SUBJECT: Legislative Advocacy Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of establishing a legislative advocacy policy is to provide a process for the City to respond to pending Local, State and Federal legislation or ballot measures affecting the City of Redwood City.

POLICY

1. Local, State and Federal Legislative Advocacy

   1.1. The City Council, acting as a body, may take a position on behalf of the City in support or opposition to Local, State or Federal legislation by voting on an agenda item at a regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

   1.2. If time is of the essence, and a significant item requires action before Council approval can be obtained, action can be taken by the Mayor or City Manager without City Council approval, if the legislation is consistent with the following guiding principles:

       a. Would directly impact the City’s finances, responsibilities, legal authority, 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, or operations; AND

       b. Is intended to protect or increase local revenues; OR

       c. Is intended to protect or increase local control; OR

       d. Is intended to protect or increase funding or otherwise benefit specific programs, services or infrastructure utilized in Redwood City; OR

       e. Is opposing an unfunded mandate; OR

       f. Is consistent with existing City policy, past action, or current City Council strategic priorities; OR
g. Is consistent with recommended positions with the League of California Cities for State issues or the National League of Cities for Federal issues; AND

h. Has been reviewed by the City Attorney or his/her designee.

1.3. Full Council action is required if:

a. Proposed legislation is not clearly within the guidelines of Section 1.2 of this Policy.

b. The recommended Mayor or staff position is inconsistent with the League of California Cities position for State issues or the National League of Cities position for Federal issues.

c. The requested support is for any type of grassroots advocacy action, such as social, political or economic movements, that are not legislation.

1.4. Councilmembers representing the City on regional or other bodies should use their discretion and take action based on the guidelines established in Section 1.2 and 1.3 of this Policy.

2. Positions on Ballot Measures/Propositions

2.1. The City Council, acting as a body, may take a position on behalf of the City on a ballot measure or proposition. 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; OR

d. The measure/proposition can be referred to staff for analysis by the Mayor and Vice Mayor, or by a Council Subcommittee 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

e. 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.
3. 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 should clearly state that they are speaking for themselves, not on behalf of the Council or the City.

3.1. 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 his/her absence the Vice Mayor. If both members are unavailable and timing is a factor, the City Manager is authorized to send such correspondence.