THE INTERNATIONAL HISPANIC NETWORK
A PURPOSE – AN OBJECTIVE

In conjunction with promoting professional excellence among Hispanic government officials, executives, and public managers within local government, the International Hispanic Network (IHN) serves to improve the management of local government(s), with a special emphasis given to the management of communities with ever-increasing Hispanic populations. In this effort of advancing the education and training of Hispanics and non-minority representatives working within city government(s) and municipalities.

THE INTERNATIONAL HISPANIC NETWORK
MAKING THE NECESSARY PROVISIONS

Despite the growing number of Hispanics in this country, very few are rising to the top level of city management. Minority majority city councils have looked for and will continue to seek qualified, professionally trained city managers and other public administrators, individuals with the qualifications and skills to lead. Survey respondents at the local level recognize the need to make provisions for Hispanic and immigrants. Additionally, a section was devoted to the needs of low-income children and families, seniors and families, personal safety, the needs of low-income children and families, and immigrants.

THE INTERNATIONAL HISPANIC NETWORK
THE MUNICIPAL BEST PRACTICES FOR THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY SURVEY

It is projected that by 2020, the Hispanic population will nearly double to 60 million, a substantial growth considering the 2003 Census Bureau’s report that the U.S. Hispanic population had grown to 37 million, marking it as the largest minority group in the U.S. Appreciating this projection, it will become imperative that local government(s), and the Hispanic professionals serving within them, learn how to adapt and serve a population that is not only linguistically and culturally diverse, but as a group, becoming older, more politically active, and more influential. As this demographic transformation continues, issues pertaining to the Hispanic population will make themselves known at local and national levels. Aware that service level gaps currently exist regarding growing communities, the IHN has made provisions to provide information and potential solutions to the many communities facing increasing Hispanic populations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
THE MUNICIPAL BEST PRACTICES FOR THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Census Bureau recently reported that the Hispanic population is currently the largest minority group in the U.S. As this trend continues, a need for public administration representation within city halls will be indispensable. Municipalities will need to learn how to serve this growing segment of the population. The Municipal Best Practices for the Hispanic Community Survey provides needed research in this area. The survey was sent to city managers whose population was 10% Hispanic or more and Hispanic city managers. One-hundred-sixty-one surveys were returned for a 31% response rate. The survey covered basic areas including access to local government services, housing, children and youth, seniors and families, personal safety, the needs of low-income children and families, and immigrants. Additionally, a section was devoted to best practices. With this, a detailed description of each section is included with tables and graphs providing support.

Although at the national level there appears to be an anti-immigration sentiment that affects all Hispanics, regardless of their legal status, at the local level, governments are making an effort to serve all their residents. The results of the survey indicate that steps are being taken to provide services. However, many local governments lack information on how to address specific needs of the Hispanic community as well as the tools to provide the additional services that are challenging many cities in the U.S. The information provided in the survey attempts to fill this gap with innovative ideas and solutions.
Conducting a needs assessment is a critical first step in addressing any new situation. It serves to explore what is being done, what can be achieved, and identifies gaps in service delivery.

- A mere 24% of the cities surveyed have undergone this first step and have a better understanding of how to serve the Hispanic community.
- As needs assessments are performed, cities will be able to adapt to the changing demographic and cultural transformations occurring.
- Crucial to service delivery is an understanding by municipal employees of the growing Hispanic population and its unique potential needs. An immediate impact cities can have as they serve their residents involves the city’s workforce.

Crucial to meeting the demands of an ever-growing Hispanic population and workforce is the availability of training to city employees.

- 46.6% of cities surveyed make this kind of provision.
- 64% of the cities indicated that creative approaches have been designed to reach culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- A key first step in delivering information about city services and educating new residents about civic responsibilities is providing interpretation and translation type services to Hispanic residents in the community.

Another innovative approach to serving culturally and linguistically diverse communities is becoming involved in local and national Hispanic organizations.

- 87% of the cities surveyed have Hispanic citizens serving on advisory councils, boards, committees, and or commissions.
- City employees remain connected to the Hispanic community through efforts such as these.

**A NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

**MUNICIPALITIES PROVIDING TRAINING**

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**MEMBERSHIP IN HISPANIC ORGANIZATIONS**

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COLLABORATING WITH OTHER AGENCIES
Findings indicate a willingness on the part of those surveyed to network and find solutions to the challenges involved in serving the Hispanic community.

• 69% work with other government agencies as well as community and faith-based organizations to provide outreach services to Hispanics.
• 64% feel there should be more accessibility to best practices and specialized assistance.

COMPENSATION FOR BILINGUAL EMPLOYEES
As part of further innovations to serve culturally and linguistically diverse communities, cities are attempting to provide additional compensation to bilingual employees.

• Sixty cities are currently participating in such programs.
• Eighty-four cities, however, do not participate.

CITIES REACHING OUT FOR IMPROVEMENT
Cities are interested in obtaining information on how to best serve their growing Hispanic communities, demonstrating that cities are in fact willing to improve their current services.

• 44% of the cities surveyed have contacted other cities for information pertaining to how best to serve the Hispanic community.

HISPANICS AND WHAT HAPPENS AT CITY HALL
Hispanics feel they have a stake in what happens at city hall. They are concerned about local events and the impact on their community.

• 73% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Hispanics are participating and engaged in the process of local government.

73% STRONGLY AGREED THAT HISPANICS ARE PARTICIPATING AND ENGAGED IN THE PROCESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.
POLICIES PROMOTING HOME OWNERSHIP

Although there is some involvement by the federal, state, and local levels of government when it comes to housing within the U.S., it remains mostly the individual’s personal matter.

• While 23% of respondents to the survey do have some type of policies promoting home ownership among Hispanics, 48% indicated they do not.

INCREASING HISPANIC HOMEOWNERSHIP

More cities have some type of homeownership program in place than actually have a formal policy. However, no clear indication is given in support of home ownership programs because an equal number of cities are currently not involved in any programs.

• 39% of the cities are currently involved in some type of program while 38% are not.

PROVIDING WORKSHOPS AND HOME BUYING COUNSELING

In terms of “how to buy a house” workshops and other home buying counseling, half the cities in the survey are involved in some manner while the other half are not.

• 43% of the cities offer some type of program while 42% do not.

48% OF LOW-INCOME HOMEOWNERS HAVE ACCESS TO CITY PROGRAMS SUCH AS TAX EXEMPTIONS, SUBSIDIES OR GRANTS TO REDUCE PROPERTY TAX.
AFFORDABILITY TO LOW-INCOME HOMEOWNERS

Tax exempt type programs or tax credits should be encouraged so that housing can become even more affordable to low-income Hispanic families.

• While 48% of low-income homeowners have access to city programs such as tax exemptions, subsidies or grants to reduce property taxes, 60% of the cities surveyed do not provide shelters for those unable to afford adequate housing without some assistance.

ASSURING NO DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

Although 50% of the municipalities do not have ordinances requiring developers to build moderately priced dwelling units in new subdivisions, mixed neighborhoods remain a common feature and add value and diversity to communities.

• 63% agree that their city partners with non-profits or housing authorities to assure there is no redlining or racial steering within the city.
AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR LOW-INCOME CHILDREN

Individuals with authority and resources are taking responsibility toward assuring programs for at-risk children, including Hispanics. However, 37% of cities do not offer or support childcare for at-risk Hispanic children. • 69% surveyed offer after school programs providing components such as sports, cultural, academics, arts, and dance.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND PROGRAMS FOR HISPANIC CHILDREN

In their attempt to best support at-risk children, the public libraries offer special programs for Hispanic children. • 52% of the cities surveyed agreed that their libraries offer special programs. • 19% were not aware of any programs.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR TRANSPORTATION

Although typically plagued with varying issues, a majority of those surveyed indicated that various types of partnerships exist between local school districts and municipalities. However, these partnerships do not necessarily exist for the transportation of students. • 46% surveyed concluded that no special relationships exist.

CITY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS WITH HOSPITAL OR CLINICS

It is not common for a city to own and operate hospitals and other types of medical facilities. Most social services are delivered through county governments. • 43% of the cities do not have partnerships or agreements to assist low-income families. • 47% do not participate in Hispanic Wellness Fairs.
SENIOR-BASED SERVICES FOR THE HISPANIC ELDERLY

As the population ages, senior services providing a wide range of activities for seniors, regardless of ethnicity, will increase in importance for cities and communities.

- 41% offer some type of services for the Hispanic elderly.

DISSEMINATING GENERAL INFORMATION

An important first step in providing services to a diverse community is publicizing the services available.

- 70% disseminate materials such as available health care, housing, parks and recreation, health fairs, work sites, and churches.

PROMOTING ETHNIC CULTURES

One of the most common ways cities reach-out to the Hispanic community is by sponsoring or organizing family events that promote various ethnic cultures, events whose purpose and intent it is to build bridges and foster understanding.

- 73% of those surveyed indicated that some cultural events took place.
POLICING THE COMMUNITY AND LANGUAGE BARRIERS

Language barriers exist in police departments, affecting relationships with Hispanics. This will continue to be a critical roadblock in establishing community policing efforts within Hispanic communities.

- 71% of police officers do not speak Spanish.

AVAILABILITY OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MATERIALS

Ongoing efforts by cities to provide emergency preparedness materials in languages other than English are commendable.

- 62% indicated that emergency preparedness materials are available in a variety of languages.

CLOSING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER GAP BETWEEN THE COURTS AND HISPANICS

Justice and fairness are evident when all parties involved understand clearly the proceedings before them.

- 86% of cities have municipal court interpreters to assist in the judicial process.
- 15% of the respondents remained neutral regarding this matter while 11% did not know if a language barrier existed.

PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

One aspect of community policing is to conduct activities with residents, including the introduction of domestic violence prevention and intervention programs. Efforts like these help build relationships between residents and police officers and ultimately reduce crime.

- 87% of cities have some type of program in place.
- 83% of respondents indicated that there has not been an increase in racially motivated crimes in their communities.
AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND THE SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD

Various types of after school prevention programs are an important component or tool toward policing within the Hispanic community. The growing trend toward preventing gang activities within these communities is the early intervention of relevant after-school programs for the Hispanic youth rather than addressing behavioral problems later.

- 57% of the cities have an early-age gang prevention program.

COLLECTING RACIAL PROFILING DATA

Appropriate measures are taken to collect and analyze profiling data. These measures require some municipalities to follow state regulations.

- 58% of the cities have measures in place to achieve this task.

THE U.S. CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION SERVICE COLLABORATIVE WITH POLICE DEPARTMENTS

The current climate involving undocumented immigration and the federal agency dealing with the criminal activity of foreign nationals is a relationship shared between police departments and the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Service.

- Fifty-six cities surveyed did not know if such an agreement existed.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLICE DEPARTMENTS AND THE U.S. CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION SERVICE IS REAL.

71% OF THE POLICE OFFICERS POLLED DO NOT SPEAK SPANISH.
EDUCATING POLICE ON THE HISPANIC CULTURE

Part of the fundamental theory underlying community policing requires the police understanding both the residents within the community and fostering relationships with Hispanic community leaders.

- 65% of the police officers are educated regarding the Hispanic culture.
- 78% of city police officers have fostered relationships.

65% OF CITY POLICE OFFICERS ARE EDUCATED REGARDING THE HISPANIC CULTURE.
Support for the Low-Income Family

UNITED WAY-TYPE ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED

Although cities have not traditionally provided direct substantive amounts of social services to residents, there is still a significant amount of support for the promotion of social service programs within the communities.

- 84% indicated that their cities support United Way-type agencies.
- The majority of the cities use Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to address the needs of children.

CREDITS OR DISCOUNTS TO LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

In terms of assistance from the cities toward credits or discounts to help low-income families address basic utilities, the numbers are minimal.

- According to 52% of the city managers, their cities did not provide for assistance regarding electricity, natural gas, solid waste, water, recycling, or other services.

MUNICIPALITIES PROHIBITING PANHANDLING

Due to an increasingly aggressive behavior by panhandlers and efforts by business lobbies within communities, both large cities and smaller communities have begun enacting laws or city ordinances prohibiting panhandling.

- 56% agreed or strongly agreed that ordinances have been passed.
**FINANCIAL EDUCATION TO LOW-INCOME FAMILIES**

An essential component toward promoting sustainability among low-income earners is a basic financial education, an education involving income tax requirement and participating in workshops underlining the importance of checking and savings accounts.

- 45% indicated the city did not offer such assistance.

**AVAILABLE WORKSHOPS ON THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT**

In terms of capacity building among low-income earners, applying for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a necessity if local residents hope to create personal wealth and more disposable income.

- While 31% of the cities provide workshops on how to apply for the EITC, 44% do not.
- 37% of the cities sponsor workshops on how to access small business loans.

**COLLABORATING TO ASSIST LOW-INCOME FAMILIES**

City and county collaboration toward supporting low-income families are beneficial to both entities of government as resources are combined to aid those in need.

- Typically counties provide for the social services of their residents.
- 56% of the cities surveyed engage in city/county collaborations.
SERVICES OFFERED TO IMMIGRANTS

There are a variety of services and levels of assistance offered to both legal and illegal immigrants. They are, however, not as prevalent as many might expect.

- Most cities do not offer English classes to immigrants.
- 40% state they do not offer any services to immigrants.

CITY GOVERNMENTS IN COMMUNICATION

E-government and providing information on city web sites has become an invaluable way for local government to communicate information to their residents.

- 14% of the respondents indicated they had web sites available in Spanish while 78% responded they did not.

DAY LABOR SITES

Another concern to local governments in terms of immigration are Day Labor Sites, an official or unofficial location where day laborers gather to seek employment and employers come to contract for services.

- While 55% of the cities surveyed indicated they did not have Day Labor Sites, 30% indicated that they did.
- 78% of the cities that have Day Labor Sites do not support the site financially.

LA MATRICULA CONSULAR AS A VALID FORM OF ID

The Mexican government, through its Mexican Consulates in the U.S., provides this ID card to Mexican Nationals for the purpose of identification. Many banks in the U.S. have accepted the ID card as a valid form of identification.

- While 20% of the cities indicated they do accept La Matricula as a valid ID card, 35% did not know if their city accepted this form of identification.
In the addendum to the report, “Municipal Best Practices for the Hispanic Community Survey,” several cities were identified and their best practices geared towards assisting the Hispanic community. Criteria used to determine what constitutes a best practice were: Successful over a period of time; innovative or groundbreaking; measurable results; consequential impact; and replicable. The following Best Practices are truly noteworthy for the contribution and impact they have had on Hispanics within their respective communities.

CITY: Alexandria, Virginia
PROGRAM: Academic No Interest Loan
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: An interest-free student loan program offered by the city to college-bound students in the community.
PROGRAM GOAL(S): Provide support for college-bound students and their families.
PROGRAM RESULTS: More than 50 students have received the loan, and the program has been well received by the Hispanic community.
LESSONS LEARNED: Continue to serve a diverse population and provide support for students of all backgrounds.

CITY: Canton, Georgia
PROGRAM: Police Minority Relations Committee
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: A committee composed of volunteers from the Hispanic community who meet monthly to address issues of concern to the community.
PROGRAM GOAL(S): To foster open communication and understanding, while promoting respect for all cultures.
PROGRAM RESULTS: Increased visibility and networking opportunities for the Hispanic community.
LESSONS LEARNED: Continue to serve as a liaison between the police department and the Hispanic community.

CITY: Elgin, Illinois
PROGRAM: Hispanic Outreach Program
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: A program designed to address the needs of Hispanic families in the community.
PROGRAM GOAL(S): To improve the quality of life for Hispanic families by providing educational, social, and economic assistance.
PROGRAM RESULTS: The program has been well received, and participation has increased over the years.
LESSONS LEARNED: Continue to expand the program to meet the needs of the community.

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City: Rupert, Idaho
Program: Farm Worker Appreciate Day
Program Description: Because the farm workers perform their jobs quietly but are lacking in experience and the necessary education to pursue managerial positions, an effort is made to jointly engage in each other’s celebrations for the purpose of more peaceful and resolute communication.
Program Goal(s): Create a sense of importance and necessity of each community member.
Lessons Learned: As a result of the eventful day, the workers come to recognize their important role within the community.

City: Salt Lake City, Utah
Program: Good Neighbors Partnership Resource Guide
Program Description: We provide a handbook that is available in English and Spanish.
Program Goal(s): To foster better communication among neighbors and more knowledge as it implies to important rules and Spanish.
Lessons Learned: The guide is printed in English and Spanish.

City: Santa Barbara, California
Program: City Councils Meetings in Spanish
Program Description: So that people interested in the matters discussed can hear them in either English or Spanish, the council meetings are simultaneously translated into Spanish.
Program Goal(s): Allow first language Spanish-speakers the same access to government and to city council meetings as English-speaking residents.
Lessons Learned: There is a general satisfaction with the Spanish-speaking resources and the willingness of city council meetings to cater to the needs of our community.

City: Seattle, Washington
Program: Latino Advisory Council/Community Liaison Program
Program Description: The purpose of this program is to bridge the communication gap between the police department and the Latino community, the Council meets with members of the police department and representatives of the Latino community to address concerns, issues, recommendations, needs, perspectives, and insights. The Latino liaison officer is a full-time position with a staff level position and a part-time position.
Program Goal(s): Help build lasting relationships between the Seattle Police Department and the Latino community.
Program Results: A reduction in Latino-youth related crime activity. Since the inception of the program, there have been more than 100 related shootings.
Lessons Learned: Contact information via the IHN website.

City: Tucson, Arizona
Program: Casa Amparo/Brewster Center
Program Description: An emergency shelter for Hispanic youth in crisis.
Program Goal(s): To identify and recognize the Hispanic roots of Tempe and educate the community with a celebration of the city’s rich culture.
Program Results: The Hispanic population as a whole is able to share their heritage and educate the community.
Lessons Learned: Contact information via the IHN website.

City: Temple, Arizona
Program: Tempe Tardeada
Program Description: A non-profit organization, El Centro Tardeada is a program organized for charitable, religious, educational, scientific, and literary purposes related to distributions to organizations qualifying as tax exempt.
Program Goal(s): Provide shelter options, advocacy, and support to Hispanic/Latino survivors of domestic violence and their children.
Program Results: Survivors are more equipped to access resources in their city, plan for their futures, and become more self-sufficient due to the support and continuum of services provided.
Lessons Learned: Survivors of domestic violence are able to concentrate on their safety and future when continuance of services are provided.

City: Weslaco, Texas
Program: Leadership Training Academy
Program Description: In an effort to better equip our predominantly minority workforce for advancement, the city participates in a leadership training program whereby Hispanic employees, identified by their directors as having potential management or supervisory potential, are nominated to participate in a ten-week training program.
Program Goal(s): To provide employees for supervisory positions within the city of Weslaco.
Program Results: Employees that participated in the program have been promoted.
Lessons Learned: The program has the full support of the City Manager and department directors.

City: Woodburn, Oregon
Program: Community Relations Officer
Program Description: This is a position created by the city to translate public announcements to the Hispanic community.
Program Goal(s): Increase the Hispanic community’s access to city services and its involvement in civic activities, improve community relations and foster cross-cultural understanding.
Lessons Learned: The program has the full support of the Hispanic community and partnerships with Hispanic businesses in the downtown area are credited for a successful Business Watch Program, generating positive crime reduction results. This, combined with a more informed Hispanic population as a result of bilingual educational materials covering vast topics.

City: Tuscon, Arizona
Program: Sin Violencia Ganaremos/Brewster Center
Program Description: A walk-in center for survivors of domestic violence, the program provides comprehensive bilingual/bicultural services. Services include crisis intervention, legal advocacy, domestic violence education, immigration assistance, child advocacy, and safety planning.
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City: Shreveville, Tennessee
Program: El Centro Latín
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City: Phoenix, Arizona
Program: Good Neighbors Partnership Resource Guide
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