



# NYSCMA Survey Executive Summary

## Survey

In October 2020, the New York State City/County Management Association (NYSCMA) distributed a second survey to assess the impact of recent events on New York State municipalities, their leaders, and their operations. This followed on a June 2020 survey on the same topics.

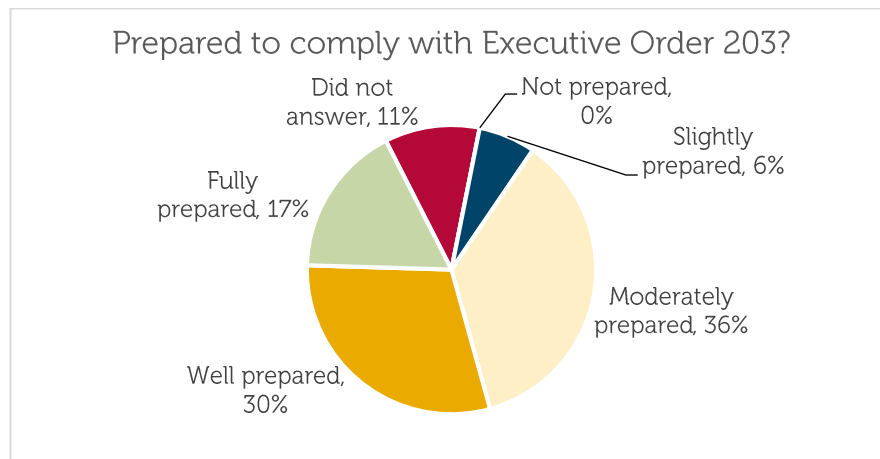
CGR partnered with NYSCMA's secretariat, the College at Brockport's Public Administration Department, to design the survey. The survey, sent to 71 municipal leaders, had a 66% effective response rate, with responses representing 47 unique municipalities. Forty-nine percent of respondents indicated they had participated in the June 2020 survey.

## Results

Municipalities in New York State continue to face a challenging environment due to a variety of recent events. However, at present, worst-case scenarios have been avoided: overall, municipalities report doing well on a variety of measures, and better than they reported doing when surveyed in June.

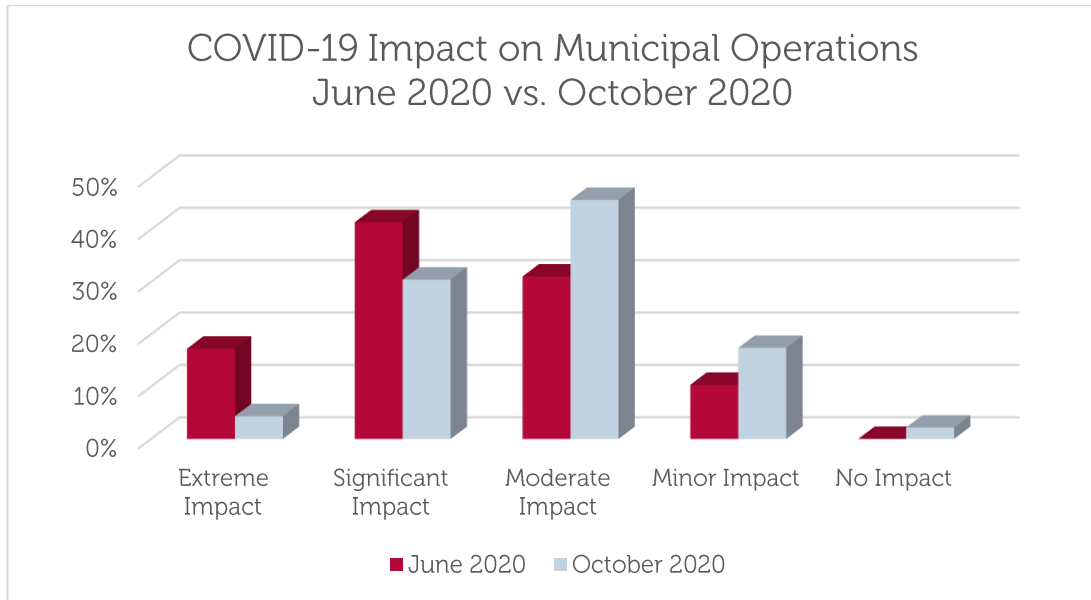
### Executive Order 203

Municipalities report good progress on complying with Executive Order 203 on policing. Forty-seven percent of respondents reported that they were well prepared or fully prepared and an additional 36% reported that they were moderately prepared. Six percent reported being slightly prepared and no one reported being unprepared.

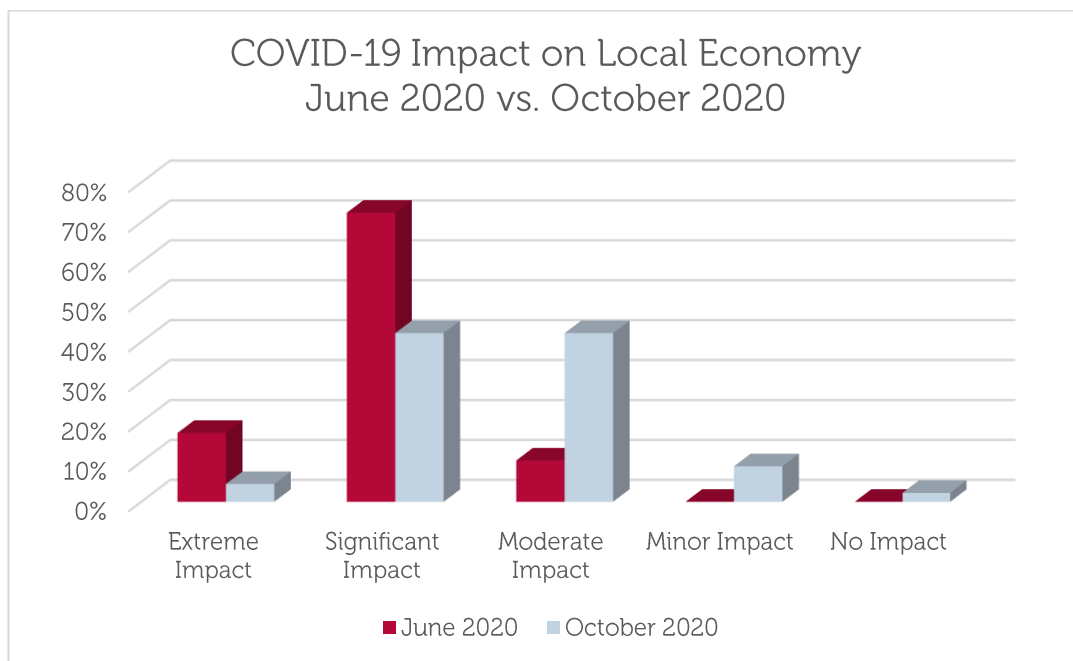


## COVID-19 Impact

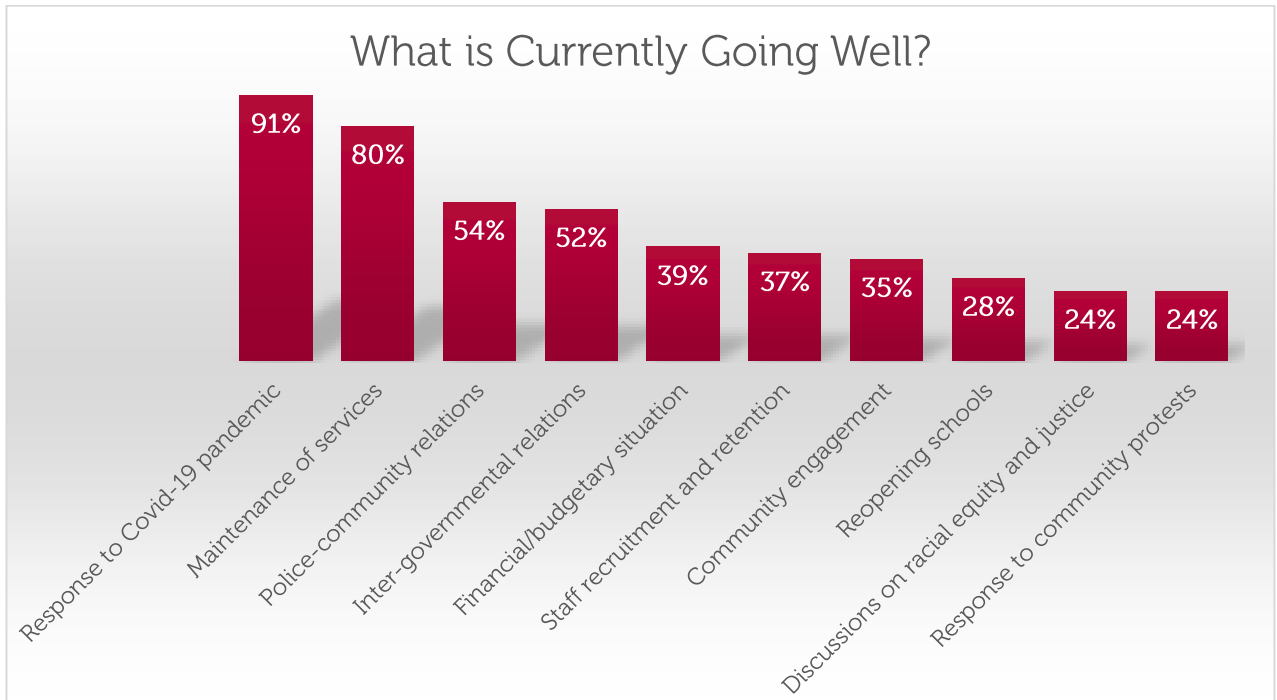
In comparison to the June survey, **the impact of COVID-19 reported by municipalities has lessened**. Whereas in June, 58% reported significant or extreme impact on municipal operations, by October, 63% reported moderate or minor impact.



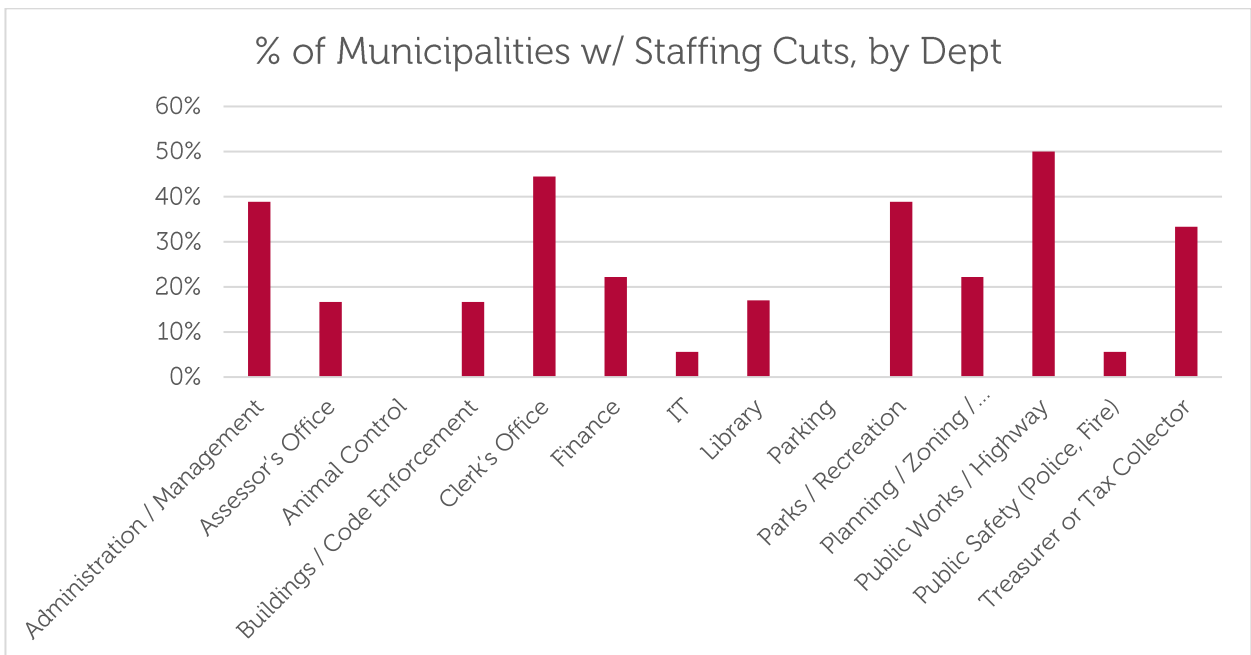
Likewise, in June, about 90% of respondents stated that COVID-19 had significant or extreme impact on their local economy. By October, only 48% of municipalities reported significant or extreme impact, and 52% reported moderate to no impact.



Perhaps reflecting this, large majorities of respondents feel that the response to the pandemic (91%) and maintenance of services (80%) are going well.

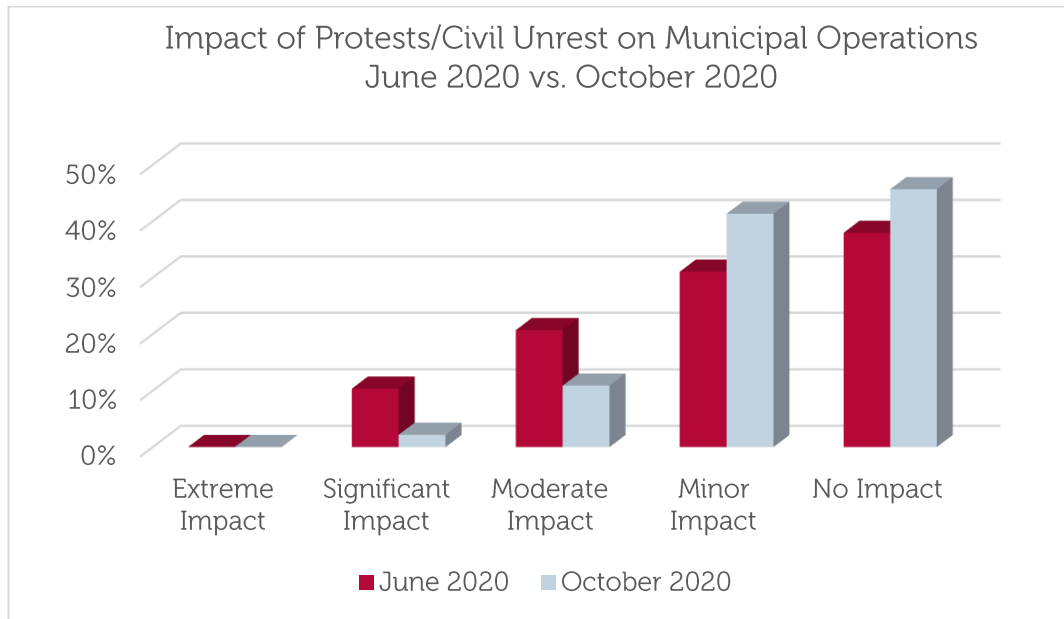


A majority of municipalities (59%) have not had to enact staffing cuts recently. However, this differs by level: a majority of counties that responded (69%) have enacted staffing cuts. Across all municipalities, public works/highway, clerk's offices, and administration/management are the departments most affected by cuts.

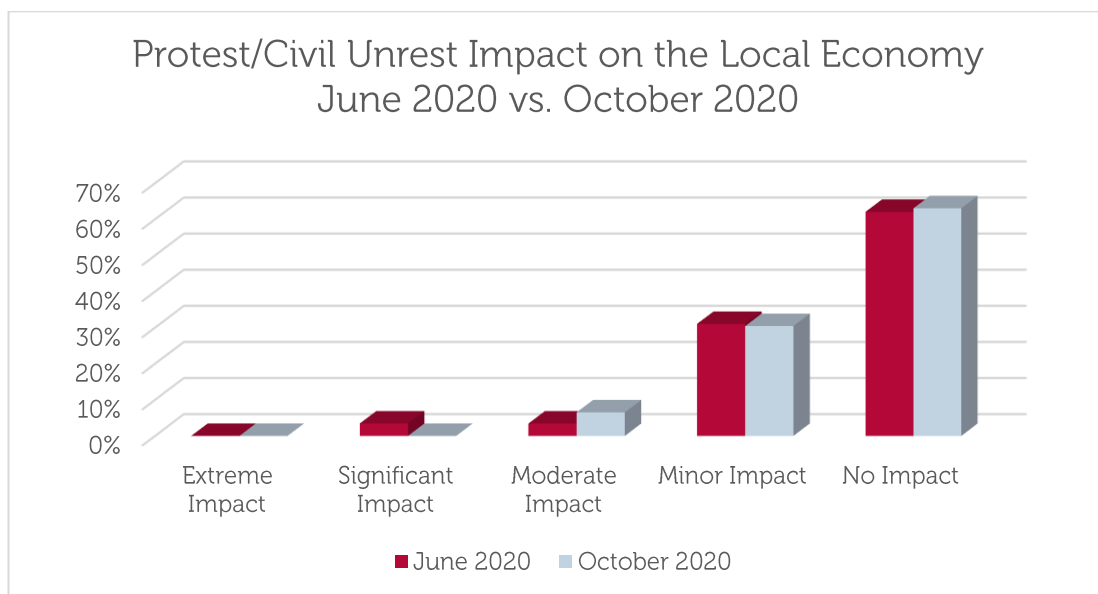


## Protests and Responses to Racism

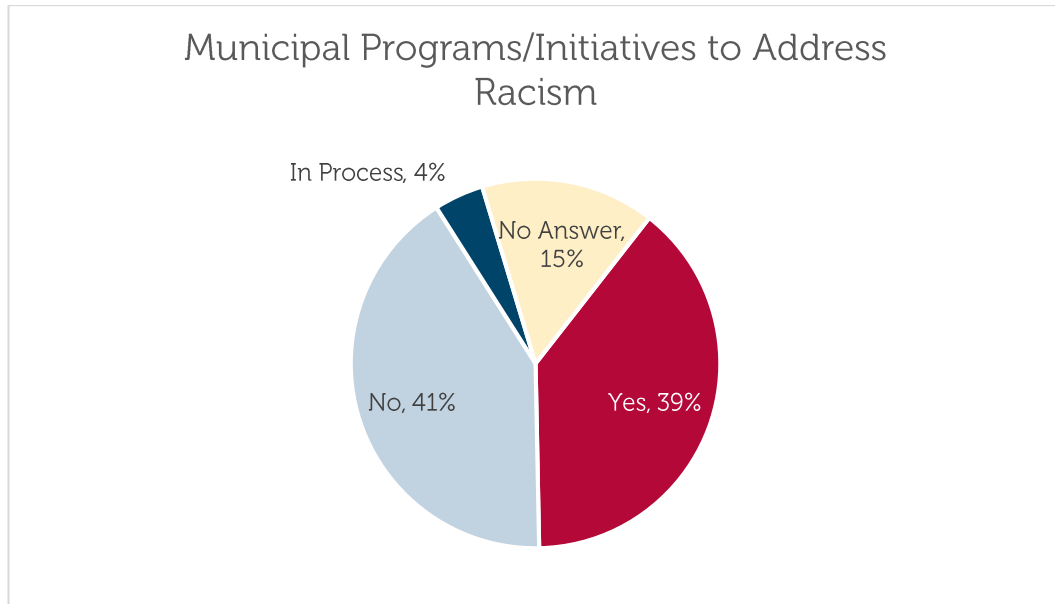
Protests or civil unrest continue to have limited impact on responding municipalities. Whereas in June 2020, 10% of all municipalities– reported significant impact on their municipal operations. 21% reported moderate impact, and 70% of municipalities reported no impact or minor impact, by October, only one municipality reported a significant impact on municipal operations, 11% reported a moderate impact, and 87% reported minor or no impact



The impact of protests on the local economy was even less, as 93% reported minor or no impact, and 7% reported moderate impact.

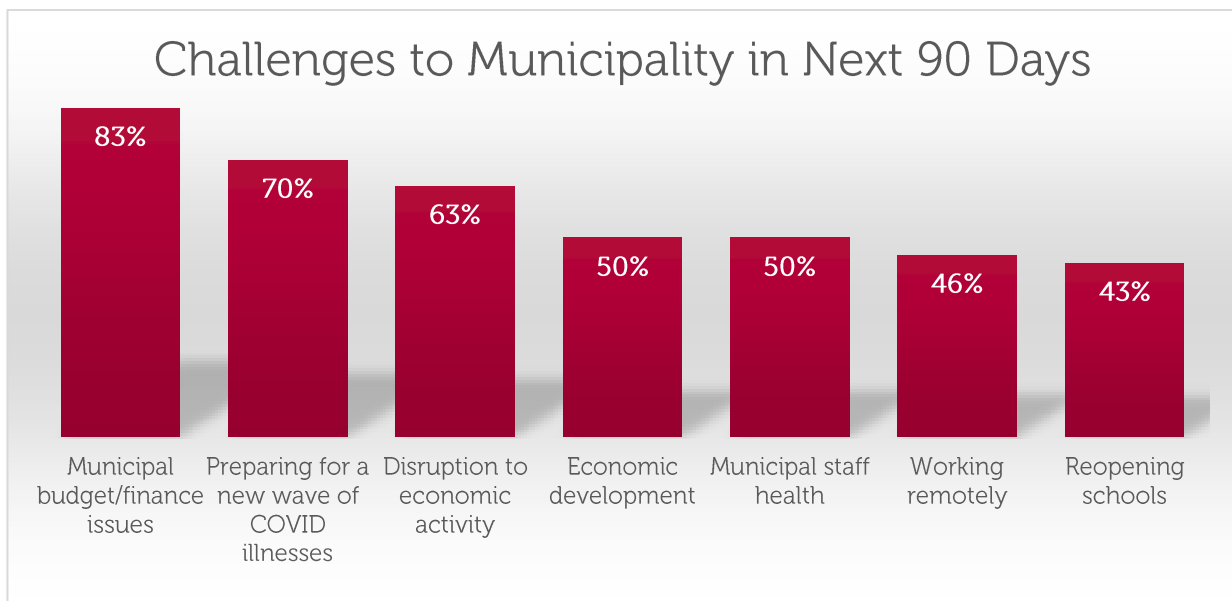


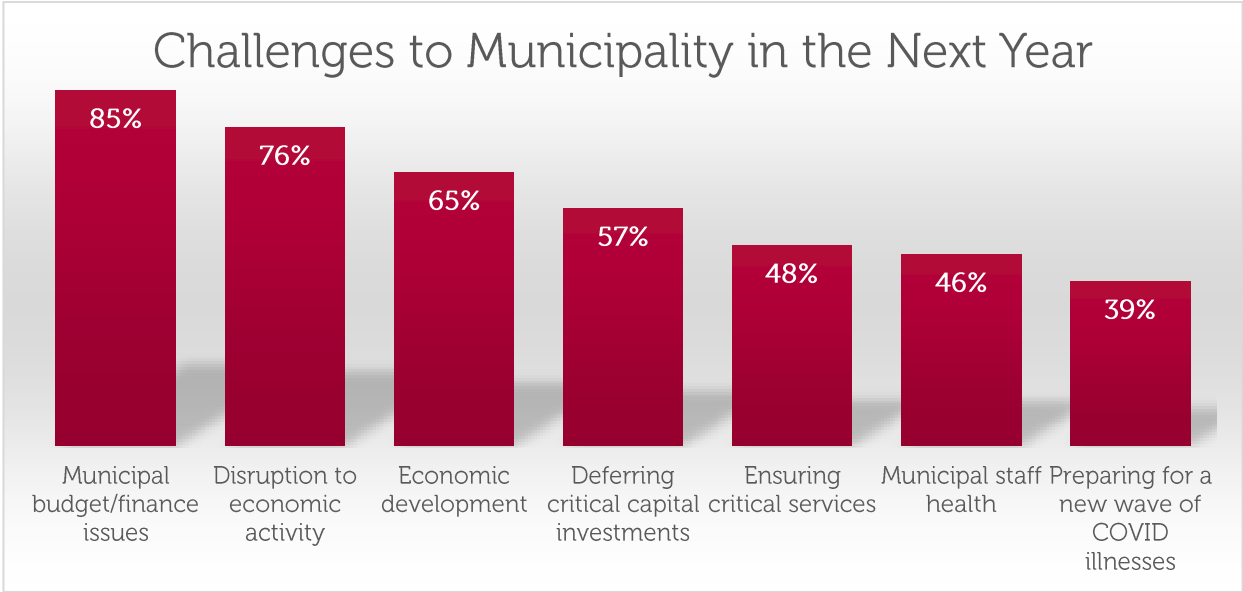
Municipalities are about evenly split between having and not having programs and initiatives to address racism. Cities are more likely than average to have them, and counties are less likely. Towns and villages are closely split.



### Anticipated Challenges

The biggest forthcoming challenge municipalities see in both the next 90 days (83%) and the next year (85%) is budget and finance issues. Likewise, when ranking their greatest uncertainties in planning, 89% ranked revenue forecasting first or second, with capital planning ranked first or second by 64%.





In terms of resources needed, municipalities are most interested in federal and state aid to address budgetary issues and information from peers on how they are handling budgeting, revenue and other current issues.

