



# BUILDING BRIDGES WITHIN WCMA

SUMMER CONFERENCE 2025



# WCMA Mission Statement:

The Wisconsin / City County Management Association exists to promote professional public service excellence through ethical local government management.

# WCMA Vision Statement:

WCMA represents professionalism, ethics, and excellence in local government management. WCMA is an action-focused, engaged-member organization that:

- ✓ Promotes professional, nonpartisan local government management;
- ✓ Provides quality programs, connections, and professional development offerings;
- ✓ Is a welcoming and inclusive organization; and
- ✓ Is an essential and innovative resource in public policy development and governance.





# WCMA Core Behaviors

*Tangible behaviors, not esoteric values.*

- **Engage New Members:** Reach out to new members within 30 days.
- **Provide Timely Value:** Share relevant resources and opportunities regularly.
- **Act on Feedback:** Actively listen and respond to member input.
- **Foster Relationships:** Encourage and mentor members' leadership qualities.
- **Inspire New Talent:** Introduce the profession to students and non-traditional candidates.
- **Promote the Profession:** Actively advocate for our field's future.
- **Collaborative Spirit:** Embrace collaboration and partnerships within and outside of our association.
- **Uphold Professional Standards:** Follow, promote, and educate on the ICMA Code of Ethics.
- **Be Transparent:** Maintain good stewardship of association resources.



# Strategic Priorities

6 priorities  
17 objectives  
68 key actions

Next Gen

Public Relations

Governance

Member Resources

Member Engagement

Culture

Created through input from the membership survey and executive board workshop.

4 year Strategic Plan





# WCMA Member Survey: Key Insights & Actions

WCMA conducted a comprehensive member survey (48% response rate!) to guide strategic direction and improve services. Survey captured a broad cross-section, primarily administrators/managers with diverse experience levels and community sizes.

## Strong Performance

Members highly value core services like job postings, conferences (Summer/Winter), ICMA Code of Ethics, salary surveys, and networking. WCMA will continue to enhance these.

## Areas for Improvement

Opportunities exist in social media, website functionality, coffee chats, profession promotion, regional meetings, and ICMA coaching webinars. Website modernization and rebranding are already underway.

## Salary Survey Streamlining

The annual salary survey will be revised to focus on salary, population, years in position, annual budget, and severance, reducing less useful sections.

## Conferences & Professional Development

- Conferences are highly valued, with scheduling conflicts being the main attendance barrier.
- Members desire more predictable professional development schedule.
- Top training topics: Legislative updates, board/counsel relations, leadership, labor law, AI, succession planning, and best practices.
- Less interest in healthcare, elections, and sustainability training; some feel there's overload on DEI topics.

# Membership Survey Key Takeaways Continued



## Digital Presence & Engagement

- WCMA website and Connected Community Listserv are neutral to positive.
- Members want improved search functionality and broader Listserv participation.
- Approximately half are open to exploring alternative platforms.
- Members want an updated/refreshed website.

## Specialized Programs

- Moderate awareness / participation in ICMA Coaching and Senior Advisor Programs (lack of time/need are barriers).
- Regional meeting attendance is split; scheduling is a common barrier.
- Career Guide is highly useful for those in transition; interest in more career coaching.

## Affiliations & DEIB

- Strong support for shared affiliations with other organizations (if done thoughtfully).
- DEIB efforts are generally positive, with varied opinions on current focus.
- General agreement that political neutrality stay at the forefront.



# Strategic Priorities



4 year  
Strategic Plan

Next  
Gen

Public  
Relations

Governance

Member  
Resources

Member  
Engagement

Culture

We listened to  
your feedback  
and here's  
where we  
landed!

6 priorities  
17 objectives  
68 key actions

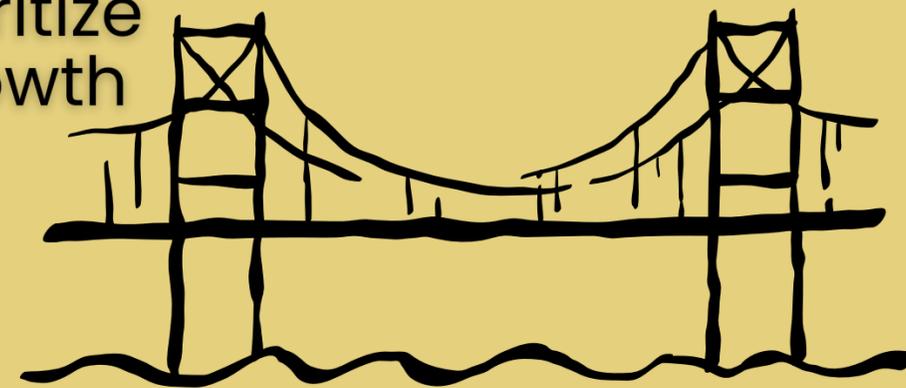
# Next Gen

**Overall Strategic Focus:** To increase awareness of the profession in the next generation of leaders, build a robust talent pipeline, and strengthen relationships with educational institutions to ensure long-term membership growth and professional development.

- Key Initiatives Summary:

- **Student Outreach Programs:** Develop and enhance programs for junior high and high school students, including mentorship pipelines, informational brochures, and outreach events.
- **Higher Education Partnerships:** Strengthen relationships with universities, colleges, and community colleges in Wisconsin and neighboring states by offering mentorships, connecting students with opportunities, and exploring recruitment beyond traditional degree programs.
- **Internship Opportunities:** Increase and prioritize funding for internships to provide crucial growth opportunities within the profession.

*Building Our Future Talent Pipeline*

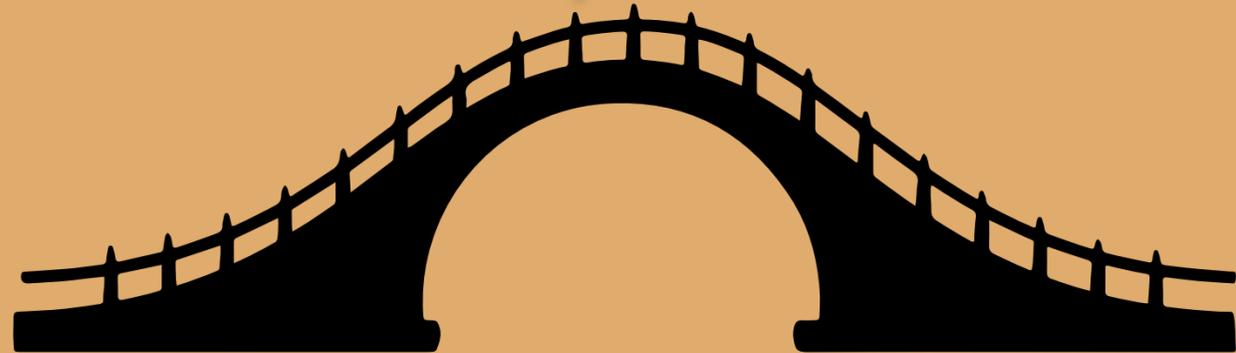


# Public Relations

**Overall Strategic Focus:** To enhance the public perception of the council-manager form of government and the profession, strengthen communication channels, and revitalize the organization's image.

- Key Initiatives Summary:
  - **Revitalize External Image:** Launch a refreshed website, rebrand comprehensively, and explore AI chatbox integration.
  - **Enhance Association Communications:** Implement a strategic communication plan to promote the profession and highlight successful community work.
  - **Effective Member & Community Engagement:** Develop a comprehensive communication strategy for social media and key messaging, focusing on successful community efforts.

Enhancing Our Image  
and Communications



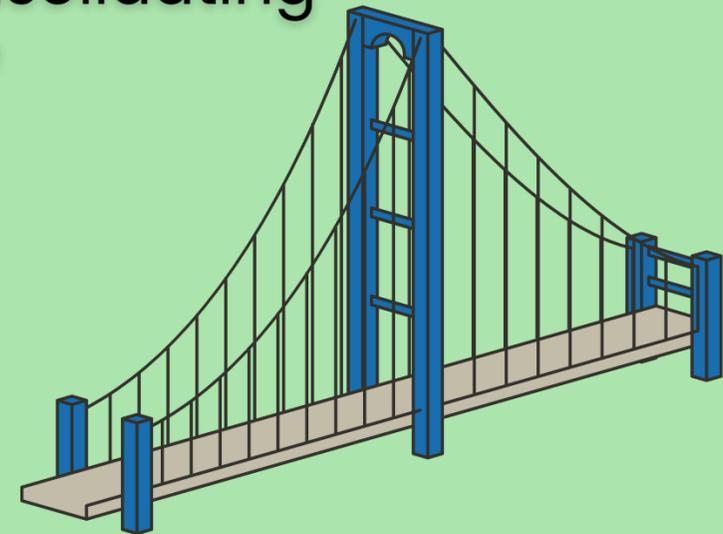
# Governance

**Overall Strategic Focus:** To streamline operations, ensure a smooth leadership transition, and strengthen organizational structure for long-term effectiveness.

- Key Initiatives Summary:

- **Successful Executive Director Transition:** Interview and identify a candidate, ensure a smooth transition for operational continuity, and implement an onboarding plan.
- **Optimize Organizational Structure & Efficiency:** Increase member awareness of benefits, review rates and fees for financial sustainability, focus on core objectives, and review conference committee structure.
- **Enhanced Committee Communication:** Consider consolidating or eliminating underperforming committees, enhance accountability with yearly action plans, and continue committee chair meetings for collaboration.

Streamlining Operations &  
Strengthening Structure



# Member Engagement

**Overall Strategic Focus:** To create a vibrant, welcoming, and valuable membership experience through engaging conferences, strong networking opportunities, and proactive member support.

- Key Initiatives Summary:
  - **Enhance Conference Experience:** Create "must-go" topics and a "wow" factor for conferences, explore creative solutions for engagement, revamp programming for hands-on skills, and consider reimagined conference formats.
  - **Strengthen Membership & Networking:** Increase direct recruitment for committees, maintain "go-to" network status, improve new member integration (e.g., buddy program), foster interaction between new and experienced administrators, and develop strategies to engage the "silent majority."
  - **Expand Professional Pipelines:** Increase exposure of local government management as a career path at other professional associations' events and boost recruitment from diverse professions and the private sector.
  - **Deliver Impactful Membership Experience:** Promote the Code of Ethics, increase corporate sponsorships, strengthen team building, and explore unique incentives for active members.

*Creating a Vibrant Member Experience*



# Culture

**Overall Strategic Focus:** To cultivate a welcoming, supportive, accessible, and collaborative organization and profession, while adapting to current political sensitivities and remaining apolitical.

- Key Initiatives Summary:
  - **Advance Association Environment:** Develop and implement a communication and integration strategy that promotes inclusivity, emphasizing respectful dialogue and understanding. This also includes "difficult conversations" training.
  - **Increase Diversity:** Develop and launch a targeted marketing and recruitment strategy to attract diverse candidates to the organization and the profession. Prioritize the recruitment and advancement of diverse managers and administrators.

Fostering a Welcoming and Inclusive Environment



# Member Resources

**Overall Strategic Focus:** To provide members with practical skills, valuable resources and tangible toolkits, and support networks to thrive in their careers and address current challenges.

- Key Initiatives Summary:
  - **Enhance Professional Development:** Implement quarterly webinars, deliver training on utilizing organizational resources, create more interactive sessions with Senior Advisors, and partner with external organizations for broader opportunities. Also, provide "Back to Basics" ethics training.
  - **Strengthen Online Support & Resources:** Develop a comprehensive online repository of educational resources (legal, financial, mental health, HR guidance). Additionally, restructure the salary survey, increase ListServ engagement, and expand contract negotiation/career assistance resources.

Empowering Our Members





# WCMA Resources

## ➤ Job Board

An opportunity to job-seek and to post openings in your community.

<https://www.wcma-wi.org/Jobs.aspx>

## ➤ Members In Career Transition

MICT Guide: [https://www.wcma-wi.org/DocumentCenter/View/800/MICT-Guide-?bidId=](https://www.wcma-wi.org/DocumentCenter/View/800/MICT-Guide-?bidId=Senior%20Advisors) Senior Advisors

## ➤ ICMA Coaching

Complementary Access as a WCMA Member!

<https://www.wcma-wi.org/283/ICMA-Coaching-Program>

## ➤ Senior Advisors

Confidential Advice / Mentorship  
Retired professionals here to help.

<https://www.wcma-wi.org/118/Senior-Advisor-Program>

## ➤ WCMA Connected Community (ListServ)

Full Tutorial!

Email Daily Digest – Reply, Review, Log-In

<https://wcma.connectedcommunity.org>

# Getting Involved



ENGAGE

JOIN

PARTICIPATE

UNITE

## Committee Service

Time commitments vary, but are minimal.  
All meetings virtually.

## Regional Meetings

Some meet virtually, some in person. Keep your eyes peeled for the great opportunities to network with professionals in your area!

## Conferences / Professional Development

Good job! You're here! Attend, learn, and network!!



# W C M A

WISCONSIN  
CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATION

THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?  
COMMENTS?  
FEEDBACK?