



# Memorandum

**TO:** RULES & OPEN GOVERNMENT  
COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Deanna Santana  
Lee Price

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** June 15, 2009

**SUBJECT: AGENDA STREAMLINING MEASURES**

## RECOMMENDATION

Accept staff report on Agenda Streamlining measures related to the Council and Committee Agenda Processes.

## BACKGROUND

The purpose of this Information Memo is to inform the Council of new Agenda Process Streamlining Measures the Administration will be implementing in August 2009. The agenda process is designed to provide information to the City Council and the Public on public policy decisions and legislative actions.

Over the past few years, as a result of Council approved Open Government Initiatives, staff has put in place several new processes related to the overall agenda process. These include, an Early Distribution Agenda Packet, posting of legal documents such as agreements, resolutions, and ordinances, and more detailed information in Council Memorandums to ensure the most transparency related to the use of public funds. Reports must comply with rigid noticing requirements established by the Sunshine Reform process.

The information below provides an overview of some key streamlining measures already implemented and a review of the new streamlining measures to be implemented in August 2009.

### Streamlining Measures - Implemented

The Offices of the City Manager, City Clerk and City Attorney have already initiated efforts to modify the process to respond to some of the concerns raised by the organization, to be more environmental and implement the use of current technology in more efficient ways. With the City's current fiscal problems in mind, process efficiencies and elimination of redundancies between the three offices will continue to be pursued. Below are some of the streamlining measures already implemented as well as ones that will be implemented in the near future.

1. **Paperless Distributions:** Beginning in the fall of 2008, staff began distributing copies of Information Memos, Supplemental Council Memos, and the Early Distribution Packet electronically. Additionally, the City Clerk distributes Councilmember ("Blue") Memos electronically.
2. **Reducing the number of Council Packets produced:** The number of full Council Agenda Packets distributed was reduced in late December 2008.
3. **Reducing number of printed large attachments:** Given the number of items on the agenda and the fact that many of these items have large consultant reports, community plans, and other large attachments, staff has moved towards including a reference to a link to the report rather than attaching to the Council Memo, or including a CD in its place.

**Internal Coordination Improvements:** The offices of the City Manager and City Clerk have worked together to streamline internal working processes to simplify updating draft documents and sharing of information by using existing technology. This has reduced staff time in developing initial working documents in the development of Council Agendas. The process has been "mapped" and opportunities to further reduce inefficiencies and unnecessary duplication have been identified. Additional coordination between the Offices of the City Attorney, City Clerk and City Manager, along with a pilot project developed by Information Technology to provide a better solution for developing the agenda and routing internally Council Memos.

### **Streamlining Measures - New**

Given the complexity and the time intensive nature of the agenda process, the organization, via the Beyond Budget Cuts (BBC) effort, has raised concerns that the process is not flexible and too labor and time intensive. The goal of the Administration is to implement streamlining measures that address the concerns of the organization while preserving the Council's goals of open government and process transparency. Additionally, these efforts come at a time of fiscal uncertainty and an environment of reduced resources available throughout the organization. Below are the current streamlining efforts that have surfaced as a priority via the BBC effort and as a result of discussions with department directors.

1. **E-signature Council Memorandums:** This measure surfaced as a priority for departments based on the amount of staff time it takes to go through the department's internal signature process and to ensure that Council Memos are hand delivered to the City Manager's Office. It was discussed that electronic submittals would result in better time management gains. This effort will be implemented on a pilot basis beginning in August 2009 with the departments of Transportation, Environmental Services, Airport and Public Works. These departments will be submitting their memos to the City Manager's Office electronically with an e-signature. There are several gained efficiencies with this approach, including:
  - o Off-site departments who have joint memos will not need to drive to City Hall to submit memo to City Manager's Office.

- Joint Memos can be approved via e-mail by directors and turned into the City Manager's Office without having to coordinate signatures.
  - Time management gains.
2. **Routine Council Item Memo Template:** Staff is in the process of exploring the use of a template/form for items that are routine and more consent calendar oriented for purposes of piloting in the fall. A draft template is attached as a possible sample, and internal outreach will be done over the next few months to solicit input and finalize the template/form for piloting. Staff is envisioning that the form will be up to 2 pages in length and will include base criteria to be checked off for the use of the form such as:
- Action is not an expenditure of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater;
  - The action is routine and/or recurring and non-controversial;
  - The action does not require a tremendous amount of Public Outreach.
  - Sufficient provisions via resolution/ordinance are available to guide proposed recommendation or outcome.
3. **Increased Paperless Distributions of Committee Packets:** Currently, staff distributes more than 30 hard copy Committee Packets to various sources. Staff is recommending that only hard copy distributions be made to Council Offices and attending staff. This will reduce the number of hard copy packets distributed. The entire packet is posted online and distributed electronically by the City Clerk. Over the next six months, staff will be working with Council Offices and the organization to reduce further the number of packets distributed with a goal of distributing hard copy packets to only Committee members and attending staff, which would result in only producing 10 hard copy packets.
4. **Eliminating one evening Council meeting a month:** Given the current downturn in the economy and development activity, as well as the reduction in staffing and resources, staff has recommended that one evening Council meeting be canceled each month. This still allows for timely placement of development items on other Council Meetings, and includes planning and development items being scheduled for Council during afternoon sessions.

### Engagement/Outreach

Via the BBC effort, along with separate meetings held with participating department directors, staff has engaged the organization on these new streamlining efforts. Additionally, staff has met with and communicated to the Council Offices the need to reduce paper distributions of Committee packets. Some offices have already opted to receive the packets electronically while others prefer hard copy distributions. The implementation of these measures will involve change management efforts by the organization and staff will continue to engage stakeholders with the goal of expanding the pilot efforts above to the full organization.

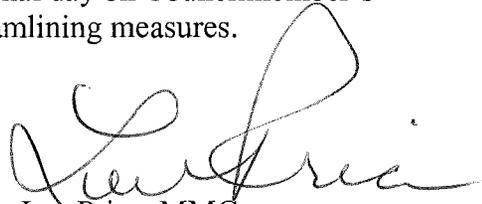
**Conclusion**

As the above measures are implemented, staff will continue to explore other opportunities to streamline, expedite, and simplify the Agenda Process as much as possible while maintaining all of the Open Government requirements. While many of the measures above are administrative in nature, the organization will also be exploring the need to streamline routine work processes such as more delegation of authority and other measures that will lighten the load on the Council Agenda and assist staff with time management for projects. Other efforts may also include opportunities to reduce the number of regular Council Meetings occurring monthly, development of a simplified Council Memo Format for all Council Items, and implementing more paperless distributions of legislative items.

There has also been a request to reevaluate the cancellation of the Council Meetings that fall after a Monday holiday. Under the current practice, staff has reserved those days for possible Study Session Meetings rather than trying to find an additional day on Councilmember's calendars. Staff will reevaluate this request with other streamlining measures.



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City Clerk

For questions, contact Nadine Nader, Assistant to the City Manager at 535-8104.

**Routine Council Memorandum**

Department:

CEQA:

Coordination:

CMO Approval:

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**OUTCOME/NEXT STEPS:**

**ANALYSIS/POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:**

**FISCAL IMPACT**