

2005 MUNICIPAL POLICY STATEMENT

Legislative Advocacy on Behalf of
Arizona Cities and Towns

League of Arizona

Cities AND Towns



1820 W. Washington St.

Phoenix, AZ 85007

Phone: 602-258-5786

Fax: 602-253-3874

league@mg.state.az.us

<http://www.azleague.org>



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT

James L. Boles
Mayor, Winslow

VICE PRESIDENT

Douglas Coleman
Mayor, Apache Junction

TREASURER

Boyd Dunn
Mayor, Chandler

MEMBERS

Diane Vick, Mayor, Bullhead City
Gilbert Lopez, Vice Mayor, Coolidge
Sandra Burk, Mayor, Eagar
Byron Jackson, Mayor, Eloy
Joe Donaldson, Mayor, Flagstaff
Steve Berman, Mayor, Gilbert
Elaine M. Scruggs, Mayor, Glendale
Stanley M. Gibson, Mayor, Globe
Jim Cavanaugh, Mayor, Goodyear
Bob Whelan, Mayor, Lake Havasu City
Keno Hawker, Mayor, Mesa
Paul Loomis, Mayor, Oro Valley
Phil Gordon, Mayor, Phoenix
Ginny Handorf, Councilmember, Pinetop Lakeside
Verlyn Michel, Mayor, Quartzsite
Mary Manross, Mayor, Scottsdale
Gerry Whipple, Councilmember, Show Low
Thomas J. Hessler, Mayor, Sierra Vista
Bob Rivera, Mayor, Thatcher
Robert E. Walkup, Mayor, Tucson
Ken Edes, Mayor, Williams
Larry Nelson, Mayor, Yuma



INTRODUCTION

The League of Arizona Cities and Towns presents its 2005 Municipal Policy Statement, which contains policy positions and action items that were collaboratively chosen by Arizona's 88 cities and towns. We invite you to review this document to better understand the issues that Arizona's municipalities have selected for discussion and action within their communities, at the State Capitol and in Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the League staff if you would like more information about any of the issues contained in the Policy Statement. We look forward to working with you to accomplish these priorities.



2005 CORE PRINCIPLES

The League's legislative policies are guided by two core principles that reflect the partnership between state and local government. These principles form the backbone of the League's legislative program.

STATE SHARED REVENUE

Arizona voters chose, through a series of initiatives, to return a portion of tax revenues back to local communities through state shared revenue. This is provided to municipalities in exchange for losses in local taxing authority such as income and luxury taxes. This system supports local choice and self-government by allowing city and town councils across the state to decide how tax dollars are spent within the community. State shared revenue funds the basic services that citizens count on such as police and fire protection, streets, courts, parks and libraries. With these vital services in mind, the League urges the Legislature to retain state shared revenue at consistent levels to assure adequate local community services in response to local needs.

LOCAL CONTROL

Cities and towns are voluntarily created by the residents of a community to provide local self-government and services, which allows Arizona's cities and towns to embody the diversity of the State of Arizona. The only way that Arizona's cities and towns can fully serve their unique constituencies is through allowing local governing bodies the freedom to make decisions at a local level that best meet the needs of the community. Thus, the League urges the Legislature to oppose efforts to erode local control and authority through preemptions and mandates.



2005 PRIORITY RESOLUTIONS

Each year, the League's membership selects five priority resolutions for the upcoming legislative session. Designation as a priority resolution means that the issue will receive special emphasis in the League's legislative program. This year's priorities reflect the wide range of issues that affect municipalities in the state.

The League of Arizona Cities and Towns:

- Urges the Legislature to enact legislation that would reduce the requirements placed on municipalities when annexing unincorporated areas including county enclaves.
- Urges the Legislature to pass amendments to the Arizona Constitution and Arizona statutes that provide for coordination of Arizona State Land Department land management plans and land disposition processes with local land use plans and allow cities and towns to obtain land to be designated as open space.
- Urges the Legislature to support efforts to preserve and fully fund the Arizona State Parks Heritage Fund through full allocation of state lottery moneys to the Fund as directed by the voters.
- Urges Arizona's Congressional Delegation, the Governor, Legislature, State Committees and Agencies and local governments to maintain and develop policies that preserve the mission viability of Arizona's military facilities by limiting encroachment of all types, supporting compatible land uses around such facilities, and ensuring the capability for future mission expansions.
- Urges the Legislature to provide local governments with the much needed tools to encourage economic development in cities and towns including tax increment financing.



2005 RESOLUTIONS



- Fiscal Policy
- General Government
- Public Health and Safety
- Community Concerns
- Community Planning
- Federal Policy Initiatives

FISCAL POLICY



The League of Arizona Cities and Towns:

- Urges the Legislature to allow municipalities to submit credit bids on state lands they have improved when the property is auctioned.
- Urges the Legislature to relieve the financial burden from unpaid property taxes imposed on cities and towns when acquiring property involuntarily under the improvement district laws.
- Urges the Legislature to remove the limitations on General Obligation bond issue premiums so that the additional revenue from the premiums can be used as part of the debt service on the bond, lowering the interest owed by the municipality.
- Urges the Legislature to submit to the voters a constitutional amendment authorizing cities and towns to issue bonds for public safety and street and roadway purposes up to 20% of the city or town's assessed value.

2005 RESOLUTIONS

GENERAL GOVERNMENT



The League of Arizona Cities and Towns:

- Urges the Legislature to support efforts to exempt municipal parks and recreation after school youth programs from a requirement to register as licensed daycare facilities if the municipality has equivalent screening requirements for the employees.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY



The League of Arizona Cities and Towns:

- Urges the Legislature to address the ongoing problems communities face with the hyper-clustering of sex offenders within their neighborhoods.
- Urges the Legislature to grant cities and towns the authority to require persons lawfully detained to identify themselves.

COMMUNITY PLANNING



The League of Arizona Cities and Towns:

- Urges the Legislature to adopt legislation authorizing cities, towns and counties to adopt ordinances or regulations that promote the development of affordable housing units for sale or rental to persons and families of low and moderate income.



2005 RESOLUTIONS

COMMUNITY CONCERNS



The League of Arizona Cities and Towns:

- Urges the Legislature to modify state liquor laws enhancing the ability of municipalities to address community related problems associated with liquor establishments.
- Urges the Legislature to support the efforts of the Attorney General to enact legislation that would discourage the practice of predatory mortgage lending by imposing guidelines that would prohibit this practice and sanctions for activities found to be in noncompliance with those guidelines.
- Urges the Legislature to protect community participation in government by protecting individuals who testify at public meetings from frivolous lawsuits based on their public comments.
- Urges the Legislature to enact legislation that will allow for the expansion of enhanced municipal improvement service districts for circumstances other than redevelopment or slum and blight.



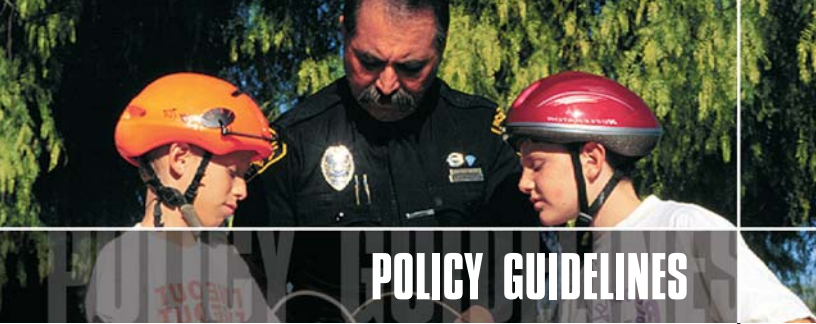
2005 RESOLUTIONS

FEDERAL POLICY INITIATIVES



The League of Arizona Cities and Towns:

- Urges Congress to provide more federal resources for affordable housing, specifically to preserve the current Housing Choice Voucher as the funding mechanism for rental assistance to local housing agencies and to reject the block granting of rental assistance, and to adequately fund the Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- Urges Congress to support efforts to preserve and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund.



POLICY GUIDELINES

The League of Arizona Cities and Towns was founded to defend the principle that local decisions are best made by local decision makers and not by another level of government. Since cities and towns are voluntarily created by the people of a community to provide local self-government and services, each municipality acting through its elected governing body is entitled to freedom for purposes of self-government and local determination.

Local decision-making encompasses all aspects of municipal living, including the provision of basic services. Ultimately, these decisions embody the common values and aspirations of the residents of cities and towns in Arizona. In addition to basic services, there are quality of life issues - a clean environment, a superior educational system, the safety of citizens to be free from violence, adequate social service programs and the preservation of our natural amenities for future generations, which are critical to the growth and maintenance of viable communities.

In the spirit of preserving and enhancing local decision making, the following are the policies that guide the legislative program of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns:

- The right to exercise local self-determination is the cornerstone of municipal policy and serves to strengthen and perpetuate our federal system of government. Any attempts to preempt local authority will be opposed.
- Incorporated city and town governments are the best vehicle for providing the people with responsible local government and services.
- The diversity of problems and needs in Arizona communities requires flexibility in legislation so that local officials can meet those unique needs and problems in the context of each city or town.

continued on p. 10



POLICY GUIDELINES

continued from p. 9

- Neither Congress nor the Arizona Legislature should mandate programs and services upon cities and towns without commensurate funding.
- Attempts to limit local taxing authority or to mandate state collection of local taxes should be opposed.
- State collected, locally shared revenues should be maintained and any reduction, whether directly through the elimination of such revenues, or indirectly, through the exemption of certain classes of property or activities from the application of taxes, should be opposed, unless other equal revenue sources are made available to local government.
- The necessary authority to adequately manage the urban environment is critical to meeting the demands of urban growth. The police power must remain as the basis for local planning and zoning.
- The concept and use of joint exercise of powers agreements in the fostering of intergovernmental cooperation among all levels of government are strongly supported.
- The continued authority of local government to effectively manage its employees through local personnel policies is appropriate. Any proposed mandating of specific personnel practices for local employees or selected groups of employees should be opposed.
- The development of an adequate and safe transportation system to meet the needs of our rapidly growing population is of significant importance to all levels of government in Arizona.



LEAGUE GOVERNANCE AND POLICY

Founded in 1937, the League of Arizona Cities and Towns is owned, financed and governed by its municipal members and exists to promote local self-government and municipal independence. The League provides a variety of services that assist cities and towns in meeting the needs of their citizens, including the provision of training, research, technical code and ordinance assistance, innovative forums, conferences, informative publications and online services. In addition, the League represents, and advocates for, the collective interests of Arizona's 88 cities and towns at the state and federal levels of government.

League policy is developed through an annual resolutions process. Each mayor, or the councilmember that he or she designates, is invited to participate in the Resolutions Committee. The Municipal Policy Statement guides the League's policies and lobbying efforts for the coming Legislative Session.

The League's activities are directed by a 25 member Executive Committee consisting of mayors and councilmembers from across the State who are elected to two year terms by the entire membership at the Annual Conference.



LEAGUE STAFF

Catherine F. Connolly, Executive Director
cconnoll@mg.state.az.us

Kevin Adam, Legislative Director
kadam@mg.state.az.us

Barbara Dolan, Legislative Associate
bdolan@mg.state.az.us

Rebecca Garcia, Administrative Assistant
rgarcia@mg.state.az.us

Eddie Geiger, Legislative Associate
egeiger@mg.state.az.us

Marisa Hoskins, Communications & Education Assistant
mhoskins@mg.state.az.us

Wendy Kaserman, Member Services Associate
wkaserma@mg.state.az.us

Randle Kuehner, Graphic Artist & Web Designer
rkuehner@mg.state.az.us

Matthew S. Lore, Communications & Education Director
mlore@mg.state.az.us

Sandra D. Morari, Office Manager
smorari@mg.state.az.us

Leslie Parish, Receptionist
lparish@mg.state.az.us

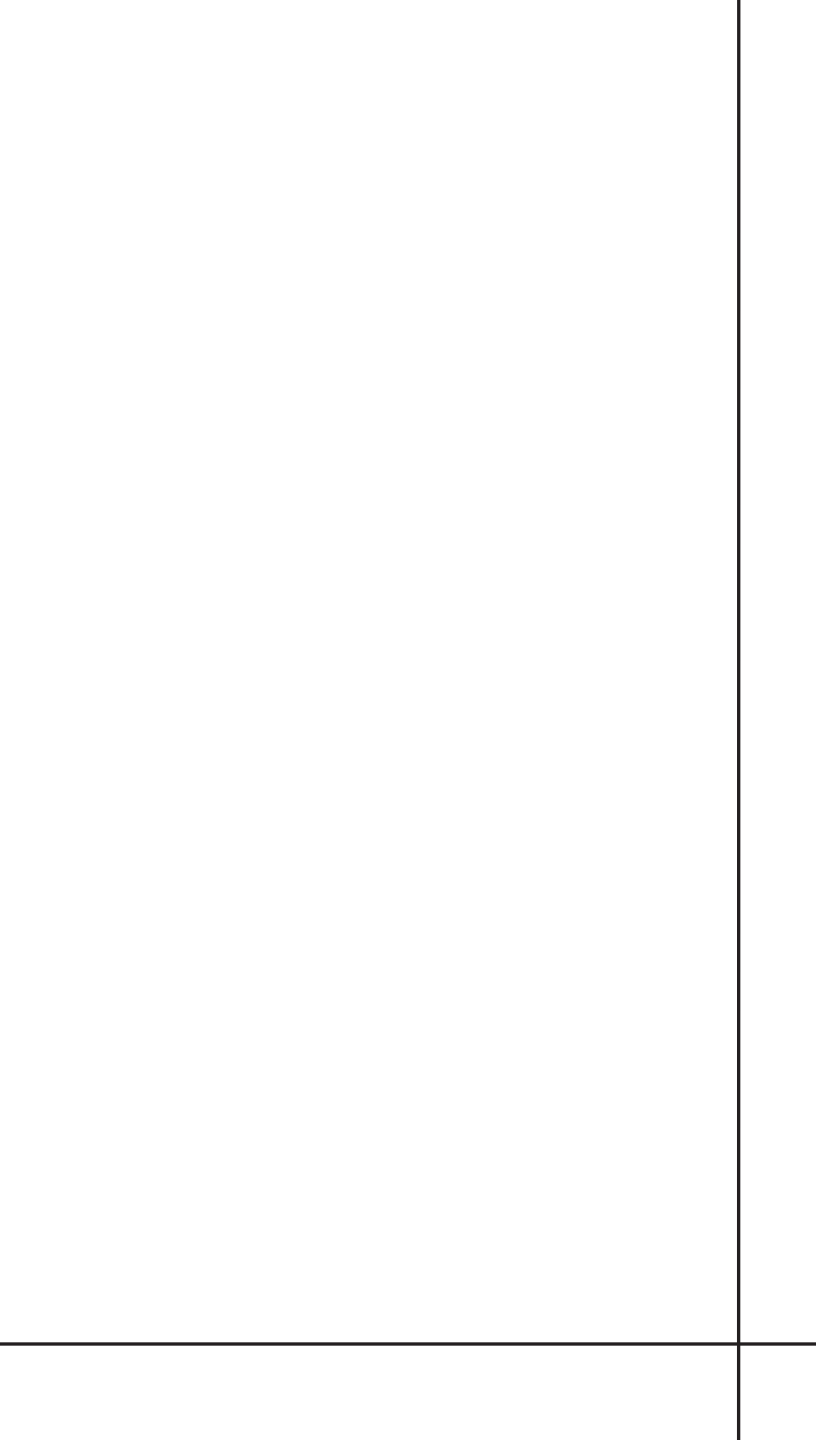
Rebecca Real, Office Clerk
rreal@mg.state.az.us

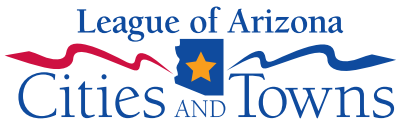
Byron D. Smith, Member Services Director
bsmith@mg.state.az.us

Christine Smith-Humphrey, Administrative Assistant
csmith-h@mg.state.az.us

Brent Stoddard, Member Services Assistant
bstoddar@mg.state.az.us

Belinda Villela, Administrative Assistant
bvillela@mg.state.az.us





1820 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Phone: 602-258-5786
Fax: 602-253-3874
league@mg.state.az.us
<http://www.azleague.org>