

Municipal

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Research News

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2601 4th Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98121-1280
206.625.1300 • Fax 206.625.1220
www.mrsc.org • mrsc@mrsc.org

Who Will Manage?

Where, oh where, is the next generation of local government managers and administrators?

Demographics, compensation levels, anti-government public sentiment, and generational differences make this a burning question in many of our communities. Let's take a look at these challenges and then propose some ideas for addressing them.

Demographics

On New Year's Day 2006, the first wave of 78 million "Baby Boomers," born between 1946 and 1964, will turn 60. Not surprisingly, demographers expect a boom in retirements over the next five to ten years. Departing boomers will be followed by a much smaller generation of workers, the 46 million "Generation Xers" born between 1965 and 1981.¹ The generation following the "Gen-Xers," born between 1982 and 2000 and called the "Millennials," number 76 million strong but are just beginning to enter the work force. So, the pool of workers available for grooming for top management positions is much smaller than it has been in decades.

This smaller generation of managerial candidates will face the challenge of providing services to a growing population. The U.S. population is expected to increase from about 282 million in 2000 to 314 million in 2012, just when the first wave of boomers become eligible for full Social Security at age 66.² Increased demand for public services will create a demand for more managers, particu-

larly more skilled managers. Otherwise, the quality of public services could decrease.

Local governments face significant challenges in recruiting and retaining a workforce capable of delivering efficient, quality services to citizens. It is reasonable to expect significant increases in turnover and intense competition for qualified employees at all levels of government during this transition from "Boomer" managers to "Gen-X" managers. According to the Washington State Department of Personnel, more than 50% of state employees are 45 years or older. By comparison, only 35% of the state's general workforce is over 45. More than 50% of executive level and 30% of mid-level managers in state government are eligible to retire in 2005.³ While there are no readily available figures for local government employees, there is every reason to expect a similar pattern at the local level. Just look around the room at your next conference!

Compensation

Compensation in the public sector is not keeping pace with the private sector, making it more difficult to recruit and retain workers. According to the October 2005 edition of *Governing Magazine* (see page 76), the median salary increase for state workers nationwide was 1.19% in 2004-2005, less than the 3.15% rate of inflation. Compensation lagged inflation in the previous year as well. This mirrors a general trend in the U.S. economy. Wage and salary growth is lagging inflation, especially when energy costs are included.

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CONTACTING MRSC

Staff members may be reached through the Internet using first initial and last name @mrsc.org: for example, ryukubousky@mrsc.org.

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Editor: Connie Elliot

Designer: Holly Stewart

Many local government employees are covered by one of two Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) plans. PERS Plan 1 covers all persons who first became members of the system prior to October 1, 1977, and PERS Plan 2 covers those after this date. There are a number of significant differences between Plan 1 and Plan 2, including the normal retirement age, the required member contributions, a cap on service credit, and cost-of-living adjustments.⁴ These differences affect the age at which employees are likely to retire. The generous PERS 1 plan exacerbates the workforce problem by encouraging early retirement. (In 2000, 17.4% of the PERS workforce were in PERS 1; by 2009 only 2.3% of the PERS workforce will be in PERS 1.) The normal retirement age for PERS Plan 1 is 60. However, members can retire at age 55 if they have 25 years of service, and they can retire at any age if they have 30 years of service. The normal retirement age for PERS Plan 2 is 65, regardless of how much service the person has. PERS Plan 2 members can qualify for a reduced early retirement if they are age 55 and have 20 years of service, but few members choose to exercise this option because of the reduction in benefits. According to data from the Department of Retirement Systems, most employees in PERS 1 retire within three years after becoming eligible.⁵ Local governments in the state of Washington are already seeing these PERS 1 departures.

Anti-government Public Sentiment

Beyond the brutal raw numbers, there are other reasons to be concerned about replacing retirees. Government service is not a draw for talented young professionals to the extent it was several decades ago. Many business leaders and media outlets delight in tearing down government. These days a common headline is, "We are finding more government waste. Tune in at 11." It is harder to attract Generation X into public management due to their general cynicism towards large institutions. In the last 30 years, they have watched as every American institution – the presidency, government at all levels, the church,

large corporations, the military – have been called into question. In Washington State, voting taxpayers are starving government through the initiative process, causing it to shrink. This has diminished opportunities for bright newcomers who might be attracted to local government. Gen-Xers, who tend to be highly independent and entrepreneurial, ask tough questions, such as, "Can I really accomplish anything in government?" Furthermore, while government service has never provided a path to wealth, there is a growing gap between compensation levels in the public and private sectors, as discussed above.

The Generational Challenge

To appeal to the next generation of managers, it's helpful to better understand their traits as well as those of the managers currently in service. Much has been written about the differences in generational values. (See shaded box for summary.) While one must always be careful about generalities, there are a few points that appear repeatedly in the literature about generational differences:

- Gen-Xers have a healthy dose of skepticism about institutions. Some younger professionals express doubt that local governments are committed to creating career paths for younger workers.
- Gen-Xers are resourceful, self reliant, independent, and entrepreneurial. Some research shows that Gen-Xers have higher intentions to move from one organization to another, perhaps making them harder to retain.
- Some older managers have labeled younger professionals as greedy, impatient, and disloyal because they want to keep their careers in motion. Some are of the opinion that the younger generation need to "pay their dues like we did." Some may even fear that the "young upstarts" want their jobs!
- Younger professionals ask, "Can I accomplish anything in government?" "Can I be true to my

values?" Reportedly, the Millennial Generation has as their number one career consideration "the ability to make a difference."

- With regard to a top managerial or administrative position, many younger professionals don't think the job is worth having, given the extraordinarily long hours and the loss of time with family and friends. They want more balance between career demands and other life priorities.

Meeting the Challenge

The public sector has work to do in order to create a positive environment for this transition. In studying this challenge, numerous ideas have recently emerged. Human resource professionals need to examine their recruiting and hiring process, their retention strategies, and their compensation and benefit policies. For starters, make mission a key part of the recruitment process. All levels of government need to change perceptions about slow-moving, low-tech bureaucracy that is not able to get anything done. Younger professionals want to know if they can make a difference. Think back to President John F. Kennedy's "ask not" challenge that attracted many boomers to government.

Next, the typical hiring process is an obstacle. The majority of those born after 1982 go to the Web to find jobs. Yet many local Web sites, if they exist at all, are colorless and out-of-date. They fail to communicate the vision, values, and challenges that might draw an individual to public service. We all need to do a better job telling local government success stories. Also, the relative stability of government jobs should be a useful recruitment and hiring tool.

Local governments face challenges in retaining young professionals too. Once hired, they have experienced limited or no mobility. Young professionals want to be paid well, and they want to be challenged. They are not afraid of being held accountable for performance. One

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strategy to reduce turnover of Gen-X employees is to provide opportunities for professional skills development. Another tactic may be to offer flexible work schedules and policies and procedures, so Gen-X employees can obtain the desired balance between work and personal life. Gen-Xers seek a combination of challenge, autonomy, and encouragement.

The financial upheavals of the dot com bust and the post-9/11 world have taken their toll. Look at ways to enhance retirement benefits. Most Gen-Xers do not believe that Social Security will be there when they are ready to retire. Cafeteria-type plans that allow younger professionals to opt for greater retirement contributions have proven to be a tremendous incentive for entering into and staying in public service.

Given the demographic imbalance between generations, it's important to consider ideas that appeal to boomers as well. Many of the previously mentioned

tools can also keep older folk around longer. Those 55 and over are the fastest-growing part of the workforce, and their retirement will coincide with a dearth of young replacements. Offer flexible schedules, such as longer days but shorter weeks, telecommuting, or hours adjusted to minimize commute time. Phase in retirements, letting older workers cut back on hours. And provide more assistance for employees struggling to balance home and work, particularly those with elderly parents.

Our citizens are demanding better service but are willing to pay less. The quality of life in our communities requires that we attract and retain dedicated professionals committed to the ideals of public service. At stake is the future of our local communities. ▀

By Richard Yukubousky, Executive Director, Municipal Research and Services Center and Bernard Seeger, Management Analyst, City of Shoreline

Footnotes

¹The definition of generational age boundaries is not consistent in the literature. Thus, any use of numbers is meant to be illustrative of trends, not precision.

²Interpolated from tables in U.S. Census Bureau, 2004, "U.S. Interim Projections by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin."

³"Impact of Aging Trends on the State Government Workforce," Washington State Department of Personnel, June 2000.

⁴"PERS Plan 1 Member Handbook and PERS Plan 2 Member Handbook," Washington State Department of Retirement Systems, July 2005.

⁵"Impact of Aging Trends on the State Government Workforce," page 15.

Veterans, Matures, Traditionalists, the Silent Generation, or Gray Eagles, born before 1945. Of the four generations they are the smallest in number (55 million), the wealthiest, and the most likely to vote. They are loyal to their employers and expect the same in return.

Boomer Generation, born after the end of World War II between 1946 and 1964. Today, boomers run local, state, and national governments, and they dominate the workplace. There are 77 million boomers. They will probably redefine the concept of retirement as they leave the workforce en masse over the next decade.

Generation X, born between 1965 and 1978. This generation is sometimes referred to as the baby boom bust generation. To Xers, institutions (government, church, military, major corporations) are deserving of skepticism. The eldest Xers are achieving management positions and the youngest have been in the workforce three years or more. This generation values flexibility and control over their time.

Generation Y, also called Millennials, born after 1979. This is known as the baby boom echo generation. Members of this generation are the children and grandchildren of the baby boomers and will surpass the boomer generation in size. They are entering the workforce looking for opportunities to learn and move about.

ASK MRSC

Summaries of recent inquiries answered by MRSC consultants

Building Code – If there is a difference of opinion over an interpretation, who is the ultimate authority for interpreting and enforcing the building code?

First of all, the International Building Code is adopted by statute and is “in effect in all counties and cities” of the state. (RCW 19.27.031.) The building code “shall be enforced by the counties and cities,” and, if a county or city does not have its own building department, it “shall contract with another county, city, or inspection agency for enforcement.” (RCW 19.27.050.)

Within the building department, there must be an official in charge, the “building official.” See Section 103.1 of the International Building Code (the “Building Code”). Under Section 104.1 of the Building Code, the building official is authorized and directed to enforce the Building Code’s provisions. In addition, it is the building official who has “the authority to render interpretations of this code and to adopt policies and procedures in order to clarify the application of its provisions.” So, at least initially, it is the building official who makes interpretations of the Building Code and enforces its provisions.

However, a person may disagree with the building official’s interpretation. The Building Code takes care of that, too. Under Section 112.1 of the Building Code, the governing body of the jurisdiction is to create a “board of appeals” that will “hear and decide appeals of orders, decisions or determinations made by the building official relative to the application and interpretation of this [the Building] code.” Thus, if there is a difference of opinion, the board of appeals will make a determination and the building official will enforce the Building Code as interpreted by the board of appeals. If a person—including the city or county itself—disagrees with an interpretation of the board of appeals, it may appeal the board’s decisions to superior court.

Whatever interpretation is finally agreed to or decided upon, it is the building official who enforces the Building Code’s provisions.

Civil Service Commission – May the civil service commission investigate a complaint of misconduct against the fire chief that has been made by a citizen?

In our opinion, such an investigation would not be proper.

The primary purpose of the civil service commission is to assure that employment decisions are made based upon merit, rather than on politics or cronyism, such that the most qualified candidates receive employment or promotion. The commission also conducts hearings on discipline to make sure that demotions, suspensions, or terminations are based upon certain conditions, such as dishonesty or incompetence, rather than on favoritism or political reward or penalty. It is for these general purposes that the commission has the power and authority to investigate, as opposed to issues relating to the day-to-day performance of duty by covered officers. Discipline and termination authority remains with the chief executive officer of the city, not with the commission. The commission becomes activated, at least as to discipline, only if the mayor or city manager takes action against a covered employee and that employee appeals that action to the commission.

This exact issue was considered in a formal opinion of the Office of the Attorney General, AGO 1986 No. 9:

We conclude that the police civil service commission’s investigatory power does not authorize it to conduct an initial investigation respecting the conduct of classified personnel. The commission’s right to investigate does not arise until a written demand for an investigation has been filed, following removal, suspension, demotion, or discharge, as provided in RCW 41.12.090.

This conclusion would have equal application to fire department civil service, as the statutory language involved is identical.

In a booklet prepared by Susan Rae Sampson, *Basic Training for Civil Service Commissioners in Washington* (1991), it is stated at page 35:

Commissioners are likely to hear complaints of police misconduct from citizens who wish the Commission to convene an investigation. But the Commission’s authority is limited to inquiry into merit hiring, merit promotion and sufficient cause for discharge. The Commission is not the administrative agency that oversees internal administration of the police department. Complaints of police misconduct other than allegations of tampering with the Civil Service system should be

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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** 2601 4th Avenue, Suite 800, Seattle, WA, 98121-1280; **Fax** (206) 625-1220; or **E-mail** mrsc@mrsc.org. Telephone inquiry service is available from 8:00 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.

referred to the chief of police, the mayor, the county commissioners, the county executive or the voters.

Perhaps the most compelling reason for not having the commission conduct investigations of complaints is that, if it were to do so and evidence of misconduct warranting discipline or termination were found, the commission would be ineligible to consider the matter on appeal from the affected officer. In this regard, see *State ex rel. Beam v. Fulwiler*, 76 Wn.2d 313; 456 P.2d 322 (1969). There the court concluded that the commission could not investigate, accuse, prosecute, and then judge the controversy involved.

Thus, in this instance, it would not be proper for the commission to investigate the citizen's complaint. The complaint should go to the mayor instead.

Open Public Meetings Act – If a council committee is subject to the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) because it is acting on behalf of the city council, may it hold an executive session?

Yes. When a committee of a governing body acts on behalf of that governing body, the committee itself is considered a "governing body" under RCW 42.30.020(2), and, as such, is subject to the provisions of the OPMA. Under RCW 42.30.110(1), a governing body may, for the purposes identified in that statute, hold an executive session. So, as long as it will be doing so consistent with one of the purposes identified in RCW 42.30.110(1), a council committee that is acting on behalf of the council may hold an executive session. ▀

WINTER DRIVING TIPS:

Make sure you have some basic supplies in your car in case you get stuck.

State Legal Holidays for 2006

January 2, 2006	New Year's Day*
January 16, 2006	Martin Luther King Day
February 20, 2006	Presidents' Day
May 29, 2006	Memorial Day
July 4, 2006	Independence Day
September 4, 2006	Labor Day
November 10, 2006	Veterans' Day**
November 23, 2006	Thanksgiving Day
November 24, 2006	Day after Thanksgiving
December 25, 2006	Christmas Day
	Optional Floating Holiday

Counties, cities and towns are not required to follow this holiday schedule. MRSC follows the state holiday schedule, and our office will be closed on these days.

**RCW 1.16.050 provides that when a legal holiday falls upon a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be the legal holiday.*

***RCW 1.16.050 provides that when a legal holiday, other than Sunday, falls upon a Sunday, the following Monday shall be the legal holiday.*

Statutory Reference: RCW 1.16.050. See also, RCW 2.28.100 and RCW 2.28.110 (Court business on legal holidays) and RCW 28A.150.050 (School holidays)

HEADS UP

Emerging information for local government

Alphabet Soup

Acronyms and Abbreviations v. Plain Language

As the issues facing local government become more complex, so does the vocabulary of legal and technical terms needed to discuss the issues. To simplify communications, the names of agencies and other technical terms are often reduced to acronyms and abbreviations – essentially they become jargon. *Plain Language.gov* defines jargon as “the language of specialized terms used by a group or profession. It’s common shorthand among experts and used sensibly can be a quick and efficient way of communicating. Most jargon consists of unfamiliar terms, abstract words, non-existent words and acronyms and abbreviations, with an occasional euphemism thrown in for good measure.”

The use of jargon, acronyms, and abbreviations may render government communications unintelligible to those unfamiliar with the topic, especially the public with whom it needs to communicate. Three approaches have been noted to help ameliorate this problem: limit the use of jargon; promote the use of writing guidelines; and educate the audience, i.e., provide a glossary. The best approach may be to just use plain English.

Several city and county legislative members have challenged colleagues to limit the use of acronyms during public meetings. Last year the Kitsap County Board of Commissioners was in the news for instituting a voluntary, informal “no acronym” policy. Anyone using an acronym or abbreviation at meetings is fined a dollar. Any money collected goes to a charity identified by the board. This anti-acronym or “no-alphabet soup” policy has been adopted by other jurisdictions.

Using a more educational approach, but also somewhat “tongue-in-cheek,” King County Department of Transportation’s *DOT Dispatch* started an “acronym of the

month feature” designed to “keep its staff up-to-date on the latest and greatest in government acronyms.” A favorite is displayed each month and readers are invited to e-mail their guesses as to what the acronym stands for. The November 2005 issue discusses the previous month’s puzzler, LUTAQH (“Land Use, Transportation, Air Quality and Health”). November’s puzzler, BAFO, is designed to frustrate those who cheat by resorting to Google. Evidently, you won’t find BAFO on Google? Amazing!

Style manuals are abundant. Here are two Web resources principally for government employees:

PlainLanguage.Gov is a Web site maintained by the Plain Language Action and Information Network, a group of federal employees from different agencies and specialties that meet to discuss plain language issues in government communications. Included on the site are links to articles on why use plain language, writing manuals, and humorous tips on avoiding the use of technical jargon. See <http://plainlanguage.gov/>.

King County Editorial Style Manual King County developed and adopted an online style manual to help county communications staff, other county employees, and county consultants use consistent editorial style in writing. The manual is designed to be used as a first reference for questions about abbreviations, capitalization, computer terms, grammar, the Internet, numbers, organization terminology, punctuation, spelling, and word usage. This manual will also help one to write correctly, clearly, and concisely, leading to enhanced credibility. In addressing the use of abbreviations and acronyms, it states that they must benefit a reader by making written text simpler and less cumbersome. An abbreviation or acronym is to be avoided if it would confuse a reader. When in doubt, spell it out. To view King County’s *Style Manual*, see <http://www.metrokc.gov/exec/styleguide/>.

A list of abbreviations and acronyms can be found for every subject related to local government administration, including finance, emergency management, public administration, transportation, health, and environment. If you need a list, here are some examples:

Abbreviations and Acronyms – Librarians Internet Index <http://www.lii.org/pub/subtopic/24>

Bellingham Environmental Resources Dictionary and Acronyms <http://www.cob.org/pw/er/dictionary.htm>

Seattle City Acronyms – City acronyms can be confusing, so a listing of every city of Seattle service, program, department, division, office, and group acronym is listed. The list is ordered alphabetically by acronym. Included is the acronym’s full name and when possible a link to a city department and agency Web site to help find out more. <http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/pan/soup.htm>.

MRSC’s Library List of Commonly Used Acronyms <http://www.mrsc.org/library/acros.aspx>

Are you familiar with the following acronyms that have recently been in the news?

BLOG - Short for Web log, a blog is a Web page that serves as a publicly accessible personal journal for an individual. A number of local government officials have started using blogs as a communications tool. See “Blogs for Local Governments,” by Trudy W. Schuett, *Government Technology*, May 6, 2005 at http://www.govtech.net/magazine/channel_story.php?channel=17&id=93913 and “What about All Those Blogs?” by Scott Neal, *Public Management*, June 2005

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at http://www.icma.org/pm/8705/private/special_department.cfm?author=Scott%20Neal&title=What%20About%20Those%20Blogs%3F.

ICANN – Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers is an internationally-organized, California-based, non-profit corporation that manages all proposals for new Internet domain name extensions like the recent .biz, .jobs, and .travel. ICANN has responsibility for assigning Internet Protocol (IP) address space allocation, protocol identifier assignment, top-level domain name system management, and root server system management functions. To see a list of extensions with descriptions go to <http://www.icann.org/registries/listing.htm>.

All jurisdictions should have adopted a **COG** and a **COOP** for use in emergency situations. Health planners are reminding jurisdictions that they also may be needed during a pandemic influenza.

COG – Continuity of Government is a coordinated effort to assure the continuity of essential functions of government during or after an emergency or disaster. The COG spells out who is in charge and how the affairs of government are to be conducted if the elected officers or administrative staff are unable to be

present during a major emergency. (WAC 118-30-060.) The emergency plan is to include a functional description of how operational components will be addressed.

COOP – Continuity of Operations facilitates the performance of department/agency essential functions during any emergency or situation that may disrupt normal operations. Recent events have demonstrated that government buildings and offices can be closed for extended periods of time due to natural or manmade events. These closures negatively affect service delivery to the general public. For more information on COG and COOP, see MRSC Web page at <http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/PubSafe/emergency/EM-Planning.aspx>.

Recently, the National League of Cities (NLC) identified the **EITC** as a source of often untapped income for the local economy:

EITC – Earned Income Tax Credit - NLC has prepared an EITC Tool Kit entitled “Maximizing Earned Income Credit in Your Communities: A Tool Kit for Municipal Leaders.” The publication provides guides on how to help eligible citizens claim the tax credit. These tax credits can greatly enhance prospects for family economic success and bring new

resources into the local economy. The federal ETIC and similar state tax credits in 18 states provide literally billions of dollars in assistance to lower-income working families. The tool kit can be viewed at <http://www.nlc.org/nlctoolkit/html/>.

As one travels the highways around the state, ITS applications help guide the way:

ITS – Intelligent Transportation Systems – ITS encompasses a broad range of wireless and wire line communications-based information and electronics technologies. When integrated into the transportation system’s infrastructure, and in vehicles themselves, these technologies relieve congestion, improve safety, and enhance American productivity. For more information see the U.S. Department of Transportation Web page at http://www.its.dot.gov/its_overview.htm and the Washington State Department of Transportation’s Web at page <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/research/IntelligentTransportationSystems.htm>. ■



WINTER DRIVING TIPS:

If your car needs a tuneup or is due for regular service, get it done now.



WINTER DRIVING TIPS:

When driving in the snow, do everything slowly.

What are Fund Balances and Why Do We Need Them?

The following article was taken from the "Finance Advisor" column appearing monthly on the MRSC Website. Each new article will provide timely local government finance information and advice.

City fund balances become a favorite topic of conversation during this budget time of year. What are they? Do we need them? If so, how much should they be? These are questions commonly asked by newly-elected officials and members of the public who participate in the budget review process.

Let's start with what they are. Whether fund balances are referred to as "beginning" cash and investments or "ending" fund balance, the general premise is the same. Fund balances represent the net cash after all revenues have been deposited and all expenses have been paid. Just like your checkbook at home at the end of the month, it represents how much you have in the fund. Whether those future needs are cash flow considerations to pay expenses, savings for capital projects, or simply reserves for a rainy day, the fact is that fund balances are a necessity.

Cash flow

The first and foremost reason to have an adequate fund balance is "cash flow." City revenues are cyclic in nature. For example, property taxes are due from homeowners on April 30 and October 30. For many cities, this tax is the primary revenue source for the general

fund. Cities receive most of this revenue in May and November. To meet the financial obligations throughout the year, cities must maintain a certain fund balance. The same cash flow scenario can be demonstrated in a water utility fund in which increased revenues during the summer irrigation season must carry the fund through to the next summer watering season. Measuring a city's fund balance on December 31 of each year is equivalent of looking at your checkbook the day after payday. Without sufficient cash flow reserves, cities would be forced to borrow operating cash.

Reserves for capital projects or contingency

Cities are just like you and me. They must save (or reserve) enough cash before they can start a capital project. The city fund balance may include the savings for these future capital projects. Understanding what portion of the fund balance represents cash flow, and what portion represents reserves for a capital project will help you understand how much fund balance is enough.

An additional consideration is a "contingency" or rainy day reserve. For those cities with a heavy reliance on a single source of revenue, it is prudent to consider a contingency reserve. Hurricane Katrina has left a lasting impression on all of us. The city of New Orleans has lost retail sales taxes and property taxes that will never be made up. Having a contingency reserve for natural disasters would help to reduce the effect of

financial disaster. Another reason for considering a contingency reserve is if your city has a heavy reliance on one or two major employers. If the thought of one of these employers leaving your community makes you worry, then perhaps a contingency reserve is worth considering.

So how much fund balance is enough? Several different methodologies may be used to calculate this number. The Government Finance Officers Association has developed a "recommended practice" for fund balance levels. (See <http://www.gfoa.org/services/rp/budget/budget-appropriate.pdf>) It generally suggests a minimum of 15 percent, but many issues come into play when making this determination. Keep in mind your city has numerous factors that make it unique. Try to evaluate all of these factors, along with consideration for capital reserves and cash flow needs, when deciding what the fund balance number should be. ■

By Toni Nelson, Small Cities Specialist
State Auditor's Office

Toni Nelson is the "Small Cities Specialist" for the Washington State Auditor's Office, providing both on and off site financial training and assistance to smaller cities and towns throughout the State.



WINTER DRIVING TIPS:
Make sure your battery and charging system are up to snuff.

New Web Pages

Look for our new Web pages:

“Washington State City Street and Road Standards” provides information about and links to design standard samples for municipal streets and roads at <http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/Transpo/waroadstandards.aspx>.

“Emergency Preparedness Planning for Pandemic Influenza” provides pandemic planning resources from federal, state, and local sources at <http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/HumanServices/pandemicplanning.aspx>.▶



WINTER DRIVING TIPS:

Make sure your windshield wipers are in good shape and washer reservoir is full.

New Ask MRSC E-newsletter

The Municipal Research and Services Center is pleased to announce the debut of our new *Ask MRSC* e-newsletter. *Ask MRSC* is a free, subscription-based, monthly e-mail newsletter featuring answers to selected questions received by our consultant staff. It's one more way for you to stay informed on current issues affecting city and county government.

View a sample issue at <http://www.mrsc.org/files/askmrscsample.htm> or go directly to our subscription page at http://www.mrsc.org/updates_ask_mrsc.aspx and sign-up to receive *Ask MRSC* today. It's free!▶



WINTER DRIVING TIPS:

Check the cooling system.

Send Us Your Budgets

Budgets, particularly those with narratives, are an important source of comparative data and program information that we often use in our research. Our goal is to have a current budget from each city, town, and county. See the list of budgets that MRSC has received at <http://www.mrsc.org/library/budglist.aspx>. If you haven't sent us your budget, please do so. We would like to receive budgets in both paper and electronic format. Thank you!▶

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. If you would like to borrow one or more of these publications, please contact Electra Enslow in our library at (206) 625-1300 or library@mrsc.org.

Economic Development

Economic Development for Small Communities: A Handbook for Economic Development Practitioners and Community Leaders, by Robert W. Shively, 2004

Elections

Democratic Delusions: The Initiative Process in America, by Richard J. Ellis, 2002

Environment

Climate Change, Carbon, and Forestry in Northwestern North America: Proceedings of a Workshop, November 14-15, 2001, Orcas Island, Washington, editors: David L. Peterson, John L. Innes, and Kelly O'Brian; sponsors: Climate Impacts Group at the University of Washington ... [et al.]

Finance

Budgeting for Outcomes: Better Results for the Price of Government, by David Osborne and Peter Hutchinson, 2004

An Elected Official's Guide to Debt Issuance, by J.B. Kurish and Patricia Tigue, 2nd ed, 2005

An Elected Official's Guide to Tax Increment Financing, by Nicholas Greifer, 2005

A Revenue Guide for Local Government, by Robert L. Bland, 2nd ed, 2005

Governance

Local Look at Civics Curriculum Focusing on Local Government, by Colorado Municipal League, 2001

Strategic Planning for Local Government, by Gerald L. Gordon, 2005

Licensing And Regulation

Handbook of Regulations for Direct Farm Marketing: "The Green Book," Washington State Department of Agriculture Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program, 5th ed, 2005

Personnel

Effective Supervisory Practices: Better Results Through Teamwork, edited by Mary Walsh, 2005

An Elected Official's Guide to Health Care Cost Containment, by Nicholas Greifer, 2005

Planning and Land Use

The Conservation Easement Handbook, by Elizabeth Byers and Karin Marchetti Ponte, 2nd ed, 2005

The Four Supreme Court Land-Use Decisions of 2005: Separating Fact from Fiction, American Planning Association, 2005

Landslide Hazards and Planning, by James C. Schwab, 2005

Reinventing Conservation Easements: A Critical Examination and Ideas for Reform, by Jeff Pidot, 2005

Scenic Solutions: Designs and Methods for America the Beautiful, presented by Scenic America and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service [computer file], 2004


Sprawl Costs: Economic Impacts of Unchecked Development, Robert W. Burchell, 2005

Transportation and Traffic

Improving the Pedestrian Environment through Innovative Transportation Design, prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2005

Traffic Calming: Retrofitting Existing Neighborhoods [computer file], 2003





Wishing you
gifts of
hope, peace,
and joy this
Holiday Season



Municipal Research and Services Center
2601 4th Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98121-1280

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