



Meeting Date: 01/08/08

ACTION	TYPE OF ITEM
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> Info/Consent
<input type="checkbox"/> Ord. No(s). _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Report
<input type="checkbox"/> Res. No(s). _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing (Info/consent)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Study Session _____

Prepared By: Martin R. Erickson *MRE* Agenda Item No. N-1  
 Reviewed By: City Manager *[Signature]* City Attorney *[Signature]* Finance *[Signature]* Other \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** December 30, 2007

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Martin R. Erickson  
 Legislative Affairs Manager  
 City Manager's Office

*Martin Erickson*

**SUBJECT:** Review of City Council Policy Regarding City Councilmembers Requests for Administrative Staff Assistance

**RECOMMENDATION**

That City Council consider and provide direction to the City Manager regarding the existing policy governing requests for administrative staff assistance, adopted by City Council on September 8, 1987.

**DISCUSSION**

Current City Council priorities and policies, and staff's subsequent scheduling and organization of work to meet those priorities/policies, should be based upon the collective direction of the City Council. On September 8, 1987 City Council adopted guidelines for staff's completion of requests on behalf of individual councilmembers. The policy filed in the Administrative Manual A-7 deals with the issue of how an individual Councilmember should communicate specific work tasks to staff outside of a collective action by City Council.

The cornerstone of these guidelines is that any individual Councilmember request to staff should be made by the Councilmember to the City Manager, who will then determine whether the request can be accommodated under the guidelines, or will require consideration by the full City Council.

Whether City Council reaffirms or modifies the existing policy, the City Attorney recommends removal of the policy from the City Manager's Administrative Manual and inclusion in the City Council Policy Manual.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no financial impact at this time.

Attachment #1 - City Councilmember Requests for Administrative Staff Assistance

000077

CITY OF OXNARD

ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL

---

SUBJECT: City Councilmember Requests For Administrative Staff Assistance	ITEM NUMBER	PAGE
EFFECTIVE DATE: September 8, 1987	A-7	1 of 2

---

**PURPOSE**

To preserve the role of the City Council in terms of the establishment of City-wide policies and priorities, while providing a practical and equitable approach to meeting the individual needs of Councilmembers. This policy is primarily intended to guide the handling of requests for administrative staff assistance, and not service-related requests made by Councilmembers on behalf of City residents. This policy is intended to better assure, for both Councilmembers and staff, a uniform and long-term understanding of the processes established for meeting individual and collective Council needs.

**AUTHORITY**

The following policy and guidelines were approved by the City Council on September 8, 1987.

**POLICY**

The establishment of City priorities and policies, and staff's subsequent scheduling and organization of work to meet those priorities/policies, should be based upon the collective direction of the City Council. As such, City staff will make every effort to respond in a timely manner to all reasonable requests made by individual Councilmembers for information or assistance, provided that: in the judgment of the City Manager, the request is not of a magnitude, either in terms of workload or policy, which would require that it more appropriately be assigned to staff through the collective direction of the City Council. In terms of making this judgement, the guidelines outlined below should apply.

**GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING REQUESTS ON BEHALF OF INDIVIDUAL COUNCILMEMBERS**

1. The request should be specific and limited in scope so that staff can respond without altering other priorities and with only minimal delay to other assignments (e.g., work should not impact the ability of staff to meet deadlines already established for other significant work activities).
2. The request should typically require that staff provide, and not produce, information. Providing information would include verbal explanations, the preparation of brief memos, copying existing reports, locating existing data and either providing the data to the Councilmember, or explaining where the data can be found. Producing data would include any significant requirement to compile data, analyze data, or summarize data.
3. The request should only impose a "one-time" work requirement, as opposed to an ongoing work requirement.

**CITY OF OXNARD**

**ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL**

---

SUBJECT: City Councilmember Requests For Administrative Staff Assistance	ITEM NUMBER	PAGE
EFFECTIVE DATE: September 8, 1987	A-7	2 of 2

---

4. Response to the request should not require a "sizable" allocation of staff resources. "Sizable" can generally be defined as consisting of more than one staff person, or a single staff person working on the issue in excess of 1-2 hours.
5. The request should not require staff to participate in policy-related matters, involving either City, State, or Federal issues, where the City Council has not previously established clear policy direction.
6. Necessary staff resources should be allocated to respond to a request made by an individual Councilmember for follow-up work, when the request is related to an already established process, project, or other activity whereby the Councilmember has identified an issue or problem which poses a significant health or safety concern. In such cases, it would be appropriate to respond to a problem brought to the attention of staff by an individual Councilmember, since correcting the problem would have occurred in the normal course of work activities, if staff had been aware of the problem. Individual Councilmember requests related to the correction or modification of existing conditions which do not contain significant health or safety implications, and which are not consistent with Council established priorities, should be addressed in a manner which would not alter existing priorities.

**GUIDELINES FOR INFORMING OTHER COUNCILMEMBERS**

In cases where a staff response to an individual Councilmember request involves, in the judgement of the City Manager, written material which provides information which may be of interest to other Councilmembers, then copies of the material will be provided to all other Councilmembers. In making this judgement, the City Manager will consider whether the information is significant or "new," and will err on the side of providing "too much" as opposed to "too little" information.

**INDIVIDUAL REQUESTS WHICH CANNOT BE FULFILLED PER THE GUIDELINES**

Any information, service-related needs, or policy positions perceived as necessary by individual Councilmembers which cannot be fulfilled per the above guidelines ought to be raised by the individual Councilmember under "New Business" category of a regularly scheduled City Council meeting. If so directed by the collective action of the Council, then staff will proceed to complete the work within Council established deadlines.