



CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

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CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Meeting: February 2, 2021

Subject

Consider adopting the 2021 Legislative Platform.

Recommended Action

Adopt the proposed 2021 Legislative Platform.

Background

Each year, the Council adopts a Legislative Platform that guides and informs official City positions on pending legislative issues during the year. The Legislative Review Committee (LRC) uses the Council-approved Platform to authorize City positions and position letters on legislation. Federal and state bills consistent with the City's legislative priorities would be supported by the City. Those policies or proposals in conflict with the Platform would be opposed. Items not clearly addressed in the City's Platform would require Council approval prior to any position being taken. Since the LRC is a smaller group comprised of two councilmembers, they can remain nimble and respond to time-sensitive legislative issues.

Discussion

This year's draft Legislative Platform includes many of the same elements as the 2020 Legislative Platform and includes some modifications based on recommendations from Townsend, LRC, and staff. These changes from the 2020 Platform can be seen in the attached redline version (Attachment B). One of the more significant changes was that a Homelessness section was added to the State Legislative Priorities section in order to support legislation that increases funding for affordable housing, promotes regional housing efforts, addresses mental health, and provides employment resources to those experiencing homelessness. This was done as there has been an increased focus on homelessness especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and shelter-in-place regulations. An additional item was also added to the Environmental Protection section to emphasize support for the preservation of natural resources, organic waste recycling, and landfill diversion.

On January 8, 2021, the LRC considered the draft of the 2021 Legislative Platform and provided input. The LRC added language to support public access to required meetings

in anticipation of potential legislation that would allow remote or video conference meetings to continue or be expanded. A slight modification was also made in the Federal priorities under education to clarify that the City would support education funding generally, not only for special needs students. An additional item was also added to monitor legislation that clarifies square footage-based parcel taxes. Rather than a support or oppose position, this item has a monitoring position which expresses that it is of interest to the City's but any official position on legislation on this topic would ultimately require a vote of the full Council. After this input, the LRC unanimously recommended that Council adopt the proposed 2021 Legislative Platform.

Sustainability Impact

No sustainability impact.

Fiscal Impact

No fiscal impact.

Prepared by: Astrid Robes, Management Fellow

Reviewed by: Katy Nomura, Assistant to the City Manager

Approved for Submission by: Dianne Thompson, Assistant City Manager

Attachments:

A – Proposed 2021 Legislative Platform

B – Proposed 2021 Legislative Platform Redline