
**A Needs Assessment for a Masters in Local Government Administration Program:
Recommendations for the University of Victoria and Capilano University**

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March 25, 2014

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the support and guidance of my academic supervisor, Dr. Jim McDavid. I would like to thank the client, Todd Pugh of CivicInfo BC, and the entire program Steering Committee for the opportunity to be involved with this exciting, challenging project. I would also like to recognize the defense committee members and the participants who provided valuable input on the proposed program and whose innovative thoughts inform the recommendations of this report. Lastly, I would like to thank my friends and family for their unconditional support and encouragement throughout this journey.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Local governments are the most publicly accessible level of government and are responsible for the provision of services and implementation of policies that directly affect communities. Local governments everywhere, including in British Columbia, are facing growing expectations from the public to deliver services efficiently, equitably, and democratically. These expectations have generated a shift towards collaborative governance and have compelled local governments to work across institutional boundaries. This new style of governance requires local government administrators to develop and apply a new set of competencies that are fundamentally rooted in collaboration.

The core of this report is a needs assessment for the perceived interest in and support for a Masters in Local Government Administration program, to be jointly offered by Capilano University and the University of Victoria. The needs assessment is conducted at the request of CivicInfo BC, the client for this project, on behalf of the program Steering Committee. This report provides evidence for the ways in which an applied graduate-level program can be designed to develop and enhance the competence of local administrators.

METHODS

This project employs four different research methods to inform the recommendations to the client and the Steering Committee:

1. A literature review of the competencies required of today's local government leaders;
2. A jurisdictional scan of existing graduate-level programs that are comparable to the proposed program;
3. A web-based survey of BC local government statutory officers and department heads to assess their support for and interest in a Masters in Local Government Administration program; and
4. Semi-structured, qualitative interviews with local government stakeholders in BC and other provinces to further explore the perceived level of support for the idea of the proposed program.

FINDINGS

The findings present local government stakeholders' interest in a masters program and their perceptions of the potential format and delivery of the program, important topics to be covered in the curriculum, the anticipated student profile, and barriers to enrolment.

Survey and interview participants perceive the proposed program as being greatly needed in BC. They indicated a high level of support for the program, in principle, and for the proposed hybrid

delivery model of online courses and periodic face-to-face sessions. Speaking for themselves as local government practitioners, they expressed a high level of interest in the program, provided that it offers flexibility in terms of format and workload.

Participants recommended the following areas as important for inclusion in the core curriculum:

1. Systems and roles of local government;
2. Stakeholder relations and consultation strategies;
3. Leadership and management;
4. Policy analysis, development, and implementation;
5. Strategic planning, performance management, and change management;
6. Sustainable community planning and development;
7. Resource management (finances, personnel); and
8. Intergovernmental and First Nations relations.

Participants suggested that to effectively deliver the courses, the universities should bring in experienced practitioners to instruct the courses (or course components), arrange students into interdisciplinary groups to complete coursework, and incorporate case studies, simulations, and social media.

The survey and interview findings indicate that prospective students are likely to have significant local government experience (ten years, on average) but limited academic qualifications. The research findings do not indicate any uniformity in terms of prospective students' areas of residence and size or type of local government. The most frequently cited barriers to enrolment were cost, the time commitment to participate, and the entry pre-requisites.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This report offers four general recommendations relating to the program format, delivery, curriculum, target audience, and admission requirements. Each recommendation is accompanied by multiple related strategies for maximizing interest and enrolments in the program. The following overarching recommendations are based on the findings of the literature review, the jurisdictional scan of comparable programs, the survey, and the interviews:

1. Offer a flexible program structure, format, and delivery model;
2. Offer a program and implement a curriculum that is specific to local government administration and management;
3. Adopt a comprehensive yet competitive approach to admissions by offering an Executive Masters in Local Government Administration program; and
4. Develop partnerships to effectively market the program, maximize interest, and expand funding options.

CONCLUSION

This report demonstrates a high level of support for and interest in a graduate-level program specific to local government administration. It recommends the development and implementation of an Executive Masters in Local Government Administration program to be jointly offered, as a hybrid of online courses and periodic face-to-face sessions, by Capilano University and the University of Victoria.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	i
Executive Summary.....	ii
Introduction	ii
Methods.....	ii
Findings.....	ii
Recommendations	iii
Conclusion	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables and Figures	vii
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Project Objectives and Problem	1
1.2 Client and Project Rationale.....	1
1.3 Background	3
1.3.1 Masters in Local Government Administration Steering Committee	3
1.3.2 Local Government Sector in British Columbia.....	3
1.4 Organization of Report.....	8
2.0 Methods	10
2.1 Literature Review	10
2.2 Jurisdictional Scan of Existing Comparable Graduate-Level Programs.....	10
2.3 Survey	12
2.4 Interviews	13
3.0 Literature Review	15
3.1 Overview	15
3.2 Collaborative Competencies for Today’s Local Government Professionals	16
3.3 Motives and Barriers to Facilitating Collaboration	18
3.4 Developing Collaborative Competencies through Formal Education	19
4.0 Overview of Existing Comparable Graduate-Level Programs	21
4.1 Canada.....	21
4.1.1 Graduate Local Government Programs	21
4.1.2 Graduate Executive Master of Business Administration Programs	22
4.2 United States	26
4.2.1 Graduate Local Government Programs	26
4.3 Europe	29

4.3.1 Graduate Local Government Programs	29
4.4 Australia	30
4.4.1 Graduate Local Government Programs	30
4.5 Summary	31
5.0 Findings	33
5.1 Survey Findings	33
5.1.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents	34
5.1.2 Support for and Interest in the Program	37
5.1.3 Challenges and Barriers to Enrolment	44
5.2 Interview Findings	45
5.2.1 Overall Support for and Interest in the Program	46
5.2.2 Delivery Methods and Program Content	46
5.2.3 Anticipated Student Profile	48
5.2.4 Other Important Considerations	49
5.3 Summary	50
6.0 Discussion	53
6.1 The Need for a Graduate-Level Program in Local Government Administration	53
6.2 The Elements of a Graduate-Level Program in Local Government Administration	55
6.3 Summary	56
7.0 Recommendations	57
8.0 Conclusion	63
9.0 References	64
10.0 Appendices	67
10.1 Appendix A: Summary of Comparable Executive MBA Programs	67
10.2 Appendix B: Summary of Comparable Graduate-Level Programs in Local Government Administration	74
10.3 Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire	76
10.4 Appendix D: Frequency Distributions of Closed-Ended Survey Questions	84
10.4.1 Support and Interest	84
10.4.2 Program Content	85
10.4.3 Face-to-Face Sessions	87
10.4.4 Cost and Barriers	88
10.4.5 Demographics	88
10.5 Appendix E: Interview Guide	91

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: Authorities and Functions of Statutory Officers	5
Table 2: UNCG Collaborative Competencies.....	17
Table 3: Job Profile of Respondents by Program Area.....	35
Table 4: Job Profile of Respondents by Organization Type	35
Table 5: Respondents' Years of Experience in Local Government.....	36
Table 6: Respondents' Highest Level of Education	36
Table 7: Respondents' Areas of Residence	36
Table 8: Population of Respondents' Areas of Residence.....	37
Table 9: Percentage of Respondents Indicating Area as "Very Important"	41
Table 10: Deterrents to Enrolling in and Completing the Program	44
Table 11: Lesser and Greater Workload Streams	59
Figure 1: Level of Support for the Proposed Program.....	37
Figure 2: Percentage of Individuals Very Supportive of Proposed Program by Years of Experience.....	38
Figure 3: Level of Interest in Proposed Program.....	42
Figure 4: Percentage of Individuals Very Interested in Proposed Program by Highest Level of Education	43
Figure 5: Percentage of Individuals Very Interested in Proposed Program by Population	43
Figure 6: Barriers to Enrolment	45
Figure 7: Typical Applicant Profile	52

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND PROBLEM

Local governments in British Columbia are facing increasingly complex challenges with respect to policy-making and service delivery. Given the specialized knowledge and skills required to be a successful administrator in local government, there appears to be a need for an applied graduate program that will equip current and future managers with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to navigate these challenges. Representatives from the University of Victoria, Capilano University, CivicInfo BC, the Local Government Management Association of BC, and other local government organizations have come together to form a Steering Committee to develop a program proposal for a Masters in Local Government Administration program for submission to the University of Victoria and Capilano University.

The purpose of this Masters project is to provide CivicInfo BC, the client representative for this project on the Steering Committee, with recommendations for the feasibility, design, and delivery of the proposed program. Specifically, this report explores the perceived interest in and need for a Masters in Local Government Administration program to be jointly offered by the University of Victoria and Capilano University. It recommends options for the program structure, delivery models, and topics that could be covered in the courses to meet the needs of local government employees and their organizations.

The primary research question driving this project is: *What is the perceived interest in and support for a Masters in Local Government Administration program, to be jointly offered by Capilano University and the University of Victoria?*

A related, supplementary research question is: *In what ways can the program be designed and delivered, taking into account the needs of local government stakeholders, to maximize interest and enrolments?*

1.2 CLIENT AND PROJECT RATIONALE

CivicInfo BC, the client for this project, is a non-profit organization whose main purpose is to provide “free and open exchange of local government information” (CivicInfo BC, 2014). CivicInfo BC offers an extensive range of information services, such as bid postings, job postings, news stories, grants listings, a documents library, and directories of local governments and related organizations. This project is being completed for the Executive Director of CivicInfo BC.

This report is intended to be used by the client, on behalf of the Steering Committee, to develop a formal program proposal to the University of Victoria and Capilano University. The report

findings are likely to be presented to multiple key stakeholder groups, including administrators of both universities, the Union of BC Municipalities, the Local Government Management Association, the Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development, and others.

This project is important and relevant because there are increasing expectations of local governments to “manage change and provide quality, affordable services to all British Columbians” (Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development, 2014). Moreover, the shift towards collaborative governance and consensus-building has generated greater expectations for local government leaders to apply a new set of competencies—for example, engaging stakeholders (including citizens), effectively managing conflict, and understanding and applying professional ethics—that are beyond competencies rooted in hierarchy and formal authority (Getha-Taylor and Morse, 2013). While local governments, the provincial government, and the federal government each have distinct accountabilities and responsibilities (relating to service delivery, for example), they are compelled to work in collaboration with one another, due to fiscal and other constraints. This report explores ways in which an applied graduate program can be designed so that these and other competencies can be effectively developed for current and upcoming local government leaders.

According to BC Stats (2014), the number of British Columbians who work in local government administration has increased by approximately 37% from 2003 to 2013. Additionally, employment in local government administration has been consistently higher (on average, 20% higher) than employment in provincial government administration over the past ten years (BC Stats, 2014). This exemplifies the importance of promoting greater knowledge, competence, and leadership in service areas as well as in the general management and support functions that directly affect communities and citizens.

The proposed graduate program will be consistent with the University of Victoria’s strategic plan, particularly the goals to support lifelong learning, educate working professionals throughout their careers, “develop an engaged citizenry,” and “promote intellectual, cultural, social and economic well-being in our communities” (University of Victoria, 2012, p. 33). It will also consistent with Capilano University’s goal of offering employment-oriented, relevant programs (Capilano University, n.d.).

The proposed program will be in line with the University of Victoria School of Public Administration’s mission to be a leading school at the national level (University of Victoria, 2014), as there is only one other Canadian institution, Western University, that offers a similar program. While the University of Victoria offers an online specialization certificate (University of Victoria, 2014) and Capilano University offers certificate and diploma programs in local government management (Capilano University, 2014), a graduate degree would cultivate more

sophisticated skills and competencies required for leaders who will be expected to take on greater responsibilities.

1.3 BACKGROUND

This section will provide contextual information about the Steering Committee and the local government sector in British Columbia.

1.3.1 MASTERS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION STEERING COMMITTEE

In 2011, Capilano University's School of Public Administration and the University of Hertfordshire, in England, undertook some preliminary work towards a program proposal for a Masters in Local Government Administration. This collaboration did not go forward due to cost and other considerations, and in 2013, discussions began between the Local Government Program at Capilano University and the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria to explore a local partnership. In July 2013, stakeholders from Capilano University, the University of Victoria, and various local government organizations, including CivicInfo BC, met at the University of Victoria. The committee has since developed a preliminary business case, which includes early ideas about program design, logistics, costs, and possible steady state enrolments. While many of the Steering Committee members are experts on local governments and have preferences for the program structure and delivery, the committee determined that further exploration of the need for and interest in a Masters in Local Government Administration was required to inform the design and delivery of a future program.

The needs assessment, which is the core of this report, was conducted simultaneously with the other work of the Steering Committee, such as deliberations about admission requirements, tuition costs, and program administration. The researcher was included in some of these discussions and was informed of the Steering Committee's progress on these dimensions.

1.3.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

The purpose of this section is to provide background information about the local government sector in British Columbia, including the roles, responsibilities, and structures of local governments; relevant legislation; and the relationship to other levels of government.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Local governments are responsible for the provision of services that directly affect communities, and as such, are deemed to be the most tangible and responsive level of government (Union of BC Municipalities [UBCM], 2012). Communities and citizens are considered to be at the centre of what local governments do; they determine the relative needs for essential services, may be appointed to or employed by a local government body, and may participate in public consultations and hearings (UBCM, 2012).

Local governments perform a diverse range of functions, depending on the particular needs of the community and the authorities that are outlined by relevant legislation. Local governments' functions typically relate to:

- Regulation: public health, business licensing, animal licensing, building inspection;
- Environment: sewer systems, garbage collection, recycling;
- Planning: land use, zoning, emergency planning;
- Protection: fire, police;
- Transportation: roads and sidewalks, streetlights, public transit;
- Recreation and culture: parks, recreational facilities, libraries; and
- Community and social development (Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development [MCSCD], 2014b).

Issues related to these service areas may be addressed at scheduled council meetings, which are open to the public, or at a variety of other public consultations (e.g., public hearings). It is important to recognize, however, that local governments are challenged with issues related to service areas outside of those listed above (e.g., lack of available health care services), in virtue of the fact that they are the most accessible level of government to the public, and endeavour to collaborate with other levels to address these issues.

STRUCTURE

Local governments in BC include municipalities—cities, districts, towns, and villages—and regional districts. Municipalities were created in the 1800s out of the need for residents to be able to control and provide their services locally (UBCM, 2012). Regional districts were formed later, in the mid 1960s, out of the need for residents in rural areas, outside of municipalities, to also be able to access and control similar services (UBCM, 2012) and for incorporated municipalities to co-operate to provide services beyond their own boundaries.

Municipalities are spread across BC and range in population size from villages with less than 200 residents to cities with over 600,000 (MCSCD, 2014b). These 161 municipalities cover approximately 89% of the BC population but only occupy approximately 1% of the geographic terrain (MCSCD, 2014b). A municipality is governed by a council, consisting of a mayor and councillors who are democratically elected to office by way of a civic vote (UBCM, 2012). The council is responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of policies, programs, and services in accordance with the needs and interests of the community (UBCM, 2012).

The council is legislatively required to appoint individuals to the positions of *corporate officer*¹ and (*chief*) *financial officer* (Community Charter, 2003). The corporate officer acts as the link between council, staff, and the public and responsible for advising council members in their

¹Also commonly known as corporate administrator or clerk.

development of bylaws and policies, whereas the financial officer is responsible for planning and managing the municipality’s financial affairs (Community Charter, 2003). The council may also appoint an individual to the position of *chief administrative officer*. The chief administrative officer reports to council and is responsible for managing the municipality’s overall operations, implementing policies and programs, and advising council on operational affairs (Community Charter, 2003). The corporate officer, financial officer, and chief administrative officer are commonly known as *statutory officers* (CivicInfo BC, 2014)². A summary of their authorities and functions is provided in Table 1 below (Community Charter, 2003; UBCM, 2012).

TABLE 1: AUTHORITIES AND FUNCTIONS OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

Officer position	Authorities and functions
Corporate officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensures accurate preparation of council meeting agendas and minutes - Safeguards and ensures authorized access to minutes, bylaws, and other records of council business - Administers oaths and takes affirmations, affidavits, and declarations required by legislation - Prepares and certifies copies of bylaws and other documents - Prepares official notices and correspondence on behalf of council
Financial officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safeguards funding and securities - Invests funds in authorized investments - Ensures expenditures are made in accordance with policies and legislation - Prepares five-year plans - Provides council with financial decision support
Chief administrative officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oversees municipal operations - Ensures policies, programs, and services are implemented as per council direction - Provides business advice to council as required

BC municipalities’ annual consolidated expenditures are approximately \$6.8 billion (MCSCD, 2012). The costs of services vary among municipalities; however, protective services, public works, and recreation services tend to be the most expensive (MCSCD, 2012; UBCM, 2012). The largest source of general revenue for municipalities is property taxes, followed by fees and special user charges (e.g., garbage pick-up, recreation centre admission), grants and transfers from other governments, private companies, and local agencies (UBCM, 2012).

²Many local governments also appoint deputy statutory officers.

Regional districts, which span both municipal and rural boundaries and provide local government functions for unincorporated areas, cover the province and are divided into sub-units called electoral areas (MCSCD, 2014c). Residents of these areas who are not included in any municipality elect a chair (equivalent to a mayor) and directors (equivalent to councillors) to a regional district board (equivalent to a council). A regional district board is responsible for coordinating region-wide services and sub-regional services, for example, recreational complexes (MCSCD, 2014c). Like municipal councils, regional district boards are accountable to the community and are expected to manage delegated regional and local issues, except those pertaining to roads and policing (MCSCD, 2014c). The positions of corporate officer, financial officer, and chief administrative officer (and respective deputies) are also pertinent to regional districts.

BC regional districts' annual consolidated expenditures are approximately \$1.3 billion (MCSCD, 2012). Similar to municipalities, public works and recreation tend to be the most costly services (MCSCD, 2012).

LEGISLATION AND AUTHORITIES

The *Local Government Act* and *Community Charter* are provincial legislation that provide local governments with the legislative authority to deliver services according to communities' diverse needs and changing circumstances.

The *Local Government Act* is the primary legislation pertaining to regional districts; however, it covers some provisions related to municipalities that are not covered by the *Community Charter*, for example, those related to land-use planning. The *Community Charter* is the primary legislation relating to municipalities, with the exception of the City of Vancouver, which is governed by the *Vancouver Charter*. Both pieces of (charter) legislation formally recognize the autonomy of local governments and outline their authorities to impose and enforce bylaws pertaining to areas such as transportation and regulation (MCSCD, 2013).

In addition to the legislation above, there are numerous other regulations and subject-specific statutes that affect the power and governance of local governments, including the *Freedom of Information and Protection Privacy Act*, *Environmental Management Act*, *Health Act*, and *Motor Vehicle Act*.

BOARD OF EXAMINERS

The *Local Government Act* recognizes the powers and duties of the Board of Examiners (the Board) to recognize "the professional standing of local government employees [by] granting them certification" (MSCDC, 2014a, para. 2). While municipal councils and regional boards often use certification to recognize and advance their staff, holding a certificate is not a precondition to employment in local government (MSCDC, 2014a).

The Board consists of three representatives, appointed by Cabinet, from the Union of BC Municipalities, the Local Government Association of BC, and the Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development (MCSCD). The Board provides local government employees with four possible levels of certification (MCSCD, 2014a):

1. *Certificate in Local Government Service Delivery*: for non-statutory employees³ who do not occupy managerial positions;
2. *Certificate in Local Government Administration*: for non-statutory employees who occupy managerial positions;
3. *Certificate in Local Government Statutory Administration*: for statutory employees who occupy Corporate or Financial administration positions; and
4. *Certificate in Local Government Executive Management*: for statutory employees who occupy Chief Administration Officer or deputy Chief Administrative Officer positions.

Each certificate requires the employee to have certain level of experience in local government and a specific level of education. These specifications are delineated in the *Local Government Employees Certification Regulation* of the *Local Government Act*. The courses credentialed by the Board include courses offered by Camosun College, Capilano University, the University of Victoria, Northwest Community College, and the University of Northern BC (L. Hodge, personal communication, March 13, 2014; MCSCD, 2014a), as well as the Municipal Administration Training Institute (MATI) courses offered by Capilano University in partnership with the Local Government Management Association (LGMA) (Capilano University, 2011).

To be awarded a Certificate in Local Government Executive Management (the highest level of certification), for example, a Chief Administrative Officer (or deputy) must successfully complete the four core courses, required at all levels of certification⁴, plus an additional five core courses offered by the University of Victoria⁵; 13 credit courses⁶; at least two years in a BC local government, one of which must be as a Chief Administrative Officer or deputy; and an oral and written presentation to the Board (MCSCD, 2014a).

The Board of Examiners collaborates with provincial post-secondary institutions (including the University of Victoria and Capilano University) to determine appropriate educational credentials required for the various levels of certification. The Board of Examiners also administers two

³Statutory employees include Chief Administrative Officers, Corporate Administrators, Chief Financial Officers, and respective deputies.

⁴Local Government Administration in BC, Local Government Services in BC, Local Government Finance in BC, and Local Government Law in BC, all of which are offered by Camosun College, Capilano University, Northwest Community College, and the University of Northern BC.

⁵Managing in Public/Non-Profit Organizations, Urban and Regional Economics, Local Government Law, Local Government Policy (also offered by Capilano University), and Ethical Public Management (also offered by the University of Northern BC).

⁶Three credit courses from the University of Victoria's Diploma in Public Sector Management or Local Government Management (or equivalent) and ten additional credit courses related to the operation of local governments.

scholarship programs, the Union of BC Municipalities Commemorative Scholarship and the Jeff McKelvey Scholarship, to assist local government employees in achieving the above certificates (MCSCD, 2014a).

RELATIONSHIP TO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

The BC Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development (MCSCD) has a specific division dedicated to partnering with and offering information, advice, and finance support to local governments. The Local Government Division, established in 1934 as a “medium of communication between the Province and its municipalities,” (para. 2) is responsible for developing and revising relevant legislation, including the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act*, and for cultivating collaborative intergovernmental relations (MCSCD, 2014). The Local Government Division is divided into and responsible for four areas (MCSCD, 2014):

1. *Governance and Structure*: providing timely and quality advisory services; fostering healthy relationships between local governments and First Nations; and overseeing the structure and restructure of local governments, including incorporation (that is, providing a community with the status of a municipality and the power to govern itself).
2. *Infrastructure and Finance*: offering financial advisory services; providing complete data and statistics on local governments; and administering grants to help local governments improve their infrastructure.
3. *Intergovernmental Relations and Planning*: assisting with community planning; advising on ways to promote and manage effective regional growth; fostering collaboration between local governments and the province; and offering dispute resolution services.
4. *Property Assessment Services*: providing accessible and equitable property assessments for local governments.

There are several other provincial ministries that create rules, regulations, and mandates for BC local governments. These include the ministries responsible for education, Aboriginal relations and reconciliation, transportation and infrastructures, finance, agriculture, and others. The province is responsible for regulating education, health care services, some natural resources, and roads throughout BC. However, as per the *Community Charter* (2003), “consultation [between the province and municipalities] is needed of matters of mutual interest,” including “proposed changes to Provincial programs that will have a significant impact in relation to matters that are within municipal authority” (s 2[2c]).

1.4 ORGANIZATION OF REPORT

This report is organized into eight sections, including this introduction and background section. Section two provides a description of the research methodology and methods used to collect data. Section three presents a literature review of the collaborative competencies that today’s local government administrators and leaders are expected to exhibit and the ways in which a masters program could help foster these competencies. Section four presents the findings of a

jurisdictional scan of graduate-level programs that may be comparable to the proposed program. Section five presents the findings from the survey that was disseminated to the local government community and from interviews conducted with local government stakeholders. Section six provides a discussion of the findings and links the results of the survey and interviews with the background, literature review, and jurisdictional scan. Section seven offers recommendations to the client and Steering Committee on how to proceed with the design, implementation, and delivery of the program. Section eight provides a conclusion to this report.

2.0 METHODS

To address the research question, this project relies on a mixed methods approach, specifically an explanatory sequential design (Creswell, 2011). This project includes a qualitative review of relevant academic literature; a jurisdictional scan of existing national and international programs that may be comparable to the proposed program; a survey consisting of both closed- and open-ended questions; and qualitative, semi-structured interviews. The explanatory sequential design in this project begins with the collection and analysis of quantitative data to answer the research question (Creswell, 2011). Qualitative research is then conducted to supplement and further explain the meanings of the quantitative findings (Creswell, 2011). This research project prioritizes the method and results of the survey and integrates interview findings to address any gaps and provide greater detail about the perceived interest in a Masters in Local Government Administration program.

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review was conducted to provide background on the competencies required for local government administrators to meet the diverse needs of communities effectively and collaboratively. The review illustrates some of the motives and barriers to cultivating collaborative competencies and provides a rationale for the ways in which an applied graduate program may foster them.

To locate academic material for the review, a search was conducted using the University of Victoria online library. Search terms included “local government,” “competencies,” “collaboration,” “leadership,” and “graduate program.” The researcher scanned the reference lists from the relevant articles found through the online library, in order to acquire supplemental research material to review.

2.2 JURISDICTIONAL SCAN OF EXISTING COMPARABLE GRADUATE-LEVEL PROGRAMS

An Internet search was conducted to generate a list of university-based graduate programs, available in and outside of Canada, that are comparable to the proposed Masters in Local Government Administration program.

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) websites were used to generate a list of Canadian and American institutions that offer graduate-level degrees in public administration, with a specialization in local government. Only NASPAA-accredited schools were included in the search of the American schools. The search yielded one program in Canada and over 40 programs in the United States.

Each of the programs was explored in detail to determine its merit for inclusion in the review.

The researcher decided to include the Canadian program because it is the only known Master of Public Administration (MPA) program in Canada to be exclusively focused on local government administration. Due to the limited number of comparable programs in Canada, an additional search was conducted of the AUCC website to generate a list of Canadian Executive Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs that may be comparable to the proposed program. The search yielded 16 results (see Appendix A for full table); however, the researcher decided to include in the review only those programs offered as a mix of online courses and face-to-face sessions. This decision is based on the premise that this delivery model has been discussed and favoured by the Steering Committee in a preliminary way. The rationale for extending the search to include Executive MBA programs is to provide the opportunity for the University of Victoria and Capilano University to consider running an Executive Masters in Local Government Administration program that would be geared to mid-career employees.

Most of the American programs discovered through the NASPAA search offer local government administration as an area of specialization within the MPA program, rather than as a distinct program. Due to the large number of these types of programs that exist in the United States, the researcher decided, similarly to the above, to include in the review only those programs delivered as a hybrid of online courses and face-to-face sessions.

A supplementary search was conducted using Google, in order to maximize the range of programs that are offered internationally. Search terms included a combination of “masters degree,” “graduate program,” or “Masters in Public Administration,” and “local government,” “municipal government,” or “regional government.” This method yielded one comparable program in Europe and one comparable program in Australia, both of which are offered as a hybrid of face-to-face and online learning and thus are included in the review. A few other international programs were also identified through the search; however, they are not included in the review due to a lack of information that is publicly available on those programs. Additionally, many of them are not offered in English and the governance structure in those jurisdictions (e.g., South Africa) differs greatly from the BC governance structure, particularly with regards to local government.

Appendix B is a summary table of the graduate-level programs in local government administration that are reviewed in Section 4 of this report.

General MPA and related programs that do not offer a specialization in local government are excluded from the review, as the University of Victoria already offers a general MPA degree. Undergraduate, diploma, and certificate programs relating to local government administration are also excluded from the review, as Capilano University and the University of Victoria already offer them and the universities are specifically interested in developing and implementing a graduate-level program.

A jurisdictional scan of related graduate-level programs is useful for identifying the breadth of existing, similar programs and the ways in which they are designed, structured, and delivered. The following elements were considered in reviewing the programs outlined in Section 4 of this report:

- Name and location;
- Date of establishment;
- Student profile;
- Admission requirements;
- Program/delivery structure;
- Length;
- Curriculum; and
- Tuition.

The University of Victoria requires submission of a program proposal for any masters or doctoral degrees that have not previously been granted approval by the school. As per the Faculty of Graduate Studies' *New Degree Proposal Guidelines*, the proposal must include a section on the history and context of the program, including a description of programs that exist elsewhere (University of Victoria, 2010). The findings of the jurisdictional scan may be useful for the client and Steering Committee in preparing this section of the proposal.

2.3 SURVEY

A web-based survey was developed in collaboration with the Steering Committee and was designed and distributed using FluidSurveys online software to individuals in the local government community in BC (n=747). It was also sent to students who have graduated with a diploma or certificate in local government management from the University of Victoria (n=36) and students who have acquired with a certificate in local government administration from Capilano University (n=297). To maximize the response rate, a CivicInfo BC partner e-mail address (i.e., partner@civicinfo.bc.ca), rather than a generic FluidSurveys e-mail address, was used to send the invite.

The survey was organized into six main sections to assess stakeholders' overall support for the proposed structure and delivery of the program; level of interest in enrolling in the program; ideas for topics to be covered in the courses; insights on the face-to-face sessions; thoughts about the proposed cost and barriers to enrolment; and demographics. The survey contained both open- and closed-ended questions. The survey questionnaire is included as Appendix C.

A list of appropriate local government stakeholders, invited to take the survey, was developed in collaboration with the client and academic supervisor. Statutory officers—that is, Chief Administrative Officers, Corporate Administrators, Chief Financial Officers, and their respective deputies—and department heads of local governments across BC were selected as participants

for the survey because they are responsible for leading the implementation of policies, set by elected officials, and administering local services in accordance with council decisions. The Steering Committee perceives these groups of administrators as the audience who would most benefit from and express interest in the prospective program. Elected officials were not selected to participate in the survey due to their lack of responsibilities related to administration and service delivery.

As CivicInfo BC hosts a comprehensive, public directory of people connected with local government and related organizations in and outside of BC, the researcher was able to contact participants directly, using the CivicInfo BC partner e-mail account, to invite them to participate in the survey. Recent graduates of the undergraduate local government programs at the University of Victoria and Capilano University were confidentially contacted by e-mail and invited by the respective program managers, on behalf of the researcher, to participate in the survey. The survey remained active for two weeks. One reminder was sent to participants, who had not yet completed the survey, one week after the survey opened. The reminder proved effective at increasing the response rate.

The survey data was exported directly from FluidSurveys into Microsoft Excel in order to perform the analysis. Microsoft Excel was considered sophisticated enough to perform analyses for the purposes of this project. Frequency distributions were compiled for the responses to each closed-ended survey question (see Appendix D). Pivot tables were generated for select variables/questions in order to make comparisons and inferences between them; for example, to determine the highest level of education attained by those who are very interested in the proposed program. The frequency distributions and cross-tabulations were also represented by pie charts and tables where deemed appropriate and useful. Thematic coding was used to analyze the open-ended survey questions and group the raw data into categories based on similar themes, dimensions, or concepts.

2.4 INTERVIEWS

The researcher conducted ten qualitative, semi-structured interviews with local government stakeholders. The purpose of the interviews was to supplement and contextualize the survey findings, provide greater detail, and address any gaps in the research. The goal was to interview individuals connected to local government in BC and other provinces in order to ensure consideration of the needs and perspectives of various local government stakeholders.

Similar to the surveys, purposive sampling was used to recruit participants. Potential participants, identified in collaboration with the client and academic supervisor, were contacted by e-mail and invited to participate in an interview. The e-mail invitation outlined brief details about the purpose of the project and the participant consent form was included as an attachment. Participants who agreed to participate were asked to contact the researcher directly to arrange an

interview at a mutually convenient time. All of the interviews occurred by telephone. An interview guide, containing a list of open-ended questions and various probes, was used to conduct the interviews and record descriptive and interpretive notes (by computer). The interview guide is provided as Appendix E. The notes from each interview were analyzed using a thematic analysis and the main points for each question/topic were transposed to an Excel spreadsheet to explore comparisons between the interviews.

3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 OVERVIEW

As demonstrated in Section 1.3 of this report, local governments are the most publicly accessible level of government. They have the unique responsibility of delivering information and essential local services, within the parameters of their legislative authorities, in ways that are both timely and effective. Through public consultations, such as community forums and public hearings, the public plays an important role in influencing elected officials' decisions and policies. Similarly, administrators play an important role in advising elected officials on their decisions and stewarding policies and programs in ways that ultimately benefit communities.

The primary purpose of this literature review is to provide context for the competencies—that is, the attributes, skills, and behaviours—that are required of contemporary local government administrators to address complex challenges related to policy-making and service delivery. Although there is an abundance of research on the competencies that are generally expected of leaders in the overall public sector, there has been limited exploration of the competencies that are essential for leaders in the local government community. An important factor to keep in mind in identifying and discussing competencies is that even where they are similar to those required for more senior levels of government, context matters. Local governments, with their roles and responsibilities, are the first level of government that citizens encounter. This immediacy, together with the unique functions that local governments perform, influences the knowledge, skills, and behaviours that competent managers require.

More than other levels of government, local government administrators are accountable to and must exhibit competence in navigating relationships with internal and external stakeholders—including the community, the council, and other governments—to bring about better outcomes for citizens. These stakeholders often have opposing interests, and as such, local government administrators must possess a strong foundation in consultation, engagement, and communication that differs from that required of more senior levels of government. Moreover, they must fully understand their operational roles and ethical responsibilities, in order to fulfill their accountabilities to council *and* the public. Given that local governments derive their powers and authorities from provincial laws (Community Charter, 2003; Local Government Act, 1996), they are required to collaborate with provincial ministries for approval to implement bylaws (e.g., zoning/subdivision bylaws) and also with federal departments and agencies (e.g., Transport Canada) to adopt policies that affect local services (e.g., public transit). These collaborations require local governments to have an arguably stronger foundation, than other levels of government, in intergovernmental relations and conflict management, for example.

This section discusses literature published within the past 15 years with a specific focus on the competencies required for current and future local government administrators and leaders. This

section also provides rationale for how an applied graduate program, when designed and delivered effectively, might cultivate these competencies.

3.2 COLLABORATIVE COMPETENCIES FOR TODAY'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROFESSIONALS

J. Nalbandian and C. Nalbandian (2003) identify the main competencies required of local government professionals to meet their responsibilities and address today's challenges. These challenges include the ability to apply knowledge effectively and creatively; to deliver services efficiently, equitably, and transparently; and to represent and function well within a community orientation paradigm, which emphasizes citizen engagement and democratic processes, and an institutional paradigm, which emphasizes bureaucracy and hierarchal structure. The primary role of local government professionals, therefore, is to build consensus, facilitate collaboration, and enhance communication between communities and institutions and between citizens and bureaucrats. This idea of the need for enhanced collaboration and communication relates to J. Nalbandian's (1999) argument, in his earlier work, that city managers' roles and responsibilities have progressed to integrate community-building and political capacity to solve problems "collectively while respecting the values of representation, individual rights, and social equity" (p. 189).

It is important to consider that competence reflects many factors, including knowledge, skills, talents, values, and strengths (J. Nalbandian & C. Nalbandian, 2003). To effectively deliver services and build collaborative partnerships, local government managers must possess political and administrative knowledge and understand how to plan for and implement change. They must possess the skills and talents to facilitate cooperative decision-making, motivate citizens towards organizational achievement, and encourage values foundational to the public service. Local government managers must also demonstrate personal attributes, such as the ability to make difficult decisions for the public and bear responsibility for those decisions. Exhibiting competence—building relationships, engaging the public, and managing conflict, for example—is contextual, however, and what a professional may be able to facilitate or initiate in one situation may prove quite onerous in another (J. Nalbandian & C. Nalbandian, 2003).

Getha-Taylor and Morse (2012) provide an analysis of the competencies that are required of local government managers and the pragmatic ways in which those competencies can be developed. The authors argue that leadership has evolved to be interorganizational and thus local government leaders are now expected to work across boundaries and contribute value to and outside of their organizations. They argue that leadership, whether good or bad, is most important and evident at the local level. This is because many of the essential services that citizens depend on are delivered and led by local governments. Citizens who perceive their communities as safe and therefore desirable to live in may attribute to this to strong leadership, initiative, and value on policing and public safety, for instance. The irony of increased public

expectations for services—for example, more affordable recreation programs and more convenient public transit systems—but limited resources, especially financial resources, to deliver those services, however, compels local governments to meet service demands more efficiently. Limited resources, especially financial resources, require local government administrators to prioritize services, develop strategic community plans, and implement “lean” practices, that is, practices that “maximize customer value while minimizing waste” (Lean Enterprise Institute, 2009, para. 2), to deliver those services.

Administering services with limited funding and staff resources necessitates a set of collaborative competencies, which, according to the authors, has been most fully developed by the University Network for Collaborative Governance (UNCG) (Table 2). These competencies reflect similar areas of knowledge and skill that J. Nalbandian and C. Nalbandian propose as necessary for local government administrators to bridge the gaps between citizens and elected officials and to foster cooperative, public participation in the decision-making process. While there are indeed overlaps in the competencies specifically required of local government administrators and the competencies generally required of public administrators, there is a magnified need at the local level for administrators to encourage the public to contribute to the planning and delivery of services that immediately and directly affect their communities. Additionally, the concept of “leadership” is more implicitly valued not as something that is imposed from the top-down but as something that should be shared with and that is a reflection of the entire community.

TABLE 2: UNCG COLLABORATIVE COMPETENCIES

<p>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</p> <p>(1) Strengthening Collaborative Leadership (e.g. collaborative leadership styles, entrepreneurialism and risk-taking)</p> <p>(2) Planning, Organizing and Managing for Collaboration (e.g. process design, designing governance structures, engaging stakeholders)</p> <p>PROCESS</p> <p>(3) Communicating Effectively</p> <p>(4) Working in Teams and Facilitating Groups</p> <p>(5) Negotiating Agreement and Managing Conflict</p> <p>ANALYTICAL</p> <p>(6) Applying Analytic Skills and Strategic Thinking (e.g. situation assessment, understanding political and legal context of collaboration)</p> <p>(7) Evaluating and Adapting Processes</p> <p>KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT</p> <p>(8) Integrating Technical and Scientific Information</p> <p>(9) Using Information and Communication Technology</p> <p>PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <p>(10) Maintaining Personal Integrity and Professional Ethics</p>
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Getha-Taylor and Morse (2012) explore two local government leadership development programs to illustrate how these collaborative leadership and management competencies can best be developed. The Public Executive Leadership Academy (PELA) in North Carolina offers a two-week residential community leadership program for local government managers. The Supervisory Leadership Training (SLT) program in Kansas is a three-day program designed for mid-career local government professionals. The authors' analyses of the programs, both of which adhere to a framework of community and relationship-based leadership, demonstrate that value and awareness of collaborative competencies can be enhanced among those who participate in such programs. However, the programs may not be sufficient to effect behavioural changes—for example, positive changes to the ways in which local government managers ask for input, manage conflict, and build capacity with provincial and federal partners—and ensure that local government managers actually exhibit collaborative competencies in their day-to-day business. While the PELA and SLT programs offer exposure to the ways in which a collaborative, community-based leadership framework might enhance the abilities of local government leaders to fulfill their responsibilities to the public, it is argued that the programs are too short and therefore not exhaustive in terms of the competency areas that must be covered. This provides evidence that a more rigorous, applied graduate program must have the capacity to not only raise awareness of but also develop collaborative competencies among current and future managers, which will, in turn, make local governments more efficient and better prepared to meet increasing service demands.

Warm (2011) provides a simple but useful definition of collaboration, which is “working together to get something done that cannot be done working alone” (p. 60). This is particularly useful because, as others have argued, local governments are expected to function through networks and partnerships with each other, other levels of government, organizations, and agencies to bring about better outcomes for citizens (Getha-Taylor & Morse, 2012). Collaboration is therefore not an end in and of itself but rather a means to achieving better results and improved services for communities.

3.3 MOTIVES AND BARRIERS TO FACILITATING COLLABORATION

There are practical, financial, competitive, and political forces that compel today's local governments to work across institutional boundaries and adopt “collaboration [as] an essential tool of good governance” (Warm, 2011, p. 62). Contemporary problems are too complex and demanding for silo organizations to tackle in isolation. Attempts to cut fiscal deficits result in tighter budget allocations across the public sector, which, coupled with greater demands for services, prompt governments, especially those most closely tied and accessible to citizens, to be innovative, to minimize duplication of services, and to share responsibilities for costs, benefits, and risks (Warm, 2011). Competition for resources and investment within the global economic system compels governments and others to collectively build a civic infrastructure that will

advance a shared agenda. Citizens also expect collaborative behaviour among leaders, as there is an implicit, shared understanding that collaboration maximizes organizational capacity to address community expectations and make informed decisions that result in positive outcomes.

Despite the benefits of collaboration, there are structural, societal, and other practical barriers to facilitating collaboration (Warm, 2011). Local governments and other levels of government are fragmented and have varying interests and priorities, which makes it hard for them to share responsibilities. Collaboration is also demanding, in that it requires skill, knowledge, and an honest commitment from the top-down. To this end, an applied academic program may help address some of these societal and practical barriers by preparing individuals interested in and committed to local government administration with the skills to enable democratic decision-making, to administer services as per community needs, and to elevate the socioeconomic well-being of communities.

3.4 DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE COMPETENCIES THROUGH FORMAL EDUCATION

In his paper, Lazenby (2010) considers the extent to which Master of Public Administration (MPA) course content is adequate in preparing students to be effective local government managers. Through a content analysis of American MPA programs that offer a state, local, or urban concentration, he found that “coverage by MPA programs is sparse for many competencies important to local government management,” (p. 350) particularly for those relating to ethics, interpersonal communication, community leadership, civic engagement, human relations, and group processes.

The majority of the courses offered by existing graduate-level programs address competencies relating to general public management but not those specifically required for local government management. While there are many competencies that are common and foundational to management in local government, other levels of government, and the private/business sector (e.g., interpersonal skills, organizational skills), there are particular areas that are more relevant and essential to the roles and responsibilities of local government managers, such as those listed above (Lazenby, 2009, 2010).

It is important to consider the extent to which formal education can prepare individuals to be competent public servants and leaders. Lazenby (2010) argues that “to become competent in anything requires some mix of innate ability, knowledge, and experience” (p. 339) but that some competencies, particularly those relating to knowledge and skill, are easier to develop through formal education than innate traits such as personal integrity and emotional intelligence. Therefore, education—to increase knowledge and understanding of what it means to be a good, collaborative leader—may prove equally as important as innate ability and experience, especially

if the academic program integrates an experiential component, for example, group-based learning.

It is important, then, to ensure that academic programs are focused enough to impart relevant knowledge and prepare individuals with the necessary skills to navigate challenges and meet the needs of the communities in which they serve. A Masters in Local Government Administration program should therefore be focused specifically on developing competencies relating to collaboration and civic engagement.

4.0 OVERVIEW OF EXISTING COMPARABLE GRADUATE-LEVEL PROGRAMS

This section provides an overview of graduate-level programs that are comparable to the proposed Masters in Local Government Administration program. The programs reviewed here include Canadian, American, European, and Australian programs that offer local government administration as a distinct graduate-level program or as an area of concentration of a graduate-level program (see Appendix B for summary table). This section also includes a review of Canadian Executive Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs that may be comparable to the anticipated local government program (see Appendix A for summary table). With the exception of the one Canadian local government masters program, the review includes only those offered as a hybrid of face-to-face, on-campus sessions and online courses.

Programs that exist elsewhere in the world are not included due to a lack of information that is publicly available on those programs and a lack of similarity of the governance structure in those jurisdictions to the BC governance structure. Programs offered at the undergraduate, diploma, or certificate levels are not included in the review, nor are general Master of Public Administration (MPA) programs that do not offer an area of concentration in local government administration or management.

This section, organized by jurisdiction, provides an overview of each comparable program in terms of its student profile, admission requirements, program/delivery structure, length, curriculum, and current tuition (for domestic/resident students).

4.1 CANADA

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (2014) reports that there are 43 graduate-level programs related to the disciplines of public administration and public policy analysis available across 21 Canadian universities. However, there is currently only one program in Canada focused exclusively on local government public administration. The AUCC also reports that there are 16 Executive MBAs offered across eight different provinces; however, only three programs are offered through a hybrid format.

4.1.1 GRADUATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

WESTERN UNIVERSITY

The Master of Public Administration program at Western University in London, Ontario is Canada's only graduate-level program specifically designed for mid-level and future local government administrators. The program was established in 1990, and since then, has accepted a combination of 30 full-time and part-time students per year (Western University, 2014). Students with a lack of relevant professional work experience are required to possess an honours undergraduate degree in social sciences, with a minimum GPA of 3.3 (on a 4.0 scale) and at least

two courses related to local government or urban studies (Western University, 2014). Students who have at least five years of professional work experience are expected to possess an undergraduate degree but may request exception by demonstrating how their experience compensates for their lack of academic qualifications (Western University, 2014).

The program requires completion of 15 credits, which equates to 13 courses, all of which are held on-campus, plus a research report (Western University, 2014). Some courses are offered once per week (e.g., 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.) over the duration of a four-month semester, while others are offered as weeklong intensives (e.g., Monday to Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) or during three consecutive weekends (e.g., Fridays, 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). The courses cover topics relating to introduction to local government, administration, organizational behaviour, municipal law, research methods, program evaluation, theory, policy process and analysis, financial management, economics, strategic planning, and human resource management, and contemporary issues (Western University, 2014).

Full-time students, many of whom have recently completed an undergraduate degree, are expected to finish the program in three semesters (one year), while part-time students, normally local government working professionals, are expected to finish the program in seven to ten terms (approximately three years) (Western University, 2014). Full-time students begin the program in September, whereas part-time students may begin the program in September or May (Western University, 2014). Tuition for the whole program, not including fees or textbooks, is \$6,641.01 for full-time students (three terms) and \$7,747.88 to \$11,068.40 for part-time students (seven to ten terms) (Western University, 2013). Since 2007, the Local Government Program has managed to secure scholarship funding, from the Faculty of Social Sciences, to cover the full cost of tuition for all full-time domestic students (Western University, 2014). The intention of offering scholarships is to recruit a high caliber of full-time students; however, the decision to offer scholarships is reviewed by the Dean's office on an annual basis and therefore the scholarships are not guaranteed every year (J. Morgan, personal communication, November 20, 2013).

4.1.2 GRADUATE EXECUTIVE MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

The Executive Master of Business Administration (MBA) program was established in 1994 through the School of Business at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario (Queen's University, n.d.). The program is offered over 16 months and is available to students anywhere in Canada (Queen's University, n.d.). Upon entering the program in August, cohorts of students are assigned to a team with five to seven other students, with a diversity of backgrounds, and are expected to remain with that team for the duration of their program (Queen's University, n.d.). Teams are designated a professional coach whose role is to guide team-based learning and monitor the team's effectiveness (Queen's University, n.d.). Most coursework is completed and submitted as a team and students are expected to take turns acting as the leader for various

projects; students also have access to personal, career, and lifestyle coaching services throughout the program (Queen's University, n.d.).

The Executive MBA is offered as a combination of interactive online boardroom learning sessions and on-campus, face-to-face sessions (Queen's University, n.d.). Students who live in a select number of major cities (i.e., Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Mississauga, Markham, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver) have the opportunity to attend the sessions at a designated boardroom learning centre, equipped with sophisticated video-conferencing equipment, with other students who live in the same area (Queen's University, n.d.). Participants living in other locations attend the same classes but individually from their home or office (Queen's University, n.d.). The instructors who broadcast the sessions from the School of Business at Queens University have access to a variety of interactive tools while they teach, including software to pose and answer questions (Queen's University, n.d.). The virtual boardroom learning sessions take place every other weekend (i.e., Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. EST) over the course of 15 months (Queen's University, n.d.). Outside of virtual class instruction, teams are expected to meet with each other and with their team coach to work on projects and assignments.

In addition to the virtual classes, students attend three intensive residencies at a conference centre near the university campus in Kingston (Queen's University, n.d.). The opening residency session is held for two weeks in August, when students enter the program; the second is held for one week at the end of January; and the third is held for one week at the end of July (Queen's University, n.d.). The residencies provide students with the opportunity to attend in-person classes and meet their team members and professors.

The curriculum is divided into five core modules that are delivered via the interactive boardroom sessions and on-campus sessions: strategic leadership and team building; foundations of management; creativity and innovation; creating successful enterprises; and integration and execution (Queen's University, n.d.). The program also requires students to complete two major projects: a global business project (team-based), wherein students travel to an international destination, near the end of the program, to conduct field research of a global business issue; and a new venture project (individual), in which students produce a business case for a new line of business, *or* a management consulting project, in which students analyze a business issue and develop a comprehensive plan to address it (Queen's University, n.d.).

Students have opportunities to personalize their MBA experience. For example, they may choose a strategic elective (i.e., financial strategy, marketing strategy, or project leadership) that best aligns with their career goals; they may attend an optional one-week international study trip; and they may also work on achieving a professional designation in project management or management consulting while enrolled in the program (Queen's University, n.d.).

There are no specific academic requirements to enroll in the program; however, the program considers an applicant's management experience, academic experience, and references (Queen's University, n.d.). A personal interview with the program director is also required (Queen's University, n.d.). Prospective students work with an advisor to assess their eligibility and submit an application and between 75 and 80 are accepted per year (R. Bearnse, personal communication, November 1, 2013). The average student admitted to the program is in his or her late 30s and has 15 years of work experience, eight of which are experience in managing people or projects (Queen's University, n.d.). The majority (95%) of students originate from Ontario, Alberta, or BC (Queen's University, n.d.). The cost of the program, including tuition, all books, learning materials, technical support, and expenses during the residencies, is \$95,000 (Queen's University, n.d.).

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY

The School of Business at Athabasca University in Athabasca, Alberta offers the largest Executive MBA program in Canada, with 50 to 120 students qualifying for admission per intake (S. Oscroft, personal communication, October 30, 2013). The program has been offered as an interactive online program since 1994 (Athabasca University, 2013). Students enroll in the program at the same time—in September, January, or May—and stay together as a cohort throughout the entire program (Athabasca University, 2013). Most students take two and a half to three years, but have up to five years, to complete the program (Athabasca University, 2013).

The program is divided into two phases. Phase one is comprised of six foundational, required courses (18 credits) that build on each other and are taken in sequence for eight weeks each (Athabasca University, 2013). Phase one is capped off by a comprehensive, case-based exam that students have one week to complete (Athabasca University, 2013). The foundational courses are separated by two-week breaks and focus on strategic management, human resource management, financial and managerial accounting, marketing management, managerial economics and quantitative analysis, and operations management (Athabasca University, 2013).

Students have an eight-week break before beginning phase two, which is comprised of four advanced, core courses (12 credits) and six electives (18 credits) or three electives (nine credits) plus a final research project (nine credits) (Athabasca University, 2013). The advanced core courses relate to information technology strategy, corporate finance, strategy and organizational analysis, and managerial ethics and decision-making (Athabasca University, 2013). Similarly to phase one, the courses last eight weeks each. Most of the courses involve two individual assignments; online group discussions, facilitated by an academic coach, with eight to ten students; and a final group project. Students work with a different team during each course to ensure that they have exposure to a variety of managerial styles (Athabasca University, 2013).

Students may choose a variety of electives or may concentrate on an area of specialization in project management, entrepreneurship, human resources, IT management, leadership, operations management, strategy, marketing, finance and governance, or international business (Athabasca

University, 2013). At least one of the students' electives must integrate a face-to-face component. Although most of that elective is delivered online, students are expected to attend a five-day in-residence session, which is offered at a variety of locations across Canada and internationally (Athabasca University, 2013). Students who choose to do an applied research project are expected to conduct a systematic literature review and apply the concepts and theories they have learned to a significant business issue (usually a real-life issue in their workplace) (Athabasca University, 2013).

In order to be considered for admission, students must have an undergraduate degree and at least three years of managerial experience; or an acceptable professional designation and at least five years of managerial experience; or at least eight years of managerial experience. Students must also submit professional references and a personal essay (Athabasca University, 2013). The average student admitted to the program is approximately 40 years old with 19 years of work experience (nine of which are managerial) (S. Oscroft, personal communication, November 1, 2013). Tuition for the program, including books and learning environment software (but not fees or travel costs associated with the in-residence sessions), is \$48,865 for students who choose to do courses only and \$44,584 for students who choose to do a final project in lieu of three courses.

ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY

The School of Business at Royal Roads University in Victoria, BC has offered an 18-month MBA in Executive Management, with an optional specialization in management consulting, since 1999 (D. Scott, personal communication, November 1, 2013). The program is divided into seven modules and is offered as a hybrid of online courses, on-campus "experience labs" (i.e., residencies), and an organizational management project (Royal Roads University, 2013). Approximately 80 students enter the program per-intake, in August or December, and start with a three-week, online pre-residency session to familiarize themselves with the online learning environment, the program structure, and the concept of team-based learning (D. Scott, personal communication, October 31, 2013). Students remain as a cohort throughout the entire program and are expected to complete courses at the same time (Royal Roads University, 2013).

Following the online pre-residency module, students participate in their first face-to-face session, focused on the topics of organizational strategy and financial and managerial accounting. This first session extends for three weeks, Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m (Royal Roads University, 2013). Students are expected to prepare for the sessions, do their readings and related assignments, and meet with their team members outside of the classroom hours.

Students then complete five consecutive distance-learning modules. Each module consists of two courses, spans a period of eight weeks, and is capped off by a two-day virtual experience lab, wherein students "meet" online using videoconferencing technology (Royal Roads University, 2013). Students work with a variety of teams throughout the modules and complete coursework using print sources, case studies, videos, and discussion boards (Royal Roads University, 2013).

In lieu of the fifth module, students may do a three-week international residency at the Grenoble Graduate School of Business in France (Royal Roads University, 2013). During the final ten weeks before the second on-campus experience lab, students complete an action research project on an organizational management issue for a third-party client or “corporate sponsor” who is seeking business advice (Royal Roads University, 2013). Students research the issue and provide recommendations to resolve the issue in a written report and oral presentation. The program concludes with a second and final three-week, on-campus experience lab, which is structured similarly to the first (Royal Roads University, 2013).

Applicants are assessed on their academic background, professional experience, and personal attributes. Generally, applicants must have an undergraduate degree and at least seven years of professional work experience (three of which must be managerial) (Royal Roads University, 2013). However, the program recognizes the value of life experience and therefore considers applicants who have at least ten years of work experience (five of which must be managerial) and are able to demonstrate how their experience compensates for a lack of academic requirements (Royal Roads University, 2013). Students must also submit professional references and a statement of intent (Royal Roads University, 2013). The average student admitted to the program is in his or her early 40s and has 15 years of work experience (Royal Roads University, 2013). The total cost for the program for domestic students, including tuition, fees, books, and residency costs (except travel), is \$38,680 (Royal Roads University, 2013).

4.2 UNITED STATES

4.2.1 GRADUATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

There are 41 graduate-level programs, accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), across 27 different states, which offer local government as an area of specialization (NASPAA, 2014). Of these 41 programs, only two are offered as a hybrid of face-to-face sessions and online courses.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The Sol Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, California offers local government management as an optional area of concentration of the NASPAA accredited Master of Public Administration program. Students admitted to the program, which was established in 1929, are classified as either “pre-service,” with less than two years of full-time work experience, or as “in-service,” with at least two years of full-time work experience (University of Southern California, 2014). Both cohorts are required to complete a total of 40 course units (i.e., 11 courses, ranging from two to four course units) within five years; however, pre-service students must also complete an internship and a related seminar worth one course unit (University of Southern California, 2014). The number of students admitted to the program has steadily increased over the years, with 126 students being admitted for the 2012/13 academic year (University of Southern California, 2014). Students with less than five years of

professional experience must possess an undergraduate degree with a GPA of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) and have an above-average score on the GRE or GMAT (University of Southern California, 2014). Students with at least five years of experience must have the same academic qualifications but may apply to waive the GRE or GMAT requirement (University of Southern California, 2014).

There are four required core courses (14 units) on the topics of intersectoral leadership, economics, public administration and society, and a capstone course (University of Southern California, 2014). During the capstone course, taken in the final semester, students complete a team-based project in partnership with a non-profit or government agency (University of Southern California, 2014). Students must also take three courses (12 units) on the topics of finance, organizational behaviour, and analytical methods (University of Southern California, 2014). Students who elect the local government management concentration must take the following four electives (14 units): urban planning and social policy; strategic planning; seminar in administration; and human resource management or performance management (University of Southern California, 2014).

The program is offered on-campus, mostly in the evenings and as “intensives” during the weekends, at two different campuses, or online. The online program was established in 2011 (University of Southern California, 2013). Currently, students studying on-campus are not permitted to take online courses, and students enrolled in the online program are not permitted to take courses on-campus (University of Southern California, 2013). Most students studying on-campus are early and mid-career professionals who pursue the program on a full-time basis and complete the program in two to three years (University of Southern California, 2014). However, part-time students may enroll on-campus and are expected to complete the program in three to five years (University of Southern California, 2014). The online program is designed specifically for working professionals to complete within two years (University of Southern California, 2013). Online students are required to participate in two weekend, intensive residencies at one of the designated locations throughout the country; the residencies are hosted at the beginning and at the end of the program and give students the opportunity to interact face-to-face with their peers and faculty (University of Southern California, 2013).

Tuition, including all fees, textbooks, and travel expenses for the residencies, ranges from approximately \$60,355 to \$66,424, depending on whether the student is classified as in-service or pre-service⁷ (University of Southern California, 2014).

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

The Askew School of Public Administration at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida offers a 42 credit, NASPAA accredited Master of Public Administration program. Established in

⁷ Pre-service students must pay to enroll in an internship as well as a seminar worth one course unit.

1947, the school is one of the oldest in the country (Florida State University, 2012). The program requires completion of five core required courses in the following topic areas: the public administration profession, public organizations, financial management, policy development and administration, and human resource management (15 credits) (Florida State University, 2012). There are also two required methodology courses, research design and quantitative analysis (six credits), and a final, applied research project (three credits), which is completed in the final semester on a topic of the student's choice (Florida State University, 2012).

The program also requires 18 credits of elective courses in an area of specialization (Florida State University, 2012). Local government administration is offered as one of the seven primary areas of specialization or "career paths." Students may choose to fulfill this career path by choosing six electives offered by the School of Public Administration, relating to the topics of public service ethics, urban and regional economics, planning theory and practice, finance resources administration, public labour relations, and strategic leadership for communities (Florida State University, 2012).

Alternatively, students may complete an optional, supplementary certificate through the Center for Florida Local Government Excellence, in partnership with the Florida Institute of Government and the Florida State University School of Public Administration (Florida State University, 2012). To earn the certificate, students must take the following four electives, for a total of 12 credits: local government administration; intergovernmental management and relations; governmental administration in Florida; and a seminar in management studies (Florida State University, 2012). The credits may be applied towards the MPA in local government administration at Florida State University or another participating university; however, students who do not seek a graduate degree, including local government employees who are looking to enhance their professional development through formal training, may also take the Certificate in Florida City and County Management (Florida State University, 2012). The program is an equal mix of on-campus Florida State University students and working professionals (B. Lee, personal communication, October 25, 2013). This program was launched in 2007 and has recently been approved to ensue at Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers in the fall of 2014 (R. Lee, personal communication, October 25, 2013).

The certificate courses are offered in a hybrid format, combining online assignments, readings, discussions, and exams with interactive, face-to-face sessions. The face-to-face sessions are two full days (two consecutive Saturdays), at the end of each four-month semester; the first day consists mainly of lectures and interactive discussions, whereas the second day is spent on student presentations of what they have learned from the coursework (R. Lee, personal communication, October 25, 2013).

The core MPA courses, methodology courses, and non-certificate local government electives are each offered once per week, during the evenings (e.g., 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.), as consecutive weekend intensives (e.g., Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.), or entirely online (Florida State University, 2012). Most of the core courses are offered every semester. Full-time MPA students normally take two to three courses per semester and thereby complete the program in approximately five semesters (one and a half to two years) (Florida State University, 2012). Part-time MPA students who work full time are advised to take no more than two courses per term and thus complete the program in approximately seven semesters (two and half to three years) (Florida State University, 2012). Students may enroll in any semester (fall, spring, or summer) and have a maximum of seven years to complete their degrees (Florida State University, 2012). A three-credit, paid internship, normally taken during the latter half of the program, is also required for students who have less than one year of full-time professional work experience (Florida State University, 2012).

Students who are admitted to the MPA program are required to have an adequate GRE score and must possess an undergraduate degree with a minimum GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) (Florida State University, 2012). Total program tuition, not including fees or textbooks, is approximately \$19,491 (Florida State University, 2012).

4.3 EUROPE

4.3.1 GRADUATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The Whitaker School of Government and Management offers a Master of Arts (MA) in Local Government Management at the Institute of Public Administration in Dublin, Ireland. The Whitaker School and the Institute of Public Administration, founded in 1957, have a formal partnership with University College Dublin; as such, the MA program is nationally accredited by the University College (Institute of Public Administration, n.d.). Students admitted to the program are required to possess an undergraduate degree from a recognized institution (Institute of Public Administration, n.d.).

The program is delivered via distance education and is supplemented by weekend seminars held at the campus in Dublin (Institute of Public Administration, n.d.). Students attend six weekend seminars over the course of an academic year: an orientation seminar at the beginning of the semester, a review seminar in the middle of the semester, and a final seminar towards the end of the semester (Institute of Public Administration, n.d.). The program is offered on a part-time basis and is designed for students, mainly working professionals, to complete in two years (Institute of Public Administration, n.d.). Students enter the program in September and, during the first year, follow the general curriculum of the Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management (Institute of Public Administration, n.d.). They take six courses over the course of two semesters: economics, managing human resources, finance, organization and strategy, research methods,

and managing service delivery (Institute of Public Administration, n.d.). In the second year, they take three courses essential to local government management—policy formulation, implementation and evaluation; financial management and accountability; and leadership and management—and then, in the second semester, undertake a minor dissertation (report) on a specific local government issue of interest (Institute of Public Administration, n.d.). The cost of the program, including fees, seminars, and textbooks, is €10,000, which equates to approximately \$14,100⁸ (Institute of Public Administration, n.d.).

4.4 AUSTRALIA

4.4.1 GRADUATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

The Master in Local Government program is offered through the Centre of Local Government, which was established in 1991 (University of Technology Sydney, 2012), at the University of Technology in Sydney, Australia. This 72-credit program, established in 2012, consists of ten courses (60 credits), four compulsory and six electives, and a capstone project (12 credits) (University of Technology Sydney, 2012). Students enter the program in August and participate in a six-day, on-campus workshop for the first mandatory course, local government principles, and then a five-day workshop for the second mandatory course, corporate management and organization change (University of Technology Sydney, 2012). Workshops are held at the university city campus and are spaced one month apart (University of Technology Sydney, 2012). After successful completion of these courses, students take six electives, on topics relating to social planning and development, strategic planning, leadership, service delivery, managing local enterprise, and environmental management (University of Technology Sydney, 2012). Elective subjects are offered through intensive three- to five-day workshops at the university or another approved institution or may be accessed by distance learning, also through the university or another approved institution; students may also arrange for workplace learning projects, in lieu of courses (University of Technology Sydney, 2012). Students complete the program with the final two compulsory courses—research in local government (five-day workshop) and comparative local governance (three-day workshop with an online component)—and a capstone project (University of Technology Sydney, 2012).

The program is designed for students who are working professionals in the Australian local government sector; the program does not extend to international students, except those in New Zealand (University of Technology Sydney, 2012). In order to enroll, students must have a graduate certificate or diploma in local government or an undergraduate degree and sufficient professional experience in local government (University of Technology Sydney, 2012). The first cohort of the program (August 2012) enlisted a total of 13 students (G. Watterson, personal

⁸ The year of establishment and the number of students admitted per intake is unknown, as the school did not respond to the researcher's inquiries.

communication, November 9, 2013). Students normally take one to two courses per semester, thereby completing the program within three to four years (University of Technology Sydney, 2012). The program costs approximately \$22,240, not including fees or textbooks (University of Technology Sydney, 2012).

4.5 SUMMARY

This review demonstrates that there are limited opportunities available, particularly in Canada, for formal, graduate-level education in local government administration and management. The programs that currently exist, particularly in the United States, offer local government as an area of specialization of a general Master of Public Administration (MPA) program, with the exception of the Institute of Public Administration in Ireland, which offers local government as an area of specialization of a Master of Arts (MA) program. For the majority of the programs, the area of specialization is an optional, not mandatory, component of the graduate program. Western University is the only known Northern American institution to offer an MPA focused exclusively on local government and the University of Technology Sydney is the only known university to offer a distinct Master of Local Government program.

The majority of the programs generated from a search of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) website, not included in the review above, are offered exclusively as on-campus, residential programs. While most of the courses in these programs are delivered during the evenings or as weekend intensives, to accommodate working professionals, they are limited only to those students who live in proximity to the campus and who are willing to commit to in-person class time, in addition to their regular work hours.

The programs reviewed in detail in this section are offered as a hybrid of online courses followed by on-campus, face-to-face sessions, ranging from a couple of days to three weeks for some of the Executive MBA programs. Most of the programs require at least two face-to-face residencies over the course of the entire program.

The programs that offer local government as an area of specialization require students to complete a set of core, general public administration courses and then a set of courses related specifically to local government topics. The core courses cover topics such as organizational strategy and behaviour, economics, financial management, research methods, human resource management, policy process, administration, and service delivery. The local government courses cover topics such as intergovernmental relations, strategic planning, urban planning, leadership, and management, but consistent with Lazenby's (2010) arguments, the courses are not exhaustive in addressing the competencies important to local government management.

Students may enroll in most of the programs reviewed above either full-time, and complete the program within two years, on average, or part-time, and complete the program within approximately three years. Most of the programs enroll students on a part-time basis and these

students tend to be mid-career local government professionals. Students admitted to the Executive MBA programs typically have extensive business experience (at least 15 years), including managerial experience. Full-time students tend to enroll directly out of their undergraduate degrees and/or have limited public administration experience. Two of the programs reviewed above, the MPA Local Government Management program at the University of Southern California and the MPA City and County Management program at Florida State University, offer two distinct streams: one for “pre-service” students (limited or no experience) and one for “in-service” students (experienced, working professionals).

Internships are common among the programs reviewed in this section but tend to be non-compulsory, except for “pre-service” students, for whom an experiential component is mandatory. Capstone courses are also common and usually require students to deliver a report with recommendations (sometimes for a real, local government client).

Most of the American Schools of Public Administration identified through the initial scan and those reviewed in more detail above have been in existence for over 30 years; however, the local government areas of specialization are relatively new domains, particularly those offered through online learning. The Canadian programs and the Australian program are comparatively newer, having come into existence as of the early- to mid-1990s.

Program tuition varies depending on the jurisdiction but is generally higher for American universities, especially those that are private (i.e., not operated by government), for example, the University of Southern California, and for the Executive MBA programs. An undergraduate degree with a GPA of 3.0 is a minimum requirement for admission to the local government graduate programs. Executive MBA programs prefer but do not require an undergraduate degree for admission; professional work experience is also considered and sometimes weighed more heavily than academic prerequisites.

This review indicates that BC has an opportunity to offer an innovative, graduate-level program that is offered in very few places elsewhere. Because local governance structures and functions are somewhat unique to each jurisdiction, it is important for the University of Victoria and Capilano University to design a Masters in Local Government Administration or comparable program in ways that will enhance the professional development of local government professionals in BC but also be applicable and transferable to interested non-residents.

5.0 FINDINGS

The purpose of this section is to report the survey and interview findings. Both methods were used to collect data on local government stakeholders' interest in pursuing a Masters in Local Government Administration program and their views of the proposed program, including potential delivery methods, topics to be covered in the courses, and estimated costs. Section six discusses the implications of these findings.

5.1 SURVEY FINDINGS

The survey was divided into six main sections, each of which contained at least one question.

The first section provided participants with an overview of a program structure and delivery option being considered by Capilano University and the University of Victoria. In this section, participants were asked to indicate their level of support for the timing of the program (starting in the summer and taking seven semesters to complete the program, including a capstone project); the hybrid delivery model (a mix of three residential face-to-face sessions and online semesters); and the cohort approach (progressing through the program at the same pace, by taking two courses per semester). Participants were also asked to comment on what they like about the proposed program and what they think could be changed about the program.

The second section asked participants about the extent to which they would be interested in pursuing the program if it was made available.

The third section asked participants to rate the level of importance of 13 different possible areas to include as part of the curriculum and to list any additional areas that they feel are important to include. This list of subject areas was based on the list initially developed by Capilano University and the University of Herefordshire; however, their program proposal did not go forward.

The fourth section asked participants to indicate their preferences for the most reasonable, feasible arrangement for the face-to-face sessions (i.e., one week of day sessions, two weeks of day sessions, one weekend, two subsequent weekends, other), an appropriate number of face-to-face sessions, and the best month(s) in which to host the face-to-face sessions.

The fifth section asked participants to comment on the proposed tuition costs (\$20,000 to \$25,000) and to specify the level to which their employer would offer financial help if they chose to enroll in the program. This section also asked participants to indicate their opinion on the biggest deterrent to enrolling in and completing the program (i.e., cost, lack of time to do coursework, time away from work/family to participate in residency sessions, other).

The final section contained demographic questions about the type of organization for which participants work (e.g., municipality, regional district), the department or program area in which they work (e.g., public works and operations), their years of experience in local government,

their highest level of education, their area of residence, and the population of their area of residence.

5.1.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Statutory officers⁹ from each local government in BC were invited to complete the survey. The total number of statutory officers who were invited to take the survey and who represent 185 different local governments in BC, was 447. A total of 175 people who identify as a statutory officer responded to the survey, which represents a response rate of 39%¹⁰ for this group.

Department heads from jurisdictions with a population of at least 75,000 were also invited to take the survey. The rationale for limiting the invitation to those who work in larger jurisdictions was that the sample of statutory officers skewed towards those who work in smaller local communities. The total number of department heads, who were invited to take the survey and who represent 23 different BC local governments, was 300. Graduates of the diploma and certificate in local government management programs from the University of Victoria (n=36) and Capilano University (n=297) were also invited to take the survey. Of these two populations (local government managers and graduates), 123 responded to the survey, which represents a response rate of 19% for these groups. Since the survey did not ask respondents to indicate whether or not they are a graduate from one or more of these programs, it is not possible to determine the individual response rates for different groups.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the program areas in which respondents work and Table 4 provides a breakdown of the types of organizations by which respondents are employed. Both of these tables are also included in Appendix D, which presents the frequency distributions for all of the closed-ended survey questions.

⁹Chief Administrative Officers, Deputy Chief Administrative Officers, Corporate Administrators, Deputy Corporate Administrators, Chief Financial Administrators, and Deputy Chief Financial Administrators

¹⁰Figures used in this report, outside of the tables, are rounded to the nearest percentage.

TABLE 3: JOB PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS BY PROGRAM AREA

Program area	n	%
Chief Administrative Officer or Deputy Chief Administrative Officer	75	25.2
Corporate Administrator or Deputy Corporate Administrator	49	16.4
Financial Administrator or Deputy Financial Administrator	51	17.1
Engineering	6	2.0
Planning, Building, or Development Services	23	7.7
Public Works and Operations (including recycling and water/sewer/solid waste)	7	2.3
Protective Services	10	3.4
Community Services or Parks, Recreation, and Culture	14	4.7
Information Technology	3	1.0
Administration or Administrative Support	22	7.4
Other	30	10.1
I do not work for local government	7	2.3
I am not currently employed	0	0.0
No answer	1	0.3

The majority (77%) of participants who responded to the survey work for a municipality, 18% work for a regional district or Islands Trust, 1% work for a First Nation, 1% work for another level of government, 1% work for the private sector, and 2% work for an organization not identified in the list of choices (Table 4). Participants who chose the “other” category indicated that they are self-employed or work for a non-profit organization or municipal agency.

TABLE 4: JOB PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS BY ORGANIZATION TYPE

Organization type	n	%
Municipality	230	77.2
Regional District or Islands Trust	53	17.8
First Nation	4	1.3
Improvement District	0	0.0
Provincial Government, Crown Corporation, or Federal Government	3	1.0
Private Sector	2	0.7
Other	5	1.7
I am not currently employed	0	0.0
No answer	1	0.3

Table 5 below represents the number of years of experience that respondents have in local government.

TABLE 5: RESPONDENTS' YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Years of experience	n	%
0 to 4	22	7.4
5 to 9	60	20.1
10 to 14	54	18.1
15 to 19	57	19.1
20+	104	34.9
No answer	1	0.3

Table 6 below illustrates respondents' highest level of education. Respondents who chose "other" indicated that they have a professional designation (e.g., accounting); partially completed graduate degree; post-graduate diploma; or law degree.

TABLE 6: RESPONDENTS' HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Level of education	n	%
High school diploma or less	1	0.3%
Partially completed undergraduate/diploma/certificate program	16	5.4%
Diploma/certificate program	97	32.6%
Undergraduate degree	81	27.2%
Master's degree	56	18.8%
Doctorate degree or post doctorate studies	1	0.3%
Other	44	14.8%
No answer	2	0.7%

Table 7 shows the breakdown of where respondents live and Table 8 shows the population counts for the areas in which they live.

TABLE 7: RESPONDENTS' AREAS OF RESIDENCE

Area of residence	n	%
Interior BC ¹¹	80	26.8
Lower Mainland	76	25.5
Vancouver Island ¹²	75	25.2
Northern BC ¹³	34	11.4
Outside of BC ¹⁴	2	0.7
Outside of Canada	0	0
No answer	31	10.4

¹¹Thompson/Shuswap/Columbia, Okanagan Valley/Similkameen, West Kootenay/Boundary, and East Kootenay/Rocky Mountain

¹²South and North/Central Island

¹³North Coast, Peace River, North Centre/Cariboo

¹⁴Both respondents indicated Alberta as their area of residence

TABLE 8: POPULATION OF RESPONDENTS' AREAS OF RESIDENCE

Population	n	%
Greater than 25,000	171	57.4%
10,000 to 24,999	49	16.4%
9,999 to 5,000	17	5.7%
Less than 5,000	61	20.5%
No answer	0	0.0%

5.1.2 SUPPORT FOR AND INTEREST IN THE PROGRAM

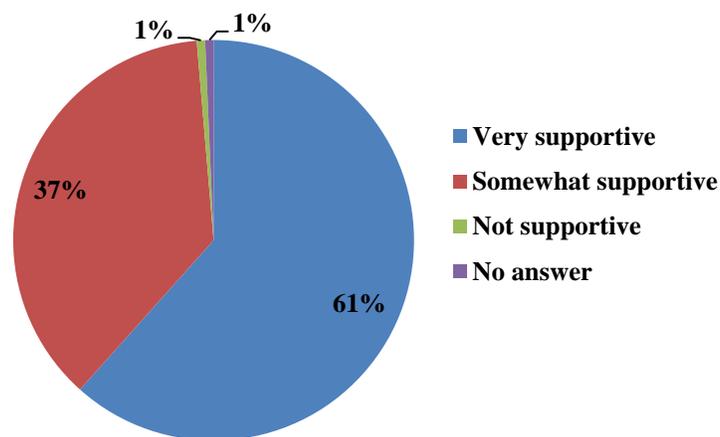
This subsection provides an account of participants’ overall support for the idea of the program in principle; preferences for the proposed hybrid delivery method, timing, length, and cohort approach; interest in enrolling in the program; and ideas about topics to include in the curriculum.

The primary focus is on the “very supportive” and “very interested” responses, as the individuals who provided those responses are most likely to be prospective students and consideration of their preferences will be important in designing the program.

OVERALL PERCEPTION AND SUPPORT

Nearly all respondents expressed some level of support for the idea of the proposed program. Sixty-one percent of respondents said that they are very supportive and 37% percent indicated that they are somewhat supportive of the program overall (Figure 1). Only 1% of respondents did not express support for the program as described in the survey introduction. The remaining 1% of the sample did not provide an answer to the question.

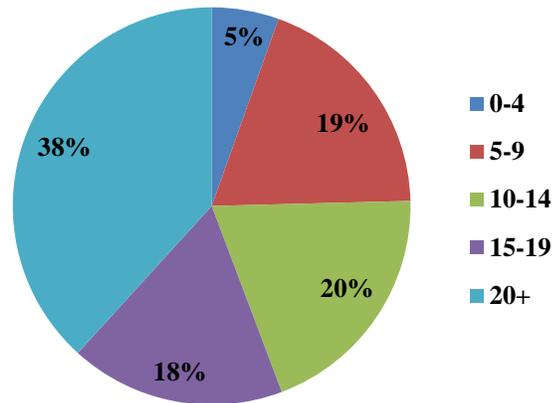
FIGURE 1: LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED PROGRAM



Over half (56%) of those who said that they were very supportive of the program have at least 15 years of experience in local government (Figure 2). Only 5% of those who are very supportive of

the program have less than five years of experience, which indicates that those in the mid-stages of their career are perhaps more willing to support and appreciate such a program.

FIGURE 2: PERCENTAGE OF INDIVIDUALS VERY SUPPORTIVE OF PROPOSED PROGRAM BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE



An open-ended question asking “what do you like about the proposed program?” was included in the survey to get a basic understanding of the perceived value and benefits of the program as described. Of the total of 298 respondents, 219 provided comments on at least one dimension that they perceived as positive. The most commonly cited benefits of the program are limited requirements for travel and time away from work while still having the opportunity to network in-person, to some extent, and acquire a masters degree. Approximately 15% of the comments cited the cohort approach as a distinguished asset that, as one participant suggested, “helps to establish relationships which can be beneficial over the long term.”

Almost half (44%) of the comments implied that the program, as described, would be reasonably flexible, accessible, and relevant for working professionals across BC and would be an attractive continuing education and learning opportunity, particularly since it is at the graduate level. As one participant indicated, “I would like to get my masters degree and it would be much more applicable [and relevant] to take it in local government since that is my career choice.” A small percentage (3%) of the participants who provided comments specified the importance of a capstone project (including oral defense) for a local government client.

When asked what they think needs to be changed about the program, 169 respondents provided comments. Almost half (43%) of them implied that the program must remain flexible in terms of the timing, workload, and delivery. Specifically, that the program offer students the opportunity to take a heavier workload (i.e., two courses per semester) or a lighter workload (i.e., one course per semester); that the face-to-face sessions be less than ten days in duration; and that the sessions be held at more than one location. Further discussion of these dimensions is provided in the “program timing and length” and “delivery method” sub-sections below. Although the majority (89%) of all respondents is supportive of the cohort model in principle, it was suggested

by a handful of the comments that it might not be a feasible model for a program designed for working professionals. About 7% of the comments reflected concerns about not having the mandatory requirements (i.e., an undergraduate degree) in order to apply to the program or suggestions for academic credit to be awarded for past relevant coursework and/or work experience.

PROGRAM TIMING AND LENGTH

The proposed timing of the program, as outlined in the survey, is for it to start in May and for students to be able to complete it within seven semesters (if they stay on track). When asked to indicate their level of support for the timing, 46% of all respondents said that they were very supportive, 48% said that they were somewhat supportive, 5% said that they were not supportive, and the remaining 1% did not provide an answer. Participants were also provided with the opportunity to comment on the timing of the program in addition to answering the question; 109 respondents provided comments. Several themes emerged in coding the findings.

Approximately one-third of the comments indicated that May is not the best time to start the program, as many employees take summer vacation or are busy covering for others who are on vacation. However, other participants (approximately 25% of those who provided comments) indicated that May is a good time to start, as summer tends to be a slower time of year for many local governments.

Approximately 15% of the comments suggested that two courses per semester might be too onerous for local government professionals who are already challenged to manage existing expectations and workloads. A smaller percentage (approximately 8%) of the comments suggested that seven semesters is too long and indicated preference for an optional accelerated program stream. Almost one-quarter of the comments indicated that flexibility—in terms of how many courses to take per semester, whether or not to enroll in semesters consecutively, and how long to take to complete the program—is essential to ensuring that the program remains accessible for all those interested.

DELIVERY METHOD

The Steering Committee is considering a mix of courses that include intensive face-to-face sessions (on the Lower Mainland or at the University of Victoria) and fully online courses to deliver the program. When asked to indicate their level of support for the mixed delivery method, 65% of respondents specified that they would be very supportive, 30% said that they would be somewhat supportive, and 5% said that they would not be supportive. Participants also provided comments on the proposed method; the comments (n=109) were analyzed to determine common themes.

The comments focused on the implications of the face-to-face sessions, namely, the associated travel costs and expected time away from work. Participants, including those who strongly support the mixed model, suggested that the program delivery must remain flexible enough to

accommodate those living and working in more remote locations, outside of the proposed areas for the face-to-sessions. Not surprisingly, almost half (48%) of those very interested in the suggested delivery model live on the Lower Mainland or on South Vancouver Island, the proposed areas for the face-to-face sessions. Some participants said that the costs incurred from travelling to and from the campus would impede their ability to participate. As an alternative, participants suggested hosting the on-campus sessions, or having supplementary sessions for those who cannot travel to Victoria or the Lower Mainland, at another central location, such as the Okanagan area. Other participants suggested the option of having video-conferencing technology made available for those who cannot attend the residential sessions in-person. A small proportion of participants (less than 5%) indicated that they would like the program to maximize the face-to-face time, whereas a different small proportion of participants (less than 5%) indicated that they would like the face-to-face sessions to be minimized or for the program to be delivered completely online. The majority of participants commented that ten days would be very challenging for local government professionals to be away from work and/or family and suggested a maximum of five to seven days as more feasible.

This is reflected in the responses to the question of what the most feasible arrangement for the face-to-face sessions would be, given participants' current situations. Almost half (44%) said that one week of day sessions (e.g., 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday) would be the most reasonable. A small percentage of individuals (4%) thought that two weeks of day sessions would be the best option. Twenty percent said that one weekend (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday) would be the most feasible and 18% preferred two subsequent weekends. The 10% who picked the "other" category suggested a combination of day and weekend residential sessions (i.e., one week of day sessions for one semester and then a weekend session for another semester); one extended, three- to four-day weekend; or evening classes.

In terms of the best month for the face-to-face sessions, almost one-third (32%) of respondents said April, 27% said August, 13% said July, 7% said December, and 2% said none of the above or did not provide an answer. Nineteen percent chose "other" and indicated preference for the sessions to take place during the fall (September to November) or the spring (April to June). Some participants expressed concern for the sessions taking place during the summer months (July and August), due to vacation, or the winter months (December and January in particular), due to adverse weather conditions for travel.

COHORT APPROACH

The Steering Committee has considered designing the program so that each entering class of students proceeds through the program together as a cohort. Survey participants were generally supportive of the concept, with 42% saying they were "very supportive" and 47% saying they were "somewhat supportive." However, 11% were not supportive of the cohort approach. While participants generally agreed that progressing through the program as a cohort would be ideal, as it tends to increase collaboration and motivation, they also indicated that it may not be practical due to personal or professional commitments. Participants commented that they would like the

option of taking less than two courses per semester or not enrolling for a semester if needed, which would make it difficult to implement a cohort model. Comments alluded to the idea that the benefit of online learning is to be able to “go at your own pace,” in order to account for personal circumstances. Participants who were not supportive of the approach mentioned that remaining as part of a cohort is not only inflexible but also takes away the opportunity to work with a broader range of people with different experiences and backgrounds.

PROGRAM CONTENT

The survey asked respondents to indicate how important they perceive 13 subject areas as a basis for potential courses. Table 9 below outlines the percentage of respondents who indicated that the area would be very important for consideration and inclusion in the curricula.

TABLE 9: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING AREA AS "VERY IMPORTANT" FOR CONSIDERATION AND INCLUSION IN THE CURRICULA

Subject area	n	%
Leadership and management	264	88.6
Strategic planning and performance management	211	70.8
Local government law	190	63.8
Policy analysis, development, and implementation	186	62.4
Administrative ethics	185	62.1
Financial management and accountability	170	57.0
Human resource management	159	53.4
Contemporary policy issues and current topics	146	49.0
Community planning	125	41.9
Intergovernmental and First Nations relationships	111	37.2
Urban and regional economics	88	29.5
Information management and technologies	56	18.8
Research methodologies	35	11.7

Participants were given the opportunity to identify any other content areas that they feel are important for local governments. Ninety-six participants provided comments, which were analyzed and grouped based on their similarities. The following emerged as the top five additional areas for potential courses:

1. Community engagement and consultation strategies;
2. Political/council/staff relations;
3. Communications and media;
4. Business writing (e.g., request for proposals, bylaws); and
5. Role of local governments (e.g., political versus administrative roles).

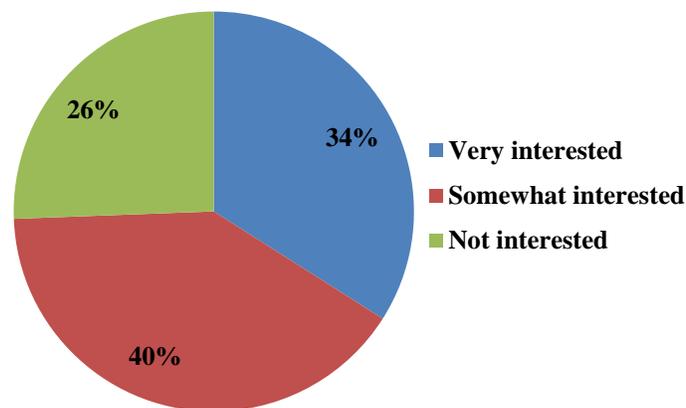
Other comments for possible content areas included infrastructure/asset management, contract law and administration, legislative processes, emergency management, dispute resolution and

negotiation, change management, service delivery, project management, and environmental health and safety.

OVERALL INTEREST IN THE PROGRAM

The vast majority of respondents expressed some level of interest in pursuing the program if it was to be made available to them, with 34% indicating they would be very interested and 40% indicating that they would be somewhat interested (Figure 3). Twenty-six percent of respondents said that they would *not* be interested in the program. However, of this 26%, only one person said that s/he was not supportive of the proposed program as described. This person did not provide comments to explain the lack of support for the proposed program.

FIGURE 3: LEVEL OF INTEREST IN PROPOSED PROGRAM



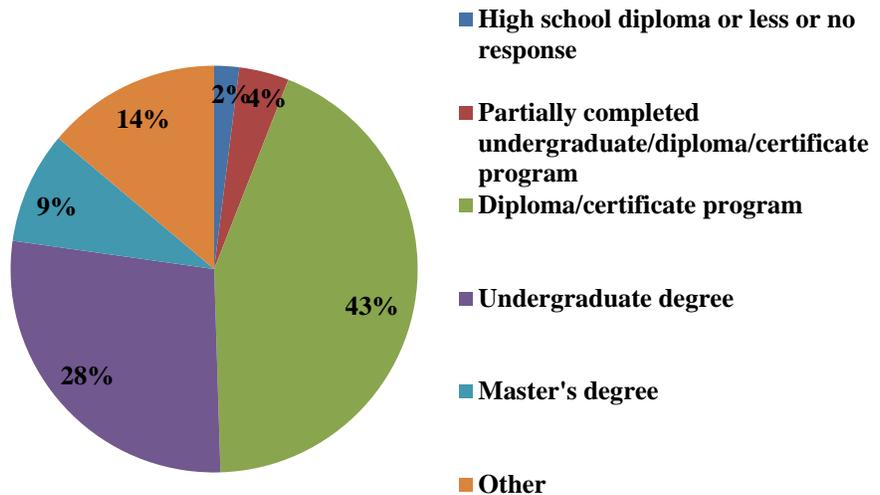
The majority (53%) of those not interested in the program have 20 or more years of experience in local government and 39% of those not interested in the program already possess a masters degree. This may indicate that some people are not interested in the program because they are at a later stage of their career and/or possess a comparable masters degree already, not because they do not support the program in principle.

The majority (70%) of the statutory officers (Chief Administrative Officers, Corporate Administrators, Financial Administrators, and their deputies), who represent 59% of the sample, are very or somewhat interested in the proposed program; however, a significant proportion (39%) of Chief Administrative Officers, specifically, indicated that they would not be interested in taking the program if it was available. Their lack of interest is related to the fact that some of them already have a masters degree and/or are approaching retirement. Individuals who responded to the survey and work in information technology or engineering or who do not work in local government are less interested in taking the program compared to others.

Almost half (43%) of those who said they would be very interested in the program have a diploma or certificate as their highest level of education, whereas only 37% have an

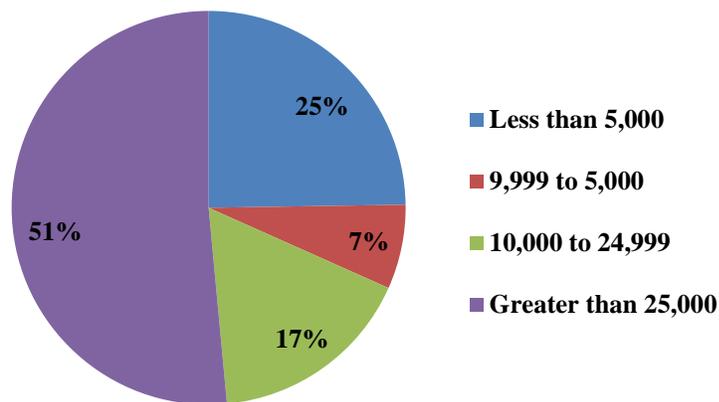
undergraduate or masters degree (Figure 4). Therefore, it will be important to consider that requiring applicants to possess an undergraduate degree may limit the number of students who are able to access the program.

FIGURE 4: PERCENTAGE OF INDIVIDUALS VERY INTERESTED IN PROPOSED PROGRAM BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION



Of those who are very interested in the program, 35% live in the interior, 30% on the lower mainland, 20% on Vancouver Island, and 15% in northern BC. Figure 5 shows that the majority (51%) of respondents live in an area with a population of 25,000 or more; however, one-quarter live in an area with a population of less than 5,000.

FIGURE 5: PERCENTAGE OF INDIVIDUALS VERY INTERESTED IN PROPOSED PROGRAM BY POPULATION



This illustrates the importance of designing and delivering the program in a way that will be feasible for both students who live in more urban centres, closer to the campuses where the

proposed face-to-face sessions will be held, and those who live in smaller, more rural communities, further away from campus.

5.1.3 CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO ENROLMENT

This subsection reports participants’ perceptions of the proposed program cost and other barriers to enrolment.

Table 10 below illustrates the results of the question that asked participants what they would consider to be the biggest deterrent to enrolling in and completing the program.

TABLE 10: DETERRENTS TO ENROLLING IN AND COMPLETING THE PROGRAM

Deterrent	n	%
Cost	90	30.2
Lack of time to do online course work	47	15.8
Time away from work to participate in face-to-face sessions	42	14.1
Time away from family to participate in face-to-face sessions	17	5.7
No deterrents	21	7.0
Other	80	26.8
No answer	1	0.3

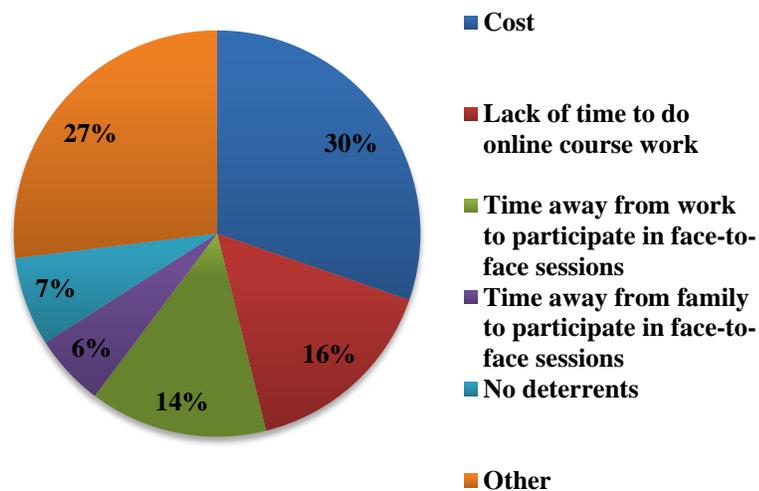
Of the 30% of participants who said cost, the vast majority (87%) of participants indicated that they were very or somewhat interested in the proposed program. After cost, “other [deterrents]” was the most frequently selected category. Just over half of the 27% who chose “other” (e.g., travel requirements, questionable value of degree, indeterminate return on investment, concern about having required pre-requisites, lack of interest, late stage in career) as the biggest deterrent indicated that they are very or somewhat interested in the proposed program. When asked if their employer would offer financial assistance if they chose to enroll, 10% of participants very interested in the program said yes, 50% said yes but limited, 7% said no, and 34% said they did not know. These findings imply that cost may be the most important factor to consider in ensuring that the program is accessible to prospective applicants.

The comments on the proposed cost from those who are somewhat interested or very interested in the program (n=165) were coded into three categories: cost considered reasonable; cost considered high/would consider other factors before enrolling; and cost considered high/would not enroll. The comments from those who are not interested in the program were not analyzed. Twenty-five percent of respondents who are interested in the program to at least some degree did not provide a comment on the proposed cost of approximately \$20,000 to \$25,000. However, of those who did provide a comment, 28% considered the cost reasonable, comparable to, or cheaper than other graduate programs. Forty percent considered the cost high and implied that they would have to weigh other factors (e.g., funding from employers, scholarships, fee installment schedule, additional costs for travel) before making a decision on whether or not to

enroll. A small percentage (6%) of participants' comments implied that they would not enroll simply because they perceive the cost as too high. This indicates that cost will be a deciding factor of application and enrolment.

Figure 6 below shows that participants also perceive lack of time to do course work—due to personal, family, and professional commitments—and time away from work to participate in the face-to-face sessions as sizeable deterrents. A very small proportion of all respondents indicated that there would be no barriers or considered time away from family to participate in the face-to-face sessions as a barrier to taking the program. These results suggest that the program be delivered in a way that balances the demands on individuals' time, given their other professional commitments.

FIGURE 6: BARRIERS TO ENROLMENT



5.2 INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The interviews were conducted to supplement the survey findings and explore certain areas in greater detail. Through the interviews, the researcher intended to get a better sense of the perceived level of support from local governments and related organizations for the proposed program; the demographic characteristics of people who might be interested in the program; and topics to be addressed by the courses to meet the needs of local government employees and their organizations.

The researcher endeavoured to interview a range of local government stakeholders in and outside of BC and was successful in securing telephone interviews with ten individuals. These individuals were initially identified by the researcher and endorsed by the client and academic supervisor as suitable candidates who have significant experience with local government administration and management. Four of the participants live and work for an organization outside of BC (Ontario, Alberta, and Northwest Territories), while the remaining six represent

BC organizations. All of the participants occupy relatively senior positions within their respective local governments or organizations. The interviews ranged in length from 30 to 60 minutes, with an average length of 45 minutes.

5.2.1 OVERALL SUPPORT FOR AND INTEREST IN THE PROGRAM

Participants were asked what they consider would be the perceived level of interest in and support for the program within the local government community. All ten participants mentioned that most local governments, depending on their leadership culture, are very supportive of education and professional development and would therefore be highly supportive of this prospective program as one that is genuinely needed. All participants indicated that there would likely be a high level of interest in the program, particularly due to the lack of availability of other comparable programs that are specific to local government administration and management. In terms of financial support, all but one of the participants specifically mentioned that local governments have at least some funding to support education and professional development. Two participants referenced the scholarships offered through the Board of Examiners.

5.2.2 DELIVERY METHODS AND PROGRAM CONTENT

All participants indicated strong overall support for the proposed mixed delivery model. Participants perceived the face-to-face sessions as invaluable to collaborative learning and the online courses as important to increasing accessibility.

In terms of the face-to-face sessions, over half (60%) of participants mentioned that ten days away may be too onerous, particularly for senior administrators and administrators of small municipalities that have limited staff resources; they indicated that five to seven days, with a mix of weekday and weekend sessions, would be more feasible. One participant indicated that she prefers the model, frequently used by Executive MBA programs, of meeting in-person every second weekend (Friday and Saturday) throughout the course of the program. Three participants suggested the possibility of having the face-to-face sessions offered at a secondary satellite site (e.g., Prince George, Kelowna) or via videoconference for those who are unable to travel to attend the sessions in-person. Early spring was most frequently mentioned as the best time of year to host face-to-face sessions, so long as the sessions do not coincide with the major local government conferences. Similar to the survey findings, participants recommended avoiding the winter and summer seasons.

In terms of workload, three participants said that taking two courses at the same time, especially if not at all related, would likely be unmanageable for most people, due to the increasing demands of their jobs and also family/personal commitments. The rest of participants mentioned that two courses per semester could be a reasonable workload but that flexibility is key and participants should be free to take less than two if needed. As such, all participants suggested that while they acknowledge the merits of the cohort approach, they do not perceive it as a vital or

distinguishing element to the program. Two participants mentioned that people who are likely to be interested in the program already have fairly established professional networks.

The greater part of the interviews focused on participants' perceptions of the skills and competencies that are or will be needed to manage the challenges that local governments experience and that should be considered in developing the curriculum. Participants alluded to the idea that successful local government administrators need to be concerned with and able to build capacity for three different dimensions: the community, the organization, and council. All ten participants indicated that political acumen and related skills (e.g., navigating relationships with elected officials) are key to being an astute local government administrator. Several participants suggested that many local government administrators do not fully understand their operational functions and legislative authorities and need to learn how to manage the "grey" areas, that is, the areas between politics and the administration. It was suggested that a course be offered relating to the ways in which administrators can better understand their roles, differentiate between politics and administration, and bridge the gap between the two realms in order to effectively deliver public services.

Almost all (eight out of ten) participants mentioned communications and public consultation/engagement as related areas that are critical to the niche of local government, particularly due to increasing demands from the public to be transparent and timely in communicating decisions and information. Participants suggested that social media and information technology, areas in which many people are still unfamiliar, be incorporated into the communications and public relations courses (as methods for engaging the public and conveying decisions).

Beyond the areas mentioned above, the following areas were most frequently cited by participants as lacking amongst local government administrators and as important for building into the curriculum:

1. Resource management (finances, personnel);
2. Leadership and innovation;
3. Policy analysis and development;
4. Sustainable community planning and development;
5. Conflict management;
6. Communications; and
7. Strategic planning.

The following areas were also cited by participants, however, not more than once: business/report writing, change management, contract administration, project management, monitoring/evaluation, and intergovernmental relations. One participant mentioned the importance of working with the Board of Examiners to ensure that the courses are credentialed to count towards the four different levels of certification.

Participants were also asked to identify any methods that they think might be effective in teaching and delivering the courses. Half of the participants said that it would be valuable to bring in experienced local government practitioners to instruct the courses (or course components) specific to their fields. Participants implied that bringing in practitioners offers students an informal mentoring opportunity. However, one participant recommended that the involvement of practitioners be structured and formal; that is, a practitioner (e.g., senior human resources advisor) be brought in to lead a lecture or face-to-face case study that is specific to his or her area of expertise (e.g., labour negotiations). Another participant suggested that students who have extensive experience in the course subject area be encouraged to co-teach the course in lieu of taking it.

Other methods that were identified more than once include: arranging students into interdisciplinary teams, based on their diverse backgrounds, to complete assignments; offering case studies and simulations during the face-to-face sessions to harness course learnings and objectives; and utilizing a range of social media and networking technologies. All ten interviewees expressed support for the idea of a capstone project, which students would complete for a local government client (likely their current employer). Participants were also keen on the opportunity for students to present their capstone projects at an annual local government conference or forum. Two participants specifically suggested the pre-conference workshops of the annual Local Government Management Association of BC (LGMA) conference, which normally occur in May or June, as a possible venue for these presentations. Participants suggested that sharing the projects at this type of networking forum could help increase knowledge and awareness of best practices and might also increase buy-in from employers.

5.2.3 ANTICIPATED STUDENT PROFILE

Interview participants were asked whom they envision as potential students in this program, in terms of years of experience and level of education. The interview findings appear to be relatively consistent with the survey findings on both the experience and education dimensions.

The survey findings illustrate that the majority (66%) of those who said they would be very interested in the program have at least ten years of experience in local government. This is consistent with the interview findings to the extent that half of the interview respondents suggested that most people who would be interested are mid- to senior level administrators (e.g., department heads, CAOs), on an executive track, who have considerable experience (at least ten years, with some managerial experience). According to these interview participants, many people who work in local government have been in the field for a significant period of time and have worked their way up in virtue of their experience (without or with limited formal education). One participant emphasized the importance of ensuring that prospective students have enough relevant experience to draw on and sufficiently contribute to the program.

The other half of the respondents indicated that the people they considered might be interested in the program do not necessarily have significant experience in local government. They suggested

that while most people likely have about five years of experience, there are certainly many people who have limited to no experience specific to local government (i.e., new grads, people transferring from private sector or another level of government).

The survey findings show that a minority of respondents has an undergraduate degree (27%) or a graduate degree (19%). This is consistent with the interview findings, in that all of the interview participants, except one, indicated that it is very common for local government employees (even at the senior level) to not have an undergraduate degree. Participants attributed this to the notion that formal education has not always been a prerequisite to employment in local government—likely due to the fact that there were less opportunities for education specific to local government administration available in previous years than there are today, albeit not at the graduate-level—and that experience is often considered just as or more valuable than education. It is interesting to note that the one participant who did not share this view, and who observed that most employees have at least an undergraduate degree, works for a local government organization outside of BC.

While municipal councils and regional boards often use certification to recognize and advance their staff, holding a certificate is not a precondition to employment in local government (MSCDC, 2014a).

Three participants said that certificate and diploma credentials are much more common among local government officials, which is also consistent with the survey findings; approximately one third of survey respondents indicated that their highest level of education is a diploma or certificate program. Interviewees suggested that certificate and diplomas are growing more common because people want to gain increased skills and knowledge relevant to their field, which the programs offer to some extent, but there is currently a lack of higher-level programs specific to local government administration.

Two participants suggested that there are many extraordinary, high-performing people in local government who have limited formal education and that the program, as an opportunity for growth, should not be restricted to those who have an undergraduate degree or equivalent. Another participant suggested that even those who have a recognized university degree, including a graduate degree, are likely to be interested in the program because it is an applied professional development opportunity specific to their field.

During the interviews, participants stressed that the target audience for the program must be determined before developing other features of the program, including the format, delivery method, and entry pre-requisites.

5.2.4 OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Survey participants perceived cost as the biggest deterrent to enrolment. When interview participants were asked what they thought would be the biggest deterrent, the majority (seven out

of ten participants) suggested the time commitment. One participant mentioned cost as the biggest barrier; however, most people reiterated that local governments and related organizations are generally very supportive of education and anticipated that the people who are concerned about cost are likely out of touch with the community and/or are unaware of the grants that are available to them. The two participants who did not mention time or cost said that the biggest challenge would be building the reputation of the program and convincing people that it is a valuable endeavour.

Participants suggested that because there is great diversity among local governments within and outside of BC—in terms of their leadership culture, governance structure, and fiscal calendars—it would be very difficult to develop and apply a “one size fits all” program delivery model. Similar to the survey findings, the interview findings suggest that in order to solicit maximum support and interest, the program must remain as flexible and as accommodating as possible in terms of the application requirements, workload, and delivery. In particular, participants suggested that the universities consider adopting a comprehensive approach to admissions and evaluate applicants based on their current and past work experiences, in addition to any formal academic credentials. Participants also recommended that students have the option to enroll in less than two courses, or withdraw for an entire semester if needed, and therefore not be required to stay “on-track” with their entry cohort. One participant suggested that above all, the University of Victoria and Capilano University should remain competitive with other universities, in terms of the programs that are offered and the ways in which they are offered, but should differentiate this program from other comparable programs that currently exist in some way or another.

While the idea of a masters program was strongly supported by interview participants, a couple of interviewees suggested that the Steering Committee consider ways to increase exposure to and awareness of local government administration at lower levels (i.e., the undergraduate level) as well. Participants proposed that increasing awareness at the undergraduate level might ultimately increase interest in the proposed masters program.

5.3 SUMMARY

The research findings present the local government community’s perceptions of the potential format and delivery of the program, important topics to be covered in the courses, and barriers to enrolment. The survey findings present the perspectives of statutory officers (Chief Administrative Officers, Corporate Administrators, Chief Financial Administrators, and respective deputies) and department heads who are currently working for a local government and are considered potential students of the program. The interview findings illustrate the thoughts and opinions of senior officials who represent related local government agencies and professional associations. Although some interviewees indicated personal interest in enrolling, this group was not anticipated as the primary target audience for the program. The purpose of the

interviews was to provide greater detail on specific dimensions of the survey findings and to help formulate a more complete account of the support for the program (in principle), the mixed delivery model, the program content, the anticipated student profile, and any potential barriers.

Both the survey and interview findings indicate a high level of support for the idea of the program, which is likely in part due to the lack of other existing, comparable programs. As illustrated in Section 4 of this report, the overview of comparable programs, there are very limited opportunities currently available, especially in North America, for graduate-level education specific to local government administration and management. Survey and interview participants perceived the proposed program as greatly needed and as an opportunity for BC to be recognized as a leader in higher-level local government education and professional development. The findings also indicate a high level of support for the hybrid delivery model, provided that the workload is flexible (i.e., students may take less than two courses per semester, if necessary), the face-to-face sessions are shortened, and the sessions are offered during a suitable time of year (i.e., spring, fall). Participants implied that the model is preferable as it has the potential to enhance accessibility, limit requirements for travel and time away from work, and provide a valuable opportunity to network in-person.

The survey findings indicate a reasonably high level of interest in the proposed program. Participants' comments implied that shortening the residency sessions to a maximum of one week, hosting the sessions during a less busy time (i.e., spring), allowing students to take less than two courses per semester or withdraw from a semester if needed, and considering work experience in lieu of or in addition to academic credentials would likely increase their level of interest (from not interested or somewhat interested to very interested) and their ability to enroll. While only a couple of the interview participants conveyed their personal interest in enrolling in program, the remainder indicated a high level of interest in supporting their staff and colleagues to take the program.

The following areas emerged from both the survey and the interviews as the top areas for inclusion in the curriculum: community engagement, public consultation, and conflict management; political/council/staff relations; communications and media; role of local government; resource management; policy analysis, development, and implementation; sustainable community planning and development; leadership, innovation, and change management; strategic planning, and performance management; intergovernmental relations; administrative ethics; project management; business writing; and contract administration. The interviews offered some insight into the ways in which these topics can be effectively taught and delivered by the courses. The methods most frequently identified included bringing in experienced practitioners to instruct the courses (or course components); arranging students into interdisciplinary groups to complete coursework and assignments; and enhancing the face-to-face sessions through the use of case studies, simulations, and social media.

The survey and interview findings indicate that while there might be some people interested in the program who have limited to no experience in local government, most prospective students are likely to have significant local government experience but limited academic qualifications. Students are likely to be geographically spread across BC (and potentially across Canada and elsewhere), which has implications for the proposed delivery model. The research findings indicate that there is no uniformity in terms of participants’ areas of residence and size of local government. Figure 7 below represents the profile of a typical interested applicant, based on the survey and interview findings.

FIGURE 7: TYPICAL APPLICANT PROFILE

Job function	Years of relevant experience	Highest level of education
Mid- to senior-level manager or administrator	Ten years	Diploma or certificate

The two biggest perceived barriers to enrolment are cost and time commitment (for participation in the online courses and in-person sessions). Other barriers include concerns about the prerequisites and the inherent value of the degree. The survey and interviews suggest that local governments and related organizations are very supportive of education and would therefore consider offering funding and support, albeit sometimes limited, to applicants. The findings suggest that cost is likely to be a deciding factor of enrolment and that participants might have to weigh other factors, in relation to cost, before deciding on whether or not to enroll.

The following section discusses the implications of the research findings and will inform the recommendations for the development and implementation of a Masters in Local Government Administration program.

6.0 DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the implications of the findings from the literature review, the jurisdictional scan of comparable programs, the survey, and the interviews with stakeholders. It is organized into two sub-sections to correspond with the research questions. The first sub-section provides a discussion of the rationale and support for a rigorous graduate-level program specific to local government administration. The second sub-section offers a discussion of the ways in which the program can be designed and delivered, taking into account the voiced needs of local government stakeholders, in order to maximize interest, accessibility, and enrolments.

6.1 THE NEED FOR A GRADUATE-LEVEL PROGRAM IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

The review of relevant literature and scan of comparable programs point to the lack of available education and professional development opportunities for local government administrators in Canada and elsewhere. While graduate-level programs in public administration are prevalent both nationally and internationally, these programs offer a limited and insufficient focus on local government administration. Lazenby's (2010) research demonstrates that Master of Public Administration (MPA) programs offer inadequate coverage of the competencies that are essential to local government administration and management, for example, engaging citizens in the decision-making process. His argument is supported by the comprehensive scan of comparable programs, included in this report, which reveals the lack of courses relating to local government topics that are offered by existing graduate-level public administration programs. The scan shows that there seem to be only two graduate-level programs offered in English that focus exclusively on local government administration: the MPA program at Western University in Ontario and the Master of Local Government program at the University of Technology Sydney in Australia. Local government administrators, especially those in BC, are unlikely to enroll in these programs due to geographic and other barriers. Based on the findings of the survey and interviews, this report argues that the curriculum for the proposed Masters in Local Government Administration program, to be offered in BC, should be more distinctly focused on local government administration than these two programs.

The research findings suggest that local government stakeholders in the BC community are interested in and supportive of a program *specific* to local government administration; they acknowledge the lack of formal opportunities for continuing education and professional development in this regard. The majority (60%) of survey participants indicated that they would be very or somewhat interest in pursuing the program. Those who did not indicate that they would be interested have significant experience in the field (20 or more years) and/or already possess a masters degree in a relevant discipline. While they are not personally interested in enrolling, they are supportive of the proposed program in principle. All of the interview participants suggested that there would be a high level of interest in and support for the proposed program from the local government community. This high level of interest and support can be

attributed to the fact that pertinent opportunities are currently severely limited. Given that employment in BC local government has continued to rise over the years and remains higher than employment in the provincial government, there is a need to focus education and professional development efforts on local government administration and provide local government administrators with greater opportunities to enhance their ability and capacity to deliver public services efficiently and equitably.

To differentiate a Masters in Local Government Administration program from other graduate-level programs (i.e., MPA and MBA programs), the curriculum should be specifically designed in a way that will help local government administrators develop the competencies suggested by the literature. The authors whose work is reviewed in Section 3 of this report argue that the roles and expectations of local governments are distinct from other levels of government, namely because they are the most accessible and subject to scrutiny by the public (Getha-Taylor & Morse, 2012; J. Nalbandian & C. Nalbandian, 2002). Local government professionals are expected to meet community needs in accordance with their authorities as governed by the province in which the local government is located; to manage conflict and facilitate collaboration between citizens and bureaucrats; and to bolster citizen engagement and ensure that decisions reflect the needs and wants of communities (Getha-Taylor & Morse, 2012; J. Nalbandian & C. Nalbandian, 2002). While it is recognized that some of these competencies are required at all levels of government, it is argued that the context and functions of local government condition the need for collaboration at the local level, given that local governments are more visible and closely tied to the public and are constrained with respect to their authorities to implement bylaws and policies, without approval from a provincial ministry or federal department. Local governments must therefore be purposely equipped and prepared to solicit buy-in and resolve conflict between stakeholders who do not always share the same interests.

The capacity of local government administrators is constrained by the fact that there are increasingly limited resources (i.e, personnel, money) available to develop programs and deliver services that communities want and need. As such, administrators must learn how to function in partnership with other governments, organizations, and agencies and effectively allocate resources to achieve better results for citizens. The survey and interview findings demonstrate that there is a lack of knowledge and understanding of how to effectively manage resources and plan for and deliver sustainable, affordable community services.

The suggestions, offered by the survey and interview participants, for important areas for inclusion in the curricula, are consistent with what is suggested by the literature. Examples of these areas include: community-based leadership and management; administrative ethics; stakeholder communications, consultation, and engagement; policy analysis; strategic planning and change management; and intergovernmental relations. The survey and interview findings suggest that building competence and confidence in these areas, through higher-level education, could help facilitate decision-making, civic engagement, and community leadership. These findings are consistent with Lazenby's (2010) arguments that formal education, especially when

it integrates an experiential component (e.g., group-based learning), is in effect an important medium for enhancing competence.

6.2 THE ELEMENTS OF A GRADUATE-LEVEL PROGRAM IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

It is important to ensure that the prospective graduate-level program in local government administration is designed and delivered in a way that will maximize interest, accessibility, and enrolments. This requires consideration and understanding of the target audience for the program, including their job function, place of residence, level of experience, and current level of education.

The survey and interview findings illustrate that a typical interested applicant would be a mid- to senior-level administrator, have about ten years of relevant experience, and have a diploma or certificate as their highest level of formal education. These demographic factors are consistent with those of the students of Canadian Executive Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs that are reviewed in Section 4 of this report.

As such, it would be strategic for the University of Victoria and Capilano University to offer an executive-style program rather than a more traditional program. Executive programs typically offer more flexible admission requirements for prospective students; that is, an undergraduate degree is not necessarily required, provided that the applicants have relevant and sufficient work/managerial experience.

An executive program has potential to be as competitive and reputable as a traditional program but would not limit enrolment to only those who have traditionally expected academic credentials. An executive program would provide a unique learning and development opportunity for experienced people who have leadership potential but who would not otherwise be considered. Therefore, in soliciting and evaluating applicants, the University of Victoria and Capilano University should develop requirements for the Executive Masters in Local Government Administration program that are comparable to the executive programs reviewed in this report and should consider level of experience in conjunction with formal education.

A hybrid program delivery model of online courses supplemented by periodic face-to-face sessions is prevalent among existing graduate-level programs in public and business administration. This model is also strongly supported by the BC local government community. It is important that the University of Victoria and Capilano University develop, implement, and market the program in such a way that will attract a high caliber of students and facilitate representation of different local governments in and outside of BC. This involves ensuring an appropriate workload and length and timing of the residency sessions, given that the anticipated student profile is full-time working professionals. The survey findings demonstrate that there is varying opinion in terms of appropriate workload and length of the residencies and the program as a whole; therefore, flexibility is essential in terms of the number of courses per semester and

the time to complete the program. Most of the programs reviewed in this report account for varying circumstances and offer a high degree of flexibility.

Given that the sample of survey respondents is equally distributed across BC, it would be ideal to host the residency sessions at more than one location. Several of the institutions reviewed in Section 4 of this report, for example, the University of Southern California and Florida State University, offer the residencies at the main campus and via satellite campuses in order to increase the likelihood of participation for students across their regions. Over time, the University of Victoria and Capilano University might want to consider partnering with other institutions to expand the reach of the program and offer residencies at multiple locations. Such partnerships might also increase exposure, awareness, and reputation of the program and expand funding options. As the research findings indicate, many prospective students will consider cost as a deciding factor of enrolment and rely on subsidies from their employer or the universities.

The strategies that are employed to deliver a program are important considerations. The survey and interview findings indicate a high level of support for applied, experiential learning, for example, applying coursework to case studies and simulations, completing assignments as part of an interdisciplinary team, and undertaking a capstone project for a real-world client. Most of the programs reviewed in Section 4 integrate comparable types of experiential components into the delivery of their curricula.

6.3 SUMMARY

This discussion of the survey and interviews findings, as they relate to the literature review and the jurisdictional scan, provides support for a Masters in Local Government Administration program to be jointly offered by the University of Victoria and Capilano University. A close examination of the ways in which the research findings echo the arguments presented in the literature and compare to the other existing graduate-level programs suggests that the prospective program should be designed for experienced local government managers. The discussion of the program elements, including the hybrid delivery model and delivery strategies, provides direction for the design of the Masters in Local Government Administration program in order for it to enhance the competence, confidence, and professional development of local government professionals in BC and elsewhere.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides CivicInfo BC, the client for this Masters Project, and the Steering Committee, which includes stakeholders from the University of Victoria, Capilano University, and the BC local government community, with recommendations for the program format, delivery, curriculum, target audience, and admission requirements, as well as additional ways to maximize interest and enrolments. The recommendations are based on the research conducted for this project; that is, the findings of the literature review, the jurisdictional scan of existing comparable programs, the survey, and the interviews. This section is organized into four overarching, general recommendations, each of which is accompanied by several strategies or considerations. The first three recommendations should be considered at the onset of the program development and implementation phases, while the last recommendation is intended to be longer-term and should be considered in expanding and refining the program.

Recommendation 1: Offer a flexible program structure, format, and delivery model

The program must be designed and offered in a way that is flexible and accessible, in order to maximize the ability of interested and qualified students to enroll and complete the program. Below are some recommended strategies to integrate flexibility and enhance accessibility:

1. Offer the program as a mix of online courses and face-to-face sessions, to limit requirements for travel and time away from work but also provide a valuable opportunity for in-person networking.
2. Ensure flexibility in terms of workload so that students can complete the program while working and within two and half to four years (maximum of five years)¹⁵. Table 11 illustrates the proposed format/timeline for students who choose a lighter workload versus a heavier workload.¹⁶
3. Do not require students to progress through and finish the program with their intake “cohort,” as this approach does not suit most students.
4. Offer a program intake in September, to remain consistent with most of the other graduate-level programs offered by the University of Victoria.
5. Host two residency sessions over the course of the program (at the end of April, during the second and fifth semesters) that are five to seven days in length (preferably a mix of

¹⁵The Steering Committee should take into account that the University of Victoria currently allows for up to three terms of leave of absence for students in regular Masters programs. However, it is recommended that the leaves of absence for this program only be granted in very exceptional circumstances, as is the case with other Canadian universities that offer Executive Masters programs, to encourage students to remain on-track.

¹⁶To ensure cost effectiveness for the universities, both streams require students to take the residency sessions at the same time. To ensure a commensurate level of foundational knowledge for the residency sessions, both streams require students to take the same number of core courses per semester, over the course of the program (including two core courses during the semesters that include the residency sessions). In addition, students would be unlikely to complete the program requirements within the allotted timeframe (five years) if they only took one course per semester for every semester.

weekdays and weekends – for example, Wednesday to Sunday, if five days, or Monday to Sunday, if seven days).

6. Host the residency sessions at a location on the Lower Mainland and eventually at supplementary satellite sites elsewhere (i.e., Victoria, Prince George, and Kelowna), in order to increase and accommodate geographical diversity.
7. Enhance the learning experience both in the virtual classroom and during the residency sessions, by arranging students into interdisciplinary teams to complete assignments; integrating social media and case studies and simulations specific to the challenges experienced by local governments; and bringing in experienced, knowledgeable local government practitioners as instructors.
8. Require students to complete and defend a capstone project for a local government client, over the course of two to three semesters.
9. Provide students with the opportunity to share their capstone projects at an existing local government forum – for example, at a workshop during the LGMA annual conference (in May or June)—that many students are likely to attend anyway and to participate in convocation (at the University of Victoria or Capilano University, depending on the location of the conference) around the same time.
10. For the proposed semesters that require students to enroll in two courses (e.g., the semesters that include the residencies), ensure that the two courses are in some way *related* (e.g., stakeholder relations/consultation strategies and intergovernmental/First Nations relations), in order to streamline the curriculum and minimize the workload burden for students.
11. Ensure that the number of required courses and number of credits are consistent with the other masters programs offered by the University of Victoria School of Public Administration¹⁷ (i.e., 19.5 credits; 8 core courses [1.5 each]; 2 elective courses [1.5 each], and a capstone project [4.5]).

¹⁷ Master of Public Administration (MPA), Masters in Dispute Resolution (MADR), and Masters in Community Development (MACD)

TABLE 11: LESSER AND GREATER WORKLOAD STREAMS¹⁸

			Lighter Workload Stream	Heavier Workload Stream
Year 1	Semester 1	Sept-Dec	One core online course (1.5)	One core online course (1.5)
	Semester 2	Jan-April	Two related core online courses (3.0) <i>Residency 1: end of April (5 to 7 days)</i>	Two related core online courses (3.0) <i>Residency 1: end of April (5 to 7 days)</i>
	Semester 3	May-Aug	One core online course (1.5)	One core online course (1.5)
Year 2	Semester 4	Sept-Dec	One core online course (1.5)	One core online course (1.5) One elective online course (1.5)
	Semester 5	Jan-April	Two related core online courses (3.0) <i>Residency 2: end of April (5 to 7 days)</i>	Two related core online courses (3.0) <i>Residency 2: end of April (5 to 7 days)</i>
	Semester 6	May-Aug	One core online courses (1.5)	One core online course (1.5) One elective online course (1.5)
Year 3	Semester 7	Sept-Dec	One elective online course (1.5)	Capstone project (4.5)
	Semester 8	Jan-April	One elective online course (1.5)	Capstone project and defense
	Semester 9	May-Aug	Capstone project (4.5)	OPTIONAL (May/June): Presentation of capstone projects at spring conference (e.g., LGMA annual conference); convocation in Victoria or Vancouver
Year 4	Semester 10	Sept-Dec	Capstone project and defense	---
		May/June	OPTIONAL: Presentation of capstone projects at spring conference (e.g., LGMA annual conference); convocation in Victoria or Vancouver	---

¹⁸ Students in both streams would be required to take the same core courses per semester. Students would be able to switch from the lighter workload stream to the heavier workload stream by taking an elective course, in addition to a core course, in Semester 4 and Semester 6.

Recommendation 2: Offer a program and implement a curriculum that is specific to local government administration and management

The proposed program is appealing to local government stakeholders because it is intended to be focused on local government administration and there are limited opportunities, particularly in Canada, to undertake formal local government education at the graduate level. It is therefore recommended that the University of Victoria and Capilano University offer a distinct, graduate-level program that is explicitly focused on local government administration and management (not a general Masters in Public Administration with local government as an optional area of specialization). The points below are recommendations for the curriculum. It is recommended that the Steering Committee collaborate with the Local Government Division and Board of Examiners at the Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development, and others to ensure that the courses are credentialed and applicable towards the four different levels of local government certification through the Board of Examiners.

1. Focus the core courses in the following topic areas¹⁹:
 - i. Systems and roles of local governments (legislative frameworks, authorities, roles, and responsibilities)
 - ii. Stakeholder relations and consultation strategies (community engagement, public consultation, council/staff relations, communications, media)
 - iii. Community-based leadership and management (innovation, administrative ethics, change management)
 - iv. Policy analysis, development, and implementation
 - v. Strategic planning and performance management
 - vi. Sustainable community planning and development
 - vii. Resource management (finances, personnel)
 - viii. Intergovernmental and First Nations relations
2. Offer possible elective courses in the following topic areas²⁰:
 - i. Project management
 - ii. Business writing and administration (bylaws, contracts, requests for proposals)
 - iii. Research methodologies
 - iv. Urban and regional economics
 - v. Information management and technologies
 - vi. Contemporary policy issues and current topics
 - vii. Emergency management/environmental health and safety
 - viii. Infrastructure/asset management
 - ix. Service delivery

¹⁹ These topic areas were more frequently cited or perceived as more important than the other topic areas, and as such, should be considered as core courses.

²⁰ These courses were not as frequently cited or perceived as important as the other topic areas, and as such, should be considered as elective courses.

Recommendation 3: Adopt a comprehensive yet competitive approach to admissions by offering an Executive Masters in Local Government Administration program

Given that the target audience for the program is relatively experienced local government administrators and managers who want to enhance their competence, it is recommended that the universities offer an executive program rather than a traditional program (with a four-year undergraduate degree as the expected entry credential). An implicit benefit to offering an executive program is the possibility of flexible admission requirements, wherein work experience can compensate for lack of formal academic credentials. Outlined below are some strategies and considerations for offering an executive program:

1. Align admission requirements with those of Canadian executive masters programs (e.g., Executive MBA programs).
2. Evaluate applicants based on academic credentials and professional work experience.
3. Establish a minimum number of years of work experience, including managerial experience, but not a minimum academic requirement for application/enrolment and offer a tiered approach to admissions²¹. For example:
 - i. 15 years of work experience (including 7 years managerial) if the student does not have any formal post-secondary education; or
 - ii. 10 years of work experience (including 5 years managerial) if the student has a diploma or certificate as highest level of education; or
 - iii. 8 years of experience (including 3 years managerial) if the student has undergraduate degree, professional designation, graduate degree, or higher.

Recommendation 4: Develop partnerships to effectively market the program, maximize interest, and expand funding options

While it is advantageous that the program be collaboratively offered by the University of Victoria and Capilano University, the universities will need to solicit buy-in from local government employers, related agencies, the province, and prospective students, within and outside of BC, in order for it to be feasible and sustainable (economically and otherwise) for students and the universities. It is recommended that the universities leverage existing partnerships and collaborate with local, national, and international institutions to strategically market and promote the program. To bolster support and enrolments, the following strategies are recommended:

1. Offer the opportunity for students to complete their capstone project for a local government client and present their project at a large-scale, knowledge-sharing forum, such as the LGMA annual conference.
2. Increase awareness and knowledge of local government administration at the undergraduate level, at both institutions, to enhance interest and employment in local government and thus the likelihood that employees will eventually enroll in the masters program and/or that employers will support students through the program.

²¹It is recommended that the universities facilitate exceptions if and where appropriate.

3. Provide prospective students with comparable opportunities for fellowships, scholarships, and bursaries that are currently offered through the University of Victoria School of Public Administration, Capilano University School of Public Administration, the LGMA, the Municipal Finance Authority, the Board of Examiners, and others.

8.0 CONCLUSION

This report demonstrates a high level of interest in and need for a Masters in Local Government Administration program to be jointly offered by the University of Victoria and Capilano University. It provides recommendations to the client representative and the Steering Committee for the design and delivery of the proposed program, including possible topics that could be covered in the curriculum to meet the needs of local government employees and their organizations.

The literature review sketches the competencies that are specifically required for current and future local government administrators and provides rationale for the ways in which a graduate-level program could cultivate these competencies. The jurisdictional scan of comparable graduate-level programs exposes the lack of higher-level education opportunities that are available to local government administrators. The findings of the survey and the qualitative interviews exemplify significant support for and interest in a Masters in Local Government Administration program. Building on these findings, this report suggests that the University of Victoria and Capilano University offer a hybrid executive program that is specifically designed for experienced local government administrators and managers.

While this report demonstrates the intellectual need for an applied program and the potential for the universities to offer a leading specialized developmental opportunity for local government professionals, it offers limited guidance in terms of implementation. Further exploration of the universities' partnership and logistical factors, for example, faculty resources, tuition and delivery costs, potential funding partners, and ways in which to market the program to guarantee its sustainability is required to build a successful implementation strategy. This report concludes that the University of Victoria and Capilano University have the opportunity to embody a leading partnership and offer a unique policy and administration program that will meet the needs of local governments in BC and beyond.

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10.0 APPENDICES

10.1 APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF COMPARABLE EXECUTIVE MBA PROGRAMS

Online and On-Campus										
Institution	Date of Establishment	# Courses	Delivery method	Approximate Program length	Student Profile	Enrolment	Admission Requirements	In-Take Semester(s)	Tuition (Domestic)	Notes
Queen's University	1994	5 modules + 2 projects (one individual and one international team-based)	Virtual boardroom sessions every other Friday and Saturday (in a select 9 Canadian cities, participants can meet as groups in designated boardrooms; if not, participants attend the boardroom sessions individually via their personal computer); 3 on-campus residencies (August, January, July) in Kingston	16 months	Average 15 years work experience; average late 30s	75-80	No minimum requirements: comprehensive evaluation based on management experience, references, academics, personal interview, potential GMAT	August	\$95,000	Team-based learning: teams of 6-8 people assigned at the beginning of the program for the duration of the program
Athabasca University	1994	Phase 1: 6 core courses; Phase 2: 4 core courses + 3 electives and project or 6 electives	Online; At least 1 residential elective (online work plus one Monday-Friday week residency in Canada or internationally)	2.5-3 years	Average 19 years work experience (nine managerial); average 40 years old	50-120	Undergraduate degree, 3+ years of managerial experience; or Professional designation, 5+ years managerial experience; or 8+ years substantial managerial experience	September, January, or May	\$44,584 (project-based); \$48,865 (course-based)	Cohort approach

Institution	Date of Establishment	# Courses	Delivery method	Approximate Program length	Student Profile	Enrolment	Admission Requirements	In-Take Semester(s)	Tuition (Domestic)	Notes
Royal Roads University	1999	7 modules + 2 projects	Online; 2 on-campus residencies (3 weeks in February, 3 weeks in June; 8am-5pm Monday to Friday)	18 months	Average 15 years work experience; average early 40s	80	Standard admission: undergraduate degree, 7+ years experience (3 managerial); or Flexible admission: 10+ years experience (5 managerial), statement of how experience compensates for lack of academic requirements	January	\$38,680	Cohort approach; Optional international residency (France)

Exclusively On-Campus with Intensive Residency Sessions										
Institution	Date of Establishment	# Courses	Delivery method	Approximate Program length	Student Profile	Enrolment	Admission Requirements	In-Take Semester(s)	Tuition (Domestic)	Notes
University of Calgary/ University of Alberta	1995	20 including major project and 1 elective	On-campus in Edmonton (once per week, alternating Fridays and Saturdays, 8:30am-5pm); 3 one-week residencies at the beginning of each semester	20 months (no summer courses)	Average 15 years work experience; Average 37 years of age	25-30	Undergraduate degree with 3.0 GPA, 7 years work experience; or undergraduate degree with <3.0 GPA, 7 years work experience, GMAT; or 10 years work experience, GMAT	September	\$58,000	10 day international study tour at end of program
University of Regina	2007	16 including international study course and capstone project	On-campus (once per week, alternating Fridays and Saturdays); 2 one-week residencies; 2 weekends on-campus to start the program	20 months	Average 15 years work experience; Average 40 years of age	20-25	Undergraduate degree with 2.67 GPA, 5 years managerial experience; or 7 years of managerial experience	August	\$42,600	
University of Toronto	1983: EMBA 2002: 1-year EMBA	21	On-campus (Friday-Saturday, twice per month); 4 residencies	13 months	Average 12 years work experience (7 managerial); average 38 years old	55-65	Undergraduate degree, 8 years work experience (3 managerial; or 8 years work experience (3 managerial), GMAT with minimum score of 550	September	\$106,000	Optional international exchange elective in lieu of a residential module
Western University	1991	16 (including client project)	On-campus in Toronto (Thursday-Sunday, once per month); 3 residencies in London	12 months	Average 15 years work experience; average 39 years old	55	No minimum requirements: comprehensive evaluation based on experience, references, self-evaluations, academics, potential GMAT	September or February	\$95,000	10 day international study trip

Institution	Date of Establishment	# Courses	Delivery method	Approximate Program length	Student Profile	Enrolment	Admission Requirements	In-Take Semester(s)	Tuition (Domestic)	Notes
York University	2001	20 + 2 residency modules	On-campus (Friday-Sunday, twice per month); 2 residencies (1 in Toronto, 1 in Chicago)	18 months	Average 12 years work experience; average 37 years old	40	Undergraduate degree, 8 years work experience	January	\$115,000	Partnership with Kellogg School of Management in Chicago; 1 week international study trip
McGill University	2008	8 modules	On-campus (Thursday-Sunday, once per month, 8am-5:30pm); 2 residential modules of 7-10 days over course of program (second one is International)	15 months (11 months in class and 4 months on final project)	Average 19 years work experience (13 managerial); average 43 years old	40	Undergraduate degree with 3.0 GPA, 10 years work experience (5 managerial), GMAT	September	\$78,000	

Exclusively On-Campus without Intensive Residency Sessions										
Institution	Date of Establishment	No. Courses	Delivery method	Approximate Program length	Student Profile	Enrolment	Admission Requirements	In-Take Semester(s)	Tuition (Domestic)	Notes
Concordia University	1998	24 including international study trip	On-campus (once per week, alternating Fridays and Saturdays, 8am-5.30pm); mandatory 4-day orientation workshop prior to beginning the program	20 months (15 months of classtime)	Average 15 years work experience; average late 30s	30	Graduate degree or undergraduate degree with 3.0 GPA, 5 years work experience; or undergraduate degree with <3.0 GPA, 5 years work experience, GMAT	September	\$68,000	10 day international study trip near middle of the program
University of Ottawa	Not found	Not found	On-campus (once per week, alternating Fridays and Saturdays)	21 months (17 months of classtime)	Average 15 years work experience; average 38 years old	Not found	Undergraduate degree with 2.67 GPA, 5 years work experience, GMAT encouraged to strengthen application	September	Not found	2 international trips (7-days to California and 9-days to an international destination)
University of Prince Edward Island	2008	14 including final project	On-campus (every second Friday and Saturday)	20 months up to 6 years maximum minimum (no summer courses)	Average 14 years work experience; average 38 years old	20-25	Undergraduate degree with 2.67 GMAT, 3 years work experience; or professional designation with 10 years work experience	September	\$31,700	Specialization required in either Biotechnology Management/ Entrepreneurship or Innovative Management
Saint Mary's University	1992	16	On-campus (once per week, alternating Fridays and Saturdays)	18 months (no summer courses)	Average 10 years work experience; average 38 years old	25	Undergraduate degree, 5 years work experience, GMAT	September	\$45,000	International study tour towards the end of the program

Institution	Date of Establishment	No. Courses	Delivery method	Approximate Program length	Student Profile	Enrolment	Admission Requirements	In-Take Semester(s)	Tuition (Domestic)	Notes
Simon Fraser University	1968	21 including final project	On-campus (every second Friday and Saturday)	20 months	Average 10 years work experience; average 41 years old	35	Undergraduate degree or professional designation, 10 years work experience (4 managerial)	September	\$50,500	Optional international stream where final term courses are offered in 4 intensive sessions at an international destination; Optional international business trip for all students

Exclusively Online										
Institution	Date of Establishment	No. Courses	Delivery method	Approximate Program length	Student Profile	Enrolment	Admission Requirements	In-Take Semester(s)	Tuition (Domestic)	Notes
University of Fredericton	2007	14 including final project	Online; virtual seminars	29 months	Average 15 years work experience; average 42 years old	8-23	Undergraduate degree with 3.0 GPA, 5 years work experience (2 managerial)	November, January, or March	\$24,500	Specialization areas in Global Leadership, Innovation Leadership, Social Enterprise Leadership, Occupational Health

10.2 APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF COMPARABLE GRADUATE-LEVEL PROGRAMS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Institution & Program	Date of Establishment	No. Courses	Delivery Method	Program Length	Student Profile	Enrolment	Admission Requirements	In-Take Semester(s)	Tuition (Domestic)
Western University (MPA, Local Government)	1990	14 core (including capstone)	On-campus (weekdays, weekday evenings, weeklong intensives, consecutive weekends)	FT: 1 year PT: 3 years	FT: directly out of undergraduate, lack of work experience; PT: working professionals	30	<5 years experience: honours undergraduate degree in social sciences with 3.3 GPA and 2 courses in local government/urban studies; 5+ years experience: undergraduate or professional degree but may be waived with statement of how experience compensates for lack of academic qualifications	September (or May for PT)	\$6,641-\$11,068
University of Southern California (MPA, Local Government Management)	1929: MPA; 2011: Online MPA with Local Government Management specialization	7 core; 4 specialization (including capstone)	On-campus (weekday evenings, weekend intensives); Online with required residency component	Online: 2 years (online) On-campus, FT: 2-3 years On-campus, PT: 3-5 years	Pre-service: <2 years experience; In-service: >2 years experience	126 (MPA Total)	<5 years experience: undergraduate degree with 3.0 GPA, above average score on GRE and GMAT; 5+ years experience: undergraduate degree with at least 3.0 GPA; may apply to waive GRE and GMAT requirements	September, January, or May	\$60,355-\$66,424 (all inclusive)

Institution & Program	Date of Establishment	No. Courses	Delivery Method	Program Length	Student Profile	Enrolment	Admission Requirements	In-Take Semester(s)	Tuition (Domestic)
Florida State University (MPA, Local Government Administration)	1947: MPA; 2008: City and County Management	7 core; 6 specialization (including capstone)	MPA Courses: on-campus (weekday evenings, weekend intensives) or online; City and County Management Courses: online with required residency	FT: 1.5-2 years PT: 2.5-3 years	Pre-service: <1 year experience In-service: >1 year experience	Unknown	Undergraduate degree with at least 3.0 GPA, GRE test scores	September, January, or May	\$22,565
Institute of Public Administration (MPA, Local Government Management)	1957	6 core; 3 specialization (including capstone)	Online with required residency	2 years	Working professionals	Unknown	Undergraduate degree	September	\$14,100 (all inclusive)
University of Technology Sydney (Master of Local Government)	2012	5 core; 6 specialization (including capstone)	On-campus (weeklong Intensives); Online	3-4 years	Working professionals	10 to 15	Undergraduate degree and graduate certificate/diploma in local government; or Undergraduate degree and sufficient professional experience in local government	August	\$22,240

10.3 APPENDIX C: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Welcome to the Masters in Local Government Administration Needs Assessment Survey!

The Schools of Public Administration at the University of Victoria and Capilano University are collaborating on developing and delivering a Masters in Local Government Administration program. I am contacting you, on behalf of a Steering Committee, which includes representatives from both universities and the BC local government community, to get your input on the development of a program. Your input will help identify options for the program structure, possible delivery models, and topics that should be covered in the courses to meet the needs of local government employees and organizations. Your responses will be used, in summarized form, to inform a business case to the universities for a Masters in Local Government Administration program. This survey is being sent to current and prospective local government professionals in British Columbia and in other provinces. It will take you about 10 minutes to complete. The survey is divided into sections that cover possible delivery scenarios, options for the program contents, possible program costs, and some general questions about yourself as a local government professional. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary, but I am interested in obtaining as high a response rate as possible to be able to more accurately reflect the preferences of the local government community. Please be assured that all answers you provide will be confidential. Please click 'Next' to begin.

Program Delivery Options

This section presents an option for delivering a joint Masters in Local Government Administration, being considered by Capilano University and the University of Victoria, and asks you to comment on it. This option has been discussed in a preliminary way by members of a Steering Committee. The Masters in Local Government Administration would be delivered by both Schools of Public Administration at the University of Victoria and Capilano University. Below is a point form summary of a proposed preliminary program scenario (keep in mind you will be able to comment on this scenario shortly):

- The program would be a mix of face-to-face sessions and online courses;
- Students would be expected to take two courses per semester;
- Students would be able to complete the whole program in seven semesters if they stay on track;
- The program would be designed and delivered so that each entering class of students would be a cohort that stays together;
- Students would take the same required courses (eight in total) together but would be able to take two electives of their choice;
- The capstone of the program would be a Masters Project for a local government client and that project would take two semesters to complete;
- The Masters Project would be defended in an oral exam;

- The program would start in May and during the first semester, students would do some online coursework and then come together for ten days of intensive face-to-face coursework;
- Some semesters following the first one would consist of online coursework only (two courses per semester) and some semesters would be like the first semester where the whole class gets together;
- Over the course of the whole program (seven semesters), the students would meet in three of those semesters (beginning, middle and end of the program); and
- The face-to-face sessions would occur either in the Lower Mainland or at the University of Victoria.

The following questions focus on several different features of the program outlined on the previous page. Please respond to each question, and where appropriate, offer your comments.

How supportive are you of the timing of program (starting in the summer and taking seven semesters to complete)?

- Very supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Not supportive

Comments:

How supportive are you of the proposed mix of face-to-face sessions on-campus and online semesters, as outlined on the previous page?

- Very supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Not supportive

Comments:

How supportive are you of the proposed cohort approach (everyone takes two courses per semester and finishes at the same time, in seven semesters)?

- Very supportive

- Somewhat supportive
- Not supportive

Comments:

Now, when you look at the whole program as described here (keep in mind that this a preliminary scenario), what is your overall reaction to it?

- Very supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Not supportive

Comments:

What do you like about the proposed program?

What do you think needs to be changed about the proposed program?

Your Own Interest

To what extent would you be interested in pursuing the Masters in Local Government Administration program, if it was available to you?

- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not interested

Program Design Options

Below are 13 possible areas that have been identified so far for courses in the program. How important do you think each one is for your personal and professional growth?

	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important
Leadership and management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Human resource management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic planning and performance management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research methodologies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial management and accountability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administrative ethics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local government law	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Policy analysis, development, and implementation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intergovernmental and First Nations relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information management and technologies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Urban and regional economics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contemporary policy issues and current topics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please list any other areas that you feel are important for local governments:

Face-to-Face Sessions

If intensive face-to-face sessions were to take place in the program, what do you think is the most reasonable, feasible arrangement for the face-to-face sessions, given your current situation?

- One week of day sessions (e.g., 9am-4pm, Monday to Friday)
- Two weeks of day sessions (e.g., 9am-4pm, Monday to Friday)
- One weekend (e.g., 9am-4pm, Saturday and Sunday)
- Two subsequent weekends (e.g., 9am-4pm, Saturday and Sunday)
- Other (please indicate): _____

- None of the above

Which of the following months would the intensive face-to-face sessions work best for you?

- July
 - August
 - December
 - April
 - Other (please indicate): _____
 - None of the above
-

Approximate Program Tuition Costs

The only way that the Masters in Local Government Administration program can be offered in the current fiscal environment is on a cost recovery basis. That means that the approximate tuition costs would be \$20,000 to \$25,000 in total. As a rough comparison, most executive Masters of Business Administration programs charge between \$30,000 and \$50,000 tuition. The Masters of Public Management at Dalhousie University (a mixed online and face-to-face program) charges about \$24,000 tuition for their program.

Please comment on this cost and any effects it would have on your interest in the program.

Would your employer offer financial help if you decided to take the Masters in Local Government Administration?

- Yes
- Yes but limited
- No
- I don't know

What do you think would be the biggest deterrent to your enrolling in and completing a Masters in Local Government Administration?

- Cost
- Lack of time to do online course work

- Time away from work to participate in face-to-face sessions
 - Time away from family to participate in face-to-face sessions
 - No deterrents
 - Other (please indicate): _____
-

About Yourself

Which of the following best represents the type of organization that you currently work for?

- Municipality
- Regional District or Islands Trust
- First Nation
- Improvement District
- Provincial Government, Crown Corporation, or Federal Government
- Private Sector
- Other (please indicate): _____
- I am not currently employed

Which of the following best represents your current job with local government?

- Chief Administrative Officer or Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
- Corporate Administrator or Deputy Corporate Administrator
- Financial Administrator or Deputy Financial Administrator
- Engineering
- Planning, Building, or Development Services
- Public Works and Operations (including recycling and water/sewer/solid waste)
- Protective Services
- Community Services or Parks, Recreation, and Culture
- Information Technology
- Administration or Administrative Support
- Other (please indicate): _____

- I do not work for local government
- I am not currently employed

About how many years of experience do you have in local government?

- 0-4
- 5-9
- 10-14
- 15-19
- 20+

What is your highest level of education to date?

- High school diploma or less
- Partially completed undergraduate/diploma/certificate program
- Diploma/certificate program
- Undergraduate degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate degree or post doctorate studies
- Other (please indicate): _____

Where do you live?

- British Columbia: South Vancouver Island
- British Columbia: North and Central Vancouver Island
- British Columbia: North Coast
- British Columbia: Peace River
- British Columbia: North Central/Cariboo
- British Columbia: Lower Mainland
- British Columbia: Thompson/Shuswap/Columbia
- British Columbia: Okanagan Valley/Similkameen
- British Columbia: West Kootenay/Boundary
- British Columbia: East Kootenay/Rocky Mountain
- Canadian province other than BC: Yukon

- Canadian province other than BC: Alberta
- Canadian province other than BC: Saskatchewan
- Canadian province other than BC: Manitoba
- Canadian province other than BC: Northwest Territories
- Canadian province other than BC: Nunavut
- Canadian province other than BC: Ontario
- Canadian province other than BC: Quebec
- Canadian province other than BC: Nova Scotia
- Canadian province other than BC: Newfoundland & Labrador
- Canadian province other than BC: Prince Edward Island
- Canadian province other than BC: New Brunswick
- Outside of Canada:

What is the approximate population for the area in which you live?

- Greater than 25,000
- 10,000 to 24,999
- 9,999 to 5,000
- Less than 5,000

10.4 APPENDIX D: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS OF CLOSED-ENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS

10.4.1 SUPPORT AND INTEREST

Level of support for timing of the program	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	137	46.0%
Somewhat supportive	142	47.7%
Not supportive	16	5.4%
No answer	3	1.0%
Total	298	100.0%

Level of support for mix of face-to-face and online	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	193	64.8%
Somewhat supportive	89	29.9%
Not supportive	14	4.7%
No answer	2	0.7%
Total	298	100.0%

Level of support for cohort approach	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	125	41.9%
Somewhat supportive	139	46.6%
Not supportive	32	10.7%
No answer	2	0.7%
Total	298	100.0%

Overall reaction	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	183	61.4%
Somewhat supportive	110	36.9%
Not supportive	4	1.3%
No answer	1	0.3%
Total	298	100.0%

Interest in pursuing the program	Frequency	Percentage
Very interested	101	33.9%
Somewhat interested	120	40.3%
Not interested	76	25.5%
No answer	1	0.3%
Total	298	100.0%

10.4.2 PROGRAM CONTENT

Leadership and management	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	1	0.3%
Not very important	3	1.0%
Somewhat important	29	9.7%
Very important	264	88.6%
No answer	1	0.3%
Total	298	100.0%

Human resource management	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	1	0.3%
Not very important	12	4.0%
Somewhat important	125	41.9%
Very important	159	53.4%
No answer	1	0.3%
Total	298	100.0%

Strategic planning and performance management	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	2	0.7%
Not very important	8	2.7%
Somewhat important	75	25.2%
Very important	211	70.8%
No answer	2	0.7%
Total	298	100.0%

Research methodologies	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	10	3.4%
Not very important	98	32.9%
Somewhat important	151	50.7%
Very important	35	11.7%
No answer	4	1.3%
Total	298	100.0%

Financial management and accountability	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	2	0.7%
Not very important	17	5.7%
Somewhat important	107	35.9%
Very important	170	57.0%
No answer	2	0.7%
Total	298	100.0%

Administrative ethics	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	0	0.0%
Not very important	16	5.4%
Somewhat important	95	31.9%
Very important	185	62.1%
No answer	2	0.7%
Total	298	100.0%

Local government law	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	0	0.0%
Not very important	9	3.0%
Somewhat important	98	32.9%
Very important	190	63.8%
No answer	1	0.3%
Total	298	100.0%

Policy analysis, development, and implementation	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	0	0.0%
Not very important	9	3.0%
Somewhat important	99	33.2%
Very important	186	62.4%
No answer	4	1.3%
Total	298	100.0%

Intergovernmental and First Nations relationships	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	4	1.3%
Not very important	33	11.1%
Somewhat important	147	49.3%
Very important	111	37.2%
No answer	3	1.0%
Total	298	100.0%

Information management and technologies	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	5	1.7%
Not very important	59	19.8%
Somewhat important	173	58.1%
Very important	56	18.8%
No answer	5	1.7%
Total	298	100.0%

Community planning	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	3	1.0%
Not very important	36	12.1%
Somewhat important	132	44.3%
Very important	125	41.9%
No answer	2	0.7%
Total	298	100.0%

Urban and regional economics	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	2	0.7%
Not very important	37	12.4%
Somewhat important	168	56.4%
Very important	88	29.5%
No answer	3	1.0%
Total	298	100.0%

Contemporary policy issues and current topics	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	3	1.0%
Not very important	21	7.0%
Somewhat important	124	41.6%
Very important	146	49.0%
No answer	4	1.3%
Total	298	100.0%

10.4.3 FACE-TO-FACE SESSIONS

Most feasible arrangement for face-to-face	Frequency	Percentage
One week of day sessions (e.g., 9am-4pm, Monday to Friday)	132	44.3%
Two weeks of day sessions (e.g., 9am-4pm, Monday to Friday)	13	4.4%
One weekend (e.g., 9am-4pm, Saturday and Sunday)	59	19.8%
Two subsequent weekends (e.g., 9am-4pm, Saturday and Sunday)	53	17.8%
Other	30	10.1%
None of the above	8	2.7%
No answer	3	1.0%
Total	298	100.0%

Best month for face-to-face	Frequency	Percentage
July	39	13.1%
August	81	27.2%
December	20	6.7%

April	96	32.2%
Other	56	18.8%
None of the above	4	1.3%
No answer	2	0.7%
Total	298	100.0%

10.4.4 COST AND BARRIERS

Financial help from employer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	35	11.7%
Yes but limited	145	48.7%
No	24	8.1%
I don't know	91	30.5%
No answer	3	1.0%
Total	298	100.0%

Biggest deterrent	Frequency	Percentage
Cost	90	30.2%
Lack of time to do online course work	47	15.8%
Time away from work to participate in face-to-face sessions	42	14.1%
Time away from family to participate in face-to-face sessions	17	5.7%
No deterrents	21	7.0%
Other	80	26.8%
No answer	1	0.3%
Total	298	100.0%

10.4.5 DEMOGRAPHICS

Organization type	Frequency	Percentage
Municipality	230	77.2%
Regional District or Islands Trust	53	17.8%
First Nation	4	1.3%
Improvement District	0	0.0%
Provincial Government, Crown Corporation, or Federal Government	3	1.0%
Private Sector	2	0.7%
Other	5	1.7%
I am not currently employed	0	0.0%
No answer	1	0.3%
Total	298	100.0%

Current job	Frequency	Percentage
Chief Administrative Officer or Deputy Chief Administrative Officer	75	25.2%
Corporate Administrator or Deputy Corporate Administrator	49	16.4%
Financial Administrator or Deputy Financial Administrator	51	17.1%
Engineering	6	2.0%
Planning, Building, or Development Services	23	7.7%
Public Works and Operations (including recycling and water/sewer/solid waste)	7	2.3%
Protective Services	10	3.4%
Community Services or Parks, Recreation, and Culture	14	4.7%
Information Technology	3	1.0%
Administration or Administrative Support	22	7.4%
Other	30	10.1%
I do not work for local government	7	2.3%
I am not currently employed	0	0.0%
No answer	1	0.3%
Total	298	100.0%

Years of experience	Frequency	Percentage
0 to 4	22	7.4%
5 to 9	60	20.1%
10 to 14	54	18.1%
15 to 19	57	19.1%
20+	104	34.9%
No answer	1	0.3%
Total	298	100.0%

Highest level of education	Frequency	Percentage
High school diploma or less	1	0.3%
Partially completed undergraduate/diploma/certificate program	16	5.4%
Diploma/certificate program	97	32.6%
Undergraduate degree	81	27.2%
Master's degree	56	18.8%
Doctorate degree or post doctorate studies	1	0.3%
Other	44	14.8%
No answer	2	0.7%
Total	298	100.0%

Area of residence	Frequency	Percentage
BC: South Vancouver Island	44	14.8%
BC: North and Central Vancouver Island	31	10.4%
BC: North Coast	9	3.0%
BC: Peace River	10	3.4%
BC: North Central/Cariboo	15	5.0%
BC: Lower Mainland	76	25.5%
BC: Thompson/Shuswap/Columbia	24	8.1%
BC: Okanagan Valley/Similkameen	39	13.1%
BC: West Kootenay/Boundary	8	2.7%
BC: East Kootenay/Rocky Mountain	9	3.0%
Outside BC: Alberta	2	0.7%
Outside Canada	0	0.0%
No answer	31	10.4%
Total	298	100.0%

Approximate population for area of residence	Frequency	Percentage
Greater than 25,000	171	57.4%
10,000 to 24,999	49	16.4%
9,999 to 5,000	17	5.7%
Less than 5,000	61	20.5%
No answer	0	0.0%
Total	298	100.0%

10.5 APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name:		Location:	
Title:		Start Time:	
Organization:		End Time:	
Date:		Signed Consent Form Received:	

Introduction and Overview

- Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. The purpose of this research is to understand the need for and interest in a Masters in Local Government Administration program that will be jointly offered by the University of Victoria and Capilano University. Your responses will help inform the program structure, design, delivery method, and possible topics that will be covered in the courses to meet the needs of local government employees and organizations.
- You can expect that this session will last approximately 30-40 minutes. Since I will not be audio recording the interview, I will be taking notes to record and ensure the accuracy of your responses. I would like to remind you that you are free to decline answering any questions that you do not wish to answer and that you may withdraw from the session at any time, without explanation or consequence. Do you have any questions before we begin?
- The University of Victoria and Capilano University have anchored a steering committee to develop a proposed Masters in Local Government Administration program, which will be jointly offered by both universities. The steering committee envisions the program as being delivered as a hybrid mix of online courses and face-to-face sessions. Initially, the steering committee thought that all students would take two online courses per semester, together as a cohort; participate in three, 10-day face-to-face sessions, which would take place at UVic or on the Lower Mainland; and be able to complete the program, including a final capstone project, in seven semesters. What we discovered, through a web-based survey that was completed by statutory officers and program managers in BC, was that many people perceived the proposed program structure as too inflexible and considered two courses per semester and the length of the face-to-face sessions as impractical, given their other personal and professional commitments. For the most part, though, people seemed supportive of mixing both online courses with in-person sessions.

TOPIC AREA/QUESTIONS	NOTES
Overall Opinion	
<p>What is your overall reaction to the proposed mixed delivery model?</p> <p>What elements do you like about the proposed program?</p> <p>What elements do you think need to be changed or further considered to maximize interest and enrolment in the program?</p>	
Interest and Support	
<p>What do you think would be the perceived level of interest in and support for the program, particularly from those in your organization?</p>	
<p>Who do you envision, within your organization, as potential students of this program? [age, job title/level, years of experience, level of education]</p> <p>Based on the characteristics of those who you think would be interested, what do you think about offering an Executive Masters program rather than a regular program?</p>	
<p>To what extent would your organization be interested and willing to support those who want to take the program? [financial support, education leave]</p>	
Skills and Competencies	
<p>What do you think are some of the skills or competencies that are or will be needed to manage the challenges that you think local governments and your organization, specifically, are currently experiencing and that should be considered in developing the curricula?</p> <p>What do you think are some important considerations in effectively “teaching” and instilling these skills/competencies throughout the program?</p>	

Program Structure and Delivery

If intensive face-to-face sessions were to take place in the program, how do you envision that they be offered? [day sessions, weekend sessions, a mix; location]

Which months do you think would work best?

What do you think would be the benefits of the face-to-face sessions? The challenges?

Potential Barriers

What do you think would be the biggest barriers to enrolment? [cost, lack of interest, lack of time to do course work, time away from work/family]

Do you have any other suggestions that you think are important to consider for the structure, design, and delivery of the program?