

COUNCIL POLICY

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A. BACKGROUND:

The City Council recognizes an active program of legislative advocacy at the state, regional and national levels is in the City’s best interest – in both protection and giving the City a voice in matters of importance. The Council’s legislative advocacy policy was last amended by the Council in 2013.

With the recent establishment of the new Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Office (CIRO), the City is in a stronger position to monitor and influence legislative and policy development at the state, regional and national levels. An updated policy will be helpful to ensure that the City’s new resources are utilized most efficiently and effectively to address policy matters affecting the City and its residents.

B. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures and principles to guide legislative advocacy by City staff and the Council on behalf of the City. The updated policy is intended to enable the City to have quick and sustained engagement on legislative issues. The policy will ensure that the Chief of Communications and Intergovernmental Relations and the Intergovernmental Relations and Legislative Officer identify and inform the Council, the City Manager’s Office, the City Attorney’s Office, City department leadership and staff on proposed legislation and other policy-related matters that may have a direct and significant impact on issues facing the City. This Legislative Advocacy Policy is not intended to limit an individual Council Member from expressing their support for or opposition to any state or federal legislation. However, in doing so, the Council Member should clearly state that they are speaking for themselves, not on behalf of the Council or the City.

C. PROCEDURE:

1. Prior to December 31st of each year, the Council shall adopt legislative platforms for both the state and federal levels. The Council may review and update either or both legislative platforms as urgent needs arise during the year. The platforms may be as detailed or as general as the Council deems appropriate.
2. The following process will be followed to implement the Council’s legislative platforms and to monitor and respond to proposed legislation or policy-related matters:
 - a. Throughout the year, the Intergovernmental Relations and Legislative Officer will, in collaboration with the City’s legislative consultants (if such consultants are engaged), review all proposed legislation to identify those items within the scope of the Council’s legislative platform or otherwise found to be of significance to local government.
 - b. The Intergovernmental Relations and Legislative Officer will coordinate with the City Manager’s Office and City Attorney’s Office to ensure that the City tracks all legislation within the scope of the Council’s legislative platform or otherwise found to be of significance to local government.

- c. As it deems appropriate, CIRO will propose that the City take a position on legislation, which may be Support, Oppose, or Watch.
 - 1. A support position indicates that the City is in favor of the legislation in question.
 - 2. An oppose position indicates that the City is not in favor of the proposed legislation.
 - 3. A watch is traditionally an internal position that indicates the City monitoring the legislation.
 - d. The proposed legislation, along with a draft position letter will be reviewed by CIRO and relevant City staff. The proposed position letter will be forwarded to the Mayor after consultation with City staff is completed.
 - e. If a policy matter is covered by the Council's adopted state or federal legislative platforms, the Mayor may sign the proposed position letter without further input from the Council as a whole. The signed letter will then be placed on a future City Council agenda under the Written Communications section to notify the Council and public of the Mayor's action on behalf of the City.
 - f. If a policy matter is not covered by the Council's adopted state or federal legislative platforms, the proposed legislation and the proposed position letter will be placed on an upcoming Council agenda for consideration by the full Council.
 - g. Pursuant to the City Charter, the Mayor will be the primary person on behalf of the City to sign a position letter. In the Mayor's absence, the Vice Mayor may sign the letter in coordination with CIRO.
 - h. CIRO will distribute the signed letter to the relevant members of the City's legislative delegation.
 - i. Once the Mayor approves the position on a policy matter, other actions may be taken by staff, including:
 - Preparing staff and councilmember testimony to legislative committees and other legislative and regulatory bodies; and
 - In-person meetings and phone calls with members of legislative and regulatory agencies;
 - Giving a verbal and written position to City's advocacy teams without a formal letter.
 - j. The City Manager's Office and the City Attorney's Office will be consulted on all legislative and policy matters and will be kept apprised of any positions proposed to or taken by the Mayor.
3. On matters of urgency in Sacramento and Washington, D.C., when there is insufficient time for the above process:
- a. In cases when CIRO determines a late-breaking bill amendment or bill to have a potentially significant beneficial or detrimental effect on the City; and when such amendment or bill is scheduled to be heard by the Legislature or Congress before it can be reviewed using the above process, the Chief Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Officer and Intergovernmental Relations and Legislative Officer shall be authorized, in coordination with the City Manager's Office, the City Attorney's Office, and appropriate department director and Mayor, to take appropriate action in support or opposition of the proposed bill or amendment.
4. In addition:
- a) The Mayor, City Manager's Office, and City Attorney's Office shall be kept advised of meetings scheduled with state and federal officials concerning policy matters.
 - b) If the Council's adopted legislative platform does not cover a pertinent policy area where staff or a member of the Council would like to take action, the item will be placed on a future City Council action for review and deliberation.

- c) City employees appointed to the Board of Directors of a Policy Committee or elected as an officer of a department of the League of California Cities or National League of Cities are permitted to vote or take a position on a state or federal legislation. Such action, however, does not necessarily indicate support of the legislation by the City Council. This would apply to any statewide, regional or local professional association, including but not limited to: WaterReuse, Association of California Water Agencies, California Transit Association, and California Association of Sanitation Agencies. To the extent possible, employees will confer with and inform the City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, the Mayor, Chief of Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Officer and Intergovernmental Relations and Legislative Officer before taking a position on such legislation.

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