PM
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

THE Good Exit

Do you have an exit strategy ready to set into action when you're ready to leave?

ADVANCING PROFESSIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT WORLDWIDE

ICMA

2011

ICMA Regional Summits

for Members and State Officers

- Network with your colleagues
- Discuss ICMA issues and programs
- Participate in an ICMA University Workshop
- Provide feedback to the ICMA Executive Board and Staff

Register online at icma.org/SUMMIT

Southeast	March 10-11, 2011 Asheville, NC
Mountain Plains and West Coast	March 24-25, 2011 Albuquerque, NM
Midwest	March 31-April 11, 2011 Novi, MI
Northeast	April 14-15, 2011 Portland, ME

2011

Young Professionals Leadership Institute

For Assistants, Assistant Managers, and those who are beginning their career path

- Special two day offering to Young Professionals, that precedes each regional summit
- Build your leadership skill set through the art and practice of leadership with three workshops: identification of effective management and supervision styles with Felicia Logan, a discussion with Bob O'Neill, and a session on life balance in a 24/7 work world
- Networking Reception

Register online at icma.org/YPLI

Made possible through a generous grant from ICMA-RC.

contents

cover stories

5
THE Good Exit

Do you have a job exit strategy to set
into action when you're ready to leave?
Ken Hampian, SAN LOUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

NEW MANAGER PERSPECTIVE

Katie Lichtig, SAN LOUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

departments

icma.org/pm

features

MANAGEMENT

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

BY MARTHA PEREGO, ICMA-CM

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

Questionable practices harm everyone

English Poet John Donne's 17th-century verse "For Whom the Bell Tolls" reminds us that our fates as human beings are linked often in ways beyond our capacity to comprehend. In writing about the Spanish civil war, Hemingway in his 1940 novel with the same title centered on the surrender of one's self for the common good.

How ironic that the importance of those messages especially to the local government profession was reinforced this past summer by allegations of unethical and illegal conduct coming from Bell, California. Reports centered on compensation for the city manager and senior staff at levels routinely described as "obscene" by most observers, a personal loan program set up for city officials and funded by taxpayer dollars, and the distortion of provisions of state law so that some councilmembers could serve on multiple boards and commissions—where it appears no real work took place—in order to collect $100,000 in salary for part-time work.

In the end, eight officials, including the former city manager and assistant manager, were indicted on charges of misappropriating more than $5.5 million in public funds.

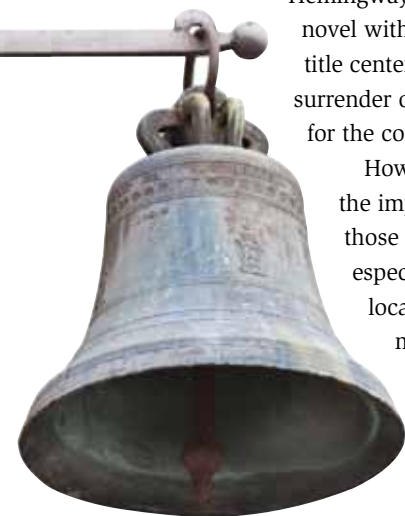The legal system will determine whether they violated the law. The verdict is in, though, on the damage inflicted on the profession. As the story went viral, city and county managers across the United States and possibly around the world were answering questions about their compensation as though they too were feasting at the public trough. Yet the vast majority in the profession, who are grounded in strong public service values, receive reasonable compensation that is nowhere near the Bell level. How do we restore our credibility? In compensation matters, the local government profession should embrace an approach that emphasizes the governance responsibilities of elected officials, more rigor in calculating compensation, greater transparency, and a stronger voice denouncing practices that are unethical and harmful to the profession.

Oversight Responsibility

Elected officials perform a critical governance role in providing oversight of the management of the organization. To that end, they must be engaged in establishing the process for determining compensation for all executives they appoint. Operating as a committee of the whole or as a designated subcommittee, the elected officials should design and implement the methodology for setting compensation for their appointees.

They should call on expert assistance where needed to get the information required to create fair and reasonable compensation levels. It's an inherent conflict of interest for the manager to play a significant role in structuring managerial compensation. For that reason, the elected officials must step up and take responsibility for this function.

How will anyone determine whether the compensation is reasonable? Apply

more rigor to determine the requirements of the job, the experience needed to be successful, market conditions, benchmark data for comparable positions regionally and nationally, and the organization's financial ability to afford and sustain the compensation. Merit pay and bonuses should be linked to predetermined performance standards.

Although unique factors may influence the final outcome, the process must be informed by the facts. For the process to have any credibility, the organization must be able to articulate clearly how the compensation package was calculated. In the interest of transparency, compensation for the local government manager must be approved by the governing body in public.

Once approved, the compensation should be made available on the organization's website. Placing it in an agenda packet or providing it upon request alone doesn't achieve the level of transparency required. If publicly traded companies are required to report all compensation for the CEO and highest-paid executives in annual proxy statements, why shouldn't publicly funded local governments do the equivalent?

Managers Must Be Responsible

A better methodology and more rigor doesn't relieve the individual from responsibility. Local government managers have an ethical obligation to be clear about what is being requested and to avoid excessive compensation. When requesting compensation changes, managers should present the governing body with the total compensation package along with a clear explanation of the change and financial impact on the organization.

The decisionmakers then have the requisite big picture upon which to make an informed decision. If the request leads to questions, the governing body should not rely on the manager's guidance but should seek outside expert advice.

Greed is not good for any profession.

Pension spiking, taking more than one salary for handling multiple duties, putting into effect leave accruals and buyouts far in excess of the organization's norm, and providing severance that is so high that it serves as an impediment to termination are practices that should not be supported by this profession.

Just because a talented negotiator can win it, doesn't make it ethical to do so. As professionals in a field built on core values of integrity, equity, and merit in all personnel actions, we lose the high ground when some colleagues sink to this level. And those attempting to negotiate reasonable compensation for themselves might find their efforts harder as a result. After all, as Donne noted, no man is an island. **PM**

MARTHA PEREGO, ICMA-CM
Ethics Director, ICMA
Washington, D.C.
mperego@icma.org

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE YOU'VE MADE THIS PAST YEAR?

DONNA OWENS
City Administrator
Niagara Falls, New York
donna.owens@niagara
fallsny.gov

This year we started a Wellness at Work program, which consists of Fitness Friday, Walking Wednesday, and monthly health presentations. We also launched a Healthy Entree Restaurant Week. All of these activities are being offered to create a healthier workforce.

PAUL BENEDETTO, CLGM
City Manager
Leduc, Alberta, Canada
pbenedetto@leduc.ca

Leduc established an integrated policing model. Now the city's enforcement services—community peace officers (CPOs)—and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) work together providing municipal by-law enforcement and policing services. CPOs report directly to the RCMP operations sergeant. They receive quality, police-trained guidance for conducting investigations, traffic control, and file management. This integrated service increases officer safety. CPOs working alone now have RCMP backup through radio contact with dispatch.

The implementation of the integrated policing model has been extremely successful as it has enhanced service to our citizens, reduced costs, and improved officer safety.

RONALD SEARL, ICMA-CM
Village Manager
Westmont, Illinois
rsearl@westmont.il.gov

Approximately a year and half ago, the Westmont Village Board directed staff to work toward consolidation of the separate emergency dispatch centers run by the police department and the fire department. The village evaluated several different options that ranged from consolidating into existing multiagency emergency dispatch centers (MEDC) to forming a new MEDC to merge dispatch functions with one or more neighboring communities.

After months of consideration, discussion, and evaluation, Westmont settled on a partnership with the village of Downers Grove. Merging dispatch functions will save each community's taxpayers approximately 25 percent of current operating costs for a stand-alone dispatch center.

This merger recognizes that further consolidation into larger mega agency emergency dispatch centers is the likely trend.

SHAUN CAREY, ICMA-CM
City Manager
Sparks, Nevada
scarey@cityofsparks.us

Sparks has faced significant challenges during this recessionary time. With general fund revenues down more than 30 percent from three years ago and a decrease of 26 percent in the city's workforce, we have turned to our city residents for help.

Today we have nearly 100 volunteers supporting such key services as police and code enforcement efforts. Our citizen volunteers have become an integral part of our organization. Not only are volunteers making a difference by serving their community, but they are observing firsthand the challenges we face as a local government. **PM**

SOCIAL MEDIA SNOW REPORTS

Local governments are using social media in their emergency management plans, from sending warnings about flooding, to H1N1 live updates, to interactive snowfall monitoring and plowing reports. Communities encourage the use of social media to complement existing systems and be able to reach more citizens.

▸ **icma.org/socialmedia&emergencymanagement**

SURVEY SNAPSHOT

Eighty-three percent of localities have a police department composed of full-time paid employees, while 10 percent reflect a combination of full-time paid personnel and volunteers; 5 percent contract with a county or other government. Results of an ICMA survey released this year offer a detailed snapshot of local police and fire departments.

▸ **icma.org/publicsafetysurvey**

EXTENDING OUR REACH EVEN FURTHER

ICMA's global reach now extends to China through partnerships for education and clean energy. Visit the new "China" page on ICMA's website to learn more about the activities.

▸ **icma.org/chinapage**
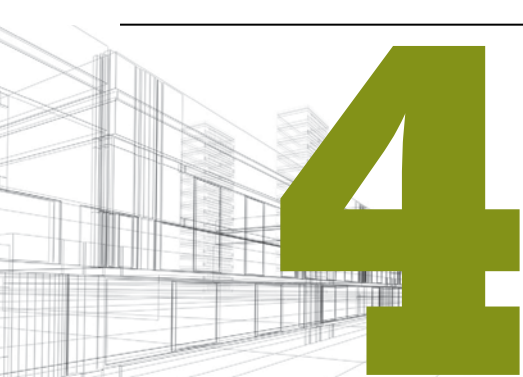
GENERAL PLAN INNOVATIONS

Innovations in Casa Grande, Arizona's General Plan 2020 offer its citizens, staff, and developers a more flexible approach to land use by using only six land-use categories, helping the city shift the focus from density to quality, while at the same time ushering in smart growth principles.

▸ **icma.org/casagrande**

With a "road map" in place, there will be fewer regrets on how a departure is handled when a manager decides to leave his or her position in a respectful way.

THE Good Exit

A smart exit strategy will serve you well

By Ken Hampian

"I'm pretty tired…I think I'll go home now."

And with those words, after crisscrossing the country for several years, Forrest Gump suddenly stopped running and walked home. People were surprised.

People were surprised when I announced my plan to leave the community where I served as manager for 20 of my 35 years in public service. I worked for excellent, thoughtful city councils; was supported by wonderful city employees; and left the job when I chose to, not because I had to.

But after a near lifetime of "running," I had my Forrest Gump moment. The time had come to change my pace and live differently.

Not everyone is lucky enough to choose the time and place for departure from the local government profession. But for the manager who can choose, there is a duty to leave in a respectful, helpful way. How does a manager do this right?

Leaving Right

In thinking through my big life decision, I did a lot of reading and soul searching. One book in particular was helpful to me: *The Adult Years: Mastering the Art of Self-Renewal* by Frederic Hudson. Hudson's book is filled with wisdom, but one of his thoughts—slightly abbreviated here—told me how to leave appropriately: Ending a life cycle with dignity and care requires an ability to say farewell with gratitude and clarity …the self-renewing adult designs an exit that honors those remaining.

So, if a manager really cares about the employing organization, leaving in the most respectful and helpful way toward the people who continue in the organization must be the first priority. But first, one must control our "little friend."

When Tony Montana yelled his infamous "little friend" line in the cult classic movie *Scarface,* he was referring to his machine gun. When I use the term, I am talking about a manager's personal ego.

Seven Phases of a Respectful Departure

Seven major steps are involved in a retirement transition, and some also apply if a manager is leaving for another position. Leaving in a helpful and respectful fashion requires doing a number of little things thoughtfully at each of the seven steps.

I'm no psychologist, but I can say that managers—and I include myself here—have egos, and sometimes high-caliber ones. This is not all bad; a strong sense of self can protect managers in a profession famous for requiring a thick skin. But beware. No matter how well we manage ourselves, we can find our "little friend" itching for action as we confront—at the gut level—our inevitable loss of relevance when we leave a position. Keep the safety latch engaged and remember: *It's not about Tony anymore.*

Here are the seven steps that I, with the advice of local government colleagues, recommend taking:

Step 1: The time to leave. Most managers who retire base their timing on a number of considerations, many of them personal. But local government managers with a choice should also give great weight to what is best for the organization. Carefully considering the workload cycle gives the next manager a chance to get more systematically oriented and established instead of being thrust onto an already speeding freight train. I strategically chose a time that would allow the new city manager to come aboard well ahead of the city's two-year budget process, expiring labor contracts, and the next election.

Step 2: The announcement. Most of us have experienced or heard of announcements that come across as sloppy or worse, as uncaring. Two suggestions so this doesn't happen: First, make the announcement with a "Goldilocks" amount of lead time—not too early, not too late. In my case, this involved providing six months notice.

Second, break the news in a thoughtful and personal way (face-to-face, as much as possible). Choreograph, in writing, precisely how the announcement will reach elected officials, department heads, employees, mentors, colleagues,

close friends, members of the media, and others. People will feel respected by sharing the decision to leave in this way.

Step 3: The recruitment. Managers who leave on good terms might be invited to play a role in the recruitment and selection of the next manager. Although I was honored to be asked to be involved in this process, I declined. Such a role has the potential for stifling open and necessary discussion regarding the qualities the council might want in the next manager that are different from qualities the current manager possesses. Instead, I offered to be the best outreach ambassador and orientation consultant that I could be during the recruitment as well as after the selection.

The city hired a professional recruiter to help with the recruitment. In partnership with the recruiter and the city's human resources director, I tried to be a tireless champion for the city and the job, spending time with possible candidates and, later, with the finalists (see Figure 1).

As far as a current manager being involved in the hiring decision, I think it is best if the current manager stays out of it. The choice needs to be made by the elected officials and them alone.

Step 4: The transition plan and orientation. After the employment negotiation was complete and the start date set for the incoming manager, I turned my attention to orienting the manager to the community, the organization, and the job.

My goal was to pave the way without getting in the way. I prepared a thorough transition plan and briefing binder, the contents of which are outlined in Figure 2. The city's choice for the new manager turned out to be my favorite final candidate as well, based on her communication skills and advance preparation during the recruitment process.

Step 5: Letting go. After committing heart and soul to an organization, a manager knows that letting go is not easy. Anxiety about change and the unknown also can be felt within the

FIGURE 1: A RECRUITER'S PERSPECTIVE.

THE RECRUITER WHO WORKED with San Luis Obispo, California, staff when hiring a new manager had this to say about an outgoing manager's participation in the process:

"Having the outgoing local government manager participate as one of the partners in a recruitment effort is an incredible asset. Along with helping sell and educate candidates about the organization and community, it also sends a positive message to potential candidates about the strength of the relationship between the manager and the council, and it presents a unified commitment to attracting impressive candidates who would be a good fit for the employing community. The outgoing manager's role in the process is also instrumental in calming the internal and external anxiety that normally accompanies anticipated change.

"Being clear about the roles each person involved will play in the recruitment is key to its success. Crafting the manager's involvement to ultimately serve as a bridge between the past and future in order to allow for the smoothest transition possible is crucial. The manager is able to make an exit with his or her legacy being celebrated while simultaneously investing in the future success of the community and the incoming manager."

SAYING THANK YOU
AND ADDING A FINAL
EXCLAMATION POINT
ON THE LAST DAY WITH
CAREFULLY CRAFTED
PUBLISHED MESSAGES
TO THE COMMUNITY
AND TO EMPLOYEES
CAN FURTHER HELP A
MANAGER LEAVE ON
THE BEST OF TERMS
AND WITH A GRACEFUL
HAND-OFF TO HIS OR
HER SUCCESSOR.

FIGURE 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR AN ORIENTATION BINDER.

AN EXITING MANAGER CAN consider preparing this type of information for the incoming manager:

Who We Are and How We Communicate
A. The organization.
   1. The culture.
   2. The council.
   3. Department head team.
   4. Union leaders.
   5. Employee relations/succession planning.
B. The community.
   1. Advisory bodies.
   2. The impact interest groups.
   3. Other community partners.
   4. Town-gown.
   5. People to meet.
   6. Land mines.

What We Do in Our Community and What's Hot This Year
C. Cycle of life.
   1. The agenda process.
   2. Goal setting and budget process.
   3. Major annual reports.
   4. Performance evaluation (manager, department heads).
   5. The city manager calendar.
D. Hot this year.
   1. Major city goals.
   2. Other public policy issues.
   3. Upcoming key recruitments.
   4. Contract negotiations.
   5. Other hot issues and projects.

organization. A manager should work to put employees at ease by keeping them constantly informed. I gave several written and verbal pep talks and talked enthusiastically about the new manager. Without slacking off from my responsibilities, I started to let go by delegating more routine tasks and investing more time in managing the orientation and transition processes.

Cleaning the manager's office and reorganizing the filing system for the new manager are obvious steps to take. Physical changes to signal a coming departure do matter, and not making such changes would send another message. Finally, I held my last one-on-one monthly updates with department heads in their offices, not mine.

Step 6: Saying goodbye. To me, leaving with gratitude and clarity meant very little talking about past accomplishments—except to give credit to other people. I tried to use the bully pulpit during my departure to reinforce the ideals that got most of us into the local government arena in the first place.

That is, the importance of good government, citizen engagement, respect, civility, honesty, transparency, and leadership.

Saying thank you and adding a final exclamation point on the last day with carefully crafted published messages to the community and to employees can further help a manager leave on the best of terms and with a graceful hand-off to his or her successor.

Step 7: Leaving. And when you go, go. Don't hang around the civic center or meddle in the organization's affairs. Don't undermine the new manager by pointing out to friends—or anyone else, for that matter—how you would have done things differently. Be available to the new manager but at the new manager's request.

Make it safe for the incoming manager to be seen with you in public. Don't endorse political candidates, become a letter-to-the-editor writer, or join a political action group that lobbies your former bosses. It's time to keep that ego in check.

In Closing

During personal conversations with people who felt underappreciated or undermined when their bosses retired, I learned that the bosses' failures were mostly due to small oversights caused by a self-absorbed focus during the transition. Although such a focus might be motivated by a desire to secure a final heroic legacy, it usually results—ironically—in just the opposite.

Leaving in a way that honors those remaining is much better and more fun. And to leave in that way, all that managers have to do is continue what they are already good at doing: committing to the right goal and implementing a methodical plan to achieve it.

I hope this article will provide some helpful ideas for those managers who are lucky enough to take that once-in-a-lifetime local government journey. **PM**

KEN HAMPIAN is retired manager, San Luis Obispo, California (kchampian@charter.net).

New Manager Perspective: Tips for a Seamless Transition

By Katie Lichtig

I'm one of the lucky ones. My outgoing predecessor did everything possible to make my transition process successful. But even with all that was done to ease the transition, there are still some things I want to keep in mind if it's my turn again.

Here are my eight tips on what can help ease the transition from one local government manager to the next. To maximize the potential for a seamless transition, try to follow these tips during the first 100 days.

1. **Have work-related transition plans.** This overall transition plan should include a plan for meeting with employees, labor leaders, and community groups like Rotary, Optimists, or other service organizations; a communications plan to introduce yourself and your management expectations to employees; and a plan for getting clear direction from elected officials on their performance objectives for you during the first year.

In my employment contract, it was spelled out that within the first 90 days the council and I were to develop performance objectives. This is extremely helpful for directing your time and attention.

2. **Create a personal transition plan also.** This plan should include things like where to live, where to buy locally whenever possible (the sales representative at the local store where I bought my new appliances is, for example, the mom of a city employee), which grocery stores are located near your home, which dry cleaners are good, where to go to the gym, and other options for necessities.

Ask councilmembers, department heads, and the outgoing city manager for their advice. The less time you spend figuring out what you need to know after you start, the easier your transition will be.

3. **Get comfortable being the center of attention for the first 100 days.** I met and shook hands with more people, attended more welcome parties, and gave more speeches than I ever imagined possible. To help tailor the message, I created a standard "show and tell" about me and then tweaked the message depending on the group I was addressing. At one of the presentations, I actually got a laugh—and perhaps endeared myself to a few in the audience—by admitting that I felt a little like a new baby panda at the zoo the way people were flocking to see me and hear me speak.

4. **Spend at least a few days in the community after your appointment but before you begin the new job.** There will be tons of curiosity—and some anxiety, too—about the "new manager." This gives the new person an opportunity to start the process of getting to know the elected officials one on one (remember, these are your new bosses), the team of department heads, and the select members of a community. It also gives you a head start on tip number 2.

5. **Ask the departing manager and the department heads to prepare an orientation package for the incoming manager that can, for example, include these items:**
- Introductions and getting acquainted.
- Information about the organization: people, programs, and projects.
- Goals and objectives: departmental responsibilities.
- Key policy documents.
- Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats—in one page!
- Department field tour, including suggestions for the future.
- Suggestions about community leaders to meet, from a departmental perspective.

Do your best to review the binder at least a couple of times before your first day, but don't have high expectations that you'll retain it all. Plan to go back to review the binder after 30 days and again after 60 days. It will be a great resource once you have context about the who, what, where, when, and why of the organization.

6. **Ask the elected officials to take you on a tour of the community.** A guided tour is an incredible tool to get to know the councilmembers, their focus, and some interesting tidbits about the local government that you might not have learned otherwise. It also gives you the opportunity to learn your way around the community like an insider. In my case, my tour guide—the councilmember—was also the driver.

During your tour, be open to new ideas. One councilmember asked me if I was willing to take the tour on a bicycle (San Luis Obispo is a bike-friendly community), and I agreed. Another councilmember is a private pilot, and he has suggested that we take to the air for our tour. This trip is still pending.

7. **Prioritize meet-and-greet opportunities.** Many people will want to get to know you, and you will need to space out your get-togethers with both current and former elected officials, department heads, employees, members of the media, chamber of commerce officials, representatives from major employers, community members, union representatives, and others.

Pace yourself because the meeting

and greeting will take months, not weeks. But definitely get out, including spending time with employees in their own work environments. So far, I have trimmed trees, welded, changed tires, spent St. Patrick's Day on patrol with the police department (which included a code 3 incident), toured our reservoirs and dams, and saw the inner workings of the water treatment plant and wastewater treatment plant.

I also perused the bus depot and rode the busiest route, finished concrete, and cut the grass in a park. I still am making the rounds, but it has been an invaluable investment in getting to know our dedicated employees and the issues that our community faces.

8. **Train yourself to recognize that it is a learning opportunity when you hear people say, "Well, when the former manager was here, he used to. . . ."** There will also be times when people contact the former manager to seek an opinion on a topic, but they do not contact the current manager. Remember that these are all data points and can be used to guide you in many directions—not just in the opposite direction—to prove that a new manager is in charge now.

In the end, there are lots of people who want you to be successful, including the elected officials, the department-head team, other city employees, caring members of the community, and—we hope—your predecessor. Take advantage of these tips and the advice and counsel of those who offer to assist—all of this taken together will lead to a smooth transition in your new community.

KATIE LICHTIG is city manager, San Luis Obispo, California (klichtig@slocity.org).

By Evelina Moulder

Do Business Attraction Plans Make a Difference?

What survey results show about attracting new business.

TAKEAWAYS

› A written business attraction plan facilitates the budget process for economic development.

› A written plan facilitates a strategic direction for business attraction.

Economic development is the driver behind local government revenues. Business attracts business, and local governments benefit from sales tax and other revenues that businesses provide. New business means jobs and increased purchasing. Jobs can mean fewer foreclosures and increased property tax revenue. Especially in these challenging economic times, attracting new business is an important economic development strategy.

We've all heard about the automobile manufacturing plants that relocate to a city and the benefits they bring or the high-tech industry or call center that has invested in vacant land and buildings. How do these new businesses end up where they are? Some of it is due to the efforts of the businesses; they have sophisticated methods for identifying promising locations that are based on such factors as an educated workforce, cost of labor, information technology and transportation infrastructure, competition in the area, market considerations, and opportunity for growth. Yet, the role of the local government in attracting new business is just as critical.

Attracting new business requires

strategy. Local governments develop plans that are based on the strengths and attributes they have to offer businesses. When ICMA conducted its 2009 economic development survey in collaboration with the National League of Cities, we learned about the different approaches taken by local governments that reported they wanted to attract new business.

More than 800 municipalities responded to the survey, and 98 percent of respondents indicated that they want to attract new business, but only 32 percent reported having a written business attraction plan. Lack of a written plan doesn't mean nothing is happening, but it does raise questions about the differences between local governments that have a written plan and those that do not.

Are those that have a written plan more active in pursuing new business? Do they use different methods to attract new business? To answer these questions, I examined the results of the economic development survey.

I was especially interested in the subset of respondents who reported a decline in the condition of their economic base from 2004 to 2009 but who anticipate some growth over the next five years, suggesting some optimism. Two groups of survey respondents were selected; both identify business attraction as a goal, but one group (28 local governments) reported having a written business attraction plan, and the other (78 local governments) indicated they did not have a written plan.

Curiosity prompted the question, "What do we learn, if anything, about the differences between local governments, depending on whether they have a written business attraction plan?" The rest of this article is based on analysis of the 106 governments in this subsample.

Barriers to Economic Development

Businesses and the people who work for them may have more complex needs now than they did even 20 years ago. From the quality of the technology infrastructure to the quality of child care, the needs of businesses that are relocat-

ing can make or break a specific choice of location. When a need can't be met, when the necessary physical or social infrastructure is lacking, it becomes a barrier to economic development.

Communities without a plan report barriers at a higher rate than do those with a written plan (Figure 1). Both groups show high percentages identifying availability of land and lack of capital and funding as problems, but in other areas the differences become apparent. Lack of skilled labor, opposition by citizens, distance from major markets, high cost of housing, poor quality of life, and a limited number of major employers are all reported by noticeably higher percentages of localities without a written plan.

Having a plan may not influence the extent of barriers, but a business at-

HAVING A PLAN MAY NOT INFLUENCE THE EXTENT OF BARRIERS, BUT A BUSINESS ATTRACTION PLAN TAKES BARRIERS INTO ACCOUNT AND DEVELOPS A STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH THOSE THAT CAN HAVE THE MOST IMPACT.

FIGURE 1. BARRIERS TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

BARRIERS	Have a written business attraction plan (%)	Do not have a written business attraction plan (%)
Lack of capital, funding	53.6	67.9
Availability of land	42.9	56.4
Environmental regulations	42.9	28.2
Cost of land	39.3	43.6
Lack of building availability (due to space or costs)	32.1	38.5
Taxes	28.6	29.5
Declining market owing to loss of population	25.0	34.6
Limited number of major employers	21.4	53.8
Inadequate infrastructure (e.g., no fiber optic cable, water, and wastewater)	17.9	17.9
High cost of labor	14.3	7.7
Distance from major markets	14.3	23.1
Lengthy permit process	10.7	14.1
Citizen opposition	10.7	26.9
Lack of skilled labor	7.1	26.9
Traffic congestion	7.1	12.8
Lack of affordable, quality child care	3.6	3.8
Lack of political support	3.6	15.4
High cost of housing	3.6	19.2
Poor quality of life	3.6	16.7

traction plan takes barriers into account and develops a strategy for dealing with those that can have the most impact. For example, high cost of labor and environmental regulations are more likely to be listed as barriers by governments with a written plan, but these governments also are more likely to focus their community development activities on environmental sustainability and job training, which shows that a written plan helps them target development to identified barriers.

When asked about the top two barriers and what strategies are used to address them, Yuba County, California, which has a written plan, reported that inadequate infrastructure and a limited number of major employers were barri-ers. Yuba County is partnering with developers on the lack of infrastructure and has an aggressive business recruitment program to attract major employers.

The "Choose Yuba" website has an array of information for developers and prospective businesses, including site selection, incentives, enterprise zone information, house hunting, and a searchable database of available commercial properties by type.[1]

Community Development Activities

Community development activities can be designed to reduce many of the barriers to new business attraction. If lack of skilled labor is a barrier, job training programs can be developed. If a barrier is lack of funding, a community development loan fund can help reduce that concern. Traffic congestion can be reduced by efficient transportation systems.

The ICMA survey included a question that asked whether the local government engaged in any of several community development activities designed to support economic development. Generally, local governments that have written business attraction plans also have in place more community development programs designed to support economic development (Figure 2).

Phoenix, Arizona, and Albany, Georgia, for example, identified lack of skilled labor as a barrier, and they both also report job training as a community development activity. Palo Alto, California, identified the high cost of housing as a barrier, and the city also reported affordable housing as a community development activity. All three cities have written business attraction plans.

Twenty-one of the localities with no written plan identified lack of skilled labor as a barrier, yet only seven reported job training as a community development activity. Twelve of the 15 that identified affordable housing as a barrier also identified affordable housing as a community development activity.

Three of the five local governments that have a written business attraction plan and indicated that inadequate infrastructure was a barrier also reported that they have high-quality physical infrastructure as a community development activity to support economic development.

Of the 14 that do not have a written plan and reported lack of infrastructure, only five (36 percent) indicate that high-quality infrastructure is part of their community development activities. One area where those governments without a written plan are more active than those with a plan is in child care. Child care is often overlooked as part of an economic development strategy, and those with formal plans may fail to identify child care as a business attraction strategy.

Across the United States, chambers

FIGURE 2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	Have a written business attraction plan (%)	Do not have a written business attraction plan (%)
High-quality of life—good education, recreation, arts	60.7	46.2
Affordable housing	53.6	51.3
High-quality physical infrastructure	50.0	43.6
Job training	50.0	34.6
Environmental sustainability	46.4	30.8
Community development corporation	39.3	30.8
Community development loan fund	35.7	19.2
Efficient transportation systems	35.7	34.6
Affordable, quality child care	3.6	12.8

FIGURE 3. BUSINESS ATTRACTION METHODS.

METHODS	Have a written business attraction plan (%)	Do not have a written business attraction plan (%)
Participation in industry-specific trade shows or conferences	78.6	47.4
Promotional and advertising activities (e.g., direct mail, CD-ROM, video, other media advertising)	78.6	44.9
Local government representative calls on prospective companies	75.0	50.0

of commerce and business leaders are becoming increasingly concerned about the lack of affordable quality child care and its impact on their ability to attract and retain workers A New York survey of economic developers found more than 80 percent now include child care as part of their economic development practice.[2]

Business Attraction Methods

Developing relationships with businesses that may relocate is a key element to success. By reaching out and establishing a visible presence, local governments not only indicate their interest in attracting new business, but they also form potentially meaningful relationships. Overall, 50 percent or fewer of the local governments that do not have a written plan report proactive business attraction methods, compared with 75 percent or more of those with a written plan (Figure 3).

Bedford, Massachusetts, describes working with other local governments to develop a brand for the area and studying regional infrastructure needs. This type of cooperation is particularly interesting because the nearby local governments are also among Bedford's competitors.

Business Incentives

Undoubtedly, incentives are a method of attracting business. They need to be considered in the context of the community and its broader goals. As stewards of the community's resources, economic development decisionmakers need to ensure that any incentives offered will ultimately produce a benefit to the community.

For the 18 incentives covered in the survey, local governments with a written plan generally offer multiple types of incentives (not shown). The notable exceptions are the use of tax credits and tax increment financing—traditional business incentives that are used by a higher percentage of local governments without a written business attraction plan (Figure 4).

Research has found that focusing on tax reduction may not be as important for business attraction as investing in

FIGURE 4. BUSINESS INCENTIVES.

INCENTIVE	Have a written business attraction plan (%)	Do not have a written business attraction plan (%)
Infrastructure improvements	64.3	40.5
Zoning or permit assistance	64.3	59.5
Tax abatements	53.6	40.5
Tax increment financing	50.0	58.1
Grants	50.0	40.5
Locally designated enterprise zones	46.4	25.7
Low-cost loans	46.4	32.4
Training support	42.9	17.6
Free land or write down	39.3	23.0
Special assessment districts	32.1	21.6
Federal- or state-designated enterprise zones	28.6	28.4
One-stop permit issuance	28.6	25.7
Relocation assistance	28.6	9.5
Employee screening	25.0	4.1
Tax credits	17.9	25.7
Subsidized buildings	7.1	9.5
Utility rate reduction	7.1	8.1
Regulatory flexibility	7.1	9.5

other services and infrastructure such as the other items listed in Figure 4.[3]

Many states have programs that provide for locally designated enterprise zones that are usually administered by a local zone administrator. The designated enterprise zones are areas selected according to the more serious economic development challenges they face.

In Virginia, the Enterprise Zone Grant Act provides grants for job creation.[4] Florida distinguishes between rural and urban areas and provides somewhat different incentives for each.[5] Illinois offers reductions in fees and tax credits.[6] Overall, the goal is to revitalize local economies in distressed areas.

When a local government's revenues or expenditures are involved, it's important to be able to demonstrate the benefit of the incentive. This can be accomplished by a performance agreement drawn up before incentives are offered.

Local governments can assess the effectiveness of incentives by looking at jobs created, money invested in materials and labor, revenue generated by the company receiving the incentive and the related sales tax revenue, and the number of new businesses that relocate because of incentives.

Measuring the Effectiveness of Business Incentives

Regardless of whether they have a written business attraction plan, most of the local governments studied for this article measure the effectiveness of the business incentives they offer. In fact, 88 percent of communities—whether they have plans in place or not—measure the number of jobs created (Figure 5).

Similar percentages measure new dollars invested in land and conduct cost-benefit analyses. But of those with a written business attraction plan,

72 percent measure the amount of money invested in materials and labor, compared with 49 percent of those that do not have a written plan. Forty-four percent with a written plan use the number of new businesses expanding or moving to the community, compared with 35 percent with no written plan.

Those without a written plan show much higher use of companies' revenue and sales figures than those with a plan. Because the economic benefits of a new, large employer can be seen in the goods and services it purchases in the community as well as in the additional restaurants, drug stores, and other small businesses that spring up to serve the large employer, it's important to have multiple measures of effectiveness. Measures are important because they provide concrete feedback to the local government on how its incentive strategy is benefiting the community.

Does a Written Business Attraction Plan Make a Difference?

We can't determine the economic benefit of a written business attraction plan for the local governments covered in this article, but we can make some inferences. Overall, those local governments that have a written business attraction plan are more active than those that do not have a written plan.

Higher percentages of those with a plan report community development activities, use of business attraction methods, and the use of a variety of incentives. A written plan provides not only the direction but the specific steps to which the local government commits as it attempts to attract new business.

By identifying these steps in advance, a local government can include them in the budget and be prepared to take advantage of opportunities using a combination of strategies designed to meet the needs of the new business and the community. **PM**

EVELINA MOULDER is director of survey research, ICMA, Washington, D.C. (emoulder@icma.org).

FIGURE 5. MEASURES USED TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BUSINESS INCENTIVES.

MEASURES	Have a written business attraction plan (%)	Do not have a written business attraction plan (%)
Number of jobs created	88.9	88.4
Amount of money invested in materials and labor	72.2	48.8
Number of new businesses relocating or expanding in jurisdiction	44.4	34.9
New dollars invested in land	38.9	34.9
Cost-benefit analysis	38.9	32.6
Company revenue or sales	22.2	41.9

FROM THE QUALITY OF THE TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE TO THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE, **THE NEEDS OF BUSINESSES THAT ARE RELOCATING CAN MAKE OR BREAK A SPECIFIC CHOICE OF LOCATION.** WHEN A NEED CAN'T BE MET, WHEN THE NECESSARY PHYSICAL OR SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IS LACKING, IT BECOMES A BARRIER TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

ENDNOTES

1 Yuba County Alliance for Development, http://chooseyuba.com/index.php.
2 "Linking Economic Development and Child Care," Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, http://government.cce.cornell.edu/doc/reports/childcare/research.asp.
3 Timothy J. Bartik, "Local Economic Development Policies" (working paper no. 03-91, W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2003), www.upjohninst.org/publications/wp/03-91.pdf.
4 Virginia's Enterprise Zone Program, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, www.virginiaallies.org/assets/files/incentives/Enterprise_Zone.pdf.
5 Enterprise Florida, www.floridaenterprisezones.com/Pageview.asp?edit_id=15.

6 Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, State of Illinois, www.commerce.state.il.us/dceo/Bureaus/Business_Development/Tax+Assistance/Enterprise-Zone.htm.

CIGNA

Green Roofs
IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

By Damon van der Linde and Steven Peck

Green roofs are becoming an increasingly prominent aspect of constructing sustainable buildings, driven by market demand, economic benefits, government financial incentives, and bylaws. Despite the North American economy's severe downturn last year, the green-roof industry grew by more than 16 percent in 2009 compared with 2008.

Green-roof technologies not only provide the owners of buildings with a proven return on investment through energy savings, increased longevity of the roof membrane, and aesthetic improvements, but they also represent larger opportunities for significant social, economic, and environmental benefits—particularly in urban areas.

In general, public benefits are greater than the private benefits. Green roofs do require a higher initial investment compared with conventional, unvegetated roofs, which is the main reason why supportive policies are needed to encourage private investment in green-roof technology.

Positive Results

A local public-private partnership can provide the impetus for private building owners and developers to install green roofs, allowing the benefits of this technology to extend to the general public. Furthermore, this technology must be implemented on a large scale if it is to deliver such major public benefits as mitigating the urban-heat-island effect—the unwanted rise of temperatures in metropolitan areas—and reducing stormwater runoff.

Older communities, for example, have combined sanitary and storm sewers, whose treatment capacity can be overwhelmed by heavy precipitation. By capturing and temporarily storing stormwater, green roofs can reduce runoff volumes. By reducing runoff, green roofs can limit the occurrence of instances of combined sewer overflow and thereby diminish the quantity of untreated wastewater entering freshwater bodies.

By reducing peak flows during storms, green roofs can reduce the incidence of flooding. This is just one of many examples of creating larger public benefits by proper public management of green roofs through supportive policy.

Green-roof policy is progressing in North America, although there is still significant room for development. A number of jurisdictions, including Chicago, New York City, Washington, D.C., and Portland, Oregon, have established a variety of policies in support of green roofs on public and private buildings.

Policies range from requirements for green roofs on city-owned buildings and stormwater utility fee charges, to grants and floor-area bonuses. The city of Toronto recently passed a mandatory requirement for green roofs on all new buildings with a gross floor area of 2,000 square meters or more.

Although green roofs are most effective in larger numbers, each project is unique because it is contingent on a variety of factors, including the physical attributes and geographic location of a building and the owner's budget and objectives.

Generally, green roofs are categorized as extensive, intensive, or semi-intensive, depending on the depth of the growing medium. Six inches or less of depth of growing medium is an extensive roof, also characterized by its lower weight, lower plant diversity, lower cost, and lower maintenance. Intensive green roofs have more than six inches of growing medium and have higher plant diversity, higher weight, higher cost, and higher maintenance.

A semi-intensive green roof is a combination of intensive and extensive on the same structure. After the establishment period has ended, extensive green roofs usually require two to three inspections per year for weeding and to ensure that the drains are clear. Intensive green roofs may require weekly maintenance for irrigation scheduling, pruning, and replanting.

Reflective white roofing can reduce ambient temperature compared to a conventional grey roof because it decreases heat absorption, but provides none of the additional benefits compared to those of green roofs. Further, when the white roof

GREEN ROOFS HAVE THE POWER TO BE INSTRUMENTS OF POSITIVE CHANGE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE ECONOMY, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF PEOPLE'S WELL-BEING.

coating gets dirty or degrades due to UV exposure, wind and other deteriorating forces, it loses its reflective properties.

What's Possible

Green roofs draw upon many disciplines for their design and installation. As the demand for this technology increases, so will the demand for such green-roof professionals as suppliers and manufacturers of green-roof components, installers, and landscapers.

In 2007, we met with a group of 16 multidisciplinary subject matter experts to develop a set of occupational standards of the specific skills and knowledge, across a number of professions, required for professionals in the green-roof industry. In 2009, the green-roof professional (GRP) accreditation was launched as a method of creating a base

level of knowledge within the industry. Since its inception, the number of GRPs in the marketplace has grown to more than 325, indicating a strong demand for more standards and education.

Green roofs have the power to be instruments of positive change for the environment, the economy, and other aspects of people's well-being. The industry is growing and shows no signs of slowing down, but it will take the action of both private investors and public leaders to make this technology as effective as possible. **PM**

STEVEN PECK is president, Green Roofs for Healthy Cities, Toronto, Ontario, Canada (speck@greenroofs.org; greenroofs.org).
DAMON VAN DER LINDE is communications and research coordinator, Green Roofs for Healthy Cities (dvanderlinde@greenroofs.org).

BY ROCHELLE WILLIAMS

SPARTANBURG AND ITS PARTNERS FOCUS ON OBESITY

Spartanburg, South Carolina's Childhood Obesity Task Force isn't afraid of setting tight deadlines while also aiming for high goals. The group is committed to reversing childhood obesity rates that have been climbing steadily in the county since the early 1980s. And task force members want to make enough of an impact so that rates start declining by 2015.

The task force is relying on a tried-and-true formula to work toward its goal. Members are tackling the biggest causes of the problem first and connecting the dots between organizations and agencies that are doing pieces of the work.

Childhood Obesity Addressed

The idea for the group was born in November 2008 when ICMA, the American Association of School Administrators, and the National Association of Counties, with funding from Leadership for Healthy Communities, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, conducted a workshop for Spartanburg and Greenville counties in South Carolina. After the session, representatives from a diverse group of organizations and agencies formed a community task force to address childhood obesity. This initial task force included staff from local foundations, a hospital system, institutions of higher learning, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the county parks system, and a handful of nonprofit organizations.

The task force spent the first year and a half defining the obesity problem in the community while partnering with the county's seven school districts to determine the rate of childhood obesity. Task force members also educated themselves about research-based solutions to the problem, and the group supported a collaborative university-based research project concerning healthy eating.

In January of this year, the task force and its partners were awarded a four-year Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant to improve opportunities for physical activity and access to affordable healthy foods in four areas of the county. Going forward, task force members say they are concentrating on partnering with more people and organizations while also focusing the scope of their work. The group completed a strategic planning process this year and set five-year priorities.

The 2015 goal was adopted at one of these meetings. "We realize that we are setting the bar high," says task force member Ana Parra, the executive director of the Hub City Farmers' Market. "But if we had set a goal for 2020 or 2025, we would have sent the wrong message to the community. Spartanburg must begin making policy and environmental changes immediately so that children can begin to experience the health benefits as soon as possible."

Task force members are in the process of forming work groups that focus on schools, preschools, after-school programs, the built environment, and access to healthy food. They are also creating a group that will work on obesity prevention–related media and marketing and a group that will concentrate on assessment.

"We spent the first two years wrapping our heads around the problem," says task force member Dave Pittman, a psychology professor at Wofford College who created a program that motivates elementary-school students to make healthy eating choices at lunchtime.

"Now we are ready to put our boots on the ground with specific strategies at the policy and environmental level."

Task force member Karen Fradua, a health educator with the state Department of Health and Environmental Control, says the work groups will help the task force make steady progress as it addresses the complex obesity issue, which can seem overwhelming.

Focus Is There

"We are becoming more focused on specific settings in the community," Fradua said. "Whether it be preschools or access to healthy food, our committee work will give us more direction about the policy and environmental changes that we want to support."

Pittman says the work groups will also help the group identify new members. "We are targeting specific areas, so we need experts who work in those areas to collaborate with us. In order for us to do our jobs well, we will need as many of those experts involved with each group as possible."

More than anything, task force members seem emboldened by what they have accomplished in two short years and confident about how they can transform their community in the future.

"Our biggest strength hasn't changed," Fradua says. "We have strong partnerships. Agencies and groups work well together, which isn't the case in a lot of communities. We have representatives from a wide variety of organizations, initiatives, and grassroots efforts who have worked well together in the past and continue to do so today." **PM**

ROCHELLE WILLIAMS
Community Mobilizing Coordinator
Partners for Active Living
Spartanburg, South Carolina
rwilliams@active-living.org

BY PETE AUGER

TWEETS, BLOGS, AND FACEBOOK POSTINGS

Auburn Hills, Michigan, stays connected

Thanks to the explosion of such social media sites as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, people are connecting, communicating, making business decisions—and forming judgments—based on what appears or is being said on these sites. Social media certainly isn't just for businesses or consumers any longer, though.

Local government management staffs must respond to this societal change and be proactive in reaching out to their communities by embracing new technologies to inform residents; maximize communication; and promote services, events, and amenities. The technologies do work, and my community of Auburn Hills, Michigan, is proof.

National Becomes Local

All of us might remember that the impact of effectively implementing social networking into the public conversation was recognized in the 2008 presidential race between Barack Obama and John McCain. Because the Obama team kept up with the changing communication and information-gathering practices of the public, they engaged and motivated voters by connecting with them using these new media. Although McCain had an online presence with constituents, Obama's team appeared to be more nimble, aggressive, and better prepared to harness social media as a universal communication vehicle.

The same benefits derived from using social media for a national initiative can also be achieved when the messages are targeted to reach smaller, local groups or the global business community. Auburn Hills is committed to applying new technologies to extend its reach and enhance communication with both audiences.

A community of 20,000 residents, Auburn Hills triples that population during the day with workers and college students. We are also an international hub. With a global business base that represents more than 30 different countries and with such major players as Chrysler Group, Borg Warner, and Continental AG headquartered or located in its boundaries, the city knows there is a real need to connect with the diverse range of workers and residents who make up the community.

I have written a city manager blog since 2005 to communicate regularly with residents. But Auburn Hills was initially motivated to implement and expand its social media tools as a strategy in 2009 to increase awareness and visibility of our rising downtown. Using Facebook and the micro-blogging site Twitter, we now post daily updates about the area's businesses, shopping, restaurants, outdoor concerts, farmers market, festivals, free Wi-Fi zone, and other news.

We also congratulate our business residents online for their many accomplishments, including groundbreakings, expansions, and industry leadership initiatives. In short, we use a social media menu to help Auburn Hills build a stronger sense of place and a business and community identity.

Public Safety Purposes

As social networking evolves, communities should be committed to pursuing more ways to harness networking tools for the good of the community. Auburn Hills launched a community online notification service in September 2009 in conjunction with the police department.

This was done to keep residents aware of such critical information as road closures, traffic updates, and utility outages as these events unfold in real time. Messages can also provide important safety tips and reminders on new laws, one being Michigan's recent ban on texting while driving.

This past spring, the city's use of the online notification system expanded to incorporate Twitter, so people who signed up for the free service can now receive updates by e-mail, cell phone text messages, or tweets. Auburn Hills police, using the community notification system, first began tweeting in April. In late June, the department announced the apprehension of a 20-year-old bank robbery suspect through Twitter, and the local newspaper made mention of the tweet in its website story.

Police departments can use social media tools as part of their broader community policing efforts because posting information goes beyond notifying or relaying basic information. It gives police personnel the added benefit of being able to collaborate and work with citizens to solve problems and even involve citizens in the search for law violators.

Dispersing standardized messages to the community using an e-notification system and integrating that system with social media is simple, and this setup provides a valuable way for local governments and their departments to help keep the community safe and secure while encouraging dialogue and input from residents, workers, and employers.

As social media become more integrated in people's daily lives, local governments have an opportunity to revolutionize the way they inform, explain, and interact with their publics. By harnessing social media for broad, practical applications, local governments can strengthen their community connectivity in the process. PM

PETE AUGER, ICMA-CM
City Manager
Auburn Hills, Michigan
pauger@auburnhills.org

BY SHAYNE SILCOX

CREATING COMMUNITY: CONSIDER THIS!

How do we go about creating what sociologists call social capital

I don't know if it is my age or the fact that I am in a civic leadership position, but often I find myself asking: what makes people happy and what is the role of local government, if any, in their happiness? From my reading and experience, I've learned that some leaders believe it is economic prosperity that makes people happy, and that is why nations invest enormous faith in the ability of economic growth to make us happy.

But finding real evidence to support this is difficult to find. The Australia Institute has published its *Genuine Progress Indicator,*[1] a national well-being indicator, if you will, that takes into account the personal and social costs of running in the race of modern life. Basically, this research suggests that, although Australians got richer faster than they had for a decade before, they were not necessarily any happier. In fact, "52 percent believe life in Australia is getting worse, with only 13 percent saying that it is getting better.

"A third (33 percent) said that it is about the same. Of those who thought life is getting worse, 26 percent said it is getting a lot worse and 27 percent said it is getting a little worse," says Dr. Hamilton.[2] Apparently, this view was broadly shared across income levels, age, gender, and city-versus-country residences.

What Do We Want?

Although we all dream of winning the Lotto and of how different and better our lives would be after winning it, the fact is that economic prosperity does not necessarily make us happy—not by itself anyway. In one thorough investigation of the determinants of happiness, researchers concluded that a sense

of meaning and purpose is the single most strongly associated one with life satisfaction.[3]

So it would seem that a sense of belonging and making a positive contribution to society matters more. This suggestion is not new. Abraham Maslow[4] back in the 1940s suggested a hierarchy of needs. At the peak was what he termed self-actualization and self-realization.

We all know that people are social beings; they require love, companionship, and positive engagements with others in order to flourish. Indeed, the Australian Bureau of Statistics commented that "the absence of family friendship or some other caring social relationships at any stage of life, but particularly when people are least able to look after themselves, can have a serious impact on personal well-being."

And there are often high costs to the wider community associated with assisting people with poor or broken social relationships, or the absence of social support."[5] This view is reinforced by O'Leary, who suggests it is friends, not fortune, that brings happiness to people.[6]

This is a sobering thought for us in local government as our communities progressively get older. These facts, plus others, lead us to consider how we go about creating community or what sociologists call social capital. Local government is, after all, the closest level of government to the people and to those most able to directly assist communities.

But why is this thing called social capital important to local government and the people it represents? In Bowling Alone, a book he wrote in 2000,

Robert Putnam defined social capital as "connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them."[7] In short, research suggests that without civic engagement, crime within communities will increase.

Some current examples of this antisocial behavior are evident in police statistics. In 2000, for every 100,000 Australians, there were about 2,300 instances of unlawful entry and 740 victims of assault.[8] Violent, aggressive driving (road rage), now common enough to have an acquired name, has risen to levels where 93 percent of Australian motorists have been subjected to it.[9]

Studies also show that neighborhoods with high levels of social capital tend to be good places to raise children. "In high-social-capital areas, public spaces are cleaner, people are friendlier, and the streets are safer," stated Putnam.[10] It would seem that higher levels of social capital, all else being equal, translate into lower levels of crime.

As individuals, we unfortunately seem to invest more in dogs, fences, security systems, and locks than in social capital for crime defense. That is why local governments try to build livable neighborhoods that translate into safer and healthier environments for our communities.

In addition to this, local governments are taking a much higher profile in community policing and are dedicating significant resources to safer initiatives in an attempt to increase our social well-being.

As a society, we are also becoming less active to the extent that we now have government-funded television ad-

vertising on the issue. While we spend less time participating in sports and developing social attachments, we are actually spending more time and money watching sports now than we did a few decades ago. The cost of obesity in Australia is estimated to be some $58 billion a year.[11]

Again, local government is a dominant player in reversing this trend by supplying facilities of a high standard compared with world benchmarks, making sport substantially free within communities, and facilitating community engagement with local clubs.

Where Are Volunteers and Family Dinners?

Another disturbing trend is in the lessening amount of community volunteering occurring in society as a whole. This is often regarded as one of the stronger measures of social attachment, as it involves assisting others. This further weakens the relationships and attachments the community builds.

Most local governments understand the need to build these social networks and facilitate volunteerism to ensure that communities are sustainable in the longer term. In fact, numerous products and services accessible to communities today could not be offered if it weren't for the thousands of hours volunteered by civic-minded citizens.

Again, it is not surprising to note Putman's views where he postulates that parents who are more engaged with their kids tend to have children who are more likely to be good citizens. Also, parents who take an active involvement in their child's education are more likely to have children who hit the books rather than hit each other. In short, social capital matters for children's successful development in life.

The culprits for civic disengagement are diverse and not necessarily understood. Sociologists suggest that the effects of television and urban sprawl and the pressures of time and money,

two-career families, and residential mobility may be contributing factors. I am sure you can name more from your own research and experience.

Good Connections

No matter what causes the problem, it is clear that better-connected societies have more volunteers, less crime, more informal socializing with friends and relatives, and better-adjusted youth. This growing body of research also suggests that where trust and social networks flourish, individuals, firms, neighborhoods, and even nations prosper.

We all must remember that citizenship is not a spectator sport, and we who work in local government must be the facilitators so people will engage with each other. From where I sit, no one else will. **PM**

ENDNOTES

1 Clive Hamilton, The *Genuine Progress Indicator: A New Index of Changes in Wellbeing in Australia*, Discussion Paper Number 14 (The Australian Institute: Canberra 1997).
2 Clive Hamilton, *Economic Growth: The Dark Side of the Australian Dream* (A paper to the Horizons of Science Forum, University of Technology, Sydney, 1999).
3 Clive Hamilton and Richard Denniss, *Affluenza: When Too Much Is Never Enough* (Australia (NSW): Allen and Unwin, 2005).
4 A. H. Maslow, *A Theory of Human Motivation.* (Published in *Psychological Review, 50, 1943).*
5 Australia Bureau of Statistics, *Measuring Australia's Progress.* Catalogue No 1370.0, 4 April 2002).
6 Cathy O'Leary (Medical Editor), *Friends, Not Fortune, Bring Happiness* (The West Australian 8 October 2003).
7 Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).
8 Australia Bureau of Statistics, *Measuring Australia's Progress.* Catalogue No 1370.0, 4 April 2002).
9 AAMI Crash Index: *Tenth Annual Road Safety Report* – P0111P104, (Australia, October, 2004).
10 Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).
11 Cathy O'Leary (Medical editor): *Obesity Cost Hits $58b a Year*, (The West Australian 22 August 2008).

SHAYNE SILCOX, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer Melville, Perth, Australia
shayne.silcox@melville.wa.gov.au

FINE TUNING COUNCIL-MANAGER RELATIONSHIPS

Need a quick refresher on maintaining a resilient relationship with your council? Try on these relationship-building tips from John Nalbandian, professor, University of Kansas, Lawrence. (These tips can also be found at ICMA's Knowledge Network, "Tips from Manager-in-Transition [MIT] Calls.")

And be sure to watch for the new column on council-manager relations beginning in the January/February 2011 issue of *PM* magazine. As always, your feedback and questions on the column are welcome. Contact Beth Payne at her e-mail address, bpayne@icma.org.

- Councils are more important in the manager's world than the manager is in the councilmembers' world.
- Don't respond to the impulse to do the council's work.
- Find ways for the council to discuss the unique value it brings to the community.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication title: *Public Management (PM)*.
2. USPS number: 449-300.
3. Filing date: October 29, 2009.
4. Issue frequency: Published monthly except February.
5. Number of issues published annually: 11.
6. Annual subscription price: $46.
7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication (not printer): 777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20002-4201.
8. Complete mailing address of the headquarters or general business office of the publisher (not printer): 777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20002-4201.
9. Full names and complete mailing addresses of publisher, editor, and managing editor. Publisher: International City/County Management Association (ICMA), 777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20002-4201. Editor: Beth Payne, ICMA, 777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20002-4201.
10. Owner: International City/County Management Association (ICMA), 777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20002-4201.
11. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None.
12. Tax status: The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income-tax purposes have not changed during the preceding 12 months.
13. Publication title: *Public Management (PM)* magazine.
14. Issue date for circulation data below: October 2009.
15. Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: A. Total no. copies (net press run): 9,593. B. Paid circulation (by mail and outside the mail): (1) Mailed outside-county paid subscriptions stated on PS Form 3541: 8,251; (2) Mailed in-county paid subscriptions stated on PS Form 3541: 0; (3) Paid distribution outside the mails including sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, counter sales, and other paid distribution outside USPS®: 462; (4) Paid distribution by other classes of mail through the USPS: 0. C. Total paid circulation: 8,713. D. Free or nominal rate distribution by mail and outside the mail): (1) Free or nominal rate outside-county copies included on PS Form 3541: 0; Free or nominal rate in-county copies included on PS Form 3541: 0; Free or nominal rate copies mailed at other classes through the USPS: 70. E. Free or nominal rate distribution outside the mail (carriers or other means): 784. F. Total free or nominal rate distribution: 854. G. Total distribution: 9,567. H. Copies not distributed: 26. I. Total: 9,593. Percent paid: 91.07.
16. No. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: A. Total no. copies (net press run): 9,753. B. Paid circulation (by mail and outside the mail): (1) Mailed outside-county paid subscriptions stated on PS Form 3541: 8,208; (2) Mailed in-county paid subscriptions stated on PS Form 3541: 0; (3) Paid distribution outside the mails including sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, counter sales, and other paid distribution outside USPS: 534; (4) Paid distribution by other classes of mail through the USPS: 0. C. Total paid circulation: 8,742. D. Free or nominal rate distribution by mail and outside the mail): (1) Free or nominal rate outside-county copies included on PS Form 3541: 0; Free or nominal rate in-county copies included on PS Form 3541: 0; Free or nominal rate copies mailed at other classes through the USPS: 75. E. Free or nominal rate distribution outside the mail (carriers or other means): 785. F. Total free or nominal rate distribution: 860. G. Total distribution: 9,602. H. Copies not distributed: 151. I. Total: 9,753. Percent paid: 91.04.
16. This statement of ownership will be printed in the January/February 2010 issue of this publication.

Signed: Beth Payne, Editor

- Bring in someone to facilitate a council "self-assessment" if the council is willing.
- Help councilmembers understand why their work is difficult.
- Find ways to reward the council for good work.
- If there is confusion over what the council expects of the manager and what the manager expects of the council, talk about it. Make expectations explicit.
- Show the council that its decisions make a difference.
- Don't assume the council understands your form of government.
- Beware of applying administrative logic when assessing council's work and relationships. There is technically no hierarchy on the council, which is difficult and unfamiliar to councilmembers, especially those from traditional business backgrounds.

- Resist allowing one councilmember to dictate your view of the council as a whole.
- It is not your job to discipline councilmembers. Just assist and facilitate. Encourage the council to discipline its own members.
  - Wait until the right time or until the council comes to you.
  - Prompt the mayor or the councilmember who raised the issue to present it to the rest of the council; do not present it yourself.
- Don't assume the council isn't also irritated with a disruptive member. The best course of action is to ignore disruption ("thank you" and then move on; or "thank you, how would the council like me to proceed"). Don't respond to disruption.
  - Learn to distinguish between what is disruptive and what is just a personality quirk or role

misunderstanding.
- Master Robert's Rules of Order.
- Consider putting council meetings on television.
- Consider majority vote instead of consensus.
- Remember that council goal setting and team building should not have to be reapproved by the council each year. If the current council approves, just make it part of the calendar after that (possibly tie it to something important like the budget process). All new councilmembers will see it is part of their expected duties, but they do not have to participate if they don't want to. Most will see its value, especially if results are tied into some type of annual report. Bringing in a facilitator does not have to cost money; any person with such facilitation skills as a local counselor or pastor, can preside. **PM**

311: THE FIRST STEP IN CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT?

Integrating 311/constituent relationship management (CRM) with citizen engagement programs creates a helpful tool that local government managers can use to address challenging or contentious issues. Three recent ICMA case studies focusing on Cupertino, California; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Savannah, Georgia, illustrate ways that a commitment to citizen engagement incorporates residents' input into decision-making processes. It also helps simplify the introduction of new programs and services, plus creates a more tangible sense of community.

A well-defined 311/CRM system can more readily translate citizen engagement goals into action, as it helps residents become more comfortable with contacting the local government and offering suggestions and feedback. It also helps government officials to gauge their responsiveness to residents' questions and requests.

Despite distinct differences in demographics, economic bases, and types of CRM systems, each of the three cities was able to take advantage of its respective CRM system's features to deal with significant issues, including budget cuts, traffic flows, development, and diversity.

While these bring to mind a picture of three quite different cities, they in fact share some common characteristics in terms of citizen engagement. In each community, leaders have articulated a commitment to citizen engagement. The commitment is backed up with programs that promote interaction between residents and government, such as town hall meetings or block leaders programs. City officials turn to local universities, colleges, or nongovernmental organizations for citizen engagement expertise. And all have invested significant amounts of time and funding in designing, implementing, and refining their 311/CRM systems to meet local needs.

Here is a brief summary of their 311/CRM systems and efforts:

Cupertino: Access Cupertino is primarily a web-based system, reflecting this Silicon Valley community's high rate of Internet penetration among households and comfort with digital tools, yet it also provides phone and walk-in options for residents with questions, service requests, or complaints.

Philadelphia: Philly311 was launched in December 2008, and the financial crisis left the city with no funds to market the new system. Yet initial call volumes were high, and city officials immediately saw its potential for outreach to residents on tough budget choices.

Savannah: The city chose to develop its 311 system with in-house expertise rather than purchase a commercial system, as it believed this would offer greater flexibility at a lower cost.

Each city has been able to benefit from its 311/CRM system's support of citizen engagement, as these examples illustrate:

Cupertino: diversity. The block leaders program was designed to improve communication within neighborhoods and between residents and city hall, and it is particularly useful in helping residents become more comfortable with diversity. Information about the program is available through Access Cupertino. Conversely, if requests made through Access Cupertino demonstrate concerns within a particular neighborhood, city officials can relay information to block leaders. Or, as block leaders raise concerns they are hearing from neighbors, city officials can step up related outreach and education efforts.

Philadelphia: budget cuts. To engage people in the process of making decisions to close a projected $1 billion deficit in the city's five-year budget, the city held a series of four community budget workshops, called "Tight Times, Tough Choices," to gather resident input. City officials used feedback received from both the workshops and Philly311 to make budget decisions.

Savannah: traffic calming. To promote a more holistic, community-based approach to solving traffic problems, Savannah initiated a year-long process to develop the "Neighborhood Traffic Calming Guidebook" for residents concerned about speeding in their neighborhoods. The citizen's office set up a partnership with 311 to provide a mechanism for handling requests for traffic calming. 311 introduced a new service request code that was created for traffic calming requests and calls related to bad behavior by drivers; the information was entered into a central database. With more complete information, the city is in a better position to make decisions about traffic.

311/CRM also has value in introducing new programs, along with enhancing communication about existing programs. In Savannah, it was used to introduce a new recycling program, and Cupertino is using its system to enhance emergency preparedness.

Savannah may analyze its 311 data in ways similar to the CompStat system that its police force relies on to direct resources to areas of need. Cupertino rolled out an iPhone application earlier this year. These communities also look to other places for ideas. There is interest in, for example, the Dallas, Texas, mobile 311 unit, which is taken into neighborhoods to raise awareness of the service.

For more information, visit www.icma.org/311. **PM**

ANNE PHELAN
Writer and Consultant
New York, New York
aphelan.writer@gmail.com

SEVEN MORE REASONS FOR BECOMING A LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGER

Regarding the commentary "So You Want to Be a Manager?" in the September *PM* issue, I was disappointed. I recognize the difficulty in getting meaningful articles from credible sources. Not knowing the author, I cannot comment on his expertise in the field. What I can comment on is a commentary that did not hit the mark I expected from the title and did not seem to add any value to the magazine.

Specifically, the commentary was negative, outlined too many difficulties in being a public manager, and did not provide his correct answer to the opening question, "Why do you want to become a local government manager?"

Since I decided to take a few shots here, I think it is only fair that I offer my suggestion on what an aspiring man-ager should answer. All management positions have difficulties, obstacles, and leadership needs. What qualities would I expect an aspiring student or young person to possess to give a push toward the public side? Here is what I would expect to hear in some way, shape, or form.

I want to become a local government manager because:

- I want to advance and improve a community. My focus is not on generating greater wealth for my stockholders but greater well-being for my neighbors.
- I enjoy getting diverse groups of people to collaborate and work together.
- I have a strong moral and ethical compass and want the burden of public trust placed upon my shoulders.
- I enjoy helping to establish policy and have the commitment (backbone) to carry it through in a fair and impartial manner.
- My local government should be focused on customer service and have a can-do attitude.
- I gravitate to a leadership role and feel that I can manage people effectively.

My knee-jerk reaction was that ICMA could have been more critical of the direction of the commentary. I am often skeptical of consultant-written content, and this article seemed more like an opportunity for advertising some good work but not directly on point of the advertised title.

Jack Cameron
Administrative Assistant to the Mayor
Evendale, Ohio
Jack.Cameron@evendaleohio.org

MY FIRST DAY ON THE JOB

After reading the June 2010 PM Short Story column entitled "How Could This Happen on My First Day," I thought about a similar and yet dissimilar event in my past career. I retired from my local government management career in 1990, after serving as chief administrative officer of Mendocino County, California, for 25 years.

As a relatively young retiree, I became a consultant and also served a short stint as an interim manager of a water district. During that experience, I learned that the small city of Rio Dell, California, was seeking an interim manager to assist during the manager recruitment process. Rio Dell, with a population of 3,000-plus, was an economically challenged community. It would provide me an opportunity to manage a city, a new experience for me.

After a relatively easy employment interview with the members of the city council, we came to terms on an employment contract. I then moved into the vacant city-owned house provided for the manager.

Having established a modicum of comfort in this housing, I reported to the modest Rio Dell city hall on Monday morning. I began my first day on the job by meeting and greeting the small office staff composed of the city clerk, the business manager, and her assistants. After meeting the chief of police and the police officers on duty at city hall, l toured the maintenance yards and water and sewer facilities.

After a quick lunch in my office, I began to review minutes of recent council meetings as well as reports on pending issues. It was at this time that the city clerk appeared in my office doorway and asked if she could have a moment with me. She then began with "Mr. Beltrami, we have a problem." I emphasize the "we." I said something to the effect of "and what is our problem?" She replied, "I cannot meet the Friday payroll."

My first thought was: "Why am I here?!"

To be in a new organization without available funding for the next payroll was truly a new experience for me. In my past local government service, one turned to the county auditor or the county treasurer–tax collector for succor. In a small operation like Rio Dell, one turned to…nobody.

As part of my continuing public administration education, I quickly learned that the manager could go to the local bank across the river in the lumber company town of Scotia (there were no banks in Rio Dell) and borrow funds against the anticipated water and sewer fees that the city was to receive. That solved the immediate payroll crisis and was my quick course in municipal finance versus county financing.

The real education for me, though, was to be more careful and detailed in checking out public administration positions in the future.

Al Beltrami
Retired Chief Administrative Officer
Ukiah, California
abel@saber.net

OVEMBER

marketplace | professional services

TO ADVERTISE, CONTACT Fox Associates at 800/440-0232 or adinfo.icma@foxrep.com

BY AL BITRO

IS IT A CITIZEN "CONCERN"?

No, it's not a concern! It's a complaint! Let's call it what it really is!

We've all seen it from our positions in management: a customer comes to the front service counter and is seething over some city or county project or employee. The community needs to *install* a stop sign at a particular location, for example, to slow down motorists in a business district. Or, it needs to *remove* stop signs in the business district so that traffic flows freely from one part of town to another. Either way, someone's not happy.

The complaining customer is often a resident, businessperson, contractor, or even another employee. He or she is extremely angry because no one seems to be listening or it's just taking too long to resolve the issue.

As a manager, I normally get involved with the complainant after frontline staff have tried to fix the problem, but have not been successful. By this point, the citizen wants to talk directly with the city manager or the mayor. That's where I come in. You know it in the job description as "other duties as assigned."

I've been told that I do a fairly good job in dealing with complainants at the counter and over the phone. Rarely do I get repeat customers—my informal performance measure—and sometimes I even get compliments from the complainants for helping them.

I'm sure there are a lot of tips and guidelines available in bookstores and on the Internet on this topic, but here are some tools I use that have worked for me during my years in local government management.

Recognize That the Complainant Is Angry or Frustrated. It's helpful to acknowledge immediately that the person is angry or frustrated and needs to vent that frustration. Listening is key here. Nod your head in affirmation. Don't interrupt

the person. Periodically ask questions about the issue and repeat statements so the person knows you are fully engaged.

Sympathize. If calling by phone, a person might already have been transferred from one department to another with no resolution. Employees in the organization may have already told the complainant, "That's not my area" or "That's not my job." Take copious notes of whom the complainant has already spoken to and request to keep copies of records or documents presented to you. This shows you're taking genuine ownership of the problem with them.

One-Stop Shopping (a.k.a. "The Buck Stops Here"). Thank the complainant for the input and for bringing the matter to your attention. Assure that he or she does not have to go to another department and fill out a special form, but that you will take it from that point. My main purpose is to advise the resident that I will take care of the issue from that point forward. I have found that communicating this—and doing it with utmost sincerity—goes a long way in defusing the situation.

But, Don't Be a Doormat (although you may begin to think, "If you point your finger at me one more time, I'm going to break it off."). After I listen to the person's story or problem, I indicate that it's my turn to talk. I also make it clear that I won't tolerate shouting at my staff, just as I don't allow rudeness at the service counter or on the phone. Yes, I make it clear that I will call—and I have called—the police department for assistance if city staff, including myself, are threatened or assaulted.

I also remind the resident that, while I investigate the concern, the two of us have to have a *dialogue*. You talk. I listen. Then it's my turn to talk. We don't

interrupt each other. I let the person know that I need to find out what the other side of the story is in the matter. Was the community acting under the law or following its own procedure?

Was the code enforcement officer's observation, for example, accurate relative to the citation? If the person applied for a city job and received a rejection notice because the application showed that requisite qualifications weren't met, did the applicant properly document formal education and experience on the application or were human resources staff members expected to be mind readers?

The message I want to convey here is that, although I may feel bad that the person perceives mistreatment, I have to make it clear that I also will check out both sides of the situation.

Close the Loop. Before a phone call ends or a person at the service counter finishes, be sure to provide your full name, title, and phone number so they know how to contact you directly. This is great public relations because it shows you're not hiding from the person in the future, and it also demonstrates your willingness to see the situation through.

Close the loop by getting back to the person in one or two business days to provide an answer. Or, if there is no answer at that time, let the person know you're still on the case, but are awaiting information from another party.

So, I've laid out my approach in dealing with complainants. Now tell me what you think! I also have started a dialogue at ICMA's Knowledge Network. **PM**
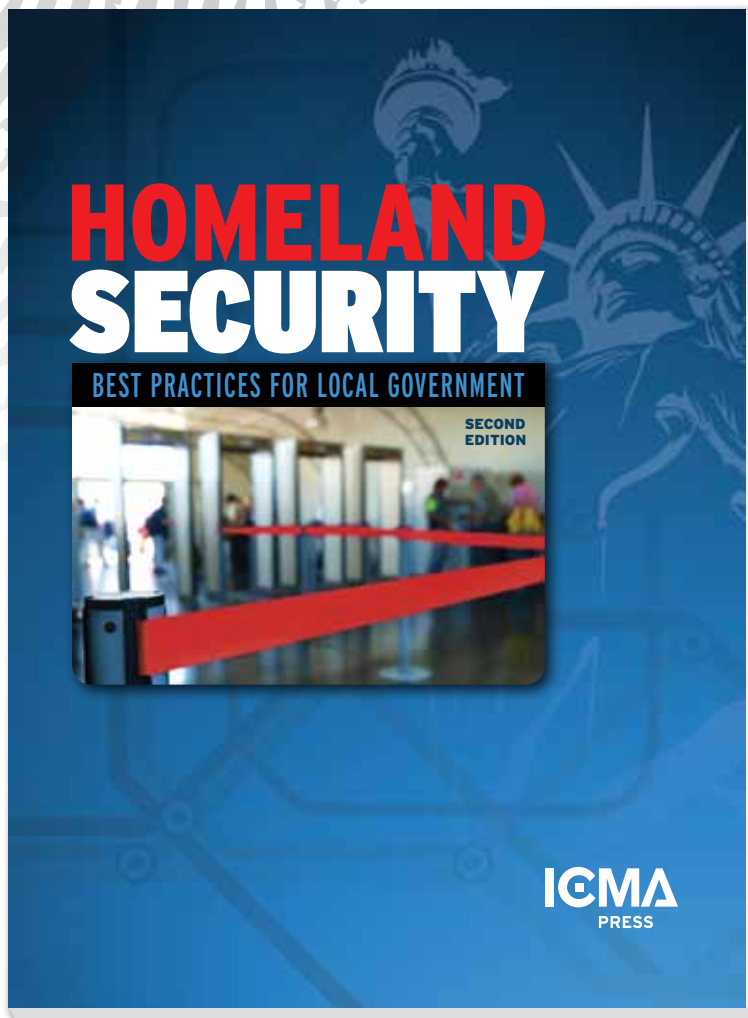
AL BITO
Assistant to the City Manager
Campbell, California
alb@cityofcampbell.com

CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY MANAGEMENT

A Holistic Approach to Local Government Management Consulting

For nearly 100 years, ICMA has provided trusted advice and technical assistance to local governments nationwide. We've helped communities large and small solve their most difficult problems by leveraging the resources and expertise of ICMA and its members.

If you need help addressing your jurisdiction's most critical issues—from financial distress to police and fire staffing to organizational performance—or if you want advice from a team of experienced local government professionals committed to delivering enterprise solutions and organizational excellence, consider ICMA Center for Public Safety Management.

Call us at **202-289-ICMA**

Email us at **customerservices@icma.org**

Or visit us at **icma.org**

ICMA

Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

11-104