

**LIFE, WELL RUN**

## CUSTOMIZABLE OP-ED

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**One great way to get the word out about *Life, Well Run* to a large audience in your state is to submit an op-ed to local and state newspapers. To make it relevant and give it a unique perspective, we have developed the following template to be written from the perspective of an appropriate retired local elected official who is supportive of professional local government management. You can help him or her customize the op-ed, and then submit it to the publication. As you customize the template, be sure to:**

- **Add any state- or locally-based stories or data that will make the op-ed more appealing to readers.**
- **Tie it to current events, recent reports, or past coverage.**
- **Check with the publication about its preferred submission method and word count, which should be available on its website, and make sure to stay within their guidelines.**

### **Title: Life, Well Run**

[Begin with 2-3 sentences about recent improvements in the community that can be tied back to professional government management, such as new bike lanes, or a boost in the local economy. For example:

On your drive to work this week, you probably noticed the new bike lanes on Main Street. Thanks to these new bike lanes, we as residents have the opportunity not only to be environmentally friendly, but also to lead healthier lives on a daily basis.

These bike lines did not happen overnight. It was a product of months of collaboration and planning among elected officials, local community leaders, and the [CITY/TOWN/COUNTY]'s management team, to find a solution that would benefit the entire community.]

In fact, our professional [CITY/TOWN/COUNTY] manager and [HIS/HER] team play an essential role in helping to develop and deliver the services that make [CITY/COUNTY/TOWN] thrive. When it comes to implementing the policies that our elected officials create – for new bike lanes or parking lanes, green space or garage space, a courthouse or a convention center – professional local government managers contribute to the choices that shape how communities look and feel. [CITY/COUNTY/TOWN] is one of more than 73 percent of cities, towns and counties across America with a population of 2,500 or more that has a professional local government manager.

As a former [MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBER/OTHER] in [CITY/TOWN/COUNTY], I observed firsthand how professional management can help make good communities great. Professional managers are the people who turn a policy into action and visionary ideas into tangible results. By partnering with me [AND MY ELECTED COLLEAGUES], professional [CITY/TOWN/COUNTY] management was able to [LIST ACCOMPLISHMENTS]. None of this could have been possible without the leadership and professionalism of [CITY/COUNTY/TOWN] manager.

*continued*

I am inspired by the commitment that professional local government managers have to their profession, and how their keen sense of public service and ethical behavior lead to a community we can all feel proud to call home. A 2011 study by IBM Global Business Services found that professionally-managed cities are nearly 10 percent more efficient than those without professional managers. They are committed to values that strengthen our local democracy: transparency, integrity, stewardship of public resources, political neutrality, and respect for the rights and responsibilities of both elected officials and residents. They help communities run more efficiently, saving taxpayers money and enabling cities, towns, and counties to do more with less.

We must ensure that our communities and others continue to operate ethically and efficiently with the help of professional local government management. As thousands of current local government managers near retirement, there is a burgeoning need to prepare young professionals to fill their shoes. As the federal and state governments cede many responsibilities to the local level, professional local government managers have even more opportunities to make a difference in their communities.

Besides those of us you've elected to office, your local government consists of a team managed by a professional who is trained to provide ethical, effective, efficient leadership. [CITY/COUNTY/TOWN] is lucky to have [NAME] and the team of dedicated public servants [HE/SHE] leads.

I encourage you to visit [LifeWellRun.org](http://LifeWellRun.org) to learn more about the value that professional government managers bring to building effective local government and great communities, like ours.