



Council-Manager Government

Model of Flexibility and Strength

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Dave Mora

ICMA West Coast Regional Director

- 35 years' local government management experience in California, including serving as manager of 3 communities, 2 with directly elected mayors
- Former president of ICMA and City Managers' Department of League of California Cities



About ICMA

- Founded 1914 as professional organization for appointed local government managers
- Currently 9,000 members
- Roughly 5,600 city, town, or county managers or senior-level assistant/deputy managers
- Decisions made by ICMA members affect millions of individuals in thousands of communities



About ICMA

- Mission: To create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional local government management worldwide
- Premier local government leadership and management organization
- Origins in council-manager form of government



ICMA Code of Ethics

- ICMA members agree to subscribe to a stringently-enforced Code of Ethics
- The Code was established in 1924 and ensures the professional and personal integrity of city, town, and county managers
- The Code also requires members to commit to a minimum of 40 hours of continuing education and professional development



A Quick History of the Council-Manager Form

- Born out of turn-of-century progressive reform movement
- Corruption in America 19th-20th Centuries
 - “Gangs of New York” and Tammany Hall political machine that controlled city politics for years
- Reformers were catalysts for local change



History of the Council-Manager Form (cont'd.)

- Reformers engaged business sector for change
- “Scientific” approach to local management
- Fostered transparency and accountability to citizens
- National Municipal League (now National Civic League) led charge against local corruption

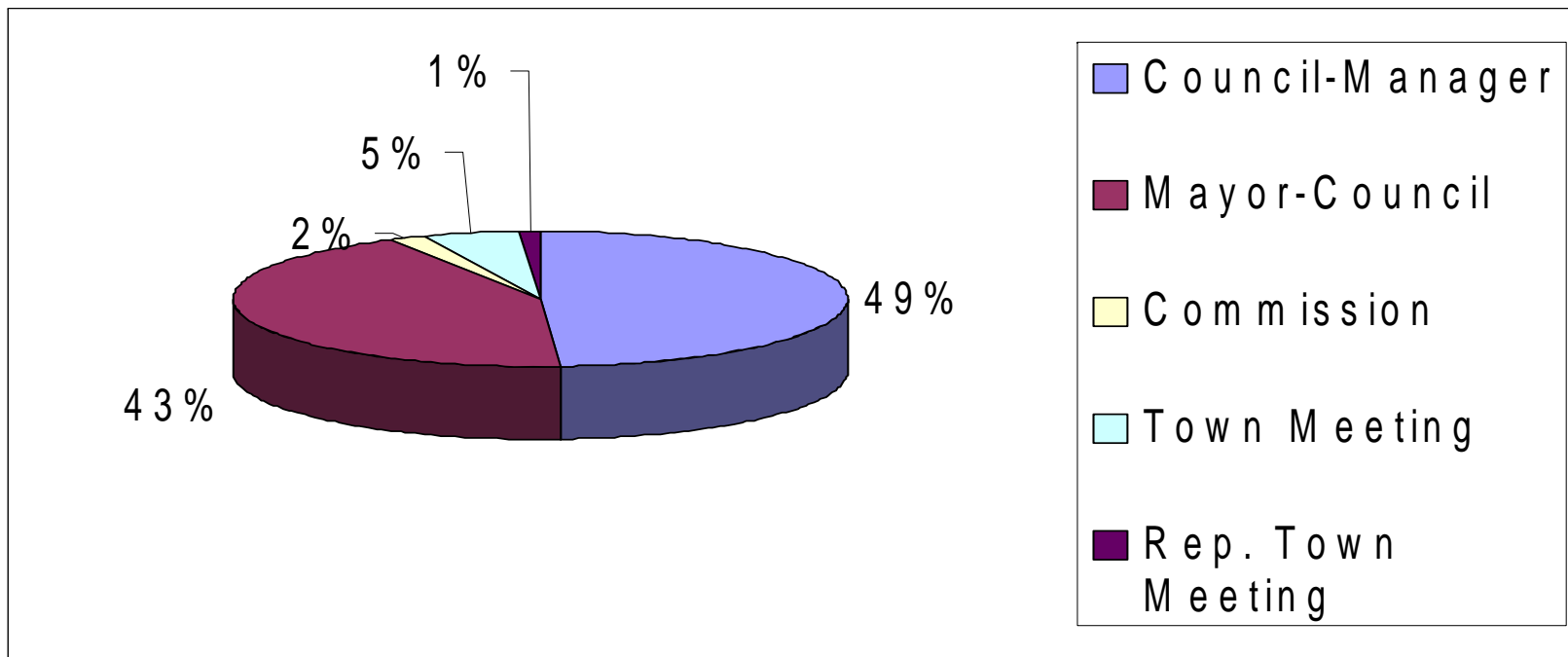


Current Status of Council-Manager Government

- Trend is toward council-manager government
- Today more than 92 million people in the U.S. live in cities and counties operating under council-manager/administrator form

Current Status of Council-Manager Government

(2009 data)





Fast Facts:

- **49%** of the 7,225 U.S. cities with populations of 2,500 and greater operate under the council-manager form
- **43%** operate under mayor-council
- **2%** commission
- **5%** town meeting and **1%** representative town meeting

(Source: 2009 *Municipal Year Book*)



Fast Facts

Among the 480 incorporated California cities and towns...

- 445 operate under council-manager government
- 17 operate under mayor-council



Benefits of Council-Manager Government

- Distinction between administrative role of manager and policy role of chief elected executive
- Mayor serves as political leader and “face” of community
- Mayor directly elected in 67% of C-M cities



Benefits of Council-Manager Government

- Political power concentrated in entire governing body
- Policy making resides with elected officials, led by mayor
- Elected officials free to devote time to policy planning and development



Benefits of Council-Manager Government

- Day-to-day operations managed by highly trained, nonpartisan, experienced professional
- Managers possess “know-how” (experience) to ensure continuous improvement of community services



Benefits of Council-Manager Government

- Manager carries out the policies established by elected governing body
- Emphasis on effective, efficient, and equitable service delivery
- NCL continues to endorse form today



Under Council-Manager Government...

- Manager appointed by majority vote of governing body for a definite or indefinite term
- Subject to termination by a majority vote of that body at any time.



Under Council-Manager Government...

- Manager responsible for preparing the budget and presenting it to the governing body
- Has direct responsibility for administration of the budget, as approved by governing body



Under Council-Manager Government...

- Manager has full authority for the appointment and removal of at least most of the principle department heads and county functions



Under Council-Manager Government...

- Manager appointment based on professional experience, managerial qualifications, and education
- Political affiliations should not influence appointment



Council-Manager Government Makes a Difference

To be successful, every city needs strong

- Political leadership
- Policy development
- Focus on execution and results
- Commitment to transparent and ethical govt.
- Representation and engagement of all segments of community



“Value Proposition” of Council-Manager Government

- Council-manager form encompasses set of professional values, skills, and practices that ensure the success of the counties that use it



“Value Proposition” of Council-Manager Government

1. Adds value to the quality of public policy and produces results that matter
2. Takes a long-term, community-wide perspective
3. Committed to a set of ethical practices in the service of public values



“Value Proposition” of Council- Manager Government

4. Builds consensus among diverse interests
5. Promotes equity and fairness
6. Develops and sustains organizational excellence and innovation



Why Council-Manager Government

- Form of government that recognizes the critical role of elected officials/policymakers who focus on connections with the community
- Form of government that also recognizes the need for day-to-day management devoted to delivering services to residents
- Roles are distinct and require full-time attention



How We Know Council-Manager Government Works

- Communities with council-manager form have a strong track record of performance and accountability
- 22 of the 30 communities recognized between 2007 and 2009 with coveted All-America City Award, which fosters civic excellence, are council-manager



How We Know Council-Manager Government Works

- 2000 Government Performance Project evaluated the 35 U.S. cities with the largest gross revenues



How We Know Council-Manager Government Works

- 2 cities with highest overall grades of A and A- respectively were Phoenix, Arizona, and Austin, Texas.; both operate under council-manager form
- 6 lowest scoring cities (Anchorage, Cleveland, Columbus, Los Angeles, Buffalo, and New Orleans) operate under mayor-council form



In summary...

- While a good manager will always do his or her best to implement the vision of elected officials efficiently and effectively regardless of the form of government...
- The council-manager form is best structured to facilitate a city's success



Additional Information

Council-Manager Form of Government:
Frequently Asked Questions

Professional Local Government
Management: The Benefits to Your
Municipality

Council-Manager vs. Strong Mayor: The
Choice Is Clear

ICMA Code of Ethics with Guidelines



For more information, contact:

Dave Mora

ICMA West Coast Regional Director

dmora@icma.org

831-737-8133

<http://icma.org>



For more information, contact:

ICMA

777 North Capitol Street, NE

Suite 500

Washington, DC 20002-4201

202/289-4262 or 202/962-3557

<http://icma.org>