

# The Next Generation Challenge: Incorporating the Local Government Managers of the Future

James H. Svara  
*Arizona State University*

## ABSTRACT

Generational change in government employment presents numerical, attitudinal, and organizational challenges. There are more impending retirements in government than in the economy generally, and the number of young professionals available to fill vacancies is relatively small. A survey of Masters of Public Administration students at five universities and other research show the strong public service values among the younger generation, as well as document an interest within this cohort in working across sectors and levels of government. Professional associations and local governments will have to do more to make work inviting and engaging. They can also expect to make efforts to reenlist persons who either start work in government and go elsewhere or enter work in government later in their careers.

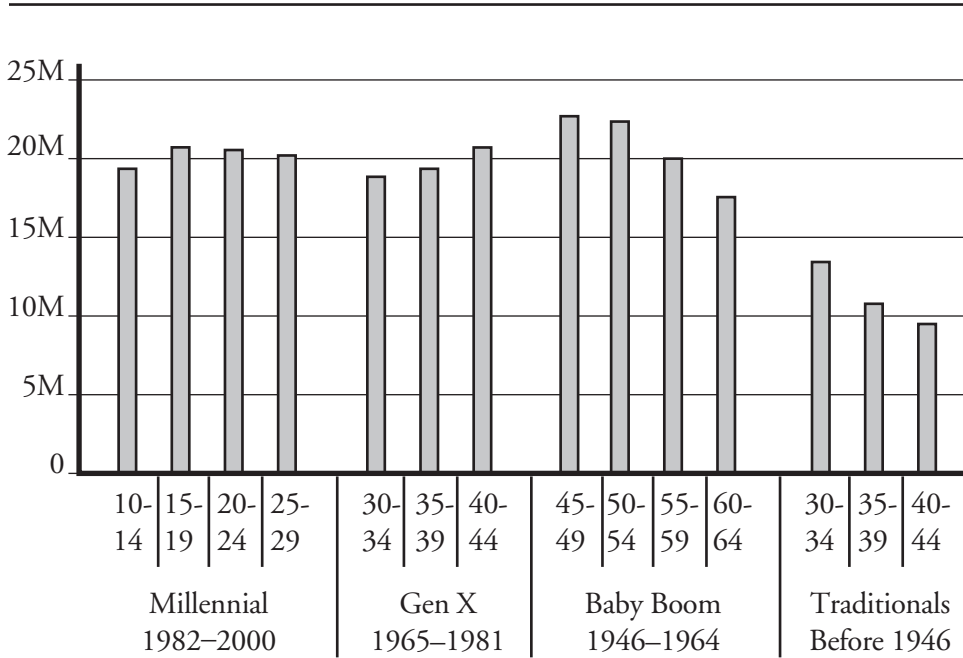
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When assessing the future of the local government management profession, one must face up to the enormous generational change that is unfolding. All levels of government need to find large numbers of young (and not so young) professionals to fill vacancies that will be occurring over the next decade. This article assesses trends and presents the views of current MPA students as expressed in surveys and interviews.

## CONTEXT AND TRENDS

On the surface, the generations succeeding the Baby Boom generation are substantial in number. As shown in Figure 1, there was a slight baby bust after the postwar baby boom, but succeeding generations are approximately the same size as the enormous generation born between 1946 and 1964, when adjusting for the length of the “generation.”<sup>1</sup> This figure shows the *current* size of age cohorts based on Census estimates through 2007. The size of each cohort is decreased by mortality and increased by immigration in comparison to the original birth numbers.

*Figure 1.*  
Population Distribution by Generations: Ages in 2010



*Note:* Source is U.S. Census (2005-2007).

The Baby Boom generation in 2000 is much larger than the surviving “Traditionals”—the Depression-World War II generation. The Generation X (16-years long) is three-fourths as large as the preceding 18-year-long Baby Boom generation, and the Millennial generation is essentially the same size as the Baby Boom generation. Two factors relieve somewhat the shortage of workers in the population. First, a majority of the Boomers are in the second half of the generation—the late Boomers—including President Obama. As indicated in Figure 1, there are approximately 45 million persons in the younger half of the generation, aged 45-54, compared to less than 38 million persons aged 55-64. Second, the younger cohorts are growing as a result of immigration. The size of the generation that is just entering or will enter the workforce is expanding slightly with new residents not available to be counted in the 2000 census.<sup>2</sup>

Still, the manpower shortage is real. It arises because the workforce has grown substantially since 1970, when the Baby Boomers were starting to complete graduate degrees and assume professional positions. In 1970, there were approximately 83 million persons in the nonagricultural workforce. Generations essentially the same size as the Baby Boom generation are already part of or entering a workforce in 2006, with 137 million workers. Estimates

are that the labor force is 7% smaller than the number of available jobs (Benest, 2003), and this worker deficit is expected to increase.

The impact of these changes on the composition of local government managers is substantial. In 1971, 71% of the appointed local government managers were 40 or younger, i.e., born after 1931, and 26% were under 30. In 2006, 86% were over 40, i.e., born before 1966 and, thus, primarily members of the Baby Boom generation. Only 2% were under 30 (Kellar, 2003).

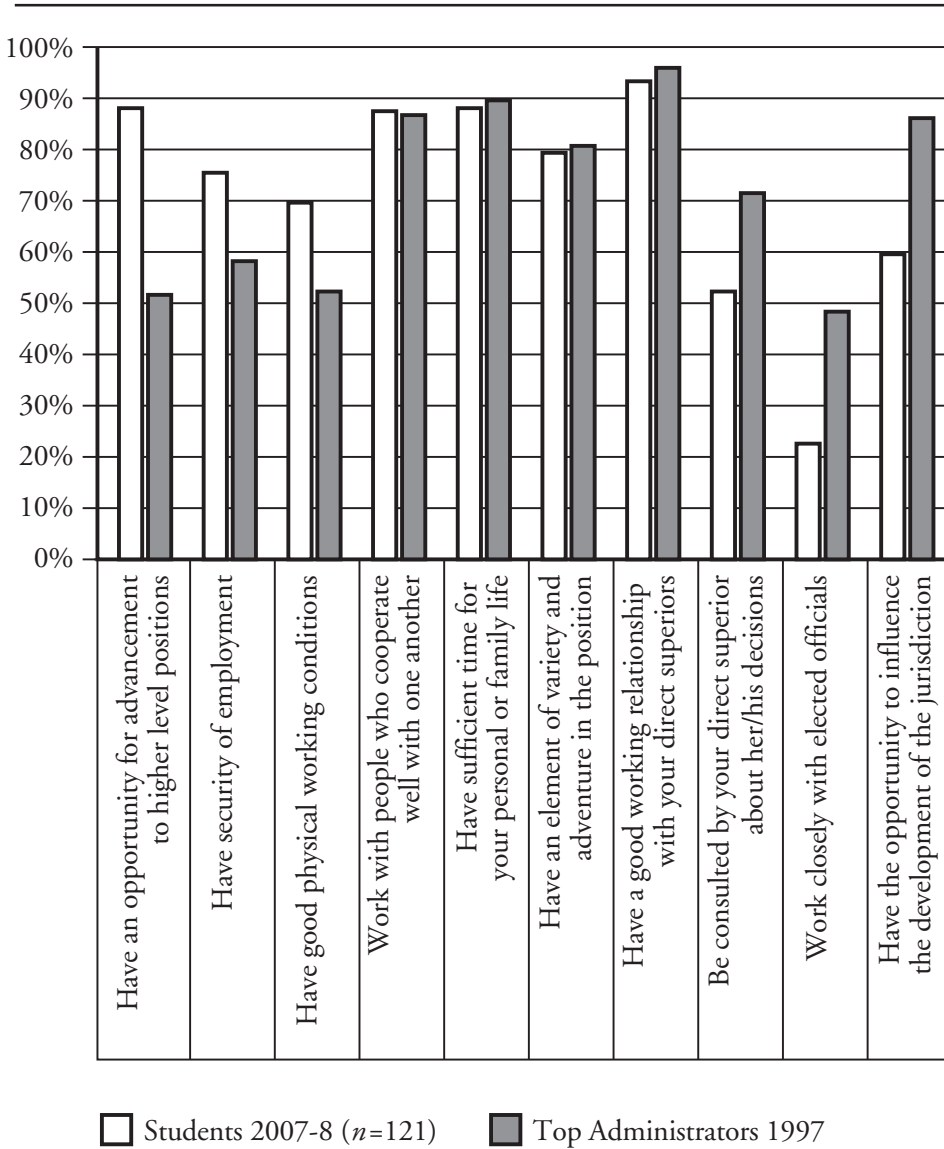
As is the case with the overall data on generational change, these numbers must be interpreted with a bit of caution. The relative youth of the local management profession in 1970 reflects the small size of the Traditional generation relative to the Baby Boom generation and the large number of young persons entering the workforce. There was also a dramatic increase in the number of small- to medium-sized cities adopting the council-manager form in these years. Between 1955 and 1975, the number of cities with populations between 2,500 and 25,000 that used the council-manager form more than doubled from 779 to 1,601, or an increase of 822. Opportunities were opening in the kind of cities in which young professionals had the greatest likelihood of being hired, especially in view of the relatively small number of older managers. Graduate programs in public administration were beginning a dramatic expansion at the same time. In comparison, between 1985 and 2005, the number of cities in this size category that used the council-manager form expanded from 1,716 to 2,607, or an increase of 891. Given the larger base, however, this number represents only a 52% increase. Although the growth in recent years is impressive, the number of new opportunities is relatively lower, and young professionals are competing with the large number of experienced professional administrators. Young professionals as a proportion of local government managers will not approximate the 1970 figure in the foreseeable future.

Local governments should conduct succession planning to prepare for the changes that are coming, but it is also important not to exaggerate the pace of change and create unrealistic expectations among those waiting for a promotion. It is easy to get the impression that the exit of most city and county managers is imminent.<sup>3</sup> As noted above, a majority of Baby Boomers are not close to retirement, and the effects of the declining value of investment funds means that an increasing number of early Boomer managers are now postponing retirement.

The exodus of Baby Boomers is coming, but it is likely to be a drawn-out departure.<sup>4</sup> Generation X (and Millennial) professionals already in government who may have jumped to the conclusion that widespread openings would be available soon could become frustrated at how long it takes to move up unless they are willing to relocate to another jurisdiction to pursue a new job. Ironically, a short-term challenge is maintaining morale among current midlevel staff members who have to wait to move up. The relatively slow pace of change could lead to two types of dissatisfaction. Generation X professionals may come to feel squeezed between late Boomers who have not yet retired, and Millennial

Figure 2.

Characteristics of Ideal Position: Percentage who Consider Characteristics to be Very or of the Utmost Importance.



colleagues who start leapfrogging them into higher positions. At the same time, Millennial professionals may seek opportunities outside local government rather than wait for promotions to come (and also leave to seek variety in their careers, as we shall see). The fiscal crisis has slowed down the transition as fewer older

workers are retiring and fewer new positions are being filled. In time, however, the tight job market that gives Millennials a competitive advantage is likely to return.

#### SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES OF EXPERIENCED AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Much has been written about the distinctive qualities of the generations that will succeed the now-established generations. In the standard view, the Traditionals focus on duty and loyalty and seek to build a legacy. The Boomers focus on advancement and fulfillment and seek to create a successful career that takes them to the top of the organization. They differ in preferred rewards—the Traditionals' satisfaction comes from a job well done; the Boomers' from a desire for recognition, promotion, and salary, with perks as signs of success. Gen Xers emphasize self-reliance, informality, pragmatism, and having fun, and they seek freedom as a reward for their efforts. Gen Xers are sometimes criticized for a lack of commitment and loyalty, but they have had to operate within the shadow of the Boomers who have filled the upper ranks of organizations. It may not be surprising that Gen Xers seek satisfaction outside the work setting. The Millennials are similar, but are considered to be more confident and optimistic than Gen Xers. This mind-set may be well founded—the world will someday be theirs. They are oriented to achievement and committed to public service. The widespread service-learning programs and required community volunteer activities in high school and college are reinforcing the service orientation and giving this generation hands-on experience in helping others in a direct, personal way.

The attitudes about careers also differentiate the generations. The Traditionals expected to work for one organization (or to be committed to one profession) and viewed job change as a stigma. Baby Boomers were disinclined to change jobs if it put them behind, but they have been willing to move across organizations in a sector if this is the best path to the top job or greater success and recognition. Gen Xers see job changing as necessary and desirable to enhance their freedom. The Millennials are likely to see job changing as a natural part of their lives and to view the concept of "career" in much more flexible terms than older generations. As Angela Eikenberry (2009) described current students, they increasingly "live in a sector-agnostic, post-traditional world" (Eikenberry 2009, p. 1060).

There is a dual concern in thinking about preparing the next generations for leadership positions. Part of the focus is on current employees. Frank Benest (2007) argues the following:

The biggest issue is talent development. To what extent are mid-career Generation X professionals ready and willing to fill the vacant leadership slots? If the smaller numbers of Gen Xers have not been sufficiently prepared and tested for leadership tasks in local government, how do local governments quickly

accelerate their growth and development in very concrete and practical ways? (p. 2).

The other emphasis is on recruiting young professionals who are part of the opening wedge of Millennials starting their work lives. The big difference is that most of the midcareer Generation X professionals who are likely to be the next managers are already working in local government<sup>5</sup>, although retaining them could be a challenge if the right opportunities are not available. In contrast, the challenge with Millennials is to attract them to consider work in government or to keep them in government positions now and later.

### *Input from Young Professionals*

Generational change is one of the major driving forces that will change local government and ICMA itself in the future. It is important to get more input from the generations that have been the focus of the “Next Gen” planning and recruitment activities. One way of accomplishing this has been to conduct a survey of students who are currently enrolled in MPA degree programs. The surveys were conducted in 2007 and 2008 at universities with a strong interest in local government management—Arizona State University, University of Kansas, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Northern Illinois University, and Wichita State University.<sup>6</sup> The number of respondents ranges from 79 to 121, depending on which version of the survey was completed.

### *Ideal job—Senior and young professionals compared.*

One often hears the point that young professionals at the present time are very different from the Baby Boom generation members that reached top positions in local government. Students in the recent survey were asked what constitutes an ideal position. The same questions were given to city managers in a 1997 national survey.<sup>7</sup> The responses from the two surveys can be compared. As indicated in Figure 2, both groups generally agreed that it is of utmost importance or very important to have a good working relationship with direct superiors, have sufficient time for personal or family life, work with people who cooperate well with one another, and have an element of variety and adventure in the position.

The young professionals were more likely to assign importance to extrinsic motivators—advancement, good working conditions, and security—than the top administrators. This finding may be explained in part by the difference in perspective between professionals at a point early in their careers and those who have already achieved the position of city manager or administrator. It also suggests that new generations, for all their idealism and service commitment (as we shall see), are also “savvy” about work conditions and opportunities (Partnership for Public Service, 2004). There are other differences. The top

administrators assigned more importance to being consulted by direct superiors (the mayor and city council, given the respondent's position), working closely with the city council, and having the opportunity to influence the development of the community. The responses may indicate that key elements of the local government manager's responsibilities are somewhat less attractive to young professionals, at least at this stage in their careers. The exception is student respondents who are interested in becoming local government managers (not shown in Figure 2), among whom almost 3 in 4 want the opportunity to influence how the community develops. Despite these differences, young professionals do not define the ideal job in a fundamentally different way than top administrators in earlier generations.

*Attitudes about career among young professionals.*

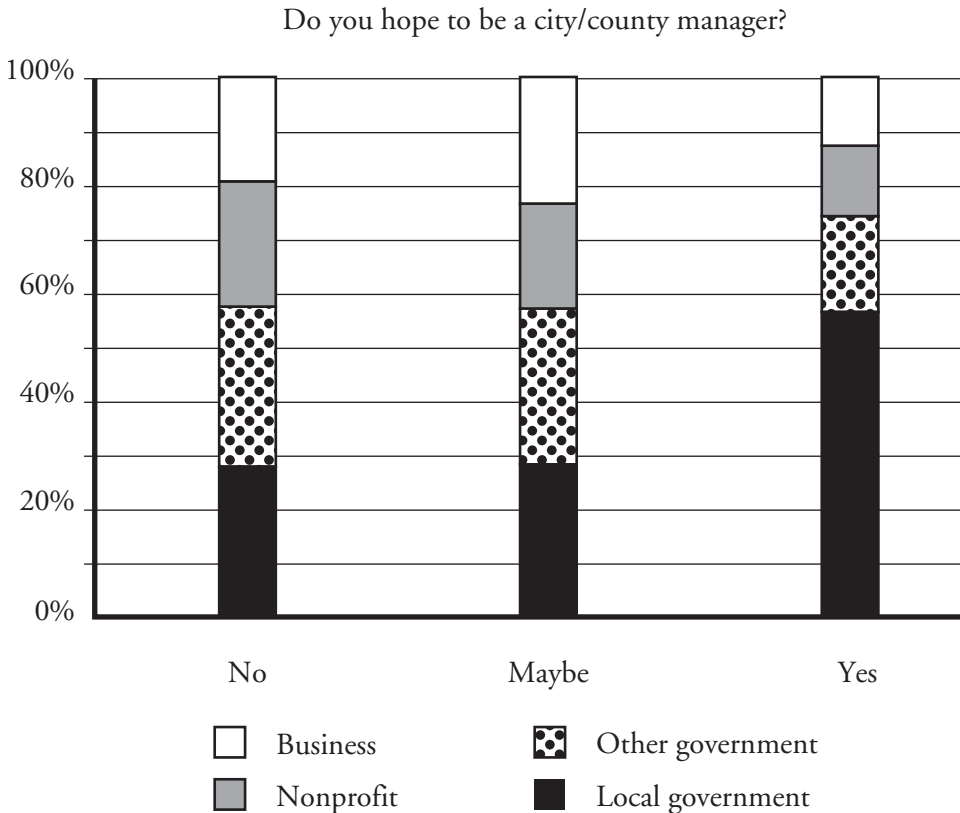
The ideas that young professionals have about careers and moving across sectors are as distinctive as the common perceptions suggest. First of all, among current students from these graduate programs with a strong focus on local government and current students from other levels of government and other sectors, 33% have a strong hope to be a city or county manager, 28% neither agree nor disagree that they hope to be a manager, and 39% clearly disagree. It is useful to compare the attitudes of the three groups of students regarding other career characteristics.

Respondents were asked to identify what percentage of time they would spend in different areas of work over an ideal career. At another point in the survey, they were asked whether they would like to be able to move between government and nonprofit organizations and between government and business in their careers. Both measures indicate a strong preference for variety and movement. Overall, half of the respondents want to work in government, nonprofits, and business, and most of the rest want to mix government work with work in one of the other sectors as indicated in Figure 3.

Even those who hope to be local government managers, however, would prefer to spend just over half of their careers working for local government along with time in other levels of government, nonprofit organizations, and businesses that provide services to localities.<sup>8</sup> Those with only a moderate interest in being managers prefer to spend over 70% of their time outside of local government.

For both groups, it appears that in addition to concerns local governments have for recruitment and retention as part of succession planning, "re-attraction" of persons who have formerly worked in local government will be important as well. It should be an achievable task. Leaving local government does not necessarily mean rejecting it; it appears that most will be interested in coming back if they have opportunities for professional advancement. The results presented in Figure 2 indicate that students expect to advance across their careers, not change sectors and start again at the bottom. In addition, many

Figure 3.  
Preferred Percent of Time in Sectors (n=121)

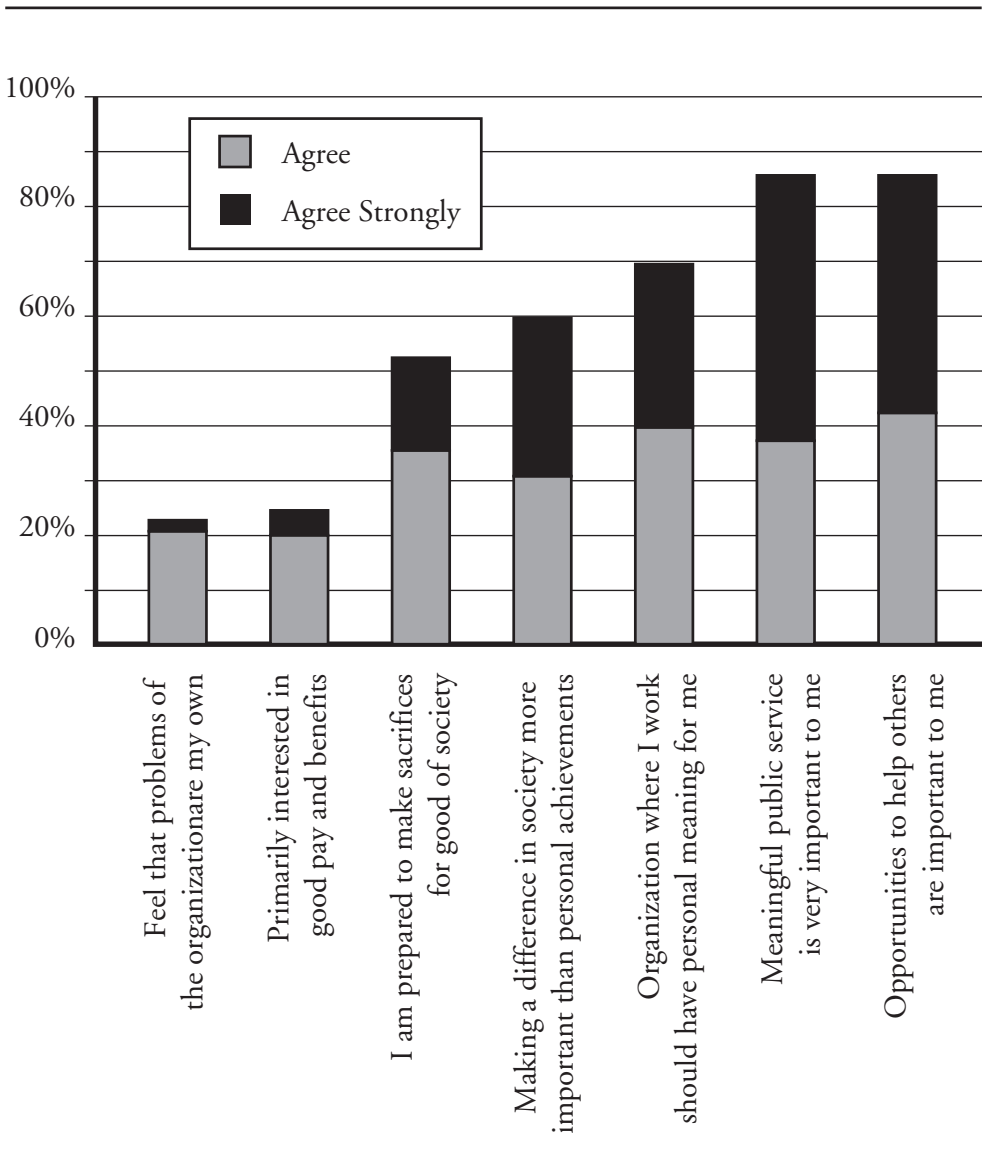


experienced professionals who are involved in community affairs could be recruited into local government. Handling reentry by former administrators is likely to be a common need. Furthermore, there are likely to be increased numbers of midcareer entry by new local government administrators who move laterally into high-level positions.

The values of young professionals are rooted in service. Figure 4 indicates the respondents' level of agreement with a series of statements about the nature of the work experience.

Overwhelmingly, the respondents agree that meaningful public service and opportunities to help others are important. When helping others is juxtaposed with personal achievement, the level of agreement drops somewhat, suggesting that individual accomplishments are not completely unimportant. Only half are clearly willing to make sacrifices for the good of society. Almost two thirds agree that work

Figure 4.  
Attitudes about Work: Percentage that Agree (n=121)



should have personal meaning, but that does not mean that there is no boundary between personal and organizational problems for most respondents. As a Wichita State University student put it, “I feel I can find happiness in my career by balancing my professional and personal aspirations, making me look forward to both going to work and going home from work. I strive for a life that places priority on both professional and personal goals but separates the two.” The primary emphasis for

most young professionals is not pay and benefits, but, as indicated in Figure 2 earlier, they are also concerned about advancement and security. These are the “savvy altruists” that Cal-ICMA (California’s state-level affiliation with ICMA) is trying to attract with new, targeted marketing and recruiting strategies.<sup>9</sup>

### *Matching Young Professionals to Employment Opportunities*

It seems likely that the election of Barack Obama by the disproportionate support of young voters signals a rebirth of interest in public service, much like what happened after John Kennedy’s election in 1960. Furthermore, whereas the Baby Boomers were observers of that election and the oldest were still four years away from voting age, young people have been a critical source of the ideas, organizing principles, and person power of the Obama campaign. There is a large pool of potential recruits for professional positions in local government who are ready to contribute immediately.

At the Federal level, the good news for young professionals is the expansion of employment opportunities. Under President Barack Obama’s 2010 budget plan, over 140,000 staff members will be hired by the Federal government (Losey, 2009). The bad news is a personnel recruitment system that is poorly suited to reach out to and tap into the young professional employment market, although reform efforts have been proposed.<sup>10</sup> Unless a system perceived to be slow and cumbersome is improved, the most talented and socially motivated young professionals may not start or stay with the process. It seems likely that the Federal government also suffers from the reputation that it is remote from the people it serves. The challenge is to convince young professionals that they can make a difference in direct ways, not simply through contributing to large programs and abstract systems.

At the local level, the good news is that young professionals are likely to see a connection between the work done and their public service values (although nonprofits will compete with local governments in this regard). The bad news for local as well as state governments is the fiscal crisis. Without the possibility of deficit spending, layoffs and hiring freezes are nearly universal. The capacity to recruit new staff will be hampered. The ranks of young professionals already employed in state and local government positions may be thinned, although early retirement incentives in some local governments may offset this tendency. With cuts in midlevel positions and the reorganization of programs and services, however, young professionals in government may have new opportunities for growth and professional development in these tight times. Local governments need to consider their succession needs and current service needs when they respond to cutbacks and start hiring, as soon as possible, to offset impending retirements.

### *The Challenge to Public Officials, Associations, and Universities*

This portrait of young professionals suggests some important challenges for associations made up of professionals, in particular ICMA. These organizations

seek to attract members and promote both the highest professional values and ethical commitment. There appears to be a major shift occurring in the way that young professionals view their careers and the values they seek to promote. They are not dramatically different from senior top administrators in many respects, but they are likely to move through positions in different ways. As a consequence, they may view professional association memberships differently. Members of older generations were more likely to be committed to local government management as a career and to either move across many different local governments to seek advancement or work up the ranks in a single organization until they reached upper level positions. This stability in career patterns also provided continuity in ICMA membership. Joining was an investment to support focused career goals, and long-term membership in ICMA contributed to professional development that accumulated progressively over time. Senior members helped to incorporate and socialize new members.

In contrast, young professionals have less interest in spending their entire careers in local government and in being city or county managers. Young professionals interested in local government are more likely to focus on growing within a community than moving across communities to pursue promotions. A Wichita State student indicated that she values a “sense of community” and wants to have “permanent roots in one area.” With this orientation, “being a city manager, and moving from town to town over the progression of a career does not appeal to me.” They are also less likely to see longevity as a value in itself. Combining these sentiments with the preference for variety over a career, it seems likely that more young professionals will choose to look for new positions in the same urban region in another sector rather than seek professional growth as a local government administrator in another jurisdiction.

With dual-career households, coordinating job opportunities is a challenge, and the interests of children add additional complications. The increasing appeal of larger urban areas reinforce the tendency to stay put and decreases the likelihood of a move to a small community in a remote, rural area. The flip side of these characteristics is that top positions in local government may increasingly be filled by professionals from within the urban region who have spent extended periods in business or nonprofit organizations, perhaps involved in city or county government affairs through new governance arrangements and public-private partnerships, but have little or no local government employment history.

### *What Is To Be Done by Local Governments and ICMA?*

#### *Local governments.*

City and county governments should pursue the wide range of leading practices identified to respond to next generation challenges. A summary by Frank Benest (2007) includes these imperatives:

- Support must come from the top—the chief executive and the executive team of department directors—for leadership development and succession planning programs.
- The roles of managers must be reconceptualized to recognize talent development as a primary function.
- All organizational systems (strategic planning, training, performance evaluation, compensation) must be aligned to achieve the goal of developing leadership talent. For example, not only should managers be trained to provide developmental support and guidance to high potential employees, but also evaluation and compensation criteria should be linked to successfully performing this function.
- Development programs must differentiate between management and leadership, stressing both formal authority and also interpersonal skills and leadership competencies.
- Training must go beyond classroom settings and include engagement in a series of challenging work experiences coupled with candid performance feedback.
- Responsibility for self-development must be placed on the employee. “Ultimately the responsibility for self-development must be the responsibility of the aspiring manager. Only the employee can commit the required time, energy, reflection, and learning that is needed if one is to grow, develop, and prepare oneself for career advancement” (p. 4).

These points are a reminder that the succession planning cannot be a top-down process. Young professionals will want to be an active part of shaping their future. They also wish to have clarity about prospects and steps toward advancement. Succession planning should be accompanied by opportunity counseling to address the frustrations of waiting for opportunities to open up.<sup>11</sup>

These approaches reflect a “grow your own” strategy. Local governments can develop their midlevel staff by working closely with universities to create MPA programs for promising managers without a master’s degree and programs for nondegree leadership development. More local governments should provide more full-time, post-graduate internship opportunities to support programs such as the ICMA Local Government Management Fellowship.

Beyond programs, shifts in attitudes are needed as well. Top administrators in local government need to pay attention to the strong preferences for service and meaningful work. A member of the ICMA Strategic Planning Committee observed that it is hard to compete with nonprofit organizations for young professionals because “in a nonprofit, you do important work from day one.”<sup>12</sup> Is it possible that young staff members in government can also do important work on their first day? There seems to be a persistent emphasis on having young staff members “pay their dues” and work their way up to the point that

they can have important responsibilities. Although it is true that top local government management positions offer the “ultimate community service” (Kellar, 2003, n.p.), young professionals in staff departments may feel removed from these service contributions, and those in operating departments may provide a service but not appreciate the big picture and larger meaning of their work. Using teams with members of mixed ages and experience to work on projects and having flexible structures that promote communication across organizational levels can contribute to real involvement for younger staff.

Local governments should be more active in service-learning programs in high schools and colleges. It is common to use internships as the avenue for student involvement in government work, but internships often go to those students who are already interested in local government and have relevant course preparation. Internships are typically more structured than the volunteer activities of service-learning programs, in which students with no experience or preparation do hands-on work helping others and conduct individual or guided self-reflection on their experience.<sup>13</sup> A Brookings Institution survey in 2003 of college seniors majoring in the humanities, social sciences, social work, and education found that only 28% of the students said that working for the government was “completely public service,” but 58% saw nonprofit organizations in this way. Even among respondents who intended to work in government, 66% felt that nonprofits were the best place to help people (Light, 2003). These attitudes are reinforced by the extensive exposure that students have to nonprofits. In the Brookings survey, more than half of the college seniors had experience with nonprofit organizations, compared with just 11% who had experience with either state or local government and 8% who had experience with the Federal government (Light, 2003). Internship programs and shadowing activities are valuable training activities, but they are not a substitute for service activities that involve a larger number of students.

It is also important to recognize the attractiveness of other levels of government and other sectors. Among the students who completed the survey and hope to be city managers, 13% would like to have experience in nonprofits, 23% in business, and 27% would like experience in both. These interests might be accommodated by giving staff members opportunities to interact with other sectors, supporting participation in a young-professional network in the community, providing loaned-executive programs or leaves of absence to work in other sectors, and examining knowledge and experience standards to better accommodate those without a local government background. Young professionals should be familiarized with the nonprofit organizations that many local governments are creating to support their activities. City and county workers should be encouraged to be active in community volunteer efforts. Exposure to the state and national municipal leagues’ work with state and Federal government could be interesting to many young professionals. It is

useful to stress the variety of functional and management areas available when working in local government organization and to provide opportunities to move around the organization. For many young professionals, the idea of spending one's career in one city or county or exclusively in government may not be appealing. It will be important to support involvement in other sectors, accept that some will take jobs there, and welcome them back.

ICMA should accept the likelihood that its membership will be less stable in the future. It should examine its mind-set and its activities to ensure that it is welcoming to new members from different backgrounds. Reflecting the attitudes of young professionals, the tight professional job market, and the changing nature of community affairs, in the future there will be increasing numbers of reentry and lateral-entry hires into top-level positions in local government. It would weaken ICMA for these persons to remain outside the association or to be involved only at the state level. New members need to be socialized to the shared values of the profession when they return or join for the first time. Still, new members with different backgrounds should not be viewed as outsiders who must be taught what it means to be a "real" manager, but rather accepted as contributors who bring unique perspectives. Explicit measures might be taken to bring relatively new members into leadership positions and the association governance process.

#### CONCLUSION

The futures of the government management profession and the membership in public official associations are integrally linked to the broad generational changes that are underway in the United States. These entities must increasingly attract new employees and association members who have a broad commitment to community service and are likely to pursue that commitment in a variety of positions. These young professionals are likely to have more fluid careers and more lapses in membership if they temporarily leave work in government. Their normal inclination may be to assign less importance to associations of government managers than to a local network of professionals from many sectors. ICMA must examine its image and attractiveness to young professionals.

It is important for governments and the associations to find ways to link service and concern for the community with attachment to the profession as a whole. It is imperative to connect the altruism of young professionals with meaningful work in local government. It is less likely that a young professional's career will be spent entirely in government or that professional membership will be in ICMA only. Government agencies and associations must develop partnerships with other sectors and other associations. In personnel and membership matters, both agencies and associations must be welcoming to those who reenter or laterally enter and recognize the varied contributions such employees have to make to community service and the future of professional local government management.

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## FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The classification of generations varies, particularly the start of the baby boom and the length of Generation X. Here I follow the convention of four generations with these birth years: Traditionals were born before 1946, Baby Boomers were born between 1946-1964, Generation Xers were born between 1965-1981, and Millennials were born between 1982-2000 (i.e., the generation that started graduating from high school at the start of the new millennium). The divisions in Figure 1 depart slightly from these periods because of the use of 5-year increments in U.S. Census data.

- <sup>2</sup> When comparing the number of children between the ages of 10-14 in 2000 with the number of children between the ages of 0-4 in 1990, there is an increase of 2 million persons. The same is true of those 15-19 years of age in 2000. The increase is present to a declining extent for persons through age 40. There were 11,363,371 more persons aged 10-39 in 2000 than persons aged 0-29 in 1990. After that age, each cohort is smaller 10 years later.
- <sup>3</sup> ICMA defines the transition period as ten years, but other discussions imply that the size and the pace of turnover will be faster. For example, Frank Benest (2007) reports that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) of Congress “now estimates that 53 percent of all government workers at federal, state, and local levels are eligible to retire in the next three to five years” (p. 2). The GAO (2001) examined only Federal staff. It did find that 53% of persons in the program management category would be eligible to retire by 2006; the percent expected to retire was 30%, compared to 16% of management and program analysts and 19% of personnel managers. The overall conclusion of the GAO report is as follows: “We estimate that by 2006 about 31 percent of [Federal] ... agency employees working in 1998, or 493,000 people, will be eligible to retire, and that through the end of 2006 about half of the eligible employees (236,000 people, the equivalent of 15 percent of the 1998 workforce) will actually retire. This 15-percent retirement rate is higher than the actual rate for fiscal years 1991 through 1998, which was 11 percent” (p. 4).
- <sup>4</sup> Some managers may encounter strong incentives to retire if there are provisions in retirement systems that reward them as much for retiring as for continuing to work. Those persons might then seek manager positions in other retirement systems or continue to work in their original positions on a contract basis. In either case, they are still competing with younger professionals for jobs. In addition, many nontraditional candidates are entering the local government management field. They include individuals from a variety of other sectors who have matured in their careers and are seeking opportunities to serve the public via local government management or new midcareer entry candidates.
- <sup>5</sup> It is also important to recognize that a substantial number of Gen Xers and young boomers are seeking to transition from nonprofit organizations or businesses into government, or they are preparing to reenter the workforce by pursuing MPA degrees.
- <sup>6</sup> I would like to thank John Nalbandian for distributing a short version of the questionnaire to full-time and part-time students in the KU MPA program and to thank Ed Flentje, who conducted open-ended discussions of issues related to generational change at WSU. Gerald Gabris, Maureen Berner, and I circulated the complete questionnaire to students at NIU, UNC-CH, and ASU, respectively. The short survey includes questions from a 1997 survey of city administrators as well as questions from a survey developed by Sanjey Panday at Rutgers-Newark. The long survey also includes questions from a benefits survey conducted by ICMA. The long survey is available in a Web-survey format and is available to any MPA or MPP programs that would like to use it.
- <sup>7</sup> This survey was the basis for Svava (1999).
- <sup>8</sup> The business option was divided between those that provide services to local government and other businesses. To a much greater extent than for the other groups, the persons who strongly hope to be managers preferred the former to the latter, 12% versus 2%, respectively.
- <sup>9</sup> A 2003 Brookings Institution survey (Light, 2003) of college seniors found similar results. The top six desired job attributes were the following: opportunity to help people, 67%; benefits, 63%; opportunity to do challenging work, 63%; opportunity to learn new skills, 63%; job security, 60%; and opportunity for advancement, 56%. Only 30% chose salary.
- <sup>10</sup> John Berry, Director of the Office of Personnel Management, announced plans for reforming the hiring process in May, 2010 ( [http://www.opm.gov/hiringreform/misc/20100511\\_remarks.aspx](http://www.opm.gov/hiringreform/misc/20100511_remarks.aspx)).

- <sup>11</sup> A recent study by The Waters Consulting Group (2007) indicated that programs to prepare and grow the future leadership management pool are more likely to be supported by staff with extensive experience. The development of a “clearly defined and communicated career ladder program to not only retain but also attract key talent” (p. tk) is more highly supported by staff with limited experience. The group also found that older and more experienced staff members tend to feel that more is being done in succession planning than do younger and less experienced staff.
- <sup>12</sup> The author was a member of this committee that functioned from 2006-2008.
- <sup>13</sup> From my involvement with service-learning activities, some service-learning “purists” do not consider internships to be service learning but rather a semiprofessional training experience. In addition, service-learning program administrators typically are more accustomed to approaching nonprofits to set up assignments for students. Local governments are likely to get a good response, however, if they initiate contact and help identify reflections questions that students could answer about public service and local government.

James H. Svara is a Professor in the School of Public Affairs at Arizona State University and is the Director of the Center for Urban Innovation. Recent publications include *The Facilitative Leader in City Hall* (CRC Press) and *More than Mayor or Manager: Campaigns to Change Form of Government in America's Large Cities*, co-edited with Douglas J. Watson (forthcoming, Georgetown University Press). The survey was conducted in connection with his membership on the ICMA Strategic Planning Committee. An earlier version of this paper appeared in *PMplus*, an online publication of ICMA, in April 2008.