

2025-2030

# STRATEGIC PLAN

# INTRODUCTION

The Missouri City-County Management Association (MCMA) is excited to present our Strategic Plan for 2025-2030. This plan is the result of a collaborative effort involving our dedicated board members, committee chairs, and the broader membership. Our goal is to outline a clear and actionable path forward that will guide our organization in supporting local government managers across Missouri. By focusing on key areas such as inclusivity, professional development, and legislative advocacy, we aim to strengthen our network and enhance the effectiveness of local government management.

Our strategic planning process was facilitated by EverStrive Solutions, who helped us gather valuable insights through interviews, focus groups, and surveys. These efforts ensured that our plan is grounded in the real experiences and needs of our members. The plan highlights our strengths, such as our commitment to continuous learning and innovation, our strong network of professional relationships, and our ability to adapt to changing circumstances. At the same time, it addresses challenges like historical exclusivity, the need for better member engagement, and the effectiveness of our current committee structure. By acknowledging these areas, we can build on our successes and tackle our challenges head-on.

This strategic plan is built around three main pillars: Welcoming and Supportive, Champion the Profession, and Trusted Resource. Each pillar includes specific goals and measures of success to ensure we stay on track and make meaningful progress. We are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment, promoting the value of local government management, and advocating for the interests of our members. Together, we can achieve our mission of delivering excellent service to every Missourian through ethical and innovative local government practices.



# PROCESS OVERVIEW

EverStrive Solutions was engaged to facilitate a strategic planning workshop for the Missouri City Management Association (MCMA) Board of Directors on January 22, 2025. Prior to the workshop, EverStrive Solutions conducted one-on-one interviews with board members, facilitated a focus group of MCMA committee chairs and past board members, and conducted a membership survey. Summarized information from the advance insight gathering was shared with the MCMA Board in the strategic planning retreat to set a common foundation of knowledge prior to goal setting.

## STRENGTHS

- **Dedicated Volunteers:** The organization benefits from members who are highly motivated to give back and support MCMA.
- **Improved Operations:** The partnership with MML has helped MCMA operate more effectively.
- **Professional Development:** MCMA provides valuable professional development opportunities, including high-quality speakers and training sessions.
- **Inclusivity Efforts:** The implementation of the Code of Conduct and efforts to address harassment issues have made progress in creating a safer and more inclusive environment.
- **Strong Board Dynamics:** The Board of Directors is described as cohesive and ready to do the work, which is a positive indicator for organizational effectiveness.

## CHALLENGES

- **Historical Exclusivity:** The organization has a history of not being welcoming to young people, women, minorities, and those with non-traditional career paths which has created deep-seated issues that need to be addressed.
- **Committee Structure:** There are concerns about the effectiveness of the current committee structure and whether it adequately engages members.
- **Member Engagement:** Keeping members actively involved and ensuring the organization remains relevant is a significant challenge. There is a need to rebuild a sense of camaraderie and personal and professional value.
- **Political Environment:** The increasing politicization and partisanship in the work environment pose challenges for MCMA.
- **Legislative Advocacy:** There is a need for better legislative advocacy and coordination among managers, independent of elected officials.
- **Collaboration with Other Organizations:** Better coordination with organizations like Women Leading Government, Missouri Municipal League, International City/County Management Association, and Engaging Local Government Leaders can help avoid duplicating efforts and find a collaborative "sweet spot."

# 2025-2030 STRATEGIC PILLARS

1

## WELCOMING AND SUPPORTIVE

MCMA is a welcoming and supportive organization. Members find value in their membership and actively promote its benefits to others.

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2

## CHAMPION THE PROFESSION

MCMA members are trusted experts in local government management, and Missouri communities take pride in being professionally managed.

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3

## TRUSTED RESOURCE

MCMA serves as an advocate for local government managers, engaging with state agencies and the legislature to represent their interests.

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## 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.

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 1:

# WELCOMING AND SUPPORTIVE

MCMA represents local government management professionals in Missouri. The organization embraces all individuals in the profession, regardless of race, gender, gender identity, age, disability, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation. Managers from non-traditional career paths are also welcomed and view MCMA membership as crucial for their professional success. Members experience a strong sense of camaraderie and belonging, relying on peer relationships for networking, support, and professional development.

## GOALS:

- **Meaningful Committee Work:** Ensure equitable distribution of work among active committees, with strong leadership and member engagement. Encourage members to participate in committees and contribute to the organization.
- **Embrace Diversity and Inclusion:** Foster diverse perspectives to enhance exposure to new ideas and strengthen professional development. Embed the principles of diversity and inclusion throughout MCMA's committees and programs.
- **Resources for Member Success:** Provide peer networking opportunities, relevant training, and a resource hub with helpful written materials. Serve as a reliable source for managers to ask questions and receive accurate, timely answers.

## DEFINING SUCCESS:

MCMA is inclusive, engaging, and valued by members. Members actively participate, committees function effectively, and diversity is embedded in all activities. Membership grows and retention remains high, with event attendance increasing and reflecting the diversity of the profession. Surveys indicate improved satisfaction, showing members feel supported and connected.

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 2:

# CHAMPION THE PROFESSION

MCMA plays a crucial role in shaping the future of local government management as a dynamic and respected profession. The general public recognizes the importance of local government management and its impact on community success. MCMA celebrates the achievements of its members and highlights core public service values such as transparency, efficiency, compassion, and consistency.

## GOALS:

- **Foster Pride in Local Government Management:** Promote the value of local government management and cultivate a sense of public pride in local government managers.
- **Attract Talent to the Profession:** Develop a pipeline of talent to sustain and grow the local government management profession.
- **Start with Service:** Emphasize the importance of local government management as the foundation for core community services such as clean water, snow removal, public utilities, public safety, trash collection, open spaces, and recreation.

## DEFINING SUCCESS:

MCMA is recognized as a leader in local government management, attracting new talent and increasing public awareness of professional city management. More managers are publicly acknowledged in governing meetings, and student engagement in events rises, strengthening the talent pipeline. Public perception improves as more people recognize the impact of professional local government leadership through surveys and media engagement.

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 3:

# TRUSTED RESOURCE

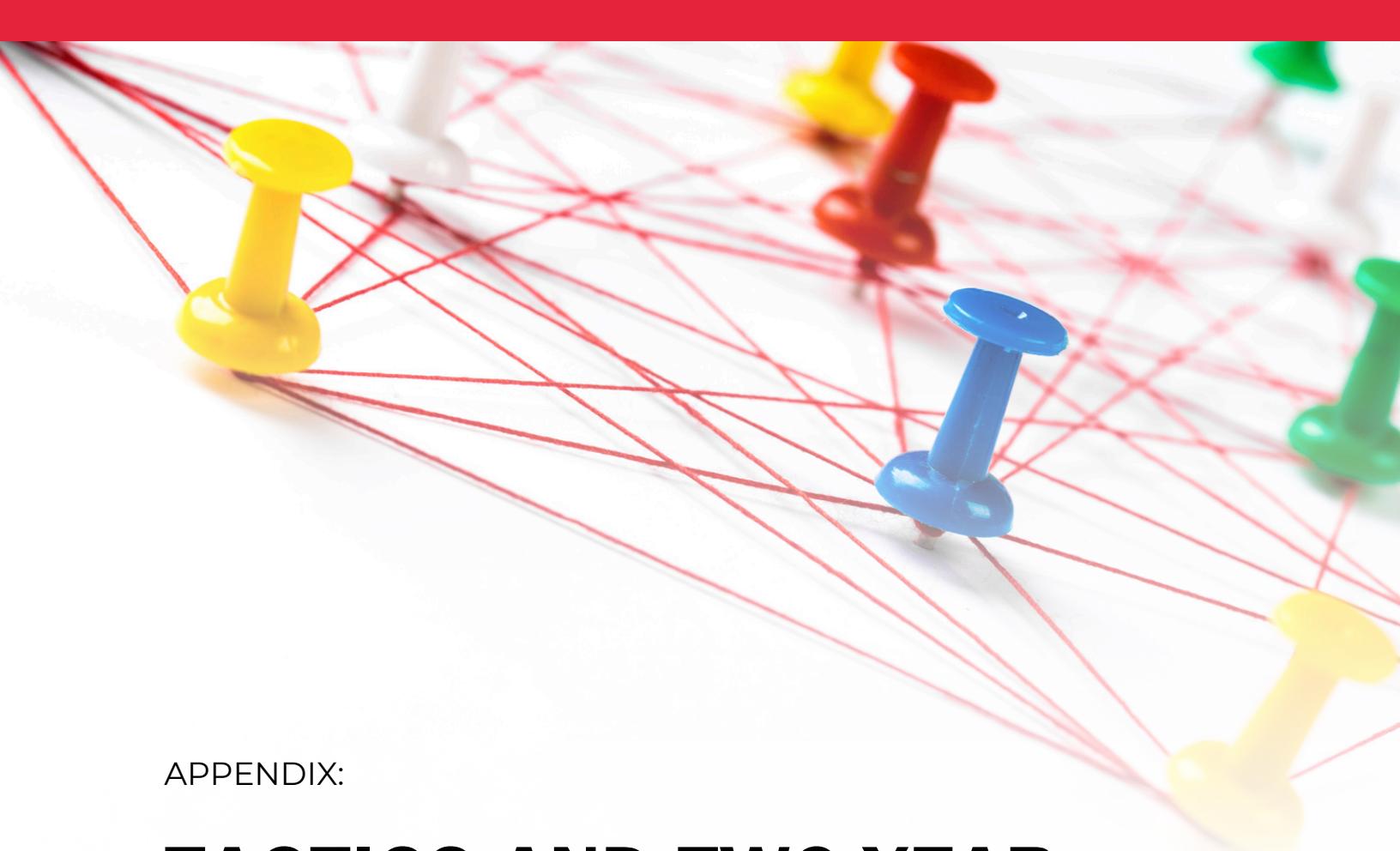
MCMA serves as a key resource for legislators and state officials on matters related to professionally managed cities. The organization provides information and insight on non-partisan local government practices and promotes the principles of competency-based civil service. In collaboration with groups like the Missouri Municipal League, MCMA helps elevate municipal perspectives. It is the only statewide organization dedicated specifically to supporting the role and needs of local government managers.

## GOALS:

- **Valued Resource for External Partners:** Establish MCMA as the leading expert for state agencies, legislators, and professional associations on matters impacting professionally-managed cities and counties.
- **Neutrality in Partisanship:** Uphold the ICMA Code of Ethics by engaging in non-partisan legislative advocacy. Support legislation that strengthens and protects local government managers and local control, without endorsing individual candidates or partisan agendas.

## DEFINING SUCCESS:

MCMA is a recognized source of expertise on issues related to local government management. State agencies and legislators increasingly seek input from the organization and its members on legislative matters. Members are regularly involved in providing testimony and contributing to discussions that shape public policy. These efforts support a greater understanding of professional city management and the role of competency-based civil service in effective local governance.



APPENDIX:

## **TACTICS AND TWO-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

As part of the Missouri City/County Management Association's five-year strategic planning process, a focused implementation plan has been developed with input from the Board of Directors to guide the organization's work over the next two years. This plan serves as a structured yet flexible framework, ensuring alignment with MCMA's long-term strategic goals while allowing for annual review and adaptation based on emerging needs and opportunities.

Recognizing that successful execution requires both direction and adaptability, the implementation plan provides a general timeline to support key initiatives. However, only a lead for the 2025 tactics has been identified at this stage, as one of the early priorities includes assessing MCMA's committee structure and responsibilities. This assessment will help refine future implementation efforts and ensure that the organization is best positioned to achieve its objectives.

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 1: WELCOMING AND BELONGING

GOALS		TACTICS		TIMELINE	LEAD
1	<b>Meaningful Committee Work:</b> Ensure equitable distribution of work among active committees, with strong leadership and member engagement. Encourage members to participate in committees and contribute to the organization.	1.1.1	Implement regular committee reports at board meetings to ensure accountability for committee assignments and outcomes.	2025	Board Chair
		1.1.2	Develop comprehensive job descriptions and clear expectations for committee roles and board service.	2025	Board of Directors
		1.1.3	Establish a formal orientation process for new committee and board members.	2025	Board of Directors
		1.1.4	Create a succession plan for committees to account for members transitioning into new board roles or completing their committee service.	2026	
2	<b>Embrace Diversity and Inclusion:</b> Foster diverse perspectives to enhance exposure to new ideas and strengthen professional development. Embed the principles of diversity and inclusion throughout MCMA's committees and programs.	1.2.1	Provide training on how to foster diverse perspectives to the MCMA Board and MCMA membership.	2026	
		1.2.2	Launch a proactive recruitment campaign to attract new members, especially from underrepresented communities and demographic groups.	2026	
3	<b>Resources for Member Success:</b> Provide peer networking opportunities, relevant training, and a resource hub with helpful written materials. Serve as a reliable source for managers to ask questions and receive accurate, timely answers.	1.3.1	Develop an annual strategic membership programming and training plan that elevates the profession throughout the state.	2025	Board of Directors   Programming Committees
		1.3.2	Develop a value-added sheet for members that provides clear justification for membership and dues.	2025	Membership Outreach Committee
		1.3.3	Conduct a membership satisfaction survey every two years to measure impact and establish a formalized feedback loop for ideas.	2025	Membership Outreach Committee
		1.3.4	Create a central electronic repository for member resources.	2026	
		1.3.5	Develop a peer support program to connect managers in crisis with personal and professional resources.	2026	

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 2: CHAMPION THE PROFESSION

GOALS		TACTICS		TIMELINE	LEAD
1	<b>Foster Pride in Local Government Management:</b> Promote the value of local government management and cultivate a sense of public pride in local government managers.	2.1.1	Actively promote ICMA credentialed managers throughout the state and recognize their professional accomplishments before local governing bodies.	2025	Membership Outreach Committee
		2.1.2	Host sessions at the Newly Elected Official Training to educate or have discussions on the class of cities and what is a Council-Manager form of government.	2026	
		2.1.3	Present on relevant topics at MML Conferences to share knowledge and insights.	2026	
2	<b>Attract Talent to the Profession:</b> Develop a pipeline of talent to sustain and grow the local government management profession.	2.2.1	Collaborate with the Missouri Municipal League and other statewide professional associations to develop career recruitment strategies targeting emerging talent.	2025	
		2.2.2	Partner with K-12 and higher education institutions to promote careers in local government management.	2026	
		2.2.3	Encourage members to host interns and provide resources to help make the experience valuable for both parties.	2026	
3	<b>Start with Service:</b> Emphasize the importance of local government management as the foundation for core community services such as clean water, snow removal, public utilities, public safety, trash collection, open spaces, and recreation.	2.3.1	Partner with Missouri Municipal League and other statewide professional associations (GFOA, APWA, etc.) to better educate the public about the importance of core services.	2026	
		2.3.2	Encourage members to use Local Government Week to educate residents on the role of local government and city managers.	2026	

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 3: TRUSTED RESOURCE

GOALS		TACTICS		TIMELINE	LEAD
1	<b>Valued Resource for External Partners:</b> Establish MCMA as the leading expert for state agencies, legislators, and professional associations on matters impacting professionally-managed cities and counties.	3.1.1	Identify subject-matter experts within the MCMA membership to serve as valuable resources for members and partners.	2025	Membership Outreach Committee
		3.1.2	Establish partnerships and a process for maintaining them with other statewide professional associations.	2025	
		3.1.3	Provide information and context to policymakers and the public about the challenges local government managers face, particularly in light of increasing divisiveness and incivility, to build understanding and support for the profession.	2026	
		3.1.4	Provide a model employment contract for members that complies with Missouri state law.	2026	
2	<b>Neutrality in Partisanship:</b> Uphold the ICMA Code of Ethics by engaging in non-partisan legislative advocacy. Support legislation that strengthens and protects local government managers and local control, without endorsing individual candidates or partisan agendas.	3.2.1	Provide "information only" testimony to the state legislature to share expertise.	2026	Board of Directors
		3.2.2	Research and implement best practices for legislative education and involvement from peer professional organizations within the state.	2025	Board of Directors
		3.2.3	Strengthen communication and collaboration with the Missouri Municipal League to share information, align messaging, and coordinate efforts on issues affecting local government operations and professional management.	2025	Board of Directors