



COLORADO
MUNICIPAL
LEAGUE

Newsletter

Vol. 46, No. 17, August 28, 2020

DOLA awards \$16.8M to local governments through energy and mineral impact assistance funds amid declining severance tax revenue



The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) recently awarded \$16.8 million to 39 local governments through Tier II and Tier I of the Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance Funds (EIAF) program. Funding from the EIAF program is ongoing and helps communities socially or economically affected by the development, processing, or energy conversion of minerals and mineral fuels. The department recently awarded 19 local governments, including Haxtun, Creede, and Dolores, a total of \$14 million.

DOLA awarded the Haxtun Hospital District in Haxtun \$1 million for updates to the primary infrastructure in the 1964 facility. Needs include refurbishment of water, electrical, and HVAC systems in order for current technology and equipment to become an option for the district, which serves the most northeastern population of the state. The Town of Creede was awarded \$323,000 for expansion of the Creede Early Learning Center. Renovations will help to improve quality standards by meeting Colorado Department of Education design guidelines, including the latest ADA requirements. The expansion will increase space provisions to 30 square feet per child indoors and 75 square feet per child outdoors, in addition to increasing the number of children overall it can accommodate. The Town of Dolores was awarded nearly \$300,000 for solar installations at their wastewater treatment plant, town workshop and town hall.

The installations will offset 100% of the town's current electrical usage at each location. Programs that receive Tier I grant funding are eligible for up to \$200,000 for their projects. In the most recent cycle, DOLA awarded 20 local governments a total of \$2.8 million in Tier I awards.

These grants are extremely important to impacted local governments. This makes the most recent projections of severance tax revenue extremely concerning. Revenues in the Local Government and Mineral Energy Impact Fund are projected to decline from \$128 million in FY 2018–19 to \$70 million in FY 2019–20, and finally to \$12 million in FY 2020–21. CML will continue to watch the projections and defend these funds as future state budgets are balanced.

For a complete list of Tier II awards, visit bit.ly/EIAFT2820. For the list of Tier I awards, visit bit.ly/EIAFT1820.

CML Executive Board holds special August meeting

The CML Executive Board held a rare special meeting on Friday, Aug. 21 to get a head start on what promises to be an eventful fall and beginning to 2021.

Bob Widner, Centennial city attorney and CML Executive Board president, first engaged the Executive Board members on how CML can best support Colorado municipalities on race, equity, and leadership issues going into the new year. While many Colorado municipalities have responded to the events of this year with local initiatives and programs, Widner would like to use his term as CML Executive Board president to advance something effective and will utilize feedback from Executive Board members, staff, and other municipalities to help inform the direction CML will take.

In addition, the Executive Board took the opportunity to support a request from the Aurora Urban Renewal Authority (AURA) to submit an *amicus curiae* brief in support of the AURA's suit against the Arapahoe County Assessor. At issue is an appeal to the Colorado Court of Appeals on multiple aspects related to the assessor's unique calculation of property tax "increment" that funds urban renewal and downtown development authority projects through tax increment financing (TIF).

Next, David Broadwell, general counsel, provided the Executive Board with a thorough background on the initiatives and referenda on the fall statewide ballot of potential municipal interest. The Executive Board will

consider whether or not to take positions on any of the items at its next meeting.

Finally, Meghan Dollar, legislative advocacy manager, provided a thorough report on the implementation of SB 20–217, "Enhance Police Accountability," and the work that CML is doing to assist our members. There was also brief discussion of legislative concepts that may follow SB 20–217 in the upcoming legislative session.

Future CML Executive Board meeting dates are **Sept. 18, Oct. 16, and Dec. 11**.

CML Fall District Meetings

Join the CML staff for the annual Fall District Meetings. These meetings are a great chance to learn more about CML's legislative agenda and connect with other municipalities within your district. All meetings will be held virtually and begin at 5 p.m.

Visit bit.ly/2BqknmJ for more information and to register!

Sept. 9 - District 4

Sept. 15 - District 5

Sept. 16 - District 6

Sept. 17 - District 7 & 14

Sept. 17 - District 13

Sept. 22 - District 8

Sept. 23 - District 1

Sept. 23 - District 10

Sept. 24 - District 9

Sept. 29 - District 2

Sept. 29 - District 12

Sept. 30 - District 11

See the next edition for a Virtual Conference recap

Check out the **Sept. 11** edition of the *CML Newsletter* for a recap of this week's CML Virtual Conference. Find out more about CML award winners, including the first ever winner of the Sam Mamet Good Governance award.



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Subscription to *CML Newsletter* is offered as a portion of member dues. Cost to nonmembers is \$300 a year.

CML Board Member Sharon Craig appointed to CDOT special highway committee



CML congratulates CML Board Member Sharon Craig on her recent appointment to CDOT's Special Highway Committee, filling the vacancy left by former Windsor

Mayor Kristie Melendez earlier this year. The Special Highway Committee is an advisory board that oversees Colorado's Off-System Bridge Program, awarding over \$4 million in grants to local governments each year to rehabilitate or replace deficient bridges

across the state. Craig serves as a trustee for the Town of Ignacio and, coming from the southwest corner of Colorado, will bring a unique perspective and some needed geographical diversity to the committee. The committee will begin meeting again this fall to review grant applications and select this year's recipients for off-system bridge awards. With Craig's selection, CML is assured of a steady hand that will keep the best interests of all of Colorado's cities and towns at the forefront of her decision making process. Congratulations, Sharon!

Cherry Hills Village introduces new city manager



Cherry Hills Village is proud to introduce its new City Manager Chris Cramer.

Chris Cramer joined Cherry Hills Village in July 2019 as the community

development director. Prior to working for Cherry Hills Village, he was the community development director for the City of Commerce City, where he served since 2014. Cramer is excited to work with city council, staff, and residents to build on the positive momentum established by former City Manager Jim Thorsen.

2020 Municipal HUTF revenue estimates now available

Each year, CML prepares an annual Highway User Tax Fund (HUTF) memo and municipal estimates to assist municipalities with modifying their current 2020 budget and developing their 2021 budget. These estimates are based on data from the Colorado Department of Transportation and the State Treasurer's Office and are being provided for budgeting purposes only.

While previous forecasts have demonstrated a reliable degree of accuracy over the years, this year's HUTF projections may be less dependable due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Although the forecast has incorporated reliable year-over-year comparisons into

its data models and accounts for some of the economic impacts associated with COVID-19, it cannot entirely predict all future outcomes associated with the pandemic. CML will continue to work closely with our counterparts at CDOT and the State Treasurer's Office to monitor any unforeseen circumstances and data in anticipation of potentially providing updated adjustments to the forecast if necessary. We appreciate your patience and understanding during these unprecedented circumstances.

A copy of this year's HUTF memo and estimates is currently available on the CML website at bit.ly/31hFq5h.

EPA Brownfield grant money now available to local communities



The EPA's Brownfields program offers local communities grants on an annual basis for the assessment, cleanup and reuse of property which has the presence of, or potential presence of, hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. Brownfields grants can be used to address a wide array of contaminants, the most common of which are lead, petroleum, asbestos, PAH's, VOC's, PCB, Arsenic and metals. Brownfields grants support revitalization efforts by funding environmental assessment, cleanup, and job training activities. The EPA recently announced the FY21 application guidelines for Multipurpose, Assessment

and Cleanup Grants available to local communities through the Brownfields program. Brownfields Assessment Grants provide funding for Brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, and community outreach. Brownfields Cleanup Grants provide funding to carry out cleanup activities at Brownfield

sites owned by the applicant. Multipurpose (MP) Grants provide funding to conduct a range of eligible assessment and cleanup activities at one or more Brownfield sites in a target area.

The EPA anticipates awarding an estimated 10 Multipurpose Grants for an estimated \$800,000 per grant, subject to the quality of applications received, availability of funds, and other applicable considerations. The closing date and time for receipt of applications is **Oct. 28**, 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET). Applications must be submitted through [grants.gov](https://www.epa.gov/grants). Applications received

after 11:59 p.m. ET on **Oct. 28**, will not be considered.

For examples of past successful projects which utilized Brownfields grant funding, including several in Colorado, visit bit.ly/31fTID9.

There is free technical assistance available to help communities apply for Brownfields grants through Kansas State University's TAB program, ksutab.org. The TAB Program, in partnership with the U.S. EPA Region 5 Brownfields Program, is offering free Brownfields grant-writing webinars, which are designed to offer tools and tips for grant-writing when applying for U.S. EPA Brownfields, Assessment, Multipurpose and Cleanup Grants. Attendance is free, but registration is required. You can find a list of workshops and webinars at TAB's website ksutab.org.

For more information, contact Maggie Egberts of KSU TAB, at maggiejessie@ksu.edu, (785) 532-0782. For questions or more information about Brownfields grants, please contact Brian Kennedy of EPA Region 5 Brownfields Program, at kennedy.brian@epa.gov, (312) 353-4383.

CML executive director to host second open town hall discussion

CML members are invited to the next town hall discussion on Wednesday, **Sept. 2**, at 3 p.m. The discussion, hosted by Kevin Bommer, CML executive director, will discuss issues and questions on the minds of CML members, coronavirus-related or otherwise. This is the second in what is anticipated to be an ongoing series of open discussions meant to keep municipal elected officials and staff from around the state connected with each other and the League.

Register in advance for this meeting at bit.ly/2FDctbk. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. If you have any questions or issues you want brought up during the discussion, email them to Kevin Bommer at kbommer@cml.org.



NLC now accepting leadership applications for 2021



The National League of Cities (NLC) recently opened the application portal for leadership positions, including the NLC Board of Directors, NLC Federal Advocacy Committees, Member Councils, and Constituency Groups.

Members interested in applying to serve as an NLC Officer or Board Member, Committee or Council Chair or Vice Chair, or leader of a Constituency Group have until **Sept. 22** to fill out the online application. All candidates must indicate on their application

whether they have obtained – or expect to obtain – their state league’s endorsement, so it is strongly advised to communicate with Kevin Bommer, CML executive director at kbommer@cml.org before submitting an application. (The state municipal league endorsement is strongly encouraged, but a written endorsement is not required.) You may choose to request letters of endorsement from people in your community, region, or state. These endorsements are completely optional. Applications and supporting materials are submitted using the MyNLC account.

The leadership application form can be found at bit.ly/2YkVMYK.

For those who would prefer to apply for appointment as a regular member of an advocacy

committee, member council, or constituency group, applications for regular membership will be available on **Oct. 20**. You can learn more at bit.ly/3aLASql.

Member news

New Associate Members

Ayres Associates Inc.

Rex Bell, vice president
3665 JFK Parkway, Bldg. 2, Suite 100
Fort Collins, CO 80525
970-223-5556
bellr@ayresassociates.com
www.ayresassociates.com

As a multidiscipline firm, Ayres delivers an impressive range of engineering, mapping, environmental, architectural, and survey services – all while focusing on building long-term relationships as trusted members of our clients’ teams. With every project we see our clients’ future more clearly and become better prepared to guide them through their next project.

Schneider Electric

6430 S. Ider St.
Aurora, CO 80016
321-271-9400
laura.french@se.com
www.se.com

Schneider Electric provides energy and automation digital solutions for efficiency and sustainability. Schneider Electric combines world-leading energy technologies, real-time automation, software and services into integrated solutions for homes, buildings, data centers, infrastructure and industries.

Hexagon Digital Wave

Greg Brophy, lobbyist
13760 E. Arapahoe Rd.
Centennial, CO 80112
970-630-0852
senatorbrophy@gmail.com
www.digitalwavecorp.com

Hexagon Digital Wave delivers safe and innovative solutions for a cleaner energy future. Hexagon Digital Wave enables storage, transport and conversion to clean energy in a wide range of mobility, industrial and consumer applications.

Research corner: NLC releases 2020 city fiscal conditions report

In its 35th year, the National League of Cities City Fiscal Conditions report continues to provide insight into the fiscal health of cities, towns and villages from across the nation. The findings in this year's survey reveal that America's municipalities are experiencing the fiscal consequences of this pandemic-downturn at an unprecedented speed – and like recent recessions, it will take years for municipal budgets to recover from the impact of COVID-19.



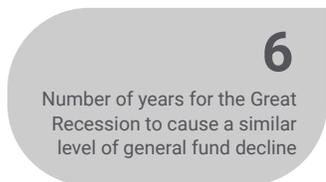
Nationwide, municipal fiscal years vary. For some respondents, 2020 fiscal years were just beginning as the coronavirus spread, and their budgets are facing the full brunt of the economic downturn throughout 2020, while others, which started their fiscal years in 2019, reaped the benefits of a stronger economy and only felt the downturn in the tail end of their fiscal year. Consequently, measuring the severity and impact of the coronavirus on cities' FY 2020 budget will be influenced by when the fiscal year begins.



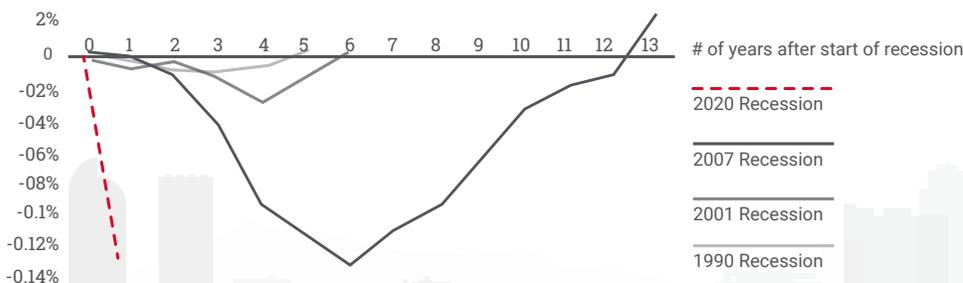
For FY 2020, 78% of municipalities reported they would be less able to meet the fiscal needs of their communities than in FY 2019.

For FY 2021, 87% of municipalities reported they would be less able to meet their fiscal needs than in FY 2020.

This widespread sentiment about lack of fiscal capacity has not been reported since the low point of the Great Recession, and is a reversal of 2019, when only 24% reported they would be less able to meet their fiscal needs than the year before.



COMPARATIVE REVENUE TRENDS DURING RECENT RECESSIONS



Source: National League of Cities City Fiscal Conditions 2020

As states face their own fiscal challenges and the federal government provides only minimal fiscal relief to cities, cities and towns are once again in a position to largely go it alone. In this environment, municipal balanced-budget requirements and revenue-raising restrictions have translated to severe service cuts, extensive layoffs, furloughs and hiring freezes, and rollbacks in capital projects. Government investment in the economy is exactly what is needed during downturns, meaning that the future economic health of our nation relies on fiscally strong cities, towns and villages, along with state and federal investments. [View the full report at bit.ly/3jayv3U.](http://bit.ly/3jayv3U)



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