

SARA OTT

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2017 - present **City of Aspen**, Aspen, CO
City Manager
- 2014 - 2017 **Washington Township**, Dublin, OH
Township Administrator
- 2003 - 2014 **City of Dublin**, Dublin, OH
Assistant City Manager/ Senior Project Manager (2005 - 2014)
Accreditation Coordinator (2003 - 2005)

EDUCATION

- M.P.A., University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS
B.A., Politics & Government, Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, OH

SARA OTT, ICMA-CM

ADMINISTRATIVE & EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

OPERATIONS EXCELLENCE | CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE | CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS | BUDGETING | POLICY DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT

Strategic leader with expertise in managing people, processes, policies, and systems to achieve city-wide objectives in alignment with council-approved plans. Skilled in coordinating operations, optimizing staffing, setting goals, controlling expenses, and driving transformative change. Collaborate with community agencies, business leaders, board members, and officials to deliver sustainable growth, enhance infrastructure, and implement innovative solutions. Adept at advancing governing body priorities, fiscal strategies, organizational culture, and special projects. Committed to fostering accountability, transparency, and team development to achieve shared goals and measurable outcomes.

Areas of Expertise

Strategic Planning | Budgeting | P&L | Networking & Outreach | Staff Training & Development | Resource Management
Employee Relations | Project Management | Economic Development | Parks & Recreation | Sustainability and Resiliency
Workforce Planning & Development | Fiscal Controls & Integrity | Community Improvement Projects | Planning & Zoning
Service-Level Analysis & Benchmarking | Community & Stakeholder Engagement | Public Relations | Municipal Operations
Historic Districts | Change Management | Collective Bargaining | Financial Planning | Program Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CITY OF ASPEN, COLORADO (population 7,000 year around and 30,000 seasonally) 2017-Present
City Manager (2019-present)/Interim City Manager (2019)/Assistant City Manager (2017-18)

Serve in a highly visible position providing complex administrative and executive leadership over 23 lines of business and 9 direct reports with dotted line accountability to a 377 full-time workforce with a mix of public and community service responsibilities. Steward fiscal decisions of a \$154M budget by approving expenditures and implementing policies, directives, and operational plans set forth by Council cooperation with community organizations, non-profit entities, business leaders, city staff, and other elected officials. Stand as a critical control point in directing economic development strategies and framing communication with community leaders, business owners, and agencies to reinforce relationships and keep the city moving in the right direction. Maintain a constant pulse on development projects and formulate strategies to promote both short-and long-term planning initiatives. Provide executive leadership support to City Council through budget recommendations, policy considerations, and development and implementation of strategic direction.

- Produce executive-level summaries and reporting on the city's finances, operations, community development projects, public works, and cross-organization planning.
- Prepared for voter ballot questions on multiple tax issues. All new and renewal questions have passed.
- Transformed accountability for department directors by holding them answerable to measured performance criteria and developing stretch goals to create opportunities for improvement & innovation.
- Oversee staffing decisions, significant purchases, renovation and construction projects, land acquisition, zoning requirements, land use applications, and permitting.
- Enforce an operational rhythm of business that continually provides the necessary tangible and intangible services to ensure the very politically engaged community and impassioned residents feel represented and supported.
- Oversee the meaningful reuse and repurpose of historic resources, including the upcoming \$40M renovation of the community's historic armory into economic development activities.
- Lead ongoing tourism and destination management practices for oversight of marketing, visitor services, and business relationships including amenities oversight, short term rentals policy, and major event management.

- Join forces with local and statewide elected officials to garner support for strategic land acquisitions and acquire additional funding for community-based and economic development projects.
- Built an executive team to provide effective leadership during significant shifts, changes, and advancements in organizational culture towards a more responsive, open, innovative and transparent government.
- Oversaw the construction of 79 affordable housing units with an additional 280 units in the site development phase and project managed the building of a new City Hall with numerous green certifications and operating on 100% renewable energy.
- Oversee water and electric utilities, including renewable power generation and distribution. Routinely engage in water rights preservation and acquisition.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, OHIO (Franklin, Delaware, & Union Counties) pop. 45,000**2014-2017*****Township Administrator***

Served as the chief executive officer of an organization with 150+ employees and a \$23.9M budget for one of the largest growing townships in Ohio. Coordinated administrative activities between multiple local governments and elected board members to maximize resources, partnerships, and strategic planning initiatives. Conferred with department heads regarding annual operating plans and ensured plans were clearly communicated, prioritized, and cascaded to appropriate stakeholders. Stood as a facilitator for the efficient development, implementation, and provisioning of economic development services. Developed proposals on city-wide and community-based projects, represented city council members during public meetings and supported fiscal decisions by preparing budgets, financial summaries, and special assessments of debt, utility billing, licensing, and permitting.

- Instituted significant policy changes to reduce the frequency and severity of workers' compensation claims, including supporting physical fitness standards and addressing mental health.
 - Led voter education process for the renewal of an 8.25M property tax levy for the Fire Department and EMS, establishing the first-ever citizen support committee, which secured 76% voter approval of the measure.
 - Developed the first multi-year Capital Improvement Program and a 10-year fiscal forecast model, which included 2 levy cycles to support spending decisions.
 - Improved citizen communication by building a social media presence with featured articles and implementing new online programs, significantly increasing website traffic by 400% within 6 months after launch.
 - Negotiated the operation and ownership of all park and recreation assets to new contractors, ensuring assets remained available for enjoyment, operated at higher service levels, and allowed \$530K to be redirected to other core services.
 - Implemented an incentive-based employee wellness program by transitioning the organization to a high-deductible health care plan that offered more cost-effective and targeted wellness programs, saving \$100K annually.
 - Developed and piloted a new classification and compensation system, resulting in salaries being brought in line with industry standards and determining the approach for comparing wages and benefits in future years.
 - Supported staff development activities to better utilize talent within the organization and build an internal bench strength of management and front-line staff.
- Worked in tandem with IT consultants to ensure the city's telecommunications, infrastructure, applications, and systems were maintained and upgraded when necessary.
- Worked closely with employee representative groups to bridge communications between departments, union members, and other impacted staff as part of a team-building strategy.

CITY OF DUBLIN, OHIO pop. 40,000

2003-2014

Assistant City Manager/Senior Project Manager (2005-2014)

Supported 3 City Managers in progressive roles to provide an innovative, growing community with high service level expectations and a history of proactive land-use planning with high-end design standards. Offered executive-level administrative skills to implement policy directives, develop web messaging, and create print collateral for the City Manager and City Council Members. Completed administrative responsibilities to assist 25 divisions in achieving operational excellence across multiple service lines, partnerships, and economic/community development strategies. Led a historic downtown district redevelopment project by formulating the request for proposal process and negotiating \$9M in public-private partnership contracts. Stood as an executive management team member to maximize fiscal strategies, make staffing decisions, and address changes impacting the organization.

- Led a capital improvement program that identified master planning initiatives for bikeways, parkland acquisitions, and real estate right-of-way negotiations.
- Served as an interim Recreation Services Director responsible for managing 320+ employees, 110K sq ft recreation center, and 2 outdoor aquatic centers with an operating budget of \$3M annually.
- Negotiated 4 public, non-profit partnership agreements and negotiated loan terms on a large financial contribution for an affordable senior housing complex.
- Participated in economic development strategy and execution for business retention and recruitment; utilized multiple economic development tools including tax increment financing, renewal authorities, incentives with performance requirements and clawbacks.

Accreditation Coordinator (2003-2005)

Earlier Career Experience: **Management Assistant** at City of Liberty, Mo; **Zoning Commissioner** at Jersey Township, Ohio; various temporary and intern assignments.

EDUCATION | PROFESSIONAL & BOARD MEMBERSHIPSUNIVERSITY OF KANSAS – **Master of Public Administration**OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY – **Bachelor of Arts; Politics & Government**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY - **Graduate Certificate in Mediation and Conflict Resolution**UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA; **Cooper Center for Public Service**

Learning, Educating, & Development Program (LEAP) | Senior Executive Institute

International City & County Management Association (ICMA); LEAD 2-Year Leadership Program

Professional Memberships: ICMA, Colorado City/County Management Association**Board Memberships:**

Colorado Intergovernmental Risk Sharing Agency (CIRSA) Board of Directors; Board Member 2021-present

Mountain Coalition for Food and Nutrition Security (MCFNS) Special Advisor 2022 - present

Aspen Airport Advisory Board, Board Member, 2021-2024

References available upon request.