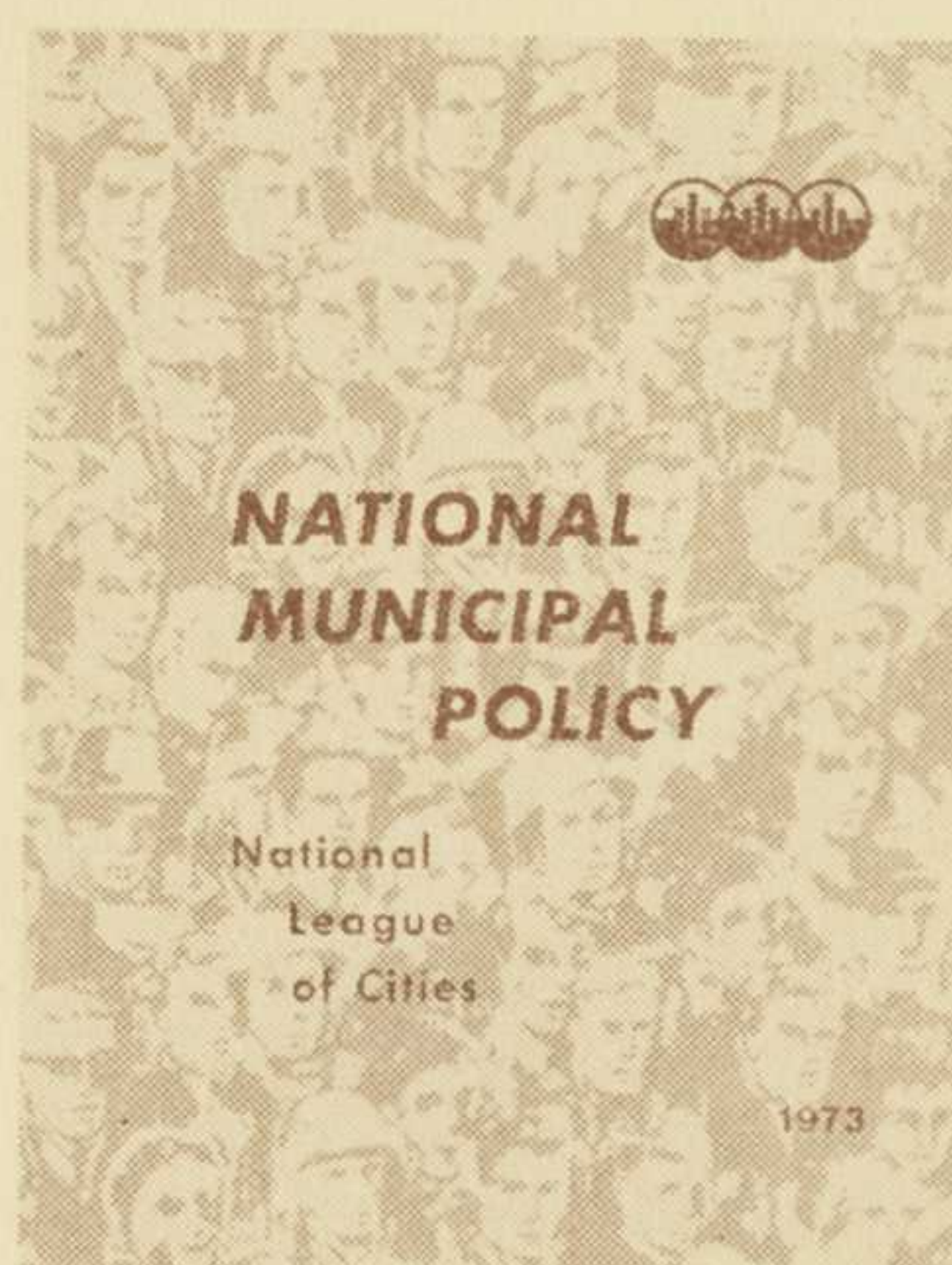


this is a largely untapped reservoir of skills. It needs to be drawn upon to fill the very real need to compare and exchange experiences in coping with the complicated task of modernizing and improving our cities, making them attractive places to live, work and play despite population and pollution pressures. Cities around the world have the same problems and the sharing of their techniques, technology and approaches in dealing with them can raise their appreciation and respect for one another. The Sister City program provides the ideal vehicle for this mutual assistance and improvement.



The current National Municipal policy statement of the League, which represents some 15,000 municipal governments in the 50 states and Puerto Rico, notes that: "Municipal officials in the United States can learn much from the organization and practices of municipalities in other countries and can also make available to foreign cities information on current municipal practices in the U.S." The League points out that this learning process should be promoted through correspondence, publications, attendance at conferences and the exchange of personnel.

"Most municipal problems are common to cities, towns and villages throughout the world. In no one country do city officials have a monopoly on financial problems," the NLC states. "Relationships with central government and day-to-day difficulties in handling increases in population and vehicle traffic, in maintaining adequate streets, public buildings and other services concern local officials everywhere...Accordingly, cities should take feasible steps to maximize exchanges for mutual benefits and strongly encourage local civic, service and professional groups to play an active, effective role in international exchanges."

The first formal technical agreement approved by the city council under the criteria spelled out in the NLC policy statement became operational in 1973 between Portland, Oregon and Sapporo, Japan. The two Sister Cities will exchange municipal employees in alternate years with Portland starting off by assigning a public works engineer to Sapporo who will work there a full year and send reports on Japanese techniques in such fields as water filtra-