



ENGAGEMENT

Florida City Government Week To Celebrate 30 Years

Focus: Teaching your residents about the importance of local government

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Florida City Government Week, which will be held October 18-24, 2021, is a time for cities across the state to celebrate, showcase and engage citizens in the work of municipal government. This weeklong annual event hosted by the **Florida League of Cities** will celebrate its 30th anniversary this year. Florida's 411 cities have reached thousands of residents by bringing awareness to the role city government plays in enhancing Florida residents' quality of life.

Municipal government is the government closest to the people and generally receives higher approval ratings than other levels of government. Yet, many residents are unaware of how city services impact their lives. Florida City Government Week is the perfect opportunity to teach your residents the importance of local government. Many activities can be held in person or virtually and at little to no cost. Below are a few sample activities that your city can plan for its residents.

OFFER TOURS OF CITY HALL OR INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENTS

Host tours so that attendees can meet city employees to learn about the services their city provides and showcase city equipment for residents to see. In 2020, the **City of North Miami** posted a virtual tour on YouTube that showcased the police department, public library and museum of contemporary art.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CITY OF NORTH MIAMI

In 2020, the City of North Miami hosted a virtual tour that included visiting the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, the North Miami Police Department and the North Miami Public Library.

SHOWCASE GUEST SPEAKERS

Contact local schools and civic organizations to coordinate general or specific information sessions based on audience age and interest. In 2020, the **City of Port St. Lucie** asked students to submit questions about local government, and students watched virtually as city employees and elected officials answered their questions.

USE DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

One free way to engage and inform your residents is to use your city's social media and email newsletters to communicate. In 2020, the **City of Coconut Creek** used the City's social media and e-newsletter to educate residents on municipal topics. The city shared 11 videos of city staff highlighting their jobs and educational materials on city charter amendments.

DEVELOP A CITIZENS ACADEMY

A citizens academy is an excellent way to educate residents, build positive relationships, increase communication between city government officials and citizens and inspire future municipal leaders. The **City of Port Orange** hosts a citizens academy annually covering topics from public utilities to community development.

For more ideas on how to celebrate Florida City Government Week, visit bit.ly/3uKZOBI. Share your civic engagement activities with us on social media in October using the hashtag #FLCityWeek.



Eryn Russell is Programs Coordinator and an Ambassador at the Florida League of Cities. **QC**



Port Orange University, the City's citizens academy, celebrated Florida City Government Week at one of their weekly classes.



Port Orange University, the city's citizens academy, held a session on fire and rescue during Florida City Government Week.



During Florida City Government Week, the City of Coconut Creek posted videos of staff discussing their role in local government, including Fire Inspector Stevenson Jean-Louis.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CITIES OF PORT ORANGE (TOP AND MIDDLE) AND COCONUT CREEK (BOTTOM)

Local Government Resources

Access the resources below for ideas, tools and tips to get started with your #FLCityWeek celebration.

- ▶ **City Government 101.** Want a fun way to communicate the basics of city government? The **Florida League of Cities** 10-minute cartoon, perfect for youth audiences and beyond, covers topics including city charters, forms of government, municipal services, property taxes and Home Rule. Watch the video at bit.ly/369pJyy.
- ▶ **About Florida's Cities handout.** What is a city in Florida? What is Home Rule? Why are cities created? Find the answers to these questions and more on this informative handout. View the flyer at bit.ly/3xgPwRf.
- ▶ **Guide for Creating a Citizens' Academy.** This guide contains brief reviews of current programs along with a planning guide that contains information on materials, budget and a program schedule. View the guide at bit.ly/3eA9oYy.

