

CITY COUNCIL HANDBOOK
COUNCIL REPORTS, REFERRALS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS SECTION
REDLINE VERSION
(With Proposed Modifications)

COUNCIL REPORTS, ~~REFERRALS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS~~

During the Council Reports, ~~Referrals, and Future Agenda Items~~ section of the agenda, Council Members can provide oral reports on attendance at intergovernmental agency meetings, conferences, seminars, or other Council events and to comply with AB 1234 requirements (reimbursable expenses for official activities).

~~a Council Member may request an item be considered on a future agenda as described below, and upon agreement of a majority of Council, staff will prepare a report if formal Council action is required. Council Members may make this request verbally during a meeting or may submit it in writing.~~

COUNCIL REFERRALS

Any Council Member may bring forward a Council Referral Memorandum (Memo) on any topic to be considered by the entire Council. The intent of this Council Referrals section of the Council Handbook is to provide an orderly means through which an individual Council Member can raise an issue for discussion and possible direction by the Council to the City Manager and City staff.

The process to make a Council Referral has two parts. The first part is to enable the Council Member to place a matter before the Council. The second part is to enable the Council to determine whether staff time should be spent on the issue.

Part 1: Council Members wishing to refer a matter to the City Council for discussion will:

- A. Prior to preparing a Council Referral Memo, Council Members can consult with the City Manager to determine whether the issue can be addressed as part of the City Manager's operational authority, does not require policy direction from the Council, and is within current budgeted resources.
- B. In advance of a Council meeting, the referring Council Member will submit a Council Referral Memo (not to exceed two pages) describing the Referral (Attachment IV – Sample Council Referral Memo). The Council Referral Memo can outline the policy issue, overall outcome or desired objective, desired timeline, identification of key stakeholder groups that might need to be consulted, and/or other pertinent information that will clarify for Council the policy issue desired for Council discussion.
- C. The Referring Council Member will notify the City Manager, or the City Manager's designee, via telephone, email, or in person and convey that the

Council Member has a Council Referral Memo to place on the agenda and the desired Council meeting date, at least two weeks prior to the desired Council meeting. This will give the City Clerk time to finalize the agenda and post it within the required timeframe. Requests received after this two-week deadline will be placed on the agenda for the following regularly-scheduled Council meeting.

Staff will not devote time preparing reports or analysis on the requested item. The limited staff assistance provided, at this initial stage of the Council referral, would be to help the Council Member clarify and/or frame the issue, if needed, so that the Council and public clearly understand the request.

- D. In consideration of staff capacity and the need to balance other City business, each Council Member can make X referrals a year. In the event any Council Member desires to make more than five referrals per year, Council Members can discuss these at the annual Council Prioritization Retreat or can ask one of their colleagues to bring forward a referral (in compliance with the Brown Act).

Part 2: Council Consideration of the Council Referral Memo:

- A. When the item is called at the Council meeting, the Referring Council Member who made the request will describe the policy issue the Council Member wishes to place on a future agenda.
- B. The Council discussion will be limited to determining whether staff time and City resources should be devoted to researching the particular agenda item and whether to direct staff to conduct further analysis on the item. Council will not take action on the agenda item itself. Concurrence that staff time and City resources will be devoted to the item does not signify approval of the item. It only indicates that the Council wishes to have the item studied further. Additionally, the Council may, at any time, decide to drop the matter, even after the matter has been analyzed by staff.
- C. Upon the concurrence of a majority of the Council that the item should be researched and placed on a future Council agenda, the City Manager will determine when to place the item on a future agenda based on time necessary to complete the research and staff workload considerations. The City Manager will maintain a log of such referrals, the date of the referrals, and the projected dates the referred matter will be agendized for further consideration.