

## Small Cities Benefit from TML Services



The Texas Municipal League has a proud history of serving Texas cities. With a membership of more than 1,060 cities, the League is dedicated to representing the interests of all its members in a number of ways. Beyond the traditional services, we are continually looking for better and more efficient ways to meet the needs of all our members.

Several years ago, the League recognized that while all Texas cities share many common interests and concerns, small cities have different needs than larger cities. At that time, we began to focus special attention on small cities and their special needs and problems. A Small Cities Advisory Council (SCAC) was formed to recommend ways in which TML services can be expanded or modified to better serve the needs of small cities. The members of the SCAC are a dedicated and diverse group and represent cities from all corners of the state.

If you have an idea for a service that would be beneficial to smaller cities, communicate with the members of the SCAC in your area. It may be that the service you want is already available and you just need help accessing it. On the other hand, you may have an idea for a new service to meet the needs of our 934 member cities with populations of less than 15,000. Or, maybe you would like to be considered for a position on the SCAC in the future.

This column regularly reports on the projects and efforts of the group. Recently, the SCAC completed an

update of the Newly Elected Officials Training Video. The video covers the basics of municipal government and the role of elected officials' in the effective and efficient operation of a city. It is an excellent companion to the *Handbook for Mayors and Councilmembers*.

Several years ago, TML embarked on a project to take training to small cities to help answer their questions and facilitate an exchange with neighboring cities. Each year, the League, under the auspices of the SCAC, conducts a series of Small Cities' Problem-Solving Clinics. The clinics are designed for small cities and are held in small cities. Many city officials have attended these clinics and have benefited from the exchange of information and the opportunity to meet others from cities like your own. Some workshop participants have never before attended a TML-sponsored event during their time in office. Registration fees for the workshop are kept at a minimum—no more than \$35.00 per person, with lunch provided—to allow for multiple registrations from a single city.

These one-day sessions are designed to provide answers to and discussion on the questions most frequently asked by elected and appointed officials. Topics covered during the sessions include a legal question-and-answer session, discussion on the Open Meetings and Public Information Acts, economic development tools for small cities, state legislative and agency actions impacting small cities, and much more.

## Final Legislative Report Available

**T**he regular session of the 80th Texas Legislature is over. When the gavel fell on May 28, it marked the end of one of the most contentious legislative sessions in recent memory. Texas cities were in a defensive posture for most of the legislative session, and the legislature passed a number of significant bills that impact municipal operations.

In an attempt to facilitate more timely access by TML member city officials, the legislative report may be downloaded from the TML Web site at [www.tml.org](http://www.tml.org). As bills are signed or vetoed by the governor, the Web site will provide updates. As always, it is suggested that you visit the Texas Legislature Online at [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us).

City officials who are unable to access the legislative report via the TML Web site may call the League offices at 512-231-7400 and request that a printed copy be sent by mail. ★

Additional sessions are being planned for the coming months; upcoming clinics are listed below. All elected and appointed officials from small cities within a reasonable daily commute will receive registration information by mail.

For additional information on these programs or other TML efforts on behalf of small cities, contact the TML office at 512-231-7400. ★

### Dates and Locations of Future Small Cities' Problem-Solving Clinics

*July 19* – Pampa  
*August 23* – Kingsville Area  
*September 20* – Lufkin Area  
*October 4* – San Angelo Area

If your city has a facility that could accommodate a Small Cities' Problem-Solving Clinic, please contact John Philpott at 512-231-7400.

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