



FALL 2023

Strengthening Local Elected Officials' Capacity

An increasingly polarized political environment has inspired new candidates to seek elected office – over 20 percent of municipal and county officials on average are newly elected during any particular two-year period. Newly elected officials need a trustworthy source of information in order to understand their duties and responsibilities. UW–Madison Extension's Local Government Education Program provides elected officials with information to assist them in carrying out their duties and responsibilities and maintaining a basic understanding of the many processes of government.

Extension works with municipal government associations and state agencies to provide training to elected officials across Wisconsin – in 2022, Extension provided training to over 3,600 elected officials and staff. This included workshops, Board of Review training, and individualized training for municipal and county committees.

Training locations were all over the state in order to maximize the number of participants, including in rural areas in northern and eastern Wisconsin. Programming focused on a variety of subjects relevant to elected officials including broadband access, bylaws, grants, budgeting, open meetings and open records laws, revaluations, and being an effective chair.

Elected officials who attended the workshops were presented with a variety of materials based on existing and historical needs. Participants reported an increased understanding and knowledge of subjects covered, which increased their ability to perform their duties and responsibilities with greater confidence. Additionally, 99.6 percent of participants said they valued the materials covered during the workshops.



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