

League of Arizona Cities AND Towns | 2014 IN REVIEW



It has been another great year for the League. We enjoyed success at the Legislature, hosted a great annual conference in Phoenix, answered thousands of calls, held classes and created educational opportunities for members, as well as gave updates to city and town councils. We have had the satisfaction of working together to provide the very best and most efficient services to our residents. Nearly 80 percent of Arizonans live in a city or town, and municipal government provides the services that are most-used on a daily basis by more than five million people in our communities. We thank you for the opportunity to work with you over the past year, and the opportunity to look back at some of the activities we were engaged in.

18 Million *Approximate number of dollars cities and towns would have lost without amendments to SB 1413, the bill eliminating the TPT tax on electricity and gas used in manufacturing*

Legislative Advocacy

The League reached out to our members throughout the session with weekly Monday legislative calls so that city officials could hear directly about the bills that had a direct impact on daily operations. Additionally, the League Officers and Executive Committee held regular meetings to update our strategies and design successful advocacy programs. City intergovs and other staff also met weekly to review committee hearings, discuss amendments and count votes. The weekly Legislative Bulletin contained reports on legislative activity each week and linked to the "Legislative Bill Monitoring" tab on the League's website, where all the bills of interest to cities and towns are regularly updated. Overall, it was a generally positive session.

1,205 *Number of bills the League tracked during the 2014 legislative session*

Throughout the year, League staff and other city officials have been deeply involved in the overwhelming task of implementing TPT reform

from HB 2111 in the 2013 session. The bill required changes to auditing, administration and construction taxes. These changes are enormously complex and require extensive engagement with state agencies such as the Department of Revenue and Department of Administration, as well as the Governor's office. Some aspects of the reform are progressing more rapidly than others, and we continue to closely monitor systems to assure they will be fully functional once the transition is completed.

19 *Number of weekly legislative update calls conducted by League staff each Monday morning during the session*

A bill that had the potential to be financially harmful was SB 1413 which eliminated the state and local TPT on electricity and gas used in manufacturing. The original version of the bill preempted local TPT taxes as well as franchise and right-of-way fees and did not include an adequate definition of manufacturing.

Working with Governor Brewer and the Legislature, the bill was amended to allow cities and towns to have the choice of whether they wanted to eliminate the tax, and also made the definitions much tighter. Those changes preserved tens of millions of dollars in city and town revenue.

57 *Average number of call-ins for each weekly legislative call*

Other significant legislative activities included:

- The passage of a bill allowing full recovery for damages from those convicted of posting graffiti. This has been a multi-year League Resolution.
- A one-year change to the way municipal elections are conducted, resulting in cost savings and a clear definition of winners and losers in council and mayoral races. We hope to make the change permanent next year.
- Defeat of several proposals that would have preempted local authority or would have imposed additional regulations on city government. See the full report of legislation impacting cities and towns in the New Laws Report under the "Legislative Bill Monitoring" tab on our website, www.azleague.org.



2014 Annual Conference

The 2014 Annual Conference was held in downtown Phoenix at the Sheraton Hotel. The event began with the leading candidates for Arizona Governor participating in a live 90-minute debate that was hosted by Arizona Horizon's Ted Simons and televised live on the Internet. Other program highlights included conversations with a group of mayors from Sonora, Mexico, the legislative awards lunch featuring US Senator John McCain, dozens of breakout sessions on many popular topics, a record number of corporate sponsors, the lively Showcase of Cities and Towns, and the annual meeting of the League Resolutions Committee. More than 1,100 delegates attended this year's conference, including 100 high school age leaders who sit on city and town youth councils and advisory committees. The 2015 conference will be held in Tucson, August 18-21 at the JW Marriott Starr Pass.



1,100+

Number of delegates at
League Annual Conference
in Phoenix

8,000+

Number of inquiry calls and general questions
league staff receives each year

Technical Assistance and Inquiry Service

One of the unique benefits of being a part of the League is the access to information about municipal best-practices and technical information that is available nowhere else. In 2014, League staff responded to more than 8,000 inquiries from members, the news media and the public. Questions range from the basic procedural questions on running a city or town to general trends about local government, legislative analysis, model ordinances, and many other topics. Most inquiries receive a response within 24 hours or less.

13.5

Number of FTEs on the League staff

Executive Recruitment Service

The League helped provide information and assistance in the recruitment of city and town managers in Eloy, Miami and Safford, among others. This service is provided to assist communities in attracting high-quality public managers to Arizona. Our process includes a menu of services that may range from coordinating the recruitment process and screening applications to providing assistance on recruitment materials and candidate background checks.

Trainings and Seminars

The League sponsored or hosted a variety of discussions and training classes on a broad range of topics during the year. Additionally, we hosted the two-day Newly Elected Officials Training for mayors and councilmembers. Topics and training sessions in 2014 included:

- City Government 101
- Grants Training
- Community Gardens
- Legislative 101: Making Impact at the Capitol
- Elections Training
- Model City Tax Code Training

20

Number of conferences, trainings and
classes League staff coordinated

Legal Services

The League's General Counsel coordinates legal advice and information sharing among the city and town attorneys. In addition, the League occasionally files amicus briefs on high-impact Arizona city and town legal cases as well as monitors federal court cases that have potential municipal impact. In 2014, the League filed three amicus briefs in the Arizona Supreme Court.

3

Number of amicus curiae briefs filed by the League on important legal matters

Publications and Manuals

The League produces a number of technical publications, everything from budgeting and finance to charter government. Most of these publications are available online and many are updated annually to ensure they are in sync with current law. In addition to our technical publications, the League also produces the bi-annual magazine, *Arizona City and Town*, and the Local Government Directory, a comprehensive directory of contact information for city and town officials. Our website, www.azleague.org, is content-rich and updated frequently. You can also keep up with the League by following us on [Twitter @AzCities](#).

A sampling of League publications includes:

- A Guide for Annexation
- Arizona City & Town Magazine
- Charter Government Provisions in Arizona
- Connection E-Newsletter
- Council-Manager Government in Arizona
- Exploring Charter Government for Your City
- Guide to Preparing and Adopting Local Laws / Municipal Publication Requirements
- Legislative Bulletin
- Local Government Directory (online and in print)
- Municipal Budget & Finance Manual
- Municipal Election Manual
- Municipal Incorporation in Arizona
- Municipal Policy Statement
- You as a Public Official

For a full listing of publications [click here](#).



Arizona Cities @ Work

The League continued to promote the good work done by cities and towns in Arizona through AZ Cities @ Work, a long-term collaborative educational program.

In 2014, AZ Cities @ Work focused on engaging citizens through social media to publicize the impact municipal services have on their daily lives. Early this year, the AZ Cities @ Work campaign produced "Your Input Matters," a video primer and outreach effort to provide information about the municipal budget process. It was used by cities and towns across the state in public meetings, via social media and on municipal websites.

The AZ Cities @ Work campaign also concentrated on promoting local tourism in 2014. Through the League's summer issue of *Arizona City & Town Magazine*, AZ Cities @ Work created "The Great Arizona Road Trip." This multi-platform effort featured all 91 cities and towns in the print magazine, blog posts and social media for a visual and print storytelling experience.

Social media efforts continued through the fall, as AZ Cities @ Work introduced two new platforms – Instagram and Pinterest – and held social media contests to engage directly with citizens.

For the 13th Annual Cities and Towns Week in October, AZ Cities @ Work increased followers and engagement on all social media platforms for this celebratory week recognizing all Arizona cities and towns.

The AZ Cities @ Work program is adaptable and ongoing, capable of being used by each of the 91 cities and towns to augment and increase outreach and communication to residents.

For more information, visit www.azcitieswork.com or connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#).

3,014

Number of miles traveled by League staff visiting local officials in cities and towns across Arizona

League Affiliate Groups

In addition to our core service offerings, the League provides professional management services, staff support and coordination of trainings and conferences for several partner organizations. Comprised of local officials, our main affiliate associations include:

- Arizona City Attorneys Association
- Arizona City/County Management Association
- Arizona Municipal Clerks Association
- Government Finance Officers Association of Arizona



This report provides just a brief overview of some of the League activities during 2014. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, or if you would like a League representative to make a presentation to your city or town council, please feel free to contact us at 602-258-5786 or send an email to Executive Director Ken Strobeck at kstrobeck@azleague.org.

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