




Date: December 14, 2009
To: State Legislation Committee Members
From: Patrick H. West, City Manager 
Subject: Recommended Changes to the 2010 State Legislative Agenda

Each year, City staff reviews the State Legislative Agenda and recommends changes to the State Legislation Committee and the City Council to ensure that the agenda is up-to-date and addresses the legislative concerns of the City. The 2009 agenda was sent to all departments for their input. Attached for your review are staff's proposed changes. Below is a summary of those proposed changes, which helps describe why deletions and additions were made.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Item A: Public Safety

The Health Department has recommended enhancing the childhood obesity language. Thus, the original language on item 3 was deleted and new language was added.

Item B: Public Safety & Crime Prevention

Item 16 was added by the Health Department to address emergency/disaster management for animal rescue and sheltering.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Item C: Water Quality

Item 5 was added by the Health Department to address diminished funds from the State for water quality testing.

Item 6 will allow the City to work with the County, Gateway Cities, and other stakeholders to ensure that any proposed LA County stormwater fee include an appropriate level of benefit to Long Beach to help improve our water quality and address our stormwater needs.

Item G: SERRF

Earlier this year, Long Beach and the LA County Sanitation District worked on an amendment to a State bill to classify the SERRF facility as a renewable resource. Currently, there are three waste-to-energy facilities in California, and only one facility in Stanislaus County is considered a renewable resource. This language clarifies the City's position to receive the same consideration as the Stanislaus facility, which will help ensure SERRF to operate in a cost-effective manner and allow for future investment in the facility.

TRANSPORTATION

Item A: Alternative Transportation & Mobility

The City Council has directed staff to explore the feasibility of a streetcar system in Long Beach. The preliminary review has been completed and presented to the City Council. The next step will involve a more in depth review of transportation issues, potentially costing \$550,000. Language has been added to reflect the City Council's interest in pursuing funds for this project.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES OF STATE LEGISLATIVE IMPORTANCE

Item A: City Revenues

Item 8 allows the City to pursue a bill that would require the State to borrow funds only at the beginning of a city's fiscal year. Under the current situation, the State generally passes a budget in July-August, which often includes a borrowing of local government revenues. While the City strongly opposes any State budget that borrows or takes local government revenues, special consideration is needed for Long Beach as our city has a different fiscal year than the State and all but five cities in the State of California. This proposal would require the State to borrow funds in October rather than July/August, so that the City does not have to take drastic measures to close our fiscal year in balance.

Item 9 is a proposal to extend or forgive the 5-year loan of Housing Set Aside funds the City used to pay the State for the \$29.5 million Redevelopment shift the State required as part of the FY 10 Budget. While the State required a one-time take of \$29.5 million, those dollars will not be repaid. The State allowed cities to use Housing Set Aside funds to pay a portion of that take, but required that those funds be repaid within five years. This proposal would extend the repayment amount beyond five years, or forgive the Housing Set Aside loan.

Item C: Preemption of Local Authority

This year, the City took a position of opposition to legislation that seeks to remove local government's current ability to declare bankruptcy. The City opposed this bill purely on the basis that it is a loss of local control. This item reinforces the position taken last year.

Item G: Water Department

In the last legislative session, the Water Department engaged in an effort to pass a bill to allow the City of Long Beach to have an alternate at Metropolitan Water District meetings, should our primary representative be unable to attend the meeting. The Water Department has expressed an interest in pursuing that bill again, and has asked for the following language to allow the City to support their efforts.

Item I: Pension/Labor Relations/ Health Benefits

In 2010, staff expects pension reform to continue to be an item of debate on the State level. This addition will direct staff to monitor those pension reform efforts and report back to the City Council for their policy direction on pension reform.

Item R: ADA Compliance

This item was added in 2009, but State Legislation was passed in 2008 that will likely provide some relief to business owners on this issue. Staff recommends removing this item from the agenda and monitoring the implementation of the State legislation (SB 1608). If that legislation does not address the issue, this item can be added back in at a future date.

Item S: Form 700 Filing

The City Clerk has requested language allowing the City to pursue legislation allowing form 700 filers to submit the required Statement of Economic Interest Form (Form 700) electronically to the City Clerk department (filing official).

NEXT STEPS

A State Legislation Committee meeting will be called for December 22, 2009 to review and discuss these recommended changes. City Council discussion and approval of the Committee's recommendations is expected to take place following the Committee meeting in January.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Tom Modica, Manager of Government Affairs at 8-5091.

cc: Mayor and Members of the City Council
Suzanne Frick, Assistant City Manager
Reginald Harrison, Deputy City Manager
Richard Steinke, Executive Director, Harbor Department
Kevin Wattier, General Manager, Water Department
All Department Heads
Samara Ashley, Director of Government Affairs (Harbor)
Matthew Veeh, Acting Director of Government and Public Affairs (Water)
Tom Modica, Manager of Government Affairs
Jyl Marden, City Council Liaison
Mike Arnold and Associates

Attachment

PHW: TM:

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