Conference 2021 - Next Week!

See you soon! Next week, the League will hold our Annual Conference in Topeka. Staff will be busy all next week prepping for the conference and be on-site to greet hundreds of local government officials and staff with the City Attorney’s Association Fall CLE and the Annual Conference. The League office will be closed around mid-day on Friday, October 9 through Tuesday, October 12.

Last-minute registrations can be taken via e-mail directly to Rynae Redd, rredd@lkm.org, through Monday, October 4. The League recently posted a Terms and Conditions for COVID-19 for the Annual Conference on the main conference web page. We encourage all attendees to review this document immediately. We can’t wait to gather again in Topeka!

ARPA Reporting Deadline Extended

The U.S. Treasury announced on September 30 that reporting dates for American Rescue Plan Act spending are being delayed. States, territories, counties, and cities (50k+), and Tribal governments will report project and expenditure data next on January 31, 2022 (instead of Oct 31, 2021). The first reporting deadline for Non-Entitlement Units (cities < 50k) will be April 30, 2022 (instead of Oct 31, 2021). Treasury will provide recipients with user guides prior to the reporting deadlines.

At the League, we knew this was becoming a source of stress for many of you with the original reporting deadline of October 31 coming up. We will hopefully see guidance and access to the reporting portal well before the Jan. 31 deadline for large cities and April 30 deadline for NEUs. View the U.S. Treasury’s Compliance and Reporting guide.
Celebrate Home Rule this October!

In 2021, the League is celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Home Rule amendment. Before 1960, a state statute was required to authorize a city to take action on a particular issue — a city had no power to act at the local level. If a city wanted to move on anything, from animal control to fire prevention, they first had to petition the state legislature for statutory permission. This type of state oversight prevented cities from being innovative and adapting to the rapidly changing environments in which they continue to operate.

We are celebrating Home Rule in Kansas this October! Download a proclamation for your city to proclaim October 11, 2021 as Home Rule Day or use any of our graphics to share the concept of Home Rule on your city’s social media, website, or newsletters! The digital toolkit is available online and we encourage all cities to use it and celebrate Home Rule in Kansas this October!

Since 1961, Kansas has been a Home Rule state via constitutional amendment; meaning that the people of Kansas have decided that they primarily prefer their local governments, rather than the state, making decisions for their communities. The basic power granted to cities by the Home Rule amendment are included in these few words: “Cities are hereby empowered to determine their local affairs and government.” On the one hand, Home Rule grants cities the power to legislate their local affairs and government. On the other hand, it restricts the power of the state legislature to treat cities differently and to enact binding nonuniform restrictions on local affairs.

Sunflower Trails Grant Program

The Sunflower Trails program is back after a five-year hiatus. Many municipalities have utilized Sunflower Trails funds in their communities before and may be interested in the current grant opportunities. The Sunflower Foundation is offering two unique opportunities for Kansas communities and trails:

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Trail Builders

This grant opportunity will provide funding to improve the health and well-being of Kansans by supporting the development of public trails. We are inviting communities of all sizes, locations, and backgrounds to apply, but priority will be given to underserved areas with no existing trails and projects with an explicit intention of increasing diversity among trail users.

Invitation to Apply for the Trail Champion Cohort

This program is designed for community teams ready to take the next step in enhancing the value of existing trails. Priority will be given to proposals working to diversify their trail base of users, supporters and volunteers. The cohort will take place January-April 2022; selected teams will have access to high-level expertise, technical assistance and coaching around topics such as economic impact analysis and trail user evaluation.

Submissions for both opportunities are due Tuesday, November 9, 2021. Please read the RFP/guidance documents in their entirety before you begin the electronic submission process for each of these opportunities. Technical support will be available through 4:00 p.m. CST on November 9, 2021. Organizations with questions may contact Elizabeth Burger with the Sunflower Foundation.