Professionally-managed communities provide the quality of life that helps businesses attract and retain top talent.

We all want the same things in our community—well maintained infrastructure, safe neighborhoods, good schools, recreational opportunities for our kids, a vibrant cultural life. Professional local government managers help build communities we’re proud to call home.

Professionally-managed governments want to partner with you.

As the role of government changes, the number of public-private partnerships is on the rise. Governments partner with the private sector to:

- build transit systems, roads, and public facilities
- develop cultural centers
- attract new college and university campuses
- make health care more readily available to residents
- start new programs to decrease energy use
- mentor students and sponsor school programs

Local governments purchase more than $85 billion in goods and services each year.

Contact your professional local government manager to find out how you can create a dynamic partnership that helps build your business.

Resources for Business Leaders

- Videos are available for you to share with your employees or your colleagues and business groups at YouTube.com/LifeWellRun.
- Information about professional local government managers and why they matter to you can be found at LifeWellRun.org
- View stories of how professional local government management makes a difference to communities at LifeWellRun.org/#map. We continue to gather stories of successful professional local government management. If you think your community has a success story to tell, please contact Amy at AMayers@ICMA.org.
Creating the environment businesses seek when choosing a place to put down roots and invest.

Professional local government managers provide continuity, stable leadership, established decision-making processes, and long-range planning. As appointed, nonpartisan, and nonpolitical officials, a professional manager’s job tenure often encompasses a number of election cycles and changes in administrations. When a newly-elected official assumes office, the manager, with years of experience, can act as a guide and adviser.

Like the CEO of a corporation, a professional local government manager brings the best practices in financial management, administration, and personnel practices to running a government. Professional managers are committed to the highest standards of equity, transparency, honor, integrity, political neutrality, responsible stewardship of public resources, and to fostering an ethical culture throughout the organization.

In addition, professional managers who are members of ICMA agree to uphold its Code of Ethics, which governs conduct and sets the standard for excellence.

Professionally-managed communities are stable and well managed financially.

Sixty-one percent of the 87 U.S. cities that received Moody’s highest rating (Aaa) in December 2009 operated under the council-manager form of government.

Seventy-three percent of the communities recognized with the coveted All-America City Award between 2008 and 2012 are run by professional local government managers.

Professionally-managed communities are efficient.

In 2011, a study by IBM Global Business Services found that professionally-managed cities are nearly 10 percent more efficient than those without professional managers.

Success stories from professionally-managed communities

- 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.
- When Phoenix, AZ, faced a budget crisis in 2009, the city manager created an innovation and efficiency task force that has produced savings of nearly $60 million, with a goal of reaching $100 million by 2015. The city is fiscally healthy, has a structurally balanced budget, and has maintained its Aaa bond rating.
- The city manager of Painesville, OH, created the city’s first economic development strategic plan, which led to the addition of 3 companies and 500 new jobs, more than $16 million in grant funding to complete vital capital projects, and a revitalized downtown district along with parks, new housing, and increased public safety.

“The professional managers here have reached out to many good businesses and drawn them into the community.”

—Bill Standish
Executive Vice President Operations, Anixter, Inc.

“Something special’s going on here, and I suspect it’s because we’ve been able to meld and marry professional city management with fantastic political leadership, and it’s really turned into something, I think, special.”

—Richard Perez
President, San Antonio Chamber of Commerce