

## About ICMA

ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, advances professional local government worldwide, and creates excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional management to build sustainable communities that improve people's lives.

- ICMA was founded in 1914 by visionary reformers who sought to end municipal corruption and bring professionalism and transparency to local governance.
- ICMA members number nearly 9,500 senior local government executives and their staffs in cities, towns, counties, and other regional entities in the U.S. and 29 other countries.
- ICMA members are committed to standards of honesty and integrity that go beyond those required by the law.
  - Since 1924, ICMA has maintained a Code of Ethics, which encompasses 12 tenets and guidelines and establishes professional and personal standards for local government managers.
  - ICMA aggressively enforces the Code of Ethics through a peer-review process that investigates complaints and sanctions violators through censures, suspension, or membership expulsion.

## Core Capabilities

ICMA develops programs, publications, and services that identify leading practices to address the needs of the nearly 40,000 municipal and county governments and their several million employees serving communities worldwide. It partners with federal agencies, grantors, foundations, and other organizations on projects that target the extensive local government market.

- **Research and Analysis**—ICMA is second only to the federal government in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating research focused on issues related to local government management.
- **Technical Assistance**—ICMA provides hands-on, reliable technical and management assistance to communities across the U.S., as well as in developing and transitioning countries throughout the world, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Jordan, Ethiopia, Uganda, South Africa, India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Albania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Panama, Guatemala, and Paraguay.
- **Professional Development and Training**—Through ICMA University, we provide high-quality training and professional development opportunities for public managers at every stage of their careers.
- **Knowledge Sharing and Disseminating Information**—ICMA disseminates timely news, data, and information to the broadest range of local government executives and their staffs, elected officials, service area-focused organizations, and other local government-related audiences.

Life, Well Run—An ICMA Initiative  
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[LifeWellRun.org](http://LifeWellRun.org)

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# ICMA

Leaders at the Core of Better Communities



Almost every professional city, town, and county manager can tell you a story about when they were asked what they do. Many people do not understand what local government management is or does. A Harris Interactive poll found that only one-third of citizens know that managers oversee the day-to-day operations of their local government, and only five percent could describe what managers do or their important role in shaping a community.

*Life, Well Run* is an ICMA (International City/County Management Association) initiative to raise awareness of and appreciation for the value professional managers bring to running ethical, efficient, and effective local governments, and building great communities we're proud to call home.

## Why It Matters

The need for highly trained local government managers has never been greater. As the federal and many state governments continue to face a fiscal crisis and deep political divisions, our quality of life increasingly depends on effective local government and the creative, steady, and ethical skills of professional local government managers.

At the same time, as the profession enters its second 100 years, many senior managers are nearing retirement, creating an urgent need to attract talented young people into the profession.

## What are Professional Local Government Managers?

Professional local government managers are non-political appointees who are CEOs trained in the business of managing government and its resources, who bring a community-wide perspective to policies and programs. They are involved in thousands of individual decisions, large and small, that shape our communities and affect our quality of life.

Managers bring shared commitment and vision to our communities—working in partnership with elected officials and residents to build communities we're proud to call home. They are leaders whose training and passion is to deliver local government services ethically, efficiently and effectively.

Professional local government managers create environments where businesses thrive, by providing stability in leadership, sound financial stewardship, and delivering a high quality of life that attracts and retains top talent.

## About the Campaign

The *Life, Well Run* campaign will use traditional and social media to raise awareness of the role managers play in their communities by creating strategic messages and sharing success stories of professionally-managed communities. We believe people will connect with the campaign and its messages through these stories.

The campaign focuses on three target audiences: elected officials who are responsible for hiring and working with professional city, town, and county managers, business and civic leaders, and the next generation of local government management professionals, particularly college students.

## Campaign Goals

1. Raise awareness about the existence and value of professional local government managers.
2. Demonstrate to elected officials how professional managers implement their policies and turn their vision into reality through efficient, effective, ethical management.

3. Convey to business and civic leaders that working with a professional city, town, or county manager to move the community forward makes sense.

4. Inspire and attract the next generation of managers.

## Strategy and Implementation

The national *Life, Well Run* campaign puts customizable resources into the hands of ICMA members, state associations, and other affiliates. A key component of the campaign is to implement a broad-reaching advertising and communications strategy, beginning in 10 targeted states.

The campaign reaches out to ICMA's state associations and affiliates, as well as to state municipal leagues to

1. share resources with state associations and members
2. advertise in state association/league publications to drive readers to the *Life, Well Run* website and resources
3. advertise on websites and Internet search engines aimed at targeted audiences
4. partner with national and state membership organizations to enlist their help in reaching target audiences
5. present the *Life, Well Run* campaign goals and updates at association meetings
6. provide members and interested parties with periodic campaign updates
7. highlight community success stories on the *Life, Well Run* website, emphasizing the role of professional managers
8. use *Life, Well Run*-branded social media channels to promote success stories of professional management, campaign updates, and campaign-produced videos.

## How You Can Support the Campaign

- Link your website to [LifeWellRun.org](http://LifeWellRun.org)
- Share your community's success story at [yourstory@LifeWellRun.org](mailto:yourstory@LifeWellRun.org)
- Share *Life, Well Run* videos with other interested parties
- Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter
- Write a letter to the editor explaining and supporting the work of professional local government managers
- Invite your professional local government manager to speak to your civic association or classroom
- Donate to *Life, Well Run* at [LifeWellRun.org](http://LifeWellRun.org) and click on Support the Campaign or contact Allison at [fund.icma.org](http://fund.icma.org) or by phone at 202-962-3697

A 2011 study by IBM Global Business Services found that professionally-managed cities are nearly 10 percent more efficient than those without professional managers. This saves taxpayers money and enables cities, towns, and counties to do more with less.

During the economic downturn, Hampton, VA, like so many other municipalities, faced a large budget shortfall. The city manager involved the public in the budget process and the city council was able to pass a reduced budget without conflicts or controversies.