

2015

Colorado Cities & Towns Week Toolkit



COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS



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A Word From CML Executive Director Sam Mamet



When we developed Colorado Cities and Towns Week (C&T Week) last year, we envisioned a week that would unite the municipal family in communicating to residents the essential services you provide. We hoped for a week filled with opportunities to bring residents, staff, and elected officials together, to educate young people on the importance of municipal government, and to acknowledge and show appreciation to municipal employees and volunteers for all the hard work they do each and every day. That is exactly what we got, and more!

The participation of Colorado's municipalities exceeded my expectations — more than 40 municipalities of all sizes and across the state participated in some way, and we hope even more will join in the fun this year, **Sept. 14–20!** If you participated last year, please join us again this year. If you were not able to participate last year, please take part in this united effort to acknowledge how terrific Colorado's cities and towns are this year!

You and your municipal colleagues make Colorado a great place to live, work, visit, and play. We appreciate all that you do. If we can be of any assistance as you plan your C&T Week celebration, do not hesitate to let me or my colleague Lisa White, CML membership services manager, know. We can both be reached at 303-831-6411/ 866-578-0936 or at smamet@cml.org or lwhite@cml.org.

We are so excited to hear how you celebrate your city or town!

Sam Mamet
CML executive director



Chapter 1: The 2nd Annual Colorado Cities & Towns Week

What is Colorado Cities & Towns Week?

Now in its second year, sponsored by the Colorado Municipal League (CML), Colorado Cities & Towns Week (C&T Week), **Sept. 14–20**, is an opportunity for municipalities to connect with residents and acknowledge outstanding municipal employees and/or volunteers, while reminding residents about the vital services provided by their city or town.

Why has CML established this week?

C&T Week provides a unified statewide opportunity to recognize municipal employees and volunteers and to educate citizens on what municipal government is all about.

What is this toolkit?

This toolkit contains information to assist you in however you choose to celebrate; it outlines numerous ideas that cities and towns can use to celebrate and features ways some municipalities across the state celebrated last year. (Perhaps it will inspire you to do something similar in your community!) If an idea interests you, in addition to CML offering support, we are sure that leaders from those communities would be happy to give you some insights into their experiences as well.

Throughout this publication, tips for increasing access to healthy eating and active living are provided by CML partner, LiveWell Colorado Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Cities & Towns Campaign, and indicated by an asterisk (*). To learn more about the HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign, visit www.livewellcolorado.org/healcampaign.

Also, please keep in mind that this toolkit only contains suggestions — the possibilities are endless! Feel free to come up with your own way for reaching out to residents as a whole (or a specific segment of your citizenry) to promote the services you provide.

There are so many activities listed, how do I know which one to implement?

Implement the activity that your municipality has resources for and that provides the most value to your community. If you want to recognize city or town staff or volunteers, there is a section on that. If you would prefer to connect with a group of students in your community, take a look at the “Engaging Youth” section. The idea is to pick at least one way to connect with a group of people in your city or town during C&T Week.

How much money is this going to cost?

Many of the suggested events and activities do not cost anything to implement. Also, if you already have an event scheduled, consider simply including the C&T Week message in it. Some ideas are quick, inexpensive (or free), while others require more resources, coordination, and planning.

Where do I start?

We know you already have so much on your plate and are likely not thrilled with the idea of adding anything else to it. We totally understand, but we hope you will commit to doing at least one thing to create increased awareness of the vital programs and services you provide.

The best place to start is to look over this toolkit containing suggested events or activities. Do any of them resonate with you? If so, take the idea and run with it — make it your own! Tailor it to make it work for your community. Again, this toolkit is intended to provide ideas — do not feel that you have to do exactly what is described. Remember, by no means is this document complete; if you have any additional ideas or suggestions for ways to connect with your residents, go for it!

I have something scheduled. Now what?

Promote it. If it is an event for citizens, get the word out via your website, newsletter, government access channel, local radio/television stations, municipal social media, signs around the community, etc.

Please let CML know what you are planning, and send us a picture(s) and short summary afterward. After C&T Week we will highlight all of the municipalities that participated via the *CML Newsletter*, so be sure to let us know how you celebrated in your community!

How should I connect with media about my event?

If possible, meet with the editor or reporter(s) who typically cover local government issues from your local newspaper or television station(s) in advance to brief them on C&T Week and how your community will celebrate. Perhaps, explore if there are opportunities to partner with them to help promote your activities to citizens and of course, invite them to attend and suggest they do a story on it.

You also may choose to send out a news release (see “Sample Materials” section for a news release template).

After the event send photos and key information (number of attendees, testimonials, etc.) to local media.

Questions?

If you have any questions about Colorado Cities & Towns Week, contact Lisa White at lwhite@cml.org, 303-831-6411/ 866-578-0936.

Chapter 2: Engaging Residents

“Nearly 100 citizens and kids attended — staff and council all seemed to really enjoy the opportunity to connect with residents. In fact, attendees asked that we do it again next year, and we definitely will! CML’s resources were extremely helpful in the planning and promotion, and the giveaway items were quite popular!”

— *Patrick Rondinelli, Ouray administrator, describing last year’s “Ouray Municipal Day,” which it hosted in celebration of C&T Week 2014*

This section provides suggestions for engaging with and educating residents during Colorado Cities & Towns (C&T) Week. Other sections in the toolkit contain ideas for engaging specific segments within your population (e.g., youth, municipal employees, etc.). Tips for increasing access to healthy eating and active living, provided by LiveWell Colorado HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign, are indicated by an asterisk (*).

If you would prefer to host an event or conduct an activity to celebrate C&T Week during a different time of the year — perhaps in conjunction with another planned holiday, festival, or occasion — that is perfectly fine. Consider sharing the C&T Week message of how cities and towns work for citizens at that time.

CML has available C&T Week giveaways (green Lego-shaped stress balls) and will mail CML member cities and towns up to 100 of them to distribute to citizens during events, such as municipal festivals, fairs, parades, career days, open houses, visits to classrooms, etc. While supplies last, these giveaways are free of charge. To request they be shipped to you, complete and submit the online form at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns.

Free (or minimal cost) activities:

- Have your city council or town board adopt a resolution acknowledging C&T Week (see page 20 for a resolution example). (Dozens of municipalities did this in 2014.)
- Frame and display the “2015 Colorado Cities & Towns Week” poster (24” X 36”) provided by CML in city/town hall or other municipal building. (One will be (or was) mailed to all member municipalities in July, to the clerk’s attention.) See Appendix A to view the poster.
- If you have a government access channel, air the 30- and/or 60-second public service announcements (PSAs) that focus on general municipal services that CML produced last year. CML will release one highlighting C&T Week 2015 in late August (contact CML Membership Services Manager Lisa White at lwhite@cml.org if you need PSAs), or come up with your own content.

C&T Week 2014 participant highlight: The **City of Longmont** created a series of slides highlighting municipal services that ran on its government access channel. See Appendix B.

- Run the C&T Week advertisement (see page 26 and Appendix E) in your local newspaper, municipal newsletter, or on your municipal website; or design your own advertisement!

C&T Week 2014 participant highlight: The **Town of Bennett** created and ran an advertisement in their regional newspaper highlighting ways that they serve residents. See Appendix C.

- Run city/town government trivia questions in the local newspaper, in your municipal newsletter, and/or on social media during C&T Week as a fun way to promote municipal government awareness and educate citizens. *If the weather is nice during C&T Week consider highlighting some walking or biking trails and encourage residents to check them out.

C&T Week 2014 participant highlight: The **City of Fort Collins** posted the following to their Facebook page, “Colorado Cities & Towns Week is in full swing! Did you know the City of Fort Collins maintains more than 600 acres of parks, 40,000 acres of natural areas, and 20 miles of off-street hike/bike trails? The City offers a wealth of services such as these to help enhance your quality of life. #cocitiestowns.”


- Offer tours of city/town hall or other municipal facilities.

C&T Week 2014 participant highlight: The **Town of Springfield** hosted an open house to celebrate its new fire station.



The **Town of Limon** invited a high school student council to tour its Willie Layton Water Treatment Plant.

- Schedule an interview about an exciting community project on a local television or radio talk show and/or your government access channel.
- Contact your library:
 - Ask if you can make available at their information desk details on how you are celebrating C&T Week, or general information about your city or town.
 - Ask if you could set up a static exhibit with information on your services.
 - Offer a special guest to read to kids during a “story hour” during C&T Week — a firefighter, police officer, mayor, councilmember, manager/administrator, etc.
- Set up an exhibit at a local shopping mall or other public place with information on your city’s or town’s services.
- Initiate a contest for residents.

 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **Town of Nederland** held a Parks and Open Space Photo Contest, where residents were invited to post their pictures of Nederland parks or open space areas to the Town’s Facebook page or Twitter feed for a chance to win gift cards to local businesses.

- Sponsor a city-wide cleanup day (at parks, main streets, tourist attractions, etc.).
- Host a recycling contest. See what organization, business, or school can team up to collect the most recycling. Announce the winner in your municipal newsletter or community newspaper.
- Arrange for an elected official or staff member(s) to address Rotaries, Chambers, senior citizens, or similar groups on local government issues and the latest news in your community.
- Post customizable “tweets” and Facebook posts to the city’s/town’s social media sites. See pages 25 and 31.
- Participate in local cable or radio public service segments to talk about municipal government and your special activities that week.
- Conduct a community service activity, perhaps explore if there is a nonprofit in your community that you could partner up with. Get the word out to residents via your website, social media sites, and/or via a message printed on utility/water bills.
- If your mayor or city manager writes a regular column for your municipal newsletter or other publication, consider the one that runs around mid-September focus on C&T Week and the value of municipal government and acknowledge those who work and volunteer for the city/town.

C&T Week 2014 participant highlight: **Salida** Mayor Jim Dickson wrote a “City News” column during C&T Week that appeared in the local newspaper, *The Mountain Mail*. In the column, Mayor Dickson talked about his love of connecting with citizens through his work as mayor, and acknowledged the group of hard-working men and women that comprise the City of Salida staff. **Longmont** Councilmember Sarah Levison also wrote a letter to the editor in the *Longmont Times-Call*, encouraging residents to take a minute to thank a city employee who works every day to provide outstanding services to the community.

Activities that require additional resources:

- Have an old fashioned event in a park or other location to connect residents with municipal staff and elected officials. To reduce costs, consider partnering with local nonprofits and other entities. *In addition to sodas, consider having bottled water and other low-sugar beverages such as iced tea available. In addition to pizza or hamburgers, think about also offering salads, fruits, or other healthier options as well.

C&T Week 2014 participant highlight: The **City of Lakewood** held a community day for residents that included free admission to Lakewood’s recreation centers, free entry to Bear Creek Lake Park, and free tours at the Lakewood Heritage Center history museum. Residents had the opportunity to meet the West Metro SWAT unit and bomb squad, and to get an up-close look at police vehicles, snowplows, dump trucks, and other equipment.



The **City of Fountain** hosted a “Community Night in the Park” one evening during C&T Week, and it was very effective. They provided hot dogs and drinks, had more than 30 large city vehicles on display for kids to tour and explore, and set up information booths about City departments. The event generated wonderful feedback from both attendees and staff. The City also partnered with the Fountain Creek Nature Center, library, U.S. Army recruiter, and El Paso Animal Control — all of whom provided games and entertainment, including Sparky the Fire Dog, Timmy the Turtle, and Hank the Humane Society Mascot. A member of the Veterans Memorial Wall Committee provided music and kids danced at the gazebo.



- Invite local civic groups, business leaders, and residents to city/town hall or other community location for an open house and informal question and answer session with elected officials and staff. Highlight major projects, new programs, and/or any efforts by the city/town to save taxpayer dollars. Be sure to invite local media to attend.

 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **Town of Elizabeth** held an open house in partnership with the Elizabeth Area Chamber of Commerce “Business After Hours” program. The Town highlighted how each department provides services to residents and businesses, shared upcoming projects, and invited community members to provide feedback on plans for future park improvements, a new logo, proposed trail system, and the proposed 2015 town budget.



Also, the **Town of Silver Cliff** provided pizza and desserts at an open house with the mayor and board of trustees to share completed improvements and those that are in the works.



The **City of Montrose** held a “kickoff celebration” early in the week at city hall for elected officials, staff, and citizens to share coffee, juice and donuts. They also produced and distributed free bumper stickers that read “Stay Here. Play Everywhere”, which were available at city hall, the visitor center, and the Pavilion Event Center.


- Host a breakfast with mayor/council for residents or local business owners.
- Host a “coffee with the council” open house at city/town hall. Consider having a local talent, or group from a local school, there to provide entertainment. *Or consider hosting a “walk with council”, where residents and council members meet at city hall (or some other easy-to-find location) and instead of meeting indoors everyone laces up their sneakers and walks around a park or the community while they chat!
- Have a car wash with funds donated to a specific project or local park.
- Plan a pet parade to promote pet licensing.

Chapter 3: Engaging Youth


This section contains ideas for connecting with youth. CML encourages municipal officials (both elected and staff) to visit with students in local schools to educate them on civics and what it takes to be a good citizen anytime during the year. After all, students are the next generation of citizens and voters! If you have a desire to connect with youth, C&T Week is an ideal time to do that. Remember, tips for increasing access to healthy eating and active living, provided by LiveWell Colorado HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign, are included and indicated by an asterisk (*).

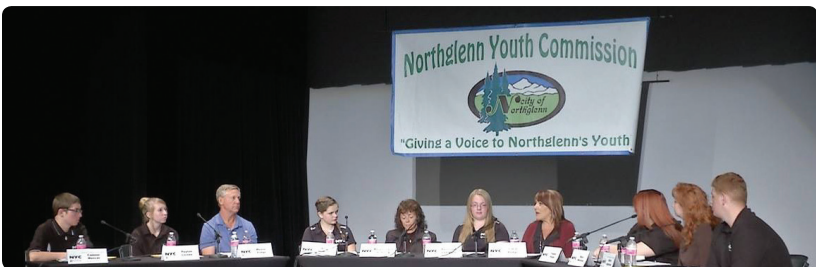
Free (or minimal cost) activities:

- Encourage elected and appointed officials from your city/town to speak at local schools, using this time to explain the importance of local government and community involvement. Contact an elementary, middle, or high school in your community and volunteer to speak to a group of students — they will be happy to give you the opportunity! See pages 16–17 for tips on visiting with students in the classroom.


 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** **Central City** Manager Daniel Miera visited with 5th and 7th grade students at Gilpin County School to talk about municipal services. The **City of Leadville** also had a speaker discuss with intermediate school students how the city serves citizens. The students in an art class then worked collaboratively on a poster focusing on the City and its many services, which was honored at a city council meeting.

- If you have a government access channel, produce a short program where an elected or appointed official(s) conducts a roundtable discussion with youth commissioners. If you don't have a youth commission, perhaps reach out to high schools and ask their class officers to participate. During the program, ask them what they think about issues that are important in your community.

 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **Northglenn** youth commissioners and elected officials conducted a roundtable that aired on their government access channel.



- Offer an afternoon of free finger printing for kids at the police station or city/town hall.
- Showcase local student talents and arts at community events.
- Hold an art/coloring contest for elementary school students related to a particular municipal government issue, e.g., recycling, water conservation, fire or police services, recreation and parks, transportation, planning, etc. (see pages 24–25 for a sample entry form and rules). Instead of a monetary award, winners could receive a certificate, mention in your newsletter, recognition of students and teachers at council/board meetings, and/or display of the winning artwork at city/town hall.


 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **Town of Hugo** held an art contest for elementary school students to draw a picture finishing the sentence “My Town is great because ...”. A winner from each grade level was chosen and awarded three free days at the Hugo Municipal Swimming Pool!

The **Town of Julesburg** also hosted an art contest for 5th and 6th grade students.



- Host a competition to seek the best solution to a municipal problem; recognize students/teachers at a council meeting.
- Hold an essay contest focusing on local government services (see pages 23–24 for a sample entry form and rules). Recognize winner(s) at a town board/city council meeting and/or offer personalized city/town hall tour for the winning student and classmates.
- If you do visit with students, be sure to contact CML and request free C&T Week giveaways to hand out to the kids (available while supplies last by completing and returning the form at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns)
- Sponsor a local government career day at a school. Invite a few department heads to attend and spend ten minutes each on what their roles are.

- One afternoon during C&T Week, showcase police, fire, and/or public works vehicles at an elementary school or other popular location.


 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **Town of Windsor** sponsored a Touch-a-Truck Day at two local daycares.




The **City of Ouray** held a community day in September, when kids were able to get up close and personal with city equipment.



- Host a youth in government night. Invite elected officials and department heads to meet and speak with your community's youth about important community issues and how kids' lives are affected by municipal government.

 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **Town of Windsor** hosted a dinner with town board members and the Student Advisory Leadership Board.

- Recognize local youth groups or organizations (scouts, debate teams, high school seniors, etc.) and invite them to attend a council meeting; perhaps take them on a tour of city/town hall or other municipal-run facility.

 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** **The Town of Limon** invited the high school student council to tour the Willie Layton Water Treatment Plant.

- Offer a special guest to read to kids during a “story hour” during C&T Week — a firefighter, police officer, mayor, council member, manager/ administrator, etc.

 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The mayor, police chief, and manager for the **Town of Limon** visited the Limon Child Development Center to read to the head start students.



Activities that require additional resources:

- Work with high school history, civics, or social studies teachers to organize a mock Government Day.
- Work with high school history, civics, or social studies teachers to organize a “Doing Democracy Day,” a multi-community, multi-school event devoted to area students wrestling with local issues, using local

leaders as resources. For more information, contact LOLG consultant and “Doing Democracy Day” co-founder Kent Willmann at kentwillmann@gmail.com.

- If you do not already have one, consider establishing a youth council in your city/town. They can plan community service projects, hold entertaining activities for families and youth, and provide input to the mayor and council regarding youth needs and concerns.

 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **Montrose** Youth Council issued a proclamation in support of C&T Week.



- Hold a mock election with the help of teachers and city council members. Let the “elected student officials” conduct a council meeting and have them come up with ideas on how to improve their community. The real council can then give them advice on their ideas — whether or not their ideas would work and why.
- Working in coordination with a middle or high school, create an advisory committee of students to study a particular municipal government issue of importance to teenagers (e.g., recreation or volunteerism) and prepare a formal report with recommendations to council. Or, include student representation on an existing citizen committee, commission, or board studying an issue of consequence to teens. Make a formal announcement of these appointments during C&T Week.
- Develop a “job shadow” program for an afternoon, where students can learn first-hand what municipal employees do.

Tips for visiting with students in the classroom

Visiting with students in a classroom can make local government come to life for young people. Do you like the idea of visiting with students, but not sure how to prepare or what to say? This information can help. Tips for increasing access to healthy eating and active living, provided by LiveWell Colorado HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign, also are included and indicated by an asterisk (*).

Via the Lessons on Local Government resource, teachers and leaders provided valuable suggestions for making leader visits successful. (Special thanks to former State Senate President Brandon Schaffer, St. Vrain Valley School Board President John Creighton, and former Firestone Mayor Chad Auer for their input.)

Do's and don'ts for visiting students in a classroom

Do: Engage students with local issues. Students have opinions and love to share them, especially with people in power. Have a few issues in mind that may be of interest to students. Parks and recreation issues, school issues, vandalism, and public safety are usually tops on student lists. Discuss with the teacher(s) what issues are best for the students.

Do: Arrive early and check in with the office. Schools have strict bell schedules and you will want to avoid the halls during passing periods when teachers often have duties. Upon your arrival, check in with the office; schools have safety regulations for visitors.

Do: Remind students of the various levels and types of government. You may be familiar with federalism, and the relationships among various local governments, but students are not...in fact, many teachers are even surprised by this information as well. A quick reminder of your constitutional/charter responsibilities and limitations will help illustrate roles in government (i.e. you cannot send troops to war and the President is not in charge of local traffic).

Don't: Plan a long lecture or presentation. 10–15 minutes is long enough for an introduction and brief presentation of your duties and responsibilities. Reserve most of the time for interaction with the students.

Don't: Be afraid to show how complex issues and viewpoints can be. Quickly informing students of multiple viewpoints and constraints will help them develop their own complex opinions.

Suggested agenda:

- Introduce yourself. Provide some background on your life, where you went to school, favorite teachers and subjects, your family, your “real” job (if you are an elected official) and what inspired you to be a public servant.
- Many students are surprised to learn of the amount of time you put into your job and the low (or nonexistent) pay.
- Quickly inform them about the scope of your position. What are your responsibilities? What issues are outside of your control? You are familiar with these, but student are just learning. Have a list of the top five duties

and responsibilities of your office. A list of services provided by your level of government can be a real eye opener.

- A map showing your jurisdiction would also be useful. Consider asking the host teacher to project an online map if their classroom is so equipped.
- *Ask the students to talk about the activities they enjoy most (i.e. riding their bikes, swimming at the community pool, playing on the swings, etc.) Mention that many of those activities are made possible through resources provided by the city or town because it's important to municipal leaders that kids in the community are able to stay active and healthy.
- Ask students what issues interest them. If they offer things like "world peace" express your interest in the issue too, but explain how that is usually not what you deal with in your job. Making a list of five or more issues on the board gets them involved. Ask students for their position on these issues and ask them to identify others in the community who may disagree. Ask students if they know of reasons why the issue has not been solved. Use your expertise to highlight the variety of positions on issues. You might talk about various opinions from phone calls, emails, and coffee shop conversations you have. Be sure to quickly explain how the issues can be complex and how resources are limited. Ask students if they would vote in favor of tax increases for certain services.

Consider a simulation

If time permits, ask students to assume the role of concerned community members for this issue. You add the real world answers as students try to make a decision. This exercise highlights how multiple viewpoints make government decision-making more difficult than it seems.

The scenario is to decide what updates to put into a park on a limited budget. (You can select another issue that is more relevant to your community as well.)

Set up the scenario: A park is being updated on a limited budget. Funds are available for only one of the following updates. Which should the city/town pick? Who would support each idea? Who would be opposed? How should it be decided?

Option 1: A jungle gym for kids aged 2–6

Option 2: A skate park for middle school and high school aged kids

Option 3: Soccer and baseball fields for grades K–6

Option 4: Safety features, such as lights and fences, for park use after dark

Option 5: A new family picnic shelter with grills and bathrooms

Separate the students into various groups:

- Homeowners near the park
- Nearby elementary school students
- Senior citizens
- Local Youth Sports Association
- Middle and high school student councilmembers

Ask students to identify which groups would support which choice. Ask them to role play the group and prepare a one-minute speech to you about why that choice is best. After listening to all groups' speeches, have the class vote. Ask the class if they are happy with the result. Then discuss how you would have made the choice and how you would explain it to the public.



Chapter 4: Municipal Employees and Volunteers

Colorado Cities & Towns Week is a great opportunity to recognize and thank the employees and volunteers who make your city or town so great!


New this year, CML will mail to you free fun cake-shaped stress balls with the text “Celebrate What You Do for Your Community!”. You can give them to your municipal employees and volunteers to recognize and thank them for their efforts (while supplies last). Employees or volunteers will smile and think about the difference they make in the community every time they see it sitting on their desks or in their vehicles. To request items, complete and return the online form found at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns.

Remember, tips for increasing access to healthy eating and active living, provided by LiveWell Colorado HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign, are included and indicated by an asterisk (*).

Free (or minimal cost) activities:

- Ask employees why they do the work that they do and share their responses with residents.
 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **City of Evans** asked municipal employees to share a few things that they would like residents to know about the services that they, or their departments, provide. Those responses were used to create posters that were shared on Facebook, on the City’s website, and in utility bill newsletters. See Appendix D.
- Recognize a community leader(s) that has demonstrated outstanding dedication to the city/town and has made significant contributions to the community. You can allow the person to be a past or present employee, boards and commission member, or community volunteer. Recognize him or her (or them) with a ceremony and a certificate. Then contact your local media about doing a feature story on the person(s) you have selected.
- Recognize employees and/or volunteers that have been with the city/town the longest. Perhaps do a feature on them in your municipal newsletter. Present awards at a ceremony and engage local media about doing a feature on them.
- Give municipal employees kudos in your municipal newsletter or on social media.
 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **Town of Parker** posted a photo of employees at work on its Facebook and Twitter pages each day during C&T Week. The **Town of Ridgway** started a series of profile articles about individual employees that will be posted on the Town’s website and may also be shared with local media.

- Print out and display C&T Week signs thanking city/town employees/ volunteers for all they do; display inside and outside of various municipal buildings. See Appendix E.
- Use your municipal newsletter to send a special message of thanks to all of the volunteers in your community. Total up how many hours they work annually and calculate the cost savings for the city/town if paid employees had to do those very important jobs. Volunteers save residents money and make the community a great place to live!
- Do you have a municipally owned digital sign in your community? Perhaps in front of your city or town hall or an event center? If so, thank your employees and/or volunteers during C&T Week with a message on your sign. For example, “The City/Town of _____ thanks all of its hard-working employees and volunteers during Colorado Cities & Towns Week!”, or something similar.
- Send letters or emails to city/town volunteers from mayor, council members, and/or manager or administrator thanking them for all that they do.
- Provide volunteers, and/or boards and commission members with Certificates of Appreciation for their dedication to your community.

 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **Town of Hugo Board** of Trustees sent certificates of appreciation to all town volunteers (members of community boards, fire and ambulance crews, baseball coaches, and others) to thank them for their hard work.

Activities that require additional resources:

- Hold an employee appreciation breakfast, picnic, or ice cream social (can include their families if budgets allow).
- Surprise municipal employees with treats during C&T Week. *Consider including a few healthy treat options as well, such as fruits, nuts, etc.

 **C&T Week 2014 participant highlight:** The **Town of Limon** kicked off the week with the mayor and board delivering pastries to the staff at each Town facility on the Monday morning of C&T Week. Similarly, elected officials in the **Town of Parker** presented “thank you” themed gift boxes filled with snacks and goodies to each Town facility, and provided employees with lapel buttons that said “Proud to Be of Service.”

- Arrange for a city/town employee day or night activity at a sports or cultural facility. It could include free or discounted admission for municipal employees and/or a special acknowledgement at intermission or half-time. *Hosting an outing where employees (and their families, if budgets allow) go bowling; visit a zoo or museum; play baseball, softball, or kickball provides great physical activity.

Chapter 5: Sample Materials for Colorado Cities & Towns Week

The materials in this section are samples; customize them to fit your needs. Downloadable documents are available at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns.

Resolution

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY/TOWN OF _____

RECOGNIZING COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS WEEK,

SEPTEMBER 14–20, 2015

AND ENCOURAGING ALL CITIZENS TO SUPPORT THE CELEBRATION AND CORRESPONDING ACTIVITIES

WHEREAS, municipal government is the government closest to most citizens and the one with the most direct daily impact upon its residents; and

WHEREAS, municipal government is administered for and by its citizens and

is dependent upon public commitment to and understanding of its many responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, municipal government officials and employees share the responsibility to pass along their understanding of public services and their benefits; and

WHEREAS, Colorado Cities & Towns Week is a very important time to recognize the important role played by municipal government in our lives; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado Municipal League's member cities and towns have joined together to teach students and other citizens about municipal government through a variety of different projects and information; and

WHEREAS, Colorado Cities & Towns Week offers an important opportunity to convey to all the citizens of Colorado that they can shape and influence government through their civic involvement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

Section 1. That the City/Town of _____ encourages all citizens, municipal government elected officials and employees to do everything possible to ensure that this week is recognized and celebrated accordingly.

Section 2. That the City/Town of _____ supports and encourages all municipal governments to actively participate in Colorado Cities & Towns Week.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City/Town of _____.

News release

Following is a sample news release to promote your event(s) and/or activities. The highlighted text indicates where to insert your information.

News release

Municipal logo

Contact: (name, phone, email)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAME OF CITY/TOWN CELEBRATES COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS WEEK, SEPT. 14–20, 2015

Date, City/Town — The City/Town of _____ will be participating in Colorado Cities & Towns Week, Sept. 14–20, 2015, which highlights and celebrates the value of municipal government and acknowledges the employees and volunteers who make our community a great place to live, work, and play. Municipal government is the level of government closest to most citizens, and the one with the most direct daily impact upon its residents. Through Colorado Cities & Towns Week, municipalities from across the state will participate in activities to showcase and celebrate cities and towns and the many services they provide.

“We are very excited about the upcoming event(s),” said Mayor/City Manager _____. “We look forward to connecting with citizens (or youth, or whomever) and celebrating the services that the city/town provides.”

Events planned for the week are (list activities, date, time, and locations).

Colorado Cities & Towns Week is sponsored by the Colorado Municipal League (CML), a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization established in 1923 and represents the interests of 268 cities and towns.

##

Suggestions:

- *If possible, include a statement from someone that is partnering with you on your C&T Week event or activity (a school official, for example).*
- *Include specific information about your city/town, keeping information to the point and brief.*
- *Keep the release to one page or less.*
- *Consider following up with phone calls to your local media to personally invite them to your event(s)*
- *If the public is invited to an event include that in the release and provide details.*

Letter to the editor

To the Editor:

During the week of Sept. 14–20, 2015, the City/Town of _____ will join other cities and towns across the state to celebrate Colorado Cities & Towns Week. This week has been set aside to recognize the many services municipal governments provide and their contribution to a better quality of life in Colorado.

Municipal government is truly government of, by, and for the people — the people who are making the decisions about our community are your neighbors, business owners, and community leaders. City and town government is administered for and by its citizens and is dependent upon public commitment to carry out its responsibilities.

During this week, we want to recognize the role city/town government plays in our lives; from public safety to promoting the area's culture and recreation. We hope you will join us in this celebration to learn more about your city/town and how it operates.

In an effort to celebrate this special week, the City/Town of _____ will _____ (insert scheduled activities).

Sincerely,

Mayor _____

Suggestions:

- *Meet with the editor/ publisher of your local newspaper(s)/television station(s) well as the reporters who typically cover city/town government to brief them on C&T Week and the activities your community will do to celebrate. Explore opportunities to partner with the newspaper/station to help promote your activities.*
- *Feature a little known or misunderstood city/town ordinance in the newsletter or local newspaper during C&T Week.*
- *Schedule an editorial board meeting with your local newspaper(s) to formally discuss your municipality and your involvement with C&T Week, ideally a week or two before the week.*
- *Contact local radio/television stations producers of news and talk shows to schedule appearances for city/town officials to appear on talk and/or news shows to discuss municipal government.*
- *Take photos of your activities; send them to your local newspaper.*
- *If you plan to include local students in an activity to celebrate C&T Week, notify the education reporter in addition to the one that covers city/town activities for your local newspaper. Invite the reporter to attend.*

Essay and art contests

Open an essay or art contest to 3rd, 4th, and/or 5th grade students or any other grade you would like; although, it is recommended that if you invite older students to participate, make the topic a bit more advanced.

Letter to teachers with guidelines for an essay contest

Dear Elementary School Teacher:

The City/Town of _____ is hosting an essay contest for ____ grade students to celebrate Colorado Cities & Towns Week, and we invite your class to participate. The contest theme is “My city/town is great because ...” and encourages students to think about the important services that the city/town provides. It is open to any _____ grade student living in the city/town.

Guidelines:

1. Essays must be no longer than one page in length and must answer the following questions:
 - a. Why is your community great — what makes it special?
 - b. What is the most important service that the city/town provides?
2. Handwritten essays must be the original work of the students. Only one entry per student (multiple entries from one author will not be accepted).
3. Essays may focus on any type of municipal service (e.g., the police department, keeping neighborhoods attractive, snow removal, parks and recreation, water, etc. An overview of municipal services can be found at www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org).
4. Originality of thought and creativity will be considered.
5. The student and teacher names must appear on each essay.
6. Mail entries postmarked by Monday, Aug. 24 to: City/town hall, address

The essay winner(s) will be announced during Colorado Cities & Towns Week during the week of Sept. 14. Arrangements will be made with the teacher and parents of the winning student to attend a city council/town board meeting to receive a certificate. It will also be published in a future issue of the city/town newsletter.

Questions may be directed to _____.

We look forward to hearing from your students!

Sincerely,

Mayor, manager, etc.

Entry form for an essay contest

Teacher contact: _____

Attach this form to essays from your class and submit to: _____

Teacher's name _____

Teacher's email _____ phone _____

School name _____

School address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Entries must be postmarked by Monday, Aug. 24.

Letter to teachers with guidelines for an art contest

Dear Elementary School Teacher:

The City/Town of _____ is hosting an art contest for ____ grade students to celebrate Colorado Cities & Towns Week, and we invite your class to participate. The contest theme is "My city/town is great because ... " and encourages students to think about the important services that the city/town provides. It is open to any __ grade student living in the city/town.

Guidelines:

1. Students are to create an 8.5" x 11" poster showing a program or service provided by their city or town. (Municipal services can be found at www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org.)
2. On the back of the poster, students should include a brief (no more than 50 words) description of the service featured in the poster and how it helps make the city/town great.
3. Also on the back of the essay the student and teacher names must appear.
4. Only one entry per student (multiple entries from one author will not be accepted).
5. Hand drawn, electronic, or a combination of images illustrating the program or service is allowed.
6. Mail entries postmarked by Monday, August 24 to: City/town hall, address _____
7. Students may work alone or in small groups at the teacher's discretion.

The winner(s) will be announced during Colorado Cities & Towns Week during the week of Sept. 14. Arrangements will be made with the teacher and parents of the winning student to attend a city council/town board meeting to receive a certificate. The winning poster(s) will be displayed in city/town hall.

Questions may be directed to _____.

We look forward to seeing your students' works of art!

Sincerely,

Mayor, manager, etc.

Entry form for an art contest

Teacher contact: _____

Attach this form to art submissions from your class and submit to: _____

Teacher's name _____

Teacher's email _____ phone _____

School name _____

School address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Entries must be postmarked by Monday, Aug. 24.

Social media

Some of the below posts are intended for use during Colorado Cities & Towns Week, while others can be used all year long to highlight the various services you provide residents.

- Twitter and Facebook during C&T Week is a great, easy, and inexpensive way to participate. Some ideas:
 - Throughout your channels, announce that you will be celebrating C&T Week and describe how. Be sure to include event information if the public is invited to participate!
 - On Twitter, use #cocitiestowns when referencing your celebration or event, or even when just referring to the regular work of your municipality throughout the year.
 - Post pictures of your staff and/or volunteers at work, using the tagline "Your city/town works for you." Include a link to the C&T Facebook page.
 - Share the posts of CML's Facebook page highlighting the work of municipal government and using the campaign images.
- Consider having elected officials and municipal staff members tweet or post messages on Facebook or their own Twitter accounts on the importance of municipal government and their roles in making your city/town a better place to live. (Offer them proper training first!)

Advertising and promoting

Advertising

CML offers a customizable advertisement to run in your municipal or community newspaper, as a bill stuffer, on your municipal website, or in any other way during C&T Week to highlight your services and/or to share how your community will celebrate C&T Week. To request a customized ad in the appropriate format, complete and return the online form found at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns. See Appendix E.

Thanking employees/volunteers

If you would like to use C&T Week to thank municipal employees and/or volunteers, CML has a template in place that can be customized with your message of appreciation. You can print them out and post inside and outside of various municipal buildings. To request customized fliers, complete and return the online form found at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns.

Promoting a public event

To promote a community event (open house, picnic, etc.), CML has a template in place that can be customized with details of your event. You can print them out and post inside and outside of various municipal buildings, use as bill stuffers or post to your website and/or social media to get the word out about the event. To request customized fliers, complete and return the online form found at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns.

Displaying the C&T Week poster

Another way to celebrate C&T Week is to display the C&T Week poster that CML will mail (or has mailed) to all member municipalities (posters mailed to clerks' attention in July). See Appendix A.

Promoting C&T Week to residents

CML has promotional items available, by request and while supplies last, if you would like to distribute fun items to residents during your C&T event or any other time when you (or your colleagues) will be connecting with citizens. To request items, complete and return the online form found at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns.

Celebrating municipal employees and volunteers

CML also has promotional items available, by request and while supplies last, to distribute to municipal employees and/or volunteers to thank them for their service. They are fun cake-shaped stress balls with the text "Celebrate What You Do for Your Community!" on them. Employees or volunteers will smile and think about the difference they make in the community every time they see it. To request items, complete and return the online form found at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns.

Airing the C&T Week public service announcement

If you have a government access channel, consider airing the public service announcement celebrating C&T Week during the weeks of Sept. 7, 14, and 21. CML will provide it to member municipalities at the end of August. You can also post a link to the video on your website and/or on social media, as well as air it during council/board or community group meetings.

Questions?

If you have any questions, or would like additional support, contact Executive Director Sam Mamet or Membership Services Manager Lisa White at 303-831-6411 or 866-578-0936. CML is happy to help however it can! Remember to let CML know how your city or town celebrates — email Lisa White at lwhite@cml.org.

Chapter 6: Sample Materials For Year-Round Promotion

In this section, you will find sample materials to help you remind residents of the valuable services you provide all year round.

Advertising templates

CML offers six advertising templates that member municipalities can use throughout the year, highlighting the various services you provide. They can be used in a variety of ways (in your municipal newsletter, community newspaper, as bill stuffers, on your municipal website, etc.) To request use and/or a customized advertisement(s), complete and return the online form found at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns.

Questions about using the advertisements or formatting should be directed to CML Communications & Design Specialist Traci Stoffel at tstoffel@cml.org.



COMMUNITY

You may not think about it, but people just like you manage our town/city. The next time you come up with that great idea to make our community better, consider running for office, volunteering to serve on a committee, or attending a committee meeting. And always remember to vote! Colorado cities & towns work for you — and now they need you to work for them.

Space for custom text and municipal logo.

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS
www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org





LIFESTYLE

We may not think about it, but several of the resources we rely on to keep us entertained, informed, and healthy — such as libraries, trails and open space, and cultural events — are provided by our town/city. The next time you check out a book or attend a lecture series, think about the hard working men and women who care for our community. Colorado cities and towns work for you.

Space for custom text and municipal logo.

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS
www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org



TRAVEL

We may not think about it, but several of the services we rely on each day to get where we need to go — such as traffic safety, street maintenance, snow plowing, and transit — are provided by our town/city. The next time you are out for a spin, think about the hard working men and women who care for our town/city. Colorado cities and towns work for you.

Space for custom text and municipal logo.

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS
www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org




VIBRANCY

We may not think about it, but our town/city works hard to keep our community thriving. The next time you see a new restaurant open its doors or tourists exploring, think about the hard working men and women who care for our community. Colorado cities and towns work for you.

Space for custom text and municipal logo.

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS
www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org







HOME

We may not think about it, but several of the services and resources we rely on to keep our homes safe and secure — such as clean water, code enforcement, trash and recycling collection — are provided by our town/city. The next time you take a stroll around your neighborhood, think about the hard working men and women who care for our community. Colorado cities and towns work for you.

Space for custom text and municipal logo.


COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS
www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org 



SAFETY

We may not think about it, but several of the services we rely on to keep us safe — such as police, fire, and emergency response— are provided by our town/city. The next time you see a police car on patrol or hear a siren in the distance, think about the hard working men and women who care for our community. Colorado cities and towns work for you.

Space for custom text and municipal logo.

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS
www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org 

Airing public service announcements

If you have a government access channel, consider airing CML's public service announcements (PSAs). The PSAs being produced this year are educational in nature detailing how a municipality provides specific services to residents. They can be found at www.cml.org/cities-and-towns.

In 2014 CML produced six 30 and 60-second PSAs last year highlighting the various services that municipalities provide and the value those services have for citizens. The PSAs are not time-sensitive and can be used during 2015. Visit www.cml.org/cities-and-towns.

Also consider posting a link to the videos on your website and/or on social media, or perhaps air them during council/board or community group meetings.

Social media

Use Facebook and Twitter to announce exciting developments, news, etc. that you want to share with residents (including pictures is particularly impactful), such as:

- Upcoming events such as festivals, ribbon-cuttings, plays, meetings, sports, dates for recycling
- Road/municipal building closures
- The facts during a crises – an immediate and accurate way to get the official word out on floods, fires, and more
- Construction updates
- New features at a government facility, whether library, community center, or accepting credit cards for bill payments
- Trails opening, maintenance, etc.
- Public notices
- Job board and commission vacancies
- Election information
- Links to municipal newsletter
- Awards/recognition received or given by the city/town
- New businesses opening, developments underway
- Share stories from the local schools, accomplishments of residents, from your downtown development authority or economic development council
- General reminders of services provided with photos, i.e., it is a great day to hit the bike trails, number of police officers serving, hours of operation and services available at main offices, etc.
- Wishing a happy Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Father's Day, 4th of July, etc.

Facebook is great for getting interactive and encouraging resident dialogue. Some ideas:

- Invite citizens to share community photos
- Link to a citizen survey
- Post fun “did you know” or trivia questions about your city/town; ask the location of current or historic photos in city or town
- Pose a question: “What are you doing on this gorgeous day?” “How much snow did you get at your house?” “Where do you take visitors in our downtown?”

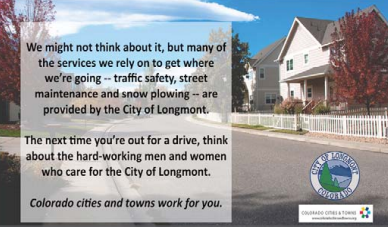
Appendix A: **C&T Week 2015 Poster** (24" x 36")

(All 268 CML member municipalities are listed in the tree)



Appendix B: Longmont C&T Week Slides


TRAVEL



We might not think about it, but many of the services we rely on to get where we're going -- traffic safety, street maintenance and snow plowing -- are provided by the City of Longmont.

The next time you're out for a drive, think about the hard-working men and women who care for the City of Longmont.

Colorado cities and towns work for you.




SAFETY




We might not think about it, but many of the services we rely on to keep us safe -- police, fire and emergency response -- are provided by the City of Longmont.

The next time you see a police car on patrol or hear a siren in the distance, think about the hard-working men and women who care for the City of Longmont.

Colorado cities and towns work for you.




COMMUNITY




You might not think about it, but people just like you manage the City of Longmont. The next time you come up with an idea to make our community better, consider running for office, volunteering to serve on a board or commission, or attending a committee meeting. And always remember to vote!

Colorado cities and towns work for you. Now they need you to work for them.




LIFESTYLE



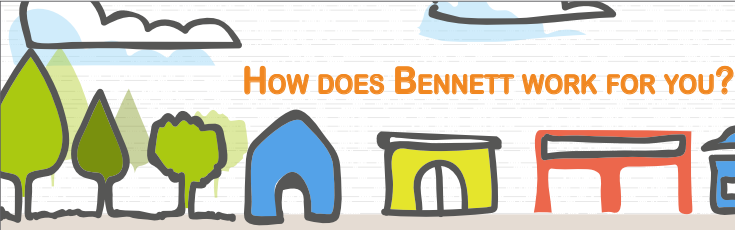
We might not think about it, but several of the resources we rely on to keep us entertained, informed and healthy -- the library, trails and open space, and cultural events -- are provided by the City of Longmont.

The next time you check out a book or attend a community event, think about the hard-working men and women who care for the City of Longmont.

Colorado cities and towns work for you.



Appendix C: Bennett C&T Week Advertisement




HOW DOES BENNETT WORK FOR YOU?


We **ensure** that your tax money is spent wisely by:

- Maintaining** infrastructure and keeping your town looking beautiful!
- Driving** economic development, while supporting our local community businesses!
- Providing** vital services like animal control, building permits, and code enforcement!
- Planning** great events like Bennett Days and Community Cleanup Day every year!


Learn more about Cities & Towns Week, Oct. 20-26, at TownofBennett.org



COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS
coloradocitiesandtowns.org



Appendix D: Evans C&T Week Poster Advertisements





Successful emergency response comes from frequent practice and routine improvements to the planning and response process, this is possible by:

- “Developing plans to prepare, respond, recover, and mitigate hazards.”
- “Training staff and testing plans for disasters.”
- “Educating the community through workshops and outreach programs.”

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNER
DAVE BURNS**

“What I love about my job is preparing the community and the City for any disaster that could present itself.”





“Our small Parks Division of two full time employees and up to twelve seasonal employees has several responsibilities, such as:”

- “Prepare and dig all grave sites in the City Cemetery.”
- “Manage and maintain over 120 acres of park land and 100 acres of Native/Natural areas.”
- “Prepare and maintain all sports fields for Recreation programs.”
- “Cleaning an average of 25 (50 gallon) bags (1250 gallons) of trash per day out of the parks system.”
- “Maintaining over 1000 trees.”

**PARKS & GROUNDS SUPERINTENDENT
SCOTT SANDRIDGE**


“What I love about my job is providing a safe, enjoyable place for people to spend quality time with friends and family.”



Appendix E: Customizable Advertisement for C&T Week 2015


(Visit www.cml.org/cities-and-towns to submit requests)

September 14–20
2015




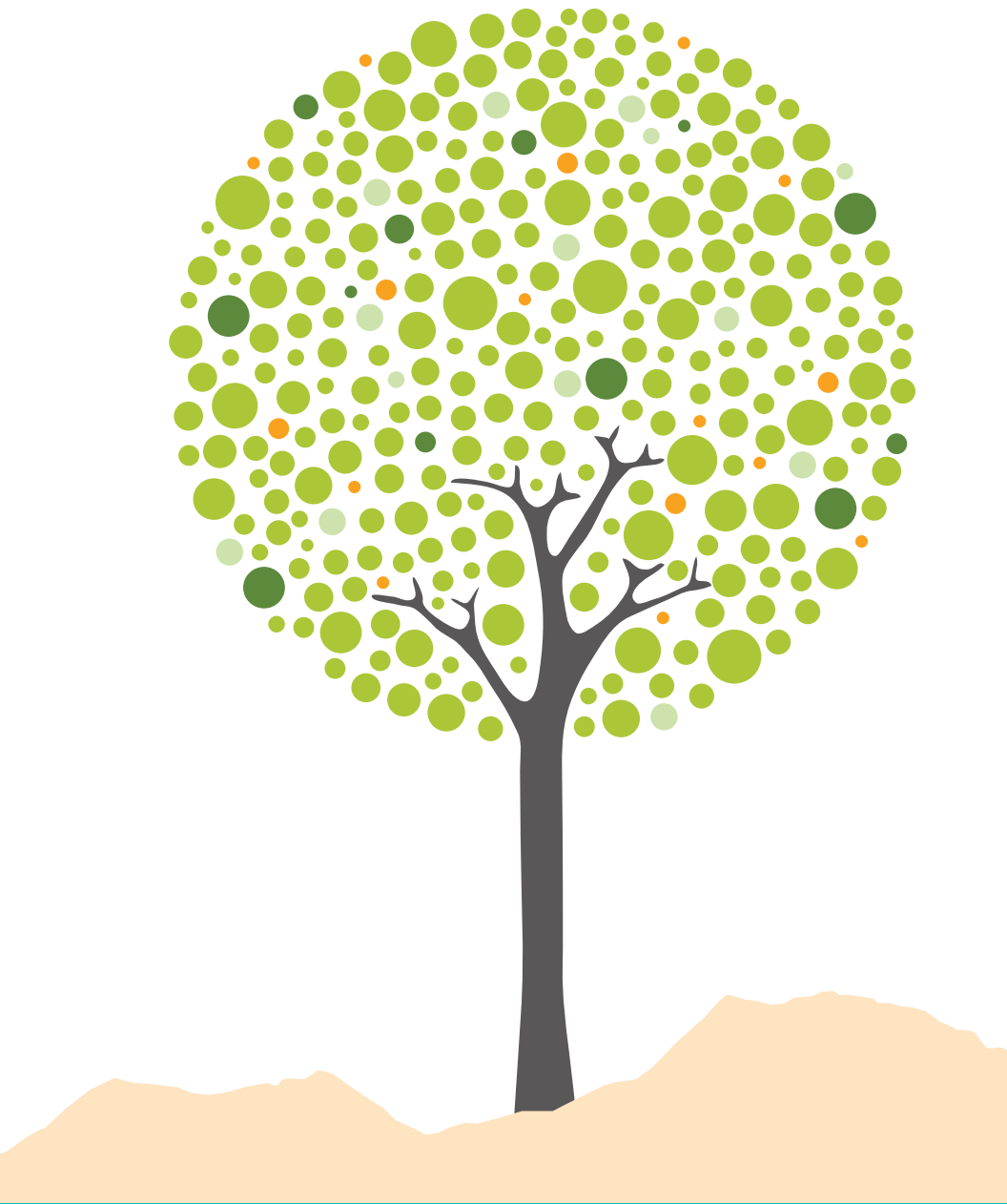
Your municipal logo here.

Use this space to acknowledge your employees for their hard work in making your community a wonderful place to live, work, and play or to promote a C&T Week event that your municipality is hosting.



Colorado Cities & Towns Week

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS
www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org 



COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS
www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org



www.cml.org