

Missouri City/County Management Association

Strategic Planning Workshop Report

January 23, 2019

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Executive Summary

In 2015, the MCMA board, in conjunction with its membership, developed and adopted a strategic plan to guide it through 2018. Since that time, significant progress has been made in achieving its goals. It has changed its structure and secured dedicated staff support, improved its professional development programs; and encouraged regional membership groups.

Using the original strategic plan as its foundation, the current Board of Directors, once again with feedback from its membership, has revised its strategic plan, developing a mission for the organization, key performance areas and priorities. A full summary begins on Page 5 of this document.

Mission

MCMA supports, promotes and advocates
For best practices and ethical professional local government
Through leadership, innovation and shared knowledge
To deliver excellent service to every Missourian.

Key Performance Areas, Goals and Objectives

Culture

MCMA is a welcoming organization that promotes ethical local government; encourages innovation; supports diversity; and challenges and encourages its members to be better personally and professionally.

Goal 1: Establish MCMA as an intentionally inclusive organization, with explicit support from the board, seeking opportunities for all to be involved in membership, professional development, and networking.

Objective 1: Adopt a policy statement regarding MCMA's value of inclusivity and diversity

Objective 2: Communicate protocol for reporting incidents contrary to this value

Objective 3: Ensure the board, committees and work groups are representative of the broader organization

Goal 2: Establish official partnerships with ELGL, Women Leading Government, and National Forum for Black Public Administrators and including representatives from these organizations in board meetings

Member Engagement

MCMA will have diverse, extensive and active membership throughout Missouri by providing relevant, accessible professional development with knowledge transfer and innovation that supports all cities in Missouri.

Goal 1: Create a comprehensive member engagement program

- Objective 1: Grow the regional outreach programs and processes already in place
- Objective 2: Implement a process to welcome new city managers and administrators to the state and invite them to join MCMA
- Objective 3: Establish opportunities for members to be formally involved, including membership on the board as well as task forces and committees to research and develop new initiatives
- Objective 4: Develop a mechanism to support MCMA members in transition
- Objective 5: Recognizing Missouri's larger communities have issues unique to their size, determine how MCMA can be more relevant and develop an approach to securing large city involvement
- Objective 6: Conduct outreach to managers/administrators and others in leadership roles in smaller communities who are not members of MCMA to solicit their involvement

Goal 2: While continuing to offer a quality spring conference and winter workshop, identify additional mechanisms to enhance the skills of Missouri local government managers.

- Objective 1: Partner with colleges and universities to provide workshops on issues of current relevance and student interactions
- Objective 2: Identify and support ongoing professional education for all members, including ICMA, MML, other professional associations credentialing, one-day workshops for new city managers/administrators and other certifications for local government staff
- Objective 3: Develop a means to foster Innovation and knowledge sharing

Communication

MCMA members are fully aware of organizational initiatives, resources and opportunities through comprehensive communication. MCMA has an external outreach communication strategy to connect, educate and involve external partners and stakeholders.

Goal 1: Implement a comprehensive communication plan, identifying best practices for traditional and digital media.

- Objective 1: Create the communication plan, prioritizing actions for immediate implementation
- Objective 2: Continue improvements to MCMA website
- Objective 3: Enhance listserv, including development of an archival system
- Objective 4: Regularly communicate with MCMA members through a newsletter

Goal 2: Identify and promote the MCMA brand to members, nonmembers and all Missouri communities

- Objective 1: Establish a task force to shepherd the branding initiative

Organizational Management: MCMA is a well-managed, highly trusted, inclusive, credible professional organization that creates a variety of innovative opportunities for its members.

- Goal 1: Strengthen MCMA's relationship with the Missouri Municipal League, identifying ways to secure greater influence with the Missouri General Assembly
- Goal 2: Evaluate staffing capacity to achieve strategic initiatives and secure additional resources if needed.
- Goal 3: Review the mission and structure of the MCMA Foundation

Implementation

To ensure the goals established by the MCMA board as reflected in this document are accomplished, each will need a champion. To that end, the board should designate responsibility among its members for each the goals outlined here.

It will be the responsibility of those members to determine the best approach to achieve the goals, implement that approach with the assistance of other board or MCMA members as needed, and report back to the board and membership on an ongoing basis.

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Full Summary

This section documents and comprises detailed notes from the MCMA Board of Director's January 23, 2019 Strategic Planning Workshop. The information and outcomes from this session in combination with input from the December 2018 member survey are the basis of the Strategic Plan.

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The Missouri City/County Management Association Board of Directors met in Columbia, Missouri on January 28, 2019 to update its strategic plan. Attending were:

- Craig Owens, City Manager, Clayton and MCMA President
- DJ Gehrt, City Administrator, Platte City and MCMA President Elect
- Roger Haynes, Deputy City Manager, Mexico and 2nd Vice President
- Greg Burris, United Way, Immediate Past President
- Scott Meyer, City Manager, Cape Girardeau, Board member
- Greg Camp, City Administrator, Festus, Board member
- Ben DeClue, City Administrator, Glendale, Board Member
- Jessica Heslin, Assistant City Administrator, Wentzville, representing Women Leading Government
- Cheryl Hilvert, ICMA Midwest Regional Director

Opening Remarks

Participants were ask to come prepared to share an “opening statement” that includes the following:

- I joined MCMA because _____.
- I continue to be a part of MCMA because _____.
- I bring _____ to the MCMA board.
- To be a productive member of the board I _____.
- My hope is that the board and the organization achieve _____.

Their responses follow.

	I joined MCMA because:	I continue to be a part of MCMA because:	I bring this to the MCMA board/organization	To be a productive member of the board/organization.	My hope is that the board and the organization achieve:
Craig Owens	This was “religion.” Had inspirational city managers that guided me. It’s just what you do. It just keeps on expanding. Pay it forward.	You realize that you pay it forward. It’s an obligation. There are new faces all the time. I see some of us in the traditional path don’t embrace folks as much as we can.	Ask hard/challenging questions; We need to start with a broad idea pallet and narrow down.		We gain a more active stance as an organization. Our relevance will decline if we don’t become more active and vocal. It’s a necessary piece that isn’t cover by other. Want to consider “unreasonable” requests.
Ben DeClue	Essential to the city management experience in Missouri; as asst. to, boss was VP; helped with operational aspects	Core belief that it is an essential part of CM in Missouri, everyone can benefit from membership	Historical perspective, important given Katie is leaving, we are losing some of that with retirements	I like to be in the know. Good at identifying things to be done.	Hope we achieve the critical mass to serving the members; incorporation was key; transitioning to Emily as a process; go to state meetings and hear what others are doing; have been pitching “boot camp” for a new managers who are transitioning to the role from a previous career/association; Illinois does that

	I joined MCMA because:	I continue to be a part of MCMA because:	I bring this to the MCMA board/organization	To be a productive member of the board/organization	My hope is that the board and the organization achieve:
Roger Haynes	It's cost effective and an excellent networking tool	Benefits I've been afforded and the networking.	A nontraditional perspective	Strive to listen and to participate; that can't be limited to board functions. See if we can entice others.	Solid identity as a statewide team. Encourage others to join and see substantial in the associational.
Greg Camp	I didn't have a clue about the profession It started with love of community; they wanted to serve the town or the people;	People are willing to share; there are things that I can continue to learn every day	Unique nontraditional perspective – broadcasting, council mayor state office; I think we will see more of that. If they come from another field, we have to facilitate their involvement	Listen and willing to share, whether failure or success stories	Clarity on mission; actively engage people to let them know we are here, there is value to be a part of the group; broaden the base and be more inclusive
DJ Gehrt	Meet people, figure out city management in Mo; 20 years ago	Helpful; obligation to provide info to other members	2013-2022 on board; bring continuity; history, can be positive and negative	Operational and incremental; need to be aspirational; first plan was largely operational	but would like to be aspirational
Scott Meyer	City Clerk said I should join; have always been a benefactor of professional orgs, its' a wonderful org	The value that it brings; I'm ignorant about so many things; camaraderie; advice, listserv; the people make me what to stay	Brings a different perspective; unique career path	Be engaged, share perspective;	Be more inclusive; find a path to that; it's hard, all of us are busy; MCMA is like a hobby, you do it when you can; it's hard to change culture when what you do is a hobby

	I joined MCMA because:	I continue to be a part of MCMA because:	I bring this to the MCMA board/organization	To be a productive member of the board/organization	My hope is that the board and the organization achieve:
Jessica Heslin	My boss told me to;	I show up because of the relationships we build, professionally and personally	Unique perspective as having been in the business only two years	Listen and share	Want to bring value
Katie Bradley	Through work with MML; liaison; respect what they did; they are the heartbeat of what happens in Missouri		Professional communication with other groups, help them do what they want to do; there's never not a time that something isn't going on		
Emily Koenigsfeld	Exec Director asked her to support MCMA. Knows a little about the group but not a lot; Like Challenges and like to be busy				
Cheryl Hilvert	Joined Ohio assn. for the same reasons; what we do is important to me.			Bring experience and link to ICMA. I've seen that as the org change and what we do broadens, we have to be aspirational through things like strategic plans.	

Understanding the Current Environment

DJ Gehrt first provided a report regarding progress made since the adoption of the 2015 strategic plan. Key accomplishments were:

- Developing a strategic plan that focused on structure and functions
- By law revisions
- Incorporation of the association
- Laid framework for regional activities
- Improving value through quality conferences and training
- Listserv
- Website improvements
- Online coaching
- Staff support

Participants were then asked to reflect on other successes and lessons learned.

Successes

- More professional processes
- Restructuring of board for succession planning

Lessons Learned

- Continuity is important
- Other states have more staff support; staff is crucial to the organization.
- Member ownership is key to success.
- Use available resources to support quality professional development
- Engage new members
- Priorities fade; need to constantly assess whether they are relevant

An overview of the results of the survey administered to the MCMA members was then provided. The survey was sent to 202 people; 70 responded, resulting in a 34.6% response rate.

Survey results indicated:

- Members believe that training and workshops offered by MCMA is critical for their professional development.
- There is a desire for greater influence on the Missouri General Assembly.
- Respondents value the networking provided by MCMA and would like increased regional opportunities.
- While the listserv is valued, improved communication with members is desired.
- The organization should be more inclusive in attracting members throughout the state as well as asking them to serve in leadership roles.

What is the mission of MCMA?

A mission statement outlines an organization’s reason for being. It should identify:

- What we do (as broad as possible)
- For whom we do our job
- Why we do our jobs

Participants brainstormed answers to these three questions.

What do we do?	For whom do we do it?	For what purpose?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support professional managers • Provide networking and training • Promote the profession • Advocate for best practices in local government • Unite the state (managers and communities) • Advocate and enforce ICMA Code of Ethics • Communication platform • Influence state legislatures • Mentorship opportunities • Leadership • Knowledge transfer • Ethos of how we do business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community • Current and future members • All local government managers • Students • Other staff • Elected officials • Citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community/citizens • Better quality of life • Grow and promote professionalism • Grow faith in government • For all in the community • Everyone in Missouri should have great local government. • Further the public good

Following the brainstorming activity, participants were divided into three groups. Each group drafted a mission statement. Based on those drafts, consensus was reached on the following mission statement.

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Key Performance Areas

As participants reflected on the newly developed mission statement, they engaged in an exercise to identify MCMA’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in achieving that mission. Strengths and weaknesses are internal to the organization; opportunities and threats are external to the organization.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation laid by prior plan Positive momentum (listserv, professional development improved) Staffing Strong commitment to success of the group Financial capacity Improved regional groups Relationships/collegiality Geographic dispersion ICMA Code of Ethics Increasing diversity Finances Shared knowledge Willingness to change Well structured Improving in being a welcoming organization Professional development 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception that it’s not an open group Number of communities without MCMA association Lack of large city participation and value of membership Sponsors/affiliate outreach/relationships Death of expertise Complacency Geographic dispersion Communication with existing and potential members Non partisanship Busy “nothing left to learn” perception No formal outreach to new managers Lack of networking with other organizations Decaying relations with MPA programs Some consider MCMA as “cliquish” Diversity in membership and leadership
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to fund higher quality staff Growth and interest in sponsorships Expand professional development; more options and certification Provide support to legislators Increased involvement from larger communities Reaching students Story telling Member engagement New member recruitment Trust in local government Local universities “Big’ city involvement MML Better Together Social Media Wayfair 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local control Unethical activity Knowledge of local government structure Distrust in government Elected officials/legislature Private interests Awareness of MCMA Member budgets Political environment in Jeff City Better together Reporting Social media Possible economic downturn

Based on this SWOT analysis, participants identified four key performance areas and defined what success would look like in each of those areas.

1. **Member Engagement:** MCMA will have diverse, extensive and active membership throughout Missouri by providing relevant, accessible professional development with knowledge transfer and innovation that supports all cities in Missouri.
2. **Communication:** MCMA members are fully aware of organizational initiatives, resources and opportunities through comprehensive communication. MCMA has an external outreach communication strategy to connect, educate and involve external partners and stakeholders.
3. **Culture:** MCMA is a welcoming organization that promotes ethical local government; encourages innovation; supports diversity; and challenges and encourages its members to be better personally and professionally.
4. **Organizational Management:** MCMA is a well-managed, highly trusted, inclusive, credible professional organization that creates a variety of innovative opportunities for its members.

The Board's Priorities

Considering the key performance areas (KPA's), all participants were provided the opportunity to identify initiatives within the KPA's. They were then given dots to identify those they thought were most important. The results of that exercise follows.

Member Engagement	
MCMA will have diverse, extensive and active membership throughout Missouri by providing relevant, accessible professional development with knowledge transfer and innovation that supports all cities in Missouri.	
Identify and implement ways to be more inclusive – rural/urban, new administrators, new members in the state, gender	7
Be sensitive to time commitments of members	5
Establish a credentialing or certification program in the state	4
Identify and recruit regional organizational leaders	3
Develop and implement a new administrator one-day training event	3
Increase member involvement at sub-board level	2
Establish professional development study groups of similar tenure, city etc. to research and innovate	2
Develop/structure a welcome package to new members	1
Annual member survey includes “inclusion” perception questions.	1
Training, webinars and one-day workshops at regional level	
Continuing to create opportunities for new members to be involved on committees and in projects	
Maintain focus on high quality professional development events	
Members feel they get great value from their membership and MCMA.	
MCMA reaches out to all communities in the state.	
Restore assistant/early career group/conference	
Mentoring	
Connect with acting managers	
Improve outreach to members in transition and those in duress	

Communication	
MCMA members are fully aware of organizational initiatives, resources and opportunities through comprehensive communication. MCMA has an external outreach communication strategy to connect, educate and involve external partners and stakeholders.	
Improve website	5
Brand MCMA	4
Improve influence and communication with the General Assembly	4
Have a regular member newsletter	3
Build a formal partnership with universities	2
Identify and fund listserv and document archive	2
MCMA taps ICMA's expertise and assistance to tell best practices in storytelling	1
Turn listserv history into database	
MCMA offers workshops to teach members storytelling	
Issue MCMA press releases on timely topics issues or events	
Provide increased resources for communication	
Increase communication frequency	

Culture	
MCMA is a welcoming organization that promotes ethical local government; encourages innovation; supports diversity; and challenges and encourages its members to be better personally and professionally.	
MCMA is an inclusive organization, with explicit support from the board, seeking opportunities for all to be involved in membership, professional development, and networking.	7
MCMA creates "fertile ground" for innovation to occur.	4
MCMA is a time-sensitive organization, recognizing our members wear many hats and are time constrained.	2
Ensure new members understand who they can talk to if treated improperly at MCMA events.	1
MCMA reaches out to new city managers/city administrators within 10 days of their appointment.	1
MCMA reaches out to other professional organizations to determine common priorities and work together to advance them.	
MCMA's organizational culture is unique to Missouri, yet aligned with ICMA's major initiatives.	
Professional	
Represent the profession ethically internally and externally to build trust throughout	
Ensure diverse voices are represented on MCMA committees	

Organizational Management	
MCMA is a well-managed, highly trusted, inclusive, credible professional organization that creates a variety of innovative opportunities for its members.	
Develop official partnerships with ELGL, MOWLG	7
Develop storytelling capacity for our organization and its members.	3
Further Improve MML/MCMA relationship.	3
MCMA offers scholarships and promotes internships to support inclusivity and diversity.	2
Identify specific staff support needs and develop alternatives	2

MCMA is financially stable and sustainable.	2
MCMA is viewed by members, partners and the legislature as credible.	1
Use technology to streamline processes	1
Delineate association, regional and individual expectations	1
Connect MCMA members with non-members for technical assistance.	1
Review all membership data and confirm accuracy.	
Member trust in MCMA is high.	
Trustworthy	
Given financial strength, continue to seek professional speakers for relevant topics	
Formalize regional responsibilities	

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