Incident #1

The takeaway from the new city

manager's first council retreat was that public works was a real weakness in the organization. The manager promised to pay close attention to the situation and, after a year, concluded that the public works director lacked the technical and management skills needed to lead the department.

A significant amount of coaching and direction didn't seem to yield better results. The manager terminated the public works director and then informed the mayor and council. The following year, the wife of the now former employee ran for and won a spot on city council.

The new councilmember is highly critical of the manager's performance and prefers to address her concerns and complaints only in public forums. She also goes directly to staff to inquire about project status, get information, and issue requests for service. The manager met with the councilmember in an

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PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

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*ICMA Credentialed Manager (ICMA-CM)

effort to get her to deal directly with him and identify the source of her discontent. Nothing has worked.

The manager next learned from a vendor that the councilmember called the vendor to determine why a project was not progressing on time and to demand better results. The manager believed her action was improper. He wonders what his next step should be. Should the manager address this issue with the councilmember? Go to the mayor?

Many times elected officials are motivated by pure desire to serve the voters, and they wander into the manager's "territory" because they lack an understanding of the manager's role and how to get things done. Managers can help newly elected officials understand the division of labor between elected officials and staff. Council retreats, orientations, presentations by corporation counsel, and regular discussions are all effective ways to build a strong understanding of roles and responsibilities and establish the ground rules for conduct of all parties. A low-key, one-on-one approach often is successful in resolving missteps and issues.

But the manager can't be expected to correct inappropriate upstream conduct. Governing body members must police the conduct of their peers and weigh in when it crosses boundaries. In this case, the manager should explain to the councilmember that her intervention is neither helpful for the project nor appropriate. The manager should also inform the mayor and request that the councilmember's conduct be addressed by her peers.

Incident #2

What do you do when the mayor is the offending party? One city manager faced that issue after the departure of the director of the city's performing arts center. The mayor then presented the manager with an ultimatum: rehire the director or meet with council in executive session called specifically

to consider the manager's continued employment.

The director had resigned from the city following a media report that he had accepted many gifts from individuals doing business with the city and failed to follow the disclosure laws. The director had been competent, but his conduct violated city policy and the law and embarrassed the organization.

This was a deal breaker for the manager because all staff, including the director, had been through ethics training that specifically addressed the gifts issue. The manager had offered the director the option to resign or be fired.

The manager informed the mayor that he would not reconsider his decision and was glad to discuss his rationale with the full council in executive session. From the manager's perspective, this was not about power or territory but about preserving the city charter and rule of law. His ethical obligation is to resist encroachment on his professional responsibilities, to handle each personnel matter fairly and on the merits, and to do what is right—even at the cost of losing his position.

Governance coach Mike Conduff reminds both managers and elected officials of the importance of the team relationship: "It is hard to imagine an effective team environment where members don't know or operate within their roles. Visualize an airline pilot leaving the cockpit to serve drinks or a pitcher abandoning the mound to catch a fly ball in the outfield.

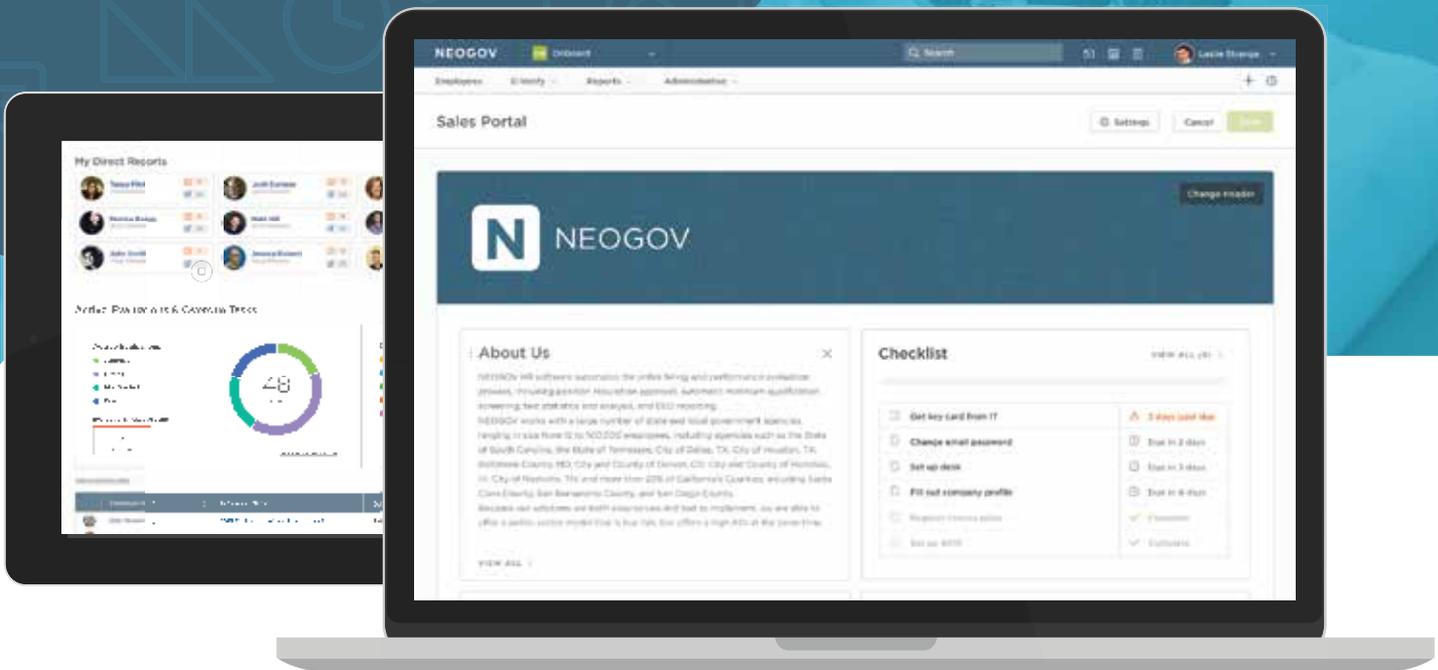
Elected officials are critical in their governing role, and in order to be effective must be educated, trained, and coached in that role. Managers can clearly assist with training, but mentoring and discipline rest largely with the mayor and governing body." We skip training camp at our peril! **RM**



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WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO FOR YOUR COMMUNITY DURING 2018?



TAMMI SADDLER JONES,
ICMA-CM

City Administrator
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I am truly excited about the year 2018. Having worked for the city of Smyrna for eight years, I am committed to serving this community. We have many wonderful things happening in Smyrna so the possibilities are endless.

My focus areas for 2018 are maintaining transparency, excelling in customer service, and promoting the great things about our city. As an ICMA credentialed manager, I embrace the importance of lifelong learning.

So, next year, I will continue my professional development through conferences, webinars, and all available resources. As always, mentoring and coaching are a major goal during this coming year.



ERIC NORENBERG,
ICMA-CM

City Manager
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I am looking forward to several projects and initiatives that will shape the city of Milford for years to come. A new hospital—the largest construction project in Milford's history—will be completed in late 2018. This \$300 million investment will anchor a 165-acre health campus, which will also include a pediatric and senior healthcare facility.

City infrastructure is key to making these projects successful and nearby growing neighborhoods possible. Milford will complete a new sewage pump station and other utility improvements in 2018.

In our downtown, I am looking forward to new restaurants and a bed and breakfast opening during the year and completion of 10 new and renovated homes.

Finally, I look forward to completing our strategic plan, based on focus groups and a resident survey, to guide the next five years.



CHRISTINE BURNS

City Manager
Spring Lake, Michigan
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Spring Lake had a rather controversial 2017 due to a small, but vocal, movement towards disincorporation. With our foot on the brake for more than eight months, not much was accomplished other than public education on such issues as how the council-manager form of government works and how taxes pay for services (no, really...they do!).

I am most looking forward to tackling a couple of tough issues, including how to whittle down our unfunded pension obligation and prioritizing some critical infrastructure needs.

There are a few fun projects in our near future as well. We have a master plan update and a branding project in the works, both of which will help us look beyond 2018.

Of course, we are always looking for ways to collaborate with our neighboring communities. Here's to another great year ahead!



REGAN CANDELARIO,
ICMA-CM

City Manager
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Novato is a community poised to take great strides in 2018. Guided by the city council's leadership, it recently celebrated the renovation of a new \$4 million downtown bus terminal serving more than 1,000 daily riders.

In the coming year, we will be finalizing work on a downtown SMART commuter rail station. It is a third stop in Novato, along a 48-mile track that links Sonoma and Marin counties.

These two transportation improvement projects, including significant private investment by new hotels, housing, and commercial development, plus plans for the re-opening of the historic Novato Theater, continue to make our community a desirable place to live, work, and play.

2018 will indeed be a banner year for Novato. **PM**

BROWNFIELD

As a Mainstream Investment

Core to land use decision making **By Tad McGalliard**



DS



It can be argued that one of the most innovative and successful outcomes to emerge from the past 30 years of sustainability are the policies, programs, public private partnerships, and more that have been created to help clean up and reuse brownfields.

During this time, local governments have increased their knowledge about brownfields and have begun to mainstream their cleanup and redevelopment as part of their core responsibilities. Local governments lead or support brownfields redevelopment in a number of ways, as described next.

Planning for Better Places

Local governments are incorporating brownfield redevelopment goals and objectives into their commonly used plans and strategies, including those that are focused on sustainability and livability, economic development, regional transportation, disaster and hazard mitigation, small-area designations, parks, and recreation and open space.

The community of Russellville, Kentucky, for instance, met several goals in various plans through redevelopment of a former car dealership to create a new fire station and sports and recreation fields as well as green infrastructure.¹

The award-winning Mecklenburg Livable Communities Plan (Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, <http://livablemeck.com/plan/mlcp.pdf>) includes key strategies, actions, and measures focused on brownfields and vacant land (see Figure 1).

Facilitating Engagement

Tools to connect community stakeholders—residents and businesses alike—in robust engagement approaches are more widely used now for brownfields projects than ever before. While such traditional approaches as public meetings are still available, it is far easier to reach constituents through online, social media, and specialized digital approaches.

The city of Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, for instance, used an online platform to solicit comments for a planning

process involving the redevelopment of a former drive-in theater property. The city's platform received more than 335 comments on the various plan alternatives that were proposed for the project.²

Using and Adapting Local Financing Tools

Local governments continue to suggest that some of the biggest challenges for cleaning up and reusing brownfield properties are those associated with financing. Because of their location, contamination, and other factors, many brownfield properties remain upside down—that is, the site's value is less than the cost of cleaning it up for productive reuse.

Creativity in leveraging and layering financing is often required to make the economics of a redevelopment project work. Local governments have long used financial tools for economic development and have adapted many to support local brownfields priorities.

By far the tool local governments use most widely to mitigate financial challenges is tax increment financing (TIF). The Pittsburgh Technology Center, a \$104 million development project that had struggled to get off the ground, is now one of the showcase redevelopment projects in the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In addition to various sources of local and state government funding, a \$7.4 million TIF program was used to finance the remainder of the project.³

In many places, communities have established other financial approaches to foster redevelopment, including property and income tax credits or adjustments, special tax districts, loan guarantees and revolving loan funds, direct grants, and municipal bond programs.

Many local governments have worked with development financing institutions to secure new market tax credits to help propel brownfields projects forward. While not widespread, some communities have begun to look toward foundation and philanthropic organizations as possible financial partners for redevelopment projects.

BROWNFIELDS CONFERENCE 21 YEARS IN THE MAKING

For more than two decades, ICMA has partnered with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the National Brownfields Conference. Roughly equal in size to ICMA's own annual conference, the brownfields conference attracts several thousand registrants, more than 100 exhibitors, and offers more than 125 educational sessions, special events, and networking opportunities.

In 1996, a cross-section of stakeholders came together in Pittsburgh for the very first brownfields conference. The conference's return to Pittsburgh in December 2017 (www.brownfields2017.org) offers an opportunity to reflect on

the maturation of the brownfields sector, as well as the continuing importance of local government policies, programs, and partnerships that support the clean-up and production of formerly used manufacturing and commercial properties.

Brownfields Roots

The period from 1965 to 2008 brought a series of national laws into existence that have basically established the framework for today's national, state, regional, and local environmental management system. During the 1960s, the Solid Waste Disposal Act and the National Environmental Policy Act were signed into legislation. In

1970, President Richard Nixon's administration founded EPA. The Clean Air Act of 1970 established regulatory requirements for air emissions from stationary and mobile sources of pollutants.

The Clean Water Act (1972), as the name suggests, set guidelines for the discharge of contaminants into U.S. waters. Other key legislation included the Endangered Species Act (1973), the Safe Drinking Water Act (1974), the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) (1976), the Pollution Prevention Act (1990), and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) (1980).

CERCLA, or Superfund as it's often

A project to redevelop a municipal dump into a library in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, received several hundred thousand dollars in foundation grants to support the initiative.⁴

Some communities have also created

public-private partnerships (P3) to meet the goals of a local project. In Owensboro, Kentucky, the city's need for a new convention center led local developers to become partners on a local riverfront brownfields project that has stimulated

redevelopment across the city's core, creating a robust pace of new public and private investments.⁵

Exercising Nonfinancial Tools

A variety of nonfinancial tools have been adapted or developed to support brownfields development. In many places, for example, local governments offer some level of support to conduct environmental site assessments of properties.

Tampa, Florida's brownfields program offers targeted environmental site assessments.⁶ Other commonly used tools include infrastructure improvements to improve the value of areas, neighborhoods, and communities ripe for redevelopment; assistance with land aggregation and land banking; expedited permitting; planning, design, and engineering assistance; and density allowances.

The Value of Investing in Brownfields Redevelopment

According to recent ICMA survey data (forthcoming *Brownfields and Local Governments 2018 Survey Report*), local government practitioners have these reasons to believe that their

FIGURE 1. Mecklenburg Livable Communities Plan.

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, has been concerned about brownfield redevelopment goals and objectives for some time and developed a specific plan (<http://livablemeck.com/plan/mlcp.pdf>) to address them. Here's an excerpt from that plan:

Strategy

- Promote the redevelopment, reuse, and rehabilitation of declining and vacant properties.

Actions

- Adjust and adopt local government policies and zoning regulations to provide flexible redevelopment of declining and vacant properties.
- Develop a temporary infill strategy, including audit of locations and countywide map to encourage infill and redevelopment.
- Preserve history through the repurposing of older structures and

analyze architecture in communities to identify well-designed and culturally significant structures.

- Support developers' integration of local plans and use of other local government tools.
- Promote well-designed, artistic, and iconic structures in developed areas.

Measures

- Infill and redevelopment activity: Number of residential and commercial building permits in targeted reinvestment areas in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

called, provides mechanisms to clean up uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous sites and to protect environmental and public health from toxic exposures.

As of 2017, more than 1,000 sites remain on the National Priorities List (NPL), an EPA-maintained database of the dirtiest former commercial and government (e.g., former military bases) properties across the country.

The Conundrum

A key element of Superfund established that a polluter pays principle, which opened the door for regulatory agencies to define potentially responsible parties, or PRP, that could be on the hook for

cleanup costs associated with sites listed on the Superfund NPL.

In the years after Superfund authorization, local governments across the U.S. took note that lenders for real estate deals, particularly in urban areas, were increasingly risk averse to investment on formerly used properties, citing a fear of becoming a PRP.

Interpretations of the regulatory framework associated with the Superfund law suggested that all past, present, and future property owners of formerly used sites could be liable for contamination. With this mindset, many owners of various kinds of properties—even such small parcels as gas stations—abandoned their

sites and declared bankruptcy rather than face the prospect of expensive lawsuits. And, because future property owners were held liable, the sites remained undesirable to developers and investors.

In the early 1990s, EPA created the national brownfields program to develop research, programming, and grant funding to help local communities overcome the challenges of potentially contaminated properties. In a significant move, the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act (2002) amended Superfund by clarifying CERCLA liability protections and providing funds to support various state, tribal, and local partners.

jurisdictions should invest human and financial resources in local brownfields actions:

- Protecting the environment as well as the public health of local and regional residents.
- Eliminating blight and increasing local tax bases.
- Creating jobs and economic opportunity.
- Prepping land for new commercial activities to develop.
- Creating more livable communities.

Across the U.S., thousands of brownfield properties have been redeveloped; however, there are likely hundreds of thousands more to go in large and small communities. Although precise numbers are hard to come by, most communities have some level of brownfields or redevelopment challenges.

The continued maturation of local expertise in dealing with these kinds of community issues is likely to be necessary for the foreseeable future. Local governments—in tandem with residents, elected leaders, and community organi-

zations—have a lot at stake, and even more to gain.

The creativity, resourcefulness, and all-around management and leadership skills of the typical professional local government practitioner are just what the situation calls for . . . and reason to be hopeful about the future. **PM**

ENDNOTES AND RESOURCES:

- 1 <http://dca.ky.gov/Case%20Studies%20Library/CaseStudy2012RussellvilleFireStation.pdf>.
- 2 http://www.pleasantprairieonline.com/openvillagehall/index.asp?pd_url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.peakdemocracy.com%2Fp%2F173#peak_democracy.
- 3 <https://www.cmu.edu/steinbrenner/brownfields/Case%20Studies/pdf/pittsburgh%20technology%20center%20-%20LTV.pdf>.

4 https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-11/documents/shepherdstown_success_story.pdf.

5 <http://www.lanereport.com/22530/2013/07/owensboro-new-downtown-riverfront>.

6 <https://www.tampagov.net/economic-and-urban-development/programs/brownfields-assessment-grant-program>.



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MASSACHUSETTS' ★ **BOOT** ★ ★ **CAMP** ★ ★ **FOR MANAGERS**

Providing the necessary know-how for success
By Kate Fitzpatrick, ICMA-CM, Jeff Nutting, and John Petrin, ICMA-CM



Massachusetts has its very own boot camp for new and aspiring managers—one that evolved after a group of local managers identified a concerning gap in management training.

Several years ago, we were having a conversation about the onboarding process for new managers. We came to the conclusion that there was truly no training available in our state to prepare new managers to be successful, starting with their first day on the job.

Obviously, there are many available educational programs for prospective managers to earn a bachelor's or master's degree in various subject areas, including public administration. State, local, regional, and professional entities also offer numerous training programs that occur on a fairly regular basis that address technical issues of the day or the broad subject of management and leadership.

We came away from our discussion with the feeling that there was no program that addressed the truly helpful hints on dealing with our various constituencies and identified the little things that can get a manager in trouble—or be seen as disingenuous and lost.

We wanted to create a curriculum that would provide prospective managers with the do's and don'ts that are not highlighted in the texts, but that are critical to leading communities. To top it off, we wanted to infuse the training with an emphasis on the Massachusetts' system of town meeting government.

With that goal in mind, we created an outline for a boot camp for managers and pitched the idea to our state managers association, the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association (MMMA). MMMA executive board and staff members agreed that this program was long overdue and eagerly agreed to support it by funding it on a yearly basis with no cost to the participants.

We asked the board members to consider how they became involved in the management association and also how they survived their first days as a local government manager. Many

noted that they were grateful their peers contacted them, but wished they could have had an onboarding process that better prepared them for the challenge of leading a community.

The board originally agreed to fund the program at \$1,500—an amount that has increased over time to cover meal and refreshment costs for participants. The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA), our state league, agreed to provide staff to coordinate the logistics.

We have been operating by seeking free space from communities, presenters who give of their own time, and MMA staff resources. MMA's Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker has been with us since the beginning and has provided the logistical oversight to make the program work. Plus, the funding has now become a permanent line item in MMMA's budget.

The Basics

Our first annual session, creatively titled “Boot Camp for New Managers and Administrators,” was held in 2008, and

The session runs all day and includes three or four components. Feedback is always solicited from attendees on the aspects of the program that were the most useful, and they are asked to identify additional subject areas.

After so many years, we have a good understanding as to what topics prospective managers need and find helpful. We cycle through these topics, focusing on one at a time for approximately 90 minutes.

The program leaders meet several months in advance to brainstorm topic areas and seek out the presenters. An agenda and logistics are then finalized with staff. MMA sends email notices about the program to the membership and to affiliate groups, and participants are encouraged to attend by colleagues or supervisors.

The application is a simple registration form and is reviewed by staff with questions being addressed by the program leaders.

The most important (and most highly rated) component is the general session that is called the “Basics of Municipal

We wanted to create a curriculum that would provide prospective managers with the do's and don'ts that are not highlighted in the textbooks.

we continue to have a strong showing of approximately 50 participants each year in October. We even took the show on the road in 2012, training other managers how to organize boot camps in their jurisdictions during the ICMA Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

Participants include newly appointed managers and employees in local government seeking to become managers. We prioritize attendance based on each applicant's career aspirations.

Management.” Topic areas include working with selectmen and other boards, residents, press, and staff; how to be a leader in your community; building effective relationships; how to show community pride; developing a personal work style; and developing a support network.

There are six managers with varying degrees of experience delivering the information in a fast-paced, informal, and often humorous way. We have always tried to blend various demographic

Boot Camp Agenda

Here are two examples—original session and a 2016 session—on how boot camps have been structured over the years:

Boot Camp for New Managers and Administrators October 2, 2008

9:00–10:00 a.m.
Municipal Management
Potpourri

10:00–10:10 a.m.
Break

10:10–11:45 a.m.
Procurement and the
Com-PASS Program

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Lunch

12:30–1:45 p.m.
Finance and Budgeting
Basics

1:45–2:00 p.m.
Break

2:00–3:15 p.m.
The Human
Resources Toolkit

Boot Camp for New Managers/Administrators October 27, 2016

8:30–8:45 a.m.
Welcome, Introductions,
and Overview

8:45–10:00 a.m.
Leadership 101

10:00–10:15 a.m.
Break

10:15–12:00 p.m.
The Basics of
Municipal Management

12:00–12:45 p.m.
Lunch

12:45–2:00 p.m.
Budgeting 101: A Guide
to Best Practices

2:00–2:45 p.m.
Forms of Government

2:45–3:00 p.m.
Final Thoughts,
Questions, and Wrap up

factors when determining the group of presenters. These factors include gender, community type and size, experience, and management styles.

Interaction with the attendees is encouraged. Presenters are familiar with each other and the repartee among them has become entertaining, with great examples and stories provided for the various points being made.

In addition to the general session, components include leadership, personnel management, collective bargaining, capital planning, finance, and other topics as we deem appropriate.

We also recruit topic area experts each year to address the basics that are needed for participants to be successful as they take on the position of manager for the first time. Topic area experts have often joined us for many years, and some have started participating in the general session.

Many participants attend a second year. We often hear that this is the most entertaining and informative session that managers have attended. Established managers have seen the impact and have been more than willing to participate.

The reviews of our casual approach to presenting information has played an important role in the word getting out that the boot camp is a great experience, as well as a place for us to get the first look at potential candidates for management-level positions.

A key factor to our success is the stories we tell in order to make our points. One manager will talk about the elderly woman he assisted with a public works issue and how he was happy to meet her at her house.

Another one speaks on how stopping at a public works job site to discuss the project is routine, while another manager only feels comfortable stopping at a site with a supervisor. Often, we are highlighting the differences in how we may individually handle a problem based on our personal styles.

We stress that participants must filter what we are saying to fit their own styles. When discussing such other areas as ethics, we make it clear that options are limited. Stories include having to address sensitive areas related to elected officials and their families.

Handling an enforcement order, for example, regarding the daughter of an elected official and not knowing about the relationship, hits home the importance of discretion and how a person should never make disparaging comments in the process.

Another maxim? Everyone is related to everyone else in local government!

A Boost to Networking

One of the outcomes of the program is that people get to meet each other and networks are developed. We often receive calls from attendees who have

used us as a resource in pursuing their own careers, and then have become colleagues and friends as their own careers have moved forward.

This aspect of recruiting and networking is truly needed in the Massachusetts environment, as many of us who have spent years in the management profession are in the process of retiring and moving on to new adventures in our lives.

Participants from boot camp sessions have gone on to take senior management positions. Nina Nazarian, town administrator of Princeton, Massachusetts, who also was a presenter in

Sample Tips from Seasoned Managers

Here is some of the management advice that is shared at boot camps:

- Treat all elected officials the same.
- Avoid personal relationships with elected officials. Keep your distance.
- Try to say yes.
- Be at community events. Showing up is half the battle.
- Remember that there are no secrets in the “big house” (i.e., local government buildings).
- Make sure you understand that you work in a community and not just a town or county.
- Get out of the office. Do not isolate yourself.

a later boot camp, states that the training is valuable for individuals entering or planning to enter local government management.

“In recalling the boot camp I attended,” she says, “it provided me some of the foundational aspects to prepare for this career. It also provided an introduction to a small group of managers who I know I can count on if I need guidance or insight in the field. I am really proud to be part of an association that offers this no-cost training opportunity.”

Adam Chapdelaine, town manager of Arlington, Massachusetts, attended the first boot camp and has also become a presenter. He says, “Boot camp provided the perspective and insight of a decades-long career in a fun and interactive one-day session.

“It’s easy to learn how to balance a budget or draft a policy from a textbook, but learning to lead and manage a people-intensive organization is far more challenging. Boot camp gave me and other aspiring managers a head start on

learning these lessons before facing them in the real world.”

Our core group of managers has remained constant over the past 10 years, but it now is changing as we prepare our succession plan. We have decided to transition the stewardship of the program to a group of managers who will be committed to maintaining the program in future years. It certainly has been a fun program to plan, coordinate, and present.

We have often gotten much out of it ourselves. We have found ourselves trying out ideas shared with each other and from the audience. Ultimately, our presentations always stress that not every idea is for everyone and that you need to be true to yourself.

We have also stressed that what is said in boot camp stays in boot camp. We try to get as personal and honest as possible to let the participants see the emotion that goes with the profession.

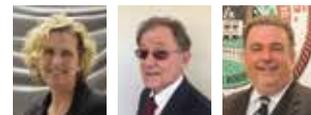
Is This Program Needed Elsewhere?

This program has been successful in our

state, and we are willing to provide any material and information to managers in other states and countries who may see the same need and be interested in a similar program.

The material can easily be adapted to fit the needs of other local governments. It really just takes the commitment of a few managers who support outreach to potential attendees.

Our success has been the fact that we have been able to have fun with this process. We have always looked forward to the annual event, as we get as much out of it as the attendees. **PM**



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ECLIPSE CENTRAL

HOW CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS, PREPPED FOR THE TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE

On August 21, 2017, a total solar eclipse passed across the continental United States for the first time since 1918. Its 70-mile wide path bisected 14 states and gave the 25 million people who live within a day's drive of totality an opportunity to witness a rarity, while also allowing them to participate in perhaps one of the worst traffic days in U.S. history.

While some people prepared for the worst, others rejoiced in the opportunity to host visitors and to capitalize on the opportunity to welcome eclipse chasers.

We in Carbondale, Illinois, had the unique advantage of being the point of longest duration of totality of the 2017 eclipse. Carbondale also has the unique title of being the "eclipse crossroads," as another total eclipse in 2024 will also pass over the city.

Two years before the eclipse, astronomers and physicists from our own Southern Illinois University (SIU) tried to convince us that tens of thousands of people, perhaps more, would flock to our town of 26,000 population to witness 2 minutes and 41.6 seconds of darkness not normally present on a hot Monday afternoon in August.

We listened, we learned, and we quickly realized that we had better be prepared.

Unlike larger cities in the path of the eclipse, including Portland, Oregon; Kansas City, Missouri; and Nashville, Tennessee, Carbondale is not accustomed to hosting 50,000 people for a special event. Nor are we accustomed to receiving so much attention.

Tremendous Undertaking

Although the thought of welcoming so many visitors was intriguing and exciting, it was equally daunting, as we knew we had little control over the number of people that would surely want to converge and claim a viewing spot at eclipse central.

We decided to take action, form a

planning committee, and embrace what we believed to be the only time in the city's history when it had a competitive advantage over everyone else. The two-year process was a tremendous undertaking that involved a lot of work, a lot of uncertainty, and a lot of questions.

Now that the eclipse is over, I can confidently say that our community was ready, and we're looking forward to April 8, 2024, to host another one. Having done it once, we learned these valuable lessons that will guide us through the next seven years and hopefully assist others when planning big events:

Get everyone on the bus. Anyone who has been in a leadership role surely understands the value of getting the right team assembled. As important as it is in managing daily operations, it's amplified when the population triples over a weekend.

Throw in a three-day festival, which the city decided to support to help celebrate the event, and staff members will be unable to handle everything. We realized this right away, and knew we had to involve the entire community in the events.

Carbondale's main street organization, tourism bureau, faith community, nonprofits, civic clubs, and hundreds of resident volunteers all played a part in developing and executing the plan of action.



CENTRAL

By Gary Williams

Since this was going to be the biggest event Carbondale had managed, we more than doubled the number of volunteers typically used for busy weekends like SIU's homecoming and graduation. Every level of the organization was involved to ensure there was an adequate number of personnel and that we were communicating our plan clearly to everyone.

Our vision for the eclipse event was reinforced by engaging teams weekly. The sense of teamwork was enhanced by accepting feedback from anyone who had an idea to share. In the end, valuing the input of every teammate, regardless of their rank in the hierarchy, helped get everyone on the bus and moving in the same direction.

Keep it simple. We all know the acronym K-I-S-S. The principle of simplifying an action plan couldn't be more relevant than when you know there are going to be a lot of moving parts to it.

Although we tried to prepare for the worst, we were careful not to complicate the existing plan. We tried to stick to the basics of what communities are comfortable managing: safety, logistics, communications, and customer service. This meant making people feel safe, providing convenient parking, making sure bathrooms were available, developing clear signage, and having people available to answer questions.

There were certainly more details to



consider, but keeping our plan simple ensured that team members stayed focused when things went wrong, which we knew they would.

Make sure people are comfortable.

Carbondale's civic center remained open all weekend, and I was amazed at how many visitors were surprised by this, but they were also glad that we did keep it open. August in southern Illinois is typically hot and humid, and the easiest way to discourage visitors from returning is to make them uncomfortable.

The civic center provided a welcome refuge to visitors who were greeted with bottles of water provided by volunteers. A key part of our plan also was to provide shuttles to move people around town more efficiently, reducing the stress of driving in an unfamiliar place.

We set up cooling tents and misting stations in various locations to help people cool off. In spite of the long hours, we also kept smiling, which assured our guests that they were in good hands.

Roll out the red carpet. Providing good hospitality doesn't have to exist only in the South, and there's no reason that your team can't provide a great experience, regardless of what region you're in.

To put our best foot forward, a major capital project in the heart of downtown was accelerated and finished. In May 2017, we began replacing all public sidewalks on a half-mile stretch of downtown. We also relocated overhead utility lines, planted new trees, and constructed new planters so that the best first impression possible could be made.

To mitigate the risk of potentially having the project unfinished, the contractor was required to include all overtime in their price. The city received a lot of additional tender loving care during the weeks leading up to the eclipse, as we repainted street lights, replaced flags, restriped pavement markings, and installed new plantings.

In the days before the eclipse took place, teams of volunteers met incoming visitors at the train station to welcome them. As downtown restaurants filled and lines of customers spilled onto the streets, bottles of water were delivered to them while they waited.

Again, workers and volunteers made sure they always had smiles on their faces and thanked everyone for visiting. For small towns off the beaten path, it can be hard to convince people to visit at all. A big event might give people reasons

to visit once, but it's up to a community to give them reasons to come back.

Play to play great. From reading the book *The Golfer's Mind: Play to Play Great* by author Bob Rotella, and through his insights on human performance and specifically in professional sports, I was amazed to learn that some of the greatest athletes in the world sometimes feared winning and attributed losses to their fear of accepting praise or the spotlight.

They actually sabotaged themselves because they wanted to avoid victory and thus, the attention that would follow. I certainly understand this rationale and perhaps like many of my peers, prefer to be behind the scenes and leave the public spotlight to elected officials.

I'm also reminded of something I often tell staff members: "It's not about

Carbondale also has the unique title of being the "eclipse crossroads," as another total eclipse in 2024 will also pass over the city.

me." If your community is as lucky as we were and have something special happen that can put it on the map, try to remember that it isn't about you as the manager, it's about your charge to your community.

It's imperative that you do everything you can to leverage the situation. Jump out of your comfort zone and seize the opportunity.

During eclipse weekend, we were interviewed by every major print and TV outlet in the country, which provided publicity that we never could have afforded to generate on our own. We welcomed more than 50,000 visitors. We knew that this was a moment where failure wasn't an option.

Lessons learned. The biggest change we would make is to try and calm the media. In the weeks leading up

to the eclipse, there was a considerable number of local media reports on impending traffic nightmares and warnings that our communities would be overrun with tourists.

All of us feel that these types of stories had an effect on local residents who by and large stayed home during the eclipse weekend. In 2024, we'll give more effort to sending a relaxed message to the media in hopes that we can calm tensions that will precede the event.

In spite of any reservations or nervousness that we may have had in the beginning, we made a decision to embrace the spotlight. We assured ourselves that we could handle the situation as well as anyone. We made the decision to not just play, but to play great. From my vantage point, we were successful. **PM**



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BY MARTIN KOCHER, SIMEON SCHUDY, AND LISA SPANTIG

ALONE AND HONEST

Or in a group and dishonest

Did you know you're more likely to be honest when you're by yourself instead of in a group? We all like to think of ourselves as honest people but according to research in a study by the Ludwig-Maximilian University of Munich, Munich, Germany, called "*I lie? We lie! Why? Experimental Evidence on a Dishonesty Shift in Groups*," we are much more likely to be dishonest when in groups than when we are by ourselves. The core data for the study was collected between June and September 2015.

The research study, which was published in the *INFORMS' journal Management Science*, explored what motivates a group of people, especially those who previously behaved honestly, to work together to lie. Even individuals who have a proven track record of honest behavior are no match for the potentially negative influences present in a group dynamic, especially when money is at stake.

Coordinated Efforts

According to the study, when organizations are exposed for large-scale deceptive or corrupt behavior, often it is not usually the actions of one or two employees but a somewhat coordinated effort of many individuals, including upper level management. A prominent example is the alleged issuance of faulty emissions certificates by German car manufacturer Volkswagen, as well as the scandal in October 2001 that led to the bankruptcy of the Enron Corporation, an American energy company based in Houston, Texas.

The study included participants in both individual and group situations. Participants, who were paid for their role in the study, were shown video of dice rolls and asked to report the number shown on the die. The higher the reported die roll, the larger the monetary compensation. Participants could report higher numbers than they had actually seen.

Participants were evaluated on an individual basis, and in two group set-

tings: one in which all members of the group needed to report the same die roll to receive a payoff, and another in which members did not have to report the same die roll to receive a payoff. In the group settings, members could communicate with each other using a chat feature.

The researchers observed that groups lie significantly more than individuals when group members face mutual financial gain, regardless of whether they need to coordinate an action in order to realize that financial gain.

Results Are Clear

Of the 78 groups that participated in the study, arguments for dishonesty were explicitly mentioned in 51 percent of the group chats. In fact, of the messages that were exchanged among group members, 43.4 percent argued for dishonest reporting, while only 15.6 percent consisted of arguments for honesty.

Interestingly, the authors found that the number of individuals in each group who had exhibited dishonest behavior in the individual portion of the study had no real impact on these results, as dishonesty occurred even in groups where all members had previously responded honestly.

The experimental results lead to the question: What intentional efforts have you, as managers, made in your organizations to build a strong ethical culture? The answers might offset what we note is an apparent decline in ethical conduct within team structures. **PM**



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BY STEVEN VINEZEANO, ICMA-CM

RESIDENCY RECOMMENDATIONS

Local impacts of employee location

As the manager of a relatively small local government of 30,000 residents, a request came to my office last year from an elected official to consider requiring all future department heads who are hired by the village to live within its boundaries.

Immediately my biases on the subject came to the surface. After 23 years, however, I have learned to never immediately shoot down an elected official's idea on any topic without thoroughly researching the matter and formulating a sound argument and recommendation.

As I began to study the topic, I found there was no one resource that provided information on local residency pros and cons. This article compiles the insight from numerous sources: general web-based news articles, ICMA website's "Ask & Answer," legal documents, and discussion with professional colleagues. (The Ask & Answer area of the website led me to more information at icma.org/questions/mandatory-residency-employees#node-84748).

Although my angle is from the point of view of department heads, much of the information gathered here could be expanded to include local government managers. It is my hope that this article will help others who are considering and researching the subject.

Arguments for Residency Laws

The debate on residency has its proponents on both sides. Here are the top reasons identified for having residency laws:

1 Residency ensures manpower will be available in case of an emergency. This argument is specific to a community's first responders, and

it also can relate to public works employees. Since these departments are usually unionized, it is a mandatory subject of bargaining.

A case can be made, however, for department heads and higher-level positions who usually serve in emergency operations centers to be required to live in the community where they are employed.

But unless the event is immediate, widespread, and a complete surprise, it is my experience that this can be managed. Over the past nine years, I managed two blizzards, one multi-day power outage, and four floods, all of which were anticipated.

Although four of these incidents were declared disasters by the United States president and I lived outside of the community some 12 miles away, I managed to be present and on-site for each incident without putting myself in danger.

2 Residency promotes a better comprehension for problems within the community and an employee will take more interest in the results of their work. This argument is probably the most emotional of all arguments for residency groups.

Residents and elected officials have a lot of pride in their local government and in most cases, deep roots. There is a strong belief among some that unless a management-level employee lives in town, owns a home, uses the schools, and participates in community events, they could never really be committed to it.

To begin with, top-level personnel need to be professionals committed to doing their absolute best to improve the life of those served. An argument can be made, however, that these same staff need to be connected to the community and actively work to not be alienated.



AN ARGUMENT CAN BE MADE THAT STAFF NEED TO BE CONNECTED TO THE COMMUNITY AND ACTIVELY WORK TO NOT BE ALIENATED.

A community connection comes from a number of things—volunteering alongside residents, participating in community clubs, attending community events, and generally being available to residents and other community organizations and agencies.

It has been my experience that department heads and other front-line employees who live outside the community often bring fresh ideas and operational programs with them from those communities.

3 Government confidence is increased when managed by residents. The argument for residency laws was not seen much in my research, but it certainly grabbed my attention. Confidence, in my opinion, is built through facetime with the public as well as the celebration of staff successes.

Depending on the form of government, it is possible that elected officials who are residents may be more engaged in local policy implementation, which is the case in the village where I currently serve.

A case can also be made against management and upper-level employees
(continued on page 23)

BY JOHN ELSESSER AND TIM LIPTRAP

TECHNOLOGY AND TOWNS

Visioning the future disruptions

As we rocket toward a “jetson-esque” future, local governments are faced with the disruptive changes to the status quo. Localities must make time to spot trends and prepare for and embrace the new technologies emerging before them.

For the past seven years, the Connecticut Town & City Management Association has invited us to present a workshop on future technology, and how it will disrupt, engage, and change the way communities do business.

During the years, we have conducted demonstrations with drones, Google Glasses, wireless tools, smartphone applications, body cameras, solar products, social media technologies, 3D printing, and live-feed software before any of these became common place.

The 2017 workshop was no different in presentation; however, the new technology soon to be available both amazed and bewildered managers who were in the audience.

The platform for smart technology has been built. In the United States, we have instant communication software, 4G wireless infrastructure with 5G under construction, GPS mapping, smartphone technology, updated satellite imagery, affordable cloud servers, powerful computing power, and reliable and renewable power sources; plus, the tools, software, motors, and machinery to access all of these at once.

The result: In 2018 and beyond, managers will see high-tech evolutions in their communities coming from new power sources, drone technology, and artificial intelligence. We also are getting hints of the volume of metadata on our communities, on who we are, and on what our preferences are.

Power Sources

In the case of an emergency, wouldn't it be nice to be able to charge your cell-phone, tablet, and radio within minutes versus hours? Or, extending the life of your car or phone batteries by three times? The race to develop a replacement for the lithium-ion battery is on.

Leading the race is a revolutionary new battery that has been developed by Professor John Bannister Goodenough from the University of Texas (<http://bit.ly/2eIsBvk>). His solid-state sodium battery is safer, cheaper, and holds a charge three times longer than the original lithium-ion battery.

These will power electric cars, vehicles, phones, lighting, and tools that run on charged batteries. Similar high-powered batteries are currently being tested by Toyota and BMW in their new vehicles.

It will lead to new electric power tools, landscaping equipment, and when tied to solar power, to remote parks for safety and security. The next generation of batteries will advance new forms of transportation, including electric scooters and bikes, water sports, and even airborne vehicles.

Drone Technologies

Will your pizza be delivered by air this year? Probably not. But, if you live in Greenwich, England, you may need to share the sidewalk with a six-wheel delivery drone from *Just Eat* as it delivers meals door-to-door. Do local governments have the policies in place to regulate coolers trucking down the sidewalks?

In 2017, the application of drone technologies is evolving into such municipal uses as the “goosebuster” drone being tested in Canada, which chases

geese away from parks, playgrounds, ponds, and golf courses.

If you want to tend the bushes in parks, then the Franklin Robots garden robot will provide micro nutrients, pruning of branches, chasing animals, or eradicating pests in your landscapes. If robots weed on a Sunday, is that grounds for a union grievance?

This is not all. Your expensive firework shows may be replaced with the Intel “shooting star” (<http://intel.ly/2xMf76b>) drone fleet. This fleet has up to 500 illuminated drones that have produced choreographed spectacular light shows at Vivid Sydney (Sydney Youth Orchestra), the Disney Starbright Holiday Show, and the Coachella Music Festival.

The next generation of drones is being developed to remotely sense things like invasive species to allow the development of impact and treatment plans. Towns already are dealing with the impact of the recreational users of drones. Note: The Association of California Cites has crafted a checklist to craft a drone ordinance at <https://icma.org/documents/ultimate-checklist-creating-model-drone-ordinance>

Artificial Intelligence

Google, Uber, and Tesla are among the companies building and testing autonomous vehicles that use artificial intelligence. We are now watching driverless vehicles being tested in the desert, on city streets, and in the air. In 2017, partnerships between motor companies and services have developed vehicles that you might see on your streets in 2018.

Local Motors has partnered with IBM Watson in developing Olli (<http://bit.ly/2wCs8Rf>), which is an ADA accessible, driverless bus. Olli is on the roads in Washington, D.C., and soon to be in Miami-Dade County, Florida, and Las Vegas, Nevada, where it will pick up riders and deliver them to shopping centers, doctors' appointments, and senior centers.

Ford and Dominos are testing a pizza delivery system in Michigan, and Otto,

which is owned by Uber, has developed and is testing six driverless 18-wheel trucks in California to move freight on the highways. Are driverless snowplows and roadside mowers in the future?

Metadata

Towns must continually ask themselves: “Who do we think we are?” New tools are emerging of publicly available data from such sources as Esri and Facebook Insights to help answer this important question.

In Coventry, Connecticut, author Liptrap conducted a series of three workshops sponsored by the Coventry Economic Development Commission to help small local businesses learn who their customers are and how to find them. All towns must help their small businesses compete in the world, or they will be lost in the giant Amazon marketplace.

Metadata also will help guide strategic planning of community needs, wants, and willingness to support them. We, as managers, need to know this information or we will become disconnected from our communities. Others will cherry pick this data and use it for their own marketing purposes. Do you want others to define who you or your communities are?

As the smart technology platform becomes more integrated in your area, these smart technologies will become part of your everyday life. Looking toward 2020, we see sharing services become mainstream with cars, tools, and housing.

Home robotics also will take over such mundane tasks as cooking, cleaning, and yard work; while driverless cars and vans will deliver kids to their sport practices.

The future is closer than we think, and managers must take the time to develop their vision of what it can be to help shape the outcome and make sure the disruptions have positive outcomes. **PM**



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management professor, Nichols College, Dudley, Massachusetts (Tim.Liptrap@nichols.edu).

being residents due to the chance of being unduly pressured by neighbors, family members, and patronage to act unilaterally or to give special treatment, thus ultimately chancing a loss of trust in the position.

4 Residency promotes the “public coffer” principle, provides jobs to residents, encourages home ownership, and discourages middle-class flight. Certainly, local employees, especially those in unions, could be considered by some to be the last stronghold of the middle class. These employees will enhance local revenues through both real estate taxes and local economy participation.

Economies, however, do not exist in isolation. People shop where they want to shop or where they need to shop based on accessibility. Employees also can be encouraged to participate in the local economy through a shop-local campaign that encourages them to shop close to work.

Arguments Against Residency Laws

Here are the top reasons identified for not having residency laws:

1 Residency results in a less-skilled workforce. This argument against residency is likely the most commonly used by hiring professionals. A residency requirement could easily be that one issue that prevents a high-quality individual from entering a candidate pool.

The job offer must be good enough to overcome uprooting family, changing schools, accepting the quality of schools, overriding partner interests, moving costs, leaving aging parents, and so on.

If a position opening does not entice these candidates, a local government is left with the potential of a lower-skilled workforce, which will negatively impact the quality of work.

2 Residency requires a generous compensation package to

attract the best and brightest to work for a local government. To overcome the pressures mentioned above, including underwater mortgages and a depressed housing market, a residency law would require a generous compensation package.

A compensation package that includes such benefits as moving and housing assistance, an above-average salary, an auto allowance, and an employment contract with generous separation terms among other items.

Unless the locality is willing to settle on a candidate who is less experienced or less qualified, a residency policy could become a long-term financial liability.

3 Residency reduces the liberty of the employee. Fundamentally, residency rules squeeze the rights of an employee by telling them where to buy a home, send their kids to school, raise a family, and spend their free time.

Quality of life is relative. While some may enjoy living in an urban setting, others may prefer suburban or country living. Forcing residency can easily have a negative impact on the work-life balance of an employee and his or her family members. This level of control could easily impact morale and quality of life resulting in resentment and ultimately, turnover.

My ultimate advice for local governments deciding to pursue residency laws for upper-level staff positions is to be mindful of the challenges they will face with attracting and retaining quality leaders and managers.

It is my experience that department heads and management personnel are career-driven professionals who are going to give any community they serve 110 percent. They will become connected to the community, no matter where they lay their heads at night. **PM**



STEVEN VINEZEANO, ICMA-CM, is village manager, Niles, Illinois (scv@vniles.com).

BY KAREN THORESON

GOING BEYOND JOB BOUNDARIES

Keep the focus on the customer

My husband, Augy Thoreson August, had hip replacement surgery this summer. Since we are basically healthy people, this experience put the two of us face to face with the increasingly complex health care system, and I was surprised to see how specialized it has become.

I reflected on that as we left the surgery center. It seems that the specialization of services has two key aspects: Better medical outcomes with highly trained professionals in discrete positions, and those outcomes coming at a cost of inferior individual patient service.

Here are my real-life examples:

- Me to doctor: He is having stomach issues from the pain pills.
- Doctor to me: I am a surgeon. Talk to your personal physician.
- Me to nurse: When can he begin to exercise again?
- Nurse to me: Ask your physical therapist.
- Me to nursing assistant: When do we need to see you again?
- Nursing assistant to me: Ask the scheduler.

You get the picture.

I tell this story because no one in this health care environment intended to be rude or off-putting. At least I would hope not. Each has been trained to stay within the boundaries of their roles, and they were intent on not stepping outside those lines.

These specializations likely have their purpose, and may even come out of necessity or requirement; however, its impact on the customer experience was evident.

Focus on the Customer Experience

This observation led me to think that often when regular people encounter a professional environment in local government departments, perhaps the experience can feel just like my health-care example.

In city and county departments around the world, we have developed highly specialized positions, and the people who hold them are trained to undertake a specific task and that task only.

Licensing, permitting, or taking a complaint or work order are examples of places where a process exists and

KEEPING THE CUSTOMER'S EXPERIENCE AT THE FOREFRONT OF OUR INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY PUT US ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS

specializations may be present with the intent of making the organization more efficient. We should not, however, lose the focus on the customer experience.

Local government staff members know the rhythm of the process, but for the first-time customer or resident, it may feel like being placed in a maze of unfamiliar rules, which then can make them feel marginalized.

So, what is the intersection of management innovation and efficiency programs like Lean or Six Sigma, both of which are seen in increasing numbers across local government organizations?

There is a connection between innovation and Lean/SS, with similar fundamental principles that allow each to flourish. It is also critical that we remember that both teach us to always

start from the customer experience.

A risk we face is to place too much focus on the efficiency side of things: How can we make the process faster or cheaper? The better place to start is to look at the entire process the customer goes through and think through how to make the total experience better.

Ask how the service can be more efficient and still emphasize that these efficiencies are defined by value from the resident's or stakeholder's perspective. The efficiencies from the business perspective still come, with the added "win/win" perspective from customer value.

Improving Personal Service

In the Alliance's Innovation Academy training program, there are principles that stand out as cornerstones to focusing on value from the customer's perspective. One is engaging cross-functional teams to come together to innovate or solve a problem.

Related to the example above, this could involve bringing together people from these specialized disciplines to understand how their work flow impacts the overall customer experience—and then collaborating to improve it.

The other is helping teams get more expansive in defining a problem. Asking: "What can we do, in this case, to experience what the customer sees and hears? Are we seeking solutions which will improve the process and the experience as well?"

Here is an example, which is related to the recent hip surgery. I went to the Department of Motor Vehicles division for a handicapped parking placard. I expected to be given a number and wait on hard plastic chairs for a long time. Instead the front-desk clerk said

she would fill out the form for me right then—and she did. It totally exceeded all my expectations and I told her so.

This example reflects providing personal service and going beyond the boundaries of the job.

Exceeding Expectations

An individual's expectations for a good customer experience are rapidly increasing. There is a whole new body of knowledge being developed around what is important to customers and how to provide it.

In a blog post this year by Steven McDowell of www.superoffice.com, he identifies steps toward creating a customer experience strategy. The point here is to provide good customer service that not only creates a satisfied customer but that also exceeds expectations through a quality customer experience that develops loyalty and affiliation.

Some of the steps that are relevant to local governments are:

- Have a clear vision for your customer experience.
- Understand who your customers are and what they want.
- Develop an authentic emotional connection with them.
- Capture feedback so you can improve the experience.
- Develop your team and act on their feedback.
- Measure your results.

In local government, our drive, passion, and purpose is centered around serving people who live in a community. Keeping the customer's experience at the forefront of our innovation and improvement efforts will undoubtedly put us on the path to success. **PM**



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BY ANN MAHONEY

"WONKY ARTICLES JUST ARE NOT INTERESTING"

One respondent answers candidly

It's probably no surprise that I'm feeling a little deflated by that verbatim response (shown in the title) to the question in the *PM* reader survey, "If you're not regularly reading *PM*, why not?"

But, really, who wouldn't also smile at the refreshing bluntness of that comment? So, while part of my brain wants to defend *PM* articles, another part is instantly energized into thinking about how we can compellingly convey the relevance or helpfulness or importance of every *PM* article.

Constant Comments

With *PM*'s June 2017 issue, we asked readers lots of questions about the magazine. A few commonalities among the open-ended responses surfaced:

- Not a single person said "use more bulleted lists" (which was a common refrain in a previous reader survey).
- Making time to read *PM* is still an issue for many, though we recognize that if every issue felt relevant to every reader, "too busy" probably wouldn't be mentioned at all.
- Many readers are disappointed to not see more articles focused on small jurisdictions (often defined as populations of 20,000 or less, or of 10,000 or less). In contrast, one respondent politely complained that the articles seem exclusively "very small town."
- Lack of diversity of authorship was mentioned several times, most often in

the context of not seeing the presence of young professionals.

- Success stories are seen as helpful roadmaps, and respondents appreciate when practitioners offer needed real-world experience and insight.
- Respondents frequently didn't know that *PM* appears on the website a few days before the month of the issue and that ICMA uses Facebook and other social media to promote *PM*.

A new special section in *PM*—LGR: Local Government Review—has caught the interest of most of the respondents, so we will continue with this experiment at least twice yearly, with the goal of connecting research to practice . . . and vice versa.

I was particularly taken by responses to the "if you could make one change" question. Many were thoughtfully specific, like these:

- Solicit advice on topics from persons knowledgeable on a topic. Have them write as a group [to get multiple perspectives on the same issue].
- Offer more gutsy, smart management pieces with measurable outcomes, on such things as early childhood education and crime rates; pedestrian-oriented development; and long-term local government fiscal health.
- Publish more takeaways, . . . more leadership articles, . . . more articles of greater depth, . . . more insight into emerging issues, . . . more best practices.

- Devote a section to the challenges and triumphs of cities with a population of 5,000 or less.
- Continue with ethics coverage but dare to discuss more nuanced situations.

I wish we could address every comment and make every article or item precisely what you need when you need it. I'm not sure that outcome is realistic. Even many survey respondents recognized our dilemma in serving the needs of a diverse readership.

What we can promise, though, is to take your feedback to heart. We will see what changes we can implement that will sharpen the focus and impact of what we're publishing by addressing identified shortcomings and building on assets.

The good news is that the magazine is already on firm ground: 89.6 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that *PM* content meets their needs, and 87.5 percent routinely find articles that are relevant to their jobs.

Staff members are touched by ICMA members who cared enough to give us their honest opinions, consistently couched in respect for what the magazine delivers. Your voices are what will help us learn and grow. Please do stay in touch.

Thank you so much! **PM**



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And the Winner Is...

Congratulations to Rafael Baptista, strategic initiatives analyst, Durham County, North Carolina, whose name was selected from among all the *PM* reader survey respondents and received a complimentary registration to the 2018 ICMA Annual Conference in Baltimore, Maryland.



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