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Empowering Women in City Management: Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges

By: Ashley Wayman, MPA - City Administrator

As we celebrated International Women's Day this month, it's a fitting time to reflect on the progress we've made in the field of city management and the successes that we are currently experiencing as female leaders in local government. As a woman who is navigating the complexities of this profession, I am deeply passionate about empowering the next generation of women and fostering their motivational interests to excel in city management roles.

City management is a dynamic and rewarding field that offers countless opportunities to make a positive impact on communities. Being involved at the heart of local government, the place where the most impact can be made for our residential constituents, is a lofty and admirable pursuit. Yet, for many women, breaking into the upper level roles that have traditionally been held by men can seem daunting.

Historically, women have been underrepresented in leadership positions in local government, with barriers such as unconscious bias and gender stereotypes often standing in the way of progress. As with any deeply rooted historical precedent, this will continue to require effort to overcome.

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Architects of Change: Empowering Women in the AEC Industry

By: Morgan DeBorde, MBA - Business Development Manager, AGCM

As a young girl, the construction industry was admittedly not how I envisioned my future. I wanted to be part of something that would change the world and I needed to be able to serve others. As an inquisitive and energetic five-year-old, to me that meant being a doctor, astronaut, or veterinarian. As I matured and experienced life as a college student, I realized that my dreams of service and impacting others would be my calling. What I had not envisioned was where my path to changing the world would lead me. It became clear my career was going to be paved in a much broader dimension.

Embarking my career in the construction field, I quickly realized that providing the assistance to construct new government facilities, schools for our youth, emergency service stations, to only name a few, were possibly the tangible change and service I had been seeking as a young girl. The Architecture, Engineering and Construction community continuously exceeds my expectations as to the level of care and attention we can provide for our public owners. This realization broke the glass ceiling in my mind about opportunities that could possibly lie ahead, as well as the growing idea for the need and inclusion of women in the AEC community.

Our firm alone hosts senior female project managers, female estimators, female field operation managers, but that's just the beginning! In this growing community, we are surrounded by women; as fearless and dedicated in the service to our public owners, as they are in service to us. It is an inspiration to be surrounded by like-minded women. Although this is neither the industry nor position I may have dreamed of as young girl, this experience has made me realize how glad that little girl's visualization of the future was incorrect. I am proud to be a part of this industry's growth, opportunity, and this learning adventure.

Ashley Wayman, MPA
City Manager, City of Rollingwood



Ashley Wayman brings extensive municipal leadership experience to her role as City Administrator for Rollingwood. With a background in municipal finance and a track record of effective governance, Ashley transitioned from City Secretary to Assistant City Administrator before assuming her current position. Holding a Bachelor's in Accounting and a Master's in Public Administration, Ashley is deeply committed to public service. She's a trailblazer in women's leadership, serving as President of the Central Texas Chapter of Women Leading Government and contributing to various municipal organizations. Ashley thrives on collaborating with dedicated staff and residents, fostering community engagement. Beyond work, she enjoys outdoor activities and spending quality time with loved ones.



Empowering Women in City Management: Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges

To succeed in city management, women must be willing to challenge the status quo and advocate for themselves and others. This could mean seeking out mentors or sponsors who can offer guidance and support, as well as actively pursuing opportunities for professional development and advancement. It is important for women to network and build relationships with colleagues and peers both within and outside the field of city management, as these connections can open doors to new opportunities and collaborations.

Another important aspect of progressing in the city management profession is cultivating leadership skills and competencies. Effective city managers must be able to navigate complex political environments, manage diverse teams and communicate effectively with stakeholders. Over the years, women have honed these skills through hands-on experience, formal training programs and ongoing learning and development opportunities, many times providing fresh and innovative solutions.

In addition to building their own skills and capabilities, women in city management can also play a vital role in championing diversity and inclusion within their organizations and communities. By creating inclusive work environments where everyone feels valued and respected, we can foster innovation, creativity and collaboration, ultimately driving better outcomes for the communities we serve.

As we look to the future of city management, it's clear that women have a crucial role to play in shaping the cities of tomorrow. By embracing our unique strengths and perspectives, we can drive positive change and create more equitable and sustainable communities for all. Together, we can continue to break barriers, build bridges and empower the next generation of female leaders in city management.



Check out the latest episode of City Manager Unfiltered Podcast (Link Below) to learn more about our recruitment process from Clear Career Professionals President Mike Boese.

<https://www.podbean.com/ew/pb-af7dm-15b50dd>



Clear Career Professionals

<https://clearcareerpro.com/>

➤ Career Opportunities:

Director of Development Services - City of Anna, Texas
Risk Manager - City of McKinney, Texas

➤ Recent Placements:

Anthony Flores - Floresville, TX - Chief of Police
Trevor Barnes - Clyde, TX - Chief of Police
Alex Coss - Whitesboro, TX - Chief of Police

➤ Clear in Action:

Kent Myers attended the TML Mid-Winter Conference in San Marcos, on March 14th - 15th.

Michael Boese will be attending the TPCA Conference in Galveston, March 25th - 27th.

Kent Myers will be attending the Arkansas City Management Association Conference in Little Rock, on April 17th - 19th.

Clear will be attending the TMHRA Annual Conference in Denton, May 8th - 10th.

Clear will be attending the TML Annual Conference in Houston, October 9th - 11th.