

CITY OF LA PALMA

COUNCIL POLICY

NUMBER: 2

DATE (Adopted/Amended): Adopted March 20, 2018; Amended November 5, 2019

SUBJECT: Legislative Advocacy and Official City Positions

POLICY:

This Policy includes procedures for adopting a legislative platform and communicating official City positions on legislation, regulations, or grant applications by or to other government bodies as well as maintaining positive intergovernmental relations. The City Council recognizes the need to protect the City's interests and local legislative authority and to identify various avenues to implement its strategic goals. The purpose of the policy is to guide City officials and staff in considering legislative or regulatory proposals and to allow for a timely response to legislative issues important to the City, including letters from the Mayor to the Legislature and/or Congress consistent with this policy.

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

The primary objective of the legislative platform is for the City Council to adopt official positions on specific legislative issues prior to the start of each legislative session. The legislative platform is developed and maintained using the goals and objectives adopted by the City Council, input from City Council and staff, a review of legislative priorities from the League of California Cities, and research of current law and pending legislation. Before January 1 of every year, the City Council shall adopt a legislative platform that will be used to guide the City's legislative advocacy efforts during the upcoming legislative session.

ADVOCACY PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

It is the policy of the City of La Palma to proactively monitor and advocate for legislation as directed by the legislative platform and by the specific direction of the City Council. This process involves interaction with federal, state, and local government entities both in regards to specific items of legislation and to promote positive ongoing intergovernmental relationships. Such ongoing positive relationships are fostered by ongoing participation and involvement by the City Council and City staff in national, state, and regional organizations and through ongoing communications and cooperation with local legislators. Therefore, to the extent practical, involvement in such organizations or efforts is encouraged and supported by the City.

Monitoring legislation is also a shared function of the City Council and City staff. City Council Members can request consideration of legislative positions through the Council Request process set forth in Council Policy 1, Council Norms.

The Mayor is authorized to submit advocacy letters on behalf of the City if the proposed State or Federal legislation clearly follows the City's adopted legislative platform. If the Mayor is unavailable, the Mayor Pro Tem or City Manager is authorized to do the same.

Such communication should be in the form of letters unless other forms have been requested by a legislator or a body to which the City is a member such as the League of California Cities (LOCC). For legislation, positions will generally be communicated initially to the author, the La Palma City Council, the representative of the City to the legislative body, and advocacy organizations to which the City belongs, such as the LOCC. As legislation progresses, further correspondence may be sent to pertinent legislative committee members, other legislators or to the Governor or President without additional action by the City Council.

Pending legislation or regulations that do not clearly fall within the adopted legislative platform or are highly politicized will continue to be brought to the City Council for consideration and action on a case-by-case basis.

Staff is responsible to provide periodic updates to the City Council relating to the item once a letter of support or opposition has been sent. In providing the necessary information, staff shall include the following:

- A basic summary of the legislation;
- How the legislation may impact the City of La Palma, including potential fiscal impacts;
- Positions taken by other bodies including the League of California Cities (LOCC), Association of California Cities – Orange County (ACC-OC), other cities or local agencies, and/or other relevant professional or non-profit organizations; and,
- Current status of the legislation.

In addition to official City positions on legislation, regulations or grant applications, individual City Council Members, the City Manager, and members of the City's Management Team (Police Chief, Department Directors, Police Captains) may take a position on such items and communicate regarding those positions so long as they clearly indicate that the letter reflects their individual position and is not the position of the City of La Palma. In no case shall a member of City staff take or communicate a position which is contrary to an official position of the City. Copies of any communication from an individual City Council Member or City staff member shall be provided to the full City Council for information.

BACKGROUND:

This policy replaces prior City Council Policy 33, Communication of Official City Positions adopted on April 18, 2008, and amended on March 20, 2018.

REVIEW:

This policy is to be reviewed as needed.