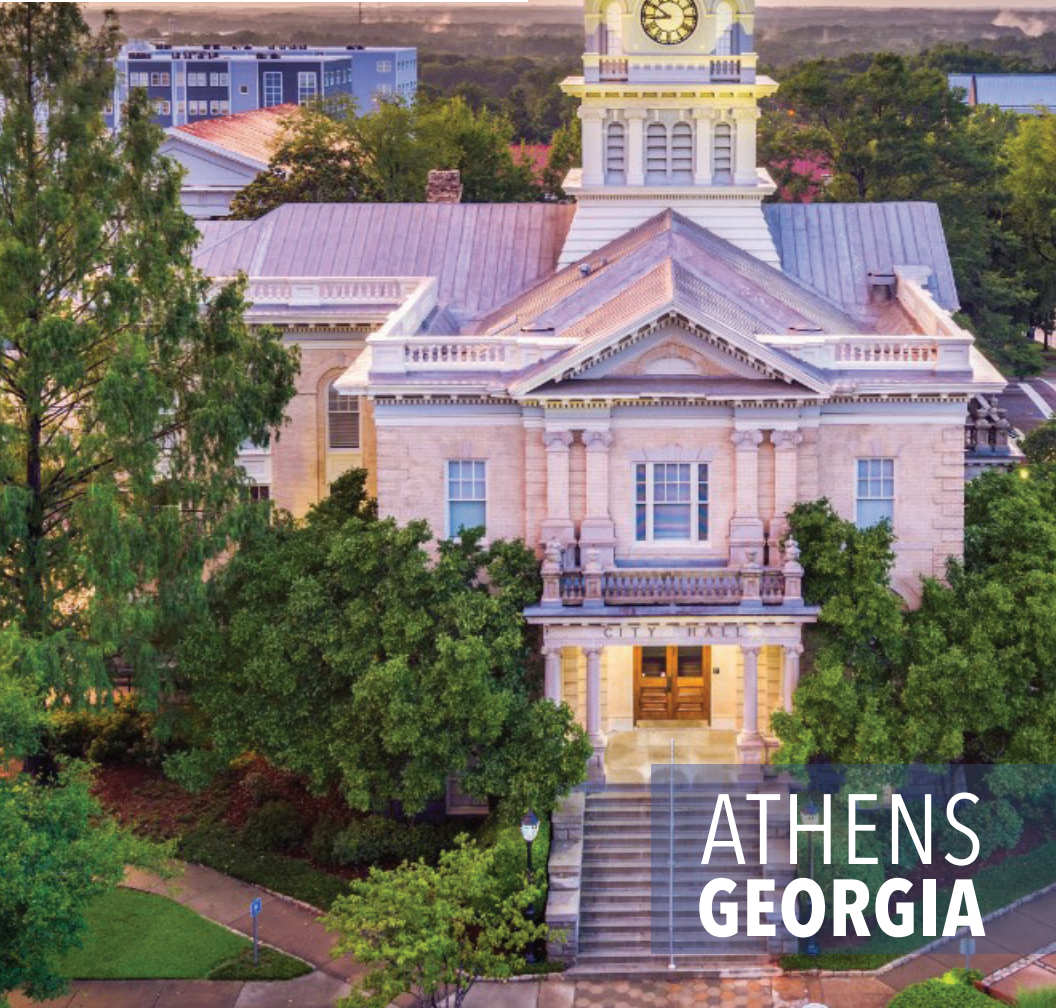


GCCMA 2024

SPRING CONFERENCE

MARCH 5-8

Georgia
City-County
Management Association



ATHENS
GEORGIA

WELCOME

On behalf of the GCCMA Board of Directors, it is my distinct pleasure to extend a warm welcome to each and every one of you to the 2024 Spring Conference in Athens. As President of GCCMA, I am thrilled to invite you to join us for what promises to be an enriching and memorable event.

Throughout the duration of the conference, you can expect a diverse range of educational sessions, workshops, and keynote presentations tailored to address the most pressing issues facing city and county management professionals today. Our esteemed speakers and panelists will share their expertise and insights, offering valuable perspectives that will undoubtedly inspire and empower you in your respective roles.

In addition to the educational opportunities, the conference will also feature numerous networking events designed to facilitate interactions and foster camaraderie among attendees. Whether you're a seasoned veteran in local government management or just starting out in your career, these networking opportunities will provide a platform for you to connect with peers, exchange ideas, and build lasting relationships.

I would like to express my gratitude to the program planning committee, Peggy Merriss, GCCMA Executive Director, Erica Grier with the Georgia Municipal Association, and Hardin Watkins with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government for their work on delivering an outstanding program for the 2024 Spring Conference.

I encourage you to take full advantage of everything the conference has to offer and to actively engage with your fellow colleagues and industry experts. Together, we can continue to elevate the standards of excellence in city and county management across the state of Georgia.

It is my honor to serve as your GCCMA President and I expect that your experience here in Athens will be excellent as usual!

Sincerely,



Chris Hobby
President
Georgia City-County Management Association



Pre-conference Workshop *Hyatt Place – Meeting Room 1* *(separate registration required – lunch included)*

10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Data Literacy & Storytelling

How to Interpret, Present, and Interact with the Volumes of Data You Encounter in Local Government

INSTRUCTOR: Anna Miller, *Public Service Faculty, CVIOG*

Is that a fact? How do I know? Data are critical to helping local government leaders make wise and strategic decisions. Local governments have gigabytes of data but often don't know how to use their data effectively or how to visualize and interpret the data they do have. This class focuses on the importance of teaching a basic understanding of data literacy for local government officials. Participants will receive tips, tools and other resources for interacting, interpreting and presenting data unique to local government functions.

ICMA Competencies: (4) Staff Effectiveness, (6) Strategic Leadership, (7) Strategic Planning, (8) Policy Facilitation & Implementation, (9) Community & Resident Service, (10) Service Delivery, (12) Financial Management & Budgeting, and (14) Communication and Information Sharing

Dinner on Your Own

7:30p.m. – 9:00pm

"No Host" Get Together

Mix and mingle with colleagues in casual conversation as a prelude to the start of the Conference at The Placery in the lobby of the Hyatt Place Hotel

7:45 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. *Grand Hall 7*

Breakfast

Gather with peers from your region. Locate your designated spot by checking the table markers.

7:45 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. *Grand Hall 1*

Orientation and Breakfast for First-time Attendees and New Members

First-time attendees and new members are encouraged to attend orientation to become familiar with the organization and be introduced to the GCCMA leadership.

SPONSORED BY: *NFP and PATH*

8:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. *Grand Hall 2–4*

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chris Hobby, *GCCMA President, City Manager, Bainbridge*

Mayor Kelly Girtz, *Athens-Clarke County*

Rob Gordon, *Director, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, UGA*

Opening General Session – Adversity Equals Opportunities Malcolm Mitchell



Malcolm Mitchell is a native of Valdosta, Georgia. As a high school senior, he was an Under Armour All-American and went on to finish in the top ten all time receivers during his playing career at the University of Georgia (UGA). While a student athlete, Malcolm was recognized as the National Captain of the Allstate Good Works Team for his frequent visits to elementary schools to read to students and talk about literacy, the first student ever at UGA to win this Honor.

He also received the National Haier Achievement Award for his success beyond athletics And the UGA Student Athlete of the Year Award. He graduated in December 2015 from the University of Georgia with a degree in Communications.

In his presentation, based on his real-life experience in athletics

and entrepreneurial endeavors (High School All-American, University of Georgia Wide Receiver, Super Bowl Champion, Author and CEO), speaker Malcolm Mitchell shares invaluable lessons and leadership strategies that can be used by local government organizations and your work teams to navigate challenges, overcome adversity, develop growth mindsets, and inspire your staff members to reach for new heights. Key components of his message include adaptation, redemption, and aligning your focus to turn obstacles into opportunities.

ICMA Competencies: (5) Personal Resiliency & Development, (6) Strategic Leadership

SPONSORED BY: Parrish Construction Group, Rochester & Associates, and Schneider Electric

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Grand Hall 7

Break

10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Concurrent Session #1: Grand Hall 5

Nuts & Bolts of Local Government Finance

MODERATOR: Sammy Rich, GCCMA Secretary/Treasurer, City Manager, Rome

PRESENTER: John Hulsey, Public Service Faculty, UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government Financial Management Program

One of CVIOG's most popular financial management faculty members, John Hulsey, will return to share a follow-up to his excellent financial statements presentation at the Spring 2023 Conference. This session will be a brisk and lively discussion of critical components of local government finance for cities and counties. This year's focus areas will include: internal financial reporting, internal controls, and properly communicating financial information.

ICMA Competencies: (1) Personal & Professional Integrity, (8) Policy Facilitation & Implementation, (12) Financial Management and Budgeting

Concurrent Session #2: *Parthenon 1–2*

How to Move from Vision to Reality: Nurturing a Town Center to Life Through Innovation, Engagement, and Collaboration

MODERATOR: Kimberly Greer, *Interim City Manager, Johns Creek*

PRESENTERS:

- **Ron Bennett**, *Assistant City Manager, Johns Creek*
- **Amanda Glover**, *Downtown Development Authority Director, Bainbridge*
- **Jonathan Herschell**, *City Manager, Hartwell*
- **Joshua W. Powell**, *City Manager, Dublin*

Many cities, both large and small, have developed or are developing master plans for city/county centers, town centers, and community-centric downtowns and seek proven and achievable methods for attaining success. This session will provide a blueprint for how to effectively coordinate and manage the planning, codification, and implementation process.

Bainbridge, Dublin, Hartwell and Johns Creek will review their efforts to leverage strategic planning that includes focusing on vision, community input, and a targeted economic redevelopment approach to initiate the process of creating a vibrant and transformative hub that functions as the Town Center.

ICMA Competencies: (2) Community Engagement, (6) Strategic Leadership, (7) Strategic Planning, (8) Policy Facilitation & Implementation, (9) Community & Resident Service, (10) Service Delivery, (14) Communication & Information Sharing

Concurrent Session #3: *Grand Hall 2–4*

Georgia's Changing Demographics & What This Means for Local Government

MODERATOR: Freddy Morgan, *GCCMA District Director, Assistant City Manager, Cartersville*

PRESENTER: Taylor Hafley, *Applied Demographer, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, UGA*

Taylor's demographic research and data analysis supports state agencies and local governments across Georgia in the areas of workforce development, economic analysis, and state budget and population projections. Be prepared to hear insights and gain understanding of trends across our state, including the impacts

of geographic concentration, racial and ethnic diversity, and Georgia's aging population.

ICMA Competencies: (2) Community Engagement, (6) Strategic Leadership, (7) Strategic Planning, (8) Policy Facilitation & Implementation, (10) Service Delivery

11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Grand Hall 7

Networking Lunch with Exhibitors

SPONSORED BY: Carter & Sloope, Inc. and Davenport & Company, LLC

11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Grand Hall 1

Board of Directors Meeting

1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Concurrent Session #4: Parthenon 1–2

Georgia's Rural Jails & Tailored Rural Policy Solutions

MODERATOR: Guy Singletary, GCCMA District Director, County Administrator, Emmanuel County

PRESENTERS:

- **Dr. Sarah Shannon**, Director, Criminal Justice Studies Program, Professor of Sociology, UGA
- **Dr. Orion Mowbray**, Associate Dean for Research, Professor, School of Social Work, UGA

Prison demographics and statistics have drawn plenty of headlines over the years—not to mention much social and political activism—but there has been minimal attention focused specifically on trends in rural jails. While incarceration rates in urban areas have dropped recently, rural communities have seen the opposite. There is a connection to negative outcomes when formerly incarcerated persons seek jobs coupled with a disconnect with mental health services availability and utilization. Hear from two UGA research leaders regarding what they've learned about why this is happening. Their research relies on county data from Decatur, Early, Greene, Habersham, Sumter, Towns, and Treutlen.

ICMA Competencies: (2) Community Engagement, (6) Strategic Leadership, (7) Strategic Planning, (8) Policy Facilitation & Implementation, (9) Community & Resident Service, (10) Service Delivery

Concurrent Session #5: *Grand Hall 2-4*

Edge City 2.0: Scenario Planning as a Tool for Economic Development and Future Growth

PRESENTERS:

- **Michael Starling**, *Director of Economic Development, Dunwoody (Moderator)*
- **Ann Hanlon**, *Executive Director, Perimeter Community Improvement District*
- **Andrew Kohr**, *POND*

Learn how the City of Dunwoody worked with multiple stakeholders to develop a future vision to guide growth and development in Dunwoody's Perimeter Center. Suburban commercial centers are experiencing greater pressures to reimagine themselves and adapt to the changing desires of their residents, visitors and workers. Doing this effectively requires a holistic approach that links market trends with land use, physical redevelopment and infrastructure. Using scenario planning to test different development models, the planning team considered increased population, land use change, and new amenities. Edge City 2.0 helps provide a roadmap for the City and developers alike to work towards a common vision.

ICMA Competencies: (2) Community Engagement, (6) Strategic Leadership, (7) Strategic Planning, (9) Community & Resident Service, (10) Service Delivery

Concurrent #6: *Grand Hall 5*

Wow! Great Ideas from Across Georgia

MODERATOR: John Hulsey, *Public Service Faculty, UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government Financial Management Program*

PRESENTERS:

- **Alicia Vaughn**, *County Manager, Habersham County*
- **Christian Sigman**, *City Manager, Brookhaven*
- **Charlene Marsh**, *Assistant to the City Manager, Norcross*

Hear from colleagues from across the state about some outstanding approaches and innovative concepts that have worked well for them to enable excellent service delivery in these areas: paramedicine, knowledge management, and budget presentation. Each community will have 20 minutes to wow you, then you get to wow them with your questions.

ICMA Competencies: (2) Community Engagement, (8) Policy Facilitation & Implementation, (9) Community & Resident Service, (10) Service Delivery, (12) Financial Management & Budgeting

2:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. *Grand Hall 7*

Break with Exhibitors

SPONSORED BY: *Garbutt Construction, Multi-Bank Securities, Inc., Prime Contractors, Inc., Stifel, and Thomas & Hutton*

2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. *Grand Hall 2-4*

General Session: James Oglethorpe, Father of Georgia: A Founder's Journey from Slave Trader to Abolitionist

MODERATOR: **Adam Mestres**, *GCCMA Vice President, County Manager, Morgan County*

PRESENTER: **Michael L. Thurmond**, *Author, DeKalb County CEO*

Thurmond (former state legislator, Director of Georgia's Division of Family & Children Services, Labor Commissioner, and DeKalb County School Superintendent) has completed his third book and is traveling across the state to share about his study examination of one of state's most well-known citizens, James Oglethorpe. Utilizing his two decades of research, fresh historical analysis, and compelling storytelling, Thurmond provides a new perspective on the prehistory of abolitionism and adds an important chapter to Georgia's origin story.

ICMA Competencies: (2) Community Engagement, (3) Equity & Inclusion, (6) Strategic Leadership

3:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. *Grand Hall 2-4*

GCCMA Business Meeting & Awards Ceremony

Plan to attend the meeting to learn about the important matters of the association and receive updates on multiple topics of interest. Additionally, the Awards Ceremony provides an opportunity to support and celebrate your colleagues from communities being recognized for outstanding initiatives and projects. There are wonderful things happening around the state and this provides an opportunity to put a spotlight on these accomplishments.

4:45 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. *Grand Hall 7*

Opening Reception with Exhibitors

SPONSORED BY: *4PM, Crews & Associates, Inc., Goodwyn Mills Cawood, and Gallagher*

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Grand Hall 7

Breakfast with Exhibitors

SPONSORED BY: Charles Abbott Associates, Inc., Deckard Technologies, MJR Solutions, Pond & Company, Republic Services, Inc., Turnipseed Engineers, and VC3

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Grand Hall 2–4

General Session: Journey to Balance: A Dual Perspective on Career, Work-Life Balance, and Retirement

PRESIDING: Chris Hobby, GCCMA President, City Manager, Bainbridge

MODERATOR: Robbie Rokovitz, GCCMA District Director, City Manager, Chattahoochee Hills

PRESENTERS:

- **Kari Kent**, Retired Assistant City Manager, Mesa, Arizona and Past-President of the Arizona City/County Management Association
- **Stuart Kent**, Retired Public Works Director for the Cities of Peoria and Glendale, Arizona

This husband-and-wife duo met in Arizona after Kari completed her BS in Political Science from Northern Arizona University and MPA from Arizona State University, while Stuart earned his BA in Political Science and MPA from UGA. Together, they share 60 years of public service experience in various leadership roles. Throughout their careers in local government, they focused on serving their communities, offering expertise in operational, strategic, and leadership domains. They'll share insights on navigating work-life balance challenges and adapting to retirement. They'll also touch on the importance of prioritizing personal well-being alongside professional commitments, cautioning against the potential negative impacts of sacrificing oneself for the sake of others.

ICMA Competencies: (5) Personal Resiliency & Development, (6) Strategic Leadership, (14) Communication & Information Sharing

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Grand Hall 7

Break with Exhibitors

SPONSORED BY: Garbutt Construction, Multi-Bank Securities, Inc., Prime Contractors, Inc., Stifel, and Thomas & Hutton

10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. *Grand Hall 2–4*

General Session: Accountability at the Council Table

MODERATORS: Adam Mestres, *GCCMA Vice President, County Manager, Morgan County*

PRESENTER: Dr. Eric Zeemering, *Director, UGA MPA Program*

How do city councils exercise their oversight responsibilities, and what are the consequences for city manager engagement with the city council? This presentation will share analysis of city council meetings for a sampling of cities in Georgia. Dr. Zeemering's research illustrates how councils ask managers for accountability in different ways, emphasizing finances, transparency, performance, and constituent needs. This research pushes our thinking beyond the politics-administration dichotomy to illuminate how city managers can engage city councils in dialogue about accountability in the context of 21st century political pressures.

ICMA Competencies: (4) Staff Effectiveness, (6) Strategic Leadership, (7) Strategic Planning, (8) Policy Facilitation & Implementation, (10) Service Delivery, (12) Financial Management & Budgeting, (14) Communication & Information Sharing

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. *Grand Hall 7*

Networking Lunch with Exhibitors

SPONSORED BY: *Carter & Sloope, Inc. and Davenport & Company, LLC*

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. *Grand Hall 5*

Assistant/Deputy Lunch

MODERATOR: Kimberly Greer, *Interim City Manager, Johns Creek*

Enjoy this time with your colleagues with interactive table dialogue with a focus on topics and matters specifically of interest to assistant and deputy managers and department leaders.

ICMA Competencies: (1) Personal & Professional Integrity, (5) Personal Resiliency & Development, (6) Strategic Leadership

SPONSORED BY: *Johnson Controls*

1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Grand Hall 5

Roundtable Session 1:

Roundtable Discussion with Kari and Stuart Kent

MODERATOR: Robbie Rokovitz, GCCMA District Director, City Manager, Chattahoochee Hills

This morning's keynote speakers will lead a conversation with early career professionals and public administration students about the state of the profession today and foster rich dialogue about differences amongst generations. Bring your questions and be ready to be engaged. The conversation will be insightful and robust.

**If interested, please sign up at the registration desk so that we can have an accurate count for the session to enable optimal facilitation of discussion.*

ICMA Competencies: (5) Personal Resiliency & Development, (6) Strategic Leadership, (14) Communication & Information Sharing

1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Grand Hall 2-4

Roundtable Session 2:

Hot Topics Review & Discussion

FACILITATORS:

- **James Friedrich**, Assistant to the City Manager, Kennesaw
- **Meredith Ulmer**, Assistant City Manager, Rome

Fast-paced review and roundtable discussion of the latest topics important to communities across the state.

**If interested, please sign up at the registration desk so that we can have an accurate count for the session to enable optimal facilitation of discussion.*

ICMA Competencies: (8) Policy Facilitation & Implementation, (9) Community & Resident Service, (10) Service Delivery

AFTERNOON TOURS

1:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Tour 1: Hockey, Music & More – Walk Through the New Classic Center Arena

Led by Blaine Williams, *Manager, Athens-Clarke County*

This regional event space in the middle of downtown Athens is a partnership between the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County and Classic Center Authority (a political subdivision of the State) to expand the convention and performing arts complex by adding a 6,000-seat entertainment facility. This walk-through will highlight the funding strategies, future programming opportunities, and overall design elements.

**If interested, please sign up at the registration desk so that we can have an accurate count for the session.*

ICMA Competencies: (6) Strategic Leadership, (7) Strategic Planning, (9) Community & Resident Service, (10) Service Delivery

Tour 2: Connecting to History – Murmur Bridge & Firefly Trail – Walking Tour

Led by Niki Jones, *GCCMA District Director, Deputy Manager, Athens-Clarke County*

See the bridge that inspired the art for R.E.M.'s Murmur album and discover why it took about 20 years to be restored. It is the cornerstone of the Firefly trail, a segment of greenway in Athens-Clarke County that upon completion will extend 39-miles connecting Athens-Clarke, Oglethorpe, and Greene Counties. Currently, there are 3+ miles of trail completed. This leisurely paced walk will take you through downtown Athens, along the river, over the Murmur bridge, and all the way to Winterville. Return transportation will be offered to those desiring a ride back after seeing the sites.

**If interested, please sign up at the registration desk so that we can have an accurate count for the session.*

ICMA Competencies: (2) Community Engagement, (6) Strategic Leadership, (7) Strategic Planning, (9) Community & Resident Service, (10) Service Delivery

SKILLS-BASED QUICK LEARNING SESSIONS

2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. *Grand Hall 2–4*

Quick Learning Session 1: Time Management 101

PRESENTER: Dr. Marci Campbell, *CVIOG Public Service Faculty, Director, Certified Public Manager Program*

Join the Director of CVIOG's Certified Public Manager program to learn tips on how to maximize your efficiency and effectiveness in the workplace. Classic time management techniques, including checklists, calendars, filing, notepads, and general organizational skills will be reviewed and discussed.

ICMA Competencies: (1) Personal & Professional Integrity, (4) Staff Effectiveness, (5) Personal Resiliency & Development, (6) Strategic Leadership

2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. *Grand Hall 5*

Quick Learning Session 2: How to Recruit, Screen, & Analyze Candidates for Your Job Vacancies

PRESENTER: Sam Trager, *CVIOG Public Service Faculty, Strategic Operations & Planning Assistance*

Learn about keys to effectiveness in the following areas from a seasoned local government Human Resources Director: how to recruit top quality applicants, how to effectively screen candidates for vacant jobs, and how to effectively analyze the applications/resumes that come in for your vacancies.

ICMA Competencies: (4) Staff Effectiveness (6) Strategic Leadership (13) Human Resources Management & Workforce Engagement

3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. *Parthenon 1–2*

Women in Government Session

Generation Bridge: Leveraging the Opportunities of a Multi-Age Workforce. This will be an interactive discussion on the positives of a multi-generational workforce. Refreshments will be provided.

ICMA Competencies: (5) Personal Resiliency & Development, (6) Strategic Leadership, (14) Communication & Information Sharing

SPONSORED BY: *iParametrics and OnPointe Insights*

Dinner on Your Own

7:45 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. *Grand Hall 7*

Breakfast with Exhibitors

SPONSORED BY: *Charles Abbott Associates, Inc., Deckard Technologies, MJR Solutions, Pond & Company, Republic Services, Inc., Turnipseed Engineers, and VC3*

7:45 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. *Grand Hall 1*

Program Planning Committee Meeting and Breakfast

8:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. *Grand Hall 2–4*

General Session: An Agenda for the Future of Governance: The National Academy for Public Administration's 12 Grand Challenges

MODERATOR: Marcia Hampton, *GCCMA Immediate Past President, City Manager, Douglasville*

PRESENTERS:

- **Teresa Gerton,** *President & CEO, National Academy for Public Administration*
- **Joseph Mitchell,** *Director of Strategic Initiatives, National Academy for Public Administration*

As the world moves quickly from the industrial age into the information age, new challenges have arisen and demands on government have increased. But the public sector has often been in a reactive mode—struggling to adapt to a rapidly evolving international, economic, social, technological, and cultural environment. Over the next decade, all sectors of society must work together to address the critical issues of protecting and advancing democracy, strengthening social and economic development, ensuring environmental sustainability, and managing technological changes. Governments at all levels must improve their operations so that they can tackle problems in new ways and earn the public's trust.

ICMA Competencies: (2) Community Engagement, (6) Strategic Leadership, (7) Strategic Planning, (8) Policy Facilitation & Implementation, (9) Community & Resident Service, (10) Service Delivery, (14) Communication & Information Sharing

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. *Grand Hall 7*

Break with Exhibitors

SPONSORED BY: *Garbutt Construction, Multi-Bank Securities, Inc., Prime Contractors, Inc., Stifel, and Thomas & Hutton*

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. *Grand Hall 2–4*

Vendor Door Prizes

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. *Grand Hall 2–4*

General Session: Managing (or Trying to Manage) Social Media Before It Manages You?

PRESENTERS:

- **Valerie L. Fuller**, *Communications Administrator, Clayton County (Moderator)*
- **Catherine Ammons**, *Assistant City Manager, Valdosta*
- **Marcelle English**, *Digital Media Manager, Fulton County*
- **Chris Floore**, *Chief Communications Officer, Macon-Bibb County*
- **Charles Reed**, *Chief Staff Attorney, Clayton County*

Feedback from across our state indicates widespread concern about the preponderance of negativity being expressed by the public via social media. This panel will suggest and discuss tools to prepare our organizations to deal with this new reality and share how we as managers can help elected officials deal with social media they see and their temptations to engage inappropriately. Finally, they will provide insight into what local governments should address and react to and what to ignore.

ICMA Competencies: (4) Staff Effectiveness, (8) Policy Facilitation & Implementation, (9) Community & Resident Service, (14) Communication & Information Sharing

Closing Remarks & Adjournment

Chris Hobby, *GCCMA President, City Manager, Bainbridge*

Notes



2024 SPRING CONFERENCE SPONSORS

PLATINUM SPONSORS



GOLD SPONSORS



Architecture and Engineering

Insurance | Risk Management | Consulting



SILVER SPONSORS



MJR Solutions



DECKARD TECHNOLOGIES



Providing Facility Solutions Since 1979



Member of FINRA & SIPC, MSRB Registered.

Sustainability in Action