



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



February 13, 2024

ITEM TITLE

Legislative Platform: Approve an Amendment to the 2023-2024 Legislative Platform

Report Number: 24-0050

Location: No specific geographic location

Department: City Manager

G.C. § 84308: No

Environmental Notice: The activity is not a “Project” as defined under Section 15378 of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines. Therefore, pursuant to State Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3) no environmental review is required. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the activity qualifies for an Exemption pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines.

Recommended Action

Adopt a resolution approving an amendment to the 2023-2024 Legislative Platform.

SUMMARY

The City coordinates and implements its legislative program with the assistance of Nielsen, Merksamer, Parrinello, Gross & Leoni, LLP, a professional advocacy firm in Sacramento to engage at the state level on legislative priorities and policies that advance City interests.

The City’s legislative platform provides a foundation for the legislative program and serves as a framework to help Chula Vista engage and collaborate to advance its interests with California policy makers, agency representatives, industry leaders and others (the “Legislative Platform”). The Legislative Platform is reviewed and updated periodically to ensure that City staff members have the direction needed to respond to legislative proposals in accordance with the City Council’s priorities and policy preferences.

The 2023-2024 Legislative Platform has been updated to reflect advocacy efforts, accomplishments from the previous year and includes new topics as identified by City staff.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed activity for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and it has been determined that the activity is not a “Project” as defined

under Section 15378 of the state CEQA Guidelines because it will not result in a physical change in the environment. Therefore, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it has also been determined that the activity qualifies for an Exemption pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines. Thus, no environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Not applicable.

DISCUSSION

In August of 2021, the City Council approved an agreement with Nielsen Merksamer Parrinello Gross & Leoni, LLP (Nielsen Merksamer) to perform State Legislative Advocacy Services and assist with implementation of the City's Legislative Program (the "Legislative Program").

The Legislative Platform provides a foundation for the Legislative Program and serves as a framework to help Chula Vista engage and collaborate to advance its interests with California policy makers, agency representatives, industry leaders and others.

The City Manager implements the Legislative Platform that is reviewed and approved by City Council. The Platform is updated periodically to ensure that City staff members have the direction needed to respond to legislative proposals in accordance with the City Council's priorities and preferences. Items covered by the Legislative Platform can be acted upon quickly by the Mayor or City Manager, or their designees, in order to respond to measures that might affect City operations, revenue resources, and other measures. Measures which are not covered by the Legislative Platform, but which are considered sufficiently significant to merit a response from the City, can be brought before the City Council for consideration and direction.

2023-2024 Legislative Session

The first year of the 2023-2024 Legislative Session has wrapped up and of the more than 2,600 bills introduced, Governor Newsom signed 890.

The City of Chula Vista, with the help of Assemblymember David Alvarez, sponsored Assembly Bill (AB) 837 which sought to secure a Surplus Land Act exemption for the University-Innovation District. After several committee hearings and negotiations with legislative staff, AB 837 was approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate for future consideration. With the help of Senator Steve Padilla, AB 837 was incorporated into State Budget legislation and ultimately signed into law by Governor Newsom on July 10, 2023.

Additionally, the City advocated for legislation with potential impacts to the City, including regulations related to medical transport, drones as first responder programs, card rooms, access to higher education, clean energy, and more.

Summary of Changes to Legislative Platform

With passage of a Surplus Land Act exemption for the University-Innovation District, the next top priority for the Legislative Program will be securing support and agreement with the state and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) to eliminate the toll-only operation of the State Route 125 Toll Road.

Additionally, the following are new position statements that are recommended to be added to reflect current, ongoing issues and/or areas of concern as identified by City staff. As a reminder, categories of policy position statements are broad and are not intended to be all-inclusive. They are intended to be used as a reference tool and guideline for the City's advocacy efforts.

Administrative Services

- Support legislative efforts and funding for voter outreach, education, and resources to instill confidence in our electoral process.
- Support funding for ethics and conflict of interest training for officials.
- Support legislation that enhances the public's right to access records while considering the fiscal and operational constraints of municipalities.

Community Services

- Support legislation and measures that enhance overall quality, affordability, and accessibility to childcare for all families.

Education and Economic Development

- Support legislation that would provide financial incentives and opportunities for filming locally.
- Support legislation that would increase access to wealth and/or improved living standards that promotes and sustains diversity, innovation, competition, and entrepreneurship.
- Support measures that expand youth opportunity including early childhood education, K-12 extracurricular activities, youth diversion programs, mental health programs, and work-based learning programs.

Environmental Quality

- Support state and federal funding and efforts to address and eliminate untreated sewage, trash, and sediment that originates from across the U.S.- Mexico border.
- Support legislation that protects and improves the reliability, affordability, self-sufficiency, quality and security of local and imported water supplies.

Housing and Homeless Services

- Support the expansion of conservatorship laws allowing for increased guardianship control and health supervision of those suffering from mental illness and recognizing mental illness and addiction as contributors to chronic homelessness.
- Support legislation that provides ongoing operating funding associated with necessary services at permanent supportive housing developments.
- Support legislation that increases housing production; promotes equity, inclusion, and sustainability; preserves housing for vulnerable populations; prevents displacement of existing residents; and protects tenants.
- Support measures that provide resources to address the mental health needs of persons experiencing homelessness.

- Support legislation that enhances the City’s ability to access funding and incentives for affordable and accessible housing for all economic segments of the community including the homeless, seniors, disabled, veterans, refugees, and moderate- and low-income households.
- Support legislation for governmental immunity for safe parking and or camping sites for unsheltered individuals.
- Support measures and legislation that provides substance abuse treatment and services for the unsheltered.
- Support harm reduction services and programs that require City input and collaboration and monitors for community impacts.

Public Safety

- Support legislation that provides for an equitable reimbursement rate for emergency ambulance transportation for public health insurers.
- Support regulatory or other measures that will assist with police recruitment and retention, and enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion among law enforcement.
- Support measures that enhance local agencies’ abilities to protect public safety related to the operation of Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS).
- Support legislation that expands access to affordable home, fire, and flooding insurance for all city residents and businesses, regardless of whether they are in a high-risk area.

Transportation, Telecommunication and Public Works

- Support legislation and/or funding to improve broadband accessibility and affordability in Chula Vista.

More detailed information and Policy Position Statements can be found in the proposed 2023-2024 Legislative Platform (Attachment 1).

DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT

Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the real property holdings of the City Council members do not create a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov’t Code § 87100, et seq.).

Staff is not independently aware and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT

City Council previously approved an agreement with Nielsen, Merksamer Parrinello, Gross & Leoni, LLP (Resolution 2021-147) to implement the Legislative Platform. City Council further authorized the City Manager to execute up to four one-year optional extensions, for a total amount not to exceed \$400,000. The City Manager has extended the agreement for the current fiscal year pursuant to this authority.

All associated consultant costs are included in the current fiscal year 2023-24 budget.

ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT

Future expenditures for legislative advocacy services will be included as part of the budget process for subsequent years.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2023- 2024 Legislative Platform (Amended 2.13.24)

Staff Contact: Adrianna Hernandez, Special Projects & Legislative Manager