

Fall 2001

# Municipal Research News

Municipal Research & Services Center of Washington

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## www.mrsc.org A Five-Year Retrospective

MRSC rolled out its Web site in May 1996, an outgrowth of an electronic bulletin board service started in 1991. It seems like only yesterday, but this is ancient history on the Worldwide Web. This article summarizes MRSC's Web experience and shares lessons from this pioneering effort.

**Networked computers** - Technology plays a strong role in delivering cost-effective services to local officials. Stand-alone computers are helpful. Many people type faster than they can hand write. I write at a speed of 18 words per minute, but I learned how to type my term papers in graduate school at 30 words per minute. This is slow compared to some of my co-workers, but it does improve my efficiency. And it is much faster to make revisions and complete subsequent drafts using word processing software.

Local area networks accelerated workplace productivity in the late 1980's. Many readers remember sneaker net – you may be using it now. Computers were not linked, so materials could not flow easily from person to person via an e-mail attachment. In our office, the attorneys used a Dictaphone wired to a central typing pool. I remember how shocked they were when hearing that this aging equipment would not be replaced, and that they would be doing their own typing instead! Ten years later, it is hard to imagine going back to the old way.

**Inquiry database** – Local officials repeatedly tell MRSC that one of our most important functions is to respond to inquiries. I believe that the inquiry program is so highly valued because our work is *customized* to address your specific needs. It is also *responsive* and *timely*. Inquiry demands accelerated

in the early 1990's. There were new cities, large annexations, and urban population growth. State requirements such as growth management and federal laws like the Americans' with Disabilities Act challenged local officials. Between 1990 and 1994, the inquiry volume doubled. MRSC absorbed increased demand with a modest increase in staff and by creating a searchable inquiry database that is accessible on our internal computer network. Every inquiry that meets certain criteria is entered into this database. We record the jurisdiction, date, and inquirer, the question along with the response, and pertinent reference documents. Let me assure you this database is for internal use only – we get some pretty sensitive questions. Presently, there are 26,500 inquiries in the database. We serve 280 cities and 39 counties that employ around 65,000 people. Many questions are asked repeatedly. When we get an inquiry, staff has the ability to instantly access research completed on that topic. You get a faster response, often while you are still on the phone. There is greater consistency in our responses. Staff is more productive – 35 percent fewer staff hours are spent per inquiry. Best of all, you save money.

**Internet** - The Web is the ultimate computer network. Anyone with access to the requisite technology can access an amazing array of services and information. The Web enabled MRSC to make a quantum leap in services provided to local governments.

The first version of www.mrsc.org was launched in May 1996 – five years ago. By May 2001, there were 100,000 visitors per *month* to the MRSC Web site. That equates to 1.5 million to 2 million hits or page views. In our wildest dreams, we predicted that

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we would get 25,000 visitors *annually*. Starting in 1991, we operated an electronic bulletin board that served 200 users per month. The Web is serving 500 times that volume.

The Web has enabled us to *significantly* increase service and access to local governments without adding staff. We receive 150 times more Web visits than inquiries. MRSC has avoided large costs by providing an alternative to the telephone. One goal was to provide a way for you to do some self-service research. Had our inquiry volume continued to grow at a rate of 15 percent per year over the last five years, our inquiry volume would have doubled. MRSC would have had to hire more staff. We have not increased staffing levels to address inquiries. (We added a few staff in 1997 to extend MRSC services to counties.)

While self-service research is available, you also have access to a consultant by phone. Many callers tell us they have already been on our Web site, resulting in “smarter” calls. Callers are better informed, resulting in more challenging questions for our staff. We feel you are getting better service, at substantial savings in cost.

The MRSC Web site can be accessed anytime, anywhere. Thirty-five percent of our local government use is outside normal office hours. Many elected officials have full-time day jobs and appreciate the after hours service.

City and county officials and staff have access to an electronic library that specializes in local government. We believe this may be the most

comprehensive local government site in the United States. Last year our “traditional” library loan volumes decreased 25 percent, since so much material is now on the Web. Almost all cities, towns, and counties can access MRSC on the Web. There are only 15-20 small cities or towns of less than 1,000 population that do not have at least one computer with Internet access onsite.

MRSC disseminates information much more quickly. For example, if there is an important court case that impacts you, we post a summary on the Web site the same day, with links to the full text document.

We are sharing our story for a couple reasons. First, we are proud of the success of the MRSC Web site as a tool for delivering cost-effective services to local governments in Washington State. Also, and equally important, we think our experience illustrates how your city, town, or county can benefit from Web-based services for communicating with your communities and in delivering services in an efficient manner.

Web-based services (often called digital government or e-government) can improve local governments through:

- *Increased Productivity* – There are opportunities to increase service without increasing staff. Online transactions can free staff resources to serve other needs.
- *Cost Savings through Self-service* - Online service transactions can reduce and some-

times eliminate transaction costs associated with traditional over-the-counter service delivery channels.

- *Increased Citizen Convenience* – Web-based services reduce the need to visit government offices. Citizens can access this service any time of the day. For those citizens who conduct business on site, waiting times will be shorter. Get online, not in line.
- *Enhanced Government Accountability and Citizen Trust* - Better access to government information and policy-making processes empowers citizens, increases accountability, and boosts citizen trust and confidence in government.

There will be a transition period to e-government during which local governments incur new costs without immediate payoffs. However, as Internet services become more integrated with work flows and “back office” procedures, significant savings will be realized. ▀

Rich Yukubousky, Executive Director  
*Municipal Research & Services Center*

*See our article on page 4, “MRSC Launches E-government Program,” to see how MRSC is working to help your city, town, or county benefit from the use of the Web for communicating with and delivering services to your citizens.*

## Metricom Files for Bankruptcy

Many cities in the Seattle metropolitan area have granted a franchise to Metricom to install its Ricochet wireless Internet service—typically via breadbox-sized antennas installed unobtrusively on light standards in the public rights-of-way. Metricom has filed for bankruptcy and has turned off its system. Your city may receive a legal notice of the bankruptcy filing. At this time it is unknown whether Metricom will be able to sell its assets to another company that will restart the wireless network. One issue raised by this situation concerns removal of the antennas.

Questions your city or county should ask: Does your franchise require Metricom to remove the antennas if the system is not operational for a certain time period? Is a clause requiring removal of antennas included in your other wireless telecommunications franchises?

# MRSC Launches E-government Program

While the United States is in the midst of a technology revolution that is transforming the way private businesses interact with their customers, many local governments lack the resources and expertise to apply these tools to governance and service delivery. Although the private sector can serve as an important partner in carrying out government services, a profit motive cannot drive government service delivery.

In the spring of 2001, MRSC began a series of pilots to assist local governments in implementing e-government applications. These Web-based services enable governments to provide residents and businesses with the convenience of accessing city and county services from any location. They also create new opportunities for joint service delivery, such as multi-jurisdictional forms for businesses to apply for or renew licenses or permits online.

By bringing together cities, towns, counties, the state, the private sector, and foundations,

MRSC hopes to reduce the barriers and costs for participating in e-government. We are excited about the prospect of pooling resources and expertise so that even small jurisdictions in Washington can provide services that only larger jurisdictions in other states provide.

Based on a survey we conducted in February, MRSC will roll out a variety of e-government services over the coming months. When asked about interest in implementing digital government (e-government) services through a consortium model, slightly more than half of the 220 responding jurisdictions expressed an interest in online bid solicitation, RFPs and RFQs, and small works rosters. More than half also expressed an interest in citizen surveys and fully searchable public documents. About 40 percent expressed an interest in implementing online permitting, online licensing, and tax and fee payments through a consortium model. Initially, MRSC will offer the following services. Based on your needs, we will add services in the future.

## Planning and business process analysis

The first step involves assessing needs and developing a strategy. MRSC can provide you with guidance and information to get started with your e-government project.

## Joint purchasing and contract negotiation

Implementing e-government involves some combination of purchasing services, hardware, and software. By pooling our purchasing power, we can negotiate better rates and services.

## Small Works Roster

The creation and adoption of a "small works" roster enables a local government to use a simplified bidding and award procedure for accomplishing projects that cost less than \$200,000. To increase competition and decrease administrative costs, MRSC has initiated a pilot with the Daily Journal of Commerce, five cities, and a county to share small works rosters electronically. Depending on the success of the pilot, we will make the service available to all cities, towns,

and counties in early 2002. In a later phase, we would develop online RFP and RFQ applications.

## Public Document Search and Retrieval

We are building upon our success with hosting municipal codes by offering a tool to search and retrieve documents such as ordinances, council packets, agendas, comprehensive plans, budgets, bid documents, and other public records. We are offering three types of services:

- Search the full text of municipal codes;
- Search the full text of other public documents in their native format (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.); and
- Search your entire Web site.

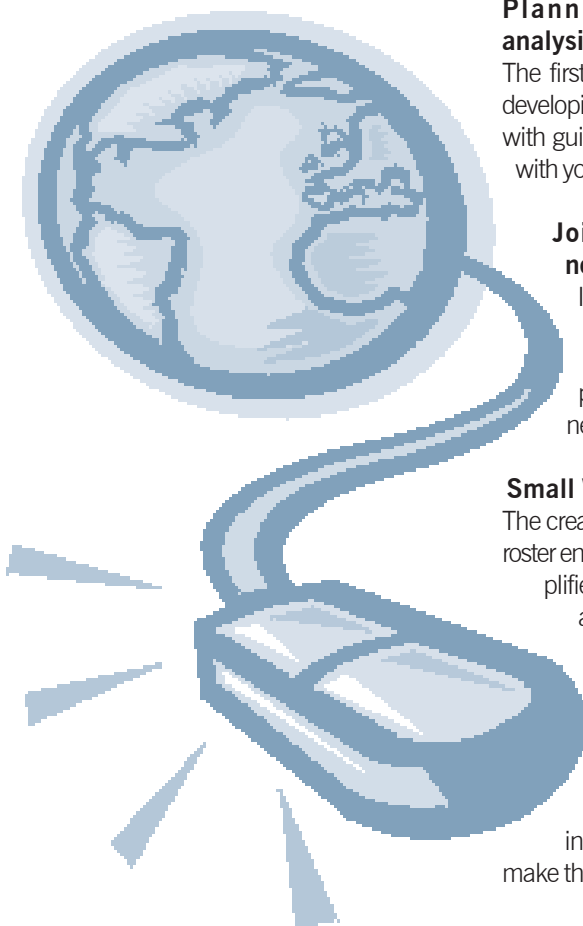
To see how this search system (NXT 3) works, go to [www.mrsc.org](http://www.mrsc.org) and click on "Local Government Search Demo" at the top of the left-hand column.

## Business Licenses

In early 2001, MRSC implemented a portal ([www.beginwa.org](http://www.beginwa.org)) that contains business license forms for most cities in Washington, along with links to instructions and appropriate code sections. Currently, an applicant can print out the form, fill it in, and mail it back. We are now working on a common form for two cities with the goal of reducing the number of forms a business needs to complete. Depending on the success of the pilot, we will offer this service to other cities and towns.

## Online Credit Card and E-check Payments

Many e-government applications involve some form of payment. MRSC is collaborating with the Washington State Department of Information Services in the hopes of providing local governments with an inexpensive option for accepting payments via the Internet. In September, we began two "proofs of concept" involving the sale of birth and death certificates for a county, and the previously mentioned business license application for two cities. If the "proofs of concept" prove successful, we hope to offer this service widely in 2002.



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# ASK MRSC

Summaries of recent inquiries answered by MRSC consultants

## **Assumption of Office - When does a newly-elected city councilmember or county commissioner assume office when the position is presently occupied by an incumbent appointed to fill a vacancy?**

The person elected in November would assume office immediately after the certification of the election results, usually within ten days or so of the election. Rather than waiting for the beginning of the full term in January to assume office, the newly-elected councilmember or commissioner assumes office for what is called the "short term" - the time between when the election results are certified and the beginning of the full term in January.

## **Board of Adjustment - Must a code city with a population over 2,500 establish a board of adjustment?**

Yes, unless the code city elects to utilize a hearing examiner. RCW 35A.63.110 provides that any code city with a population over 2,500 must establish a board of adjustment and provide for its membership, terms of office, and jurisdiction. A hearing examiner is an alternative to the board of adjustment. The establishment of a board of adjustment in cities with a population less than 2,500 is optional.

## **Damage Claims - Are cities and counties required to appoint agents to receive claims for damages?**

Yes. Chapter 119, Laws of 2001, which went into effect on July 22, 2001, provides that the governing body of each county, city, and town is to appoint an agent to receive any claim for damages arising out of tortious conduct of the local entity. The identity of the agent and where he or she may be reached during normal business hours are a public record and must be recorded with the auditor of the county.

## **Final Plats - What is the time limit from the date of city council approval of a final plat to the time the final plat must be signed and recorded?**

According to the language in RCW 58.17.140, the *submission* of the final plat is required within five years. The statute is not explicit regarding the time of signing and recording of the final plat.

## **Mayor Pro Tem Voting Rights - Does the mayor pro tem in a mayor-council town retain the right to vote when presiding at council meetings in the absence of the mayor?**

MRSC legal staff has consistently taken the position that a councilmember in a mayor-council town, who is presiding at a council meeting in the mayor's absence, retains the right to vote as a councilmember. Although there is no specific statutory authority providing for a town mayor pro tem to retain the right to vote, there is also no statutory authority that denies a town mayor pro tem the right to vote as a councilmember. This conclusion is consistent with the statutory scheme for a mayor pro tem in city classifications. See RCW 35A.12.110; RCW 35.23.201.

## **Military Leave - How is military leave calculated under state law for firefighters who work a 24-hour shift?**

RCW 38.40.060 entitles a public employee to an excused absence for any calendar day in which the employee cannot work due to the necessity of reporting for active military duty. The statute entitles each employee to 15 such days in any calendar year. Calculating what constitutes a day can be confusing for employees with non-traditional workdays, such as firefighters who may work a 24-hour shift.

A method for calculating use of military leave is contained in an attorney general opinion, AGO 1999 No. 2. This AGO

contains examples of different work schedules and how to calculate military leave time. A copy of this AGO is available on the MRSC Web site at <http://www.mrsc.org/legal/agos.htm> or from the MRSC library.

## **Public Records - Does a city or county have a continuing duty to provide documents relevant to a public disclosure request?**

No. If documents that a city or county would have disclosed in response to a public disclosure request are received or created after the city or county has responded to a request, it does not have a duty to provide those documents. It would be incumbent upon the requester to make a subsequent request. The city or county has a duty to provide public records for inspection and copying, unless those records are exempt from disclosure. RCW 42.17.260(1). If a city does not have or has not yet created a record when the request is made, it is not covered by the request.

## **Salaries - Would a salary commission established under the authority of chapter 73, Laws of 2001 (HB 1084), set the salary of a municipal court judge?**

Yes, if the municipal court judge is an elected position. This new legislation provides in section 4 that: "[s]alaries for elected officials of towns and cities may be set by salary commissions established in accordance with city charter or by ordinance," and "[s]alary increases established by the commission shall be effective as to all city or town elected officials, regardless of their terms of office." State law requires that a full-time municipal court judge be elected. RCW 3.50.055. Also, a council in a city with only a part-time judge may require that the position be an elected one. RCW 3.50.050. Unlike the salaries for superior and district court judge positions, which are established by the Washington Citizen's Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials, those for municipal court judge positions are set by the city.

## Subdivisions - Must applications for all phases of a subdivision be submitted within five years?

The subdivision statute, RCW 58.17.140, establishes the requirement for final approval within five years. It also allows local governments to adopt ordinance procedures that would permit extensions of time that may or may not contain additional or altered conditions and requirements. Our consultant staff suggests that separate preliminary approval could be given for each phase of a subdivision to allow the five-year time period to apply only to a single phase of a project. Another approach followed by some local governments is to provide an automatic one-year extension for a phased subdivision. ▀

### Correction

In the "Ask MRSC" column of the Summer 2001 issue of *Municipal Research News*, there was an entry regarding impact fees that was incorrect. It should have read as follows:

**Impact Fees - Is it legal to charge impact fees on new development of existing lots when some lots in the same subdivision were not charged the fees?**

Yes, it is legal. This question is answered by a recent case, *New Castle Inv. v. City of La Center*, 98 Wn. App. 224 (1999), in which the state court of appeals held that GMA impact fees are not land use control ordinances and therefore are not subject to the vesting rule. Consequently, impact fees may be assessed at the time lots are developed. Most cities assess impact fees at the time of application for a building permit.

**How to "Ask MRSC."** Assistance from MRSC may be obtained by **Phone** (206) 625-1300 or 1-800-933-6772 for long-distance calls; **Letter** 1200 5th Avenue, Suite 1300, Seattle, WA, 98101-1159; **Fax** (206) 625-1220; or **E-mail** [mrsc@mrsc.org](mailto:mrsc@mrsc.org). Telephone inquiry service is available from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If a consultant is not immediately available, you can record a detailed request on voice mail 24-hours a day, and a staff member will call back as soon as possible.

## Open Public Meetings Act New Court Decisions

Two different courts, one federal and one state, recently issued decisions regarding coverage of the state Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). First, the state court of appeals, in *Battle Ground School District v. Wood* (No. 98-2-03191-7; July 27, 2001), addressed application of the OPMA to members-elect of a governing body (officials elected but not yet sworn into office) and to electronic communications between members of a governing body, such as a city council or board of county commissioners. The court held that the OPMA does not apply to members-elect of a governing body, because they have no authority to transact the official business of the public agency. Although the court conceded that applying the OPMA to members-elect would be consistent with its legislative purpose, it concluded that it is the legislature, not the courts, that must decide this basic legislative question.

The court of appeals also decided that the OPMA can apply, depending on the circumstances, to e-mail communications between a majority of the members of a governing body. The court held that an exchange of e-mail between such a majority can constitute a "meeting" under the OPMA, if the members "collectively intend to meet [by e-mail] to transact the governing body's official business" and they "communicate about issues that may or will come before the [governing body] for a vote." However, the court's language is curious, because "intent" to transact official business is not required for a "meeting" under the OPMA. Also, the OPMA defines "action" (which is necessary for a governing body to take for a "meeting" to occur) to include "discussion," which is not necessarily limited to discussion of official matters that may come before the governing body for a vote. In any event,

the court held that the OPMA is not violated when the members of a governing body merely "receive information about upcoming issues or communicate amongst themselves about matters unrelated to the governing body's business via e-mail."

In the second court case, decided on August 6, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, in *Clark v. City of Lakewood* (No. 99-35453), addressed application of the OPMA to a "task force" established by the city's seven-member Planning Advisory Board to analyze all aspects of adult entertainment in the city and to make a report and recommendations on adult entertainment to the board. This subcommittee, composed of three board members and two citizens, gathered information through various sources, including actual visits to adult entertainment establishments and testimony from police officers and members of an anti-pornography group. The task force held a number of meetings, only some of which were open to the public. The task force's report and recommendations formed the basis of the eventual city adult entertainment ordinance.

The federal court of appeals held that the OPMA applied to the task force meetings because it was created as a committee of a governing body (the Planning Advisory Board) and "took testimony and public comments, conducted hearings and acted on behalf of the Board and the City Council." The court did not analyze or explain how the task force "acted on behalf" of the Planning Advisory Board and city council. Consequently, this holding presents a somewhat uncertain precedent regarding the scope of the OPMA.

MRSC recommends that city and county governing bodies discuss with legal counsel the scope of the two Open Public Meetings Act decisions. ▀



# HEADS UP

Emerging information for local government

## Green Roofs/Eco Roof: A Tool for Stormwater Management

The use of green roofs or eco-roofs to reduce runoff from impervious rooftops is gaining interest as a tool for dealing with stormwater in the Northwest. A roof surface is entirely covered with a thin layer of soil and vegetation, which completely absorbs or slows down the amount of run-off from the impervious roof surface. Green roofs are being planned for Seattle's new justice center and city hall. The Seattle chapter of the Northwest EcoBuilding Guild is performing a two-year study to examine the feasibility of green roofs for residential construction. The draft of Seattle's new stormwater flow control manual contains an eco-roof option to reduce runoff. In January, the Portland city council amended the Central City District Plan to provide an eco-roof floor area ratio bonus provision. For additional information on the topic, see the article, "Green on Top," in *Urban Land*, June 2001, and the Web sites for Green Roofs for Healthy Cities at <http://www.peck.ca/grhcc/main.htm> and the Northwest EcoBuilding Guild Project at <http://www.wolfenet.com/~pkc/green-roofs/>

## Posting Handbills in Seattle

Seattle's Land Use Code was amended to allow installation of community sign kiosks around the city as a means of fostering neighborhood interaction. The new legislation (Ordinance 120388) provides a workable alternative for the posting of handbills, signs, or posters - all of which were banned from being attached to utility poles, traffic control devices, lamp posts, city structures, or publicly-owned trees or shrubbery by a 1994 ordinance. Public posting areas are considered an important vehicle for maintaining community spirit and healthy neighborhoods, providing a venue for getting messages to neighbors (e.g., notices regarding lost pets, yard sales, and neighborhood meetings). (Seattle, *DCLU News*, June 2001.)

## The Role of Arts in Economic Development

The arts are emerging as a potent force in the economic life of cities and rural areas nationwide and are serving as a direct and indirect contributor to state economies. A new resource released by the National Governors Association (NGA), *The Role of the Arts in Economic Development*, (<http://www.nga.org/cda/files/062501ARTSDEV.pdf>) notes that the non-profit arts industry is a potent force in economic development nationwide. States and communities have integrated the arts into their economic development arsenal to achieve a wide range of direct and indirect economic goals. The publication describes how the arts revitalize communities, improve the quality of life, create an innovation habitat, and help states remain competitive in the new economy.

## Feral Felines – Trap, Neuter, Release Programs

For some communities, the presence of wild domestic cats, or feral cats, is the source of many nuisance complaints. Feral cat management programs known as "trap, neuter, release" (TNR) or "trap-test-vaccinate-alter-release-and-monitor" (TTVARM) programs are presented as a solution to the problem. Such programs aim to reduce the number of feral cats while concurrently reducing the number of animals killed in shelters and animal control facilities. The August 2001 issue of *Governing* describes a TNR program planned by city officials of Cohoes, New York. Stray cats are trapped, neutered, and released into a wooded area owned by the city and taken care of by volunteers. Other volunteer programs have been created in San Diego, the San Francisco Bay Area, San Jose, Stanford University, and Marin County, California and Orange County, Florida. In the fall of 1999, the California Veterinary Medical Association began

a Feral Cat Altering Program in which veterinarian volunteers would be reimbursed for surgically neutering 20,000 feral cats each year for three years. For further information on TNR programs see, The Humane Society of the U.S. Web site, "Statement on Free Roaming Cats" at [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org), Alley Cat Allies at [www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org), and The San Diego Feral Cat Coalition at [www.feralcat.com](http://www.feralcat.com).

## FEMA Wildfire Warning for Western Washington

The Region 10 FEMA Acting Regional Director, Tammy Doherty, warns that with current drought conditions Western Washington is vulnerable to the same wildfire conditions as Eastern Washington. Ms. Doherty noted that if fires do start, local reservoirs are low, and state firefighters may be exhausted from weeks of deployment east of the mountains...or may still be deployed there. Densely wooded western forests of cedar, hemlock, and fir, once ignited, burn intensely and make traditional firefighting particularly hazardous. Forest perimeters are heavily settled. Urban interface areas have expanded along the Cascade foothills, encroached down wooded stretches bordering Puget Sound, and up and down the Pacific Coast. More infrastructure, more businesses, and more people are at risk. Western Washington tends towards complacency in regards to wildfire conditions. The common-sense commitment to pre-disaster wildfire mitigation, which is so prevalent in Eastern Washington and Eastern Oregon, has not been internalized in Western Washington. But the same precautions accepted in more traditionally recognized wildfire-prone areas could be equally effective here. See [http://www.fema.gov/reg-x/2001/r10\\_43.htm](http://www.fema.gov/reg-x/2001/r10_43.htm). ■

# MRSC Teams with Learn2.Com

After sampling and evaluating several of Learn2.com's online course offerings, with positive results, MRSC has begun offering Learn2.com's courses to its own staff and has now partnered with Learn2.com to bring Washington local government officials and employees the same affordable training alternative.

The MRSC/Learn2.com site features hundreds of interactive, self-paced courses covering all of the most widely-used office software applications. Learn2.com's engaging multimedia tutorials are served over the Web straight to your employee's office or home desktops.

A portion of the course fees will benefit MRSC and will be used to improve our services to Washington cities and counties.

## Why Online Training?

- **Lower course fees** - Learn2.com's course fees are 40 - 50 percent lower than traditional off-site training. This should be very appealing to many cash-strapped city and county training budgets. A typical six-month course subscription costs just \$19.95 per user.
- **Time and travel cost savings** - Online training is delivered straight to your employee's office or home desktop, saving the time and travel costs normally associated with traditional off-site training.
- **Flexible scheduling** - Scheduling employee training time is more convenient since online courses are available 24x7 and can be accessed at home as well as the office. Learn2.com's courses are self-paced, which

allows users to go at their own speed.

- **Course selection** - Learn2.com features hundreds of interactive courses developed in partnership with industry leaders. Topics include Microsoft Office, Desktop Computing, Programming, Internet, Finance and Graphic Design, and Soft Skills.
- **Effective learning** - Learn2.com's engaging multimedia content results in higher learning gains and retention rates than traditional training methods.

## Getting Started

Go to the MRSC Home Page at [www.mrsc.org](http://www.mrsc.org) and click on the link "About MRSC/Learn2.com." There you will find the following suggestions for getting started:

1. Go to the "Training - Learn2.com" site
2. Review the course catalog by category or view the "all tutorials" list.
3. When you find a course that interests you, click on the link to view the course description, pricing options, and outline.
4. You may want to try the free course demo.
5. Once you are satisfied with your selection, you can purchase it online. The courses are typically offered on either a six-month or one-year subscription basis.

6. In order to view a course you will first need to download Learn2.com's "player/plugin" software. This usually takes only a minute or two, depending on the speed of your Internet connection.

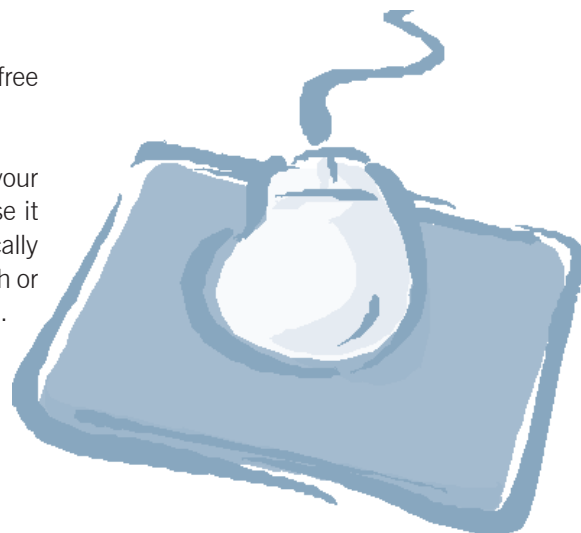
7. Once you sign up for a course, you will be given a password that will allow you to access it from any Internet-connected computer.

8. By the way, Learn2.com's courses work well even with modem speeds as low as 28.8.

## About Learn2.com

Learn2.com, Inc. is an e-learning company that provides engaging multimedia learning solutions for corporate, government, and individual clients. Many companies, schools, and federal, state, and local governments throughout the United States and abroad employ its engaging content, patented technology, and services.

Try it. We think you will find it to be a helpful learning tool. ■



### **Parks and Recreation Registration and Reservation**

MRSC has embarked on a pilot with a local company and the city of Fife to develop an online parks and recreation class registration and facility reservation application. Fife plans to begin accepting online registration for its fall swim classes. To see the application, visit the "Parks & Recreation" page on the Fife Web site, [www.ci.fife.wa.us](http://www.ci.fife.wa.us).

### **Citizen Surveys**

MRSC is considering a plan to purchase software to develop online surveys on behalf of local governments. We would collaborate with a survey firm to develop questionnaires and analyze and report on survey results.

### **Service Requests**

MRSC would develop service request, complaint, land use commentary, and other service comment forms that local governments would use to increase

their responsiveness to residents and local businesses.

### **E-bulletin Notification**

This application would provide a tool to facilitate notification by local governments to citizens and businesses on specified topics of interest. Individuals would subscribe to receive notification on subjects such as comprehensive plan updates, city hall news, community events, public works projects, or any other topic likely to be of high interest in the community.

If you would like additional information about any of these projects, please contact Fred Ward, at 206-625-1300 or [fward@mrsc.org](mailto:fward@mrsc.org). As we progress with these projects, we will post updates on the MRSC Web site.■

Fred Ward, Manager of Library & Information Services  
*Municipal Research & Services Center*

*MRSC believes the Web can assist local governments in delivering services to its citizens in an efficient, cost-effective manner. Read our front page article, "www.mrsc.org: A Five Year Retrospective," to learn how MRSC has used the Web in improving our services to you – the city and county officials in Washington State.*

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## Web Site Index

For complete information on these topics, go to [www.mrsc.org](http://www.mrsc.org).

- ▼ Latecomer agreements: recovering street and utility costs
- ▼ FAQs: search updated frequently asked questions
- ▼ Community involvement: tools for success
- ▼ Municipal Codes: try the new search program
- ▼ Emergency management: planning for disaster
- ▼ Open public meetings: e-mail communications
- ▼ Telecommunications: updating your ordinance
- ▼ Model pipeline ordinances: reducing hazards

# LIBRARY LISTINGS

New resource materials now available

## New Acquisitions

This list contains new publications, ordinances, and other materials recently received by the MRSC library. We also prepare a more comprehensive list of new acquisitions each month which is posted on our Web site at [www.mrsc.org/library/newacq.htm](http://www.mrsc.org/library/newacq.htm). If you would like to borrow one or more of these publications, please contact Sarah Sordt in our library at (206) 625-1300.

### ▼Economic Development

*Creating the future downtown*, by Doyle Hyett and Dolores Palma, 2000

### ▼Energy Conservation

*Sustainable Energy: Power Solutions for Local Governments*, by Mary Walsh and Beverly Sala, 2001

### ▼Environment

"Salmon Overlay to the Snohomish Estuary Wetlands Integration Plan," City of Everett, 2001

### ▼Finance

*Governmental Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting*, by Stephen J. Gauthier, 2001

"Grant Management 2001," presented by Washington Finance Officers Association and Washington State Auditor's Office, 2001

*Recommended Practices for State and Local Governments*, Government Finance Officers Association, 2001

*Small City Handbook*, Washington State Auditor's Office, 2001

### ▼Governance

*Comparative performance measurement*, by Elaine Morley, Scott P. Bryant, Harry P. Hatry, 2001

### ▼Information Services

*Municipal Benchmarks: Assessing Local Performance and Establishing Community Standards*, by David N. Ammons, 2001

### ▼Parks

"Aquatics Facilities Manual," City of Colville, 1997

*Evaluative Research in Recreation, Park, and Sport Settings: Searching for Useful Information*, by Carol Cutler, Riddick, Ruth V. Russell, 1999

*Leisure Resources, Its Comprehensive Planning*, by Daniel D. McLean, Joseph J. Bannon, Howard R. Gray, 1999

### ▼Personnel

*The Mayor as Personnel Manager*, by Eileen M. Lawrence and Annette M. Sandberg, 2001

*Performance-based Contracting*, by Stephen B. Gordon, 2001

### ▼Planning/Land Use

*Achieving Growth Management Goals: Local Success Stories*, Washington State Office of Community Development, 2000

"Bingen Downtown Revitalization Plan," City of Bingen, 2000

*How To Turn A Place Around: A Handbook for Creating Successful Public Spaces*, Project for Public Spaces, 2000

*Impact of Parks and Open Space on Property Values and the Property Tax Base*, by John L. Crompton, 2000

*O, Say, Can You See: A Visual Awareness Tool Kit for Communities*, Scenic America, 1999

*Smart Growth: Myth and Fact*, Urban Land Institute, 1999

*Urban Spaces*, edited by John Morris Dixon, 1999

*Valuing the New Urbanism: The Impact of the New Urbanism on Prices on Single-Family Homes*, by Mark J. Eppli, Charles C. Tu, 1999

### ▼Public Works/Utilities

*Guidelines for the Preparation of Water Shortage Response Plans*, Washington State Dept. of Health, Environmental Health Programs, Division of Drinking Water, 2001

*Maintenance Management for Water Utilities*, by James K. Jordan, 2000

*Options for Leak and Break Detection and Repair of Drinking Water Systems*, by Lawrence A. Smith, 2000

### ▼Streets and Sidewalks

"Field Guide for Unpaved Rural Roads," developed by the Wyoming Technology Transfer Center, 1997

"Problems Associated with Gravel Roads," U.S. Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, 1998

### ▼Transportation

"Neighborhood traffic management plan," City of Camas, 2001

*Parking Spaces: A Design, Implementation and Use Manual for Architects, Planners and Engineers*, by Mark C. Childs, 1999

"Transportation Planning Handbook," edited by John D. Edwards, Jr., 1999

## Resource Sharing

The *Information Partnership Program* seeks and collects current materials from Washington local governments. The materials received provide answers and support to the challenges faced by cities and counties every day. You may order the materials below by contacting the MRSC library at (206) 625-1300 or 1-800-933-6772 or e-mail us at [mrsc@mrsc.org](mailto:mrsc@mrsc.org). Due to space limitations, the list below may not be complete. A comprehensive list of IP materials received may be requested from the library or viewed on our Web site at [www.mrsc.org/library/rshare.htm](http://www.mrsc.org/library/rshare.htm).

### ▼Latecomer Agreements

**Anacortes** Application for latecomer agreement, 1 p. (T 2.1200, U4.3000); Ordinance 2523 adopting new procedures for establishing latecomers agreements for street and utility improvements, 5 p. 2000 (T 2.1200, U4.3000); **Camas** Latecomer's agreement, water main, 6 p., 1999 (U 4.3000); **Colville** Reimbursement agreement, water and sewer mains, 12 p., 1998 (U4.3000); **Ellensburg** Contract for reimbursement under Water and Sewer Facilities Act (RCW 35.91) for sewer and water facilities, 3 p., 2001 (U 4.3000); **Friday Harbor** Water and/or sewer facility contract, 2 p. (U 4.3000); **Gig Harbor** Latecomers agreement for reimbursement for municipal water system extension, 7 p., 1999 (U 4.3000); Latecomers agreement for reimbursement of municipal water, 7 p., 1995 (U 4.3000); **Omak** Sewer system installation latecomers reimbursement agreement, 7 p., 1996 (U 4.3000); **Port Angeles** Developer reimbursement agreement, 13 p., 1994; **Raymond** Contract for service extension, 5 p., 1999.

### ▼Purchase Contracts for Equipment

**Omak** Invitation to bid – specifications for Caterpillar 928G WA wheel type loader, 9 p., 2000 (F 8.6000); **Port Angeles** Bid submittal sheet – police cruisers, 12 p., 2001 (F 8.6000); Bid proposal – ambulance, 50 p., 2000 (F 8.6000)

### ▼Web Design/Development RFPs/RFQs

**Ellensburg** Request for proposals, creation of city Web site, 1 p., 2001 (IS 4.3000)

### ▼Hearing Examiner Contracts

**Des Moines** Appointment of temporary hearing examiner (letter), 1 p., 2000 (PL 2.4000); **Ellensburg** Professional services agreement for hearing examiner, 7 p., 2000 (PL 2.4000); **Gig Harbor** Contract for pro tem hearing examiner services, 4 p., 2000 (PL 2.4000); **Leavenworth** Professional services agreement, 4 p., 2001 (PL 2.4000); **Shelton** Agreement for hearing examiner services, 3 p., 1999; **Spokane** Personal service contract for hearing examiner, 2 p., 1993; Interlocal agreement with Spokane County for hearing examiner services, 5 p., 2001 (PL 2.4000); **Westport** Personal services agreement, 6 p., 2001 (PL 4.3000)■

## Receive this Newsletter via E-Mail

**R**ead all about it, even before the presses roll! If you would like to receive this newsletter via e-mail, see the subscription instructions below. You will receive a monthly update notice about the MRSC Web site along with this quarterly newsletter. All messages to this distribution list will come from MRSC.

If you are on our paper distribution list, we will continue to mail you a paper copy of the newsletter, at least initially. In order to substitute the e-mail version for the paper copy, we would need to edit our database of 4,500 names for each individual, which presently is not cost effective.

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Address an e-mail message to [mrsnews-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:mrsnews-subscribe@egroups.com). No subject line. In the body of the message type: subscribe [your name.] If you have any questions about subscribing, please contact MRSC at [listadmin@mrsc.org](mailto:listadmin@mrsc.org) or (206) 625-1300.

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