



Schedule subject to change.

## **Wednesday, Feb. 7**

**10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.**

**Registration Open**

**11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.**

**Sponsor Tables Open**

**1:30-3:15 p.m.**

### **Opening General Session**

Karen Pinkos, President, City Managers Department, League of California Cities and City Manager, El Cerrito welcomes attendees to the 2024 City Managers Conference and introduces our opening keynote speaker.

**Speaker:** *Karen Pinkos, President, City Managers Department, League of California Cities and City Manager, El Cerrito*

**3:15-3:45 p.m.**

### **Coffee Chat: New City Managers**

Are you new to the role of City Manager? Grab a coffee and join city managers from across the state for a great conversation with the City Manager Department Officers about leadership and growing within the role.

**3:45-5:00 p.m.**

### **Protecting the Profession**

In our modern reality, with information at our fingertips and political polarization at a high, city managers are being targeted in personal and professional attacks by a disgruntled few. What can be done to prevent these attacks? When it's too late, what can be done about the transgression? Learn from city managers who have tackled these challenges directly.

**Moderator:** *Fran Robustelli, City Manager, San Leandro*

**Speakers:** *John Donlevy, Retired City Manager, Retired*

*Ken Domer, City Manager, La Verne*

*Christa Johnson, Town Manager, Town of Ross*

### **The Economic Adventure: City Managers Unleash Their Superpowers!**

These city managers have built reputations as superheroes and leading visionaries in the field of economic development. They will be assembling as a super-team to share their innovative strategies to grow and attract

businesses and leverage community assets to activate spaces in their cities. Learn how they have built strategic partnerships, used data, and solved problems to address the needs of residents and businesses and lay the foundation for long-term financial sustainability in their communities.

**Speakers:** *Mike Lee, City Manager, Moreno Valley*

*Lisa Kim, City Manager, Garden Grove*

*Ben Kim, City Manager, Rosemead*

### **The Electric Future: Best Practices and Lessons Learned from Pioneer Cities**

Cities large and small are embracing new technology to electrify their infrastructure and deliver the services of tomorrow. Learn how South Pasadena will become the first city in the nation to fully electrify their police department's fleet; how Rosemead was able to partner and deliver electric vehicle charging stations to their public library; and hear from a representative from the Port of Long Beach about their goal to become a zero-emissions seaport by 2030, and what it will mean to our state's economy. Discover what your city may do to attract infrastructure investment, and receive the best practices and lessons learned from pioneer cities in the electric future.

**Moderator:** *Cody Tubbs, Director, Local Government Relations, Southern California Edison*

**Speakers:** *Arminé Chaparyan, City Manager, South Pasadena*

**5:00-6:00 p.m.**

#### **Networking Reception**

Make new friends and catch up with old ones while enjoying delicious appetizers and tasty beverages during the evening networking reception. It's the perfect opportunity to form support networks inside your profession.

## **Thursday, Feb. 8**

**8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.**

**Registration Open**

**8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.**

**Visit with Sponsors**

**8:00-9:00 a.m.**

**Networking Breakfast**

**9:00-10:15 a.m.**

**Members Only Session**

Session details to be announced.

**10:15-10:45 a.m.**

**Sponsor Break**

Grab a coffee and visit with our event sponsors.

**10:45 a.m.-noon**

**Organizational Culture and Ethics: Peanut Butter and Jelly or Oil and Water?**

We all know the saying that “culture eats strategy for lunch,” but a good culture doesn't always guarantee highly ethical actions. The two should go together like PB&J, but that's not always the case. In this session, hear ICMA's new Director of Ethics and three well-respected city managers talk about the challenges they have faced with building a strong culture that also places a high value on ethics. In this interactive session, you will also be given the chance to share your successes and failures in dealing with this challenging leadership role.

**Moderator:** *Jessica Cowles, Ethics Director, ICMA*

**Speakers:** *Fran Robustelli, City Manager, San Leandro*  
*Graham Mitchell, City Manager, El Cajon*

**AI-Powered Cities: Empowering Municipalities through New Technology**

As communities continue to grow, the challenges faced by city officials become more complex. The resource at the forefront of the demand for innovation is artificial intelligence. AI leverages language models to interpret, generate and respond to human language. Now we must learn how to use AI and explore how it can be integrated into city governance, ultimately unleashing a new era of efficiency, transparency, and community empowerment.

**Moderator:** *Jennifer Vaughn, Director, Tripepi Smith*

**Speakers:** *Geoff Spencer, Management Analyst - Communications, Yorba Linda*  
*Sunil Rajaraman, Founder & CEO, Hamlet*  
*Peter Pirnejad, City Manager, Town of Los Altos Hills*

**Crisis Management for Cities - Modern Problems for a Modern World**

In 2017, the League of California Cities' Annual Conference featured a panel on crisis management for cities. At the time, the emphasis was on external crises, such as earthquakes and fires. In the intervening years, we have seen an increased number of crises that arise internally, such as staff misconduct

accusations, city managers under fire, housing element requirements that enrage neighborhoods, and cyberattacks. The panel will focus on this newer type of crisis and how to deal with intense scrutiny of a city's internal operations, including public records requests, media inquiries, and city council concerns about staff performance.

**Moderator:** June Catalano, Consultant, Renne Public Management Group

**Speakers:** David White, City Manager, Santa Monica  
Kelly McAdoo, City Manager, Hayward

**noon-1:15 p.m.**

### **Networking Lunch**

**1:30-2:45 p.m.**

### **Assistant/Deputy City Manager Roundtable**

Join in roundtable discussions with assistant and deputy city managers on the roles they serve in the organization. Seasoned ACM/DCMs will share their experiences in how to build a good working partnership with the city manager, and by extension the city council and organization, while those entering the role will have opportunity to ask questions on issues they are facing and learn about what support networks exist. Assistants/deputies will gain tips on evaluating if and when to take the next step to the chief role - or remain in, what some would call "the best job in the organization."

**Speakers:** Jessica Deakyne, Assistant City Manager, Novato  
Elisa Cox, Assistant City Manager, Rancho Cucamonga

### **Lions and Tigers and Landslides, Oh My! Crisis Management and Communication**

We don't get to choose when a crisis hits in our communities, but we do get to choose how to react. Crisis management is an imperative executive function, and failure to respond and communicate effectively in real time can have dire consequences for residents and the organization. This session will touch on recent situations experienced in the cities of Rolling Hills Estates and Rancho Palos Verdes that deal with catastrophic land movement, a high-profile incident featuring a prominent sports figure, and a fabricated story that created a panic on social media. Focusing on the importance of providing accurate and consistent information relevant to all parties, leveraging resources and agency partners, and utilizing risk management strategies to reduce risk in a crisis, this session is an excellent opportunity to gather valuable insights on some best practices and lessons learned from two cities that have been on the front lines of crisis management.

**Moderator:** Jon Barilone, Principal, Tripepi Smith

**Speakers:** Greg Grammer, City Manager, Rolling Hills Estates

*Ara Mihranian, City Manager, Rancho Palos Verdes*

### **Supporting Civility and Effective Resident Engagement**

How can you host effective conversations on divisive topics and bring differing viewpoints together to encourage civilized discourse? Informed conversation makes resident feedback more effective, benefiting both resident and city by providing actionable and realistic information for the city to address or solve. Establishing substantial resident engagement demands a commitment of both resources and time. However, the potential benefits are significant. Explore how to merge these worlds and engage with active community members, fostering effective civic engagement while identifying techniques to bridge relationship and political gaps.

**Moderator:** *Ryder Todd Smith, President, Tripepi Smith*

**Speakers:** *Elizabeth Doll, Director of Braver Politics, Braver Angels*  
*Grace Leung, City Manager, Newport Beach*

### **2:45-3:15 p.m.**

#### **Coffee Chat: Women Leading Government**

Looking to connect with other women in government? Join Women Leading Government for coffee and great ideas in the afternoon coffee break of the 2024 Cal Cities Managers Conference. Not a WLG member? Come and talk with us about how WLG is committed to your professional success!

### **3:15-4:30 p.m.**

#### **Walking the Line: Addressing Complaints Against Elected Officials**

You just received the dreaded call, a city employee has complained about harassment by a councilmember and a workplace investigation is about to ensue. How do you handle an investigation when the person you are investigating has the authority to fire you and isn't your employee?

This session will delve into how to initiate an inquiry, legal considerations for moving forward with an investigation, and best practices for navigating these sensitive situations. Session attendees will gain first-hand insights into addressing complaints about elected officials' alleged misconduct from the perspectives of a city manager, city attorney, and investigator. Join this session and gain the tools you may one day need to navigate an elected official investigation while not discrediting your city in the eyes of the public or your employees.

**Moderator:** *Kelly Trainer Policky, Employment Practices Manager, California Joint Powers Insurance Authority*

**Speakers:** *Nelson A. Fialho, Executive Director, Renne Public Management Group*

*Eli Makus, Managing Partner, Van Dermeyden Makus Law Corporation*

### **Workforce Challenges You Can't Ignore**

Explore workforce challenges that keep city managers up at night. The session will feature a case study of a regional effort involving all the local governments in the Silicon Valley to address workforce trends. Sponsored by the City Manager Associations of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, the two-county Next Generation Committee has developed several programs to attract, retain, and develop talent. Some of these regional programs include the Management Talent Exchange Program, a summer internship program placing hundreds of university students in local government agencies, Management Fellowship Program, speed coaching events, a City Manager in Residence Program for Bay Area universities, and an annual Tomorrow's Department Head Forum for professionals on the cusp of becoming department directors. The session will provide a new resource tool for city managers, a template for helping Executive Teams conduct a Readiness Assessment and Talent Development Discussion. Recently pilot tested by seven organizations, this template and a sample will be provided to all participants via online session materials.

**Moderator:** *Frank Benest, Liaison for Next Generation Initiatives, ICMA*

**Speakers** *Christina Turner, City Manager, Morgan Hill*  
*Melissa Stevenson Diaz, City Manager, Redwood City*

### **Ensuring the Pipeline is Primed: How We Can All Help Retain Diverse Candidates for Leadership Roles**

When we talk about workforce planning, we often shift responsibility for developing the pipeline of city management leaders to those wishing to move up in the profession. City managers and those currently in leadership roles can help ensure a diverse selection of candidates, as their choices likely have an even larger impact in ensuring a strong candidate pool for future city leaders. Join our discussion on how we can all ensure the pipeline is primed.

**Moderator:** *Jessica Deakyne, Assistant City Manager, Novato*

**Speakers** *Cathy Capriola, Vice President, MRG*  
*John Gillison, City Manager, Rancho Cucamonga*  
*Maraskeshia Smith, City Manager, Santa Rosa*

**Friday, Feb. 9**

**8:00-11:00 a.m.**

## Registration Open

**8:00-9:00 a.m.**

### Networking Breakfast

**9:00-10:30 a.m.**

#### **How to Survive Your Annual Performance Evaluation**

Learn best practices for a productive performance evaluation that meets your needs and contributes to the council/manager partnership. Hear about your colleagues' experiences with their evaluations. Discuss how to use the performance evaluation process to get council agreement on goals. Learn about ways you can reduce the stress of the evaluation for both you and your council. A productive process can help you avoid unpleasant surprises, course correct, and reinforce what is going well. It can be a way to convey issues that are impeding staff, set boundaries, and rein in unproductive behaviors. The session will be interactive, with opportunities for sharing among city managers about their experiences with evaluations and will provide practical tools that you can use.

**Moderator:** *Dan Keen, Consultant, Daniel Keen Consulting*

**Speakers** *Harry Black, City Manager, Stockton*

*Linda Smith D'Ambrosio, City Manager, Dublin*

*Jan Perkins, Vice President/Retired City Manager, Raftelis*

**10:45 a.m.-noon**

#### **Closing General Session: Who are we? A Profile of the Profession**

Who are city managers? CCMF partnered with the Rose Institute of State and Local Government at Claremont McKenna College to survey all city managers throughout the state and compiled a report demonstrating demographics and trends. Hear from the survey organizers about what they learned, and what today's city managers can do to ensure the success of the next generation of leaders.

**Moderator:** *Ken Striplin, President, CCMF*

**Speakers** *Karen Pinkos, President, City Managers Department, League of California Cities and City Manager, El Cerrito*

*Bipasa Nadon, Assistant Director, Rose Institute of State and Local Government*