



# REGISTRATION & SCHEDULE

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JANUARY 26-29, 2024

Atlanta Hilton

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# HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE



Invited special guests including Georgia's top leaders



More than six opportunities to engage directly with Georgia legislators



The Capitol Connection Breakfast followed by a "Cities United" trip to the Gold Dome



Unmatched training opportunities offered by the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute

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Contact GMA registration staff for questions regarding Cities United Summit at [registration@gacities.com](mailto:registration@gacities.com)

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## VENUE

The 2024 GMA Cities United Summit will take place at the Atlanta Hilton.

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The Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House will be invited to address attendees and all members of the Georgia General Assembly will be invited to attend, providing a great opportunity for networking with state leaders. Following breakfast, city officials will be encouraged to visit the Capitol to celebrate GMA Cities United Day at the Capitol. Shuttle service from the Atlanta Hilton to the Capitol will be available through the lunch hour.

<https://www.gacities.com/Legal-Disclaimer>



# SCHEDULE

## FRIDAY, JANUARY 26

- 9:00 am – 4:00 pm:** Municipal Training Institute classes (6-hour classes)  
**9:00 am – 12:00 pm:** Municipal Training Institute classes (3-hour classes)  
**1:00 pm – 4:00 pm:** Municipal Training Institute classes (3-hour classes)  
**4:15 pm – 5:15 pm:** Municipal Training Board Meeting

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 27

- 9:00 am – 4:00 pm:** Municipal Training Institute classes (6-hour classes)  
**4:15 pm – 5:45 pm:** GMA Board of Directors Meeting

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 28

- 7:30 am – 8:00 am:** Devotional service  
**8:00 am – 9:00 am:** Federal Policy Council Meeting  
**8:00 am – 9:00 am:** Orientation for First-Time Attendees  
**9:15 am – 10:30 am:** Policy Committee Meetings  
**10:45 am – 12:00 pm:** Policy Committee Meetings  
**12:15 pm – 2:15 pm:** Awards Luncheon  
**2:45 pm – 4:00 pm:** Policy Committee Meetings  
**4:15 pm – 5:00 pm:** Legislative Policy Council Meeting  
**4:15 pm – 5:15 pm:** Workshop: Information Session (Topic TBA)  
**5:30 pm – 6:30 pm:** Networking Reception

## MONDAY, JANUARY 29

- 7:00 am – 7:45 am:** Legislative Networking and Capitol Connection Breakfast  
**7:45 am – 9:00 am:** Capitol Connection Breakfast Program  
Speakers to be invited: Governor  
Lt. Governor  
Speaker of the House  
**9:30 am – 12:00 pm:** Cities United Day at the Capitol

Cities United Summit full registration includes all Sunday and Monday events.  
(Training courses on Friday and Saturday require a separate registration fee.)



2024 GMA Cities United Summit and Municipal Training Institute

## REGISTRATION FORM

Online registration available at [www.gacities.com](http://www.gacities.com)

Full Name:		
Preferred name for badge:		
Title (including certifications):		
City or Organization:		
Street Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Spouse/Guest name (if spouse/guest is registering):		

<https://www.gacities.com/Legal-Disclaimer>

**Cities United Summit Registration - includes all Sunday and Monday events (training courses require a separate registration fee)**

- City Officials/All City Employees  \$375
- Spouses/Guests of Registered Attendees  \$135
- Extra Awards Luncheon Ticket  \$75
- BAP Members or Non-Profit Attendees  \$425
- Non-Members (all others)  \$700
- Monday Day Pass  \$100

*Day pass includes Monday Capitol Connection Breakfast and Cities United Day at the Capitol. Transportation is provided.*

- First-time Attendee
- New Member/First Time Attendee Orientation (1/28/24)

**Municipal Training Institute (You may register for training only)**

**Friday, January 26 (each course is from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm and provides 6 hours of training credit – Lunch is included)**

- Data Literacy and Storytelling for Cities  \$305
- Ethics\*  \$305
- Money, Money, Money... Money! Funding City Projects Through Grants and Loans  \$305
- Municipal Finance I\*  \$305
- Navigating the Future: Thinking, Planning and Acting Strategically  \$305



2024 GMA Cities United Summit and Municipal Training Institute

## REGISTRATION FORM

Online registration available at [www.gacities.com](http://www.gacities.com)

Friday, January 26 (each course is from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm and provides 3 hours of training credit — Lunch is included)

- Beyond The Beltway: Influencing Federal Policy Through Grassroots Engagement  \$210
- Capital Improvement Program  \$210
- Excellence in Customer Service  \$210
- Municipal Taxation 101 - The Basics\*  \$210
- Open Meetings\*  \$210

Friday, January 26 (each course is 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm and provides 3 hours of training credit — Lunch is included)

- Let's Get Social  \$210
- Effective Practices for Municipal Operations  \$210
- Information Privacy and Security Breaches: Prevention and Response\*  \$210
- Public Policy Development and Implementation\*  \$210
- Municipal Annexation  \$210

Saturday, January 27 (each course is 9:00 am - 4:00 pm and provides 6 hours of training credit – Lunch is included)

- Building a Hometown Connection: GMA Lobbying 101  \$305
- Conflict Resolution\*  \$305
- Current Issues Class: Workforce Development  \$305
- Downtown Development Authority Basic Training (ends at 5pm)  \$305
- Economic Development\*  \$305
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services  \$305
- How Shall We Live? Practical Ethics for Public Life\*+  \$305
- Human Resources\*  \$305
- Law Enforcement Services: Trends and Best Practices  \$305
- Making Citizen Engagement Work in Our Communities\*  \$305
- Municipal Finance II\*  \$305
- Municipal Long-Term Budgeting  \$305
- Planning and Zoning\*  \$305
- Steering Through the Storm: Guiding Your Community Through a Disaster\*  \$305
- \*\* CLERKS COURSE – Athenian Dialogue: Loving the Person You Are today: This is Me **(CE Credit)**  \$305

Total:  \$\_\_\_\_\_

*Classes with an \* are on the "required" list for the Municipal Training Institute certificate program.*

*Class with an \*\* is a Clerks Course and not a part of the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Certificate Program.*

*Classes with a + are part of the Advanced Leadership Track and are needed to complete the Certificate of Dedication.*



2024 GMA Cities United Summit and Municipal Training Institute

## REGISTRATION FORM

Online registration available at [www.gacities.com](http://www.gacities.com)

**ATTENDEE REGISTRATION:** The fee includes access to six policy committee meetings, the awards luncheon, special workshop, networking reception, the Capitol Connection Breakfast and Cities United Day at the Capitol.

**SPOUSE/GUEST REGISTRATION:** The fee includes access to the networking reception, Awards Luncheon Ticket, Capitol Connection Breakfast and Cities United Day at the Capitol.

**MONDAY DAY PASS:** The day pass includes the Capitol Connection Breakfast and Cities United Day at the Capitol. Transportation will be provided to and from the Capitol following breakfast. This option is not available to those taking training and/or attending policy committee meetings and/or the awards luncheon.

**\*MUNICIPAL INSTITUTE TRAINING COURSES:** Training courses on Friday and Saturday require a separate registration and are not included in the conference registration fee.

**CANCELLATION and CHANGE POLICY:** All changes and cancellations must be submitted in writing to [registration@gacities.com](mailto:registration@gacities.com). Cancellations after December 15th will be assessed a \$100 administrative fee. Cancellations after December 29th will not be eligible for refund.

If paying by credit card, you are encouraged to register online at the Cities United Summit webpage. If you are unable to register online, fax your registration to our secure line at **678-686-6255**. GMA is not allowed to accept credit card payments by email. If paying by check, please mail to:

GMA, Attn: Rodline Africo-Prado, P.O. Box 105377, Atlanta, Georgia 30348.

*We strive to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to engage fully.*

Check here if you need special assistance or have dietary restrictions.

To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact [registration@gacities.com](mailto:registration@gacities.com)

Check Enclosed (to GMA)  Visa  MC  AMEX

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

The **Hilton Atlanta** will serve as the conference hotel. It is located at 255 Courtland Street NE, Atlanta, Georgia, 30303. The GMA room rate is \$171 (other room types are available for additional costs). For reservations, please call 404-659-2000 and ask for the GMA rate of \$171. To get the GMA rate, all reservations MUST be made by Friday, January 5th. You may also register and make your hotel reservation online: Click: **Cities United Reservations** or visit [www.gacities.com](http://www.gacities.com).



# COURSES

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

## **Data Literacy and Storytelling for Cities**

Is that a fact? How do I know? Data are critical to helping local 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 course focuses on the importance of teaching a basic understanding of data literacy geared towards the needs of local government officials. This course will expose officials to data literacy, storytelling, and performance management topics. Participants will receive tips, tools, and other resources for interacting, interpreting, and presenting data.

## **Ethics\***

This class examines the importance of ethical conduct in the administration of one's public duties and how ethical lapses can severely damage the reputation of both individual officeholders and the city. An overview of state ethics laws and regulations that apply to municipal officials, including campaign financing and private interest disclosure requirements, is provided. Ethical dilemmas that often confront public officials and the value of strong local ethics ordinances are also discussed.

## **Money, Money, Money...Money! Funding City Projects Through Grants and Loans**

With limited ability to generate increased revenues from taxes and user fees, city officials often seek grant and low-interest loan opportunities to help address a range of capital improvement and operational needs. This class details some of the state, federal and foundation funding sources available to municipalities in Georgia and offers advice on how to write strong grant applications. Additionally, the class introduces some reporting and administrative responsibilities the city may have once funding has been awarded.

## **Municipal Finance I\***

This class is intended to serve as a basic primer on municipal finance issues that all mayors, councilmembers and managers should understand. A discussion of the budget process, the revenue sources available to cities, purchasing policies and financing capital improvements is included in this general overview.

## **Navigating the Future: Thinking, Planning and Acting Strategically**

All organizations, institutions, associations and jurisdictions must respond to change, either because they happen to change or change happens to them. This is why virtually every city and town engages in some form of what is commonly referred to as strategic planning. *(continued on next page)*



# COURSES

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

## **Navigating the Future: Thinking, Planning and Acting Strategically (*continued*)**

But having a strategic plan and thinking strategically are not the same. If they were, so many so-called strategic plans wouldn't sit on the shelf. Municipal leaders must be able to engage colleagues, constituents, citizens and their community in strategic thinking if they are to address not only the challenges facing them today, but also those of tomorrow. This class uses a strategic simulation that incorporates strategic thinking, visioning and navigating to address the what, why and how of strategic planning. Class participants work together in small groups to simulate a strategic process that includes an environmental scan, building scenarios of most likely and most preferred futures, identifying driving and restraining forces, conducting a gap analysis, identifying key themes, framing goals and strategies, and developing an action plan to guide how to navigate from today to tomorrow. **This class is limited to 45 participants.**

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

## **Beyond the Beltway: Influencing Federal Policy Through Grassroots Engagement**

Decisions made in Washington, D.C. on issues ranging from environmental regulations to tax reform and the federal budget have a direct impact on municipal operations. Federal policies may create unfunded mandates and result in unintended consequences. Local officials have a key role in influencing federal policy. By sharing information with federal leaders about local challenges and needs, federal leaders can make more informed decisions. This class provides information about Congress, federal agencies, and how municipal officials can engage most effectively with leaders at the federal level to advocate for municipal priorities. Participants obtain tips for communicating with members of Congress and engage in role-playing exercises to hone their negotiating skills.

## **Capital Improvement Program**

Capital assets are essential for service delivery in local governments. All governments should have a comprehensive capital improvement program (CIP) to renew and replace these capital assets. The class provides an overview of a CIP, including how a CIP is included in the annual budget. In addition, creating a CIP, incorporating capital asset requests and the decision-making process are discussed. Finally, discussion includes considerations in funding capital asset improvements.





# COURSES

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

## **Excellence in Customer Service**

This class provides valuable information for elected officials and staff relating to the proper role that customer service plays in local government. Participants will explore ways to move from average customer service to excellent customer service. Participants examine internal policies and procedures that hamper and support customer service at its best. The class instructor guides officials in defining and communicating the customer service organizational culture of their respective cities.

## **Municipal Taxation 101—The Basics\***

The class gives municipal officials an overview of the fundamentals of local government taxation with an in-depth look at the two primary funding sources for local government in Georgia: property tax and sales tax. This class is designed to give participants an understanding of tax language and appropriate usage of revenues, preparing them to communicate tax issues to constituents and make prudent decisions related to expenditures. **This class includes information from the previous six-hour Taxation 101 - The Basics class. Those who completed the six-hour version may earn credit for completing the three-hour version.**

## **Open Meetings\***

Open, accessible meetings are a hallmark of local government and are important for communicating with residents and businesses. This class examines the requirements of Georgia's Open Meetings Act, what constitutes a "meeting" and the limited circumstances authorizing executive sessions. The importance of proper notice as well as meeting agendas, summaries and minutes are discussed. Class participants are apprised of potential consequences for failing to follow the law.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

## **Let's Get Social**

Technology impacts personal lives, work and local government. This class examines and defines what social media means and how social media can be used by local government, including the risks and benefits of such usage. The legal basis for governmental use of social media is reviewed. Demonstrations on making social media user-friendly for both large and small governments are provided. Finally, the class helps participants determine the social media applications that matter most to their organization, navigate the set-up process for key applications, create meaningful content, and engage their audience across different sites.



# COURSES

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

## **Effective Practices for Municipal Operations**

This class targets municipal elected officials from small communities and newly elected officials and exposes them to various fundamental principles for having a professionally managed city. The class examines basic management strategies and analyzes tools and processes needed to create an organizational climate of excellence to effectively deliver municipal services. In addition, the class identifies emerging issues and other challenges that can impede effective municipal operations.

## **Information Privacy and Security Breaches: Prevention and Response\***

Elected officials and city management are the “face” of a city’s commitment to information privacy and security. This class covers what municipal officials “need to know” about information privacy and security policies including: risk assessment, access controls, security provisions in contracts, disaster recovery/business continuity, workforce training and incident/breach readiness. Class attendees review actual municipal and county information privacy and security breaches. Participants also hear how to champion for the resources to secure city information and how to designate the city as a HIPAA “hybrid entity”.

## **Public Policy Development and Implementation\***

Developing policy to advance the vision of the city is one of the most important duties that a mayor and council perform. This class is designed to give municipal officials an understanding of the importance of that function and the role of the elected officials and professional staff in developing, implementing and evaluating those policies. Participants learn how to effectively use policy-making models in the development of practical public policy that will benefit their communities and constituents.

## **Municipal Annexation**

Annexation is an important and unique power of city governments. It can often be a difficult and complex undertaking. This class describes the different methods of annexation permitted by Georgia law, the steps for zoning annexed territory and handling county objections to annexation. Participants discuss why cities annex property and the potential impacts of annexation on the cities, newly-annexed stakeholders and the county government.



# COURSES

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 2024

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

## **Building a Hometown Connection: GMA Lobbying 101**

This class provides an overview of the state legislative process and helps city officials understand how they can be effective advocates of issues important to their community and cities throughout the state. Participants receive ideas for establishing productive year-round relationships with members of the General Assembly as well as practical lobbying tips they can use during the legislative session. The class also includes a hands-on exercise using real-life legislative scenarios.

## **Conflict Resolution\***

This class explores strategies and techniques for successfully resolving conflict through negotiation and mediation. Emphasis is placed on identifying the sources of conflict and the personality styles of the parties involved.

## **Current Issues Class: Workforce Development**

This class provides participants with information pertaining to workforce trends in local government and Georgia's workforce, as well as the role of elected officials and key players throughout our state.

## **Downtown Development Authority Basic Training (ends at 5:00 PM)**

This class is primarily directed at those who serve on Downtown Development Authorities, but it is open to all city officials. Topics include: the management of downtown as a valuable resource; the role of the authority, board members and staff; DDA laws; and the day-to-day operations of a Downtown Development Authority. **This class is limited to 50 participants.**

## **Economic Development\***

This class provides a basic overview of the economic development process, with a focus on the strategies, resources and programs employed by the state of Georgia to assist communities in achieving success in today's global economy. Topics such as community development building blocks, business development strategies, regional cooperation and the role of local leadership in economic development are covered.

## **Fire and Emergency Medical Services**

This class exposes city officials to some of the basic concepts involved in providing municipal fire suppression, fire prevention and emergency medical services. In addition to reviewing applicable laws and codes, the class covers emerging issues and new technologies.



# COURSES

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 2024

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

## **How Shall We Live? Practical Ethics for Public Life \*+**

Ethics is often seen as something that is lacking in public officials, and therefore must be imposed on them through laws and training. Ethics training may promote awareness and compliance, but it does not promote ethical excellence. In this class, participants explore the advantages and limitations of codified ethics; how values, morality, virtue, character and obligations play out in everyday decision-making; why ethical dilemmas arise and how we resolve them; virtues and temptations of leadership; and how public service constitutes a moral and ethical enterprise for public leaders.

## **Human Resources\***

This class provides an overview of state and federal personnel laws that apply to municipal governments and the basics of human resource management. Key topics include day-to-day issues facing human resource staff, the role of the personnel manager, establishing and adhering to sound personnel policies and procedures, and dealing with the media.

## **Law Enforcement Services: Trends and Best Practices**

This class familiarizes municipal officials with the basic concepts of law enforcement. In addition to reviewing applicable laws, funding mechanisms and staffing models, the class addresses emerging public safety issues, trends and innovations.

## **Making Citizen Engagement Work in Our Communities\***

This class explores the importance of getting citizens engaged in the process of governance. The class exposes officials to the concept of deliberative forums, a method of citizen engagement that brings diverse community interests together to explore policy options and share insights, ideas and suggestions in a structured setting. Participants receive tips, tools and other resources for recruiting residents, creating productive conversations and encouraging residents to be involved in local problem-solving.

## **Municipal Finance II\***

This class emphasizes the importance of establishing sound financial policies and provides participants with a better understanding of how to read and understand audited city financial statements, assess the effectiveness of internal accounting controls and manage a city's cash and investments. This class may be taken before or after Municipal Finance I.



# COURSES

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 2024

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

## **Municipal Long-Term Budgeting**

This class is intended to serve as a follow-up to Municipal Finance I. Topics will address long-term budget requirements for capital asset renewal and replacement, capital improvements, pension and other employment benefit costs and compensated absences.

## **Planning and Zoning\***

This class examines the difficult choices municipal officials encounter in stimulating economic well-being, protecting public infrastructure investment and maintaining environmental integrity. It examines legal considerations for planning and zoning, the role of the mayor, council and manager, and practical steps for maintaining a comprehensive plan and effective zoning procedures. In addition, the class highlights issues, barriers and policy solutions associated with efforts to achieve desirable patterns of development.

## **Steering Through the Storm: Guiding Your Community Through A Disaster\***

During times of natural or human-made disasters and pandemics, cities are often faced with the challenge of steering through the “storm,” continuing city business operations, and communicating effectively, to meet the basic needs of their community as well as managing the needs and demands of the on-going recovery operation. While the initial focus following a major disaster is to respond to the life safety aspects of the emergency, multiple tasks will quickly emerge to face the local leadership team. Is your city prepared for the organizational resiliency necessary to sustain regular services as well as emergency operations during the four distinct phases of a disaster? What is the role of elected leaders in these scenarios? This class will define the various types of disasters, review the four phases of a disaster, and the planning and preparedness required for community resilience in responding to disasters, exploring methods for prioritizing crucial essential services, and recognizing the multiple impacts on the local economy, city services and city staff. **This class includes some content from the previous class “Emergency Management.” Those who previously took Emergency Management can take this class and receive credit towards a training certificate.**



# CLERKS COURSE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 2024

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

## **\*\* CLERKS COURSE – Athenian Dialogue(CE Credit) (6-hour class)**

What is an Athenian Dialogue? Dialogues are conversations that go beyond the usual knowledge recall and application process familiar to training seminars. They are unique because they explore leadership principles and practice, drawing on the insights contained in a book that all participants have read. The premise of the Athenian Dialogue Society is that clerks are leaders in very profound yet subtle ways. Participants devote a full day (6 hours) to a Dialogue and come away intellectually enriched by this experience.

Loving the Person You are Today: This Is Me by: Chrissy Metz.

***Each attendee is responsible for purchasing and reading the book prior to class. (available on Amazon)***

About the Book: After starring in the wildly popular television show “This is Us”, Chrissy Metz shares the life lessons she learned from her setbacks and successes in this autobiography. A born entertainer, Chrissy finds light in even her darkest moments, and leaves the reader feeling as if they are spending time with a trusted friend who gets it. With chapters that alternate from autobiographical to instructional, Chrissy offers practical applications of her hard-won insights in a series of “Bee Mindful” interstitials. Blending love and experience, Chrissy encourages us all to claim our rightful place in a world that may be trying to knock us down. She also encourages us to find our own unique gifts and to pursue our dreams.

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