Opportunity Zones Program: Challenge and Opportunity For Communities

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In December 2017, the U.S. Tax Cut and Jobs Act was enacted. The Opportunity Zones Program formed from that legislation as an economic development tool designed to draw private investment into areas that experience a high level of socio-economic distress. There are 8,700+ opportunity zones in the U.S. and 161 zones in Missouri.

Even though the odds are that your community does not currently have opportunity zones, there is an impact. What does the Opportunity Zones Program mean for your community?

The vision of the Opportunity Zones Program is to positively change the economic vitality and sustainability of a community. Opportunity zones are census tracts that were nominated in 2018 by each state’s governor, then qualified federally to be designated as part of the Opportunity Zones Program. The Opportunity Zones Program is designed to benefit an investor by providing deferral and forgiveness of the federal tax on capital gains invested in a qualified zone.

Since the federal government awarded opportunity zone designations in 2018, cities and economic development organizations have been searching for ways to capture qualified opportunity fund investment to the benefit of their communities. Because of opportunity zone legislation, philanthropic and private foundations, as well as federal agencies, are rethinking how they are doing business.

“All communities should be aware that grant funding and federal support for community infrastructure and
economic development may change as Opportunity Zones Program policies evolve,” states Lee Langerock, partner with Prep the Page LLC. “We’ve seen it with the establishment of the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council; the U.S. Economic Development Administration’s (EDA) additional priority listing authorizing funding priority in opportunity zones; and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) change in policy. Developers and institutional funds are paying attention to the Internal Revenue Service’s (IRS) guidance and rulings for the Program. This means cities and towns across Missouri should be aware of both federal dollar and private investment focus, and be prepared to compete for that attention.”

At the Act’s onset, the president signed an Executive Order (#13853) establishing the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council. The Council is evaluating support for urban and economically distressed areas, including qualified opportunity zones for grants, financing and other assistance. This movement aligns 160 federal programs to target, provide preference or add support to opportunity zones. In April 2019, the Council released the implementation plan with key emphasis on 1) economic development, 2) entrepreneurship, 3) safe neighborhoods, 4) education and workforce development, and 5) measurement and analysis.

As an example of how the federal grant landscape may change, communities not typically qualified for EDA funding received a boost in 2018 when opportunity zones became a qualified area for EDA investment. This was reinforced in 2019, when the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development announced that the EDA is adding opportunity zones as an investment priority.

In 2019, federal legislation was introduced to expand zone designations. New zones were designated for disaster relief. That momentum of change is anticipated to push into 2020. States throughout the U.S. are aligning tax code and incentive packages to leverage the anticipated private investment and expansion of local designations. Opportunity zone institutional funds have been holding for a Final Ruling on tax code from the Internal Revenue Services (IRS), released Dec. 19, 2019, and codified once printed in the Federal Register.

Opportunity zones are on the radar of every multi-family, workforce housing and commercial real estate developer in the nation. By rule, to receive the investment benefit, businesses and investors must deploy their capital with the intent of profit. Investors can live anywhere in the U.S. and the investment, made through a qualified opportunity fund and/or qualified business, can be in any designated zone. As a wide-open field, community success in attracting investor attention translates when the community is prepared to meet business and developer interests proactively. The question then becomes, “what is the investment impact on my city’s financial bottom line”?

The Kresge and Rockefeller Foundations are deploying millions of dollars on opportunity zone impact. Both cities of Kansas City and St. Louis have benefited from the Rockefeller Foundation’s push to improve economic opportunity and the Foundation’s
leadership in promoting and fine-tuning Opportunity Zones Program policy. Urban areas are actively engaged in pursuing opportunity zone investment. However, a good percentage of opportunity zones are in rural communities and counties, where business and real estate development opportunities are not as well known, yet business and community investment ripples significantly.

The city of Excelsior Springs, Missouri, provides an excellent example of preparedness to pursue community and business development. Excelsior Springs is uniquely identified for its historical districts and emphasis on redevelopment. The Opportunity Zones Program designation covers most of the land mass within the Excelsior Springs’ city limits. In early 2019, the city of Excelsior Springs contracted Prep the Page LLC to help develop an Opportunity Zones Program strategy outline. During that process, the City determined three key priorities:

- Help educate local citizens about the direct and indirect benefits of continuing to invest in their community;

As part of the process to continue evolving its local Opportunity Zones Program, the City worked to develop a community marketing plan, including an asset study to define local opportunity and the community’s portfolio of properties.

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• Inform aligned outside interests of the advantage Excelsior Spring’s Opportunity Zones provide for their return on investment; and
• Encourage qualified real estate and business opportunity zone investments.

While developing their marketing strategy, the city of Excelsior Springs clarified the need to help increase personal wealth and property values; celebrate and support the tourism industry; and promote community health and wellness. The City has a stated goal to encourage small business and industrial growth that translates into capital investment and employment.

Opportunity zones are different from enterprise and empowerment zones. However, the Program can overlap and stack with other economic development incentives offered at the local, state and federal level. Encouraging investors to contact the City prior to initiating development is a key factor in initiating a proactive approach.

“The City’s leadership for Excelsior Springs and partners have big goals for our community,” states Molly McGovern, city manager for Excelsior Springs. “We want to make sure it is understood there are opportunities for business and investors to grow in Excelsior Springs. Pursuing and addressing investment fits well with our existing business and community development mission. The City is being proactive regardless of program.”

As part of the process to continue evolving its local Opportunity Zones Program, the City re-engaged Prep the Page to facilitate the development of a community marketing plan, including an asset study to define local opportunity and the community’s portfolio of properties. To implement the plan, Prep the Page created documents, content and workflow designed to give the City a branded presence online and the tools to respond effectively to investor and business interest.

Today, Excelsior Springs is one of the few communities in the Midwest with a dedicated opportunity zone informational portal: https://www.excelsioropp.com/. For the City, the opportunity zones portal and implementation of its opportunity zone marketing plan help address the challenge of developer communication. The website opens the door to learn more about the Opportunity Zones Program and, more specifically, the community.

In addition to the portal, the City is continuing opportunity zone education by hosting forums designed around the topic. In October, the City invited regional resource partners and local businesses and investors to learn more from legal, accounting and finance experts. Lewis Rice, CBiz, Prep the Page, the Missouri Department of Economic Development, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture provided panel discussions around the introduction and intricacies of what are now known as opportunity zones. To date, the City’s Opportunity Zones Program education and investor outreach continues.

The need for reinvestment in economically disadvantaged areas is decades old. There are hundreds of millions of dollars

Key Opportunity Zone Facts

• U.S. Tax Cut and Jobs Act passed into law December 2017.
• Zone designations were awarded in 2018.
• Zone expansions for disaster relief were awarded in 2019.
• Business and real estate may qualify.
• Guidance was released: April 2019 and September 2019.
• Federal legislation pursued amendments 2019.
• Anticipated zone expansion legislation pursuit (ongoing.)
• IRS issues further guidance for qualified opportunity funds forms October 2019.
• Final ruling from the IRS is delivered Dec. 19, 2019.
released every year to subsidize and spur redevelopment efforts. The Opportunity Zones Program, while new and fresh, is another tool for communities to utilize. Having this unique designation presents a rare moment to capture the attention of local and institutional investment alike.

While the verdict on the Program’s impact is out, the potential to put private capital to work to achieve community goals is real. From the Act’s onset, the IRS and U.S. Department of Treasury has been working to build policy and finalize regulations for investors seeking to utilize the opportunity funds benefit as part of their overall capital gains and investment strategy. IRS and Treasury Final Rules have only recently been presented for Federal Register publication. Despite this, there are billions of dollars in institutional investment within qualified opportunity funds ready to deploy throughout the United States.

To get more facts about the Opportunity Zone Program visit: https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/opportunity-zones-frequently-asked-questions.

About the city of Excelsior Springs: In 2018, Excelsior Springs, Missouri, became one of the select few communities in the United States to receive not one, but two, federally designated opportunity zones. Uniquely, this covers the majority of Excelsior Springs proper located within Clay County. The city of Excelsior Springs encourages the utilization of available local, state and federal programs such as the Opportunity Zones Program to help qualified business and real estate investors leverage their return on investment. For more information: https://cityofesmo.com/development/.

Lee Langerock is a business investor with 30+ years of extensive experience in starting, operating and building business in rural, suburban and urban economies. Langerock has chaired several statewide and regional initiatives and currently serves on two national advisory boards for business and economic policy. In 2018, she joined Prep the Page LLC as a partner focused on helping cities implement effective operations and sustainable growth. Prep the Page LLC is a Missouri-based consulting company focused on helping cities plan, promote and execute operational and business development strategies. The company’s experts have 30+ years of global business and economic development experience.

Want To Learn More?
The National League of Cities answers frequently asked questions and offers a resource guide to learn more about Opportunity Zones at https://www.nlc.org/program-initiative/opportunity-zones

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Melinda Mehaffy is the Economic Development Director in Excelsior Springs, Missouri. After working in the Northland for more than twenty years, most notably in Gladstone and Liberty, Melinda joined the City of Excelsior Springs in April of 2017. Melinda has a long track record in the public sector from managing budgets to executing strategic planning along with extensive expertise in commercial real estate. In 2016 Melinda received her Master’s Degree focused in Public Administration from Anna Maria College.

Disclaimer: The information contained herein is intended as educational and not a solicitation for investment or endorsement of a product or program. Any content contained herein is intended as strictly informational and should not be construed as an interpretation of IRS Code Rulings, endorsement of policy or qualifier for investment. The Opportunity Zones program is governed by the IRS final regulatory rulings. As always, when considering opportunity zone or any other incentive program please consult the proper legal advisors and accounting vendors for advice regarding your individual or organizational requirements.

The Opportunity Zones Program is another tool for communities to utilize. Having this unique designation presents a rare moment to capture the attention of local and institutional investment alike.

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Bringing Data Home

Data Matters

Data is the lifeblood of our economy. Whether seeking funding, engaging community members, or planning a public works project, data is necessary. The challenge for municipalities is that the internet in general and the massive investment from major tech companies into mobile technology has led many to believe data should be readily available to answer any question.

Data Is Getting Easier To Collect

While collecting and dealing with data is challenging, meeting citizen and consumer expectations is becoming easier. Some data collection tools like internet-connected sensors attached to everything from trash cans to street lights can be expensive; however, basic tools for implementing online surveys or visualizing data are often inexpensive or free! If you need to figure out what trash cans are used the most, those sensors may be worth your money. For many situations, local officials probably do not need to go this far.

Plan Ahead For Collection And Analysis

Instead of beginning a massive investment in a data collection and an analysis system, start simple to build capacity over time. This may seem like a tedious process but laying out all the steps will help you measure your work. Pick one thing to measure. If you have an important goal for your community, start with a single, desired outcome on the path to achieve that goal. Next, list the resources that will contribute to implementing that activity and achieving that goal; list the specific activities you will undertake; and list the desired measurable outcomes.

Double- and triple-check your assumptions before you invest resources in the activity and try to find good evidence supporting the assertion that the activity will lead to the desired outcome. It is important to make sure that the money intended for this activity be spent in a way it is intended. Watch for grant funds that may have very specific restrictions or reporting requirements.

Break outcomes into short, medium- and long-term goals to better focus data gathering and analysis efforts. This planning will help you gather the appropriate information, instead of gathering all information. Check to make sure the data being gathered can be analyzed with the tools you have available. You do not want to buy some really cool sensors only to later discover the data analysis requires extensive consulting time, advanced technology or specialized software.

Finally, make sure to train everyone involved in the process to be sure data is collected consistently. Differences in survey questions, for example, can change the responses and make it difficult or incorrect to compare the data.

Understand The Data

After setting goals and collecting information, it is important to analyze, reflect and react. Watch for trends. A single data point collected at a single point in time may not reveal much, and trends over a few data points could be completely random. Looking at data over several weeks, months or years can help determine whether outcomes are headed in the desired direction. With some basic trends you can start testing different policy or programmatic changes to test what happens.

Proving whether or not a program or activity is accomplishing the goal is more complicated, but it can be done. If you find reliable, scientific evidence indicating your activity should lead to the desired outcome, track to ensure it is working correctly. If it is not, talk to the people engaged in implementation to find the breakdown.

It is important at this stage to reflect on the data and any predictive models that may have been created. Data never speaks for itself and never tells the complete story. Instead, we use data to create and support stories. Does the data seem right? Does it fit the theory of how a program or activity is supposed to work? If something does not seem right, it may not be! On that same note, do not doubt information just because it does not fit expectations. Use the data to keep a conversation going.
A Simple Customer Service Initiative

Creating a project around improving customer service is a great place to start work with data. Improving the citizen customer experience can make the community happier and more engaged. There are a wealth of satisfaction surveys available to draw from to create a survey of your own, and there are open source (free!) tools to help implement surveys.

Start with a survey of your community to determine where there are pain points in interactions with local government; make some adjustments around those points; and survey again to evaluate any changes. It may take some time for changes in interactions to reflect changes in attitudes, but the pace of such a shift should not deter you from tracking and measuring those changes.

From this simple survey data, staff can begin to create a body of knowledge and experience regarding data collection and analysis. The processes of planning, developing, implementing, analyzing, and adjusting can be replicated across many activities and will become easier as it becomes routine.

Do you have an incentive program for businesses? Step back and check if the incentives lead to the desired outcomes. Are you spending time writing grants? Gather up some information and check to see if that investment of staff time is leading to positive outcomes or burning time.

No matter what you are doing, citizens expect to see data demonstrating tax-dollar investments that lead to productive outcomes. There is no reason to shy away from this expectation. Instead, follow some simple and consistent steps across all activities to make data collection and analysis part of your routine.

Dave Overfelt is a consultant and analyst at Kolibri Associates where he evaluates programs and processes to help teams make better decisions. With experience across diverse industries, Dave has helped many teams improve the organization and execution of their day-to-day activities by focusing on understanding their work and their data. He can be reached at Dave.L.Overfelt@gmail.com.

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Engaging With MU Extension's Business And Communities Program

University of Missouri (MU) Extension has undergone extensive changes over the past few years to better serve the citizens of Missouri. These changes allow Extension faculty to develop effective partnerships to grow local economies, strengthen communities, and improve individual health and well-being. MU Extension’s Business and Community (B&C) program includes teams focused on business development, community economic development, and labor and workforce development. As the organization evolves, a key goal is to deepen partnerships with cities and counties across the state.

Local leaders and volunteers understand their community’s needs, and the B&C team, with local, regional and statewide responsibilities, can help them drive economic growth and enhance community success. The following stories are examples that highlight how Extension faculty have partnered with local and state stakeholders to benefit Missouri’s businesses and communities.

Advancing Individual and Community Success

Meaningful engagement through intentional connections is a top priority for MU Extension County Engagement Specialists (CES). CES facilitate engagement through the Connect Strategy, a process designed to identify community challenges and opportunities and develop important relationships. Through the Connect Strategy framework, CES and Extension faculty collaboratively produce a more data-driven understanding of the conditions, challenges and opportunities within their counties to help achieve community goals.

Agritourism – When A Hunch Becomes An Event

Benton County CES Amie Breshears found herself in a series of informal conversations with friends about agritourism shortly after beginning her position with Extension. Not one to waste an opportunity, Breshears found several local agricultural producers looking for ways to expand their business operations by diversifying into agritourism ventures, such as short-term lodging, specialty farm tours and farm activities. Breshears called the county tourism director, who shared a similar vision.

“When you consider the history, natural beauty, wildlife, streams and lakes, small towns, recreation resources, and all the things that those of us who live here enjoy every day, there is plenty of untapped agritourism potential in Benton and surrounding counties,” said Breshears.

With a groundswell of community interest, Breshears coordinated with local, state and federal partners, as well as private businesses, to host the Basics of Agritourism Conference. Participants heard from experts on tourism, law, insurance, marketing/social media, wildlife leases, business planning, forestry and value chains. State and federal programs that support the industry were also conference topics. Given the positive response, Breshears now plans to organize a Small Farm Conference in 2020 to help landowners think about ways to diversify their incomes.

2020 Census – Making It Count

Christian County CES Pam Duitsman recognized that an undercount in the 2020 Census would have significant financial consequences for Christian County. For example, for the 2010 Census, one expert reported that each 1% underreporting of population would cost Missouri approximately $76 million in Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP) in FY2015.1 In 2020, the Census will direct households to complete the census by invitation through an online portal, thereby using fewer canvassers. Duitsman worried about achieving an accurate count given the number of residents with limited internet access; people uncomfortable with technology; and underserved or hard-to-count populations.

With that in mind, Duitsman coordinated with community partners to hold a public forum on Census 2020 that included educational
programming, panel discussion and community feedback sessions. Due to an overwhelming response and under the direction of the Christian County Commission, leaders from more than 20 organizations formed a Complete Count Committee to raise awareness about issues of access. In coordination with the committee, Duitsman continues to meet weekly with U.S. Census Bureau representatives to design communication strategies and marketing materials for use by the broader community to ensure an accurate count.

Neighborhood Leadership Academy – Building Leaders For Tomorrow

The University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) and University of Missouri Extension launched the Neighborhood Leadership Academy (NLA) nearly 18 years ago, in response to a need to build leadership capacity. The program convenes residents from different neighborhoods across the St. Louis region to build leadership skills, promote collaboration between communities, and create sustainable neighborhood projects. NLA attracts many existing community leaders, such as neighborhood association presidents, block captains and community activists, and provides them with opportunities to hone their leadership skills and build relationships. NLA also works with community partners to identify new and emerging leaders who have the potential to be change agents and could benefit from a supportive network of partners and resources.

During the program, St. Louis City CES Claire Rippel and other UMSL and Extension faculty, guide participants through a process to develop a community project. The curriculum covers topics including community building principles, planning, fundraising, marketing, engaging and evaluating. An external evaluation of the program found that 68% of participants reported starting new community leadership roles since being in NLA, and 70% of participants implemented these projects in their respective communities.

Building Stronger Businesses

The U.S. economy relies on small business success, and the health of Missouri’s small businesses is top of mind for the Missouri Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), a division of the B&C’s Business Development program. Funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration, MU Extension, and local colleges, universities and economic development partners, the Missouri SBDC helps business owners make confident business decisions through education and research. Counselors partner with business owners to deliver personalized support to drive revenue and job growth.

Link Electronics – Resources That Matter

When Patricia and David Kendall bought a struggling manufacturing company, they saw an opportunity to build a new, revitalized business. Link Electronics opened in 1989 in Jackson, Missouri, offering quality technology to the broadcast industry. The original owners had developed a strong reputation for customer service
in the United States and abroad, but the company was at a crossroads. It was at this time, the Kendalls decided to purchase the business with a goal to improve its profitability.

Saving the business was complicated, as it used obsolete technology and many product components were no longer in production. The couple needed to find a way to introduce new technology and restore relevance. During the first year after acquiring Link Electronics, David sought guidance from Jakob Pallesen, the SBDC director at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau. Equipped with the latest tools and business databases, Pallesen introduced the business owners to tools like GrowthWheel to refine their marketing strategies and focus their attention on future growth.

Link Electronics remains a small business but has grown rapidly over the past year and a half, and the SBDC partnership has been critical to its success.

“A lot of companies fail because they don’t know what’s out there to help them grow,” said Tricia McRae, national sales manager. “Jakob is just as much a part of our team as any of our employees and the SBDC is an integral part of us growing. They’ve really helped us out and pointed us in the right direction.”

Pallesen keeps a close eye on his client and knows when they hit a target and need to move on to the next step.

Forging Career Pathways

The Labor & Workforce Development team brings research expertise to communities and the state to help understand workforce issues and develop strategies to assist in meeting needs. Using the research tools at their disposal, the team can also provide insight into skills gaps and how best to address those gaps, as was recently done with a state survey.

Career And Technical Education – Understanding Meaningful Work

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (DESE) Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Council conducted a statewide survey about perceptions of CTE this past year. Upon completing the survey, the CTE Advisory Council reached out to Rob Russell, director, and Mark White, associate extension professor, from MU Extension’s Labor & Workforce Development Program to analyze nearly 10,000 survey responses and turn them into actionable information to guide the future activities of the Council. The survey results demonstrate the need to raise awareness about CTE programs and opportunities among students and their parents. Most students and parents do not have a negative perception of CTE, but the analysis showed that they are not aware of the earning opportunities available in CTE-related careers; opportunities to earn Industry Recognized Credentials (IRCs); or to transfer CTE credits to community and technical colleges.

As a result, Russell and White identified several steps that Extension faculty and staff, along with other partners, can take to promote CTE programs and careers at the local, regional and state level. Providing this knowledge allows students to make more informed decisions about their academic and professional futures, opening the door to career options they would not have otherwise considered. This information may also be used by adults already in the workforce who have a need or desire to transition to other careers.
Partnering For A Brighter Future

The University of Missouri Extension’s Business and Community program is excited to continue to build expertise in business development, community economic development, and labor and workforce development to better serve the needs of all Missourians and bolster the Missouri economy. This article has highlighted ways the program has partnered to benefit community and economic development across the state.

Each county in Missouri has a CES ready to engage with you; the CES can also connect you with field specialists or campus-based state specialists if appropriate. We encourage you to meet your regional CES and SBDC counselors and follow our initiatives on social media using @MUExtension and #BusComEx or https://extension2.missouri.edu.

Jennifer Presberry joined the University of Missouri Extension in 2019 as the senior project coordinator to help expand economic growth initiatives throughout the state. She works with faculty and staff to develop and maintain partnerships with organizations and institutions, as well as assist with project planning and coordination.

Dr. Robert Schwartz joined MU Extension in 2019 as director of special projects after a 17-year career in various other roles for the university. His work focuses on the development of strategies to address population loss and economic challenges faced by rural communities in Missouri.

The authors would like to acknowledge the following team members for their contributions to this article: Amie Breshears, Pamela Duitsman, Claire Wolff, Jakob Pallesen, Sherry Noller and Dr. Robert Russell.

Endnote:

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City Fiscal Conditions Report 2019
Two thirds of big cities predict recession, Midwest in fiscal decline

In October 2019, the National League of Cities (NLC) released its annual report, “City Fiscal Conditions,” at an event in Washington. The report, that analyzed survey results and fiscal data from over 500 cities, finds increasing fiscal uncertainty and trends similar to those that emerged at the start of previous economic downturns.

Key findings from this year’s report include:

- General fund revenues slowed to their lowest annual growth rate since 2013.
- For the first time in seven years, cities anticipate a decline in revenue as they close the books on fiscal year 2019.
- Declining fiscal conditions are sharpest in the Midwest as overall general fund revenues in cities there declined by 4.4%.
- Property tax receipts are showing signs of weakening, notably in the Midwest.
- Spending growth has outpaced revenue growth in recent years, and we expect this trend to continue.
- Two thirds of big cities predict a recession will hit in 2020 or 2021.

Yet, three out of four local finance officers remain confident about the ability of their cities’ budgets to meet the financial needs of their communities.

“For the first time in 34 years, we took a closer look at fiscal trends by region and city size to get a more complete picture of what different communities are facing on the ground,” said Clarence Anthony, NLC CEO and executive director. “It is clear that communities across the country — and their residents and businesses — are experiencing varying economic realities. My hope is that local leaders continue to use this report to improve communications and outcomes within their own budget processes, and ultimately, to better support the needs of the people they serve.”

The City Fiscal Conditions survey is a national email survey of finance officers in U.S. cities conducted from May to July of each year. Officers were asked to report on local fiscal policies, budget pressures, revenue and expenditure data and to give their assessments of their cities’ fiscal conditions. In addition, budget data for 200 of the largest cities were collected directly from online city budget documents. In total, the 2019 data were drawn from 554 cities and yielded a response rate of 40%. The data allows for generalizations about the fiscal conditions in cities.

“City fiscal conditions are a reflection of underlying economic factors,” said Christiana McFarland, research director at NLC and report author. “While many local economies are healthy, global economic disruptions are starting to make an impact on fiscal health, particular in the Midwest.”

Find a link to download the full report on page 20.

Homeward Bound: The Road to Affordable Housing

In July 2019, the National League of Cities (NLC) released a comprehensive affordable housing report entitled “Homeward Bound: The Road to Affordable Housing.” The report focuses on the challenges and solutions communities large and small are using to address the nation’s growing affordable housing crisis with cities, towns and villages on the front lines. Reflecting the collaborative work of more than 20 bipartisan community leaders on NLC’s housing task force, the report offers several policy actions and gives a comprehensive overview of the history and factors behind the crisis, as well as case studies from cities launching innovative solutions and recommendations from experts.

Local leaders are seeking real housing solutions for their residents, who want a safe, quality place to call home. Currently, half a million Americans are homeless, half of home renters are cost-burdened, and the average minimum-wage worker would have to work 99 hours per week to afford a one-bedroom apartment. Housing is the single biggest factor impacting economic mobility for people. It is an outsized cost for a growing number of working families, creating cost burdens that impact millions of residents. Nearly 40% of households in the U.S. are rented and research shows half of these households allot more than 30% of their income for housing.

America’s affordable-housing crisis is not limited to large urban cities or suburbs; all communities are forced to tackle this growing issue head-on. From Bozeman, Montana, and Oakland, California to Camden, South Carolina, and Washington D.C., bipartisan local leaders are developing innovative strategies to meet the needs of their communities and set an example for others, including federal partners, to follow.
Nationally there is overwhelming support for greater federal investment for affordable housing. This view is held across the political spectrum, with 95% of Democrats, 87% of unaffiliated voters and 73% of Republicans, agreeing housing should be a top national priority.

When residents have stable living conditions, the benefits are apparent. Students do better in school and health outcomes improve. Communities benefit as a whole from this stability. Opportunities for investment growth and economic prosperity develop when sustainable housing serves the needs of residents across generations and income levels.

The report highlights a set of five national housing policy recommendations:

- Immediately stabilize and stem the loss of public and affordable housing.
- Follow emergency intervention with passage of a long-term, stand-alone federal housing bill that authorizes 10 years of new funding for pilot programs that advance housing for all.
- Support innovation and modernization of land-use and planning at the local and regional level.
- Fix inequities in housing development and the housing finance system.
- Support scalable innovation and financing for cities, towns and villages.

It also includes five local recommendations:

- Establish local programs by combining funding and financing streams to support housing goals.
- Modernize local land use policies, including zoning and permitting, to rebalance housing supply and demand.
- Identify and engage broadly with local stakeholders; and coordinate across municipal boundaries, to develop a plan to provide housing opportunities for all.
- Support the needs of distinct sub-populations including the homeless, seniors and persons with conviction histories.
- Prioritize equitable outcomes in housing decisions, as it is an essential component for success.

NLC Reports Are Available For Download At:
https://www.nlc.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/Homeward%20Bound_The%20Road%20to%20Affordable%20Housing_WEB.pdf
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MML Legislative Update

When the Missouri General Assembly convened on Jan. 8, 2020, legislative leaders emphasized the following priorities: “fixing” Clean Missouri, gun violence, fixing roads and bridges, and prescription drug monitoring. Other key issues include internet taxation and charter schools.

The key municipal issues are internet taxation, preserving municipal video (cable) franchise fees, maintaining the effectiveness of municipal courts and fending off attacks on local property and sales taxes. We will have sessions on these issues at the MML Legislative Conference on Feb. 11-12, 2020, at the Jefferson City Capitol Plaza Hotel. Also, future MML “Capitol Reports” will provide more detailed information on these issues.

Although the legislature has a heavy agenda ahead of them, many bills of municipal interest have already been filed, some with potential damaging impacts to municipalities. Please be alert to MMLs “Capitol Report” and “Legislative Alerts” notifying you when it is appropriate to contact your legislators. Keep the League informed of your legislative activities by notifying us when you are meeting with legislators and if you plan to testify on an issue. Also, send copies of legislative correspondence and replies to League headquarters. Cities are strongest when they speak with a unified voice. You have the ability to show legislators how the decisions they make in Jefferson City impact your community. Together, we can strengthen the voice of cities, keeping decision making on local issues at the local level.

Missouri Senate - Leadership

- Senator Dave Schatz (Sullivan) President Pro Tem (573) 751-3678
- Senator Caleb Rowden (Columbia) Majority Floor Leader (573) 751-3931
- Senator Wayne Wallingford (Cape Girardeau) Assistant Majority Floor Leader (573) 751-2459
- Senator Dan Hegeman (Savannah) Majority Caucus Chairman (573) 751-1415
- Senator Jeanie Riddle (Fulton) Majority Caucus Secretary (573) 751-2757
- Senator Sandy Crawford (Buffalo) Majority Caucus Whip: (573) 751-8793
- Senator Gina Walsh (North St. Louis County) Minority Floor Leader (573) 751-2420
- Senator S. Kiki Curls (Kansas City) Assistant Minority Floor Leader (573) 751-3158
- Senator Karla May (St. Louis) Minority Caucus Chairwoman (573) 751-3599
- Senator Jamilah Nasheed (St. Louis) Minority Caucus Whip (573) 751-4415

Missouri House of Representatives - Leadership

- Elijah Haahr (Springfield) Speaker of the House; Elijah.Haahr@house.mo.gov, 573-751-2210
- John Wiemann (O’Fallon) Speaker Pro Tem; John.Wiemann@house.mo.gov, 573-751-2176
- Rob Vescovo (Arnold) Majority Floor Leader; Rob.Vescovo@house.mo.gov, 573-751-3607
- J. Eggleston Assistant (Maysville) Majority Floor Leader; J.Eggleston@house.mo.gov, 573-751-4285
- Steve Lynch (Waynesville) Majority Whip; Steve.Lynch@house.mo.gov, 573-751-1446
- Sonya Anderson (Springfield) Majority Caucus Chair; Sonya.Anderson@house.mo.gov, 573-751-2948
- Chris Dinkins (Annapolis) Majority Caucus Secretary; Chris.Dinkins@house.mo.gov, 573-751-2112
- Jeffrey Messenger (Republic) Majority Caucus Policy Chair; Jeff.Messenger@house.mo.gov, 573-751-2381
- Crystal Quade (Springfield) Minority Floor Leader; Crystal.Quade@house.mo.gov, 573-751-3795

Richard Sheets is the deputy director for the Missouri Municipal League. Contact Richard at Rsheets@mocities.com or (573) 635-9134.
FAQ: Annexation For Municipalities
by Ramona Huckstep

Every workday your Missouri Municipal League staff answers dozens of questions on municipal issues. This column provides an opportunity to share some of the most frequently asked questions. As with all legal matters, municipal officials are urged to consult their city attorney for guidance for the specific challenges faced by their municipality.

Annexation is the procedure for bringing unincorporated areas of a county into an adjacent city. The city then extends its services, laws and voting privileges to meet the needs of residents living in the annexed area.

Why would a municipality annex property?
Typically, annexation takes place in areas that are adjacent to a municipality. People living in unincorporated areas generally need services and facilities beyond those provided by state and county governments. In addition, annexation encourages orderly growth and provides standardized services to those who live in the annexed area. It also promotes fairness by requiring that those who reap the benefits of living near a city, and who use the services provided by a city, share in the costs of operating the city. Annexation can assist with economic growth and overall municipal growth as it relates to services such as additional police, increased sewer, drinking water pipes and other services.

What state statutes cover annexation?
Section 71.012 RSMo – Annexation procedure, hearing, exceptions (Perry County, Randolph County) - contiguous and compact defined - common interest community, cooperative and planned community, defined - objection, procedure.
Section 71.014 RSMo – Annexation by certain cities upon request of all property owners in area annexed - deannexation, statute of limitations.
Section 71.015 RSMo – Objections to annexation, satisfaction of objections prior to annexation, procedure - certain cities, elections for annexation, procedure - cause of action for deannexation authorized.
Sections 71.860 to 71.920 RSMo – Annexation in certain charter counties
For 3rd class cities – Section 77.020, RSMo
For 4th class cities – Section 79.020, RSMo
Special charter cities - Section 81.080 for cities under 20,000 population; Section 81.200 for cities more than 20,000 population and less than 250,000

What are the different kinds of annexation?
There basically are two types of annexation procedures for Missouri municipalities:
- The property owners petition a municipality for annexation, also known as voluntary annexation; and
- The municipality initiates the annexation, also known as forced annexation.

What are the definitions of voluntary and forced annexation?
Voluntary or landowner-initiated annexation is when the landowner willingly comes forward and wants their property annexed into the municipal boundaries. Involuntary annexation, or forced annexation, is the process that a municipality expands its boundaries into adjacent areas not already incorporated into the municipality.

What are the steps involved in the annexation process for municipal-initiated or forced annexation?
Basic chronology of municipal-initiated annexation (except municipalities in Jackson, St. Charles and St. Louis Counties that follow special rules):
Step 1. Determine that the area to be annexed is contiguous to the existing municipal limits;
Step 2. Adopt a resolution of intent to annex;
Step 3. Prepare a plan of intent;
Step 4. Introduce an annexation ordinance;
Step 5. Hold a public hearing;
Step 6. Adopt an annexation ordinance;
Step 7. Obtain a declaratory judgment (may be obtained after the election); and
Step 8. Hold election.

One of the steps in forced annexation indicates that the area that is being annexed be contiguous to the existing municipal limits. How is contiguous defined?
Section 71.015 RSMo requires the territory to be contiguous and defines contiguous to mean that the length of the...
Do you think RURAL means non-municipal? With our 2019 membership of 912 system members, 502 are municipalities. Of those, we serve cities with populations over 20,000 such as Wentzville, Liberty, and Nixa as well as municipalities of less than 200 such as Allenville, Lohman, and Collins.

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FAQs - Annexation For Municipalities

What if there are no registered voters in the area to be annexed?

If there are no registered voters in the area to be annexed, then during the first election annexation would pass if two-thirds of the voters in the municipality vote in favor of the annexation in the municipality that is requesting the annexation.

What is the annexation process for landowner-initiated or voluntary annexation?

Basic chronology of landowner-initiated or voluntary annexation (except in municipalities in Jefferson, St. Charles and Franklin counties that follow special rules):

Step 1. A petition for annexation must be signed by the owners of all the fee interests of record in all the tracts of real property to be annexed. It is presented to the governing body of the municipality and must comply with the following:

- The petition must be written and addressed to the governing body;
- The territory must be contiguous and compact to the existing corporate limits; and
- The petition must be verified.

Step 2. Once the petition is filed, the municipality must hold a public hearing.

Step 3. The hearing must be within 60 days of the filing of the petition, but it cannot be held less than 14 days after the receipt of the petition.

What if the municipality believes there are not enough votes to support the annexation during a municipal-initiated annexation for the second time around?

While the statute reads “the proposal shall again be voted upon in not more than 120 days” the municipality is not obligated to hold this second election if it determines that doing so would be a waste of money. The municipality may cancel and stop the annexation proceeding at any time.

What are some examples that might be included in a plan of intent with a forced annexation?

Examples of required supporting information for the plan of intent, includes: services, service schedules, assessment and taxes, proposed zoning, and an effective date.

When is an election needed related to annexation?

When there is a municipal-initiated annexation, an election is needed. Upon receiving court approval for the annexation, the municipality then proceeds to hold an election before the municipal limits may be extended.

When an election is held to annex property for a municipal-initiated annexation, what is the percentage by which it must pass?

The proposition must be approved by a majority of those voting within the municipality and a majority of those voting in the area to be annexed. If a majority of the municipal voters approve the annexation but majority approval is not obtained in the area to be annexed, a new election is held in not more than 120 days. At this second election, approval by two-thirds of the voters, counting those in the municipality and those in the area to be annexed together, will authorize the municipality to annex the area.

What if there are no registered voters in the area to be annexed?

If there are no registered voters in the area to be annexed, then during the first election annexation would pass if two-thirds of the voters in the municipality vote in favor of the annexation in the municipality that is requesting the annexation.

What is the annexation process for landowner-initiated or voluntary annexation?

Basic chronology of landowner-initiated or voluntary annexation (except in municipalities in Jefferson, St. Charles and Franklin counties that follow special rules):
Step 4. Notice of the hearing must be published at least seven days prior to the public hearing. The notice must be published in a newspaper of general circulation qualified to publish legal notices.

Any interested person, corporation or political subdivision may appear and present evidence on the proposed annexation.

Any written objection to the annexation must be filed within 14 days of the public hearing and must be signed by 5% of the registered voters from within the municipality or two registered voters from the area to be annexed.

Step 5. If, after the public hearing there is no objection, then the city may annex the territory by ordinance without further action, once the governing body of the municipality determines:

That the annexation is reasonable and necessary to the proper development of the city; and

That the city has the ability to furnish normal municipal services to the area to be annexed within a reasonable time frame.

Step 6. Three certified copies of the annexation ordinance must be filed with the county clerk.

When going through the process of a voluntary annexation, the land must be contiguous and compact. What does that mean?

The terms contiguous and compact, according to Section 71.012 RS Mo means that an unincorporated area that is being requested to be annexed would be considered touching the limits of a municipality even if there is a highway or railroad right of way in between. The term contiguous and compact does not prevent voluntary annexations just because the annexation would create an island of unincorporated area within the municipality, so long as the owners of the unincorporated island were given the opportunity to voluntarily annex in.

What is a flagpole or balloon annexation? Are these allowed?

Flagpole annexation or balloon annexation are terms used for an annexation by a municipality where it tries to acquire new piece of land that is contiguous to the existing municipal boundary; however, it is only connected to it by a thin strip of land. It is sometimes called a “flagpole annexation” because the piece of land attempting to be annexed resembles a flagpole, where the connection is the “pole” and the land trying to be annexed is the “flag.” No, this type of annexation is not allowed.

What public outreach do municipalities have to do if they annex property?

If the municipality is considering annexing property, they must hold a public hearing. The public hearing is held primarily for the purpose of presenting the plan of intent. Once the date is set for the hearing, notice must be made by certified mail to all fee owners of record within the areas to be annexed. The notice must be made not less than 30 and no more than 60 days before the hearing. The residents of the area are to be notified through newspaper publication. Notice must be published in a newspaper of general circulation qualified to publish legal matters in the county at least once per week for three consecutive weeks prior to the hearing, with at least one such notice being not more than 20 days and no less than 10 days before the hearing.

After annexation, how soon must a municipality provide services?

If it is a municipal-initiated annexation, the municipality has three years to provide services. If it is a landowner-initiated annexation, the city must provide services within a “reasonable time.” This has not been defined by the statute or the courts.
What if services are not provided within three years for municipally initiated annexation or within a “reasonable time” for landowner-initiated annexation?

If services are not provided within the allotted amount of time, then those residing in the annexed area could start the deannexation process and file with the circuit court.

What agencies need to be notified following an annexation?

It is recommended that the Missouri Department of Revenue be notified with regard to the sales and use tax boundary to make sure the newly annexed area is included in their calculations. It is also recommended, that the county clerk and the county assessor be notified of newly annexed property.

Is annexation the same as consolidation?

No, under state statute certain adjoining municipalities may consolidate under one government. Consolidation of municipalities may be instituted by the governing bodies of any cities, towns or villages, or any combination of, by ordinance adopted by the governing bodies of the respective municipalities. Another way for municipalities to be considered for consolidation, is for voters from each of the affected municipalities to sign a petition requesting the county commission put the question of consolidation on the ballot for the next election. For more information on consolidation, please see Missouri Revised Statutes 72.150 to 72.220.

How can I find out more information?

This Missouri Municipal League has a technical bulletin entitled “Annexation Laws in Missouri” that is available to League members free of charge. Email info@mocities.com or call 573-635-9134 to receive your free copy, or download by logging in to the League website at www.mocities.com. League staff are available for any additional questions regarding annexation.

Ramona Huckstep is a policy and membership associate with the Missouri Municipal League. Ramona has been with the League five years and enjoys getting out to MML-hosted regional meetings and visiting MML members around the state. As the spouse of a veteran, Ramona appreciates the sacrifice of the families and veterans who have served our country.
Economic Development Projects Around The State

Cape Girardeau

Regional Airport Success

An airport is a critical part of any regional hub focused on economic growth. The Cape Girardeau Regional Airport (CGI), one of few commercial airports in the state, has experienced a surge in passenger boardings after partnering with SkyWest Airlines (United Express) starting in December 2017. Daily flights from CGI now connect to Chicago O’Hare, making it easy to reach the world from our backyard.

As of early November 2019, the airport hit the important milestone of 10,000 commercial flight boardings. At that level, the airport can combine federal funds with local tax revenue approved by voters in August 2019 to build a new control tower and terminal for the regional airport.

Exceeding 10,000 boardings unlocks $2.55 million in additional funds from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Cape Girardeau voters in August 2019 renewed the Capital Improvement Sales Tax. Leveraging additional FAA and sales tax funds will provide the necessary $6.8 million for a new control tower and airport terminal.

In addition, long-time Airport Manager Bruce Loy will retire after the start of 2020. Deputy Airport Manager Katrina Amos will take the helm as major changes begin. We look forward to the bright future for our airport and regional economy!
The city of Creve Coeur is partnering with the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership to implement the bold vision of 39 North, a 600-acre global hub for plant and life sciences located in Creve Coeur.

Several projects are underway to physically transform the district and attract leaders in the agtech industry, as envisioned in the 39 North Master Plan shaped by regional stakeholders, including the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, Danforth Plant Science Center, Bayer, St. Louis County, the city of Olivette, and the city of Creve Coeur.

The major vehicular interchange of Olive and Lindbergh Boulevard will be reconfigured to improve traffic flow and also free up land for redevelopment. This $5 million project will be under construction in 2020.

The 39 North Greenway Plan aims to create 11 miles of new greenway paths throughout the district, and the Old Olive Street Road redesign project will convert the existing road into a destination corridor that will include a $2.4 million intersection reconstruction.

Benson Hill Biosystems, an agriculture technology firm, recently committed to 39 North by commencing construction of its new $52 million, 160,000-square-foot headquarters in the heart of the district that is expected to bring more than 100 jobs to the area.
Perryville

Economic Expansion

The city of Perryville continues to grow at a steady pace despite a low unemployment rate. It is continually the lowest unemployment rate in the state at under 2%. The community’s population is home to more than 8,000 persons. Although it is a smaller municipality, it continues to be recognized at the state and national level for its ability to attract successful development and expansion projects.

Major employers include Gilster-Mary Lee, TG Missouri and West Star Aviation, while several local businesses are multi-generational. A couple of the community’s success stories include a recent announcement from TG Missouri and the addition of West Star Aviation to Perryville.

TG Missouri parent company Toyoda Gosei Co. Ltd. announced plans to expand its plant in Perryville by 64,000 square feet and invest $17 million by the end of fiscal year 2021. With this expansion, the Perryville facility will span 921,390 square feet of manufacturing space.

The TG Missouri plant in Perryville opened in 1986 on 275 acres of land along Route 51 on the City’s north side and is the largest of Toyoda Gosei’s U.S. production facilities, with approximately 2,100 employees.

Another company is West Star Aviation aircraft maintenance facility that opened at Perryville’s Regional Airport in 2018. It has just earned its FAA Part 145 maintenance repair station certification. The authorization process took 18 months to complete the FAA requirements.

“We are proud that these two quality companies call Perryville home,” said Scott Sattler, executive director for Perry County Economic Development Authority.

St. Joseph

American Electric Building Project

The city of St. Joseph has partnered with Wes Grammer of Skye Real Estate on the use of public assistance on the redevelopment of the former American Electric Building, located within downtown St. Joseph. The proposed project involves the rehabilitation and the restoration of an existing approximately 200,000-square-foot historic building, located at 302 North 3rd Street, for the development of market rate apartments and commercial retail and office space. The total cost for this project is estimated at $40 million.

The City utilized a variety of public incentives, including the use of a community improvement district sales tax, tax increment financing, and Chapter 100. In order to make this project financially feasible, all three economic development incentives were needed to assist with the complete redevelopment of this important downtown icon.

The City has been actively working the past 10 years through public-private partnerships to help revitalize downtown. St Joseph has realized the success of its downtown helps to promote the overall attraction to businesses and residents to the community.
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MML Welcomes New Board Members

The Missouri Municipal League welcomes three new board members to the MML Board of Directors.

Damien Boley
Mayor, Smithville

Boley was elected in 2018 at the age of 37 and is currently running for a second term. He did not serve as an alderman prior to being elected Mayor. Boley lives in Smithville with his wife Kelly and 8 year-old daughter Anastasia. He works in IT and teaches at two local colleges. Along with serving on the MML’s Environment, Energy and Sustainable Development policy committee, he also serves on the Northland Regional Chamber board. He was recently asked to serve on the KC Climate action executive board as treasurer.

Boley loves promoting Smithville. On his first official day on the job, he interviewed and made an offer to Smithville’s city administrator who, along with the board of aldermen, have delivered large infrastructure projects including a downtown streetscape, sewer, water, sidewalk and trail projects. The City just adopted a 10-year strategic plan and has started work on a comprehensive plan update.

Bryant DeLong
Council Member, North Kansas City

DeLong serves on the MML Resolutions Committee in 2017 and 2018, and also served on the MML Board of Directors Nominating Committee in 2018. He is active with the National League of Cities First Tier Suburbs Council, as well as the Transportation & Infrastructure Services Federal Advocacy Committee.

Len Pagano
Mayor, St. Peters

Len Pagano has served the City of St. Peters as an elected official since 1983. He was a Ward 3 Alderman from 1983-2007. In April 2007, he was elected Mayor of St. Peters to fill a vacancy. He was re-elected to full, four-year terms as Mayor in 2008, 2012 and 2016.

Mayor Pagano currently serves on the President’s Advisory Board on Community for Lindenwood University, is an Executive Board Member for Metro Mayors of St. Louis and serves on the Executive Board for Missouri Mayors United. Mayor Pagano was recently appointed to the Missouri Municipal League Board of Directors.
Heather Hall Elected To 2020 NLC Board Of Directors
At the recent National League of Cities’ City Summit in San Antonio, Texas, Kansas City Councilwoman and MML Board Member Heather Hall was elected to a two-year term to the NLC Board of Directors. Congratulations Heather!

Engineer Of The Year
Congratulations to Chris Boyd, city of Richmond Heights public works director, who was awarded the American Public Works Association (APWA) Professional Engineer of the Year award!

Complete Streets Consortium
The National Complete Streets Coalition is working with Missouri-based partners to launch the third “Complete Streets Consortium Series,” with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. After a competitive application process, the city of Kirkwood, city of Joplin, and Eastern Jackson County have been selected to participate in this program to support safer, healthier streets.

Digital Cities Survey
Congratulations to the city of Kansas City, Missouri, and the city of Lebanon for being honored as winners in the 2019 Digital Cities Survey. Now in its 19th year, the annual survey, sponsored by the Center for Digital Government (CDG), recognizes cities using technology to tackle social challenges, enhance services, strengthen cybersecurity, and more.

East-West Gateway Celebrates Public Sector Achievements With 2019 OLGA Awards
East-West Gateway Council of Governments presented its annual Outstanding Local Government Achievement Awards (OLGA) to eight recipients during its 54th annual meeting and luncheon Nov. 13, 2019. The awards recognize area governments and officials for their achievements in public service, leadership and productive collaboration. Find details about their accomplishments by visiting East-West Gateway’s website at www.ewgateway.org/. This year’s winners are:

- Herb Simmons, Executive Director, St. Clair County Emergency Management Agency — Gateway Lifetime Public Service Award
- Gerry Welch, Mayor, Webster Groves — Gateway Lifetime Public Service Award

- City of Dellwood — Exemplary Accomplishment by a Local Government Jurisdiction, Agency or Individual
- City of Wentzville Stormwater Program — Exemplary Accomplishment by a Local Government Jurisdiction, Agency or Individual
- O’Fallon Downtown District — Exemplary Collaboration, Partnership or Regional Initiative
- St. Clair County Head Start Apprenticeship Program — Exemplary Collaboration, Partnership or Regional Initiative
- STL.works — Exemplary Collaboration, Partnership or Regional Initiative
- St. Louis Downtown Multimodal Plan — Leadership in Planning and Design Innovation

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For full details and enrollment form visit: www.mocities.com
### MML Calendar of Events

#### January 2020
- 21..... MML Webinar: "An Insurance Perspective on Cyber Security," presented by Jeff Eiserman, Advisor, Ollis/Akers/Arney Insurance and Business Advisors
- 23..... West Gate Region Meeting, Sugar Creek, Missouri
- 30..... MCMA Winter Workshop, Columbia, Missouri
- 31..... Missouri GFOA Winter Seminar, Columbia, Missouri

#### February 2020
- 5..... MML Webinar: "Municipal Court Update: Show-Me Courts and Recent Supreme Court Rule Changes, and How They Impact Your City," presented by Missouri Municipal & Associate Judges Association
- 11-12..... MML Legislative Conference, Jefferson City, Missouri

#### March 2020
- 2..... MML Innovation Award Entries Due
- 2..... MML Annual Conference Speaking Proposals Due
- 8-12..... Missouri CCFOA Annual Spring Institute, Columbia, Missouri
- 9..... MoCCFOA New Clerks Institute, Columbia, Missouri
- 18..... MML Webinar: "Records Management," presented by John Korasick, Director, Local Records, Office of the Secretary of State
- 25..... MML Webinar: "Ethics in the Political Arena," presented by Ron Holifield, Chief Executive Officer, Strategic Government Resources

#### April 2020
- 7..... Municipal Election Day
- 8-10..... Missouri GFOA Annual Spring Conference, Lake Ozark, Missouri
- 12-18..... Missouri Local Government Week

#### May 2020
- 17-20..... International Institute of Municipal Clerks Annual Conference, St. Louis, Missouri

*Find more events and details on [www.mocities.com](http://www.mocities.com) and in the MML monthly e-newsletter.*

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At the recent National League of Cities City Summit in San Antonio, Texas, MML President Mayor Debra Hickey had the opportunity to meet up with her counterpart at the League of Kansas Municipalities, Governing Body President John McTaggart.

MML Deputy Director Richard Sheets, MML President and Battlefield Mayor Debra Hickey, and MML Executive Director Dan Ross stop for a photo opportunity at City Summit in San Antonio, Texas, in November 2019.

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