



**CITY OF SUNNYVALE  
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER**

**January 31, 2014**

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

**FROM:** Robert Walker, Assistant City Manager 

**SUBJECT:** Council Study/Budget Issues Workshop

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**Overview**

The purpose of the workshop is to identify study issue priorities for the 2014 calendar year and budget issues priorities for the coming fiscal year.

This Council packet augments the workshop binder that you received in December. It includes:

- Final Workshop Agenda
- New study issues proposed before or after the January 7 public hearing (on blue paper to differentiate them from previously submitted issues)
- New budget issues (also on blue paper) proposed before or after the January 7 public hearing

**Study Issues**

The study issues process lays the foundation upon which Council examines and establishes City policy each year. The process allows the City Council to consider and compare at one time all policy topics of interest or concern, as identified throughout the calendar year by members of the public, boards and commissions, City Council members or City staff. In this manner, the process provides a structured approach for addressing the large number of issues that are raised each year, allowing Council to rank the issues and set priorities within the limits of time and resources. Council may also drop a study issue from any further consideration, or defer the examination of a study issue to a future calendar year.

*Study Issues with a Fiscal Impact*

Any non-budgeted costs to complete a study will require funds to be reduced from an existing project or operating program, or will require the identification of a new revenue source. Staff recommends any Council-prioritized study issues that require funding be resubmitted as a budget supplement for consideration within the context of all new requests for funding in the fiscal year FY 2014/15 Recommended Budget. This is consistent with past practice.

## **Ranking Process**

At this workshop Council will be asked to review potential study issues one department at a time following the steps suggested below:

- By Department, Council questions or clarification on any study issue submitted (includes new items for 2014 and deferred items from 2013).
- Before ranking, issues may be combined, dropped or deferred from ranking consideration by a majority vote of Council.
- Council discussion and deliberation.

Council is encouraged to drop rather than defer proposed study issues when a strong interest does not exist, as it is possible that an item can find its way onto the calendar even though there is little interest in it. This is a poor use of Council and staff time that could be better directed to other priorities or a department's internal study program.

### *Staff Recommendation and Priority Ranking*

Please note that each study issue paper has a section for staff's recommendation which indicates whether or not staff thinks the issue should be considered by Council as a priority, deferred to the next year, dropped from further consideration at this time, or no recommendation. In addition, each department has submitted a priority rank for each issue that is recommended for study; the priority is listed on Council's ranking sheets and on each department's Summary Worksheet.

## **Budget Issues**

Budget issues are proposals to add a new service, eliminate a service or change the level of an existing City service. Budget issues can be proposed by the City Council or Boards and Commissions; any item proposed by a member of the public must be sponsored by one of these groups. Council votes on each budget issue, deciding to either drop, defer, or refer each to the FY 2014/15 Recommended Budget. Budget issues that are referred to the Recommended Budget are considered as budget supplements. Service level changes proposed by staff will be identified and highlighted in the City Manager's Recommended Budget presented in May.

## **Study Issues Proposed for Initiation in 2014**

On March 4, staff will present a Report to Council identifying the study issues that can be initiated in 2014, consistent with Council's priority order and within departmental resource constraints. Once approved by Council, the study issue presentation dates will be added to the Tentative Council Meeting Agenda Calendar.