

## **Michael Penny, ICMA-CM, MPA**

### **Executive Biography**

For more than two decades, Michael Penny has exemplified the ideals of leadership, collaboration, partnership, and teamwork as the administrative manager for both large and small municipalities across Colorado. His passion and dedication to building robust communities that address the critical needs of citizens, businesses, and industry is evidenced by the strong footprint Michael has left in each community he has touched.

Michael's career path is marked with success through significant contributions to local government as a municipal manager, consultant, and private sector strategist. Michael currently serves as the City Manager for the City of Castle Pines.

His prior experience includes roles as the Vice President of Client Services for Brown and Caldwell (2016 to 2017), City Manager for the City of Littleton, Colorado (2011 to 2016), Town Manager for the Town of Frisco, Colorado (2004 to 2011) and City Manager for the City of Ouray, Colorado (2002 to 2004).

#### **City of Castle Pines (2018 to Present)**

Michael was unanimously appointed as the City Manager of Castle Pines in April 2018 after serving as the Interim Manager for just over two months. Incorporated in 2008, the City of Castle Pines (population 11,000) is one of the southernmost municipalities in the Denver metro area, and is experiencing tremendous residential and commercial growth. Michael oversees the administration of a \$6.5M annual budget and a staff of eight, including the Community Development Director, Public Works Director, City Clerk, CFO/HR Director, City Planners, and other administrative personnel.

Upon appointment, the 7-member City Council tasked Michael with developing a strong, single identity for Castle Pines, an area initially established as a series of homeowners associates in unincorporated Douglas County. Achieving this goal would require extensive strategic planning and forward-thinking insight to design and deploy programs and services that meet the overreaching strategic vision of the City Council and on behalf of the community.

Most notably, this necessitated a change to the City's governance structure that would allow the community to adopt policy that directly address the unique culture and values of the City. This required Michael to spearhead the strategic and tactical management of an initiative to transition Castle Pines from a Statutory City to a Home Rule City. This change of structure will allow City Staff – on behalf of the City Council – to implement new ordinances and policies that will make the community an autonomous entity, allowing for better definition of the City's unique mission, vision and values.

Beyond defining the strategic vision for Castle Pine's future, Michael made efforts to improve the City's budget to a more robust reporting format that better allocates resources to top-tier priorities while ensuring adherence to GFOA standards. Additionally, he created new, compliant personnel policies, and oversaw the hiring of two key staff members to round out a small, but highly effective, executive team.

In an effort to build community engagement and input, Michael deployed the "Engage Castle Pines" website that allows citizens to provide direct feedback and ideas directly to city government officials, and has successfully increased community participation. He also guided the elevation of the City's public profile by leading efforts to revamp the City logo, and eventually, to guide the installation of new, highly visible road signs at the entrances along I-25 and on local street signs.

#### **Brown & Caldwell (2016 to 2017)**

In June of 2016, Michael accepted a private sector position as the Vice President of Client Services for Brown and Caldwell, an environmental engineering firm. Leveraging his experience and extensive network of public sector contacts, Michael identified nearly \$17M in potential partnerships for the firm. Though the position was a deviation from his path of nearly 20 years as a municipal manager, it provided an opportunity for him to maintain the strong connection with his City/Town Manager colleagues he desired as

well as focus on the needs of his family which included avoiding relocation outside of the metro area. He served Brown and Caldwell as a full-time employee through November 2017 before refocusing his efforts to pursue a position as a City Manager in the public sector.

### **City of Littleton (2011 to 2016)**

In 2011, Michael accepted the position of City Manager for the City of Littleton, Colorado (population 44,000), a full-service suburban municipality with a 7-member City Council, 500 employees, and a \$100M budget. As the City Manager, Michael worked closely with senior staff members and City Council to develop strategic priorities for the City in the areas of economic development, housing, community development, and intergovernmental relations.

Within a short time on the job, Michael recognized that the City faced numerous issues, including operational inefficiencies within City service delivery, an outdated strategic plan, low employee morale and engagement, and numerous pending economic development opportunities. Starting internally, he implemented an inclusive approach to leadership and management. The approach empowered employees across the organization to identify and integrate new process improvements that proactively helped meet the needs of the community and City Council. Additionally, to drive service delivery and customer service, Michael initiated Denver Peak Academy training for over 30 employees within the organization. The outcomes from the program are still visible in the City in the form of streamlined processes and best practices, including the City's One-Stop Shop that reduced wait time and accessibility of permits.

Michael extended his collaborative management into the overall strategic vision of the City of Littleton. He worked with Council to develop the City of Littleton's first written comprehensive goals and objectives that resulted in a complete organizational restructuring and built a framework for identifying ongoing priorities. Michael also led the update of a 30-year-old Community Plan that raised the threshold for residential and commercial permits to decade-high levels.

An advocate of strong community and intergovernmental partnerships, Michael successfully rebuilt strong alliances with community fire partners and neighboring governmental entities. These relationships ensured fair and transparent contract negotiations and consensus among all stakeholders regarding operational processes.

Michael also worked diligently on numerous economic development and urban renewal initiatives that supported the Council's strategic vision. These included efforts that brought a Breckenridge Brewery and its associated destination value to the City. Michael also championed efforts to retain and redevelop a shopping center anchored by a King Soopers that helped maintain a key parcel with high-quality retail and neighborhood services.

### **Town of Frisco (2004 to 2011)**

In 2004, Michael was recruited by the Town of Frisco, Colorado, to become its Town Manager. Frisco lies in the heart of the Rocky Mountains and is a central community hub supporting numerous recreational opportunities located within close proximity to the Town. Frisco is governed by a 7-member elected Town Council and Mayor, a \$17M annual budget, and 67 full-time and 100+ seasonal employees. Capitalizing on the impact of regional tourism was an important priority to the Town, and ensuring that adequate housing, employment, and community services were available for citizens was a parallel focus area. Michael's leadership guided the implementation and development of numerous key projects.

Specifically, Michael championed the development of a master plan for the Frisco Peninsula, which included the build out of the Frisco Adventure Park, a \$6M recreation area featuring a tubing hill, alpine courses, a BMX park, day lodge, and other amenities. Despite a looming economic recession, Michael spearheaded intensive community outreach initiatives to gather support for a bonding issue and rallied the Town Council and other stakeholders around a project that carried major risks, but also held the potential for high reward by creating a pinned destination for Frisco that transcended its status as a "pass through" community for tourists traveling to other mountain activities. The project also resulted in over \$1M in new

revenue to the Town.

A strong community advocate, Michael secured a \$1M federal grant to fund improvements to the West Main business district, which led to significant private redevelopment along the corridor. He also guided all public processes related to an initially controversial affordable housing project that called for the buildout of 72 housing units on a Town-owned parcel of land that had been unofficially adopted as an open space park and recreation area. Michael worked tirelessly to rally community support for the project, which eventually gained acceptance. The Colorado Chapter of the American Planning bestowed its 2010 Excellence Award for Outstanding Planning Project for the project which was coined "Town of Frisco Peak One Parcel: Vision to Neighborhood." A testament to the quality of the development, several of the newly seated council members established residency within the Peak One Parcel.

During his tenure, Michael also oversaw a very contentious public process on a nine-acre parcel owned by the Town. Following a failed ballot measure that would have approved the construction for a Home Depot on an empty parcel framing a high-end housing development, he was able to secure a commercial development that included a Whole Foods Market, a hospital, and other retail and community services – a project that was wholly supported by the community and secured long-term financial impacts that will drive sales tax revenues for years to come.

While at Frisco, Michael established his presence as a regional and statewide leader. He played a key role as the Chairman of the I-70 Coalition tasked with partnering with CDOT to develop a consensus-based solution for I-70 into the mountains and participated in negotiations with Denver Water concerning the Blue River decree. Michael served Frisco until resigning to accept the position of City Manager at the City of Littleton in 2011.

#### **Town of Ouray (2002 to 2004)**

Michael's first experience as a municipal administrator began in 2002 when he was hired by the City of Ouray, Colorado, as its City Administrator. The City – located in the heart of the San Juan Mountains – is governed by a 7-member elected City Council and Mayor and employs over 25 full time and 100+ seasonal employees under a \$4M annual budget. Recognizing the importance of maintaining the City's heritage while also providing critical infrastructure upgrades and community services, Michael successfully lobbied for millions of dollars in federal grants and earmarks for much-needed street and water infrastructure improvements. Michael also understood the importance of well-timed, and well-placed economic development opportunities, and was proactive in facilitating meetings with community leaders, developers, and citizens to define parameters and goals for reaching consensus and support for long-term strategies and plans. Michael served Ouray for two years, until accepting the position as Frisco's Town Manager.

Michael began his career with the City of Boulder. He rapidly advanced to the position of Development Review Manager, where he oversaw all aspects of the permitting and development review process. Understanding the need for efficiency and clarity of process, Michael quickly focused on customer service, and worked to implement proactive approaches to streamline review processes that enabled quicker and more timely approval for private and public development community projects.

During his prestigious career, Michael has held numerous leadership positions that provided significant opportunity to influence policy for groundbreaking municipal policies throughout the state. He held leadership roles on the I-70 Corridor Coalition, The Colorado Municipal League, the Colorado City/County Manager's Association, and the Denver Regional Council of Governments. He was also appointed by former Gov. Bill Ritter as a member of the State Transportation Finance and Implementation Panel.

#### **Early Career & Education**

Michael spent most of his younger years in Boulder before earning a Bachelor of Science degree in

Criminal Justice from California State University - Long Beach. While in school, he worked for the Signal Hill Police Department, where he had the opportunity to work closely with the Police Chief, the Mayor, and other community leaders – an experience that initiated his passion for public service. After graduation, he moved back to Colorado and began his career with the City of Boulder. He also holds a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree from the University of Colorado – Denver.

In addition to his bachelor and master's degrees, Michael received a certificate in State and Local Government Leadership from the Harvard Kennedy School in 2008. He is a member of the International City/County Management Association where he earned status as a Credential Manager, and currently serves on the Credentialing Board and the Leadership Advisory Board. Locally, he is a member of the Colorado City/County Management Association and serves on the Ethics Review Committee for the association.

Michael's passion for community and mentorship is also noted in his regular role as a Lecturer at the University of Colorado-Denver School of Public Administration.

A strong advocate of work/life balance, Michael enjoys experiencing all the seasonal outdoor amenities afforded by the state of Colorado in the company of his family – his wife Lisa, daughter Anna, and stepson Garret. The Pennys enjoy traveling to exotic lands and share a passion for scuba diving.

Connect with Michael at [www.linkedin.com/in/michael-penny](http://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-penny)