

Kevin Knutson, ICMA-CM

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Local government executive leadership, strategic planning, budget, process management, media relations, and communications professional with 21 years of experience in high-performing municipal governments. Strong record of successfully delivering large, complex, and politically sensitive projects while creating productive and robust relationships between government and constituents. Developed a strategic planning system that was a key factor in Coral Springs being the first and only local government to be awarded the **Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award**.

Additional areas of expertise include:

Leading staff	Labor relations and negotiations	Legislative affairs
Policy analysis and development	Financial forecasting	Intergovernmental relations
Performance measurement	Process improvement	Bond portfolio management
Benefit structure planning	Emergency management	Grants management
Economic development	Redevelopment administration	Housing and homelessness
Council support	Crisis and emergency communications	Media relations
Social media	Citizen engagement	Community relations

Experience & Results

City of Reno, Nevada

01/2008-02/2012

218,000 population, \$320 million budget, 1,123 employees, 7 council members, council-manager government

Assistant City Manager, 08/2011-02/2012

- Direct oversight of Human Resources; Neighborhood Services (including public information, media relations, Council support, and call center); Federal, State, and local intergovernmental affairs; grants management; Community Resources; economic development; and the Reno Redevelopment Agency.
- Organized Northern Nevada Economic Development Coalition's "ReCharge Nevada" event that brought together more than 200 stakeholders to kick-off a regional economic development effort.
- Provided executive oversight of numerous projects and committees, including shared services; managed competition; negotiations on tax increment agreements and sales tax districts; redevelopment land sales; facility leases; parks development; and fire deconsolidation.
- Acted as Emergency Operations Center Director and management liaison during November 2011 Caughlin Fire (2,000 acres, 9,500 evacuated) and January 2012 Washoe Drive Fire (3,200 acres, 10,000 evacuated).
- Assigned to level two grievance resolution for several bargaining units; negotiated resolutions. Chaired health benefits appeal committee. Lead negotiator for collective bargaining.
- Established internal committees for strategy deployment, including innovation, open government, customer service and employee relations teams.

*Interim City Manager, 03/2011-06/2011**Interim Executive Director, Reno Redevelopment Agency, 03/2011-06/2011*

- Unanimously appointed as interim city manager for a full-service city. Provided leadership to a redevelopment agency with two districts, a new AAA baseball stadium, numerous catalyst projects, and retail properties.
- Prepared, presented and adopted \$170 million Fiscal Year 2011-2012 General Fund budget that began to provide steps toward **financial stability** for the first time since the recession began in 2008, by adding \$3.8 million to stabilization reserves, investing \$4.0 million in capital projects, and shoring up fund balances across all fund types.
- Negotiated agreement with International Association of Firefighters Local 731 after 15-month impasse before going to binding interest arbitration, meeting the City's goal of **7.5% reduction in salaries** with related benefits, including no salary increases for the next two years. Negotiated contract with Fire administrative union that had been at impasse for 12 months before going to fact-finding by an arbitrator. Closed two-year contracts with three Police bargaining units and a professional group with various concessions.
- Successfully avoided State takeover of City finances when process was initiated in February 2011. The City of Reno met 11 of 23 conditions defining "severe fiscal emergency" under Nevada Revised Statutes, and was called before Senate Revenue Committee, Assembly Taxation Committee, and the Committee on Local Government Finance. Developed corrective action plan to remedy all issues. Negotiated with Department of Taxation.
- Planning and negotiations with creditors of a **\$634 million debt portfolio** experiencing severe revenue losses.

Director of the Office of Management & Budget, 06/2010-08/2011

- Designed budgetary response to major revenue losses, including a 30% drop in sales tax related revenues and a 16% drop in ad valorem property taxes. **Implemented budget reductions totaling \$27 million**. Staff reductions totaled 32% over two years, from 1,648 to 1,123.
- Implemented process improvement program using lean manufacturing tools. First project in business licensing division reduced cycle time from 30-day to 6-day average and **generated more than \$90,000 a year in savings**.
- Managed professional staff engaged in Community Development Block Grant program, federal grants program, homelessness initiative and Community Assistance Center, neighborhood stabilization program, low income housing, American Recovery & Reinvestment Act programs, and federal legislative lobbying.
- Facilitated intergovernmental negotiations on shared services; including 911 and dispatch, information technology, human resources, purchasing, business licenses, and building permits. Lead author on mandated (AB 494) shared services report to Nevada State Legislature.

Director of Community Relations, 01/2008-06/2010

- Chief spokesperson for the City.
- Direct responsibility for public relations, media relations, issue management, crisis communications, Reno TV (channel 213 on Charter Communications), the City's web site (reno.gov), the City's intranet (CORE), advertising, in-house video production, and numerous other print collateral for City of Reno. **Reduced overall cost of community relations function by \$1.1 million** between 2008 and 2010.
- Managed community relations and ombudsman programs, including a neighborhood services program, eight Neighborhood Advisory Boards, the Community Pride Grant program (\$220,000 - \$440,000), Reno Direct call center (45,000+ calls per year), and town hall meetings.

- Developed and successfully implemented City of Reno Strategic Communications Plans in 2008-2009 and 2009-2010, identifying audiences, stakeholder needs, strategic messages, message deployment tactics, and measurement.
- Developed and implemented crisis communications response plans, including a vote of "no confidence" in a Fire Chief, union conflicts, police officer DUI, major fires, accidents, staff layoffs and service reductions, among others.
- Launched Reno's first blog, *Around the Arch*, in April 2009. Developed and implemented social media communications outreach using Facebook (13,500+ fans), YouTube (127,500+ video views, 187 subscribers), Twitter (3,700+ followers), Flickr, LinkedIn (440+ followers), and Friendfeed. Wrote and established social media policies and procedures. Program won 2011 3CMA Award of Excellence – Social Media.

City of Coral Springs, Florida

05/1991-01/2008

135,000 population, \$170 million budget, 820 employees, 5 commissioners, council-manager government

Director of Communications & Marketing, 11/2005-01/2008

- Creative and editorial direction of *Coral Springs* magazine, CityTV (channel 25 on Advanced Cable Communications), CityRadio (AM 1670), the City's web site (coralsprings.org), the City's intranet (The Knowledge Network), advertising, public relations, media relations, in-house video production, and other print collateral.
- After a 2006 comprehensive redesign, **market penetration** of *Coral Springs* magazine, mailed to 53,000 households and commercial addresses, was **72%**, well above the major local daily, the South Florida Sun-Sentinel, at 46%. (Readership as a percent of total population.) This was a significant increase from 60% in 2006. In 2007 was awarded 3CMA's Savvy Award for best magazine.
- Planned campaign, wrote and directed design of advocacy materials for a General Obligation bond issue that **generated 84% votes in favor of the referendum** during a period of public concern over tax rates. The campaign won the 2006 3CMA Award of Excellence - Community Issue.
- Resident satisfaction with communications in Coral Springs **rose from 89% in 2005 to 92% in 2007**. Satisfaction ratings for major communications vehicles in 2007 included 83% for CityTV, 91% for the magazine, and 89% for the website.
- Developed and implemented crisis communications response plans, including major hurricane devastation, economic and financial crises, a blimp crash, elected official arrests, officer-involved shootings, ethics violations, and others.

Budget & Strategic Planning Manager, 10/1998-11/2005

- Managed the preparation and execution of an annual operating budget of up to \$135 million and a capital budget of \$15 million for a large municipality (population 132,000), **maintaining or lowering ad valorem tax rates each year**, from 1998 through 2005.
- Created strategic planning process that linked policy direction to operations at all levels. Directed a professional staff that created reports, forecasts, variance analyses, trend analyses, financial models, and feasibility studies for revenues, programs, and capital acquisitions. Prepared and delivered financial and statistical reports and presentations. Established policies and internal controls. Performed internal audits and program evaluations.
- Developed, wrote, designed, and published Strategic Plan, Business Plan and Budget documents that won the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from 1998 through 2005. For

2001 through 2005, budget documents were given additional designations as an "Outstanding Policy Document," "An Outstanding Communications Device," "An Outstanding Financial Plan," and as an "Outstanding Operations Guide." Received special recognitions for Capital Improvement Program and for integration of performance measures numerous times.

- Mostly based on the strategic planning model and financial results, City of Coral Springs General Obligation Bonds and Water & Sewer Bonds were **rated AAA** by Moodys, Standard & Poors, and Fitch-ICBA from 1998 through 2005.
- Managed organization-wide performance measurement system, linking operational management to strategic goals. Performed performance audits and analyzed results. Selected and implemented ActiveStrategy as performance management system. Charter member of the Florida Benchmarking Consortium. Charter participant in ICMA Center for Performance Measurement.
- Directed managed competition program. Wrote winning bid for City's Utility Billing Team during privatization of billing function. Wrote winning bid for operation and maintenance of a 60 acre community park. Wrote successful bid to provide neighboring city with Fire Rescue service in 2004. Successfully outsourced ongoing park maintenance and management of a performing arts center.
- **Central participant in implementing quality management program based on Baldrige criteria, culminating in 1997 and 2003 Florida Governor's Sterling Awards and the 2007 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for Performance Excellence**, making Coral Springs the first government to earn the Baldrige Award. Served as a Sterling Examiner in 2001-2002. Coral Springs was also selected as the first entity to receive the Florida League of Cities' City of Excellence Award in 2004 and was listed in Money Magazine's Ten Best Places to Live in 2006.
- Coral Springs' Strategic Planning process was used as a best practice model for performance measurement in the National Partnership for Reinventing Government and the American Quality & Productivity Center, and was a case study in Bob Paladino's *Five Key Principles of Corporate Performance Management* (2007) and Shayne Kavanagh's *Financing the Future: Long-Term Financial Planning for Local Government* (2007). Budget process was featured in the 2001 edition of GFOA's *Best Practices in Public Budgeting*.

Senior Budget Analyst, 07/1996-10/1998

Museum Director, Coral Springs Museum of Art, 10/1995-07/1996

Director of Event Services, Professional Facilities Management, 10/1994-10/1995

Acting General Manager, Coral Springs Center for the Arts, 04/1994-10/1994

Business & Information Systems Manager, Coral Springs Center for the Arts, 05/1991-04/1994

Box Office Manager, Omni Auditorium, Broward Community College, 10/1989-05/1991

Sound Engineer/Stage Hand/Gaffer's Assistant, Freelance/Self-employed, 06/1982-05/1991

Overseas service in the US Army, 3rd Infantry Division, 12/1984-12/1986 (Honorable discharge, 10/1992)

Education

Senior Executives in State & Local Government
Leadership Development Program
Advanced Government Finance Institute
Certificate in Strategic Management
Certified Public Pension Trustee
Incident Command System Certificates
Board of Examiners Training

John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 2011
Center for Creative Leadership, 2007
University of Wisconsin - Madison, 2005
Florida Institute of Government, 2000
Florida Public Pension Trustees Association, 2006 - 2008
Federal Emergency Management Administration, 2006 - 2010
Florida Sterling Council, 2000

Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing	Florida International University, 1995
Bachelor of Arts in English	Florida International University, 1991
Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts	Broward College, 1988

Recent Professional Activities

International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

Selected as conference chair for 2013 annual conference

Achieved Credentialed Manager designation, 2011

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)

“Financial Recovery: A 12-Step Process for Regaining Financial Health”, webinar, September 21, 2011

“Managing Perceptions”, *Government Finance Review*, December 2010

“Advanced Tools for Finance Directors: Long-Term Financial Planning”, regional Conference, March 22-23, 2010

Distinguished Budget Award reviewer

City-County Communications & Marketing Association (3CMA)

Communicator of the Year, 2011

Award of Excellence - Social Media, 2011

Conference co-chair for the 20th Anniversary National Conference, Lake Tahoe, Nevada, 2008

“Leveraging Baldrige for Performance Management”, conference presentation, 2008

Professional Relations Society of America (PRSA)

Board member, Vice President of Programming, Sierra Nevada Chapter

Personal Attributes

- In a 2007 Center for Creative Leadership Benchmarks 360-degree review, the greatest strengths identified by superiors, peers, and direct reports included being a quick study, resourcefulness, straightforwardness and composure, doing whatever it takes, and **leading employees**. In a second 360-degree designed to identify leadership competencies, highest scores were for **ethics, leading change, embracing flexibility, and leveraging differences. The lowest score for any of the 11 competencies was 4.48 on a five point Likert scale.**
- The ICMA Management Practices Applied Knowledge Assessment in 2011 showed an overall score of 91% (as compared to the ICMA median of 84%) and identified scores significantly higher than the median (15 points or more) in the following core content areas: **staff effectiveness; initiative, risk taking, creativity and innovation; technological literacy; budgeting; financial analysis; human resources management; strategic planning; and media relations.**
- Team creativity climate assessment in 2007 showed very high scores from direct reports for **supervisory encouragement**, work group supports, and freedom.