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**UNEXPECTED
MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES
& SURVIVE**

2013 ICMA Regional Summits

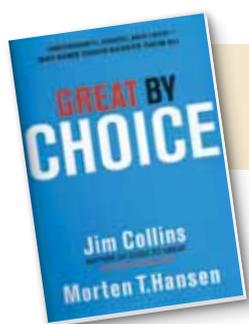
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Registration Is Open!



Join us for this two-day professional development and information sharing event that will bring together current and past state leadership, as well as future leaders of the profession.

Don't miss this opportunity to participate in an ICMA University workshop, discuss ICMA issues and programs, provide feedback to the ICMA Executive Board and staff, and network with your colleagues in the region.



ICMA Regional Summit Workshop

ICMA – GREAT by CHOICE!

The Decade of Local Government and the 20-Mile March

Join Bob O'Neill and colleagues for a discussion of Jim Collins' 12 questions for leadership teams as outlined in Collins' keynote session at ICMA's 2012 Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. Discussion leaders from each of ICMA's five regions will share their application of the ideas in Jim Collins' *Great by Choice*, in their community.

Discussion Leaders Panel:

- **Southeast Region** (March 7–8, Asheville, NC): Peggy Merriss, city manager, Decatur, GA; Tom Lundy, county manager, Catawba County, NC; and Simon Farbrother, city manager, Edmonton, Canada.
- **Northeast Region** (March 21–22, Portsmouth, NH): Kate Fitzpatrick, town manager, Needham, MA, and Simon Farbrother, city manager, Edmonton, Canada.
- **Midwest Region** (April 4–5, Bloomington, MN): Mike Baker, deputy village manager, Downers Grove, IL; Milton Dohoney, city manager, Cincinnati, OH; and Simon Farbrother, city manager, Edmonton, Canada.
- **West Coast Region** (April 18–19, Las Vegas, NV): Charlie Bush, deputy city administrator, Issaquah, WA; Betsy Fretwell, city manager, Las Vegas, NV; and Simon Farbrother, city manager, Edmonton, Canada.
- **Mountain Plains Region** (May 2–3, Aurora, CO): Bill Buchanan, county manager, Sedgwick County, KS, and Mario Canizares, deputy city manager, Coppell, TX.



2013 Young Professionals Leadership Institute (YPLI)

icma.org/YPLI

For assistants, assistant managers, and those who are beginning their career path—build your leadership skill set through the art and practice of leadership.

AYPLI precedes each Regional Summit. **Managers: you are encouraged to invite young professionals to attend this leadership institute.**

Made possible through a generous grant from ICMA-RC.

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BY MARTHA PEREGO

THE ICMA CODE OF ETHICS: VALUES FOR THE NEXT CENTURY

Foundational values continue guiding the profession

As ICMA approaches its 100th anniversary in 2014, the local government management profession will celebrate its legacy of public service: vibrant towns, cities, and counties built around the world by ambitious and innovative leaders. Fundamental to the success of those countless individuals was their commitment to a core set of ethical principles.

First adopted in 1924, the ICMA Code of Ethics outlined the values that are foundational for the profession. A commitment to democracy, equity, integrity, transparency, political neutrality, and fairness continue to define the profession today.

In crafting the Code, the founding leaders had the foresight and wisdom to recognize that a true profession is more than a body of knowledge implemented by experienced practitioners. A true profession is anchored in and guided by a set of commonly held core principles. Those principles not only guide the individual's conduct but create a set of expectations and a bond among individuals and the community they serve.

Taking that first step to create a core set of principles so early in its infancy was fundamental to the success of the local government management profession. Today, those core principles are taught in public administration and public policy programs, reflected in local government management practices, and enforced in a peer-review process governed by ICMA.

The Values

Keeping the profession's ethical standards relevant to the work that managers do is crucial. Over the past 85 years, the tenets of the ICMA Code of Ethics have been revised seven times to make it relevant to the conditions of the day and to strengthen principles that perhaps were losing meaning and visibility to the profession. The last revision occurred in 1998 when the membership sought to emphasize the importance of political neutrality to the profession by approving a re-ordering of the tenet's statements.

As the local government management profession approaches its second century, the time has come to initiate a review of the ICMA Code of Ethics—the principles outlined in the tenets of the Code as well as the guidelines that serve to direct their practical implementation. ICMA's Committee on Professional Conduct, the standing Executive Board committee responsible for enforcing the Code of Ethics, is developing the framework for such a review.

What Values Matter Most to You?

As the framework for engaging the profession in the formal review rolls out, take time to reexamine the 12 tenets of the ICMA Code of Ethics.

TENET 1: Be dedicated to the concepts of effective and democratic local government by responsible elected officials and believe that professional



Public Management (PM) aims to inspire innovation, inform decision making, connect leading-edge thinking to everyday challenges, and serve ICMA members and local governments worldwide in the pursuit of excellence in local governance.

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*ICMA Credentialed Manager (ICMA-CM)

general management is essential to the achievement of this objective.

TENET 2: Affirm the dignity and worth of the services rendered by government and maintain a constructive, creative, and practical attitude toward local government affairs and a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant.

TENET 3: Be dedicated to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the respect and confidence of the elected officials, of other officials and employees, and of the public.

TENET 4: Recognize that the chief function of local government at all times is to serve the best interests of all people.

TENET 5: Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts and advice on matters of policy as a basis for making decisions and setting community goals; and uphold and implement local government policies adopted by elected officials.

TENET 6: Recognize that elected representatives of the people are entitled to the credit for the establishment of local government policies; responsibility for policy execution rests with the members.

TENET 7: Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators. Refrain from participation in the election of the members of the employing legislative body.

TENET 8: Make it a duty continually to improve the member's professional ability and to develop the

competence of associates in the use of management techniques.

TENET 9: Keep the community informed on local government affairs; encourage communication between the citizens and all local government officers; emphasize friendly and courteous service to the public; and seek to improve the quality and image of public service.

TENET 10: Resist any encroachment on professional responsibilities, believing the member should be free to carry out official policies without interference, and handle each problem without discrimination on the basis of principle and justice.

TENET 11: Handle all matters of personnel on the basis of merit so that fairness and impartiality govern a member's decisions, pertaining to appointments, pay adjustments, promotions, and discipline.

TENET 12: Seek no favor; believe that personal aggrandizement or profit secured by confidential information or by misuse of public time is dishonest.

After reading the tenets, consider these questions: Which values outlined in the Code matter most to you? Do the tenets as written accurately reflect the profession's commitment to ethics? Is some principle or value understated? Is some principle or value missing? Lastly, how would we know?

Feel free to share your thoughts with ICMA by sending comments to me at mperego@icma.org. **PM**



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BY BONNIE SVRCEK, ICMA-CM

MEMBERSHIP — A POWER NETWORK!

The “just one thing” challenge

At the ICMA Annual Conference in Phoenix/Maricopa County, Arizona, this past October, I shared that “increasing member engagement” was a goal that we could work on together before meeting again at the Boston/New England conference in September 2013. We talk a lot about the importance of citizen engagement in our communities. As ICMA members, we have that same responsibility to engage in our association.

I challenged attendees who were in Phoenix to do “just one thing” to engage in the association and promised that in this issue of *PM* magazine I would provide a list of “things” that they might do as members during the next year. Here is a starter list of ideas to consider:

- Attend an ICMA webinar.
- Become a Legacy Leader.
- Contribute to the Fund for Professional Management or the *Life, Well Run* Campaign.
- Sponsor a Local Government Management Fellow.
- Mentor a member participating in the Emerging Leaders Development Program.

THE PURPOSE OF THE “JUST ONE THING” CHALLENGE IS TO SUGGEST HOW MEMBERS CAN ENGAGE IN ICMA IN A WAY THAT THEY MAY NOT HAVE DONE IN THE PAST.

- Become a credentialed manager.
- Post a leading practice from your community on the Knowledge Network.
- Exhibit the ICMA Code of Ethics in your workplace and share the 12 tenets with your employees.
- Share with elected officials the value of your membership in ICMA.
- Invite a colleague in transition to lunch.
- Create a student chapter of ICMA at your local college or university. The goal is to create at least

- 17 additional chapters before September 2013.
- Participate in the CityLinks Program.
- Nominate a person or program for the ICMA Annual Awards Program.
- Explore local government as you travel internationally and share your learning on the Knowledge Network.
- Start a blog on the Knowledge Network. (Check out “Bonnie’s Blog” at http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/blogs/blogpost/912/A_busy_first_month.)
- Volunteer for a committee or a task force.
- Attend a regional summit.

Your choices aren’t limited to this list. Do something else that you think contributes to making ICMA an even more spectacular community of local government professionals than it is today.

The purpose of the “just one thing” challenge is to suggest how members can engage in ICMA in a way that they may not have done in the past. If, for example, you are already a Legacy Leader—an ICMA program that encourages credentialed managers to coach the next generation of local government professionals—during the year ahead do something that you have never done before as an engaged ICMA member.

Over the next few months you will be hearing more about the “just one thing” challenge. I am convinced that an engaged member is a retained member and that a retained member strengthens the ICMA family as a whole. And, yes, I believe that ICMA is an extremely strong family of local government professionals that contribute daily to life well run!

As we begin a new year, I wish you and your families the best that life can bring to you. As always, thank you for your commitment to professional local government management! **PM**



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WHAT IS YOUR YEAR-AHEAD FORECAST FOR YOUR COMMUNITY (AND WHY)?



DEANNA SANTANA
City Administrator
Oakland, California
djsantana@oaklandnet.com

Oakland is on the rise! Unemployment is down, sales tax revenues are up, and we remain optimistic about growth. We've made a lot of tough decisions to weather the global recession, and those decisions are paying off.

We have advanced sound fiscal policies to put Oakland on solid financial footing, which will help us continue to emerge from the downturn. Our focus is to continue to drive economic development and job growth, invest in infrastructure, and rebuild our police department so that we provide adequate resources to meet our significant public-safety challenges.

Our vision is a peaceful and prosperous city. We have a great employee team to meet these challenges!



RICHARD CLARK
City Manager
Des Moines, Iowa
raclark@dmgov.org

Our downtown is strong and vibrant. We have a two-year balanced budget and a triple AAA bond rating from S&P. Our fund balance is growing.

Here are the things ahead for Des Moines:

1. We are seeing an uptick in development downtown and across the community. We will place significant emphasis on maintaining the positive momentum we have worked so hard to create.
2. Public/private collaborations will result in major quality of life enhancements in the city, including major zoo expansion, revamped botanical center, upgraded public spaces, and trails.
3. Local government financing will occupy center stage as we continue to search for common ground with the state on various tax proposals and unfunded mandates.
4. Smart-growth initiatives and regional collaboration are gaining acceptance, and we'll see progress in the coming year.
5. The need all communities face to "do more with less" will continue to be a focus and will include a renewed emphasis on employee training needs.



JASMINE LIM
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For the past six years, I have incorrectly forecasted a slowdown in construction, so this year I'll predict that construction remains at the same level as 2012. Home-owners who are unable to sell their homes have elected to renovate and enlarge them. Commercial projects approved several years back continue to come on board.

During the past two years, we have experienced a significant number of staff retirements. I expect this trend to continue due to concerns about possible erosion of benefits in state pension plans, retiree health care plans, and collective bargaining agreements. State mandated increases in employee health benefit contributions are pushing employees toward retirement if eligible for free retiree health benefits.

Of greatest concern is rapid depletion of top management staff who are predominantly baby boomers. We lost 4 of 10 directors in the past one and a half years and expect to lose another 3 in the next one and a half years.



DON HOYT
City Manager
Anniston, Alabama
dhoyt@anniston.al.gov

By all accounts, the nation's economy has at least stabilized with some indicators of improvement. For Anniston, though, the coming year promises much more.

Anniston paid down its debt during the hyper-growth years. As a result, when states and cities were awash in stimulus money, Anniston could swim in it at will for infrastructure and investment while interest rates were low.

While much of the service economy relocated to the interstate highway, with all of the congestion that usually results, quality-of-life assets and long-term stability in Anniston encouraged the professional sectors to stay put.

Little of the heavy industry remains in Anniston, while the auto industry in the region will continue to grow. And our abandoned military base has miles of undeveloped land to market.

Assets like museums, bike trails, mountain woods, underused but stable buildings, an Amtrak stop, and an airport promise a bright future. All we need now is the will to work together for it. **PM**

1 FOR ANIMAL LOVERS

If reducing costs for your animal services' program while improving customer service and public support interests you, then Washoe County, Nevada, may provide some ideas that can benefit your program.

▶ icma.org/animalservices



LEAGUE SCORES!

Since Arlington, Texas, established the Police Athletic League in 2007, the program has given at-risk youth positive relationships with peers and adults.

▶ icma.org/policeleague

4 SUCCESS STORIES FROM AFGHANISTAN

Success stories from the RAMP UP program in Afghanistan show how ICMA is helping build the capacity of municipal officials to improve service delivery and increase local revenues while also fostering participation by residents, including women and youth.

▶ icma.org/ramp-up



3 BUSINESS FORWARD

Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, wants tangible outcomes for an improved business climate. Its Business Forward initiative is set to help do just that.

▶ icma.org/brooklynpark

A close-up photograph of an elephant's trunk and the surrounding wrinkled skin. The trunk is the central focus, showing its segmented, fibrous structure. The skin is heavily textured with deep, irregular wrinkles. The lighting is bright, casting shadows that emphasize the texture.

FACING THE

ELEPHANT

TAKEAWAYS

- › Large or small, every community has hidden opportunities for greater efficiency and cost savings.
- › Be prepared. Investing a few hours to review your operations could save you the embarrassment of the public or media finding out something is wrong before you do and could save your community millions.

HANT

Survival strategies for meeting unexpected challenges head-on

By David Evertsen

Walking through one of the most populous cities in the world – Dhaka, Bangladesh – amidst millions of people crowded into small streets, traffic, pollution, and concrete, the last thing I expected was to find myself face-to-face with an elephant. Imagine yourself in my shoes: Toe to toe. Massive head. Massive feet. 10,000 pounds. 10 feet tall. His face 18 inches from yours.

I stared at him. He stared back. Time stood still. What do I do? What do I say? How do I behave? When his trunk reached down and grabbed my leg, it was time for immediate action.

I tried to move to the right, but he moved with me. His feet and body cut me off. Blocked! I moved to the left. Blocked again! I'm thinking, how am I going to navigate around this elephant without getting injured? None of my professional training as a local government manager could prepare me for something like this.

How did I get away? With extreme caution. Coming face-to-face with an elephant might sound romantic—until it happens to you. Every day, public administrators manage more than 80,000 political subdivisions in the United States, and our management

colleagues in international locations do the same. So whether you are an appointed manager, elected official, school superintendent, school principal, or mid-level manager working in a small town of 5,000 or a megacity of 5 million, most of your challenges are known or anticipated and managed without major incident.

Whether you are in a Great Plains town or coastal community, a special utility district, school district, or fire district, your challenges and solutions are quite similar. At some point in your career, however, each of you will face an “elephant” that no one wants to discuss but is impossible to overlook—something so different, so challenging, so unusual, that you may find little in your professional or personal experience to address it.

This article has two objectives. One is to share experiences from two public administrators who faced their own elephants and lived to tell the tale. The second is to provide potential solutions for dealing with unexpected challenges that may inevitably come your way.

Navigating Massive Fiscal Hurdles

Chris Hillman, ICMA-CM, was the fifth city manager hired to serve in five years. Within six months of his arrival in Surprise, Arizona (population 120,000), in May 2011, the city went through a contentious election and redistricting process that resulted in a newly elected mayor and two seated councilmembers being “districted out” at the next election.

Just weeks before his arrival, the FY2010 audit was released, requiring

more than 30 prior period adjustments (PPAs) to previous audits and totaling more than 50 adjustments over a five-year period. Misallocated were more than \$70 million in special revenue funds—mostly from impact fees—from more than 96 prior development agreements.

When the “qualified” opinion of its FY 2011 audit identified another 10 PPAs, the city’s general fund reserve was reduced to less than \$500,000, well below the required \$13 million reserve for two months of operating expenses. The city’s bond rating was immediately reduced by two rating agencies.

To make matters worse, the state legislature concurrently banned “general government” impact fees, which were anticipated to help repay a large portion of the city’s new \$70 million city hall complex, and a \$50 million obligation from a commercial development agreement came due.

And finally, within a five-week period this past summer, the city’s top three financial officers all resigned to take positions in other cities. Chris had come face-to-face with his elephant.

He navigated around it by first garnering a specific policy-based solution from the council before proceeding. Councilmembers demanded a fully funded reserve of \$13 million in 24 months with no increase in taxes or fees, no reduction in services to residents, and no reductions in force or programs for public safety, special events, and recreation.

To accomplish this, Chris reduced the workforce by eliminating 33 positions and downgrading 19 management positions, saving the city more than \$3 million. As part of the reorganization, he implemented a paid-time-off payout option to help pay for pension payments. Chris and his management team also cut an additional \$1.5 million in materials and supply costs.

To receive a clean audit, two accounting firms were hired to review more than 96 separate development agreements and to ensure all obligations were properly recorded. They also audited more than 150,000 impact fee transactions made

over a 12-year period.

The city council adopted the more than 50 new financial policies proposed by staff to provide greater accountability and oversight, giving Chris the tools and authority to ensure something of this magnitude never happens again. He and his team recently submitted a \$169 million budget for FY2013 addressing all council expectations. It passed unanimously, setting the city on a new financial course.

Dealing With Fallout From a State Mandate

David Harden, a former U.S. Navy supply corps officer and retired Navy captain, served as city manager in the full-service community of Delray Beach, Florida (population 61,000). Throughout his 35 years in city management, he thought he had seen it all. Then, in 2008, the Florida State Legislature approved a two-part package to reduce statewide property taxes by as much as \$49 billion over five years.

More than half of this would come at the expense of local government through dramatic cuts in property tax collections and a dramatic expansion of the

homestead exemption. This amounted to a 40 percent reduction in general fund revenues for most cities and towns.

Within 18 months, things went from bad to worse with the downturn in the housing market leading to reductions in property tax values and further reduction in property tax revenues. David and nearly every city and town manager in Florida faced their elephant.

Despite his management experience, David commissioned a \$35,000 comprehensive assessment of all departments and offices, including administration, city clerk, environmental services, human resources, community improvement, police, city attorney, finance, fire, recreation services, and planning and zoning. His objective: Examine each department to determine how to increase operational efficiency, reduce expenditures, and increase revenues.

With a pre-existing culture of innovation, quality, and fiscal sensitivity, consultants and city employees together examined each department’s functions, skills, processes, procedures, planning, paperwork, and personnel. They evaluated and discussed service levels, resource needs, priorities, technology,

At some point in your career, each of you will face an “elephant” that no one wants to discuss but is impossible to overlook—something so different, so challenging, so unusual, that you may find little in your professional or personal experience to address it.

and even potential reorganization.

The results were comprehensive. Most were immediately implementable and sustainable. Some, like hardware and software upgrades would take some time to implement. The city eventually recovered millions from unaccounted for water and nearly \$100,000 in increased collections.

Greater efficiency and reduced liability were found through the replacement of ineffective software. The city also benefited from ways to decrease annual fuel expenses by nearly \$200,000 and to reallocate and redistribute personnel, thus increasing fiscal accountability and efficiency.

Survival Strategies

As a professional “elephant trainer” myself, it has been a privilege to mobilize local government managers to be analysts and advisers. Their collegial familiarity and subject-matter expertise have helped more than 300 public administration staff members face their elephants!

Here are quick snapshots of ways that have been used to find uncollected revenues and avoid unnecessary expenditures. Copies of the detailed studies referenced are available by contacting the manager listed or the author of this article.

Private-sector Agreements

Development agreements. Constant review of all development agreements would have avoided a loss of \$70 million and 30 employees. If responsibility for monitoring all agreements’ terms and conditions was properly assigned, all financial transactions would have been properly allocated and disaster avoided. —Chris Hillman, city manager, Surprise, Arizona (population 119,489; chris.hillman@surpriseaz.gov).

Cable franchise agreements. A franchise audit identified \$1,053,000 in uncollected liquidated damages from a cable provider. —John Hendrickson, former city manager, La Habra Heights, California (population 5,363; jjhendrickson@verizon.net).

Pole attachment agreements. City

avoided a 10-year, \$700,000 revenue loss through auditing and updating light or power pole attachment fees. —Huey Long, retired manager, and former city manager, Safford, Arizona (population 9,700; hlong@cableone.net).

Utility Billing

Unaccounted water. Efficiency study identified 27 percent of the city’s treated (finished) water (value of \$6.3 million) as not accounted for in city’s utility billing system. —David Harden, retired manager, Delray Beach, Florida (harden@mydelraybeach.com).

Inefficient or missing meters.

Consultant audit of all 120,000 utility accounts discovered \$2 million in additional annual revenue by identifying meters missing from the utility billing system in Washington D.C. (population 602,000). An audit of newly acquired private water utilities discovered and eliminated a \$20 million liability by identifying all but three of 30,000 unaccounted-for connections. —Colin Baenziger, adviser to Palm Beach County, Florida (population 1,335,000).

Delinquent utility bills. The city maintained a record of more than 3,500 delinquent accounts in a community of only 5,000 water connections. During

13 years, the total uncollected debt totaled more than \$660,000, and the city wrote off more than \$1.2 million over the same period. Utility billing policies and procedures were amended to remove a strangling administrative process. Adding fees and surcharges helped encourage resident payment, reduce the rate of bad debt accumulation, reduce risk to the city, and increase collections by \$97,500 per year. —Rick Davis, ICMA-CM, city manager, West Jordan City, Utah (rickd@wjordan.com), and adviser to Arkansas City, Kansas (population 12,401).

Information Technology

Software license fees and servers. The city maintained a large number of unnecessary servers and paid more than \$100,000 in license fees for software no longer used by employees. Potential annual savings of more than \$309,000 were identified through eliminating overpayment of maintenance charges, unnecessary license fees, and support costs. —David Evertsen, adviser to Daytona Beach, Florida (population 61,000).

Software limitations. Inefficiencies were reduced by \$300,000 to \$350,000 per year through replacing 30-year old software that was lacking functionality,

Even if you don’t suspect that your records, systems, tools, and processes may be inaccurate or inefficient, it’s worth the time and effort to find out for sure. Don’t wait until an elephant blocks your management path.

causing employee workarounds and significant inefficiencies in police and fire, planning, finance, and utilities. —David Harden (harden@mydelraybeach.com).

Regressive technology and staff.

With the lack of an enterprise resource plan to guide purchasing decisions, the city purchased additional hardware and software that could have been eliminated by transitioning to a virtual environment. Adding rather than reducing multiple servers and less collaborative software increased costs by \$150,000 per year. —Dirk Marshall, IT director, Mesquite, Nevada (dirk.marshall@gmail.com), and adviser to Parkland, Florida (population 24,400)

Virtual/Cloud conversion. Reduced hardware and software licensing fees by \$100,000 while increasing compatibility with smartphones through use of Google Apps virtual servers. —Dirk Marshall, Mesquite, Nevada (population 15,411; dirk.marshall@gmail.com).

Fleet Maintenance and Fuel Expenses

Purchasing off the state contract. Assessment results found a potential annual cost savings between \$13,000 and \$17,000 by purchasing fuel off the state contract. —Robert Hoffmann, village administrator, Westwood Village, New Jersey, adviser to Clearfield, Utah (population 30,618; rhoffmann@westwoodnj.gov).

Gas-Electric Hybrids and Vegetable Oil in Diesels. Westwood Village uses gas electric hybrid vehicles on police patrols for an annual savings of \$29,600 per vehicle when a gallon of gasoline was \$2.50; today's savings are even greater. The entire fleet of public works vehicles was converted into hybrids using a 50-50 blend of recycled vegetable oil and diesel fuel. —Robert Hoffmann, Westwood Village (population 10,979).

Excessive fuel. After identifying a potential \$348,000 in excessive annual fuel expenses, \$246,000 was eliminated by using a recycled vegetable oil/diesel blend in 200 of the city's 715 vehicles. Another \$165,000 in fuel costs were reduced by replacing 32 of the police

department's 156 gasoline-only vehicles with gas-electric hybrids. —David Harden (harden@mydelraybeach.com).

Privatization/consolidation

Fire department and a cemetery maintenance department consolidation. With a 40 percent reduction in general fund revenues, the fire department took over operations and maintenance of the city cemetery. Embracing "graveyard shift"—affectionately titled by the local media—saved the town \$100,000 and avoided potential staff reductions within the fire department. —Stephen Cleveland, town manager (sscleveland1@gmail.com), and Bob Costello, fire chief, Buckeye, Arizona (population 54,000).

Solid waste. When 35 percent of the solid waste staff were unavailable daily for duty due to vacation, workers compensation, or sick leave, privatization achieved a \$600,000-per-year savings from an operations and maintenance cost of \$1.5 million. —Jim Thomas, former town manager, West Warwick, Rhode Island (population 32,000; jthomas124@verizon.net).

Process Improvement

Licensed drivers increased from 26,000 up to 125,000 per year and total collections of license fees increased from \$2.7 million up to \$12.5 million through comprehensive process mapping and strategic assessments. Solutions included increasing license expirations from one to three years, reducing traffic school from 10 days to five, and replacing paper driving licenses with plastic ones thus reducing foot traffic for replacement paper licenses in the directorate offices. —David Evertsen, Kabul, Afghanistan (population 5,000,000).

Purchasing

The city had a lower-than-average comparable bid requirement level (\$15,000 compared to \$25,000) contributing to excess staff time for formal bid preparation. This low limit caused 50 percent of all requisitions to be in error, requiring 20 percent of staff time to correct requisitions in error. Increasing the bid threshold significantly improved purchasing efficiency and staff inputs. —David Harden (harden@mydelraybeach.com).

Combining biannual elections, Delray Beach, Florida, saved \$50,000 per year.

Elections

Combining biannual elections, Delray Beach, Florida, saved \$50,000 per year.

Pay Period Reduction

Consultative assessment identified a potential savings of \$101,000 by transitioning from 52 to 26 pay periods. —Robert Hoffmann, adviser to Daytona Beach, Florida (population 61,000; rhoffmann@westwoodnj.gov).

Charting a Course

As these vignettes have illustrated, there are myriad ways to deal with unexpected and potentially disruptive fiscal challenges. At such times, it's often prudent to consider whether it's in the community's best interest to seek outside expertise. Chris Hillman advises that: "At times, and for various reasons, it can be best to outsource an audit and review to an independent, third-party organization. This is not a judgment of internal staff's abilities to perform such an audit. It is simply an acknowledgment that political, institutional, or environmental pressures can dictate the need to separate the organization and the analysis in order to achieve an effective result."

This decision should also be made when the confidence of the public, elected officials, and local government staff members is waning. Bringing in an outside agency can provide the needed confidence and stability."

Even if you don't suspect that your records, systems, tools, and processes may be inaccurate or inefficient, it's worth the time and effort to find out for sure. Don't wait until an elephant blocks your management path. **PM**



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THE Arts Mean BUSINESS

First in a series of three articles on the value
of nonprofit arts and culture organizations

By Robert Lynch



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: "Inside Outside," mural on 3S ArtSpace building by Artist Peter Flynn Donovan, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 2011. See link http://www.3sarts.org/news_and_events.cfm?sarticleID=9. "Fisherman's Luck," Australian granite whale by Cabot Lyford in Prescott Park, Portsmouth, 1979. "Moose Myth," stick moose by Andy Moerlin and Donna Dodson in Portsmouth's Market Square, 2010.

America's local governments were hit hard by the Great Recession.

As managers, you have made some extremely tough and unpleasant decisions when preparing your budgets. You have likely cut important and valuable programs because of budget deficits. Luckily, the tide is finally turning in communities where revenues are increasing once again.

Managers might be hearing about the importance of promoting small business and about how Main Street is the key to our economic recovery. Unfortunately, many community leaders do not recognize that nonprofit arts and culture organizations are just that: small businesses.

They are resilient and entrepreneurial. They are local employers, producers, and consumers. Their spending is far-reaching: they pay employees, purchase supplies, contract for services, and acquire assets within their community.

In addition, unlike most industries, nonprofit arts and culture organizations leverage a significant amount of event-related spending by their audiences. When people attend a cultural event they may pay to park their car, purchase dinner at a restaurant, shop in nearby stores, eat dessert after the show, and pay a babysitter when they get home. Cultural tourists often spend the night in a hotel. All of these dollars generate commerce for local businesses.

TAKEAWAYS

- › The nonprofit arts are an economic engine in every city in America and have an economic impact of more than \$135 billion.
- › The 100,000-plus nonprofit arts organizations are small businesses directly employing more than 1 million jobs and supporting an additional 3 million.
- › Nonprofit arts are a strong investment with organizations and their audiences contributing more than \$22 billion in local, state, and federal taxes.

Case Study: PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Portsmouth, New Hampshire (population 21,000), participated for the third time in the Arts and Economic Prosperity IV study conducted in 2011 by Americans for the Arts, Washington, D.C.

Using a widely accepted economic input-output model, this study measured the economic impact of the nonprofit arts sector to the city's economic vitality. In 2011, we learned that nonprofit arts organizations in Portsmouth contributed \$41.4 million to the local economy and supported 1,270 full-time equivalent jobs. These businesses also returned \$2.7 million in local government revenue.

The city understands and values the importance of this sector of the economy to the quality of life for our residents and as an attraction for both business and visitors. Through the city's participation in the prosperity study in 2000, 2005, and 2010, our residents and elected officials have come to understand the quantitative value of the nonprofit arts and culture sector as a local economic driver.

A prime example of this growth is when you compare 2005 data to 2010. In Portsmouth, even after enduring the Great Recession, total arts organizational spending along with audience spending increased by \$3.2 million (from \$38.2 million to \$41.4 million).

Without the direct and indirect benefit of these creative businesses, Portsmouth would be a much less interesting and economically vibrant city.



JOHN BOHENKO, ICMA-CM
City Manager
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More and more, key decisionmakers—along with the general public—are recognizing these impressive economic benefits provided by our cultural industry. Fundamentally, the arts foster beauty, creativity, originality, and vitality. They inspire us, soothe us, provoke us, involve us, and connect us. But they also create jobs and contribute to the economy.

National Study Documents Economic Impact

Americans for the Arts recently published Arts and Economic Prosperity IV, its fourth national study of the economic impact of spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences. The most comprehensive study of its kind ever conducted, this study evaluated the economic impact of the nonprofit arts industry in 182 U.S. communities representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. (See sidebar, “Case Study: Portsmouth, NH.”)

These diverse communities range in population from 1,600 residents (Gunnison, Colorado) to more than four million (Houston/Harris County, Texas). To complete the national analyses, researchers collected survey data from 9,721 nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and 151,802 of their event attendees. Finally, the project economists built 182 customized economic input-output models—one for each community.

The study findings are impressive (see Figure 1). In spite of the funding challenges created by the Great Recession, nonprofit arts and culture remain a thriving industry. Nationally, it generated \$135.2 billion in total economic activity during 2010—\$61.1 billion by the organizations themselves, plus an additional \$74.1 billion in event-related expenditures by their audiences. This economic activity supports 4.1 million full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and generates \$86.7 billion in resident household income.

A Key Jobs Supporter

What company would you name as your city's largest employer? Most likely it would be a local manufacturer, a hospital

system, or a nearby university. Chances are you would not consider the nonprofit arts for your short list of candidates. But consider a few of the cities that participated in the Prosperity IV study.

In Telluride, Colorado (population 2,361), spending by nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences supports 740 FTE jobs, almost a third of the population. In Laguna Beach, California, that number is 718; and in Providence, Rhode Island, the industry supported 2,577 FTEs.

In fact, according to a comparison with statistics from the U.S. Department of Labor, the nonprofit arts and cultural industry supports approximately 0.87 percent of the entire U.S. workforce. That may not seem too impressive—until you consider that the same data demonstrates that elementary school teachers make up 1.17 percent of the workforce, police officers represent 0.51 percent, farmers account for 0.32 percent, and firefighters represent 0.24 percent.

Generating Revenue

Ask the question, “How much do you think all levels of government (local, state, and federal) appropriate to support nonprofit arts organizations?” to city officials and their staffs and you'll receive answers ranging from “not enough” to hundreds of billions of dollars. The real answer is approximately \$4 billion each year, and that's only if you count everything that even remotely resembles support for the arts.

About one-quarter of that funding—\$1 billion—is provided by city government sources. Then ask, “How much tax revenue is generated for the various levels of government by the nonprofit arts industry?”

Most have never considered the question. Thanks to the study, of course, we know that the answer is \$22.3 billion. If you do the math, that represents a return on-investment greater than 5-to-1.

In Flagstaff, Arizona, population 60,222, the city invested \$355,000 in the current fiscal year into nonprofit arts, culture, and science organizations; however, according to the study, the city collected \$3,836,000 in local government revenue as

FIGURE 1: Source of Estimated Revenue for Nonprofit Arts Organizations

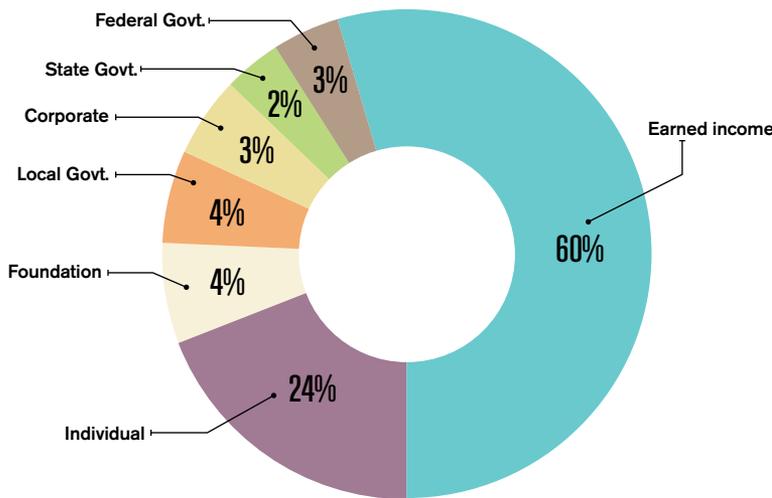


FIGURE 2: Economic Impact of the Nonprofit Arts and Culture Industry (2010)
(Combined spending by both nonprofit arts and cultural organizations AND their audiences)

Total Direct Expenditures	\$135.2 BIL
Full-Time Equivalent Jobs	\$4.13 MIL
Resident Household Income	\$86.68 BIL
Local Government Revenue	\$6.07 BIL
State Government Revenue	\$6.67 BIL
Federal Income Tax Revenue	\$9.59 BIL

a result of nonprofit art groups activities. That is more than a 9-to-1 return on investment! In other words, investing in the arts is a smart business decision.

Measuring Economic Impact

The Prosperity IV study uses a sophisticated economic analysis called input-output analysis to measure economic impact. It is a system of mathematical equations that combines statistical methods and economic theory. Input-output analysis enables economists to track how many times a dollar is “respent” within a local economy and the economic impact generated by each round of spending.

A theater company, for example, purchases a gallon of paint from the local hardware store for \$20, generating the direct economic impact of the expenditure.

The hardware store then uses a portion of the aforementioned \$20 to pay the sales clerk’s salary; the sales clerk spends some of the money for groceries; the grocery store uses some of the money to pay its cashier; the cashier then spends some for the utility bill, and so on.

Interestingly, a dollar “ripples” differently through each community, which is why each study region has its own customized economic model.

Here’s another measure of the arts’ economic impact. Nationally, ticket sales account for about 60 percent of what it costs to produce an event or show. The remainder comes from donations, grants, and government support (see Figure 2).

On average, a nonprofit arts organization receives only about 4 percent of its revenues from local government (often

as a pass-through grant from your community’s local arts agency). But, this is important as they can take this revenue and the “stamp of approval” that it connotes to attract other funding sources. The 4 percent is then multiplied into 8 percent, 12 percent, or more!

In other words, a small investment by the city can be multiplied into a substantial revenue stream and a source for new jobs.

Capitalizing on the Arts

The first thing that key decisionmakers must recognize is that nonprofit arts and culture organizations exist in every community coast-to-coast—fueling creativity, beautifying our cities, and improving our quality of life. Your city is home to a variety of cultural organizations.

Some may have more visibility than others, but all are working hard to serve the needs of your community and its residents. As your city’s chief executive, look to the arts as an investment rather than a gift, a frill, or even an appropriation.

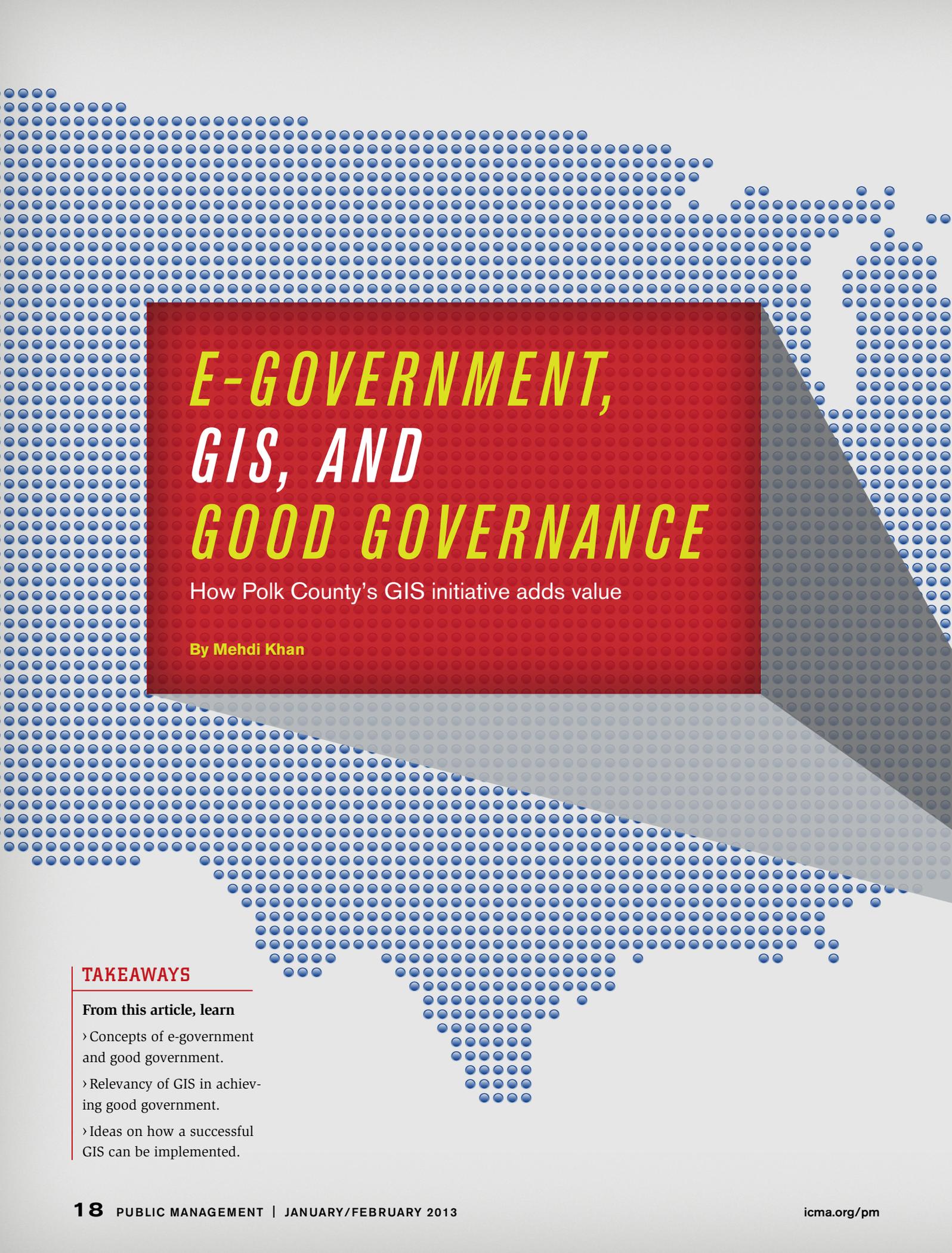
Just as we invest in infrastructure, schools, and safety, we need also to invest in the arts and culture. As budget processes are completed for upcoming fiscal years, invite your local arts agency and other arts groups to explain how your community’s financial support for the arts can help your area’s economy grow. After all, it’s true that the arts mean business!

To download a copy of the full Arts & Economic Prosperity IV national report, including the individual findings for all 182 participating U.S. communities, visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org/EconomicImpact. **PM**

A three-part article series continues in the March 2013 issue of *PM* with an explanation on why nonprofit arts organizations are the key catalyst for cultural tourism, plus how those tourists generate billions in revenue for local businesses.



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E-GOVERNMENT, GIS, AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

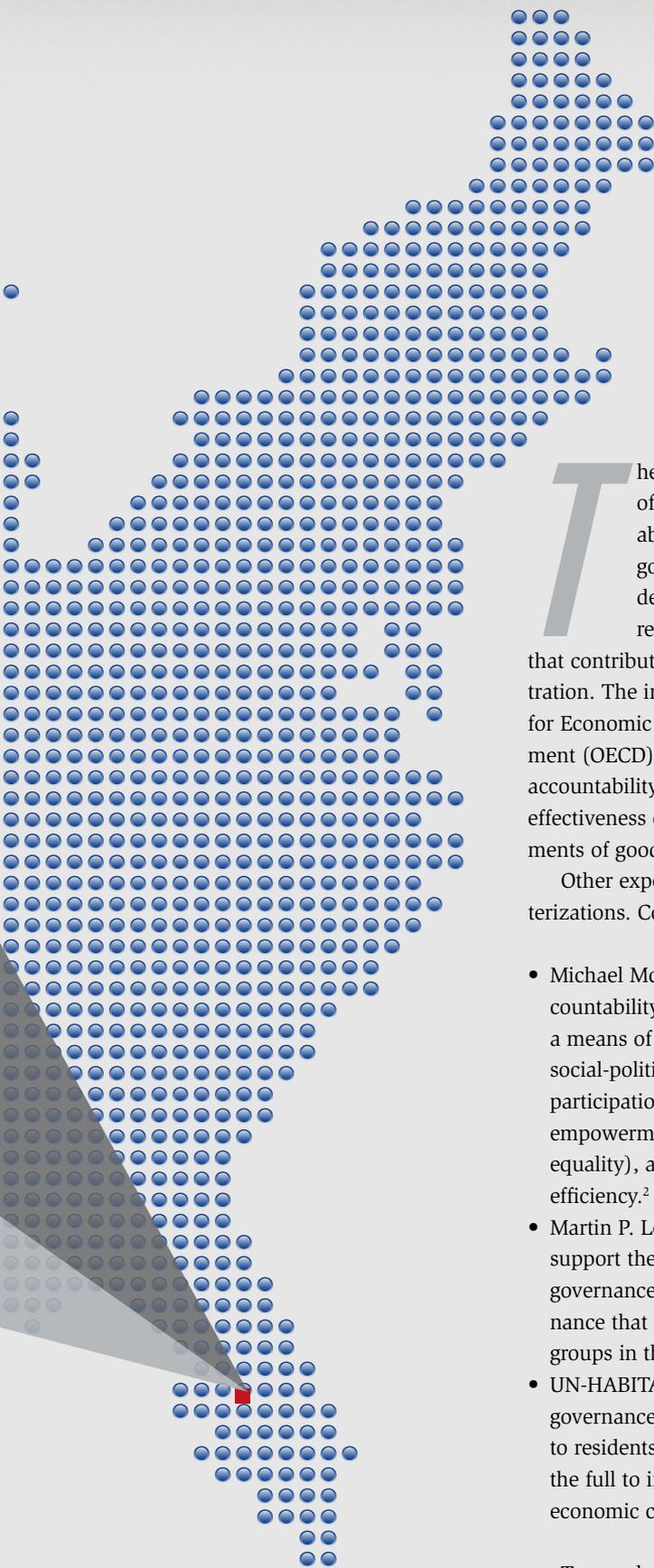
How Polk County's GIS initiative adds value

By Mehdi Khan

TAKEAWAYS

From this article, learn

- › Concepts of e-government and good government.
- › Relevancy of GIS in achieving good government.
- › Ideas on how a successful GIS can be implemented.



The term “good governance” often pops up in discussions about public administration, government policies, and development strategies and refers to multiple attributes that contribute to an effective administration. The international Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has noted transparency, accountability, legitimacy, quality, and effectiveness of policies as the core elements of good governance.¹

Other experts suggest similar characterizations. Consider these examples:

- Michael McCall argues that accountability—open government—is a means of supporting high-level, social-political goals of legitimacy and participation, respect for rights and empowerment, equity (not simply equality), and competence, including efficiency.²
- Martin P. Lewis and Aurobindo Ogra support the idea that good urban governance refers to integrated governance that includes and represents all groups in the urban society.³
- UN-HABITAT describes good urban governance as providing a platform to residents “to use their talents to the full to improve their social and economic conditions.”⁴

Tremendous development in web, mobile, and communication technologies and their adaptation in all spectrums of residents’ lives mean that local governments increasingly are focusing on electronic government or e-government

in order to provide efficient information and generate public participation in government decision-making processes.

Dimensions of E-Government

E-government incorporates three dimensions according to Arild Jansen, who credited A. Eds. Grønlund for the concept:⁵

- Democratic dimension (e-democracy): focusing on the political processes and interaction between the constituents and the government.
- Service dimension (e-service): comprising the delivery of all types of electronic services.
- Administrative dimension (e-administration), including various types of management work, internal routines, and the like.

This simple framework of three distinguishable dimensions provides direction for achieving elements of good governance. The challenge is to find the appropriate combination of technologies and tools in the specific context of local government that will serve well in all these three dimensions.

Often implementation of technologies lacks effective integration, which means the full extent of their usefulness is never totally realized. This scenario is common in the implementation of a geographic information system (GIS) in local governments.

GIS has enormous potential for addressing and enhancing all three dimensions of e-government. It represents a better option in addressing many challenges at local or urban governments

FIGURE 3: With the integration of open source resources, GIS helps utilities staff find such features as hydrants, valves, and more.

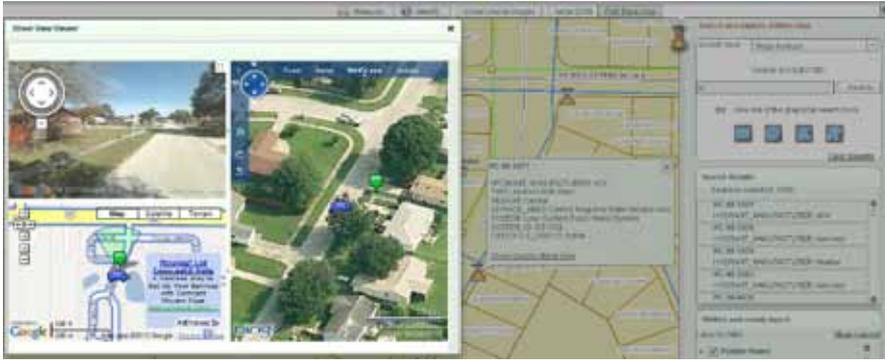


FIGURE 4: Residents get mosquito control information through a web-GIS application. Pink shaded area is the treatment zone, and red pushpin is plotted address of a resident.



Appropriate use of GIS makes it a cheaper, quicker, and more efficient way of finding information. In one estimate, this application saves 12.5 employee hours every day in the building division alone.

For better communication between the county commissioners and their constituents, GIS is used to help a resident find the commissioner's district where he or she is located, along with all the relevant information about the individual's representative. This can be done simply by entering an address or marking a location on a map.

Another creative use of GIS is the county's mailer application. Land development codes require notifying all property owners within 500 feet of a proposed development. In order to do so,

all a staff member needs to do is click on a selected property to automatically generate letters with addresses of the owners around that property—a huge savings of time and resources.

GIS is also implemented at Polk County's utilities division, which is in charge of water utility network throughout the county for potable, waste, and reclaimed water. The need to maintain this vast utilities network with more than 54,000 customers pushed the department to convert all its relevant drawings, documents, and data into GIS, which is a work in progress.

Through an enterprise GIS with desktop, mobile, and web components, utilities data are collected, created, maintained, and published. Maps are

GIS RESOURCE

The potential uses for GIS technology in local government continue to multiply as author Mehdi Khan, GIS supervisor for Polk County, Florida, highlights in this article. ICMA, working with its long-time Strategic Partner Esri, will jointly release a new book in 2013, *The Elected Officials' Guide to GIS*. This new resource will showcase how governments at the local, regional, and state levels are using this powerful technology to make better policy decisions and improve efficiency and service delivery.

The *Elected Officials' Guide to GIS* will represent a peer-to-peer information exchange featuring 50 case studies and interviews with government officials from across North America and even Ireland. The book explores how GIS technology is being used for multiple innovative purposes and provides guidance on how officials can achieve better results from their own efforts.

For more information or to sign up to receive a notice when the book is released, contact Cory Fleming at cfleming@icma.org or 207/854-1083.

produced as a traditional use of this system on a regular basis for external and internal customers' needs, while the web component serves as the doorway to access real-time utilities data.

Ability to Enhance Operational Efficiency

Operational, maintenance, field crews, and other stakeholders use this web GIS application as an integral part of their daily business. By using and integrating various open source tools, aerial images, and utilities data, the application helps a field crew or a maintenance worker

It is true that use of GIS is increasingly growing in governments of all kinds but it is still perceived predominantly as a map-making technology by many, and mostly used for that purpose in such select areas as urban planning, water utilities, and so forth.

quickly find a utilities feature that requires work.

By integrating the county's enterprise asset management system with GIS, the transportation division is better equipped to manage roadway assets. It is easier and quicker to find road or traffic assets and create work orders against specific assets that need maintenance.

Transportation staff can see an asset in the context of road map, aerial images, contour lines, and asset types that enhances their ability to select appropriate equipment before they make a visit to the site after receiving a request from a resident or for regular maintenance. This saves multiple trips to a site requiring any repair or restoration, thus making the process more efficient.

GIS is also extended in Polk County's natural resources division. From collection and storing outfalls, location views, and printing reports for management, GIS is being leveraged to increase productivity. Residents, for example, can easily locate their address in the county, find the areas around those locations, and get information about when it was treated or will be treated for mosquito control (see Figure 1).

They can also download maps showing exact streets that were sprayed. The county environmental land program (ELP) helps residents find a park according to their needs. GIS technology makes it possible to search and see parks by the type of amenities, distances from residents' locations, or simply by the name of a park.

In all these areas, GIS is adding value to service deliveries by provid-

ing appropriate information to both residents and county employees. This is one step forward toward good governance when a resident can make an educated financial or business decision in buying or selling a property with appropriate information in hand.

It is better service when a resident knows easily about the next treatment

date for mosquito control in his area. It is enhanced competence when an employee can respond to a resident's request quickly and effectively. Communication is enriched when residents readily know the identity of their representatives.

Promoting Participation and Administrative Excellence

All of these initiatives exist within the category of "service dimension." GIS can be extremely effective in the other two dimensions of e-government noted earlier—democratic and administrative.

Resident participation is one of the key attributes of effective government. The concept of participatory GIS is an excellent, if not the best, idea of getting residents' feedback in a local government setting for any development or planning decision. GIS helps to visualize the interests, needs, relationships,

GIS IMPLEMENTATION: FACTORS TO CONSIDER

The *GIS Development Guide*, which was prepared by the New York State Archives in cooperation with the National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis to help officials in New York's local governments, reports that "management actions may be the most critical aspect of the GIS development process." It sees GIS development as "a process of technological innovation" that "requires management attention appropriate to this type of activity."

The guide adds that "historically, much of the disillusion and disappointment with GIS projects stems not from a failure of the technical components of the GIS but rather from a lack of understanding of the process of technology innovation and the lack of realistic expectations of all parties associated with the project. . . ."

Although the guide was prepared more than 16 years ago, the statements above are still true. The successful implementation of GIS needs some unique considerations, including the following:

Enterprise GIS system instead of compartmentalized GIS.

In local governments, it is common to have GIS implemented independently as parts of programs or projects that require GIS, causing compartmentalized or stand-alone presence of GIS throughout an organization. An enterprise system approach (i.e., considering the entire organization as a single entity and designing the system accordingly) is a must for an effective GIS.

Integration of GIS with other information systems. The innovative integration of GIS with other information systems is vital to fully use its

and disparity among various factors, and thus empowers residents through meaningful participation in a decision-making process.

GIS certainly has the power to improve management and administrative process by providing an executive snapshot of the reality on the ground. The utilities manager can look at his or her smartphone on the way to a meeting and have an idea about how many service requests were made, their locations, how many were resolved, how many are in queue, and what area suggests a potential breakdown. This is exactly the power of GIS that makes this technology so promising.

Significant Potential

The potential of GIS is not fully exploited in most local governments partly because of the lack of aware-

ness of what GIS can do and how it should be used. Although its usefulness is increasingly being realized, most cases of GIS are still used as isolated technology and rarely in the decision-making process.

As part of a productive e-government, an effective GIS needs to be considered and incorporated. Lewis and Ogra rightly said that “Keeping aligned with the concepts of good urban governance, the dimensions of GIS in good governance at the local level should primarily account and take into consideration such areas as GIS for service delivery, GIS for resource mobilization, and GIS for planning and development with participation.”

Polk County’s GIS initiative is just a scratch on the surface; nevertheless, it is a step forward in the right direction. **PM**

ENDNOTES

- 1 OECD e-Book, 2001, “Citizens as Partners – Information, Consultation, and Public Participation in Policy-Making.”
- 2 McCall, Michael K. (2003), “Seeking Good Governance in Participatory GIS: A Review of Processes and Governance Dimensions in Applying GIS to Participatory Spatial Planning,” *Habitat International*, Volume 27, Issue 4, p. 549–573.
- 3 Lewis, M.P., and Ogra, A. (2010, 18–20 June), “An Approach of Geographic Information System (GIS) for Good Urban Governance,” 2010 18th International Conference on Geoinformatics, Beijing, IEEE Xplore Digital Library. Retrieved from <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org>.
- 4 Good urban governance is discussed on UN-HABITAT website: <http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&catid=25&cid=2097>.
- 5 Jansen, Arild (2005), “Assessing E-government Progress—Why and What,” Tessem, B, J. Iden og G. Christensen (red) NOKOBIT 2005. ISBN 82-8033-026-7, ISSN 1504-1697. Retrieved from http://www.jus.uio.no/ftp/om/organisasjon/afin/forskning/notatserien/2005/7_05.pdf.



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potential. Various other systems have built-in capabilities or can be customized to be integrated with GIS, which are often ignored or left unused. Enterprise systems for asset management and facilities management, for example, can greatly be enhanced through the integration of GIS.

Involving GIS earlier rather than later. GIS can be used in diverse areas that are both conceivable and inconceivable. The benefit of GIS, for example, may be obvious as a decision-making tool in utilities but not so much in budget and finance. A mechanism of getting GIS advice at the beginning of projects can be extremely helpful, instead of using it as an afterthought or as a reporting or mapping tool to present the results at the conclusion of projects.

Creating awareness among managers and decision makers. Decision makers are not always aware of the possibilities of GIS, which is one of the main reasons for GIS not being fully utilized. GIS will never be effective if managers do not know, at least, what to expect from GIS and how their specific business needs can be addressed by it.

One classic example, cited by author Eric Gakstatter: A local government declined to use a “GIS format” of the Pavement Condition Index study for each local road segment because it would cost \$2,000 to \$3,000. Later, once the community realized how difficult it would be for the city council, city staff, and residents to interpret the data in tabular and text format for miles and miles of roads,, spending \$3,000 was an easy decision.

Customized GIS positions and organizational structures. The nature of GIS and the required staff expertise can be similar or can greatly vary based on the needs, goals, and purposes of individual units of an organization. Therefore, GIS positions and job descriptions should be customized to create an effective GIS workforce, instead of fitting GIS professionals into the existing organizational structures with generic job descriptions.

Utilization of open source resources. Instead of reinventing the wheel, GIS development initiatives should take advantages of such open source solutions as different data models, tools, scripts, and models that are available for free. It will greatly reduce the time and will save money for creating effective GIS.

Establishing active coordination with other stakeholders. For successful GIS, analysis’ data are often needed that goes beyond the jurisdiction of a single government entity. The impact of certain developments in surrounding counties or cities, for example, may need to be considered for a specific development decision.

It is also unreal for a single organization to create all data it needs. Therefore, a successful coordination effort must be made to share and exchange data with other public and private entities in order to get the most out of GIS.

—Mehdi Khan, GIS supervisor, Polk County Board of County Commissioners

BY JOHN SCRUTON, ICMA-CM

THERE ARE 3 Cs IN HIRING

After reading the On Point department in the November 2012 issue of *PM*, I decided to share my response to the question, "What's the Best Advice You've Ever Received," because hopefully sharing it will also be helpful to my colleagues.

The wisest piece of advice I received is to always hire people on the basis of character, chemistry, and competence, in that order. Can you trust the person? Will the person get along well with others? Does the person have the ability to do the essential tasks of the position?

There are many people who either have the technical skills to do the job or are capable of learning them in a reason-

able time frame. This is especially true when I look at the large number of resumes I usually receive for a position. After screening out those who lack basic skills and competencies, and narrowing the field to a manageable number based on competency, the final separation of candidates is not based on separating out who might be a little better than the others in a particular skill.

Skills are the easiest of the three to change in people who possess basic technical competency. It is far harder to change character or the way a person relates to others. Those two areas are where I focus on separating out finalists for a position. **RM**



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BY RICK COLE

RECLAIMING PUBLIC SERVICE AS AN HONORABLE CALLING

Let's reinforce our idealistic values in how we do our work

A century ago, the “shame of the cities” triggered a national movement to reclaim public service from rampant corruption under the thumb of crooked political machines. Much of what today we take for granted in local democracy was forged during that era of reform: the council-manager form of government; primary elections; recalls; referenda; initiatives; and even women’s right to vote.

Those institutional reforms were grounded in heartfelt moral values. As pioneering civil service reformer Dorman Eaton wrote: “Public office is a public trust, the authority and opportunities of which must be used for the public benefit, and not for the purposes of any individual or party.”

The transcendent idea that public service is an honorable calling took hold across America. Back in 1912, when New York City’s main post office was built, this motto was carved above the stately Greek columns: “Neither snow nor rain nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.” That the humble work of men and women delivering the mail could evoke the stirring words of the Greek historian Herodotus reflected the era’s widespread belief in the values of public service.

Nobody talks that way today. In the past five years, the postal service has shed 139,000 workers and lost \$37 billion. Nobody compares the remaining half million postal workers with ancient Greek heroes anymore. If they compare them to anyone, it’s today’s bankrupt Greek government.

Even that bastion of progressive reform, the council-manager form of government, has been sullied, symbolized by the grotesque abuses of City

Manager Robert Rizzo, who managed to squeeze more than \$1.2 million in annual compensation from Bell, California, a city of 30,000 working-class immigrants. While local governments are viewed more positively than the federal and state governments, trust in every level of government continues to decline along with public respect for the 22 million Americans who work in the public sector.

Cynicism Abounds

What’s gone wrong? What led to the public thinking of government workers as overpaid bureaucrats instead of selfless public servants?

Obviously, we live in cynical times. Heroes have always been imperfect, but today the media feeds us a steady diet of disillusionment. What passes for news is filled with the scandals of politicians and sports stars, along with the transgressions of everyone from bankers to priests.

Polls show public trust has eroded in virtually every profession. Yet the hostility toward public workers is too strong to simply chalk it up to jaded public attitudes. The work of public service is too vital to let the crooks in Bell become the face of public employment. We are all in deep trouble if the public comes to believe that working for the government is just another way to make money, with no higher ethical standards than we expect from Wall Street.

To explain why, we need only look at another federal government agency, one even older than the postal service.

A Higher Cause

Founded in 1775, the United States Marine Corps started out with a pretty limited mission: to board and capture enemy ships and fend off attacks from

enemies boarding U.S. ships. That role has changed drastically over the past 238 years. But the Marines remain, the few and the proud.

Even though they are the smallest of the four armed services, when there’s trouble abroad, the first ones we send are the Marines. That’s because the Marines have a unique esprit de corps, captured in the Marine Hymn:

*We fight our country's battles
In the air, on land, and sea;
First to fight for right and freedom
And to keep our honor clean;
We are proud to claim the title
Of United States Marines.*

For the Marines, unselfish devotion to duty isn’t just a motto engraved above marble columns. Marines practice those ideals under fire every day. Marines are expected to risk their lives to retrieve the body of a dead or dying comrade “because Marines leave no one behind.” If you are a Marine, focusing on results isn’t an abstraction; it’s a gung ho commitment to “take that hill.”

Like the postal service, the Marine Corps is part of the federal government. But you won’t find Tea Party critics castigating the Marines for feeding at the public trough. You won’t hear angry taxpayers complaining that Marines are overpaid. We know Marines are human like everybody else, yet they earn our respect by serving a higher cause than a paycheck.

So if we still honor the high ideals of our fighting forces, what happened to high ideals for those who also serve us every day at home? What about the people who run our national parks or teach in our public schools? The public workers who protect our environment or who fix our streets? The public

servants who administer justice or who run our public colleges and universities?

Isn't it important that they also keep their honor clean? Shouldn't they be proud to claim their titles as well?

In a world where other nations are fighting to rid themselves of crooked governments, isn't it time we reclaimed the honor of public work in America? I think it is. So let me pose three challenges for the management profession.

Living By Our Ideals

The first challenge is to live our own lives according to our ideals. Easy to say, I know, and people have been saying it for about 2,500 years or so. And that's my point, actually. Cynical times breed cynical behavior. Idealistic times foster idealistic behavior.

AMERICA HAS HAD TOUGH TIMES BEFORE. NEITHER CYNICISM, NOR POLARIZATION, NOR TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES SHOULD PREVENT US FROM RECLAIMING THE LEGACY OF PUBLIC SERVICE AS AN HONORABLE CALLING. WE OWE IT TO ANYONE WHO IS WILLING TO ANSWER THE CALL TO SERVE THE NEXT GENERATION OF AMERICANS. SUCCESSFUL LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEPENDS ON IT.

Gandhi was right when he recognized that India could not achieve home rule as a nation until Indians embraced self-rule as a principle. "Be the change you want to see" he preached and that remains the only reliable way to change the world for the better.

Here in California, the boom years triggered an unseemly escalation in annual salaries for local government managers, along with ingenious additional benefits off the public radar—at least until the Bell scandal broke. While far less egregious than private sector CEO packages, these compensation levels were justified as necessary for cities to be competitive for top-flight talent.

Is it any wonder that the most bloated fueled the press and public perception of managers as mercenaries? If some managers personally chase top dollars and rich pensions, how can they hold the line when unions insist on escalating wage and retirement demands as well?

Serving the Common Good

Here's the second challenge. As managers, we can use our influence to prod councils and the public to think less about government from the standpoint of "what's in it for me?" and instead focus on "what's in it for us?" We are not the decisive voices in local debate, but we help frame the debate in the reports and analysis we provide.

There have been times when we have realized that, as Martin Luther King said,

"Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. You can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be." Managers are well-situated to resist special-interest claims by ensuring transparency and holistic analysis.

Policies and resource allocations come at a cost. What's good for a particular group or interest needs to be weighed against what's best for the common good. Those decisions are made by elected officials. But the objective analysis should be available to the press and greater public to hold those elected officials accountable for decisions that serve narrow agendas.

Reframing Professional Elitism

The third challenge is perhaps the most difficult. My experience has been in California local government, so I hesitate to speak too broadly about professors at state universities, New York City firefighters, or Chicago teachers. But I don't think those of us who work in California local government are that different from others in public service across America.

Here I think we need to acknowledge our own unintentional contribution to the problem. Managers live in a complicated world. Managing multimillion dollar budgets is more complex than balancing the family checkbook. Successfully planning a community's infrastructure or safely operating a wastewater treatment plant are not skills possessed by ordinary residents. Amateurs can't plan and operate the multifunctional agencies that provide 24-hour emergency response to crime, fires, medical emergencies, and natural disasters.

So it's natural that over the years we've put more and more stock in our professionalism. While local government isn't rocket science, it has become a specialized arena of expertise. We developed our own indecipherable jargon and erected defensive barriers against unqualified amateurs interfering with—or even understanding—what we do.

We have come to see ourselves as professional "service providers." Not unlike a vending machine. The taxpayers pay their money, and we deliver them services. In a business transaction, residents become customers.

Customers have neither the time nor ability to provide the services government provides, any more than they can assemble their own computers or fix their own appliances. To maintain their roads or staff their libraries or respond

Commentary Continued on Page 29

BY CHRISTINA STASIUK

ESTABLISHING A LOCAL GOVERNMENT WELLNESS PROGRAM

When employees are healthy and more productive, your organization thrives

Are you where you want and need to be when it comes to driving and promoting good health among your employees? We've put together this guide to help you do just that.

With a significant increase in workplace wellness programs around the country, many individuals are making healthy lifestyle changes. Now you can put together a wellness program for your local government to help employees get and stay healthy.

The Value to Employees

These health statistics might be of interest:

- The average age and disease burden of employees is higher in government than in other industries. The average age is 42.5 years, which is seven years older than other industries. Also, approximately 10 percent more individuals in government positions have a chronic condition compared to other industries.¹
- Hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and diabetes are the most common chronic conditions in the government industry.¹

The Good News

Up to 70 percent of health care costs are the result of personal lifestyle choices, which means a number of these conditions can be prevented or more effectively managed with the right education, support, and programs.²

When you consider the important role local governments play in society, keeping those who interact with community residents in good health truly matters -- not just for the organization,

but for the future of the community. A well-developed wellness program provides individuals with an integrated approach to improving their health, creates an environment that reduces exposure to health threats, and incorporates health promotion into the culture of the municipal government.

Here are four strategies to implementing a wellness program for your local government.

1. LAY THE FOUNDATION

Get the support of senior leaders. Talk to key individuals, which can include elected officials, human resource and benefits department employees, stakeholders, and bargaining entities. Learn the issues that most concern your community's leadership (e.g., health care costs, absenteeism, turnover, disability claims).

Determine core beliefs. Hold a core beliefs session to help define guiding principles on health benefits. Set expectations of health benefits, wellness promotion, incentives, indoor and outdoor group activities, and so on.

Consider your environment. The geographic and socioeconomic characteristics of your locality also are important considerations.

Establish a wellness committee. Recruit representatives from all areas and levels of your organization. Choose people with a variety of skills such as

event organizers, motivators, data analysts, and writers.

Conduct a needs assessment to guide your efforts. A key characteristic of successful wellness programs is that they are set up thoughtfully and logically, with a focus on collecting measurable data to determine health improvement opportunities based on what your employees might need and want. Examples include health assessment, health screening data, and medical/health care claims.

2. PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Develop an operating plan. This plan will set measurable goals and objectives that can quantify a program's success, including program goals, specific objectives, implementation strategy, timelines and persons responsible, methods of communication and promotion, budget, and evaluation plan

- Choose appropriate activities. Numerous activities are appropriate for a local government wellness program. Consider the environment and culture. The wellness committee may find that multiple channels will help it reach the most employees.
- Boost participation. Promote employee participation with these strategies:
- Get the active, public support of managers at all levels.
- Implement a strategic incentive program.
- Use multiple means of communication and repeat the message often.

3. Build a Culture of Wellness

It's key that leadership at all levels: Proclaim that health is an important value and responsibility for the local government and its staff.

- Be accountable for facilitating a healthy work setting and rewarded for their success.

VISIT THE WELL AT WWW.CIGNA.COM/SITES/HEALTHPROMOTION/INDEX.HTML FOR ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR BUILDING A CULTURE OF WELL-BEING.

- Establish policies that support healthy practices, which can be implemented and enforced.
- Provide exercise opportunities during breaks, before and after work, including lunchtime walking or running groups and access to public gym facilities.

4. Evaluate the Program,

A sign of a successful wellness program is its ability to adjust to the changing needs of the target audience. An evaluation period enables the wellness committee to:

- Analyze which methods were the most or least successful.
- Determine the most effective way to use resources, reach more people, and measure the program's impact on health and health care spending.
- Continue to consider new opportunities to get the entire local government engaged in the culture of well-being. **PM**

ENDNOTES

- 1 Cigna's Book of Business Data 2012.
- 2 Whitmer, R.W., Pelletier, K.R., Anderson, D.R., Baasem C.M., Frost, C.J. (2003) A Wake Up to Corporate America. *J Occup Environ Med.* 45(9): 916-25.

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Commentary Continued From Page 27

to their 911 calls, we have devised an elaborate machine that delivers what we in government know residents need.

But what happens when you feel shortchanged by a vending machine, or it doesn't deliver what you want? You shove it or even kick it. You have no other recourse because you are completely at the mercy of the machine.

Taking Pride in Idealistic Values

There is another way to look at government. Out on the frontier, although every farm family needed a barn, they couldn't build one on their own. There was no private "Barns R Us" in those days, nor public "Department of Barn Services" to provide them.

It required nearby families to come together as a community to raise a barn.

Not everyone was a skilled carpenter, of course. Some did the heavy lifting, others cooked the lunch, or took care of the younger kids. Someone said a prayer to bless the work. When the barn was finished, nobody was tempted to shove the barn or kick it. It wasn't an impersonal machine. It was a product of the shared labors of the entire community.

Neither metaphor is an exact fit for the challenge of public service in the 21st century. But for those of us in the public sector, we would serve better if we took our inspiration from the example of the barn-raising rather than the model of the vending machine.

Professional skills are vital, but we should take greater pride in our idealistic values. Without continually reinforcing those values in how we do our work, we will be branded by others as a self-serving elite.

For 30 years, I was proud to pursue public service. I am proud of those who continue to work in government at a time of rising animosity and declining budgets. It's a tough time to begin a career in

HEROES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IMPERFECT, BUT TODAY THE MEDIA FEEDS US A STEADY DIET OF DISILLUSIONMENT.

public service and a tough time to try to remain in public service.

But America has had tough times before. Back in 1777, General George Washington took his defeated Continental Army into winter retreat in the bleak forest near Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. He had only 12,000 troops as the snow fell on his camp. Only half had blankets. Just a third had shoes. More than 2,500 died from the cold, the lack of food, and the abysmal conditions.

Yet with the help of a handful of foreign volunteers, Washington trained that surviving remnant into a disciplined citizen army. Only a few short years later, that army forced the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, marking the improbable defeat of the world's most powerful empire by a people determined to govern themselves.

That is the legacy we inherit. Today's challenges pale in comparison. Neither cynicism, nor polarization, nor tough economic times should prevent us from reclaiming the legacy of public service as an honorable calling.

We owe it to those who suffered at Valley Forge and to anyone who is willing to answer the call to honorably serve the next generation of Americans. Successful local government depends on it. **PM**



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BY AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION'S GREEN COMMUNITIES RESEARCH CENTER

PLANNING FOR SOLAR ENERGY

New briefing papers help communities navigate the issue

As part of its role in the SunShot Solar Outreach Partnership, the American Planning Association has recently developed a series of briefing papers aimed at helping communities understand important issues in planning for solar energy. The briefing papers cover these topics:

- Community engagement in planning for solar energy.
- Solar mapping.
- Integrating solar energy into local plans.
- Integrating solar energy into local development regulations.
- Balancing solar and other potential competing interests in communities.
- Recycling land for solar energy development.

Here's an overview of what you'll find in each of the papers.

Community engagement in planning for solar energy. Involving community members and stakeholders in developing new plans and policies can be an integral step in accurately reflecting the community's goals and priorities and gaining support for implementation. In addition, community outreach and education, especially around emerging issues, is an important role for planners and other local government staff.

This paper provides an overview of common public concerns and misconceptions about solar energy so that local communities can be better prepared to respond with correct and current information. It also highlights opportunities to raise local awareness about solar energy by helping to create and distribute such informational materials as brochures and website content and by suggesting opportunities for public education, including forums and workshops. Several communities showcased in this

paper provide case studies for what may work for other places.

Solar mapping. Solar mapping is a technology communities can use to showcase solar installations, as well as provide information on potential sites for new solar development. Solar maps are built using such computer programs as geospatial information systems (GIS).

These maps can educate community members on solar energy near their homes, while also providing resources on local installers and financing options. Utility companies that want to track their own systems' production and efficiency may also find the maps useful.

This briefing paper elaborates on this popular new technology and how some communities are using it to promote solar energy systems.

Integrating solar energy into local plans. Local plans can help clarify a community's goals when it comes to solar energy, identify the local solar resource, outline relevant policies, and establish the foundation for incorporating solar energy standards into local development regulations.

This paper highlights ways to integrate solar energy considerations into the comprehensive plan while ensuring consistency with energy, climate action, sustainability, or other plans.

Integrating solar energy into local development regulations. Reviewing and updating such local development regulations as zoning ordinances and subdivision codes is important to ensure that unintended barriers to solar are removed and appropriate standards are added.

Considerations for small-scale systems, large-scale systems, solar-access ordinances, solar-siting ordinances, and solar-ready homes are discussed in this paper, as well as model ordinances.

Examples highlight places that have enacted solar energy standards in their local development regulations.

Balancing solar and other potential competing interests in communities. Communities have a range of goals and priorities. Sometimes, these goals can be in conflict with one another; decisions in support of one goal may be detrimental to another goal. Planners can help communities balance these competing interests and understand any trade-offs.

This paper describes the potential conflict between solar and historic resources as well as solar and tree preservation. Relevant legislation, case law, and local development regulations are highlighted, as well as steps communities can take to help ensure these resources co-exist in the future.

Recycling land for solar energy development. In recent years numerous planners, public officials, and policy advocates have pointed to renewable energy projects as a potential strategy for managing previously developed, but currently vacant, land. While solar energy installations can be a good fit for vacant properties of all sizes in a wide range of contexts, there can still be barriers to recycling land for solar energy production.

These barriers may include incomplete or inaccurate information about available sites, inadequate solar access, outdated or confusing development regulations, extensive on-site contamination, and insufficient project financing. This paper provides an overview of considerations and strategies for local governments hoping to promote or pursue solar energy projects on vacant properties that have little current demand for re-occupancy or conventional redevelopment.

These briefing papers are available at www.planning.org/research/solar, which also features links to other resources on planning for solar energy. **PA**

This article was provided by the American Planning Association's Green Communities Research Center (greencommunities@planning.org).

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BY CARL STEPHANI, ICMA-CM

HOW NOT TO ZONE OUT ON ZONING

Make zoning understandable

Here are what I consider to be the 10 most important things managers should know about zoning:

Zoning is understandable.

Most zoning ordinances are confusing. Why? Because the basic elements of the ordinance are all mixed up like the ingredients of a tossed salad.

There are seven basic elements to every zoning ordinance.

FIRST ELEMENT: segregation of uses. The core of every ordinance is the section containing the regulations regarding the segregation of permitted uses. In addition to permitted uses, some things, like churches, daycare centers, and so forth are considered special uses that require a special use permit before they can be undertaken.

SECOND ELEMENT: development standards or rules regarding the size and shape of lots and buildings erected on property. They are always specifically measurable, including how high, how wide, and how deep a building can be. Variances are waivers of development standards that would allow, for instance, a home to be located closer to the street than normal because of a special characteristic of the property (e.g., a deep canyon).

THIRD ELEMENT: nonconformities that are lots, buildings, and uses that existed before the zoning ordinance was adopted but are inconsistent with the zoning. The terms “grandfathered” and “vested rights” relate to this element. Some jurisdictions don’t allow these to be changed at all, but most allow changes under certain conditions.

FOURTH ELEMENT: evaluation criteria. These are rules used to judge the merit of permit applications to do or build things that are not allowed outright by the zoning ordinance. An evaluation criterion, for example, might require that before a certain special use could be undertaken it would have to be demonstrated that it would be “consistent with the neighborhood.” Criteria must not be “arbitrary or capricious.”

FIFTH ELEMENT: procedures or processes that must be followed to obtain a permit to do or build something that is not allowed automatically by the zoning, or to obtain approval of a change to the zoning ordinance itself. A high percentage of zoning decisions that are appealed are claimed to be faulty because of the procedure that was followed to make the decision.

SIXTH ELEMENT: definitions. These are terms that have specific meaning in the zoning ordinance that may not match normal usage.

SEVENTH ELEMENT: map. This displays areas where the different use and development regulations apply.

When faced by a controversial zoning issue, take a moment to determine which element(s) of the zoning ordinance are involved before becoming overwhelmed by the details. Recognizing which elements are involved will enable you to organize the details in an understandable context. **PM**



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Details of Roger Kemp's background and professional skills are highlighted on his website. Dr. Kemp has experience as a seasoned city manager in politically, economically, educationally, and ethnically diverse communities. Call or e-mail for more information.

Roger is contributing author and editor of *Town and Gown Relations: A Handbook of Best Practices* (McFarland, 2013). This is a handbook of national best practices in this dynamic and evolving field!

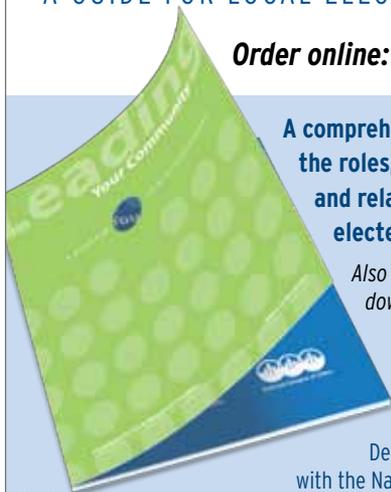


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BY STEVE CROWELL, ICMA-CM

DRIVING MR. MANAGER

Even mundane jobs provide opportunities

Early in my public sector career, I had the fortunate opportunity to work in a management assistant program (MAP) for a large council-manager city.

MAP was designed to attract young professionals interested in a public sector career. It also provided the city with an opportunity to develop employees consistent with the goals and values of the organization.

The program experience was an excellent opportunity for the city to employ personnel who could develop their management skills and to provide those professionals with meaningful,

manager, particularly due to the last-minute urgency of the request.

I reported to the city manager, and he personally gave me my assignment. During a brief time between meetings the manager did not have time to find parking but needed to make a stop downtown and then return quickly to city hall. I was to be his driver.

Although I understood the urgency, I was a little disappointed in not having the opportunity to work on a major city project. The upside was that I would get to drive the city manager's car in the big city (a fun experience since I usually took public transportation to work).

We got into his car and took the relatively short drive to the initial destination. While driving, we started talking about how the manager became interested and involved in the public sector.

DON'T GET TOO COMFORTABLE WITH WHO YOU ARE AT ANY GIVEN TIME – YOU MAY MISS THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME WHO YOU WANT TO BE.

– Jon Bon Jovi, Oxford Union Address, June 15, 2001, www.allbonjovi.com/oxford_speech.html

public sector work experience. I had the opportunity to work directly with an assistant city manager from whom I learned a great deal.

A Special Call to Service

One day while working with the assistant manager, I received a call from the city manager, who wanted to know if I was available to assist him. I advised the assistant manager that I was needed immediately by the city manager and needed permission to assist the manager on a project of utmost importance to the city.

The assistant, apparently aware of the urgency, authorized me to help the manager. I was enthusiastic and excited about the opportunity to work with the

An Opportunistic Discussion

The conversation eventually turned to questions about my interests and experience. We had a discussion on what I liked about cities, including the big city. After our stop downtown, we returned to city hall.

At the time I did not fully appreciate it, but after some reflection I realized that our discussion about interests and various-sized cities was really a “values discussion” (my values). That conversation with the manager helped me focus on my areas of interest, which were working as a city manager; rather than working in a larger city in a departmental support role.

Although circumstantial perhaps, I am convinced that the manager made

the opportunity, or at least took advantage of the opportunity, to have the specific conversation with me. I gained some valuable insight from the conversation. In addition to clarifying some of my interests regarding what type of public sector experience I wanted to pursue, the articulation of the goals and values was important to me. I also learned that some big city vehicle drivers do not appreciate it when a car stops mid-block to drop off the city manager.

Pay It Forward

As a young professional, I learned that opportunities can present themselves in various, sometimes seemingly mundane, ways. As a (hopefully more) seasoned professional now, I have often looked back on my driving the city manager, our conversation, and what I learned during that short period of time. The lesson I took away from the conversation is to remember to try and make opportunities that will provide some input, focus, or feedback, oftentimes informally or indirectly, for other professionals.

Several months after the time I spent with the city manager, after having time to reflect on our conversation, I received a job offer for my first city manager position in a small city. I had the opportunity to decide whether I wanted to stay employed with the big city or pursue my first city management position in a smaller one.

From my previous conversation with the manager, I realized that my interests were more in making a positive difference in small- to medium-sized local governments, rather than larger ones. The result: I decided to accept a position (my first) as city administrator in a small community.

For those of you who are wondering—the big city was Dallas, Texas; the city manager was Charles (Chuck) Anderson; and the drive, invaluable. **PM**



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