Cities lead residents’ most trusted government officials. Yet cities need more resources to support their work and make voting and elections accessible, safe, and secure to achieve 100% voter turnout. Cities are advocates to other levels of government for civic engagement and 100% voter turnout. Cities are educators for their residents on how, when, and where to vote. Cities are implementors of voting infrastructure that enables accessible, safe, and secure elections to all eligible voters. Cities have an opportunity to lead their communities more in civic engagement and healthy local democracy. City leaders have the opportunity to lean into the leadership roles they already play in their communities in order to establish permanent investment and outreach on civic engagement. Cities are uniquely positioned to educate residents, advocate up to other levels of government, and implement elections effectively making the voting process accessible, safe, and secure to all eligible voters. Municipalities must receive more support from state and federal governments, philanthropies, and civil society to achieve 100% voter turnout in every election. **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF CITIES IN THE 2020 ELECTION?**

**Cities are ADVOCATES** to other levels of government for civic engagement and 100% voter turnout

- 42% of city leaders see their primary role in elections to support county, state, and federal election boards.
- 20% of city leaders view their primary role as providing education and information on voting and elections.

**Cities are IMPLEMENTORS** of voting infrastructure that enables accessible, safe, and secure elections to all eligible voters

- 16% of city leaders see their primary role in elections to implement voting infrastructure like drop boxes and poll sites.
- 6% of city leaders see their primary role in elections as providing education and information on voting and elections.

**Cities are EDUCATORS** for their residents on how, when, and where to vote

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**Cities have an opportunity to lead their communities more in civic engagement and healthy local democracy.**

- City leaders serve their communities and other government entities during elections. But when asked about their funding sources by election scenario, city leaders report that they get most of their funding for voting and elections from their municipal budgets, with minimal funding from other sources. According to survey respondents:

  - **If given additional resources, city leaders would invest more in these three priority areas:**
    - Dedicated staff for voter turnout campaigns
    - Engaging historically underrepresented communities
    - Coordination with nearby counties

- **What is the role of cities in the 2020 elections?**

  - NLC surveyed over 100 cities, towns, and villages across 36 states and the District of Columbia to understand the state of voting and elections at the municipal level.

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- As implementors of voting and elections efforts, city leaders play a critical role in successful elections. Here is what is keeping city elections leaders up at night:

  - 24% reported that that their primary source of funding was federal.
  - 12% from other local government entities.
  - 3% from nonprofit sources, philanthropy, and the business community.
  - 1% from state government.

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- **What is keeping city elections leaders up at night?**

  - How to maintain turnout (due to voter fatigue, voter registration, and early voting coming)

**WHAT DO CITIES NEED FOR FUTURE VOTING AND ELECTIONS WORK?**

If given additional resources, city leaders would invest more in these three priority areas:

- Develop better ballot accessibility
- Conduct biannual assessments of election readiness
- Engage communities in voter outreach and education

**WHAT DO CITIES NEED FOR FUTURE VOTING AND ELECTIONS WORK?**

- 24% of city leaders are concerned about voter turnout.
- 21% are concerned about accessibility for people with disabilities.
- 21% worry about voter fraud and other security concerns.
- 14% fear low in-person turnout due to voter fatigue, low voter registration, and early voting coming.

City leaders have the opportunity to lean into the leadership roles they already play in their communities in order to establish permanent investment and outreach on civic engagement. Cities are uniquely positioned to educate residents, advocate up to other levels of government, and implement elections effectively making the voting process accessible, safe, and secure to all eligible voters. Municipalities must receive more support from state and federal governments, philanthropies, and civil society to achieve 100% voter turnout in every election.

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