



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO'S

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-26



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MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO



I'm proud to present the Florida League of Cities' 2025-26 Annual Report, reflecting a year of focused advocacy, expanded resources, and strong member engagement across the state.

This year brought one of the most consequential property tax debates Florida's cities have faced in decades. During a June special session, the Legislature advanced a proposed constitutional amendment for the November 2026 ballot. In response, the League intensified its research, data analysis, coalition building, and member education to help cities clearly explain how local revenues support essential services.

Our members were more engaged than ever. A record 318 officials attended our Legislative Conference. In addition, a record 221 individuals were honored this year as Home Rule Heroes. Our Monday Morning Call-Ins moved to a webinar format, growing participation by more than 50%. That engagement strengthened the voice of Florida's cities at a critical moment.

The new State Statute Municipal Reporting Requirements Guide helps cities track important obligations and deadlines. We also launched an AI Hub to help leaders learn new technology responsibly, strengthened our Grants Assistance Program, and continued growing our property tax educational resources with city-level data, research, FAQs, videos, and communication tools.

The League continued investing in future leaders as well. Five students received Public Service Pathways Scholarships, and our education, conference, and recognition programs, including a refreshed FLC Leadership Class, created valuable opportunities for city officials to learn, connect, and share ideas.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to 2025-26 FLC President Holly D. Smith for her steady leadership and dedicated service to the League this year. And to our members, thank you for your partnership and for the extraordinary work you do every day for Florida's communities.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeannie Garner".

Jeannie Garner
Executive Director/CEO





MISSION

Founded in 1922, the Florida League of Cities is the united voice for Florida's cities, towns, and villages. As a nonpartisan organization, we advocate for Florida's cities and support our local leaders through specialized events and training. We believe in local voices making local choices, which focuses on the impact citizens and city leaders have on enhancing Florida's communities. As the government closest to the people, Florida's cities are best positioned to address the unique needs of their communities.

CORE VALUES

Home Rule, Integrity, Public Service, Excellence

MOTTO

Local Voices Making Local Choices

GOALS

1. Advocate for local self-government and represent the collective interests of Florida's municipal governments.
2. Increase public awareness and support for local self-government.
3. Deliver exceptional training, resources, and engagement experiences for city leaders that improve municipal operations and help plan for the future.
4. Offer insurance and financial services and other innovative business services to meet the needs of Florida's local governments.
5. Uphold principled governance of the League's assets and a value-driven culture guided by Home Rule, Integrity, Public Service, and Excellence.



ADVOCATING FOR OUR MEMBERSHIP

The League continues to advocate for local self-government, influencing state and federal policy to support Florida's cities, towns, and villages.

2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

During the 2026 regular session, 1,896 bills were filed, and 237 were passed by both chambers. Numerous property tax-related proposals were considered, but none passed both chambers during the regular session. The League tracked legislation, briefed members, provided alerts and testimony, and published a comprehensive final report.

PROPERTY TAX SPECIAL SESSION AND BALLOT AMENDMENT

A special session followed, and the Legislature passed HJR 1-F on June 2, a proposed constitutional amendment for the November 2026 ballot that would significantly increase the homestead exemption and restrict how cities and counties may use ad valorem revenue. The League expanded its education and outreach efforts to help members and residents understand the connection between property taxes and essential city services. These efforts included:

- ▶ Expanded property tax educational resources, including city-level data and research
- ▶ Frequently asked questions on communicating under Florida's ballot-question law
- ▶ Videos, presentations, social media materials and an action checklist
- ▶ Coalition building and coordinated outreach with affected stakeholders

 flicities.com/propertytax



View the **Legislative Session Final Report** for a full summary of the legislative session at flicities.com/legislative-resources.



STATE REPORTING RESOURCES

The League launched a **State Statute Municipal Reporting Requirements** guide and companion webpage to help cities identify required state reports and monitor upcoming deadlines. The resource was updated during the year as new reporting obligations took effect.

 flcities.com/state-reporting

INCREASING MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT

The League continued to see increased engagement this year. Monday Morning Call-Ins moved to a webinar format, resulting in a more than 50% increase in participation and expanding access to timely updates. **Legislative Conference** saw record attendance with 318 attendees. In total, 221 individuals earned Home Rule Hero recognition.

268
Monday
Morning
Webinar
Average
Participation

51% Increase

318
Legislative
Conference
Attendees

30% Increase

221
Home Rule
Heroes

16% Increase

GROWING PUBLIC SUPPORT

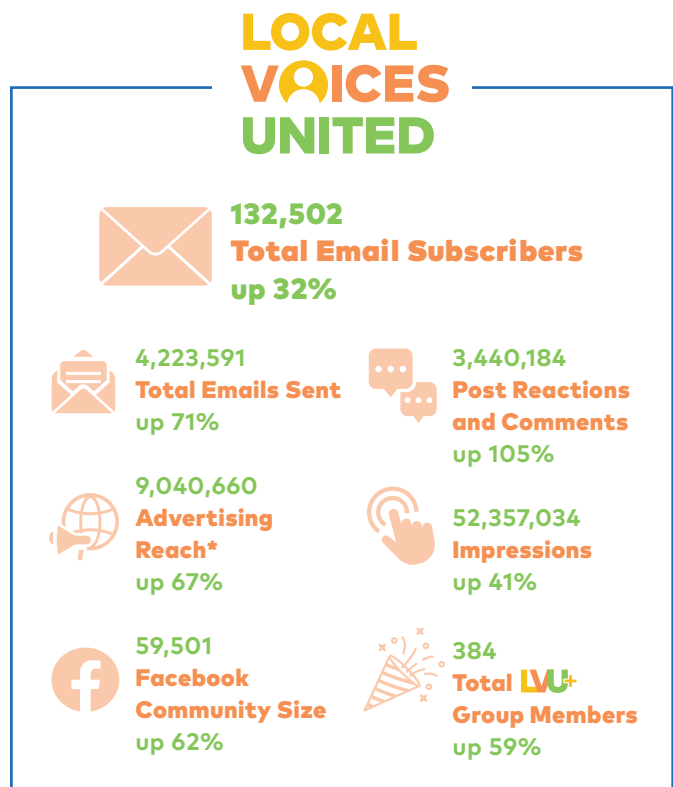
The League expanded public-facing resources that explain municipal government, elevate city success stories, and connect people with public-service opportunities.

INFORMING THE PUBLIC

Local Voices United (LVU), the League's long-term grassroots advocacy brand, continues to serve as a key platform for building public support and driving civic engagement in support of local decision-making. In 2026, the initiative added shareable property tax videos and social content to support factual community education ahead of the November ballot.

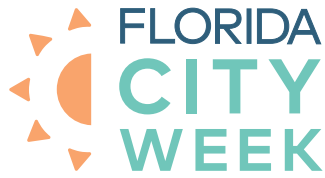
LVU also developed and deployed a **Local Government 101 course** that teaches users how local governments work and awards a certification upon completion. The course draws on FLC's Cities 101 videos to explain key concepts.

 **localvoicesunited.com**



*These specific metrics are estimated by Meta.

Note: Percentages show year-over-year increases from the totals reported in August 2025



Florida City Week was celebrated by cities across the

state October 20-26, 2025, using the refreshed name and visual identity to showcase municipal services, employees, and community impact. Ninety-two cities engaged on social media, a 43% increase from last year. To help highlight what cities do, the League promoted its **Cities 101 video series**, a collection of quick, two-minute videos covering the fundamentals of how cities work, from Florida's forms of government and municipal charters to Sunshine Laws, city services, Home Rule, and preemptions.



Now in its second year, the **Public Service Pathways Scholarship** supports students pursuing careers in local government. Applicants completed FLC's orientation for newly elected officials as part of the process, and the Scholarship Committee selected recipients following application reviews and interviews. Each recipient received a \$5,000 scholarship and a job shadow day with city leaders. The 2026 scholarship recipients are:



- ▶ **Jorge Barrios**, City of Doral, Florida International University
- ▶ **Kylie Finnegan**, City of Miramar, University of Miami
- ▶ **Matthew Lammens**, City of Tallahassee, Florida State University
- ▶ **Jared W. Lee**, City of Sebring, Florida Gulf Coast University
- ▶ **Kristina Majeski**, City of Naples, Florida Gulf Coast University

FLCityJobs



FLCityJobs continued connecting municipal employers with job seekers through searchable listings organized by region, job type, pay, and functional area.

2,801

jobs posted
to date

5,917

job applications
to date



QC

In addition to the print magazine, FLC's online magazine

QualityCities.com continues to promote timely stories that empower municipalities and highlight local voices making local choices.



13,088

Website
Views

ENGAGING AND EDUCATING OUR MEMBERSHIP

The League continues to deliver high-quality membership engagement and training opportunities that provide city officials with timely information and resources.



ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCES AND RECOGNITION

The League expanded its **Grants Assistance Program** this year to help members find, apply for, and manage grants more easily. Through its partnership with Euna Solutions, members have access to a database of more than 10,000 federal, state, and foundation grants, along with discounted post-award services. A newly enhanced website and grant guide bring these tools together in one place, with expanded resources that now include:

- ▶ One-on-one coaching sessions with our grant coordinator
- ▶ Quarterly grant-readiness trainings
- ▶ A curated and regularly updated list of featured grant opportunities
- ▶ A directory of grant writers with contact information
- ▶ Sample RFPs to help guide cities in procuring grant services

 flcities.com/grants



Launched last fall, the **AI Hub** helps municipal leaders understand, evaluate, and use artificial intelligence responsibly and effectively. With plain-language guidance, real examples from Florida cities and counties, templates, and policy tools, the one-stop webpage helps leaders get started with AI, evaluate accuracy and privacy risks, and navigate legal considerations for responsible use.

 flcities.com/ai



Participation in the **Certificate Program for Elected Municipal Officials** increased by 36% for this program year. In total, 310 elected city officials earned gold, silver, or bronze status by registering for the program and earning points for attending FLC training events from July 2025 through July 2026.



The League continues to engage newly elected officials through the **Newly Elected Official** program, with tailored communications to officials entering their first year in office.

Participation in the **Institute for Elected Municipal Officials (IEMO)** I and II remained strong statewide. This year, the **FLC Leadership Class**, reserved for IEMO graduates, debuted a refreshed look and elevated marketing, positioning it as the League's premier leadership experience. The League also offered its state-mandated 4-hour ethics training throughout the year.



Connected 509 newly elected officials to FLC	170 elected officials graduated from the IEMO I and II	97 FLC Leadership Class attendees	944 live ethics training participation
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The 2026 **Florida Municipal Achievement Awards** recognized municipalities for innovative programs and projects that have enhanced their communities:

- ▶ **City of Fort Myers/City of Cape Coral** – Environmental Stewardship Award (tie)
- ▶ **Town of Longboat Key** – Environmental Stewardship Award (tie)
- ▶ **City of Oakland Park** – Economic Advancement Award
- ▶ **City of Tallahassee** – Public Engagement Award
- ▶ **City of Tavares** – Local Action Award



OFFERING EDUCATION AND RESOURCES

The monthly **Quality Cities (QC) Live** webinar series covered several timely topics this year, including:

- ▶ Understanding the Property Tax Amendment
- ▶ 2026 Hurricane Season Outlook and Forecast Products
- ▶ Municipal Charters
- ▶ Environmental Funding
- ▶ Legislative Priorities
- ▶ And more!



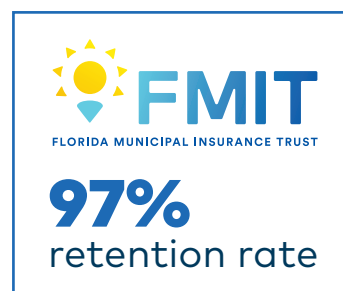
Meeting the needs of Florida's local governments, the League continues to offer innovative insurance and financial services and other business services.

INSURANCE SERVICES

The League held its fourth statewide **FLC Insurance Summit** with a strong presence from the **Florida Municipal Insurance Trust (FMIT)**. FMIT's retention rate for FY 2025-2026 was over 97% for all coverage lines combined.

To continually meet the needs of members, the FMIT also:

- ▶ Strategically balanced property reinsurance capacity and retention to keep property rates competitive for membership
- ▶ Marketed and negotiated casualty reinsurance, resulting in favorable casualty rates for membership
- ▶ Facilitated regional roundtables to engage neighboring members in training
- ▶ Maintained a continued strong FMIT presence at the FLC Insurance Summit



FMIT **Risk and Safety Management** actively engages members in their safety management processes. As part of that effort, FMIT launched a new series of targeted safety newsletters, each tailored to a specific municipal role to help staff stay informed and reduce risk. The lineup includes:

- ▶ Shift Brief: Law enforcement
- ▶ On Scene: Fire, rescue, and EMS
- ▶ Risk Ready: HR and risk management
- ▶ In the Field: Public works, utilities, and parks



The **Hometown Health** program provides FMIT health members with the education, tools, and services needed to take preventative measures to maintain health and achieve a better quality of life. This year, the program debuted a new open enrollment booklet to help members better understand and navigate their benefit options.



FINANCIAL AND INVESTMENT SERVICES

The **Florida Municipal Investment Trust (FMITvT)** offers a diversified selection of investment portfolios to local governments across Florida. Governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees, the FMITvT contracts with the League to provide investment management, daily administration, marketing, custodian, and performance monitoring services for its 58 members. FMITvT has \$2.203 billion in total net assets as of June 30, 2026. This is an increase of \$23 million for the last quarter of Fiscal Year 2025-2026.



The **Florida Municipal Pension Trust Fund (FMPTF)** offers retirement plan services to local governments across the state. Services include complete administration for defined benefit, other post-employment benefits (OPEB), 401(a) defined contribution, and 457(b) deferred compensation plans. Governed by a five-member Board of Trustees, the FMPTF contracts with the FLC to provide daily administration, marketing, actuarial, and custodian services, investment management, and performance monitoring. The FMPTF has 228 plans covering over 7,800 participants and net assets in excess of \$1.5 billion as of June 30, 2026.



The **Florida Municipal Loan Council (FMLC)** provides a cost-effective way for cities to issue debt for capital improvements, land acquisitions, and building renovations, as well as for refinancing existing debt. To date, the FMLC has issued 140 loans through bond issues totaling more than \$1.2 billion to 69 municipalities. The FMLC has also facilitated 33 bank loans totaling more than \$157 million.



People and principled governance are core to the League and help provide responsible, honorable administration and a value-driven workplace culture.

NEW OFFICERS

The following officers were elected at the 2026 Annual Conference and will serve during the 2026–27 year: **Shalimar Mayor Mark Franks** as President, **Titusville Council Member Sarah Stoeckel** as First Vice President, and **Westlake Vice Mayor Greg Langowski** as Second Vice President.



FLC STAFF

Embodying the League's four core values of Home Rule, Integrity, Public Service, and Excellence, the **Culture Excellence Award** winners were Mike Taylor (Orlando), Associate Director, Infrastructure, and Joy Spillers (Tallahassee), Applications Support Specialist II. The League recognized Laura Garber, Director of HR and Operations, as the 2025 Employee of the Year.

214
Full-Time
FLC positions

DEPARTMENTS:

- Accounting and Technology
- Executive
- External Affairs
- Insurance and Financial Services
- Legal
- Legislative Affairs

2025-26 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The directors below served on the board from August 16, 2025, to August 15, 2026.

Visit flcities.com/board for the current FLC Board of Directors list.

PRESIDENT

Holly D. Smith, Councilwoman, Sanibel

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Mark Franks, Mayor, Shalimar

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Sarah Stoeckel, Councilmember, Titusville

DISTRICT DIRECTORS

- (1) **NanDrycka King Albert**, Mayor Pro Tem, Midway
- (1) **J.B. Whitten**, Mayor, Crestview
- (2) **Rufus Borom**, Commissioner, Palatka
- (2) **Thomas DeVille**, Vice Mayor, Penney Farms
- (3) **Chris Cloudman**, Mayor, DeLand
- (3) **Nancy Miller**, Mayor, Daytona Beach Shores
- (4) **Diana Adams**, Council Member, West Melbourne
- (4) **Shaun Ferguson**, Councilman, Rockledge
- (5) **Lewrissa Johns**, Mayor, Chiefland
- (5) **Cal Rolfson**, Councilmember, Mount Dora
- (6) **John Dowless**, Mayor, Edgewood
- (6) **Joseph McMullen**, Commissioner, Oakland
- (6) **Jordan S. Smith**, Commissioner, Lake Mary
- (7) **Morris West**, Mayor, Haines City
- (7) **Brian Yates**, Mayor, Winter Haven
- (8) **Thomas Reid**, Vice Mayor, South Pasadena
- (8) **David Will**, Mayor, Redington Beach
- (9) **Campbell Rich**, Mayor, Stuart
- (10) **Nicholas Pachota**, Mayor, Venice
- (11) **John R. King**, Councilmember, Fort Myers Beach
- (12) **Roger Michaud**, Mayor, Lake Park
- (12) **Michael Napoleone**, Mayor, Wellington
- (12) **J.P. O'Connor**, Mayor, Westlake
- (12) **Molly Young**, Mayor, Tequesta
- (13) **Felicia Brunson**, Mayor, West Park
- (13) **Traci L. Callari**, Vice Mayor, Hollywood
- (13) **Joyce Davis**, Mayor, Dania Beach
- (13) **Todd Drosky**, Mayor, Deerfield Beach
- (13) **Denise Horland**, Council President, Plantation

(13) **Henry Mead**, Vice Mayor, Weston

(13) **Susan Starkey**, Councilwoman, Davie

(14) **Karyn Cunningham**, Mayor, Palmetto Bay

(14) **Rodney Harris**, Mayor, Miami Gardens

(14) **Omarr C. Nickerson**, Mayor, El Portal

(14) **Fortuna Smukler**, Commissioner, North Miami Beach

10 MOST POPULOUS CITIES

Rahman Johnson, Council Member, Jacksonville

Ralph Rosado, Commissioner, Miami

Luis Viera, Councilman, Tampa

Bakari F. Burns, Commissioner, Orlando

Copley Gerdes, Council Member, St. Petersburg

Stephanie Morgan, Councilwoman, Port St. Lucie

Dianne Williams-Cox, Commissioner, Tallahassee

John Gunter, Mayor, Cape Coral

Dean Trantalis, Mayor, Fort Lauderdale

PAST PRESIDENTS

Scott Black, Mayor, Dade City

Joy Cooper, Mayor, Hallandale Beach

Patricia Bates, Mayor, Altamonte Springs

Leo E. Longworth, Commissioner, Bartow

Isaac Salver, Mayor, Bay Harbor Islands

Antonio "Tony" Ortiz, Commissioner, Orlando

Jolien Caraballo, Vice Mayor, Port St. Lucie

Michael C. Blake, Mayor, Cocoa

FCCMA LIAISON

Ann Toney-Deal, ICMA-CM, City Manager, Seminole

FLC EXECUTIVE STAFF

Jeannie Garner, Executive Director/CEO

Eric Hartwell, General Counsel/Chief Legal Officer

Maclain Benton, Chief Financial Officer

Casey Cook, Chief of Legislative Affairs

Chris Krepcho, Chief of Insurance and Financial Services

Jenna Tala, Chief of Strategy and External Affairs

Michaela Metcalfe, Board Relations Administrator