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**Marshall City Administrator Sharon Hanson Named Winner of
2026 Dr. Robert A. Barrett Award**

(May 1, 2026—St. Paul, MN) Sharon Hanson, City of Marshall city administrator, has been selected as the recipient of the 2026 Dr. Robert A. Barrett Award for Management Excellence, presented by the Minnesota City/County Management Association (MCMA). The Barrett Award is MCMA’s highest honor and recognizes outstanding service to the profession of local government management.

Hanson, who has served as Marshall’s city administrator for eight years, exemplifies the highest level of professional competence, leadership, and commitment to local government. As noted in her nomination, “Sharon Hanson’s career reflects these principles in action,” demonstrating excellence in management, trusted leadership, and a strong commitment to advancing the profession.

In Marshall, Hanson has led complex and high-profile initiatives, most notably the Marshall Aquatic Park project. According to her nomination, Hanson was instrumental in securing legislative authorization for a local sales tax, followed by a successful public referendum and guided the project through planning, design, and construction. These efforts required extensive coordination and engagement, which she led “with clarity, persistence, and professionalism.”

Beyond capital projects, Hanson has successfully led union negotiations, managed sensitive community issues, advanced grant-writing initiatives, and pursued Economic Development Authority opportunities, while also playing a key role in coordinating flood and storm recovery efforts.

A strong communicator and community connector, Hanson regularly meets with community members and business leaders and launched the Citizens Academy to increase government transparency. Outside of city hall, she has served as an instructor at Southwest Minnesota State University’s Gold College and contributes to local media, reflecting her belief that “informed communities and transparent communication are foundational to effective local government.”

Hanson is also deeply committed to mentoring future leaders. She has hired and mentored a variety of summer interns, providing hands-on experience, professional guidance, and exposure to municipal management. She also actively supports professional organizations that strengthen the field by serving as a board member for the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities’ and League of Minnesota Cities’ boards of directors.

Prior to her tenure in Marshall, Hanson served as Pipestone County Administrator, where she received the Joe Ries Excellence in County Management Award. Her experience across both city and county government highlights “a long-standing record of respected leadership” and a consistent impact across communities.

As noted in the nomination, Hanson’s leadership continues to inspire confidence among staff, council members, peers, and the public, and she is widely regarded as someone who consistently delivers results.

The Dr. Robert A. Barrett Award for Management Excellence is selected by a committee of MCMA members. Recipients demonstrate respected leadership, serve as role models in the profession, and support the advancement of local government through outreach and engagement.

MCMA is the professional and educational organization for appointed management executives and assistants serving cities, counties, and other local governments in Minnesota. MCMA is a state association affiliate of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), headquartered in Washington, D.C.