

# COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS WEEK

October 20–26, 2014



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## COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS WEEK TOOLKIT

June 2014



*The Voice of Colorado's Cities and Towns*

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# A WORD FROM SAM MAMET, CML EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I am so excited about the establishment of Colorado Cities & Towns Week. Creating a week to acknowledge and celebrate the incredible work that you do day in and day out has always been a dream of mine. And now the time has come!

We cannot do it alone — we need each of you to help make it a success. Please commit to doing one thing to celebrate this special week and let us know about it. It doesn't have to be a huge effort; just something to help communicate the message that cities and towns are united in making Colorado a wonderful state in which to live, work, and play. And you do! If I can be of any assistance, do not hesitate to let me know. We are so excited to hear how you celebrate your city or town!

Sam Mamet  
CML executive director

# **CHAPTER 1: THE INAUGURAL COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS WEEK, OCT. 20-26, 2014**

## **WHAT IS CITIES & TOWNS WEEK?**

Sponsored by the Colorado Municipal League (CML), Colorado Cities & Towns (C&T) Week is an opportunity for municipalities to inform their residents, in a unique way, about the vital services provided by their city or town. C&T Week is part of an ongoing effort sponsored by CML to raise public awareness about the services that cities and towns perform and/or to educate the public on how municipal government works. As studies continuously show, municipalities generally receive a higher approval rating than any other level of government. Cities and towns provide a higher level of service than most governments, yet many residents need to be reminded how municipal services impact their lives. Through C&T Week, CML hopes to heighten the public's awareness of municipal government's role in enhancing their quality of life.

## **WHY IS CML ESTABLISHING THIS WEEK?**

Establishing C&T Week provides a unified statewide opportunity to educate citizens on what municipal government is all about and to let them know that municipal government is of their making and works best when they are involved.

## **WHAT IS THIS TOOLKIT?**

This toolkit contains information to assist you in however you choose to celebrate this week. It outlines numerous ideas that cities and towns can use to celebrate. Keep in mind that it 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 to specific segments of your citizenry to promote the services you provide.

## **THERE ARE SO MANY ACTIVITIES LISTED, HOW DO I KNOW WHICH TO IMPLEMENT?**

Whatever your municipality has the resources to implement and finds of most value to your community is what you should do. 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 "Youth Engagement" 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, even if it is during a different time of the year, consider simply including the C&T Week message in it. Some ideas

are quick and inexpensive (or free), while others require more resources. Some ideas are simple, while others require more coordination and planning. However your municipality wants to participate is great.

## **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 give you ideas — do not feel that you have to do exactly what is described. By no means is this document complete; if you have 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.

Also, please let CML know what you are planning, and send us a picture and short summary afterward. After C&T Week, we will highlight all of the municipalities that participated, so please be sure to let us know how you celebrated in your community by sending an email to CML Membership Services Manager Lisa White at [lwhite@cml.org](mailto:lwhite@cml.org).

## **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 you could 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 may also 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 Cities & Towns Week, contact CML Membership Services Manager Lisa White at [lwhite@cml.org](mailto:lwhite@cml.org) 303-831-6411/ 866-578-0936.

# CHAPTER 2: RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

This section outlines suggestions for engaging residents during Cities & Towns (C&T) Week. Other sections provide ideas to specifically engage youth and municipal employees/volunteers. These ideas should be considered as starting points; you are encouraged to come up with your own events and activities to promote the valuable work of municipal government.

If you would prefer to host an event or conduct an activity to celebrate cities and towns during a different time of the year — perhaps in conjunction with a holiday or other planned occasion — that is perfectly fine! Perhaps you have a regular booth at a festival or participate in an annual parade; if so, consider sharing the C&T Week message of how cities and towns work for citizens at that time.

CML is happy to send member cities and towns promotional items to distribute to citizens during visits to classrooms or at other events, such as municipal festivals, fairs, parades, career days, open houses, etc. While supplies last, these are free of charge. Contact CML Membership Services Manager Lisa White at [lwhite@cml.org](mailto:lwhite@cml.org) to request free items.

## **Free (or minimal cost) activities:**

- Have your city council or town board adopt a resolution acknowledging C&T Week. (See page 15: Sample Materials, Resolution to Recognize Colorado C&T Week 2014.)
- CML will mail a “Cities & Towns Week 2014” poster to each member municipal clerk in August 2014 — frame and display this poster in city/town hall or other municipal building.
- Air the 30- and/or 60-second PSAs that focus on municipal services on your website and/or government access channel. Contact CML Membership Services Manager Lisa White at [lwhite@cml.org](mailto:lwhite@cml.org) to get access to the PSAs.
- Run the C&T Week advertisement (see page 22: Sample Materials, Posters and Templates) in your local newspaper or municipal newsletter, and post to your municipal website.
- Post city/town government trivia questions in the local newspaper or municipal newsletter, or on your social media pages, during C&T Week as a fun way to promote municipal government awareness and educate citizens.
- Consider scheduling an interview about an exciting community project on local television or radio talk show and/or your government access channel.
- Contact your library
  - Ask to make C&T Week celebration or general municipal information available at their information desk.
  - Ask if you could set up a static exhibit with information on your services.
  - Offer a special guest — firefighter, police officer, mayor, councilmember, manager, etc. — to read to kids at a “story hour” during C&T Week.

- Offer tours of city/town hall and other municipal facilities, such as a water treatment plant or fire department. Stagger tours to allow for small group interaction with city/town staff or volunteers.
- At any open houses, events, or presentations you hold, distribute the C&T Week giveaways provided by CML. Contact CML Membership Services Manager Lisa White at [lwhite@cml.org](mailto:lwhite@cml.org) to request free items.
- 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!
- Set up static exhibits at a local shopping mall or other public place with information on your city or town's services.
- Provide citizens with a history lesson on the founding of your city/town.
- Sponsor a city-wide cleanup day (at parks, main streets, tourist attractions, etc.)
- Host a recycling contest. See which organization, business, or school can collect the most recycling and announce the winner in your municipal newsletter or community newspaper.
- Arrange for an elected official or staff member(s) to speak on local government issues and the latest news in your community to rotary, chambers, senior citizens, or similar groups.
- "Tweet" and post to Facebook C&T Week messages. (See page 20: Sample Materials, Social Media: During C&T Week.)
- Participate in local cable or radio public service segments to talk about municipal government and your special activities during C&T Week.
- Explore partnering with a local nonprofit to sponsor a community service activity. For example, since C&T Week occurs in late October, the timing is perfect to sponsor a food drive to collect nonperishable foods in time for the holidays for those in need.
- If your mayor writes a regular column for your municipal newsletter or other publication, consider focusing on C&T Week and the value of municipal government and acknowledge those who work and volunteer for the city/town in a column.

**Activities that require additional resources:**

- 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 local talent, or group from a local school, provide entertainment.
- Have a car wash with funds donated to a specific project or local park.
- Plan a pet parade to promote pet licensing.
- Have an old fashioned city/town picnic in the park. Invite businesses and civic groups to cosponsor the event.

# CHAPTER 3: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

As you may be aware, CML and the Special District Association of Colorado created Lessons on Local Government, a resource providing Colorado's K-12 teachers access free curriculum materials to help educate students on the structure and value of local government. We have received great feedback from teachers, who say that these materials have proven to be very useful to them.

CML also encourages municipal officials (both elected and appointed) to visit with students in their schools to educate them on civics and what it takes to be a good citizen. 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.

## FREE (OR MINIMAL COST) ACTIVITIES

- Encourage elected and appointed officials from your municipality 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 page 8: “Tips for visiting with students in the classroom.”) If you do visit with students, be sure to contact CML Membership Services Manager Lisa White (lwhite@cml.org) and request free C&T Week giveaways to hand out to the kids.
- If you have a government access channel, produce a short program with an elected or appointed official(s) conducting a roundtable discussion with youth commissioners. If you do not have a youth commission, 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.
- Hold an essay contest focusing on local government services (See page 18: Sample Materials, Essay Contests.) Recognize winner(s) at a board/council meeting and/or offer a personalized city/town hall tour for the winning student and classmates.
- Hold an art contest for students related to a particular municipal government issue, e.g., recycling, water conservation, fire or police services, recreation and parks, transportation, planning, etc. (See page 19: Sample Materials, Art Contests.) Winners could receive a certificate, mention in your newsletter, or recognition at council/board meetings. Winning artwork also could be displayed at city/town hall.
- During C&T Week, pick a time to showcase police, fire, and/or public works vehicles at an elementary school.
- 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.
- Sponsor a local government career day at a school. Invite a few department heads to attend and discuss their jobs.
- Offer a time for free finger printing for kids at the police station or city/town hall.

- 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.
- Showcase local student talents and arts at community events.
- Host a competition to seek the best solution to a municipal problem and recognize students/teachers at a council meeting.

## **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 civics or social studies teachers to organize a “Doing Democracy Day.” This is a multicomunity, multischool event devoted to students wrestling with local issues, using local leaders as resources. For more information, contact Lessons on Local Government consultant and “Doing Democracy Day” co-founder Kent Willmann at [kentwillmann@gmail.com](mailto:kentwillmann@gmail.com).
- Hold a mock election with the help of teachers and local elected officials. Let the “elected student officials” conduct a council/board meeting and have them come up with ideas on how to improve their community. The real municipal officials then can 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 (for example, 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.
- If you do not already have one, consider establishing a youth council, often used to plan community service projects, hold entertaining activities for families and youth, and provide input to the mayor and council regarding youth needs and concerns.
- Develop a “job shadow” program for an afternoon, during which students can learn first-hand what municipal employees do.

## TIPS FOR VISITING WITH STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

*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 on this section through Lessons on Local Government.*

Visiting with students in a classroom can make local government come to life for young people. Love the idea of visiting with students, but not sure how to prepare or what to say? This information can help.

### DOS 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 usually top student lists. Discuss with the teacher(s) what issues are best for the students.

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

**Don't: Plan a long lecture or presentation.** An introduction and presentation of your duties and responsibilities should not last longer than 10 to 15 minutes. 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.

**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! 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).

### SUGGESTED AGENDA:

- Introduce yourself. Provide some background on your life, including where you went to school, favorite teachers and subjects, family, your "real" job (if you are an elected official), and what inspired you to be a public servant.
- What your role takes. Many students are surprised to learn of the amount of time you put into your service work and the low (or nonexistent) pay.
- The scope of your position, including your responsibilities and what issues are outside of your control. You are familiar with these, but students are just learning. Having a list of the top five duties and responsibilities of your office can be a real eye opener.
- A map showing your jurisdiction. Consider asking the host teacher to project an online map if the classroom is so equipped.

- Ask students what issues interest them. If they offer things like “world peace,” express your interest in that as well, but explain how that is usually not what you deal with in municipal government. Write a list of five or more issues on the board to get them involved. Ask students for their positions 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. Discuss various opinions you have heard from phone calls, emails, and coffee shop conversations. 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 an 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 following scenario is to decide what updates to put into a park on a limited budget. (Obviously, you can pick another, more relevant issue if you would like.)

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 or 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 council members

Ask students to identify which groups would support which choice. Ask them to role play the group and prepare a one-minute speech 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.

## BAKER STUDENTS GET CRASH COURSE IN CITY GOV'T.

*By Jenni Grubbs, Fort Morgan Times staff writer;  
reprinted from the April 11, 2014 issue of the Fort Morgan Times*

City government can be a strange, confusing thing for those who do not regularly — or ever — follow it.

Now, imagine being a 12- to 14-year-old and being asked to be a part of a city government.

That's what a handful of Baker Central School sixth-grade students did recently, holding a mock Fort Morgan City Council meeting and taking on the roles of various city officials for the meeting.

There were two sessions, morning and afternoon, with students from different homerooms.

At the morning session, the students heard from retired teacher and former Fort Morgan City Councilman Jim Powers about how the city came to have Colorado-Big Thompson water and the role the council played in that process.

In the afternoon, the students from the homerooms of Mrs. Chisum, Mrs. Meyer and Mrs. Lunning held a mock council meeting.

But first, former Councilwoman Deb

Forstedt explained to the students the great responsibility and large time commitment of being on the council.

"But city council for me was an extremely rewarding experience," she said. "You learn so much about the workings of small, home-rule city government."

At both sessions, Mayor Terry McAlister, City Manager Jeff Wells and City Clerk/Public Information Officer John Brennan explained how their jobs work.

During the afternoon session, they also instructed students in filling those roles during a mock council meeting — after a crash course in how the council runs.

Brennan explained what people do to run for the council, including the differences between running for mayor or a council seat. He told the students about the three city wards, which each have two council seats, and candidacy requirements.

Forstedt told the students she "went door-to-door in Ward 2 and

asked (people) to sign my petition" so she could run for council.

She said people asked her why she wanted to serve on the council.

"That is a very important question," Forstedt told the students. "Your answer becomes your guide for why you are on the council if elected."

Brennan also talked about meeting agendas.

"Every meeting needs an agenda so you know what business will be talked about," he said.

Sometimes the agenda only has proclamations, small bids and routine items on it, but other times it has serious policy issues and large spending measures, Brennan said.

"Last meeting, the city council ended up approving spending almost three-quarters of a million dollars for that fire truck," he told the kids, some of who had impressed looks at that large number.

### **Mock meeting**

Then, armed with some knowledge, the students set up their city

government and held a mock council meeting.

McAlister and Wells picked a few kids to fill the mayor, six council seats, police chief and city clerk spots, and then Wells had the now-seated council pick the city manager.

“How’d you like to have 12,000 bosses?” Wells asked the students, explaining that was what the seven kids on the council now had — all city residents as their bosses.

After some coaching from Brennan, the student mayor called the meeting to order and got things going. McAlister helped her with the words she needed to say, questions to ask and directions to give to staff.

One student volunteered to bring an issue before the council. She went to the podium and asked them to build a recreation center so kids would have somewhere safe to go and do things.

Wells told the students on the council they could not raise taxes on their own.

“But you can ask the voters to raise taxes,” he said. “Ultimately, it’s the decision of the people.”

He warned the students on the council that city voters turned down such a proposed tax increase twice before.

The students wound up voting on this issue twice, defeating it 4-3 the first time, but then passing it unanimously on reconsideration.

The next issue the students on the council heard was a citizen’s concern from another classmate about the fate of the spot in City Park that used to hold the Dinky train. After hearing related information from the student city manager (coached by Wells), the council asked the speaker if there was something she would like to see go there. She suggested “something from Fort Morgan’s history.”

The council heard from the student city manager that there was nothing in the budget for this, but money could come from reserves. (Wells coached him again.)

The students on the council wound up approving 4-3 the motion to install something related to the city’s history in the empty corner.

The kids on the council discussed quite a few more issues — all brought up by their classmates. They included: the city’s curfew, quiet zones, rebuilding the ball fields at Riverside Park, potential economic development like Taco Bell, the fate of the Fort Morgan Middle School building, the looks of closed gas stations, smells from the sugar beet factory, the timeline for getting all of the park trails open, cooperation between the city and school district and stormwater drainage problems.

Afterward, Wells said he was impressed with the types of questions and issues the students were looking to address. They were exactly the types of things the adult city council deals with on a regular basis, he said.

## MAKING SENSE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

By Kathy Browning

reprinted from the Feb. 19, 2014 issue of the Delta County Independent

Fourth graders at Hotchkiss K-8 have been studying about how town councils work. On Thursday, Feb. 13 they walked to the Hotchkiss Town Hall and met and listened to Mayor Wendell Koontz, public works director Mike Owens, deputy Ryan Sparks, town clerk Marlene Searle and deputy town clerk Tami Smith.

They left with handouts on water, a copy of the U.S. Constitution and a sucker.

The fourth graders are in the classes of Kathryn Oxford and Tucker Moore. The students were full of questions for the town leaders.

Mayor Koontz displayed a map of town limits to show how Hotchkiss had grown over 115 years.

Mike Owens gave the students handouts about water. The handouts included activity sheets and an experiment that could be done at school or at home. The public works department provides domestic water for town residents all the way up to Hanson Mesa,

Barrow Mesa, Rogers Mesa and part of Powell Mesa. The town's water comes from Leroux Creek.

Deputy Ryan Sparks of the Hotchkiss Marshal's Office said he walks through Hotchkiss K-8 with deputy Gates Shaklee, who stopped by to visit with the kids as well.

Sparks said the officers look for bad guys so the students can be safe. He showed what equipment he carries with him and in the patrol car.

Marlene Searle explained the administrative duties that are done at town hall. She shared about the town budget.

The money in the budget belongs to the people in Hotchkiss. As of the 2010 census 974 people live in town. Deputy town clerk Tami Smith showed the former grade school in Hotchkiss built in 1910 which is now Timbers Apartments. Smith attended that school when her family moved to Hotchkiss.

# SECTION 4: MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES AND/OR VOLUNTEERS

Perhaps you would like to use C&T Week to celebrate and acknowledge your municipal employees and/or volunteers. Following are a few ideas to do that. If you hold an event for employees and/or volunteers and you would like to distribute C&T Week giveaways, contact CML Membership Services Manager Lisa White at [lwhite@cml.org](mailto:lwhite@cml.org) to request free items.

## FREE (OR MINIMAL COST) ACTIVITIES:

- Recognize a leader(s) — a current or past employee, board or commission member, or volunteer — who has demonstrated outstanding dedication to the municipality and has made significant contributions to the community with a ceremony and a certificate. Contact your local media about doing a feature story on the person(s) you have selected.
- Recognize the employees and/or volunteers who have been with the city/town the longest. Feature them in your municipal newsletter. Present awards at a ceremony and engage local media about doing a feature on them. (See page 14: “City of Sterling employees honored for milestone service.”)
- Recognize public safety personnel in your municipal newsletter or in some other manner.
- Display C&T Week signs inside and outside of municipal buildings thanking employees/volunteers for all they do. (See page 22: Sample Materials, Posters and Templates.)
- 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 municipality if paid employees had to do those very important jobs. Volunteers save residents money and make the community a great place to live!
- Send letters or emails to city/town volunteers from mayor, councilmembers/ trustees, and/or manager/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.

## ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Hold an employee appreciation breakfast, picnic, or ice cream social. Include their families if budget allows.
- Arrange for a city/town employee night at a sports or cultural facility, baseball game, bowling alley, movie theater, zoo, etc. The evening could include free or discounted admission for municipal employees and/or a special acknowledgement at intermission or half-time.

## CITY OF STERLING EMPLOYEES HONORED FOR MILESTONE SERVICE

*By Sara Waite, Journal-Advocate managing editor  
reprinted from the Jan. 28, 2014, issue of Journal Advocate.com*

City of Sterling employees gathered in the Sterling Public Library's community room Monday for a Years of Service recognition luncheon hosted by the Excellence Committee.

Shari Bollish took the highest honors, with 40 years as a city employee. She began as a dispatcher, then transferred in 2007 to the Sterling Police Department's records department.

Police Chief Tyson Kerr presented her service award, saying Bollish is "the epitome of friendliness."

He noted that 40 years with one employers is "a milestone most will not see."

Mayor Dan Torres also congratulated Bollish on her achievement, and

spoke to her genuine personality.

Kerr was also among the employees recognized; he has been with the police department for 15 years. Virgie Nelson, Sterling Youth Services coordinator, noted that in that time, he has moved from a cadet to the chief. She expressed her appreciation for the "energy and forward thinking" she said Kerr brings to the department.

Acting City Manager Bob Brown recognized Sterling Municipal Judge Jay Brammer for his 10 years of service, joking that the forlorn faces of those coming in and out of City Hall are always a reminder that it is Wednesday, when court is held.

Joselyn Welsh, legal secretary, has also had 10 years with the city.

She was not present for the luncheon.

Margie Peake was honored for her five years with the Sterling Public Library, after retiring from her teaching career.

Michelle Dahlinger was recognized for five years as a dispatcher.

In addition to recognizing employee milestones, Brown acknowledged the work of all city employees, whom he called "the backbone of the city."

Torres said he apologizes if "we do not tell you often enough" how much the employees' work is appreciated, and he hopes to do more to expres thanks for making Sterling great.

# CHAPTER 5: SAMPLE MATERIALS

The materials in this section are samples; customize them to fit your needs. Some are intended for use during C&T Week, while others can be used all year long to highlight the various services you provide residents. **Downloadable documents are available at [www.cml.org/cities-and-towns](http://www.cml.org/cities-and-towns).**

## RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE COLORADO C&T WEEK 2014

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY/TOWN OF \_\_\_\_\_

RECOGNIZING COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS WEEK,

OCTOBER 20-26, 2014

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 \_\_\_\_\_.

# SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE SUPPORTING C&T WEEK

News release

Municipal logo

Contact: (name, phone, email)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **NAME OF CITY/TOWN CELEBRATES COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS WEEK, OCT. 20-26, 2014**

**Date, City/Town** – The City/Town of \_\_\_\_\_ will be participating in Colorado Cities & Towns Week, Oct. 20-26, 2014, which highlights and celebrates the value of municipal government.

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 267 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.*

# SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR SUPPORTING C&T WEEK

To the Editor:

During the week of October 20-26, 2014, the City/Town of \_\_\_\_\_ will join other cities and towns across the state to celebrate the first-ever 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 or publisher of your local newspaper(s) and/or 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 CONTESTS

## SAMPLE NOTE/EMAIL TO TEACHERS FOR AN ESSAY CONTEST

*(Feel free to gear the contest to third, fourth, fifth and/or any other grade. It is recommended that if you want to invite older students to participate, you make the topic a bit more advanced.)*

Dear 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](http://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, October 6 to: City/town hall, address

The essay winner(s) will be announced during Colorado Cities & Towns Week during the week of Oct. 20.

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 of achievement. 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.

## **SAMPLE ENTRY FORM FOR AN ESSAY CONTEST**

Teacher contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach this form to the essays from your class and submit to: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's name \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's email \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

School name \_\_\_\_\_

School address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Entries must be postmarked by Monday, Oct. 6.

## **ART CONTESTS**

### **SAMPLE NOTE/EMAIL TO TEACHERS FOR AN ART CONTEST**

*(Feel free to gear the contest to third, fourth, fifth and/or any other grade. It is recommended that if you want to invite older students to participate, you make the topic a bit more advanced.)*

Dear 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 should 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](http://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, October 6 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 Oct. 20.

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 of achievement. 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.

### **SAMPLE ENTRY FORM FOR AN ART CONTEST**

Teacher contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach this form to the essays from your class and submit to: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's name \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's email \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

School name \_\_\_\_\_

School address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Entries must be postmarked by Monday, Oct. 6.

### **PROMOTIONAL ITEMS**

CML also has promotional items available, by request and while supplies last, if you'd like to distribute fun items to residents during your C&T Week event or any other time when you (or your colleagues) will be connecting with citizens. Contact Lisa White at 303-831-6411, 866-578-0936, or at [lwhite@cml.org](mailto:lwhite@cml.org) to request items.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA: DURING C&T WEEK**

- Twitter and Facebook during C&T Week is a great, easy, and inexpensive way to participate and engage with residents. 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 [www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org](http://www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org).

- 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!)

## **SOCIAL MEDIA: THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

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 crisis – 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 local schools, accomplishments of residents, or from your downtown development authority or economic development council
- General reminders of services provided with photos, i.e., it’s 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?”

## POSTERS AND TEMPLATES: DURING C&T WEEK

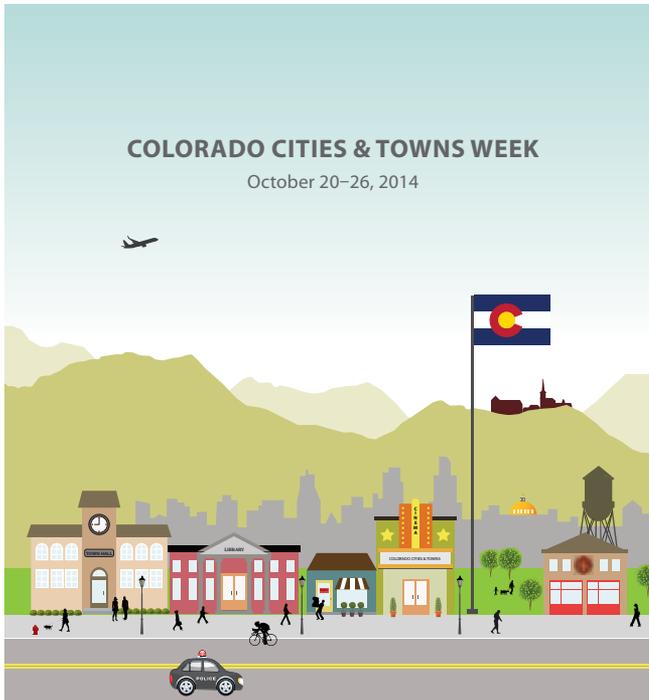
CML will be sending each member municipal clerk a Colorado Cities & Towns Week poster in August to be displayed before and during C&T Week.

Similar artwork is available as customizable advertisements 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.

This template also could be printed and posted as signs around municipal buildings, thanking employees and volunteers for their work.

To request customization and get the ad in the appropriate format, fill out the online form found at [www.cml.org/cities-and-towns](http://www.cml.org/cities-and-towns). Please allow up to two weeks, depending on demand.

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



### COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS WEEK

October 20–26, 2014

*Design of poster promoting Colorado Cities & Towns Week.*

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS WORK FOR YOU

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS  
[www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org](http://www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org)

*A similar design is available for advertisements, with area for custom text and municipal logo. Contact CML Communications & Design Specialist Traci Stoffel at [tstoffel@cml.org](mailto:tstoffel@cml.org) for details.*

## ADVERTISING TEMPLATES: THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

CML also offers six advertising templates that member municipalities can use throughout the year highlighting the various services you provide. As with the C&T Week ad, 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 customization (half-page shown; also available as full-page or custom-sized), fill out the online form found at [www.cml.org/cities-and-towns](http://www.cml.org/cities-and-towns). Please allow up to two weeks, depending on demand for ads.

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



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.

*Area for custom text and municipal logo.*

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS  
[www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org](http://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.

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS  
[www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org](http://www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org)



# SAFETY

We may not think about it, but several of the services we rely on to keep us safe — such as 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.

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS  
[www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org](http://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.

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS  
[www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org](http://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.

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS  
[www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org](http://www.coloradocitiesandtowns.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.

COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS  
[www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org](http://www.coloradocitiesandtowns.org)



## QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions, or would like additional support, feel free to contact executive director Sam Mamet or membership services manager Lisa White at (303) 831-6411/ 866-578-0936 anytime. We are happy to help however we can! Remember to let us know how your city or town celebrates the week....just send Lisa a quick email at [lwhite@cml.org](mailto:lwhite@cml.org).