



Veterans Local Government Management Fellowship Work Plan

Local Government Overview:

The Veterans Local Government Management Fellowship (VLGMF) is sponsored by local community governments throughout the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Mountain Plains Region that typically employ the Council-Manager form of government. Council-Manager forms of government are managed by a professional executive appointed by and responsible directly to local government elected council members and board members. A local government manager typically oversees a large cross-functional staff and departmental employees that include Administrative Services, Public Works, Civil Engineering, Community Services, Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Municipal Court, City Clerk, Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, and Utilities.

Other local government sponsors use a mayor–council government system, which is the other most common form of local government in the United States and is the one most frequently adopted in large cities. The strong mayor form of government is headed by the mayor who serves as the city’s chief executive and the city council who serve as the city’s legislative body. Generally, under the strong mayor system, a mayor has the authority to prepare and control the budget, appoint and remove department heads, and directs the activities of departments.

Each local government administers a multi-million dollar budget that is made up of a general fund that supports the non-utility aspects of the organization and typically one or more enterprise funds. An enterprise fund provides funding for utilities and other services that are funded by fee-for-service activities.

The Fellowship Program:

The fellowship program is a 16 to 20 week program, in partnership with Department of Defense Military Installations, designed to provide a comprehensive experience for service members who are transitioning out of military service and who have an interest in local government. The goals of the program are to provide a broad-based degree of experience for the fellow, preparing him or her with leadership skills to succeed in local government.

The Fellow will be mentored directly by either the Local Government Manager, Department Director, or Senior Manager while conducting highly responsible work for various departments of the organization. Since local government is highly diverse and this position requires a great degree of involvement in areas as utilities, public safety, economic development, financial management, public works, and community development, the Fellow will receive a broad base of experience. Each Fellow’s experience will be tailored to him or her, depending on the needs of the organization and the experiential desires of the Fellow.

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Commitment to Mentoring the Fellow:

- The Fellow is given an annual membership with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), Engaging Local Government Leaders (ELGL) network, and their ICMA state affiliate organization.
- The Fellow participates in and completes the ICMA Local Government 101 Certificate. The Fellow's mentor will allow for 2-3 hours per week to complete the certificate during the 16 to 20 week fellowship.
- Monthly luncheons and weekly feedback sessions will be scheduled with the City Manager, Department Director, or Senior Manager to ask questions, review resumes, and seek career advice.
- The local government provides educational and professional development opportunities that will be designed from programs offered by the local government or other organizations within the region, based on the Fellow's needs and professional development goals.
- Fellows have access to the ICMA Coaching Program which provides coaching, career advice, and resources to Fellows interested in local government careers and provides access to their nationwide database of local government managers. This program will allow fellows to identify local government managers who have prior military service and who can provide a personal and professional perspective on transitioning from military service to local government management.
- ELGL will encourage fellows to include their resumes in the ELGL annual resume book that is circulated among national recruiters and local governments. ELGL will also provide podcasts, professional development webinars, conferences & networking, and writing/blogging opportunities to fellows on local government issues.
- ICMA State Affiliate Range Riders (long-serving and experienced city managers) will provide Fellows with the opportunity to review resumes and provide one-on-one feedback throughout the Fellow's annual membership.

Description of Potential Local Government Involvement by Fellow:

- The program is designed to provide a broad range of exposure for the Fellow through project work in various local government departments.
- The Fellow attends a minimum of one (1) City Council or Board meeting per month in order to observe the interaction between local government staff and the elected body. Additionally, the Fellow will be expected to develop and give presentations to the Senior Manager, Executive Staff, City Council, or Board relative to matters relating to their project work.
- The Fellow works with staff to monitor and/or develop the budgets for the Local Government.
- Throughout the duration of the fellowship, the Fellow will have the opportunity to work with the staff from Community Development, Utilities, the Local Government Manager's office, and partner organizations to coordinate partnership efforts for the community.
- The Fellow will also be asked to provide research and/or analysis of items that will emerge as a result of Elected Officials, Local Government Manager, or Department Director requests. Often these projects, which will inevitably emerge throughout the 16 to 20 week period, will provide the Fellow access to key Local Government departments that they may not have a chance to work with otherwise.

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