

OVERTURE

We have sought a metaphor to convey what the Florida League of Cities is about. Something that draws you to join in, that is exciting and innovative; something that delivers its product with class and style.

That metaphor is an orchestra. Share with us a musical journey for Florida's cities, towns and villages.

What is an orchestra? It is at once an organization, a presentation, a sense of community and hopefully, a successful form of art and culture.

The lifeblood of an orchestra may be the music it performs, but its core is its musicians. Each section of an orchestra is vital to the full sound yet each section has solo abilities as well, and becomes known for its virtuosity. These "parts" are the woodwinds, the brass, the percussion and strings. Musicians within each section are selected for their musical gifts and for their ability to blend with one another for the composite sound of the orchestra.

Guiding the orchestra is the conductor, who in turn relies upon musical directors and other musicians for the production of the orchestra. A board of patrons supports the orchestra; the local community embraces the music and the organization and supports it, too. Behind the scenes are the set designers, marketing assistants and other key personnel who make each performance come together seamlessly.

The League is like an orchestra. Supported by the cities and charter counties of Florida and guided by the Board of Directors and officers who give their charge to the conductor, the League brings forth its music to the elected and appointed officials alike who comprise the unique, varied and wonderful communities of the Sunshine State.

The parts of the League are like the sections of the orchestra: the percussion section's sound is similar to the advocacy effort--each drum sets a pace just like legislative priorities set the pace for the League. In addition to the lobbyists themselves, we have the legal department and the public information staff. There is a rhythm to each year and to each aspect of the League's work; sometimes external and sometimes internal. The rhythm is essential to each piece of music; it sets the tone, the audience's reaction and keeps everyone in-step and on time.

Similar to the rhythm of the percussionists, the publications and other information shared with the membership and the public are like the brass section. Yes, we toot

our own horn. The cities of Florida have a great deal to say and share, and the brass section helps them do it! Whether its our award-winning videos or magazine, the *Datagram*, *Legislative Bulletin*, e-mail, or our Home Page on the Internet, our brass section works to get the word out within and about our members.

Next is the string section. In the orchestra, the strings bring lightness and harmony and sweeten the overall tone of the selection. A light touch of the strings can bring a musical piece soaring out of a darker tone...and often conveys strong yet positive emotion. Within the League, the string section provides a different kind of sweetness: strong membership services, technology services, and financial resources! The League's public risk management insurance programs, the Leagues investment programs, and the technology services programs comprise the strings section. Sweetening the Leagues' financial standing with their revenues, the trustees and staff behind these programs also deliver the sweet sounds of harmonic partnerships between cities, counties, special districts and the League. For 20 years these programs have grown and developed into one of the League's most stellar features.

Last is the woodwinds. Seen as the backbone of an orchestra, they provide the melody and depth and often add complex harmonies throughout a selection. Sturdy, dependable and often overlooked--not unlike the administrative and other internal components of the League! Our secretariat services, conference planning, accounting and human resources may not be as visible to the membership as other sections, but their consistently strong, dedicated work ensures that the League's musical productions are award winning.

Now, what about the music? Think of some of the most famous orchestras you know--like the Boston Philharmonic--best known for its annual 4th of July performance of the "1812 Overture." Every great orchestra becomes known for its signature pieces--yet each orchestra also strives to be creative within the music field and to respond to the changing tastes of its patrons. Our greatest hits include "Home Rule" and "Municipal Independence" and "Revenue Flexibility" and, of course, "No Unfunded Mandates", a rousing, passionate piece! Within our strategic plan, annual priorities and policy statements, we have written some outstanding music together! Our repertoire is nationally known.

What about the conductor and the patrons? The president is the League's guest conductor, brought in annually to guide and develop the play list. The Board of Directors is the largest patron support group; our Platinum Level. Our patrons also include the policy committee members, the Commission on Quality Cities, the Trustees for each of the investment, technology and insurance programs and our other advisory groups. Of course, our patrons are also the loyal city officials who attend and participate in our conferences and workshops each year. The patrons bring to the orchestra a sense of community, continuity and commitment.

Each member of the orchestra, whether in Tallahassee or Orlando, must know their own instrument and that of their section. In an orchestra, the first chair of each section is its leader. For the League, each department director leads their section and provides essential guidance and management of the many League services and programs. Each class of instruments strives for harmony within their own section and with the rest of the orchestra--all to the tune of the regular conductor, the executive director.

Music is a complex blend of notes, rhythm and a mixture of sounds that evoke certain emotions and feelings within, as do our hometowns and cities. Each is unique, with certain gifts and talents. Each brings special thoughts to mind and just a glimpse of a city skyline or a familiar neighborhood, like hearing a few notes of a favorite song, can bring forth memories. An orchestra takes each musical selection and brings energy and enthusiasm to its collective notes and produces a sound, and "show" for its audience, and often, the public in general. The League tries to do the same for its cities.

For 80 years, the League has helped Florida's cities to speak with one voice and to find innovative approaches to municipal governance. By staying in tune to the needs of each community, this orchestra will continue to play on.

Thank you for joining us on this musical journey. This publication was originally prepared in 1996 to present the adopted Strategic Plan to our members and other interested persons. Now at the turn of the 21st century, we have prepared a new version fine tuning existing instruments (programs) and adding more arrangements to our orchestra. Within the Aim, Vision and Mission statements, we have committed the League's resources to the broad concepts embraced by the League's founding members. Each year, annual priorities will be presented to the Board for adoption. These priorities will serve as specific goals that reflect the commitments of the Plan. You will find these goals in the back pocket of this publication.

Please contact us if we may provide you with additional information.

Florida League of Cities, Inc.

Strategic Plan

This plan was originally prepared in 1996 at the request of the Board of Directors. Based upon a strategic plan adopted by the membership in 1994, which had been extensively reviewed by the membership, the original plan was expanded for new League services and statements regarding internal management philosophies. The plan was adopted by the Board on April 10, 1996.

In 2001, after 5 years of the plan being implemented, it has been revisited to refine the League's goals and objectives.

AIM

The aim of the Florida League of Cities is to promote local self-government and serve the needs of the municipal governments in the State of Florida.

VISION

The Florida League of Cities will be the premier provider of programs, products and services needed by the municipal governments in Florida and become the benchmark by which all state municipal leagues in the United States are judged.

CORE VALUES

The League is dedicated to the values of Home Rule, Integrity, Excellence, and Public Service. We aspire to achieve these values in everything we do. We commit ourselves to the hard work required to realize these values and will be vigilant in upholding them.

Home Rule: The League is committed to using every resource to protect Florida's Home Rule powers for municipalities, and to enhancing these powers in any way possible. Home Rule is the greatest strength of our cities.

Integrity: The League embraces truthfulness and trust, and has the moral courage and obligation to be open, honest, and ethical in all that we do. We treat everyone with dignity and respect.

Excellence: The League is committed to achieving the highest standards of excellence in our service, programs, products, technology, management and

leadership. We recognize our responsibility and are accountable for the important work entrusted to us to better serve our members for future generations.

Public Service: The League is committed to the spirit of public service, and recognizes the tremendous energy, dedication, sacrifice and compassion needed to give unselfishly to one's community. The League, Florida and our nation are stronger and better because of the public servants who choose to serve and leave.

MISSION

I. Aggressively promote municipal independence and represent the interests of the municipal governments in Florida.

II. Increase public knowledge of municipal services, issues, concerns, accomplishments and responsibilities.

III. Provide professional, high-quality information, research, training and technical assistance, as well as innovative forums, conferences, publications and on-line services to help municipal governments plan for the future and improve the quality of life for their citizens.

IV. Provide professional administrative leadership to ensure the continued availability of financially sound, innovative and cost-effective insurance/risk-management, programs and products to local governments.

V. Provide professional administrative leadership to assure the continued availability of financially sound, innovative and cost-effective financial services; programs and products to local governments.

VI. Provide expert guidance and professional consultation to Florida's local governments to afford them every available technological opportunity.

VII. Provide responsible and honorable stewardship of the Florida League of Cities' resources, especially human and financial.

MISSION I

Aggressively promote municipal independence and represent the interests of the municipal governments in Florida.

Goal A: Positively influence the policymakers at the state, regional and federal levels of government.

Strategies:

1. Provide a program that informs, recognizes and rewards state and federal officials by informing the FLC membership of legislators' actions and giving special thanks and recognition to deserving supporters.
2. Provide quality media events for municipal issues.
3. Effectively use FLC Board and committee members to supplement advocacy efforts and to mobilize cities and media support.
4. Represent municipal interests in all areas of the policy-making process including proposed constitutional amendments.
5. Publicize and promote important and timely municipal issues each year.
6. Publish the votes of state and national policy-makers on important municipal issues.
7. Establish, utilize and maintain coalitions to support common issues within municipal professional groups such as the attorneys, city managers, finance officers, clerks and others.
8. Seek cooperation from regional, metropolitan and other multi-jurisdictional agencies and authorities.
9. Deliver state and federal information and actions to FLC members via the latest available technology.
10. Make regular personal contacts with federal policy-makers and their staff.

Goal B: Favorably influence the political and policy-making process within the National League of Cities (NLC) and the Southern Municipal Conference.

Strategies:

1. Strive to keep at least two FLC members on the NLC Board of Directors.
2. Increase the number of FLC members appointed to NLC steering and policy committees including leadership positions.
3. Strive to obtain the right for state municipal leagues to appoint members to NLC steering committees.
4. Strive to improve the NLC municipal policy statement and eliminate the non-municipal issues.
5. Encourage the NLC to reduce dues and meeting registration fees.
6. Encourage NLC to develop professional development programs for state municipal league staff.
7. Provide leadership and active policy involvement in the Southern Municipal Conference.

Goal C: Provide municipalities with the highest quality representation before regulatory agencies.

Strategies:

1. Provide municipal influence and early involvement in rule-making processes of regulatory and administrative agencies.
2. Provide information to regulatory agencies so they can better understand municipal issues and problems.
3. Invite policy-makers of selected regional agencies and organizations to join the FLC at various meetings.
4. Strive to increase the appointment of city officials to various state and regional agencies/commissions/committees.

Goal D: Favorably affect state and federal court decisions to strengthen the authority of cities.

Strategies:

1. Provide city attorneys with legal advice and assistance on municipal issues with statewide impact to city attorneys.
2. Provide proactive participation in litigation relating to limitations on municipal powers by aggressively filing appellate court amicus curia briefs and seeking procedures to allow the FLC to initiate legal actions on behalf of the membership.

Goal E. Provide high-quality leadership and staff support to encourage local and regional leagues to positively influence policy-makers at the state, regional and federal levels.

Strategies:

1. Share all important information with local and regional leagues in a timely manner.
2. Provide for League leadership and staff participation in local and regional league activities.
3. Provide educational training opportunities to regional/local league leadership and staff.
4. Encourage and assist regional/local leagues to improve media relations.

MISSION II

Increase public knowledge of municipal services, issues, concerns, accomplishments and responsibilities.

Goal A: Improve the understanding of municipal government in Florida.

Strategies:

1. Be the authoritative voice in Florida on municipal government issues.
2. Become the unifying force on significant issues affecting municipal governments.
3. Encourage school systems to teach municipal government courses.

Goal B: Ensure that the FLC has the very finest reputation with its members, the state Legislature and state agencies, the media and the public.

Strategies:

1. Improve membership awareness of the many services of the League.
2. Educate legislators, state staff and the media about municipal government.
3. Cultivate and maintain a strong personal relationship with policy-makers, state agency officials and the media.
4. Expand and improve FLC organized media events for municipal issues.
5. Promote municipal government achievements.
6. Maintain a handbook on municipal governments for elected officials.

MISSION III

Provide professional, high-quality information, research, training and technical assistance as well as innovative forums, conferences, publications, technological aid, and international programs to help municipal governments plan for the future and improve the quality of life for their citizens.

Goal A: Provide the highest quality forums for the exchange of ideas, innovation, consensus building, the development of public policy positions and the fostering of a cooperative and collaborative approach to municipal problem solving.

Strategies:

1. Promote and foster conventions and conferences of municipal officials and seminars on topics of interest to elected and appointed officials.
2. Encourage intensive leadership and issue training seminars on a statewide basis and a regional basis in conjunction with local/regional leagues.
3. Provide, enhance and adequately fund the highest quality of training and services needed by the membership so all municipal governments can perform in the most efficient and effective manner.
4. Be available to serve as a mediator and assist when intergovernmental conflicts arise.

Goal B: Develop and share accurate, quality information with municipal governments.

Strategies:

1. Provide leadership and influence to other data-gathering agencies such as the Institute of Government, the Advisory Council on Intergovernmental Relations, state agencies, universities, etc. to guide their research agenda.
2. Provide leadership and influence to data gathering agencies such as the Institute of Government, the Legislative Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, state agencies, universities, etc. to guide their research agenda.
3. Provide a resource base for grants, loans, technical assistance and other resources available to cities, including innovative programs and ideas.

MISSION IV

Provide professional administrative leadership to assure the continued availability of financially sound, innovative and cost-effective insurance/risk-management and financial services, programs and products to local governments.

Goal A: Provide the highest quality, innovative workers' compensation insurance program and services to Florida's local governments.

Strategies:

1. Design and market insurance products that attract and maintain participation in the program.
2. Provide alternative risk retention programs and payment options.
3. Research and recommend new risk management techniques to help reduce workers' compensation claims.
4. Use technological advancements to improve the quality, speed and accuracy in processing and reporting of claims.
5. Establish internal controls that provide protection of member's equity, and ensure compliance with state and federal laws.

Goal B: Provide the highest quality, innovative liability insurance programs and services to Florida's local governments.

Strategies:

1. Design and market insurance products that attract and maintain participation in the program.
2. Provide alternative risk retention programs and payment options.
3. Research and recommend new risk-management techniques to help reduce legal costs and claims.
4. Use technological advancements to improve the quality, speed and accuracy in processing and reporting of claims.

5. Continue enforcing the internal controls that provide protection of member's equity, and ensure compliance with state and federal laws.

Goal C: Provide the highest quality, innovative property insurance programs and services to Florida's local governments' property investments.

Strategies:

1. Design and market insurance products that attract and maintain participation in the program.
2. Provide alternative risk retention programs and payment options.
3. Research and recommend new risk-management techniques to help reduce property losses and claims to local governments.
4. Use technological advancements to improve the quality, speed and accuracy in processing and reporting of claims.
5. Establish internal controls that provide protection of member's equity and ensure compliance with state and federal laws.

Goal D: Provide the highest quality, innovative employee health insurance programs and services to Florida's local governments.

1. Design and market insurance products that attract and maintain participation in the program.
2. Provide alternative risk retention programs and payment options.
3. Research and recommend new risk-management techniques to help reduce claim costs.
4. Use technological advancements to improve the quality, speed and accuracy in processing and reporting of claims.
5. Establish internal controls that provide protection of member's equity, and ensure compliance with state and federal laws.

MISSION V

Provide professional administrative leadership to assure the continued availability of financially sound, innovative and cost-effective financial services financial services, programs and products to local governments.

Goal A: Provide the highest quality, innovative investment programs to provide local governments access to safe, diverse, professionally managed and cost-effective investment opportunities.

Strategies:

1. Design and market a program that attracts and maintains participants in the investment trust.
2. Provide a diversified group of investment portfolios.
3. Identify and analyze new trends and products in the financial services industry.
4. Use technological advancements to improve the quality, speed and accuracy of information regarding these programs.
5. Establish and maintain internal controls that provide protection to the participants, investments and ensure compliance of the clients' investment policies, state and federal laws and generally accepted accounting principles.

Goal B: Provide the highest quality, innovative employee pension and retirement programs that are safe and financially sound to Florida's local governments.

Strategies:

1. Design and market a program that attracts and maintains participants in the pension and retirement programs.
2. Identify and analyze new trends and products in the pension and retirement industry.
3. Use technological advancements to improve the quality, speed and accuracy of information regarding these programs.

4. Establish internal controls that provide protection to the participants' investments and ensure compliance of the clients' plan documents and policies, state and federal laws and generally accepted accounting principles.

Goal C: Provide the highest quality, innovative debt management programs that are cost-effective and fiscally prudent for Florida's local governments.

Strategies:

1. Design and market a plan that attracts and maintains participants in the debt management programs.
2. Identify and analyze new trends and products in the financial services industry.
3. Use technological advancements to improve the quality, speed and accuracy of information regarding these programs.
4. Establish and maintain internal controls that provide protection to the participants' investments and ensure compliance of the clients' plan documents and policies, state and federal laws and generally accepted accounting principles.
5. Continue to provide utility audit services that meet the needs of participants and which recognize changes with in utility regulation at the state and federal levels.

MISSION VI

Provide expert guidance and professional consultation to Florida's local governments to afford them every available technological opportunity.

Goal A: The League will serve as a clearing house of technology information to help members find solutions.

Strategies:

1. Improve and refine electronic communications and information systems geared principally toward municipal issues and information sharing.
2. Encourage electronic contributions to League publications to promote the advantages of shared municipal information.
3. Expand on-line access to credible research-oriented and statistical databases that provide high quality information to the membership.
4. Development new and enhance existing delivery methods to create a greater understanding of cities, their problems and their issues.
5. Anticipate the necessity for research, coordination and expansion of database network to assist advocacy efforts.

Goal B: The League will offer technology consultations to members.

Strategies:

1. The consultations will include local government systems' evaluation, and following analysis, will provide recommendations.
2. The League with the finest top industry analysts in the electronic and telecommunications field.

MISSION VII

Provide responsible and honorable stewardship of Florida League of Cities' resources, especially human and financial.

Goal A: Provide for and manage a well-trained, courteous and professional FLC staff.

Strategies:

1. Recruit, select and train diverse, courteous, well-educated people.
2. Comply with all state and federally mandated personnel programs.
3. Provide a safe and positive work environment for staff.
4. Recognize the inherent worth of each individual.
5. Provide fair recognition, salaries and benefits for all staff.
6. Communicate employee activities to the Board of Directors and membership.
7. Provide annual evaluations for all employees.
8. Ensure effective use of personnel.

Goal B: Ensure a secure financial future for the FLC.

Strategies:

1. Adopt and manage a balanced budget every year.
2. Seek new and expand existing revenues.
3. Develop, adopt and implement a reserve policy.
4. Provide for efficient and effective use of all resources.
5. Obtain an unqualified audit each year.

6. Provide financial planning to assist in long-range resource development and financial forecasting.

Goal C: Carefully and effectively manage physical and personal assets.

Strategies:

1. Properly manage and insure all real property.
2. Maintain equipment, cars and other personal property in safe and satisfactory working condition.

Goal D: Be innovative and prepared for change.

Strategies:

1. Strive to use the latest available technology to provide services and products to our members.
2. Analyze, research and develop new strategies for anticipating change in member needs and take proactive steps to implement successful services and products as necessary.

Goal E: Provide professional administration of League-affiliate organizations and a framework for effective partnerships with selected municipal associations of Florida.

Strategies:

1. Respond to the needs of municipal associations for the best possible affiliate programs and provide effective communication to and from each entity and the League.
2. Develop innovative workshops and conferences that meet the needs of the diverse affiliate memberships.
3. Establish effective financing options for affiliate groups.

Goal F: Provide for a confident, professional relationship between the FLC leadership and staff.

Strategies:

1. The Executive Director will share all important information and make recommendations to the Board and its committees.
2. The Board of Directors will provide an annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director.
3. The Board will actively participate in priorities of the FLC.
4. The Executive Director will carry out Board priorities with professionalism and dedication.

ABOUT THE LEAGUE

Like an orchestra, the League relies upon its patrons and sponsors for their faithful gifts of leadership, guidance and time. A description of the activities of these patrons is provided here as an explanation of the League's services.

Policy Committees (not members):

Municipal Finance and Taxation; Urban Administration; Intergovernmental Relations; Environmental Quality; Ethics and Personnel; Criminal Justice. These committees, appointed annually by the president, consider the many state legislative issues and prepare an annual Legislative Policy Statement that is adopted by the membership in November. The chairs and vice-chairs of each committee form the League's Advocacy Core; a committee that provides leadership and lobbying assistance within the League and the membership.

The Commission on Florida's Future:

Quality Cities: This committee, appointed annually by the president, is the League's "think tank." Over the years, the QCC, as it is known, has focused its attention on numerous issues, including the preparation of a curriculum for city and county government that is voluntarily used in Florida's public and private schools; technological challenges for cities; recognition for cities with the "Florida City Government Week" proclamation and activities and other valuable programs.

The Federal Action Strike Team (FAST) was created in 1996 to enhance the League's federal advocacy efforts. City officials in each Congressional district work together to increase the visibility of municipal issues in Washington, and the team works to bring our delegation together on important Florida issues as well.

Legislative Policy and Public Affairs:

The League's advocacy and public information programs have been a vital component of the League since its formation in 1922. The League represents municipal interests and concerns before state, federal and regional agencies.

Insurance Trusts:

Starting in 1977, the League developed several pooled insurance programs to serve cities, counties and special districts. Today, these programs comprise the Public Risk Services program of the League, which operates from the League's Orlando office. Guided by trustees from cities across the state, these programs provide cost-effective insurance for liability, property, health, workers' compensation and a comprehensive reinsurance program. The League administers and manages these programs for the trusts.

Programs:

In addition to the public risk services, the League is pleased to provide an occupational license tax collection service; legal research and counsel; access to municipal charters and ordinances for comparison and research; a comprehensive salary survey; technical assistance and grant information; a bi annual innovations magazine; growth management, labor relations and economic research services. The League also provides a competitive, fiscally sound pension program. The Financial Services programs offers cities a variety of investment and financial service opportunities. The newly created Technology Services program is designed to assist cities with all aspects of technology, from training to utilization.

Secretariats:

The League is pleased to provide secretariat services to the Florida Association of City Clerks (FACC); the Florida City and County Management Association (FCCMA); the Florida Government Finance Officers Association (FGFOA); the Florida Municipal Attorneys Association (FMAA) and the Florida Redevelopment Association (FRA).

Local and Regional Leagues:

The League is proud to be affiliated with the local and regional leagues around the state. These independent, self-governed associations provide valuable services to their members, including serving as a forum for information, training and innovation.