



ICMA State of the Profession 2012 Survey Results

ICMA conducted the State of the Profession survey in the summer and fall of 2012. The mail survey was sent to 7,550 city-type local governments with a population 2,500 and above and to all 1,306 county governments with an elected executive or council-administrator form of government. Those who did not respond to the first mailing received a second survey mailing. Respondents had the option of completing and submitting the survey online. The overall response rate is 24%, with 2,079 cities and counties responding.

The summary below shows the percentages that provided answers in response to each individual question. Not all local governments answered each question, so the percentages are not based on all survey respondents. The number reporting (N) is provided for each question.

FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

1. How would you describe your local economy? (N=2,028)
 - Improving = 60%
 - Stagnant = 35%
 - Declining = 5%

2. What is your community's current unemployment rate? (N=1,557)
 - Average unemployment rate is 8.2%.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

3. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements as they pertain to your local government.

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Do not agree
a. Attention is primarily to the minimum legal requirements for public engagement, including public comment periods and hearing. (N=2,037)	6%	28%	12%	16%	38%
b. There are few public engagement practices beyond minimum requirements, and they vary by department. (N=2,021)	3%	27%	10%	17%	43%
c. There are expectations that more extensive and deliberative public engagement beyond minimum requirements above will be used for local decision-making, e.g., budgeting and general plans). (N=2,035)	17%	45%	17%	14%	8%
d. There is an adopted set of principles that generally define and encourage the use of effective and inclusive public engagement when/as appropriate. (N=1,995)	10%	37%	22%	11%	19%
e. Partnerships are developed with neighborhood and community organizations to involve the public in appropriate public engagements activities over time.	15%	46%	13%	16%	10%
f. There is an established and ongoing body, process, or protocol that provides community representatives with input into the direction, operation, and adaptation of a public engagement plan or set of practices. (N=2,047)	11%	34%	20%	15%	20%

4. How important to your local government are the following goals of public participation? (If your local government does not have a particular goal, check "N/A.")

Goal	Highly important	Important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important	N/A
a. Provide the public with objective information to assist them in understanding problems/solutions/alternatives (N=2,042)	44%	41%	9%	2%	0%	3%
b. Obtain feedback from the public on analyses of problems/solutions/alternatives (N=2,039)	24%	46%	19%	7%	1%	3%
c. Work directly with the public to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered (N=2,043)	27%	48%	16%	6%	1%	3%
d. Partner with the public in development of alternatives, identification of the preferred solution, and decision making (N=2,029)	18%	39%	26%	10%	2%	4%
e. To place decision making in the hands of the public (N=1,991)	3%	16%	25%	26%	19%	11%
f. Hear input/ideas from a broader cross-section of residents. (N=1,993)	30%	43%	17%	6%	1%	3%

5. Are there methods of citizen engagement that you have found successful in your community? (Please describe.)

(Written responses are not available in the summary.)

6. How would you characterize the level of citizen participation in your local government's engagement efforts/initiatives? (N=2,040)

- Low – small number of regular participants = 47%
- Medium – some representation across different parts of the community depending on the issue = 42%
- High – regular representative group of community members on issues of importance = 12%

7. How would you describe civic discourse in your community in the past year? (N=2,035)

- Very polarized and strident, often rude = 6%
- Somewhat polarized and strident, occasionally rude = 32%
- Generally polite and tolerant of different opinions = 53%
- Very polite and tolerant of different opinions = 9%

CODE OF ETHICS

8. Does your local government have a code of ethics? (N=2,030)

- Yes = 86%
- No = 14%

9. If "yes," whom does it cover? (Check all applicable.) (N=1,444)

- All elected officials = 83%
- Board and commission members = 65%
- All staff members = 79%
- Other = 7%

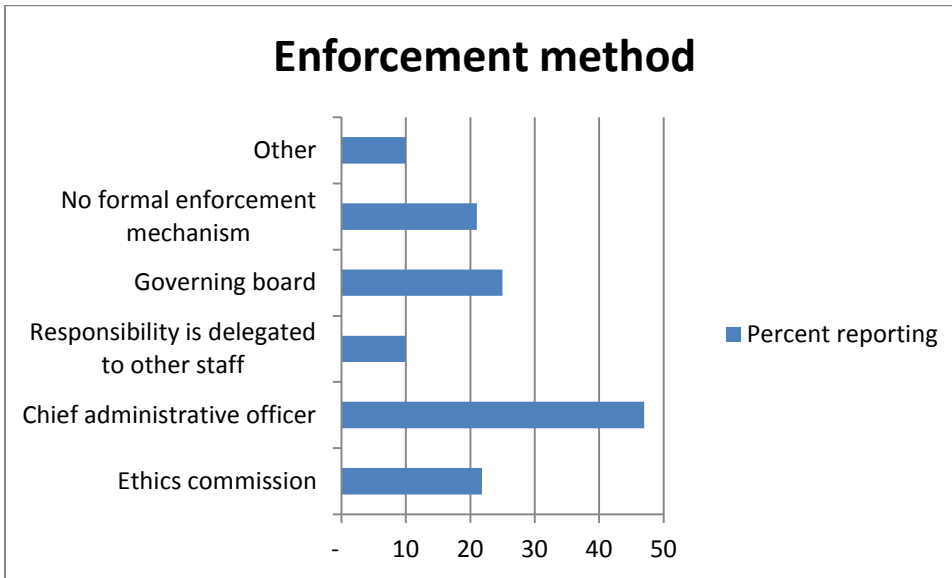
10. Does your local government offer ethics training to employees? (N=2,028)

- Yes = 54%
- No = 46%

11. If “yes,” how often?

- Annually = 33%
- As needed = 51%
- Other = 15%

12. How does your local government *enforce* the code of ethics (determine violations and impose sanctions)? (Check all applicable.)



COUNCIL RELATIONS

13. Please describe the relationship between you and the elected officials to whom you report. (Check only one.) (N=2,039)

Description	Percent reporting
Relationship is highly collaborative	48.8
Relationship is generally collaborative	40.5
Relationship is somewhat collaborative	9.2
Relationship is not collaborative	1.5

14. Please describe your relationship with the elected officials to whom you report over the past year. (N=2,040)

- Relationship improved - 46.9%
- Relationship remained the same - 41.6%
- Relationship worsened - 11.5%

15. Please indicate on the following scale your opinion of the effectiveness of your council, board, or commission as a **decision-making** body. Consider the speed and ease with which the members reach consensus, how well they work together, and the degree to which political and personality conflicts interfere. (Circle only one number.) (N=2,008)

1	2	3	4	5
Highly effective		Moderately effective		Not effective
<u>25.6%</u>	<u>34.6%</u>	<u>28.4%</u>	<u>9.3%</u>	<u>2.1%</u>

16. Please indicate on the following scale your opinion of the effectiveness of your mayor or board chair as a **visionary leader**. Consider the effectiveness at creating a vision and helping to develop goals and policy proposals. (Circle only one number.) (N=2,014)

1	2	3	4	5
Highly effective		Moderately effective		Not effective
<u>24.7%</u>	<u>28.6%</u>	<u>28.4%</u>	<u>11.2%</u>	<u>7.1%</u>

17. Please indicate on the following scale your opinion of the effectiveness of your mayor or board chair as a **facilitative leader**. Consider the effectiveness at sharing information, promoting cohesion within the council, and supporting the working relationship between the chief appointed official and the council. (Circle only one number.) (N=2,008)

1	2	3	4	5
Highly effective		Moderately effective		Not effective
<u>26.5%</u>	<u>29.8%</u>	<u>26.5%</u>	<u>11.5%</u>	<u>5.7%</u>

18. Please indicate on the following scale your opinion of the effectiveness of the council's appraisal of the chief appointed official's performance. (N=1,970)

1	2	3	4	5
Highly effective		Moderately effective		Not effective
<u>19.9%</u>	<u>34.8%</u>	<u>30.5%</u>	<u>10.3%</u>	<u>4.6%</u>

19. Please describe the relationship among members of the council. (Check only one.)

Description	Percent reporting
Relationship is highly collaborative	23.2%
Relationship is generally collaborative	47.9%
Relationship is somewhat collaborative	23.7%
Relationship is not collaborative	6.1%

20. Please describe the relationship among members of the council over the past year. *(Check only one.)*

- Relationship improved - 24.7%
- Relationship remained the same – 58.2%
- Relationship worsened - 17.2%

ROLES OF THE CHIEF APPOINTED OFFICIAL/MANAGER

21. Please indicate how often you perform each role listed below.

Role	Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Always
a. Support the governing body by providing it with information. (N=2,022)	0%	1.0%	21.4%	77.7%
b. Promote interaction among the governing body to ensure that there is adequate opportunity for policy discussion and definition. (N=2,021)	1.3%	12.7%	46.1%	39.9%
c. Support the governing body by identifying community needs and initiating policy proposals. (N=2,030)	0.5%	12.3%	49.3%	37.8%
d. Play a significant role in policy initiation through advice and recommendations to the governing body. (N=2,032)	0.8%	11.5%	47.5%	40.2%
e. Promote team building within the governing body. (N=2,013)	7.0%	36.6%	33.9%	22.6%
f. Provide the governing body with formal reports documenting the implementation of specific council/board policies and directives. (N=2,016)	0.7%	19.5%	40.2%	39.5%
g. Exercise significant latitude and discretion in the interpretation and administration of governing board policy. (N=2,023)	4.7%	25.5%	46.1%	23.7%
h. Strive to ensure that service delivery is equitable and responsive to citizens. (N=2,010)	0.3%	3.4%	28.0%	68.3%
i. Go out into the community and engage directly with the public on policy issues. (N=2,033)	5.7%	40.7%	36.6%	17.0%

INDIVIDUAL INFORMATION

22. What is your position title? (N=2,029)

a. City manager/ administrator	58.2%	e. Village manager/ administrator	4.8%
b. County manager/ administrator	9.8%	f. Borough manager/ administrator	3.1%
c. Township manager/ administrator	3.9%	g. Other (please describe)	11.3%
d. Town manager/ administrator	8.9%		

23. How many years have you been in your current position? *(Please round to nearest year.)* Average is 7.3 years. (N=1,994)

24. How many total years have you been in the local government management profession? *(Please round to nearest year.)*

Average is 20.5 years. (N=2,015)

25. What was your most recent position before being appointed as chief administrative officer/city or county manager? (N=1,934)

a. Dir. of planning	3.9%	e. Dir. of econ. development	2.7%	i. Assistant CAO/manager	33.0%
b. Dir. of public works	4.4%	f. Local govt. attorney	1.4%	j. State/Federal government	2.6%
c. Dir. of finance	5.8%	g. Military officer	1.6%	k. Private sector	11.0%
d. Student	1.9%	h. Staff of council/elected	2.6%	l. Other (Please describe)	29.0%

26. Please indicate on the following scale your current level of professional satisfaction. (Circle only one number.) (N=1,988)

1	2	3	4	5
Highly satisfied		Moderately satisfied		Not satisfied
<u>31.1%</u>	<u>39.3%</u>	<u>23.1%</u>	<u>5.2%</u>	<u>1.2%</u>

27. During the past year, have you been: (N=1,743)

- a. Fired 1.0%
- b. Forced to resign 0.7%
- c. Under pressure to resign 4.9%
- d. None of these apply 93.3%

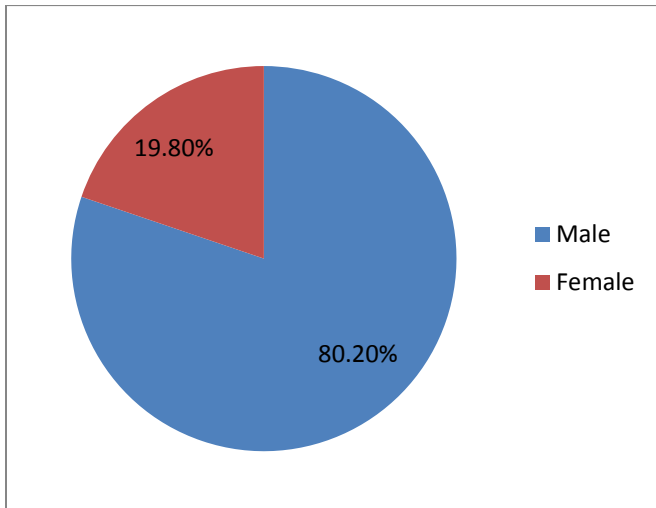
28. Please check all options related to the circumstances surrounding the dismissal or the pressure to resign.

a. Poor economic or fiscal conditions blamed on manager	9.2%	d. Change in form of government	5.0%	g. New mayor elected	15.1%
b. Personality conflicts with mayor or commissioner	36.1%	e. Political pressures	32.8%	h. Other (Please describe)	18.5%
c. Performance issues	6.7%	f. Changes in council membership following election	49.6%		

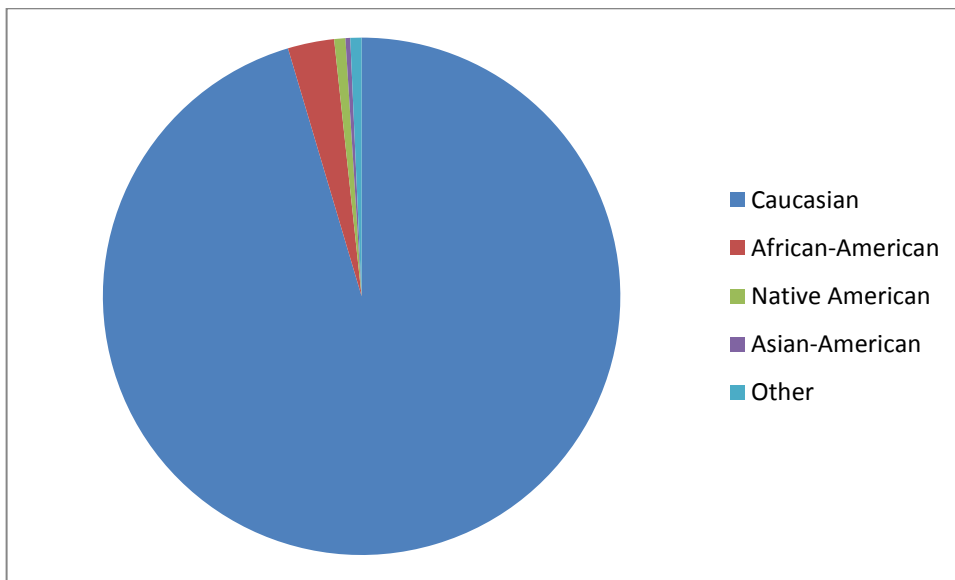
29. Age (N=2,020)

- Under 30 = 1.3%
- 30 - 35 = 3.9%
- 36 - 40 = 6.2%
- 41 - 45 = 11.0%
- 46 - 50 = 14.2%
- 51 - 55 = 18.8%
- 56 - 60 = 20.7%
- 61 - 65 = 17.0%
- 66 - 70 = 5.5%
- Over 70 = 1.3%

30. Gender (N = 1,951)



31. Race (N = 1,985)



32. Are you of Hispanic background? (N = 1,911)

- Yes = 3.0%
- No = 97.0%

33. Please indicate the **highest** level of education you have completed. (N = 2,017)

