



WCMA Nominations

2026-2027 Officers and Board of Directors

Nominees for Vice President

Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager, City of Ellensburg

Nominees for Board Member

Wally Bobkiewicz, City Administrator, City of Issaquah

Torie Brazitis, County Administrator, Kitsap County

Katherine Caffrey, City Manager, City of Des Moines

Rob Gelder, City Administrator, City of Poulsbo

Doug Russell, City Manager, City of Lakewood

Richa Sigdel, Deputy City Manager, City of Pasco

Nathan West, City Manager, City of Port Angeles

NOMINEE FOR VICE PRESIDENT



STATEMENT OF INTEREST:

I am passionate about local government service and understand the importance of the professional administrator in promoting good governance, fostering quality communities, building partnerships, and delivering responsive public services. I also recognize the challenges inherent in this role.

Since my first exposure to the city management profession in 2006, I have focused on learning, strengthening my personal and professional toolkit, and advancing my career so I can contribute more meaningfully to the profession. Along the way, I have remained deeply committed to developing others through example, mentorship, and stretch opportunities, as well as introducing students,

employees, and community members to the services, functions, and career paths available in local government.

My life mission is service, with a primary focus on family, organization, and community. After two years of service on the WCMA Board, I am prepared to commit to a broader leadership role that supports and elevates our professional association while benefiting local government professionals and communities across Washington.

BIO:

Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, MPA, ICMA-CM, has served as City Manager of Ellensburg, Washington, for more than five years. She brings more than 20 years of local government experience from three Washington cities (Lacey, Tumwater, and Ellensburg), along with prior leadership experience in the private and nonprofit sectors.

Heidi grew up in a small rural town in southwest Minnesota. She attended the University of Minnesota, earned a B.A. from Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minnesota, received an MPA from The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, and completed the Senior Executives in State and Local Government program at the Harvard Kennedy School.

Heidi is committed to maintaining a well-managed city, supporting a strong team that delivers high-quality, innovative public services and resilient infrastructure, and building successful partnerships to address complex challenges facing the community. She currently serves on the Washington City/County Management Association Board, the Association of Washington Cities 2027 Legislative Committee, and the Alliance for Innovation Board.

NOMINEES FOR THE WCMA BOARD

WALLY BOBKIEWICZ



STATEMENT OF INTEREST:

I am honored to submit my candidacy for the Board of Directors of the Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA). Throughout my career in local government, I have been guided by a commitment to public service, professional excellence, and the belief that strong local government management is essential to healthy and thriving communities.

Having served in local government leadership roles for more than three decades, I have witnessed firsthand the value that professional associations bring to city and county managers, administrators, and emerging leaders. WCMA has long served as an important source of professional development, networking, mentorship, and support for those dedicated to public service. As a member of the Board, I would work to strengthen and expand those opportunities for current and future WCMA members.

One of my priorities would be increasing WCMA's focus on serving mid-career professionals who are taking on greater leadership responsibilities and preparing for executive management roles. Department directors, assistant city managers, deputy administrators, and recently appointed managers/administrators face increasingly complex challenges as they balance organizational leadership, workforce development, community expectations, and career advancement. These professionals benefit from meaningful opportunities for peer networking, leadership development, executive coaching, and candid discussions about the realities of local government management.

I believe WCMA can play an even greater role in supporting these leaders by providing programs, resources, and connections that help them grow professionally and prepare for future opportunities. Investing in mid-career professionals strengthens the entire profession by ensuring a robust pipeline of experienced, capable leaders ready to guide Washington's cities and counties through future challenges.

I am also committed to strengthening WCMA's relationship with the Association of Washington Cities (AWC). City and county managers bring a unique operational perspective to public policy discussions, and I believe WCMA can be an even stronger voice in helping inform and advocate for legislative priorities that affect our communities. By working collaboratively with AWC, we can help advance policies that support effective local governance, fiscal sustainability, infrastructure investment, public safety, housing, and the many other issues facing Washington's cities and counties.

If elected, I will bring a collaborative approach, a passion for professional development, and a deep commitment to advancing the local government management profession. I would be grateful for the opportunity to serve WCMA and help ensure that our association

continues to provide value to its members while strengthening local government throughout Washington State.

BIO:

Wally Bobkiewicz is City Administrator in Issaquah and has served communities as a local government professional for over thirty years. Born in Chicago and raised largely in Camarillo, California, he developed an early interest in public service that was influenced by his family's commitment to civic involvement. His career began in local government administration in California, where he held positions with the cities of Long Beach and Novato before becoming City Manager of Santa Paula in 2002.

Bobkiewicz gained national recognition during his decade-long tenure as City Manager of Evanston, Illinois from 2009 to 2019. There, he oversaw a wide range of initiatives involving public safety, economic development, sustainability, transportation, and community engagement, while helping modernize city operations and strengthen communication between residents and local government.

Since joining the City of Issaquah as City Administrator in 2019, Bobkiewicz has led the organization through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, guided strategic planning and financial stewardship efforts, advanced housing and transportation initiatives, strengthened regional partnerships, and promoted a culture of organizational excellence and community engagement. His leadership has helped position Issaquah to address growth, sustainability, and infrastructure challenges while maintaining a strong commitment to effective and responsive local government.

Bobkiewicz earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Administration from University of Southern California and later received a Master of Public Administration from Syracuse University.

Throughout his career, he has been active in ICMA including service on the Executive Board as Midwest Region Vice President and as Chair of the Association's International Committee. Bobkiewicz is an elected Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, serves on the Board of Directors and as Chair of its Local Government Working Group. Known for his collaborative leadership style and commitment to civic engagement, Bobkiewicz has built a reputation as a respected leader in local government management.

TORIE BRAZITIS



STATEMENT OF INTEREST:

I nominate myself as a candidate for a position on the WCCMA Board of Directors. I have enjoyed serving since June 2025 when I was appointed to a vacated Board seat and hope the membership will allow me to continue. To serve the membership, I bring 21 years of experience in communications, local government, and community building, the past 15 years of which has been directly in professional local government management. In 2014-2017, I served on the Colorado City/County Management Association (CCCMA) Board, first as their Emerging Managers

Representative and then by election to a seat. I graduated from the inaugural class of the NW Women's Leadership Academy in 2019. I am also part of the Washington State County Administrators Association (WSCAA) through Washington State Association of Counties. Professionally, I earned my Masters in Public Administration from the University of Colorado Denver School of Public Affairs in 2012, after which I served in management positions in City of Lone Tree, Colorado; City of Lakewood, Washington, City of Bothell, Washington, and City of Seattle. In 2023, I was honored to accept an appointment to be the County Administrator of Kitsap County, giving me the chance to bring professional local government skills and ethics to my hometown.

I can offer the Board a deep background in local government, community building, ICMA ethics, professional development, and state chapter activities to grow the profession. I enjoy representing the value of Counties and the local government professionals who serve them in this organization and on this Board. I appreciate your consideration of my self-nomination. Thank you.

BIO:

Torie Brazitis has served on the Washington City/County Management Association Board since June 2025.

Torie has been the County Administrator of Kitsap County since January 2024. In her role as County Administrator, she leads 10 Departments under the Board of County Commissioners and internal coordination of County functions. Before coming home to Kitsap County, she served as the Associate Operating Officer in the City of Seattle's Department of Finance and Administrative Services; Assistant City Manager for the City of Bothell; Assistant to the City Manager at City of Lakewood, WA and City of Lone Tree, CO; and consulted for King County Metro, the Colorado Office of the State Auditor, and multiple cities in Colorado and Washington state.

Torie served on the Colorado City/County Management Association Board from 2014-2017 and on the ICMA Awards Committee from 2019-2021. She completed the Northwest Women's Leadership Academy of the Washington City/County Management Association in 2019. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in government with honors from Franklin and

Marshall College in Pennsylvania and a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Colorado Denver.

KATHERINE CAFFREY



STATEMENT OF INTEREST:

I would like to express my interest in serving in one of the Full Member positions on the WCMA Board of Directors for the 2026-2027 term.

I joined the Washington local government community in November 2024 as City Manager for the City of Des Moines after spending nearly twenty years in local government in Texas. While moving across the country was a significant personal and professional transition, one of the things that has stood out to me most since arriving has been how welcoming and supportive this profession is in Washington. Colleagues across the state have been generous with their time, advice, and encouragement, and I've quickly come to

appreciate the strong sense of community within WCMA.

Serving on the Board feels like an opportunity to give back and contribute to an organization that plays an important role in supporting local government professionals and strengthening our Washington communities.

Over the course of nearly twenty years in local government, I've had the opportunity to work in communities experiencing growth and change and to support efforts related to strategic planning, organizational improvement, budgeting, and community engagement. In my current role in Des Moines, I continue to learn alongside colleagues as we work through long-range planning and organizational priorities.

If selected, I would bring a collaborative approach, a willingness to contribute where helpful, and the perspective of someone who is both experienced in the profession and still relatively new to Washington. I would welcome the opportunity to continue building relationships across the state and supporting WCMA's mission and members.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to the Association. I would be honored to serve.

BIO:

Katherine Caffrey has served as City Manager of the City of Des Moines since her appointment by the City Council in November 2024. Katherine brings almost twenty years of local government experience to Des Moines, including municipal operations, community engagement, fiscal and strategic planning, and redevelopment. Katherine spent the last 17 years with the City of Cedar Park, Texas and held various positions including Deputy City Manager. Prior to Cedar Park, Katherine began her career with the City of Little Rock, Arkansas.

As the chief executive officer for the City of Des Moines, Katherine is responsible for the management of the City's affairs and day-to-day operations.

Katherine holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of Kansas and a Bachelor of Arts in Politics from Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas. She is an active member of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Washington City Management Association. Additionally, Katherine is passionate about encouraging more women to pursue leadership roles in the public sector. During her time in Texas, she was actively involved with the Women Leading Government initiative. She serves on the Highline College Foundation Board and is a member of the Des Moines Normandy Park Rotary Club.

Katherine is a resident of Des Moines, living in the southern part of the city with her husband and their elementary-school-age son. They enjoy exploring both the Pacific Northwest and the region.

ROB GELDER



STATEMENT OF INTEREST:

As a relatively new member of WCMA, but no stranger to local government, I would appreciate the opportunity to serve the association as a member of the board. As wonky as it might seem, I really enjoy the governance aspects of organizations - membership, policies, operations, etc. I believe that the effective leadership of an association directly impacts its ability to serve the members for whom it exists. I have the interest and passion to serve a three-year term on the board if the membership agrees. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

BIO:

Rob is currently serving as the City Administrator for Poulsbo. Although a native New Yorker, Rob has spent the past 36 years in the Greater Seattle area. Rob moved to Poulsbo in 2004 for work but discovered Little Norway years before as he gravitated to the area due to his Scandinavian heritage. After 7 years at Martha & Mary, Rob was appointed as Kitsap County Commissioner in March of 2011 and was subsequently elected 4 times and served 12 years. Prior to serving as commissioner, Rob learned the complexity of municipal budgets as a member of the county's budget committee. Budgets, operations, community engagement and organizational development have continued to be areas of passion and interest for Rob.

Rob continued in public service as the Assistant County Manager for Thurston County upon leaving elected office. In that role, Rob partnered with county leaders on land use and planning, emergency services, public health and social services, public works, public defense and pre trial services.

Rob has also served on the state and national levels of county association operations and advocacy.

Eager to return to his Poulsbo roots, Rob is honored to serve alongside the stellar Poulsbo City staff and leadership to achieve the community's goals and vision for the years ahead. Rob is a member of WCMA and ICMA.

DOUG RUSSELL



STATEMENT OF INTEREST:

Please accept this letter of interest, accompanying biography statement, and photo as my self-nomination for the 2026-2027 Board of Directors for the Washington City/County Management Association.

Having started my employment for the City of Lakewood in August 2026, I am eager to engage with members across the state as part of our management association. I have participated in management associations throughout my career, including serving as the President of the Great Open Spaces City/County Management Association (GOSCMA) for a two-year term. With the experience of municipal management positions in four other states (Montana, South Dakota, Kansas, and Wyoming), I am hopeful I can bring a

broad perspective to the WCMA. I have additionally held board and committee positions with state insurance pools, ICMA, and GFOA.

BIO:

Doug is an experienced local government executive with more than 20 years of city management leadership. He holds a Bachelor of Science from Montana State University, a Master of Public Administration from the University of Colorado, and completed the Senior Executives in State and Local Government program at Harvard Kennedy School of Government. He is a Certified Manager (ICMA), Certified Public Finance Officer (GFOA), and Accredited in Public Relations (PRSA).

His career includes service as Town Administrator in Lovell, Wyoming, and City Manager in Arkansas City, Kansas; Yankton, South Dakota; Kalispell, Montana; and Lakewood, Washington. Since 2025, he has served as City Manager for Lakewood.

A recognized leader in the profession, Doug has served as President of the Great Open Spaces City Management Association, Chair of the Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority, and a founding director of the Montana City Managers Association. He has also served on numerous state and national boards and committees focused on local government leadership, public finance, and public policy.

RICHA SIGDEL



STATEMENT OF INTEREST:

I am honored to submit my nomination for a Full Member position on the 2026–2027 WCMA Board of Directors.

Growing up in Nepal, I witnessed firsthand what it means when local government falls short - unpaved roads, unreliable clean water, and cities that grow without intention or equity. Those early experiences gave me a profound appreciation for how an effective local government can impact everyday lives and is a driving reason for why I chose this profession. The work we do is not abstract, it shapes whether people have safe roads to travel, clean water to drink, clean air to breathe and communities that are built to last.

Local government administration in Washington State is at an inflection point. Communities are navigating fiscal pressures, workforce challenges, rapid growth, and

increasing expectations for transparency and service delivery, often simultaneously and with limited resources. WCMA plays a vital role in equipping practitioners with the tools, networks, and professional support needed to lead effectively, and I want to contribute to that mission.

As Deputy City Manager for the City of Pasco, I work at the intersection of finance, economic development, policy, and community engagement every day. If elected to the Board, I would bring a commitment to equity and a deep belief in the power of local government to transform lives. I would be honored to serve and look forward to the opportunity to learn from and contribute to this outstanding organization.

BIO:

Richa Sigdel serves as Deputy City Manager for the City of Pasco, where she provides direct executive oversight of Public Works, Community & Economic Development, City Clerk & Records Management, Risk & Safety, Parks & Recreation, and Information Technology. Since joining the City in 2016 as Finance Director and advancing to Deputy City Manager in 2023, Richa has built nearly a decade of local government experience with deep expertise in municipal finance, economic development, policy formulation, and organizational change management.

In addition to her municipal career, Richa held financial leadership roles at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and Idaho National Laboratory. She holds a Master of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting from Washington State University.

Richa is committed to her community, currently serving on the boards of the United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties, B5 Learning Center, and Fuse SPC.

NATHAN WEST



STATEMENT OF INTEREST:

As a longstanding Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) member I have always valued the diligence and dedication through which our Board of Directors act on our behalf throughout the year. I have appreciated with gratitude the sacrifice that our Board of Directors make to serve.

For all of us it is challenging to find the time in a senior city management position to volunteer for this important role. I am now near completion of my eighth year as City Manager for the City of Port Angeles and believe it is time to take on more to make certain I am doing my part for the current and long-term success of the WCMA organization. Through my experience I have directly witnessed

the respect and honor that our Board of Directors brings to this organization. This includes hosting an immeasurably important support system for all Managers and Administrators that serve. Without each other, our jobs and the countless unimaginable challenges we face daily would be intolerable. We succeed together by supporting one another.

Of additional significance is the direct relationship and communication that WCMA has established with Association of Washington Cities and organizations such as Municipal Research and Services Center. Critical engagement with our international professional organization ICMA ensures our resources are even further broadened. Most Importantly WCMA provides members with connections, education and the support we need to succeed in our profession.

Already the Board of Directors has set a solid strategic approach for our profession in Washington State and it would be my goal to focus on three imperative objectives:

1. Further the growth and development of effective leaders in the profession to ensure those who aspire to serve with integrity have the opportunity to succeed.
2. Innovate and enhance the quality of local government service in the face of unprecedented change and challenges.
3. Strive to constantly grow and enhance our internal and external support networks.

I would be extremely honored to serve along side exceptional professionals already dedicated to the Board of Directors and would do so with a prioritization of service, ethics and furthering the long-term viability of city and county management professionals. I would appreciate your support and dedication to the same via a vote for me.

BIO:

Nathan A. West, AICP – Since 2018, Nathan has been the City Manager for the City of Port Angeles overseeing the administrative and executive functions for the City. Prior to taking this position Nathan was responsible for the Community and Economic

Development Department of the City responsible for the Building, Economic Development, Planning, and Cultural Resource divisions of the City. Nathan currently represents the City on the Clallam County Economic Development Council, Clallam County Housing Solutions Committee, Port Angeles Waterfront Center Board and KO Erickson Trust Board. Prior to coming to the Port Angeles Area, Nathan managed the Policy Development Section of the Cayman Islands Government Planning Department. In his various roles he has accumulated over 27 years of experience in local government based community involvement and implementation. Nathan has a demonstrated history of policy development and regulatory reinvention by implementing incentive based municipal codes and policy documents. Throughout his career he has been responsible for the development of local, regional, and national long range plans in the U.S. and abroad. In Washington State he has worked creatively to address regulatory requirements and land use barriers. In the Caymans, Nathan was part of the Governor's Vision 2008 Round Table developing a strategy for the sustainable development of all three Cayman Islands.

In recent years, Nathan has participated in multiple community assessments including American Institute of Architects Sustainable Design Assessment Teams (SDAT) and Your Town Design Workshops for jurisdictions throughout the U.S.

Nathan has a Bachelors degree in Environmental Science from Willamette University and a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Tennessee. Nathan is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners and completed the University of Washington Executive Management Program in 2010.