

Transformative Leadership:

Strategies for Achieving Success

ILCMA WINTER CONFERENCE

February 5-7, 2025

Tentative Schedule

Wednesday, February 5

12:30 p.m.

Registration Open

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Exhibitor set-up

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Pre-Conference Session:
Strong Towns Presents "Revolution to Rebuild American Prosperity"

6:00 – 6:30 p.m.

MIT Reception with Senior Advisors

6:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Welcome First Time Attendees,
Scholarship Winners, & New to the Profession

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Welcome Reception hosted by
Downstate/SWICMA

Thursday, February 6

8:00 – 8:50 a.m.

Breakfast

8:50 – 10:00 a.m.

Welcome/Introductions/Keynote:
5 Keys to Predictably Attract, Engage & Retain the Best Talent
Presented by Betsy Allen-Manning

10:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Break in Exhibit Hall

10:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Resume Reviews/
Mock Interviews
MGT



10:30 – 11:45 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Session 1: Financial Readiness:
Optimizing Your Retirement

Session 2: AI in the Workplace:
A Practical Roadmap to Integration

11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Lunch & ILCMA/ICMA Updates
Phil Kiraly, ILCMA President, City
Manager, Glencoe

ICMA Update – Matt Fulton, ICMA
Midwest Regional Director

12:45 – 1:45 p.m.

Luncheon Keynote:
*The US Economy: Remarkably
Resilient, So Far*
by Elliot Eisenberg



1:45 – 2:15 p.m.

Break in Exhibit Hall

2:15 – 3:30 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Session 3: IACA Idea Exchange

Session 4: Tackling Toxicity

3:30 – 3:45 p.m.

Break in Exhibit Hall

3:45 – 5:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Session 5: Who is Doing the
Hiring? Educating Your Hiring
Team on the Benefits of Hiring a
Veteran

Session 6: From Insights to
Action: Practical Strategies and
Stories for Every Stage of Your
Career

5:15 – 6:00 p.m.

Veteran's Reception

6:00 – 8:15 p.m.

Social Event / Dinner at the
Children's Discovery Museum

8:30 – 11:30 p.m.

IAMMA Social Event

Friday, February 7

6:15 a.m.

ILCMA 5K Run/1.5M Walk
Meet in Marriott Lobby

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Breakfast with Brad
Legislative Update – Brad Cole,
Executive Director, IML

9:30 – 9:45 a.m.

Break

9:45 – 10:45 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Session 1: Building an
Emotionally Intelligent & Inclusive
Workplace

Session 2: Future Ready IT:
Transforming Local Government
with Strategic Partnerships and
Service Innovation

10:45 – 11:00 a.m.

Break

11:00 a.m. – Noon

Closing Keynote:
*Great City/County Leadership
Amid Change: Building
Organizational Resilience from
the Inside Out*
by Scott Lesnick



Session Information

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

1:30 – 4:00 p.m. PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP:
Pre-Conference Session Registration Cost: \$75

Revolution to Rebuild American Prosperity

Presenter: Carlee Alm-LaBar, Chief of Staff, Strong Towns

Why are so many cities and towns across North America going broke? Our roads are deteriorating. Our governments are in debt. No matter how much we increase them, our taxes aren't enough to fix it all. And no one seems to be able to agree on how we got here—much less how to change the course. This isn't just about numbers on a budget. This is about the fate of the communities we love most, and the real people that live there. This is about how to give our citizens, today and tomorrow, a chance at the future they deserve. If we want American cities to be strong and resilient, we need to change everything about the way we plan and build our places.

In this presentation, Carlee explains, in plain language, how so many American cities have found themselves in decline after decades of "growth." And then will show you a revolutionary way forward that could create enduring prosperity—if we just have the courage to change our minds.

Learning Objectives

1. Explain why our cities are on the cusp of a long, slow decline, and how to approach the necessary triage in a rational way.
2. Articulate why inducing growth and development (the conventional response to urban financial struggles) just doesn't work.
3. Explain why old and blighted areas are often more financially productive than shiny new ones.
4. Make the case for why "little bets" are a powerful way to strengthen communities and improve the lives of citizens.

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: 6 (Strategic Leadership); 8 (Policy Facilitation and Implementation)

JOIN US!

Register Here

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6

8:50 – 10:00 a.m.

Welcome / Introductions Opening Keynote *5 Keys to Predictably Attract, Engage & Retain the Best Talent*

*by Betsy Allen-Manning,
The Destination Workplace™*

Why can't I find and keep good talent? What do employees really want in today's workplace? How can I improve the employee

experience without diminishing employee performance? Sound familiar? You are not alone. According to our research, 90% of organizations say that staffing shortages are the biggest threat to their business. So, what's going on? Sixty-eight percent of employees say the top two reasons they leave a job are bad leadership and a toxic workplace culture. Those are just two of the five main reasons why people leave. Are you ready to take the guesswork out of how to win the war for talent? In this presentation, Betsy shows you how to predictably attract, engage, and retain the best employees by understanding what makes people say, "I want to work there!" and "I love it here!" When you understand these 5 concepts, you can transform your organizational culture from under-staffed, burnt-out, and ready for resignation, to become a place of destination. Through data-driven insights and real-world applications, you can become a Destination Workplace™.

Learning Objectives

1. Utilize Betsy's proprietary '5 EX Blueprint' to build an organization with high levels of purpose, accountability, and loyalty.
2. Discover the #1 tool top organizations use to attract the best talent and start turning our 'hiring' initiative into a 'marketing' initiative.
3. Identify the signs of a negative organization culture that will immediately turn staff into a flight risk.
4. Prevent the 4 biggest mistakes that executives, managers, and HR Directors make when it comes to building a Destination Workplace™ culture.

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: 4 (Staff Effectiveness); 6 (Strategic Leadership); 13 (Human Resources Management and Workforce Engagement)



10:30 – 11:45 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Session 1: Financial Readiness: Optimizing Your Retirement

The time to plan for retirement is now, regardless of age. While it's generally recommended to start as early as possible, it's never too late to begin saving and investing for retirement. The goal of this session is to provide quality financial education and information to equip attendees to address current personal financial situations, maximize financial resources, and effectively handle financial challenges that may arise in the future. In this session, you will learn how your pension is funded, your benefits, and the importance of having more than one savings vehicle as you prepare for your eventual retirement.

In this session, a representative from the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) will discuss how membership is a major financial asset for public sector employees and provide an overview of benefits. Additionally, a representative from Mission Square will speak on Retirement Health Savings (RHS) Plans and 457 Deferred Compensation Plans. Join us to discover tools to set yourself up to maximize your future retirement.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the various financial resources available for retirement planning.
2. Learn tips to optimize your financial management.
3. Discover strategies for implementing short- and long-term financial analysis and planning.

Moderator

Dave Cook, Executive Director, IPBC

Panelists

Meaghan Price, Member Counselor, IMRF
Megan Foristall, Area 2 Public Affairs Specialist, Social Security Administration
Rebecca Gill, Vice President, Institutional Sales, Midwest Region, MissionSquare Retirement

Addresses ICMA Practice Area: 5 (Personal Resiliency and Development)

Session 2: AI in the Workplace: A Practical Roadmap to Integration

As organizations race to adopt AI technologies, many struggle with moving beyond initial implementation to prepare for workplace integration. This practical session provides a strategic roadmap for successfully bringing AI into your organization, focusing on the technical and human elements essential for long-term success.

Through real-world examples and actionable frameworks, you'll learn how to assess organizational readiness, identify high-impact opportunities, and create an implementation strategy that drives adoption. We'll explore critical success factors, including change management, employee upskilling, and building trust in AI systems. Whether

you're just starting your AI journey or looking to optimize existing initiatives, you'll leave with practical tools and strategies to transform AI from a technological initiative into an integrated part of your workplace.

Learning Objectives

1. Discover how to evaluate organizational readiness and identifying optimal AI opportunities.
2. Learn how to manage change and develop AI champions within your organization.
3. Create an AI Policy Manual.
4. Scale successful implementations across your organization.

Moderator

Evan Walters, Village Administrator, Burr Ridge

Speakers

Jason Cummings, Lead Advocate, Local Government and Education, Google Public Sector
Gene Leynes, Data Scientist, City of Chicago

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: 6 (Strategic Leadership); 8(Policy Facilitation and Implementation); and 11(Technological Literacy)

11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Lunch & ILCMA/ICMA Update

by Phil Kiraly, ILCMA President and Matt Fulton, ICMA Midwest Regional Director

12:45 – 1:45 p.m.

Luncheon Keynote: The US Economy: Remarkably Resilient, So Far

by Elliot Eisenberg

In this entertaining and very informative presentation on the economy, Dr. Eisenberg will discuss how the four parts of the GDP will perform. Topics will include: strong consumer spending, the general slowing in the labor market, the behavior of inflation, the thinking of the Fed and the path of interest rates, home prices, the impact of the election on growth and inflation, demographics, and much more.

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: 6 (Strategic Leadership); 12(Financial Management and Budgeting)

2:15 – 3:30 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Session 3: IACA Idea Exchange

The Idea Exchange provides an opportunity for county officials from across the state to discuss issues specifically relevant to counties in an informal setting. All who have an interest in county administration are welcome to attend! It's a great opportunity to learn about the issues and challenges of being a county administrator.

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: 6 (Strategic Leadership); 8(Policy Facilitation and Implementation)

Session 4: Tackling Toxicity

The mental and emotional cost of being a public servant in an age that celebrates toxic and abusive behavior is no longer limited to top executives. It is impacting employees at every level hurting productivity, damaging the ability to recruit in new employees and affecting everyone's mental and emotional health. This session will provide you with a broad framework for how to create a healthier organizational culture, as well as practical strategies to create a resilient organization that can thrive despite enduring abusive and toxic behavior.

Learning Objectives

1. Develop an awareness of what is driving the current toxic and abusive environment.
2. Learn strategies to create an organizational culture that is resilient in the face of toxicity.
3. Learn strategies to help governing bodies rise above the temptations to become toxic.

Presenter

Ron Holifield, Chief Executive Officer, SGR and Interim Executive Director, Alliance for Innovation

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: 6 (Strategic Leadership); 14 (Communication and Information Sharing)

3:45 – 5:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Session 5: Who is Doing the Hiring? Educating Your Hiring Team on the Benefits of Hiring a Veteran

The ILCMA Veterans Support Committee is an Ad Hoc Committee that is tasked with advocating for, networking with, and supporting veterans who serve in local government. Everyday veterans transition from their federal service duty with viable professional skill sets that can transfer to meet the needs we have in a lot of our local government vacancies. In this challenging labor market, it's time to consider intentionally creating a more inclusive workplace by tapping into this trained and experienced workforce.

Learning Objectives

1. Introduce the ILCMA Veterans Support Committee and our vision, mission, and goals.
2. Solicit new committee members to support our efforts.
3. Create a working understanding of viable transferable skill sets.
4. Encourage members to modify their job announcements to be more inclusive to veterans.
5. Share strategies you can easily use to connect with qualified veterans transitioning into this challenging job market.
6. Share veteran-specific advertising sources.

Moderator

David Hulseberg, Executive Director/CEO, Berwyn Development Corporation

Panelists

Doug Krieger, City Manager, Naperville
John DuRocher, ILCMA/ICMA Senior Advisor
Mark Rooney, Village Administrator, Campton Hills
Lowell Crow, Retired
James Harkens, Veterans Outreach Program Specialist, Department of Veteran Affairs

Addresses ICMA Practice Area: 13 (Human Resources Management and Workforce Engagement)

Session 6: From Insights to Action: Practical Strategies and Stories for Every Stage of Your Career

Join an engaging small roundtable and networking session designed to connect early-career professionals with peers and seasoned leaders. This session provides a unique opportunity to hear candid advice, share personal experiences, and explore real-world challenges. Participants will dive into topics like building trust, managing difficult situations, fostering relationships between assistants and chief administrators and directors, and dealing with community members and elected officials. Whether you're new to the profession or looking to offer guidance from your years of experience, this session fosters learning, mentorship, and peer support.

Learning Objectives

1. Gain insights into navigating ethical dilemmas and leadership challenges faced in city and county management.
2. Understand how to cultivate trust and open communication with peers, supervisors, and community stakeholders.
3. Learn strategies to lead from any position, including those with organization-wide responsibilities.
4. Develop techniques for managing difficult relationships and situations, from toxic employees to conflicted elected officials.

Addresses ICMA Practice Area: 1 (Personal and Professional Integrity); 5 (Personal Resiliency and Development); 6 (Strategic Leadership); 14 (Communication and Information Sharing)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7

6:15 a.m.

ILCMA 5K Run/1.5M Walk

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Breakfast with Brad Cole, IML Executive Director: Legislative Update



9:45 – 10:45 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Session 1: Building an Emotionally Intelligent & Inclusive Workplace

In today's diverse and dynamic workplace, the intersection of emotional intelligence (EQ) and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) creates powerful opportunities for organizational transformation. This practical session explores how developing emotional intelligence can enhance DEI initiatives and create a more inclusive, high-performing workplace culture.

Participants will discover how to leverage EQ competencies to build stronger, more inclusive teams through discussion and real-world examples. They will also learn practical strategies for developing self-awareness, cultural empathy, and inclusive communication skills across their organization. Whether you're a leader, HR professional, or team member, you'll gain actionable insights to foster an environment where all employees can thrive.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the crucial connection between EQ and DEI.
2. Develop core EI competencies that support inclusion.
3. Create psychologically safe spaces for diverse teams.
4. Implement practical training and development programs.

Moderator

Elijah Bebora, Management Analyst, Lincolnwood

Panelists

Cori Burback, Assistant City Manager, Dubuque
Gisella Aitken-Shadle, Chief of Equity and Human Rights, Dubuque
Dr. Kathleen Yang-Clayton, Founder and Director, Center for Equity, Effectiveness and Efficiency in Local Government

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: 3 (Equity and Inclusion); 4 (Staff Effectiveness); 6 (Strategic Leadership); and 13 (Human Resources Management and Workforce Engagement)

Session 2: Future-Ready IT: Transforming Local Government with Strategic Partnerships and Service Innovation

Local government IT staff are dedicated problem-solvers, often relied upon to address issues as they arise. However, this break-fix approach limits the potential for IT to drive strategic service innovation. This session will explore how local governments can transition from a reactive model to a proactive and strategic role by leveraging managed service partners and smart future-proofing strategies.

Drawing from real case studies implemented at the City of Aurora, IL, the second largest city in Illinois, the discussion will highlight successful initiatives and lessons learned. By unlocking the hidden value of IT, organizations can boost productivity, improve staff retention, and foster a workplace culture that employees are proud of. Attendees will discover how to align their IT to drive meaningful change and innovation in local government, ensuring a resilient and forward-thinking enterprise.

Learning Objectives

1. Transition to Proactive IT Strategies: Understand how local governments can shift from a reactive, break-fix IT model to a proactive, strategic approach.
2. Leveraging Managed Service Partners: Explore the benefits of partnering with managed service providers.
3. Real-World Case Studies and Implementation: Gain insights from actual case studies at the City of Aurora, IL.

Speaker

Michael Pegues, Chief Information Officer, Aurora

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: 8 (Policy Facilitation and Implementation); 10 (Service Delivery); 11 (Technological Literacy)

11:00 – Noon

Great City/County Leadership Amid Change: Building Organizational Resilience from the Inside Out

by Scott Lesnick

In an ever-changing world, organizations are facing unprecedented challenges that demand adaptability and resilience. The impact of these changes on employees cannot be ignored, as they face new pressures, exhaustion, and the need to navigate uncharted territories.

To retain top talent and achieve our goals, leaders must understand the effects of change on their staff and provide leadership with the necessary support. This is accomplished by acknowledging and addressing shifting priorities, fostering resilience, and promoting interaction that allows for us to enhance recruitment and retention efforts.

This popular keynote delivers essential tools and strategies to navigate change successfully, encouraging open communication, and cultivate a resilient and inclusive workplace culture.

By embracing the challenges of change, leaders can position their organizations for growth, increase employee retention and engagement, and create a productive and thriving workforce. Prepare to level up your leadership skills, inspire your teams, and lead your organization with resilience and agility in the face of change.



Learning Objectives

1. Successfully leading and navigating positive change: Develop the skills to lead your teams through change effectively. Discover strategies to foster collaboration, navigate a culture of positive change, and inspire your staff to embrace new opportunities for growth.
2. Learn 7 powerful actions, derived from my five year survey, that will strengthen communication and promote inclusion within your organization. Explore techniques to cultivate a workplace culture that values open dialogue, collaboration, and diversity.
3. Gain insights into identifying and addressing the challenges your staff faces, both personally and professionally. Understand how to create a supportive environment that acknowledges individual needs, fosters well-being, and provides the tools and resources for personal and professional growth.
4. Develop a stronger, more agile vision that aligns with the changing landscape. Explore strategies to stay productive, engage as a leader, and foster meaningful relationships at all levels of the organization.
5. Discover 3 key tools that allow individuals to stress less, engage better at work, and boost productivity, even in the face of adversity. Learn practical techniques to promote employee well-being, reduce stress, and create a positive work environment that supports individuals during challenging times.

Addresses ICMA Practice Area: 3 (Equity and Inclusion); 4 (Staff Effectiveness); 5 (Personal Resiliency and Development); 6 (Strategic Leadership); and 14 (Communication and Information Sharing)

Accommodations

This year, the Marriott is undergoing major renovation, which is welcome for future use. However, this means ILCMA has fewer rooms available at the hotel. Therefore, we have secured two overflow hotels.

Main hotel: Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel & Conference Center

201 Broadway Ave, Normal, IL 61761 Phone: 888.236.2427

Room Block for Illinois City/County Management Association

Start Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025

End Date: Friday, February 7, 2025

Last Day to Book: Tuesday, January 15, 2025

Hotel offering special group rate:

\$145 USD per night plus taxes and fees.

Register online by going to Illinois City/County Management Association

Click [here](#) to book online.

Social Events

Wednesday, February 5

6:00 – 6:30 p.m.

MIT Reception with Senior Advisors

6:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Welcome First Time Attendees, Scholarship Winners, & New to the Profession

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Welcome Reception hosted by Downstate/SWICMA.



Children's Discovery Museum

Thursday, February 6

5:15 – 6:00 p.m.

Veteran's Reception

6:00 – 8:15 p.m.

Social Event including Dinner
Children's Discovery Museum
101 E Beaufort St, Normal, IL

8:30 – 11:30 p.m.

IAMMA Social Event

Be sure to register for the dinner and the social event when you sign up for the conference!

Overflow hotels:

Hyatt Place (Closest)

200 Broadway Avenue, Normal, IL 61761

Phone: 309-585-4303

Start Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025

End Date: Friday, February 7, 2025

Last Day to Book: Monday, January 4th, 2025

Special group rate of \$159 per night plus taxes and fees.

Register online:

<https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/PIAZN/G-IC25>

DoubleTree (free shuttle available to/from Marriott)

10 Brickyard Dr., Bloomington, IL 61701

Phone: 309-664-6446

Room Block Cutoff Date: January 15, 2025

Special group rate of \$146 per night plus taxes and fees.

Register online:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/illinoiscitycountymangement/>

Four Easy Ways To Register

ON-LINE: <https://www.ilcma.org/conferences/>

PHONE: 800-345-9472 FAX: 815-753-6900

MAIL: Send completed registration form and payment to:
Outreach Services Registration Office
Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115

Registration Deadline: Register by January 29, 2025

For a full refund, you must cancel your registration by January 29, 2025

Fees are waived for "in transition" corporate members and their spouses/partners

Click here
to register

Registration Rates

ILCMA Member \$255

Spouse/Partner \$145 (Wed. Reception, Two Breakfasts, and Thur. 2 Cocktails/Dinner)

Student \$75

(Scholarships available for both full-time and part-time students enrolled in an MPA Program)

Non-ILCMA Member \$450

Thursday 2 Cocktails and Dinner Only (spouse/partner) \$60

Pre-Conference Workshop \$75

First 20 **online** registrations for **NEW corporate (voting) members** who are **first time winter conference attendees** are **free** or for **ILCMA corporate members** who have **NOT attended a conference in the past five-years**. There will be 10 waivers for managers/administrators and 10 waivers for assistants/assistant to/management analysts. There is also a travel stipend of \$255 connected to the complimentary registration. All registrations using this category will be verified with ILCMA records. The travel stipend will require proof of expenditures before the stipend will be granted.

Dress: Business casual

How to Save on Costs

Carpool with your colleagues from a neighboring community or share a room (especially nice to invite a Member in Transition or a student to be your guest)

Additional Conference Opportunity

Career Counseling Appointments

The ILCMA Membership Services Committee is pleased to offer conference attendees 30-minute appointments to talk about your career including mock interview and resume review services. These services will be offered by representatives from MGT (formerly GovHR USA). Appointments are available on February 6 (10:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.). Please contact Dawn Peters at dpeters@niu.edu to schedule an appointment.

Conference Committee

Conference Chair - Kimberly Richardson, Assistant City Manager, Peoria

Elijah Bebora, Management Analyst, Lincolnwood

Josh Wary, Director of Economic Development, Pekin

Evan Walter, Village Administrator, Burr Ridge

Ashley Monroe, Assistant Village Manager, Riverside

David Hulseberg, Executive Director, Berwyn Development Corporation

Coady Moake, Chief of Staff, Marion

Justin Pisellini, PPC, 457 Consulting Group

Mary Oshana, Economic Development Manager, Libertyville

Caitlin Johnson, AICP, Vice President, SB Friedman Development Advisors, LLC

Jacob Smith, Administrative Analyst, Normal

Ralph Nikischer, MGP

Max Weiss, Assistant City Administrator, Batavia

Mark Essenfled, TCG Services

Nick Palmer, Village Administrator, Peotone

Kathy Thomas, Miller Canfield

Dave Cook, Executive Director, IPBC

Brian Bordeaux, Village Administrator, Gilberts

Grant Litteken, Assistant City Administrator, O'Fallon

SAVE THE DATE:
ILCMA Summer
Conference

JUN

3-5

2025

(TUE-THU)

I HOTEL IN CHAMPAIGN, IL