

Calendar of Events

April 4

IAMMA First Friday
Virtual

April 4

SWICMA Meeting
Cahokia Heights, IL

April 9

ILCMA Professional
Development
Naperville, IL

April 9

Metro Manager Luncheon
Naperville, IL

April 11

IAMMA Conference
NIU Naperville

May 7

ILCMA Professional
Development
Elk Grove Village, IL

May 16

Legacy Conference
Naperville, IL

May 21

Metro Manager Golf Outing
Glen Ellyn

June 3 - 5

ILCMA Summer Conference
Champaign, IL

**To view all
upcoming
events
click here**

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President's Column

By Paula Schumacher, Chair, ILCMA Summer Conference Committee and Village Administrator, Bartlett

Reading a recent ICMA Newsletter, an article by Katryna Peart caught my eye. The article, "Why is it important to harness the power of professional friendships?" had some overlap with why it's important to attend the ILCMA Summer Conference happening this June 3-5 in Champaign, IL. It also caught my eye because it had a vintage David Letterman type top ten list, and I was feeling nostalgic. So, I made some additions to her list...

10 reasons you should develop professional friendships and attend the ILCMA Summer Conference:

1. For your sanity and mental health. Having a professional friendship gives you a sense of trust and safety within the work environment. *Attending the ILCMA Summer Conference gives you a chance to recharge, get a change of scenery, and break up your regular routine.*
2. For your loved ones' sanity. Save your family from hours of unrelatable frustrations about your job. *At the conference there is no shortage of colleagues with which to commiserate with, and maybe even get some sage advice from our Senior Advisors.*

continued on next page



Job Mart
**Click here to see
job listings**



continued from page one

3. For growth. Leverage your professional relationships for new opportunities, as well as knowledgeable feedback about your work. *Don't miss the chance to hear the latest from ICMA and to recognize good work and commitment to the profession by fellow members when the ILCMA Awards are presented at the lunch and Business Meeting on Wednesday.*

4. For support. Having someone to talk through common issues can help with mental stress as well as provide a sounding board for resolving the issue. *Many of these honest conversations happen on the golf course during the 18-hole Scramble and Conventional Golf outing on Tuesday or the Legacy Walk on Wednesday at the Summer Conference.*

5. For navigating the unknown. New projects, complex tasks, and new roles or responsibilities can be daunting. *Having a professional friendship can provide emotional support as well as professional insight for problem-solving. Keynote Speaker Joy Baldrige will be speaking on Resilience in Uncertain Times on Wednesday morning.*

6. For connections to resources. There is power in numbers! Your professional connections can help you resolve issues within your work by providing access to additional resources. *You can find the help you need during the dessert break in the Exhibitors Hall, that space is full of potential solutions and available resources. Sessions on cybersecurity and AI can help you keep up to speed with new technologies and make you aware of their risks.*

7. For connection to their networks. Looking to grow or pivot in your career? *Reach out to your professional friends for support. They may lead you to your next opportunity! The Summer Conference also provides the opportunity for Career Counseling on Wednesday.*

8. For a different perspective. A fresh look at ongoing issues may provide breakthroughs and solutions! *If you are looking to shake things up, register for the Pre-Conference Workshop with Patrick Ibarra – Enemy of Innovation on Tuesday afternoon. Our Friday Keynote speaker Devon Harris knows about doing the unconventional and overcoming obstacles. He was one of the founding members of the Jamaica National bobsled team which first competed in the 1988 Winter Olympics.*

9. For defusing workplace drama. They know you, not your team, so they can provide neutral feedback. *You might be overreacting; your professional friend can tell you that. The breakout session May the Workforce Be with You: Using Development Planning to Drive Individual, Team, and Organizational Success or the breakout session on What Employees Want will send you home with actionable solutions.*

10. For overall resiliency and professional growth. When the hits keep coming at you as an individual or your profession overall, professional friends provide honest conversations, resources/networks, perspective, support, and wellness checks. *Another place for gaining perspective is at the session the Committee on Professional Conduct is presenting, devoted to navigating ethical questions and utilizing professional guidelines to make tough calls.*

Of course, there are more than just 10 reasons to attend the Summer Conference. The conference planning committee has done a fantastic job of creating an educational program as well as capitalizing on the unique social event opportunities presented by being in Champaign and the University of Illinois campus.

On Tuesday afternoon, T.J. Blakeman will conduct a walking tour of Downtown Champaign. As a twenty-year veteran of the Planning and Development Department and informal City Historian, Mr. Blakeman has been deeply involved in the design of capital projects and the development of programs that have led the revitalization efforts of Downtown Champaign. Tuesday evening will feature dinner and social activities at the University of Illinois Colonnades Club at Memorial Stadium. Wednesday after dinner we will venture to downtown Champaign to experience Downtown Champaign's award-winning culinary and nightlife scene with our Savor the Flavor night! With over 40 locally owned bars and restaurants in the district, you can find flavors from all around the world.

It's going to be a great conference!! Don't wait to register, do it today!

JOIN US!

register

Navigating the Future:

LEADERSHIP, ETHICS, AND INNOVATION

ILCMA 2025

SUMMER CONFERENCE

Welcome New Members

New applications for Full (voting) membership are listed below and will be effective 30 days from the date of this publication unless a written objection is received by ILCMA. Objections should be addressed to the executive director.

Full Members:

Jenny Keigher, Assistant City Manager, Town of Normal
Eric Sikkema, City Administrator, City of Fulton
Ashley Walter, County Administrator, Christian County
Brandiss West, Finance & Administrative Services Director,
Village of East Dundee
Melissa Wiak, Village Administrator, Village of Thornton

Members:

Ken Chastain, Farnsworth Group
Toni Garza, ComEd Energy Efficiency
Rachel Joy, Equity and Engagement Director, City of Champaign
Todd Kemerly, Managing Director, Senior Living & Healthcare,
Common Energy
Clay Pearson, Sr. VP, Strategic Government Resources
Nasko Pelinkaj, Management Analyst, Village of Lincolnshire



Who's Who Directory Update

Sabrina Irizarry has been chosen as the new assistant village manager of Glen Ellyn. Irizarry. She previously served as village management analyst in Glen Ellyn.

Emily Shaw, MPA, is the new Economic Development and Special Projects Coordinator for the village of Lindenhurst. She was previously a Management Analyst, Community & Economic Development in Des Plaines.



*Advancing Civic Leadership
Navigating the Future*

Apr. 23, 2025 —NIU Naperville

Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Presented by Janelle Crowley, Ph.D., Chief of Staff, Governors State University

May 14, 2025 —Online Webinar

New Civics: The Dynamics of Today's Civics and Globalization*

Presented by Greg Kuhn, Ph.D., Director, Center for Governmental Studies, Northern Illinois University

May 22, 2025 —NIU Naperville

Managing in the Union Environment (NEW)

Presented by Paul A. Denham, J.D., Partner at Clark Baird Smith LLP, Chicago

June 25, 2025 —NIU Naperville

Leadership Lessons: Trying Times Demand Sound Leadership* (UPDATED)

Presented by Greg Kuhn, Ph.D., Director, Center for Governmental Studies, Northern Illinois University

** This is one of two core workshops required to earn a CLA 'Certificate of Achievement.'*

*CLA Courses Qualify for ICMA's
Voluntary Credentialing Program*

go.niu.edu/cla



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

**Center for
Governmental Studies**

Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development

Navigating the Future: LEADERSHIP, ETHICS, AND INNOVATION

ILCMA 2025
SUMMER CONFERENCE

JUN
3-5
2025

REGISTER BY MAY 31

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, JUNE 3

9:00 A.M.

9-hole Golf

10:00 A.M.

18-Hole Scramble

12:00 P.M. – 5:30 P.M.

Registration Open

1:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.

Walking Tour of Downtown Champaign

1:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Exhibitor Set-up

3:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Pre-conference Workshop:
Best Practices are the Enemy of
Innovation by Patrick Ibarra

6:00 P.M. – 10:00 P.M.

Dinner at the Colonnades Club in
Memorial Stadium

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4

6:45 A.M. – 7:30 A.M.

Legacy Walk

7:30 A.M. – 8:45 A.M.

Registration and Breakfast

8:50 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.

Welcome, Intros & Keynote Address
*Building Resilience: Leadership
Strategies for Uncertain Times*
by Joy Baldrige

10:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

Break in Exhibit Hall

10:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

Career Counseling &
Financial Advising
Appointments



10:30 A.M. – 11:45 A.M.

Breakout Sessions

Session 1: AI in Action: Practical Strategies for
Local Government

Session 2: Transforming Spaces, Building
Places, Innovative Placemaking Across Illinois

11:45 A.M. – 12:45 P.M.

Lunch, ILCMA Business Meeting, &
ICMA Update

12:45 P.M. – 1:15 P.M.

ILCMA Awards Celebration

1:15 P.M. – 1:45 P.M.

Dessert Break in Exhibit Hall

1:45 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Beyond Right and Wrong: Decisions,
Dilemmas, and Dialogue

3:00 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.

Snack Break in Exhibit Hall

3:30 P.M. – 4:45 P.M.

Breakout Sessions

Session 1: May the Workforce be With You

Session 2: Cybersecurity Maturity

6:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.

Reception and Dinner at the I Hotel

7:30 P.M. – 11:30 P.M.

Savor the Flavor of Downtown Champaign

THURSDAY, JUNE 5

7:30 A.M. – 8:30 A.M.

Breakfast

8:30 A.M. – 9:30 A.M.

Breakout Sessions

Session 1: Grant Procurement: Strategies
for Success

Session 2: Lessons Learned in Freeport:
Recovering from the Challenges of
Infrastructure Disinvestment

9:30 A.M. – 9:45 A.M.

Break

9:45 A.M. – 10:45 A.M.

Breakout Sessions

Session 1: What Employees Want:
Optimizing Total Rewards to Attract
and Retain Employees

Session 2: Building Successful Government
Facilities: From Vision to Reality

10:45 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

Break

11:00 A.M. – NOON

Closing Keynote

Keep on Pushing:
A Roadmap to
Ethical and
Innovative
Leadership
by Devon Harris



TUESDAY PRE-CONFERENCE SESSION:

Pre-Conference Session Additional Cost: \$35
Be sure to sign up on the registration form!

3:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Best Practices are the Enemy of Innovation

The issue with best practices is that they often merely masquerade as innovation. In the wrong hands, they become a shield to deflect critics, as though one can expect to be granted management immunity by proclaiming the use of supposedly tried-and-proven solutions. But a cut-and-paste approach to better government is emblematic of status-quo thinking, the “we’ve-always-done-it-that-way” mindset that serves as a powerful deterrent to meaningful change. This session shows how modern leaders are taking a sharp pivot away from best practices and toward “next practices” in their efforts to build stronger, more effective organizations.

Learning Objectives

1. Implement effective ways to disrupt status quo thinking.
2. Identify an effective approach to designing and implementing innovative solutions.
3. Understand your specific role in executing innovative solutions.

Speaker

Patrick Ibarra, The Mejorando Group

Addresses ICMA Practice Area: (4) *Staff Effectiveness*; (6) *Strategic Leadership*; (1) *Service Delivery*; and (13) *Human Resources Management and Workforce Engagement*

REGISTER BY MAY 28

ilcma.org/conferences

CLICK HERE!

WEDNESDAY OPENING KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Joy Baldridge, CSP, CPC, CVP



8:45 – 10:00 A.M.

Building Resilience: Leadership Strategies for Uncertain Times

In today's fast-changing world, city and county managers and public leaders must navigate complex challenges with confidence, adaptability, and foresight. This engaging keynote will explore essential strategies for building resilience in leadership, helping you stay steady under pressure, lead effectively through crises, and drive positive outcomes in uncertain times. Discover practical tools to enhance flexibility, maintain clarity in decision-making, and empower both yourself and your team to thrive amid change. Walk away with actionable insights to strengthen your leadership, foster a resilient organization, and turn uncertainty into opportunity.

Addresses ICMA Practice Area: (4) *Staff Effectiveness*; (5) *Personal Resiliency and Development*; (6) *Strategic Leadership*

WEDNESDAY MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

10:30 A.M. – 11:45 P.M.

Session 1: AI in Action: Practical Strategies for Local Government

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming how local governments operate, making processes more efficient, data-driven, and responsive to community needs. This session brings together municipal leaders who are actively integrating AI into their operations, discussing real-world applications, challenges, and successes. Attendees will gain insights into AI-driven decision-making, automation of municipal services, and strategies for responsible implementation.

Join our expert panel as they share their experiences in leveraging AI for operational efficiency, policy development, and community engagement. Whether you're just starting to explore AI or looking to refine your approach, this session will provide practical takeaways to help navigate the evolving landscape of AI in local governance.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand practical AI applications in municipal government operations.
2. Explore challenges and ethical considerations of AI adoption.
3. Learn strategies for integrating AI into existing workflows.
4. Gain insights into how AI can enhance decision-making and public engagement.

Moderator

Jeff Fiegenschuh, City Manager, Rochelle

Panelists

John Peebles, CG-CIO, IT Coordinator, Bartlett
Walker Steinke, MPA, Innovation Strategist, Schaumburg
John Weidl, City Administrator, Whitewater, WI
Joe Gallo, Director, Illinois Smart City & Region Association

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: (1) *Personal and Professional Integrity*; (10) *Service Delivery* and (11) *Technological Literacy*

Session 2: Transforming Spaces, Building Places: Innovative Placemaking Across IL

What makes a place more than just a location? Placemaking is the art of transforming spaces into dynamic, people-centered destinations that drive economic growth, foster community engagement, and build local identity.

During this session, you will hear from leaders representing three Illinois communities—Crystal Lake, Evanston, and Berwyn—who have implemented innovative placemaking initiatives. Discover how Crystal Lake transformed a former gravel quarry into the thriving Three Oaks Recreation Area and developed the mixed-use Water's Edge, how Evanston Thrives is revitalizing commercial districts through data-driven economic development strategies and deep community engagement, and how Berwyn is fostering small business growth and artistic expression by converting two 7,200-square-foot footprints into successful retail incubator and artist spaces within an already built-out community. This session will offer inspiration and actionable strategies to help communities of all sizes achieve their placemaking goals.

Learning Objectives

1. Explore a Variety of Placemaking Approaches: Gain insight into different strategies communities use to activate and transform spaces, from recreational redevelopment and commercial revitalization to small business incubation and public art integration. Learn from real-world examples and discuss the challenges and successes encountered along the way.
2. Understand the Impact of Strategic Development: Discover how creative reuse, adaptive planning, and innovative funding models can turn underutilized areas into vibrant, thriving community assets. Learn how data-driven insights, community input, and strategic partnerships play a role in successful placemaking efforts.
3. Foster Collaboration and Community Engagement: Examine the role of municipalities, businesses, and local stakeholders in shaping placemaking initiatives. Explore best practices for building consensus, addressing challenges, and ensuring projects reflect community needs and values.
4. Apply Placemaking Strategies to Your Community: Walk away with actionable ideas that can be tailored to fit different community sizes, needs, and resources. Learn how to assess feasibility, measure impact, and implement placemaking initiatives that support long-term sustainability.

Moderator

John Harris, Principal and co-Founder, a5 Branding & Digital

Panelists

David Hulseberg, Executive Director/CEO, Berwyn Development Corporation
Katie Boden, Economic Development Coordinator, Evanston
Heather Maieritsch, Economic Development Manager, Crystal Lake

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: (2) Community Engagement; (6) Strategic Leadership; (7) Strategic Planning; (8) Policy Facilitation and Implementation; and (14) Communication and Information Sharing

11:45 A.M. – 12:45 P.M.

Luncheon, Business Meeting & ICMA Update

12:45 P.M. – 1:15 P.M.

ILCMA Awards Celebration

1:45 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Beyond Right and Wrong: Decisions, Dilemmas, and Dialogue

Ethics are often nuanced and complex, so this interactive session incorporates a number of real-life case scenarios, encouraging open discussion, providing opportunities for professionals to analyze different perspectives, and focusing on the decision-making process behind ethical dilemmas. After a summary of ICMA and ILCMA modifications to the ethics enforcement procedures, this session will dive into real-life examples of ethical issues in different situations. Rather than simply stating what is "right" or "wrong," allowing ILCMA members to grapple with complex situations and consider the potential consequences of actions; this approach promotes critical thinking and ethical reasoning, making ethics relevant and applicable to our day-to-day operations and management approach.

Learning Objectives

1. Reinforcing a strict adherence to ICMA's Code of Ethics and how enforcement of the Code is critical to the profession.
2. Real-life case studies and scenarios to illustrate ethical challenges.
3. Utilize current events, business cases, and personal anecdotes to illustrate ethical challenges and encourage discussion about how ethical principles apply in practical situations.
4. Emphasize the importance of identifying all parties affected by a decision and analyzing the potential consequences for each stakeholder.

Moderator

Mark Franz, Village Manager, Glen Ellyn

Presenters

Stephanie Dawkins, City Administrator, Geneva
Cara Pavlicek, Village Manager, Northbrook
Scott Hartman, Deputy County Administrator, McHenry County

Addresses ICMA Practice Area: (1) Personal and Professional Integrity

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

3:30 P.M. – 4:45 P.M.

Session 1: May the Workforce Be with You: Using Development Planning to Drive Individual, Team, and Organizational Success

This presentation will share actionable insights, strategies, and best practices for effective workforce development planning tailored to municipal environments. Workforce development planning is the foundation of creating a skilled and agile workforce and is necessary to build a talent pipeline for the future. Ideally, robust development planning is done at an individual, functional/team, and organizational level.

This thought-provoking session aims to equip participants with the knowledge and tools necessary to develop talent by identifying skill gaps, forecasting future talent needs, and taking thoughtful actions to ensure that the workforce can deliver on the organization's strategic objectives.

Learning Objectives

1. Apply the basic framework of workforce development planning.
2. Understand the benefits of strategic workforce development planning.
3. Learn to align workforce development planning with organizational objectives to create a talent pipeline for the future.

Presenter

Sarah Schillerstrom, Owner/CEO of SRSD Consulting, LLC

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

Session 2: Cyber Maturity

Cyber Maturity refers to an organization's progression from a reactive, passive defensive approach to an active and strategic focus on enhancing cybersecurity capabilities. Organizations that prioritize maturity are not only focused on responding to threats but are also proactive in monitoring, identifying, and hunting for potential risks. This shift enables them to prevent many incidents and significantly minimize the impact of security threats, ultimately strengthening their overall security posture and resilience.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the concept of cyber maturity: Learn how organizations evolve from reactive defense strategies to proactive cybersecurity practices, including the importance of continuous improvement and risk management.
2. Identify key strategies for building cybersecurity maturity: Explore the critical components of a mature cybersecurity strategy, such as threat monitoring, vulnerability management, and incident prevention.
3. Develop proactive threat-hunting capabilities: Gain insight into the methodologies and tools used by organizations to actively identify and respond to potential risks before they escalate into incidents.
4. Evaluate the impact of cyber maturity on organizational resilience. Understand how a mature cybersecurity posture can reduce the frequency and severity of security incidents, enhancing the organization's overall security resilience.

Moderator

Scott Hilts, Village Administrator, Round Lake Beach

Panelists

Pat Brust, Director of Advanced Communications, Rochelle
Britt Zick, Risk Manager & Safety Coordinator, Rochelle
Ben DeCasta, Network Specialist, Rochelle
Impact Network (TBD Name)

Addresses ICMA Practice Area: (6) Strategic Leadership; (11) Technological Literacy

THURSDAY MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

8:30 A.M. – 9:30 A.M.

Session 1: Grant Procurement: Strategies for Success

Great grant procurement requires balance. Balancing preparation with thinking on the fly, balancing grant requirements with community needs, and balancing pages and pages of applications, forms, drawings, and financials.

This session aims to provide valuable insights into identifying available funding sources, understanding eligibility requirements, and crafting compelling grant proposals that align with community priorities. Experts in the field will share strategies for maximizing the impact of grant awards, as well as tips on managing grant funds and reporting to ensure compliance. This interactive session aims to equip municipal leaders with the tools and knowledge needed to successfully secure and manage grants that support the growth and development of their communities.

Learning Objectives

1. Explore technologies and processes to aid in the grant procurement process.
2. Prepare organizations to move nimbly when grant funds become available.
3. Discuss grant writing as a learnable vs. hireable skill.
4. Explore real cases of grant management done well... or done wrong.
5. Teach organizations to craft and plan a go/no go grants process, and to balance the shovel-ready nimble projects with the long-game of grants.

Moderator

Jeff Fiegenschuh, City Manager, Rochelle

Panelists

Darren Monico, Capital Improvement Market Lead, Gewalt Hamilton Associates

Russ Loebe, ICMA-CM, Vice President, Corporate Growth, HR Green Inc.

Julia Pluff, Director Business Development-National Grants Manager, Farnsworth Group

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: (1) Personal and Professional Integrity; (4) Staff Effectiveness; (6) Strategic Leadership; (9) Community and Resident Service; (11) Technological Literacy; (12) Financial Management and Budgeting

Session 2: Lessons Learned in Freeport Recovering from the Challenges of Infrastructure Disinvestment

The City of Freeport has undertaken significant infrastructure improvements in many different areas:

1. Drinking Water: Freeport addressed PFAS contamination by transitioning to a new well and treatment facility, ensuring safe drinking water free of "Forever Chemicals."
2. Wastewater Treatment: The city is upgrading its outdated wastewater facility, originally built in the 1930s, with improvements to headworks, chemically enhanced primary treatment, and ultraviolet disinfection to enhance efficiency and environmental compliance.
3. Road Infrastructure: Freeport implemented a five-year road resurfacing program funded by a 1% sales tax, enhancing transportation infrastructure for residents.

This session will offer attendees detailed insights and practical lessons learned from Freeport's successful transformation of critical municipal infrastructure.

Learning Objectives

1. Identify best practices for responding effectively to environmental contaminants in municipal water supplies, including securing funding and gaining necessary Council support.
2. Explore strategies to manage complex infrastructure projects from pilot phases through construction, addressing unforeseen challenges effectively.
3. Understand essential modernization techniques for wastewater

treatment facilities to ensure compliance, improve environmental outcomes, and support long-term operational efficiency.

4. Discover successful approaches for creating and sustaining consistent funding mechanisms, such as dedicated sales taxes, to support continuous infrastructure improvements like road resurfacing programs.

Speakers

Rob Boyer, City Manager, Freeport

Darin Stykel, Project Manager, Fehr Graham

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: (6) Strategic Leadership; (8) Policy Facilitation and Implementation; (9) Community and Resident Service; and (10) Service Delivery

9:45 A.M. – 10:45 A.M.

Session 1: What Employees Want – Optimizing Total Rewards to Attract and Retain Employees

If you're a business owner, HR professional, or CFO, you understand the complexity of today's workforce demands. From rising compensation expectations to evolving benefit needs, creating an effective total rewards strategy has never been more challenging - or more crucial for your success.

In this session, we'll show you practical ways to enhance your total rewards program without breaking your budget. We'll cut through the complexity and share what's really working in today's competitive market.

Learning Objectives

1. The latest trends shaping employee expectations
2. Methods to maximize your benefits offerings
3. How to get to the root of what today's employees truly value

Speaker

Heather Acerra, Employee Benefits Consultant, Cottingham & Butler

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

Session 2: Building Successful Municipal Facilities: From Vision to Reality

This session will provide a comprehensive guide to planning and constructing municipal facilities that meet the evolving needs of communities. Attendees will learn how to evaluate existing facilities to identify deficiencies and prioritize improvements, with a focus on aligning design decisions with operational and staff needs. Best practices for engaging staff and the public throughout the planning process will be discussed, emphasizing collaboration to ensure the facility reflects the community's values and goals.

Expert speakers will also share strategies for effective project management, from conceptual planning through construction, to keep projects on time and within budget. Whether you are renovating a current facility or embarking on a new build, this session will equip you with the tools and insights necessary to create spaces that enhance municipal operations and serve residents effectively for years to come.

Learning Objectives

1. Evaluate Existing Facilities: Learn how to assess current municipal facilities to identify inefficiencies, prioritize improvements, and determine long-term needs.
2. Identify Operational and Staff Requirements: Understand best practices for gathering input from staff and operations teams to ensure new or renovated facilities are designed to meet functional and organizational goals.
3. Foster Collaboration with Stakeholders: Explore strategies for engaging staff, the public, and other stakeholders in the planning process to create facilities that reflect community priorities and enhance trust.

4. Master Project Management Techniques: Gain insights into managing facility projects effectively, including budgeting, scheduling, and overseeing construction to ensure successful completion.

Moderator

Andrew S. Buckwinkler, MPA, Management Analyst, Village Manager's Office

Panelists

Tim McAvoy, Business Development Manager, McKinstry
Patrick Moore, Project Manager, Wight & Co.
Michael Hall, Village Hall Public Safety, Schaumburg
Mike Baker, Deputy Village Manager, Downers Grove
Dane Bragg, Village Manager, Buffalo Grove

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: (2) Community Engagement; (7) Strategic Planning; (9) Community and Resident Service; and (12) Financial Management and Budgeting



CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY CLOSING KEYNOTE

11:00 A.M. – NOON

Keep On Pushing: A Roadmap to Ethical and Innovative Leadership

By Devon Harris

Join three-time Olympian Devon Harris as he shares the powerful "Keep On Pushing" philosophy that took him from the tough neighborhoods of Kingston, Jamaica to the Winter Olympics—and how this mindset can transform your approach to county leadership. In this inspiring keynote, Harris translates his remarkable journey into practical strategies for navigating the future of public administration with vision, integrity, and resilience.



Drawing on real-world examples from counties across America, Harris offers a comprehensive framework for ethical decision-making, fostering innovation through teamwork, and transforming seemingly insurmountable challenges into opportunities for community growth. You'll discover how the Keep On Pushing mindset can help you maintain forward momentum even when resources are limited, stakeholder demands conflict, and the path ahead seems unclear.

Whether you're facing budget constraints, political complexities, technological disruption, or changing community needs, this presentation will equip you with actionable insights for leading with purpose, persistence, and unwavering ethical commitment. Don't miss this opportunity to gain a fresh perspective on leadership that will inspire and equip you to navigate an uncertain future with confidence.

Addresses ICMA Practice Areas: (1) Personal and Professional Integrity) and (5) Personal Resiliency and Development

CHAIR - Paula Schumacher, Village Administrator, Bartlett
Joey Dienberg, Village Administrator, Winnebago
Stevie Ferrari, Assistant Village Manager, Brookfield
Jeff Fiegenschuh, City Manager, Rochelle
Paola Garibay, Project Manager, Economic Development, Berwyn Development
Justin Pisellini, 457 Consulting Group
Tia Schoolcraft, Senior Program Director, Risk Program Administrators
Elijah Bebora, Management Analyst, Lincolnwood
Sarah Schillerstrom, CEO, SRSD Consulting
Alaina Murphy, Administrative Analyst, New Lenox
Charity Mitchell, Village Administrator, Beecher
Jim Petrakos, Principal Architect, Director of Business Development, Tria Architecture, Inc.
Roger Nulton, Regional Vice President, Equitable
Regan Stockstell, Village Manager, Richton Park
Hannah Lipman, Assistant Village Manager, Tinley Park
Nancy Rabel, Deputy City Manager, Champaign
Jacob Smith, Administrative Analyst, Normal
John Harris, Principal, a5 Branding & Digital
Dan Choi, Partner, Centrix
Danielle Melone, Senior Lead Sales, Veregy
Scott Hilts, Village Administrator, Round Lake Beach
Andrew Buckwinkler, Management Analyst, Schaumburg
Rob Boyer, City Manager, Freeport
Dawn S. Peters, Executive Director, ILCMA



ILCMA 2025 SUMMER CONFERENCE

CAREER COUNSELING APPOINTMENTS

The ILCMA Membership Services Committee is pleased to offer to conference attendees one-half hour career counseling appointments that can include mock interview and resume review services. These services will be offered by GovHR USA/MGT. Appointments are available on June 4 (10:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.). Please contact Dawn Peters at dpeters@niu.edu or call her at 815-753-0923 to schedule your appointment.

FINANCIAL ADVISING APPOINTMENTS

ICMA's Mission Square will be available to provide financial counseling on xxxx from xxx to xxx and xxxx from xxxx to xxxx. Please go to this link to schedule your appointment: XXXXXXXXXX

SOCIAL EVENT INFORMATION

Tuesday, June 3

9:00 a.m. Nine Hole Golf at Atkins Golf Course at University of Illinois

If you plan to participate in the pre-conference ICMA University Workshop and would also like to squeeze in a round of golf, sign up for nine-hole golf. Tee off begins at 9:00 a.m. The charge for nine holes of golf will be \$57 (includes golf and lunch) and is payable at the time of registration.

[SIGN UP](#)

10:00 a.m. 18 Hole Golf at Atkins Golf Course at University of Illinois

The fee for the handicap or the scramble tournament is \$92 (includes golf, lunch, and prizes) and is payable at the time of conference registration. Tee times begin at 10:00 a.m. Due to tee time restrictions, golf is limited to the first 72 registered golfers.

[SIGN UP](#)

1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Downtown Champaign Tour

Join Economic Development Manager T.J. Blakeman for a walking tour of Downtown Champaign. As a twenty-year veteran of the Planning and Development Department and informal City Historian, Mr. Blakeman has been deeply involved in the design of capital projects and the development of programs that have led the revitalization efforts of Downtown Champaign. During this hour-long tour, we will visit the new Downtown Plaza to discuss how the city is taking a lead in creating new public spaces and programming to welcome back patrons lost during COVID. We will discuss programs such as our Redevelopment Incentive Program to learn about public-private partnerships to revitalize downtown buildings and discuss further enhancing the public spaces throughout downtown, including the new Downtown Plaza. Along the way, you'll have a chance to ask questions about how lessons learned in Champaign could be returned to your community. This tour is limited to 30 people.

6:00- 10:00 p.m. Dinner at the Colonnades Club in Memorial Stadium

Don't miss out on this fun event. There will be entertainment, tours of the stadium and much more! Bus transportation will be provided to/from the I Hotel and Hilton Garden Inn. Shuttle service from the hotels will begin at 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 4

6:00 – 7:30 p.m. Dinner and Reception

The I Hotel and then transportation to Downtown Champaign for Savor the Flavor!

7:30 – 11:30 p.m. Savor the Flavor

Experience Downtown Champaign's award-winning culinary and nightlife scene with our Savor the Flavor night! With over 40 locally-owned bars and restaurants in the district, you can find flavors from all around the world. On Wednesday night, we will bring you downtown and provide you with two tickets to be redeemed at a selection of spots for crafted cocktails, beer, wine, and delectable desserts. Hosted by Experience Champaign-Urbana, this evening will get you out of the hotel for a brilliant night of networking while sipping and tasting our local flavors. Transportation to and from the conference hotels to downtown Champaign will be provided by ILCMA.

ILCMA 2025 SUMMER CONFERENCE

ACCOMMODATIONS

I HOTEL & ILLINOIS CONFERENCE CENTER

1900 S. 1ST ST. CHAMPAIGN, IL 61820

Room Rate (does not include taxes): \$159/night plus tax

There are two ways to make a reservation at the I Hotel:

- Online at this block booking link. This will take you to a log in page, where you will enter your block information to access your special rate:
Block Code: ILCMA25 Guest Password:
- Phone at 217-819-5000 must mention the block code ILCMA25 to any of the Guest Service Agents.
Room block deadline: Monday, May 3, 2025

OVERFLOW HOTEL:

There are limited rooms available at the I Hotel; therefore, alternative accommodations have been secured at the Hilton Garden Inn which is .9 miles away.

Hilton Garden Inn 1501 S. Neil St., Champaign, IL

Room Rate (does not include taxes): \$169/night plus tax

There are two ways to make a reservation at the Hilton Garden Inn:

1. Online at Hilton Garden Inn.
2. Phone 217-352-9970
Room block release is May 3, 2025

[CLICK HERE!](#)

THREE EASY WAYS TO REGISTER

ONLINE

<https://www.ilcma.org/conferences/>

FAX

815-753-6900

MAIL

Send completed registration form and payment to:
Outreach Services Registration Office
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
Phone: 800-345-9472

REGISTRATION DEADLINE

REGISTER BY MAY 28, 2025

For a full refund, you must cancel your registration by May 28, 2025.

There is a \$50 cancellation fee after this date.

REGISTRATION RATES

ILCMA Member Registration (includes all meals): \$250

First time attendee* (includes all meals): \$175

Student (includes all meals): \$50 Student Scholarships are available!

Non-ILCMA Member (includes all meals): \$425

Pre-Conference Workshop: \$35

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 \$250 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.

Fees are waived for "in career transition" managers, assistants, and spouses/partners.

Register online at: <https://www.ilcma.org/conferences/>

Dress: Business casual

How to Save on Costs: Carpool with your colleagues from a neighboring community. Share a room or villa (especially nice to invite an MICT to be your guest!)



ILCMA NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT & RECOMMENDATION TO THE MEMBERSHIP

MARCH 25, 2025

The 2025 ILCMA Nominating Committee consisted of ILCMA Past President, Peggy Halik, as Chair and included the following members: Rudy Espiritu, President's Appointment representing membership at large; Ben Schloesser, President of SWICMA; Christopher Walton, President of Downstate Managers; Brian Murphy, President of Metro Managers; Glen Cole, President of IAMMA; Shauna Musselman, President of IACA; and Megan Golden, President of Legacy. Since Mr. Walton was a candidate for an at-large position, he did not participate in the selection process. Ms. Musselman did not participate in the selection process due to scheduling conflicts.

On March 25, 2025, Chairperson Halik called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. The meeting was held by Zoom.

The Nominating Committee reviewed the credentials of candidates who submitted applications for ILCMA officer and board member positions. Paula Schumacher, Village Administrator, Bartlett, will move up to the position of Board President in 2025-26 after serving as President-Elect in the current year. Phil Kiraly, Village Manager, Glencoe, will become the Immediate Past President of ILCMA after serving as President in 2024-25. Applications reviewed by the Nominating Committee were for the offices of President-Elect, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer and for open Board member positions. Only one candidate submitted to be considered for the offices of President-Elect, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer. There were four candidates that submitted applications to be considered for the two open Board Member (At-Large) positions.

The Nominating Committee is recommending the following candidates to serve the 2025-26 ILCMA Board of Directors:

- Kimberly Richardson, Deputy City Manager, Peoria, to move to the position of President-Elect after serving as Vice President in the current year.

- Joe Carey, Director of Human Resources, Schaumburg, to move to position of Vice President after serving as Secretary/Treasurer in the current year.
- Anne Marie Gaura, Village Manager, Lincolnwood, to be appointed as Secretary/Treasurer. (Motion: Murphy, Second: Schloesser; passed unanimously)
- Christopher Walton, Village Administrator, Savoy, to fill a vacant Board Member position for the three-year term beginning in 2025-26. (Motion: Murphy, Second: Schloesser; passed unanimously)
- Jason Miller, Assistant Village Manager, Park Forest, to fill a vacant Board Member position for the three-year term beginning in 2025-26. (Motion: Murphy, Second: Schloesser; passed unanimously)




The meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m. (Motion: Espiritu, Second: Golden; passed unanimously)

As outlined in the Association's By-Laws (<https://ilcma.org/about-ilcma/bylaws/>), any corporate member wishing to add their name in nomination may do so by submitting a petition bearing the genuine signatures of at least ten (10) corporate members of the Association who are in good standing. The petition must be submitted by May 1, 2025. Submittals can be sent to: Peggy Halik, ILCMA Nomination Chair, 1104 Woodcrest Dr., Downers Grove, IL 60516; email: peggy.halik@gmail.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
Peggy Halik
ILCMA Immediate Past President/Chair of the Nominating Committee



Join us for a collaborative discussion on workplace policies and employee benefits that are shaping the future of our local municipal government. Hear firsthand insights on:

-  **Unlimited Paid Leave** – A one-year review from Glen Cole, City of Rolling Meadows
-  **Remote Work in Action** – How 's it working, several years in, from Michael Braiman, Village of Wilmette
-  **Retention & Employee Development** – Small-community strategies from Ashley Monroe, Village of Riverside

Hybrid Professional Development Event: Innovative Workplace Strategies: Lessons Learned, Tested Best Practices & New Ideas

Beyond learning from these case studies, participants will have the opportunity to share their own experiences, ideas, and best practices in an interactive session designed to spark innovation and opportunities you may consider for your organization. Walk away with fresh perspectives and actionable strategies to enhance your workplace and workforce!

Addresses ICMA Practice area 13 – Human Resources Management and Workforce Engagement

ILCMA HYBRID PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENT

April 9, 2025

Register at: <https://www.ilcma.org/?p=24514>



NIU Naperville, 1120 E Diehl Rd
Breakfast / Check-in at 9 AM



Zoom Session begins at 9:30 AM
Register for Virtual for recording

Attend in-person at NIU Naperville, 1120 E Diehl Rd or virtually via Zoom. Zoom presentation begins at 9:30 AM. Registration fee is the same for in-person and virtual attendance \$35. Register for Metro Luncheon Session as well for \$65. Student Rate \$20 or \$45 for both events. MICT's are free.



ILCMA AWARDS PROGRAM



NOMINATE A COLLEAGUE TODAY!

NOMINATIONS DUE BY

April 15

ILCMA started the awards program in 1994 to honor those in the association who have exemplified excellent public service. There are two major award categories: The Robert B. Morris Lifetime Achievement Award and the Special Service Award. There are three categories within the Special Service Award: Service to the Profession, Service to the Association, and Service to the Community. The award criterion for each award is described in detail below.

Robert B. Morris Lifetime Achievement Award

The ILCMA Lifetime Achievement Award was renamed the Robert B. Morris Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004 in honor of Robert B. Morris. Mr. Morris was hired in 1951 as the Village Manager (VM) in Glencoe and was the first VM in Illinois not trained as an engineer. Bob went on to serve in the village of Glencoe for over 30 years. His distinguished career and ILCMA legacy is highlighted by many professional contributions and accomplishments including the following:

- In 1964 ILCMA hosted the ICMA 50th Anniversary Conference in Chicago, IL. Bob Morris served as the chair of the conference committee.
- Also, in 1964 Bob Morris was elected ICMA Regional Vice President.
- From 1982–1991 Bob served as Midwest Manager and Director of Training and Development, ICMA Retirement Corporation, Evanston, IL
- ILCMA joined the ICMA Range Rider (now Senior Advisor) program in 1991 and Bob Morris became one of the first Illinois Range Riders. Chuck Willis, and Les Allen, long time manager of Decatur, were his counterparts. Bob went on to serve as a Range Rider until 2006.

Qualifications

The Robert B. Morris Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to a retired individual who has served no less than 20 years in local government, at least eight of those in Illinois. Selection for the Robert B. Morris Lifetime Achievement award is based on the following criteria:

- 1) The nominee's professional contributions to the communities in which he/she has served;
- 2) The nominee's personal contributions to the communities in which he/she has served;
- 3) The nominee's contributions to the advancement of the local government management profession through leadership, advocacy, and the development of other professionals;
- 4) The nominee's exemplary service to the Illinois City/County Management Association;
- 5) A clear indication that the nominee has, throughout his/her career, dedicated himself/herself to public service above and beyond the organizations in which he/she served.

The award recognizes a manager whose service has been judged by peers as strong or exceptional, and who has made major contributions beyond direct service to local government (e.g., through service to the associations and the profession). An ILCMA Lifetime membership is awarded to the recipient.

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Special Service Awards

Service to the Association

Gregory J. Bielawski Service to the Profession

Leslie T. Allen Service to the Community

Qualifications

The Special Service Award is presented to individuals who have notable association or affiliate activity and significant professional accomplishments in the following areas:

- 1) Service to the Association: The nominee has actively served the Illinois City/County Management Association through exemplary service to an ILCMA committee, the executive board, or has made other significant contributions to ILCMA.
- 2) Gregory J. Bielawski Service to the Profession: The nominee has demonstrated concern for the support, well-being, and growth of other professionals and those aspiring to a career in local government management, or the nominee has actively promoted the profession to the community at large including, but not limited to, university programs, Illinois Municipal League, and regional councils of government.
- 3) Leslie T. Allen Service to the Community: The nominee has demonstrated exemplary service within one's organization by being an above average professional manager and having displayed the characteristics of integrity and leadership in order to provide exceptional service to one's community in order to get project(s) completed. This award can also honor a nominee who has served a cause that is beyond that of the municipality or county through volunteerism in national, state, regional, and local organizations. This award can encompass private interests, family interests, acts of heroism, charitable acts, or social accomplishments.
- 4) ILCMA Resiliency in Leadership Award: This award recognizes an individual that exemplifies the power of collective action and community resilience, even amidst difficult circumstances. The recipient of this award has demonstrated the following:
 - A consistent dedication to nurturing resilience and growth in their community or organization, especially in the face of tragedy.
 - Strong leadership that guides their community or organization through hardships, promoting healing, education, and collective action.
 - Significant contributions that resulted in a lasting, positive impact on their community and the profession.

Don't forget to nominate a member anytime throughout the year for the ILCMA Lifesaver Award! This award is for members who go above and beyond for a member in transition.

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ILCMA Awards Nomination Form



Name of Nominee _____

Current or Most Recent Position _____

Address _____

Please indicate the award for which you are nominating this individual.

____ Robert B. Morris Lifetime Achievement Award

Special Service Award – **place an “x” in one area below**

____ Service to the Association

____ Gregory J. Bielawski Service to the Profession

____ Leslie T. “Les” Allen Service to the Community

____ Resiliency in Leadership

In the space below or in a separate Word saved as a PDF document, indicate the reasons the above individual is worthy of the award for which she\he is being nominated. Please **DO NOT** submit multiple letters of support. More than one person may sign a nomination letter. Nominations must be **received by April 15**. Send a pdf form of the nomination to: Dawn Peters at dpeters@niu.edu. Please put ILCMA Award Nomination in the subject line.

Name of Nominator _____

Signature of Nominator _____

BEYOND THE NUMBERS

STRATEGIES FOR RECRUITING, RETAINING, AND DEVELOPING MUNICIPAL FINANCE PROFESSIONALS

A Hybrid Presentation presented by Metro
Managers and IGFOA on Wednesday April 9

Local governments are increasingly challenged to recruit and retain talented finance professionals amidst intense competition from the private sector, technological advancements, and an aging workforce. Drawing from the IGFOA/GFOA's "Rethinking the Finance Officer" project, this session highlights six actionable strategies for attracting diverse talent, fostering leadership development, leveraging technology, and improving workforce retention. Attendees will gain practical insights on flexible work arrangements, mentorship programs, career lifecycle support, automation and efficiency, cross-sector talent acquisition, and strategies to effectively promote local government finance careers. Join us to explore how these interconnected approaches can build a robust, future-ready finance team.

Presenters:

Shayne Kavanagh, Senior Manager of Research, GFOA

Dorothy Wisniewski, City Manager, City of Des Plaines

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



In Person Check-in/networking 11:30 AM
12:00 PM Lunch 12:30 PM Presentation



Virtual Presentation
begins at 12:30 PM

Attend in-person at NIU Naperville, 1120 E Diehl Rd or virtually via Zoom. Zoom presentation begins at 12:30 PM. Registration fee is the same for in-person and virtual attendance \$35. Register for ILCMA Professional Development Event as well for \$65. Student Rate \$20 or \$45 for both events. MICT's are free.

Register at: <https://www.ilcma.org/?p=24514>

28th Annual

IAMMA

Find Your Path Forward. *Conference*

Adapt & Advance:



Navigating Change with Confidence

Tickets & Program:
bit.ly/2025IAMMAConTix

APRIL 11, 2025

8:00AM - 4:00 PM

Northern Illinois University Campus
1120 East Diehl Road
Naperville, IL 60563

FOR EVERYTHING IAMMA
FOLLOW US ON:  
OR VISIT IAMMA.ORG

2025 LEGACY PROJECT CONFERENCE



**May 16, 2025
8 AM - 4PM
NIU Naperville
1120 E. Diehl Rd
Naperville, IL 60563**

\$125 Member Registration
\$35 Student Registration
\$225 Non-member Registration
\$120 each for Groups of 5 or
more from one organization

Registration and
Breakfast begin at 8AM
and the program
begins at 8:50 AM

Lunch is included in
your registration



CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

8:00 AM Check In & Continental Breakfast

8:50 AM Welcome and Introductions

9:00 AM Opening Keynote *"Make HER Voice Visible in the Workplace"* Quinn Conyers

10:30 AM - 11:45 AM Breakout Sessions

Dare to Lead: Empowering Women to Rise in Local Government

Should I Stay or Should I Go?

Verbalizing Your Value for Career Advancement

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Lunch & Awards

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Breakout Sessions

Stronger Together: Unlocking the Potential of Mentorship for Diverse Leadership

What Would You Do? Responding to Scenarios in Real Life Situations

What's Motivating Me? What's Holding Me Back?

2:15 PM Closing Keynote *"Empowered Leadership: Building a Legacy of Women Who Rise"* Kristen Ziman

4:00 PM After Conference Social and Networking

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION & REGISTRATION](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL BROCHURE](#)



IML Managers Column

Pension Legislation Update

By Reid Ottesen, IML Manager's Committee

A primary role of the IML Manager's Committee is to provide insight and analysis on legislative initiatives that would impact local government. Managers bring a perspective often different from elected officials. After several years of focusing on the preservation of TIF District's and the economic benefits they bring to communities, the IML Manager's Committee shifted its focus to the numerous bills that would transform our pension systems through reforms and enhancements all coming with significant financial impacts.

The 2025 legislative process saw members of the General Assembly introduce approximately 100 bills that would alter or expand Article 3 (police officers), Article 4 (firefighters), Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) and other statewide pension system benefits. The Committee has worked with IML staff in reviewing bills and evaluating the impacts. Additionally, the Chair and Vice Chair of the IML Manager's Committee have been active participants with the Pension Fairness for Illinois Communities Coalition. For those that are not familiar with this group, it started in 2011 as part of the pension reform efforts that established the Tier 2 benefit structure.

As of the time of the writing of this article, the bills directly impacting local government have not generally moved forward although, there are numerous vehicles that have been advanced out of committee so there remains a real chance that the General Assembly could still advance pension changes during this year's session. Organized labor and other stakeholders continue to push their agenda which would have a significant financial impact on local governments and our taxpayers.

As the chief appointed official, you need to make sure you are tracking the legislation and understand the impact the various bills could have on your community. Over 95% of the members of the General Assembly were not in office when Tier 2 was created. They do not understand the pension system nearly as well as you and educating them is critical to maintaining a sustainable system. Last year, on a trip to Springfield I had a Chicago area legislator ask me why I wanted to discuss "Downstate Pensions" when I was from the Chicago area. After taking a few minutes to explain that "Downstate" was everything other than Chicago, we had a good conversation of the impact of rollbacks. The point is that the legislators have hundreds of special interest groups, constituent requests, meeting demands, etc. that are facing them every day. We cannot assume that they will approach the pension issue with the same level of understanding that we have.

A quick meeting with your finance staff and actuary can give you a lot of really good information to share with your elected officials (local and state) and even your employee groups. Several of us on the IML Managers Committee had a study done for our communities. The results of a Tier 2 roll back would potentially increase our annual employer contribution by 11.5% in Palatine. Even changing the wage base to match Social Security would have an impact of almost 2% on our contribution. This information has been very helpful in opening a dialogue with outsiders so they understand that a change is not as easy as what some proponents will try and sell them on.

IML has a dedicated webpage, iml.org/pensions, that has pension reform resources. Additionally, the Pension Fairness for Illinois Communities Coalition is utilizing the Invest in Communities webpage, <https://investincommunities.org/> to help deliver valuable information for local government and the taxpayers that are responsible for the pension costs. I encourage everyone to be familiar with these resources.

The Manager's Committee will continue to advocate for a sustainable pension system.

Senior Advisor Column

April is the Season for Orientation; Theirs and Yours

By Tim Frenzer, ICMA/ILCMA Senior Advisor

If it's April, if the year ends in an odd number, and if you work in Illinois municipal government, it is the season for orientation. After



the election, one, several, or most of your governing body may be newly elected officials. Some may have served on a board or commission and be familiar with public meeting procedures and staff. Some may have served on boards for other units of government and others may have no governmental experience at all.

Between Election Day and the first regular meeting in May, when elected officials are typically sworn in, you need to orient them to their duties and responsibilities. You likely have a training packet that you've used for this process in the past. The list of subjects you'll need to cover is lengthy, including open meetings laws, freedom of information, conflicts of interest, acceptance of gifts and prohibited political activity, as well as explaining meeting procedures, administrative procedures, and the roles of your staff.

There's another important aspect of orientation that isn't covered by your review of the rules of engagement. The new officials also need to be oriented to you and the nature of their working relationship with you. You, too, need orientation to the new officials. To the extent possible, you need to understand their expectations, inclinations and relationships with each other if you are going to forge a productive working relationship.

- **Be Proactive**

Orientation is an opportunity to show that you and your team are committed to their effectiveness in public office. Contact the new officials immediately after their election is apparent (the official results and canvas will not be complete until weeks later) to schedule meetings and tours. If possible, schedule them before they take office in May because: (1) their first meeting may have important business; and (2) they are not yet public officials subject to the Open Meetings Act. This second reason is significant if your new officials would constitute a "majority of a quorum" by themselves. Orientation without an audience facilitates learning and frank discussion.

Law firms, councils of government and statewide associations also offer new public official training, but don't abdicate training to them. Your municipality may have rules on voting, meeting procedures, and your authority that vary

greatly from others. This doesn't mean that outside training isn't beneficial. It reinforces information provided by you and offers new officials an opportunity to meet peers from other communities. Nevertheless, your orientation is an opportunity to show the professionalism of your team and learn how the new officials relate to the staff and each other. Don't outsource it entirely.

- **Be Enthusiastic**

You are part of a profession dedicated to public service and committed to the highest ethical standards. Let the new officials see the pride you take in that. Share the ICMA Code of Ethics with them and let them know it is your north star. Most elected officials are proud of their community, proud to be leaders, and want to be proud of their organization. This is an opportunity to develop shared pride and sense of purpose. Observe them and you will quickly see which respond positively.

One of the joys of being a manager is that each day is an opportunity to learn something new. Accordingly, it's worthwhile to tell new officials that one of the best parts of their service will be how much they will learn about their municipality and its work. No matter how long we live or work in a community, there is always more to learn about its history and operations. Someone may have lived in a town all their life, but never seen how potable water is processed, wastewater is treated, or stormwater is managed.

Be enthusiastic about the professionalism of your staff. Let the new officials see that excellence runs deep in your organization. At each department you take them to visit, try to give your staff an opportunity to teach them something interesting. One of my favorites was having the Fire Department do a "compartment tour," where one of the members would open all the compartments on a tower ladder truck and explain the use of all the equipment. Residents see fire trucks and think only about hoses and ladders. When they see, maybe for the first time, the wooden cribbing, cutting tools, inflatable boats, medical equipment, and myriad other equipment, they learn how varied and challenging the department's work is and how much training it requires. Ideally, they're left with a better appreciation of the department's mission and its professionalism.

- **Be Curious**

During an election, we learn the candidates' public positions on public policy. Orientation is an opportunity to learn about them as individuals, in terms of their behavior, attitudes, preconceptions, and relationships with the rest of

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the council. Be curious about their personal histories, their likes and dislikes, and their experiences in the community. What you learn may be invaluable.

Simple questions unrelated to policy are useful. How long they have lived in town? If they've lived here their whole life, what made them want to stay? If they moved here, what attracted them most? Do they work in town or own a business? Have they ever used the building permit process? Do they attend community celebrations, and which ones do they like best? The questions may all seem anodyne, but they start to give you a better sense of the person. The more you know about them, the better you can speak to them in ways that will resonate.

Be curious about how long the newly elected officials have known each other, as well as the other officials already on your board. There's no need to pry into personal relationships, but people who don't know each other sometimes need more time and support from the staff to achieve effective working relationships. Conversely, in my experience, sometimes the elected officials who knew each other the longest also had the longest list of grievances with each other. In any case, some sense of their history with each other will help you anticipate, and hopefully mitigate, potential conflicts.

- **Be Observant**

The codicil to being curious is being observant. With all the information you are trying to impart to the new officials in a limited amount of time, it is easy to forget to sit back and watch them. Are they engaged or bored? Are they asking questions? Do the questions sound like interest and excitement, or cross-examination? Your orientation will need to adjust, depending on how it is being received by the audience. Having staff members participate in the orientation gives you time to observe the new officials and demonstrates the competency of your staff.

Observe how the new members converse with each other, especially when there is a group discussion. For every public official who likes to dominate a conversation, there is at least one other who is frustrated and feels ignored and talked over. If you see that one member is not being heard, look for an opportunity to ask that person what they think about the topic under discussion. They will appreciate having an equal chance to speak, and that you want to know what all the officials have to say.

Orientation is necessarily focused on the many rules and procedures the new public officials need to understand. But thoughtfully done, it is also a great opportunity to set the tone of the working relationship and obtain important insights about your new officials.



[Apply Here](#)

Lifesaver Award

Do you know someone who has provided assistance to a member in transition (MIT)? If so, consider nominating them for recognition through the MIT Lifesaver Award! Anybody who has been an MIT knows it is a very difficult time and any assistance provided by their fellow ILCMA members is greatly appreciated. The Membership Services Committee has been working to develop a simple, inexpensive, durable, and easily identifiable form of recognition, in a manner that encourages and promotes such assistance to ILCMA members who assist MITs. A lifesaver-ring lapel pin will be awarded to members who provide significant, tangible assistance to an ILCMA MIT. Significant, tangible assistance may include sharing a room at an ILCMA or ICMA conference, adding an MIT to an interview process, hiring an MIT part-time, full-time, or for a special project, or inviting an MIT to a regional managers' lunch. Applications are available on the ILCMA website and may be submitted to the Secretariat who will provide the info to the Membership Services Committee for review.



[CLICK HERE FOR INFO](#)

ILCMA Connect is an enhanced member benefit that is a powerful network to connect colleagues from across the state of Illinois to exchange knowledge and share solutions.

ILCMA Connect, which automatically enrolls all ILCMA voting members, students, and cooperating members, is a cloud-based, private online community. ILCMA has started off with one general community for launch, which includes an open forum for general discussion. The potential exists for affiliate associations to have their own specialty community, so look for this new feature soon. ILCMA members will receive an email with a subscription notification. In addition to being able to chat with colleagues, members will be able to participate in discussions; access a library of resources specific to communities; and post images, videos and documents to share with others. ILCMA Connect access is tied to ILCMA corporate membership. Members will be able to join communities, update individual profiles and manage the frequency of community notifications. To learn more and join the discussion, please visit the ILCMA Connect website.

Express Yourself!

Merch Store Open For A Limited Time
bit.ly/iammamerch



Hoodies!!!



**Bucket
Hat!**



**Coffee
Mug!**



**Tote
Bag!**

Order today!



Share Your Stories with ILCMA

How to Use #ILCMAproud in Social Media

Social Media Hashtag

What is a hashtag?

- This: #
- It's a keyword that relates to what you're writing. It's #searchable #clickable.
- Use it to draw attention, organize, promote.

How do I use a hashtag?

- Put a # in front of a word or phrase
- No spaces, no punctuation, no special characters
- Capitalization only matters for readability (#KnowWhatIMean vs #knowwhatimean)
- Hashtags can be used on Twitter & Facebook. NOT LinkedIn.

Include **#ILCMAproud** in your tweets and other social media posts about ILCMA or your community awards and other recognitions – good news stories!

Facebook

Find ILCMA on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ILCMA1953

- Like and Follow ILCMA's Facebook page for periodic updates
- Friend conference attendees
- Share photos

How to create a simple Facebook post (you must have a Facebook account):

- Open Facebook on your computer or device.
- At the top of the screen, you'll see "What's on your mind?" Tap or click there and type away! Add hashtags like **#ILCMAproud** to your text.



BECOME AN ILGHN MEMBER TODAY!

ILGHN MISSION

The Illinois Local Government Hispanic Network is a professional, diverse, inclusive and ethical association that connects, inspires, mentors and encourages communities, organizations and individuals through innovative and enriching professional development, resources, services and dynamic networking opportunities.

What are the benefits of being a ILGHN member?

Professional Development

ILGHN provides opportunities for professional growth and development. Members can access resources, training, and educational programs designed to enhance their skills and knowledge in the field of local government.

Networking

Membership in ILGHN connects individuals with a diverse and supportive community of fellow Hispanic/Latino public service professionals. Networking within LGHN allows members to build relationships, share experiences, and collaborate on various projects and initiatives.

Mentorship

ILGHN has access to the national LGHN 'Madrinas y Padrinos' mentorship programs that pair experienced members with those who are newer to local government. This mentorship can provide valuable guidance, career advice, and support for career advancement.

Professional Recognition

ILGHN provides opportunities for members to be recognized for their contributions to local government and their commitment to advancing the network's mission. This recognition can enhance one's professional reputation.

Personal Growth

In addition to professional benefits, ILGHN can contribute to personal growth and a sense of belonging. It provides a platform for individuals to celebrate their heritage, share their experiences, and be part of a supportive community.

Community Engagement

ILGHN focuses on community engagement and outreach. Members can participate in initiatives that address the unique needs and concerns of Hispanic and Latino communities, fostering a sense of civic responsibility and impact.

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Preparing the Next Generation and we need YOU!



ILCMA invites seasoned managers/administrators and assistants to become an ILCMA mentor.

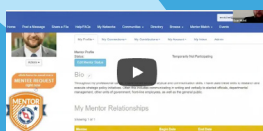
The ILCMA Mentor Match program reflects ILCMA's commitment to developing the next generation of local government management professionals. Mentor Match is the latest addition to an expanding line-up of our services to support members' professional development needs. It is an online tool – including a searchable database – that facilitates the establishment of mentoring relationships. It is user-driven, allowing registered Mentees to search among registered Mentors using specified criteria to find individuals whose experience and expertise match areas in which they wish to be mentored. Likewise, registered Mentors can search for and identify potential Mentees.

Why be a Mentor?

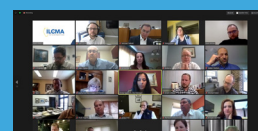
Volunteering as a Mentor can be mutually rewarding: mentees gain encouragement and guidance for their careers, and mentors gain deeper insights into their own careers and the satisfaction of helping others.

Mentoring offers value for people at any career stage, and everyone can benefit from mentors who help them see their situation and opportunities from a fresh perspective; even successful executives seek out mentoring. Mentors are encouraged to share expertise, insight, and experiences from their life's work to help others negotiate their own career paths, overcome obstacles, reinvigorate their passion, and plan next steps.

The future of the profession depends on the mentorship for the next generation of managers. ILCMA invites you to use the new mentor/mentee matching service through ILCMAConnect, which is the current ILCMA listserv platform. ILCMAConnect brings the power of data and search to help mentees find mentors that match their needs. To sign up to be a mentor, all you need to do is go to your ILCMA Connect page and sign up to be a mentor: <https://connect.ilcma.org/home> If you any issues logging in to ILCMA Connect contact Alex Galindo at agalindo@niu.edu.



**VIEW ENROLLMENT
INSTRUCTION VIDEO**



**VIEW MENTOR
DISCUSSION VIDEO**

Find a Mentor with ILCMA's Mentor Match



Finding and creating relationships with a mentor is easier than you think with ILCMA's Mentor Match. ILCMA invites new and aspiring managers/administrators, assistants, analysts, assistants to, and student/interns to become a Mentee on ILCMA's Mentor Match.



ENROLLMENT TUTORIAL VIDEO



FIND A MENTOR TUTORIAL VIDEO

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Why be a Mentee?

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ILCMA Hybrid Professional Development Event

KILLING SACRED COWS

Why Local Government Fails (and How to Fix it)

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Government is broken...but not for the reasons you think. It's not a lack of money, resources, or even talent. The real problem? We protect broken systems, elevate mediocre leadership, and allow accountability to be replaced with excuses. This session is a direct, unfiltered look at the real barriers to performance excellence in local government and how to fix them. Drawing from real-world municipal leadership experience, attendees will unpack the hard truths about why strategic plans fail, why innovation is often just a buzzword, and why most "best practices" are outdated nonsense. If you're looking for feel-good platitudes, this session isn't for you. If you want the tools to destroy bureaucratic inertia and build a high-performance government, this is the session you've been waiting for.

Learning Objectives:

- How to spot and kill 'Sacred Cows': The outdated processes, rules, and excuses that make government slow, expensive, and ineffective.
- Why "best practices" are often bad practices: And how real leaders push beyond them to drive meaningful change.
- The leadership crisis in local government: How to fix the culture of passivity and make accountability a core value.
- The "microwave mentality" is killing cities: Why instant-gratification thinking leads to bad policy, and how to build for long-term success.

Addresses ICMA Areas 4. Staff Effectiveness; 6. Strategic Leadership; 10. Service Delivery; 13. Human Resources Management and Workforce Engagement



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Brooks Williams is a city manager, performance excellence expert, and disruptor of broken government systems. He has led one of the most dramatic municipal turnarounds in Texas, eliminating deficits, quadrupling fund balances, and securing the first bond rating upgrade in 15 years. As a Lean Six Sigma-certified leader and CEO of Quality Texas Foundation Regional Program, he trains leaders on how to stop managing failure and start engineering success. Brooks has served in executive roles across government, education, and corporate sectors, implementing data-informed strategies that drive real results. He doesn't do bureaucracy. He doesn't do excuses. He does high-performance leadership, and he's here to show you how.

**TO REGISTER VISIT:
WWW.ILCMA.ORG/?P=24889**

Registration fee is \$35; \$20 for Students; MICTs are complimentary.
Continental Breakfast/Check-In begins at 9AM for in-person attendees.

Spotlight on: ComEd Energy Efficiency Program

Powering the Future: How Municipal Officials Can Lead in Energy Efficiency

By ComEd Energy Efficiency Program

Municipal officials play a pivotal role in shaping their communities' energy future. By implementing energy efficiency measures in municipal buildings, local governments can lead by example—reducing costs, enhancing sustainability, and setting a precedent for businesses and residents alike. This article explores key strategies for improving energy efficiency in municipal facilities and the significant benefits these initiatives bring.

Where to Begin:

Assessing Energy Use. The first step in improving energy efficiency is understanding where improvements are needed. Municipalities can leverage free utility assessments and tools like the EPA's ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager to benchmark building performance and identify targeted upgrades.

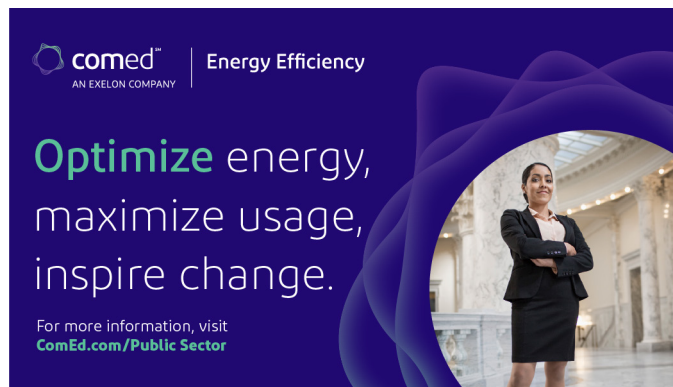
High-Impact Upgrades for Municipal Buildings. Many municipal buildings have untapped potential for energy savings. Key upgrades include:

- Enhancing insulation and building envelopes for better temperature regulation.
- Upgrading HVAC systems to improve efficiency and air quality.
- Installing energy-efficient lighting and smart controls to reduce consumption.
- Exploring EV charging and solar solutions for long-term sustainability.

Making Efficiency Upgrades More Affordable. Many utilities offer incentives that cover a large portion of project costs, making upgrades more accessible. Whether it's lighting, insulation, refrigeration, or HVAC systems, chances are an incentive exists to support the transition to energy-efficient solutions.

More Than Just Cost Savings. Efficiency improvements don't just cut costs—they enhance comfort, air quality, and overall building performance. LED lighting improves visibility while reducing maintenance, and HVAC and insulation upgrades ensure consistent indoor temperatures.

A Sustainable Future Starts Now. By prioritizing energy efficiency, municipal leaders can drive real change—lowering energy use, cutting costs, and building a more sustainable future. The time to act is now.



Spotlight on: Complete Technology Solutions (CTS)

Why Managed Services Providers are ideal for Illinois Cities and Counties

By Greg Morse, Complete Technology Solutions (CTS)

Is there a more uncomfortable spot in the annual budget than technology? Many Illinois cities and counties know they need it, but they also aren't sure how much to spend on it or what to spend it on. Do they hire someone in-house? What happens when that person is sick or on vacation? Should they hire an entire team? Software updates and low-level tickets are one thing, but what about more critical issues? Not to mention there are the persistent questions and requirements of most cyber insurance policies.

These are all real questions that local leaders are asking themselves, and they usually don't have the answers for them. Then, in the middle of trying to figure it out, the worst possible thing happens: a cyberattack. All data is locked. Criminals are demanding a ransom. Government offices and departments are shut down for days, weeks, and months. Citizens are angry. The anxiety of this very real scenario is why more and more local governments across Illinois are considering Managed Service Providers (MSPs) for their IT needs. By having a third-party IT partner like an MSP, local governments can take the weight and anxiety of technology off themselves and place them on experts who can help.

However, not all MSPs are equal, and any potential investment should include a close analysis and comparison of each provider to make sure the right one is chosen for your government's needs.

What Illinois Cities and Counties should look for in an MSP

The most basic expectation any city or county should have of their MSP is 24/7 helpdesk support, minimum cybersecurity standards, phones, backups, and proactive monitoring and support. But government leaders should expect much more than just that.

Your preferred MSP should be more than an IT vendor, they should be a partner. This partner should walk alongside your organization to ensure goals are being planned and goals are being met using the power of technology. Your MSP should be asking (and helping answer) those big questions. Are compliance and regulatory agencies being satisfied? Are the insurance requirements being met? How can AI be used to transform local government and make life better for employees and citizens?

Every Illinois city and county has its own unique needs and challenges. The questions are going to be different. Because of this, your preferred MSP should be dynamic in their skillset and service offerings. When interviewing an MSP, ask what services they offer and be transparent about your needs.

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Another question every local government official should be asking MSPs: Who supports them? In the ever-growing world of technology, standalone MSPs struggle to keep up with the needs of complex entities, like local government. MSPs that are part of a strong support network of other MSPs not only have the scaling capabilities to meet the needs of any organization but also have the benefit of extra layers of support. Technology is too important to ignore

Whether your city or council decides to hire an internal technology resource, outsource it to an MSP, or meet in the middle with a co-managed solution, the bottom line is that every local government needs an answer to their technology questions. Technology is too important to neglect. Financial considerations are important, but they should not be prohibitive. The cost of having well-managed technology is far less than the cost of ransomware and prolonged downtime. Besides reduced threats, better technology increases efficiency, which reduces costs, and ultimately makes constituents happier as their services become better.

CTS is a proud partner of the ILCMA. Located in Sparta, Illinois, CTS has been providing nationally recognized phone and technology solutions to counties, cities, businesses, and organizations all over Illinois for over 40 years. Learn more about CTS's services and schedule a complimentary consultation by visiting CTSComplete.com, emailing info@ctscomplete.com, or calling 618-443-3068.



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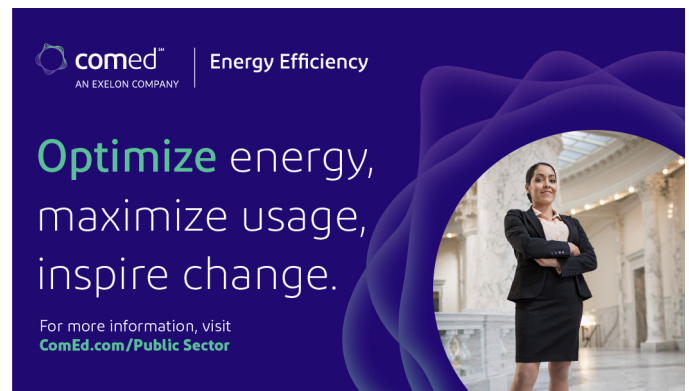
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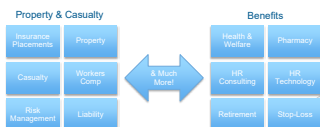


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