

CITY COUNCIL POLICY

EFFECTIVE: March 7, 2022

SUBJECT: Legislative Advocacy Policy

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of establishing a City Council Policy on legislative advocacy is to formalize a process on the timing and manner for the City to respond to pending Local, State and Federal legislation or ballot measures affecting the City of Redwood City. In order to protect the City's interests and the City Council's local discretion, it shall be the policy of the City of Redwood City to actively monitor, engage and advocate on State or Federal legislation impacting the City's key priorities, operations, and programs.

1.1 The City Council Governance Sub-Committee in conjunction with City staff shall evaluate and if needed make proposed modifications to the City's legislative platform annually. If the platform is amended, the updated platform shall be approved by the full City Council in advance of the proceeding legislative year during a regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

1.2 In accordance with the City Council approved legislative platform, the City Manager's office will be responsible to work in coordination with the Governance Sub-Committee, City departmental staff, and the City's legislative consultant to:

- a.** Continuously review and evaluate legislative proposals for consistency with the approved Legislative platform.
- b.** Make recommendations on appropriate advocacy position consistent with the legislative platform.
- c.** Draft advocacy letters consistent with the approved legislative platform and policy positions as defined in section 3 of this policy.
- d.** Direct the City's legislative consultant to engage with appropriate State and Federal officials on legislation in which the City has taken an advocacy position as outlined in section 3 of this policy.

1.3 If an advocacy position is clearly consistent with the City Council's adopted legislative platform, the City Manager shall be authorized to request that the Mayor or in the

absence of the Mayor, the Vice Mayor to sign advocacy letters on legislation of interest without taking the item to the Governance Sub-Committee or City Council for approval.

- a. Consistent with State and Federal legislative committee requirements, revised advocacy letters and advocacy activities may continue to be submitted on behalf of the City throughout the legislative process.

1.4 If a legislative proposal is not clearly consistent with the adopted legislative platform OR is inconsistent with the League of California Cities recommended position for State issues or the National League of Cities recommended position for Federal issues, the City Manager's office in coordination with the City's legislative consultant may also present the legislative proposal in question to the Governance Sub-Committee for review. The City Manager may propose to the City Council a position on such legislation if it is determined to be in the City's best interest.

1.5 Any correspondence developed under this policy shall be copied to the full City Council. Whenever possible, City correspondence will come from the Mayor or in the Mayor's absence the Vice Mayor or City Manager, unless under extenuating circumstances as outlined in section 2 of this policy.

2. Advocacy Position Adoption in Extenuating Circumstances: It is important to recognize that the State and Federal legislative practices do not adhere to the same timing as local agencies who must comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.

2.1 If time is of the essence, and a significant item requires action before approval can be obtained as outlined in section 1 of this policy, action can be taken by the Mayor or City Manager without approval, if the legislative proposal is consistent with the following guidelines:

- a. Does not directly conflict with the Council adopted legislative platform AND
- b. Would directly impact the City's finances, responsibilities, legal authority, discretion or operations, or a significant portion of the residential or business community of Redwood City that could, in turn impact City government finances, responsibilities, legal authority, discretion or operations AND
- c. Is intended to protect or increase local revenues, OR
- d. Is intended to protect or increase local control, OR
- e. Is intended to protect or increase funding or otherwise benefit specific programs, services or infrastructure utilized in Redwood City, OR

- f. Is opposing an unfunded mandate, OR
- g. Is consistent with the recommended policy position provided by the League of California Cities or National League of Cities for federal issues, AND
- h. Has been reviewed by the City Attorney or designee.

3. Advocacy Efforts and Positions for Adoption: The following advocacy efforts to advance adopted positions may include the following activities: written position letters, staff, consultant, and councilmember testimony to legislative and regulatory bodies or Administration officials; as well as coalition building efforts, meetings, phone calls and other direct or indirect communications with legislative, regulatory, and Administration officials.

3.1 The City's legislative advocacy positions as further defined below, are established, and advocated for in accordance with the policies outlined in sections 1 and 2.

- a. **Support:** A support position indicates to the corresponding legislature, regulatory agency, and other stakeholders, that the City of Redwood City is in favor of the legislative proposal in question.
- b. **Oppose:** An oppose position indicates to the corresponding legislature, regulatory agency, and other stakeholders, that the City of Redwood City is strongly against the proposed legislative policy proposal. Barring an amendment that would exempt the City from its provisions, it is unlikely the proposal could be feasibly amended to remove all concerns.
- c. **Oppose Unless Amended:** An oppose unless amended position indicates to the corresponding legislature, regulatory agency, and other stakeholders, that the City of Redwood City is against the proposal in question unless all or a significant number of the substantive concerns with the proposal are addressed through amendments.
- d. **Neutral:** A neutral position indicates to the corresponding legislature, regulatory agency, and other stakeholders, that the City of Redwood City is impartial on the legislative proposal in question. Typically, this position is adopted, after amendments have been taken to address concerns on a particular piece of legislation.
- e. **Watch:** A watch position indicates to the corresponding legislature, regulatory agency, and other stakeholders, that the City of Redwood City is dedicating resources to monitor the proposal. Typically, this position is adopted if the City is undecided on how to proceed and will continue to watch for amendments that may cause concern or provide tools/resources for the City.
- f. **Sponsor/Co-Sponsor:** A Sponsor or Co-Sponsor position indicates to the

corresponding legislature, regulatory agency, and other stakeholders, that the City of Redwood City is not only in strong support of the legislative proposal but is in effect leading the advocacy effort. This position is only used when a State or Federal lawmaker has agreed to carry a specific proposal on behalf of the City.

4. Formal Positions on Ballot Measures/Propositions: The City Council, acting as a body, may take a position on behalf of the City on a ballot measure or proposition.

4.1 Should the City Council choose to take a position on a Local or State measure/proposition, the measure/proposition:

- a. Should directly impact the City's finances, responsibilities, legal authority, or operations; OR
- b. Directly impact existing City policy, past action, or current City Council strategic priorities; OR
- c. Directly impact specific programs, services or infrastructure utilized in Redwood City.

4.2 The measure/proposition can be referred to staff for analysis by the Mayor and Vice Mayor, or by any Council Sub-Committee prior to the full City Council taking a position on a measure/proposition. Staff will evaluate objectively the referred measure/proposition's potential impact on the City and present its analysis in an objective and impartial manner to the City Council. Staff's analysis will be made available to the public; AND

- a. If the City Council adopts a resolution endorsing or opposing a ballot measure or proposition, the resolution should include a statement that no public funds shall be used in the campaign for or against the measure or proposition.

5. Grassroots or Local Measure or Advocacy Action Policy: Full Council action is required for any formal position for any type of grassroots or local advocacy action, such as social, political, or economic movements, that are not legislation, regulatory or an administrative proposal.

6. Individual Council Member Positions: This policy is not intended to limit the prerogative of individual Councilmembers from expressing their individual support for or opposition to any Local measure, or State proposition, State or Federal legislation, or grassroots advocacy actions. However, in doing so, the member shall clearly state that they are speaking for themselves, not on behalf of the Council body or the City collectively. When acting in individual capacity, Councilmembers shall do so in accordance with other City Council policies.

When appointed by the Mayor or City Council, Councilmembers representing the City on regional or other bodies should use their discretion in taking formal action, particularly with respect to adopting formal advocacy positions on legislative proposals based on the guidelines established in this policy including the adopted legislative platform referenced throughout this policy.

Councilmembers may consult with the City Attorney and City Manager, and are encouraged to provide the City Clerk information on formal advocacy positions taken by regional bodies so that the information may be shared with the Governance Sub-Committee.