

The Basics on California Cities

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City Basics



- 482 cities. Approximately 83% of state population, 31.5 million
- Formed by the people themselves to provide more self-government. The level of government closest to the people.
- Issues very important to city residents:
 - Community traditions and sense of place. “Each city is unique.”
 - Local history.
 - Retaining “local quality of life.”
 - Ensuring new growth and development match community standards.
- Cities provide ***municipal*** services: police, fire, water, sewer, parks, library, etc. to local residents.
- Common ground between all cities: passionate support for fundamental principle of local democracy and ***local control***.

City Basics

Two Types of Cities:

- Charter Cities (121): Authorized in the Constitution. Special powers to govern “municipal affairs.”
- General Law Cities (361) formed under the general laws of the state with local voter approval.

Key Challenges

- Local budget and economic development/loss of redevelopment.
- Sustainability of quality local services and employee benefits
- Absorbing population growth (AB 32/SB 375) ideals, matched up against fiscal and infrastructure limitations.
- Environmental challenges with expanding pop.: water, air, trash, etc.
- Maintaining Quality of Life.

What is the League?

- Established in 1898 (operating for 119 years)
- Organization dominated by local *elected* officials
- Mission: *Restore and protect local control for cities through education and advocacy in order to enhance the quality of life for all Californians.*

League Key Functions: Education

Local self-government is a complicated endeavor. Much to learn and keep track of: *Brown Act, public contracting, environmental laws, budgeting, political reform, land use and planning, solid waste, water supply, transportation, cap and trade, economic development...*

Cities are constantly innovating and learning from each other.

- The League hosts many conferences and webinars to address the educational needs of local elected officials, city department heads, their staff at all phases of their professional careers.

Other information sources:

- Western City Magazine
- City Advocate (newsletter)
- Institute for Local Government (League/CSAC/CSDA)
- Californiacityfinance.com

League Key Functions: Advocacy

- **Policy/Legislative:**
 - 6 full-time lobbyists.
 - 16 Regional Public Affairs Managers mobilize city officials and coalition partners to augment and support these efforts.
- **Legal:** Represents city interests in both federal and state court. File approximately 50 friend of the court briefs per year.
- **Ballot Issues:** Proposition 1A, Proposition 98/99 and Proposition 22

League Legislative Representatives

Dan Carrigg

Deputy Executive Director/Legislative Director



Tim Cromartie

Public Safety



Jason Rhine

Housing, Community & Economic Development



League Legislative Representatives

Rony Berdugo

Transportation and Public Works



Dane Hutchings

Governance, Transparency & Labor Relations



Erin Evans-Fudem

Environmental Quality, Community Services



Thank you!

For more information on legislative language, the League's position letters, and sample position letters for cities, please visit www.cacities.org/billsearch and type the bill number into the search function