



City of Solvang Legislative Platform 2024

Section: **City Council**

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Solvang has considered the Legislative Platform to facilitate the City’s expeditious response to County, State, and Federal legislation in a proactive manner, since legislation can often move quickly through legislative bodies, with insufficient time for the City Council to take formal action. The Legislative Platform further serves as a guide for the City Council to consider legislative affairs on an ad hoc basis.

City staff monitors state and county legislation for potential impacts to the City. Federal legislation may also be brought to staff’s attention by the League of California Cities, or other professional organizations for fields such as engineering, water, finance, community development, or public safety.

The Mayor (or Mayor pro tem, in the Mayor’s absence, or the City Manager in the absence of both the Mayor and the Mayor pro tem) is authorized to sign correspondence expressing the City’s position on pending legislation, consistent with the City’s Legislative Platform and/or other positions on pending legislation consistent with prior City Council actions. Once staff determines a legislative proposal may impact the City, a letter outlining the City’s position (whether for or against) may be drafted for the Mayor’s (or Mayor pro tem’s or City Manager’s) signature. Copies of such correspondence will be included in the Agenda packet on the next regularly scheduled Council Meeting.

City positions on pending legislation on topics not included in the Legislative Platform require a vote of the City Council. Nothing in the Legislative Platform is intended to preclude consideration of any legislation by the City Council, regardless of whether it is included in the Legislative Platform.

City positions in support of legislation on a specified topic shall be construed as opposition to something that shall do the opposite, and the reverse is also true. For example, if the Legislative Platform supports increased funding for libraries, it also inherently opposes decreased funding for libraries.

The City may participate in the Legislative Action Day event hosted by the League of California Cities each spring. This event includes updates from the League of California Cities and its lobbyists representing cities’ interests, panel discussions of critical issues, meetings with the City’s representatives in the State Assembly and State Senate, and other networking opportunities. The City’s elected officials and City staff may also participate on the League’s Policy Committees which focus on specific policy areas. Staff communicates on a regular basis with elected officials and

their representatives to address issues that arise in the City that may best be resolved with a legislative action.

1. GENERAL GOVERNANCE

Local Control

- a. Support legislation that protects local control and funding of vital community services including, but not limited to, improving public safety, land use planning, increasing transportation infrastructure investments, fair and community friendly environmental regulations, and the development of transparency measures of public meetings and other public disclosure requirements that are shared equally between elected and appointed officials at both the City and State governments.

Workers' Compensation

- a. Oppose legislation that would increase Workers' Compensation benefits that will result in additional employer costs.
- b. Support legislation that would reform the Workers' Compensation system to eliminate system abuse and limit presumptive eligibility claims for benefits.
- c. Support legislation that would reform the Workers' Compensation process to incentivize employees returning to work, creating a disincentive for those that do not return to available modified duty or alternate positions.

Unemployment Compensation

- a. Oppose legislation that would increase employer liability for unemployment or that would reduce local discretion over the hiring and retention of employees.

Labor Relations

- a. Oppose legislation that would impede local administration of labor relations, and oppose legislation that would require, impose, or expand compulsory binding arbitration for public employees.
- b. Oppose legislation that would impose or expand state-mandated compulsory mediation or fact-finding processes that are not mutually agreed upon by the local public agency and its employee organizations.
- c. Oppose legislation that would increase the cost of benefits, the cost of administering benefits, or mandate that a specialized occupational group benefit be provided to all employees.
- d. Oppose legislation that reduces local control over public employee disputes and/or imposes regulations from an outside governmental agency or special interest group on such disputes.
- e. Oppose legislation that requires the use of City employees rather than allowing a City to have the flexibility to determine the most efficient means of providing a service, including contracting out.
- f. Support legislation that will maintain the confidentiality of personnel matters.

State and Local Government Relations

- a. Oppose legislative efforts that restrict the City from representing itself, including using contract

representation, on issues of importance before State agencies and commissions.

Pension Reform

- a. Support pension reform that will reduce long-term costs for participating agencies, provide long-term financial stability and sustainability, and allow agencies to continue to be effective locally in recruiting and retaining a skilled, quality work force.
- b. Support investment strategies that balance the short and long-term ability of CalPERS to meet its financial commitments to its members without relying on increased financial burdens on local agencies.

Telecommunications

- a. Support the authority of cities to maintain local control to zone and plan for the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure and the ability to maintain and manage the public right-of-way.
- b. Support the authority of cities to collect fair market fees for the use of local government infrastructure by telecommunications providers.
- c. Support the authority of local government to retain full control over the time, place, and manner for the use of the public right of way in providing telecommunications services, including the appearance and aesthetics of equipment placed within it.
- d. Support legislation that would preserve public, educational, and government (PEG) television channel funding and programming support by video service providers, such as: payments to local government of utility franchise fees, PEG fees, and facility/equipment grants; and furnishing public access production facilities.
- e. Support efforts to provide for the improvement of broadband availability, accessibility, competition, and performance in the city and the county.

Economic Development

- a. Support legislation that would provide State or Federal aid and assistance in the development of local and regional economies.
- b. Support legislation that would provide resources and mechanisms to local governments to finance economic development efforts.
- c. Support legislation that would provide local officials more discretion in the use of State and Federal funds.
- d. Support legislation that will provide tools and incentives to support job creation and retention, such as Infrastructure Financing Districts, awarding of direct grants to fund the development of infrastructure that results in the creation and retention of jobs, the elimination of matching dollar requirements for economic development and infrastructure state grants; the provision of grants funding for infrastructure planning and design and the creation of economic development strategies; and allowing cities the maximum flexibility in the use of State funds toward local priorities that support job creation.
- e. Support legislation that provides additional tools to cities to provide business development and retention and job creation to generate economic stimulus.
- f. Support legislation that expands enterprise zones to assist City economic development.

2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

State-Federal Mandated Programs

- a. Oppose legislation that fails to provide adequate funding or creates a negative cash position for the City for State and Federally mandated programs.
- b. Oppose measures that mandate procedures that would make local government more dependent on the State for financial stability.
- c. Support legislation that protects local control and funding of vital community services including, but not limited to, improving public safety, land use planning, increasing transportation infrastructure investments, fair and community friendly environmental regulations, and the development of transparency measures of public meetings and other public disclosure requirements that are shared equally between elected and appointed officials at both the City and State governments.

Long Term Financing of Local Agencies

- a. Oppose legislation that shifts revenue from local government to the State, or another agency, for any purpose, or that reduces local discretion in the use of local government revenues.
- b. Support legislation that further protects local government revenue from being taken, confiscated, shifted, diverted, or otherwise used to fund State government, or another agency's, operations, and responsibilities.

Revenues, Fees, and Taxes

- a. Support legislation that maintains or provides funding mechanisms to provide better service (i.e., streets and roads infrastructure, economic development related programs, water and sewer infrastructure).
- b. Oppose legislation that would change the property tax collection method or formula that would result in less property tax to local governments.
- c. Oppose legislation that would transfer a local government's reserves, or designated reserves, to the State or other agency, or reduces a local government's revenue due to the level of reserves it maintains.
- d. Oppose legislation that would reduce or eliminate critical local programs and services as a result of State budget cuts (i.e., public safety, transportation, streets and roads).
- e. Support legislation that would amend the State Constitution Article XIID, Section 6.C, to include storm drain fees among the list of types of fees that are exempt from the voting requirements imposed by Proposition 218.
- f. Support State and local authority for cities to collect their fair allocation of sales tax on Internet or other remote transactions.
- g. Support legislation that returns motor vehicle license fees to local governments without any offsets to existing local revenues.
- h. Support legislation to collect and retain for local agencies the full amount of local transient occupancy tax from online sales of lodging.

3. PUBLIC PROTECTION

Public Safety

- a. Support legislation that provides for additional funding sources dedicated to public safety programs (911 systems, interoperability, fire suppression, medical response), services, and personnel.

Cannabis Regulation

- a. Support legislation that enhances and protects maximum local regulatory, land use, and enforcement authority in relation to medical and adult use cannabis businesses.
- b. Support legislation that recognizes and affirms the authority of cities as it relates to the location, operation, and establishment of medical and adult use cannabis businesses, including deliveries of cannabis.

4. TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS

Transportation

- a. Oppose legislation that directs local transportation funds away from cities.
- b. Support legislation that appropriates State and Federal funds to city and regional governments for transportation projects, including funds for the preservation and maintenance of streets and roads.

Vehicles

- a. Support legislation that promotes maximum City control of local streets and the road system.
- b. Support legislation that promotes vehicle speed limits that are designated and enforced with consideration of street design, neighborhood characteristics, adjacent land use, and mix of transportation mode usage.

Solid Waste and Recycling

- a. Support legislation that provides cities with financial assistance for programs designed to provide for the safe disposal of solid, hazardous, and special wastes.

Public Works

- a. Support legislation that would allow the City increased discretion for awarding contracts.
- b. Support legislation that promotes innovative ways of contracting for public projects allowing for award based on best value while providing full and open competition/supports flexibility for public private partnerships to enhance public works funding.

5. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

Water

- a. Support legislation that would provide Southern California with a more stable and reliable water supply, including expanded water storage projects.

- b. Support legislation that would provide economic incentives and funding to develop alternative local water resources.
- c. Support legislation that would advance the opportunity for local governments to provide reclaimed/recycled water as an alternative water source.
- d. Support legislation that would address the conflict of interest requirements and the ten percent rule that governs the State and Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- e. Support legislative efforts to provide financial and technical assistance for the development of local water supply enhancement projects that promote resource sustainability including, but not limited to, groundwater desalination, recycled water, and distribution system interconnection projects designed to reduce dependence on the imported water supply from the Bay Delta.
- f. Support legislation that would make it easier for cities to fund and comply with new and increasingly stringent storm water quality permit requirements.

Storm Drain and Sewer

- a. Oppose legislation that imposes more stringent requirements on storm drain runoff without providing funding and/or consideration of the feasibility of monitoring and mitigation of such requirements.

6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Housing

- a. Oppose legislation that restricts local discretion in the use of housing funds or meeting local housing needs without local input.
- b. Support Housing Element reform legislation that increases local control and flexibility, simplifies the process, improves effectiveness, and limits the California Department of Housing and Community Development's review role.
- c. Support legislation that defines an equitable process to determine regional housing needs.
- d. Support legislation that provides local government with community revitalization tools and funding mechanisms.

Land Use

- a. Oppose legislation, or other agency actions, that would usurp local control of land use decision-making.
- b. Oppose legislation that would impose State mandates or procedures that are contrary to local development standards.
- c. Support legislation that protects local zoning as a function of cities.

7. PUBLIC LIBRARY

Library Services

- a. Oppose legislation that reduces funding for public libraries, including Public Library funds, and support legislation that provides financial assistance for local public libraries without the imposition of new taxes.

- b. Support legislation that ensures cities receive a proportionate share of property taxes upon withdrawal from a county library services district, or any other county service or district for property taxes are received.
- c. Support legislation that provides financial assistance for local public libraries.
- d. Support legislation with the intent to allow City operated Libraries (as opposed to districts) to have an “advisory” commission, not a Board as per current law.