



City of Santa Ana
20 Civic Center Plaza, Santa Ana, CA 92701
Staff Report
August 16, 2022

TOPIC: Councilmember Requested Items Process

AGENDA TITLE:

Amend City Council Policy Relating to Councilmember Requested Items

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve an amendment to the City Council policy requiring that:

- (1) All Councilmember Requested Items be placed on the agenda via a memorandum establishing what is being requested, why it is being requested, and a summary of background information relating to the item;
- (2) No specific date be mandated for return of an item without staff input; and
- (3) At least one Councilmember supporting a Councilmember Requested Item first confer with the City Manager and/or City Attorney for input (not approval).

DISCUSSION

The City of Santa Ana policy allows councilmembers to place on the agenda "Councilmember Requested Items," also previously known colloquially as "85A items." These items allow individual councilmembers, or up to three councilmembers working in tandem, to request an item be brought before the entire City Council for discussion and direction. These items may discuss any issue within the City Council's jurisdiction, including, but not limited to, policy research, drafting ordinances, creating resolutions, or providing other direction to staff.

In recent years, these Councilmember Requested Items have proliferated. However, often, neither the City Manager nor City Attorney will have received notice about these items, only finding out once an agenda is posted, and therefore are not given the opportunity to provide input. This sometimes results in items that come forward which are duplicative of existing policies, items that are already being implemented at the staff level, or otherwise create logistical issues. Additionally, without such a memorandum, due to Brown Act limitations, councilmembers are unable to discuss in detail specific issues or concerns regarding a Councilmember Requested Item.

Implementing this memorandum and conference process will not only allow the City's highest executives to provide councilmembers additional information before items are requested, but it would give other councilmembers an opportunity to research a topic or issue prior to the meeting and give the public more detailed notice about an item that is

brought forth.

This policy would increase transparency between the City Council and the public relating to City business, encourage collaboration with City staff, and ensure timely requests by policymakers.

Submitted By: Councilmember Thai Viet Phan

SAMPLE