



Legislative Platform and Policies

**Approved by the City Council on
On January 31, 2012
January 2012 – December 2013
INTERIM 2012 SESSION, AND 2013 SESSION (77TH SESSION)**

CITY OF SPARKS
Legislative Platform and Policies
City Council meeting on January 31, 2012

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Contact information: Adam Mayberry, Community Relations Manager
775-353-7894 or amayberry@cityofsparks.us

INTRODUCTION

Sparks VISION Statement

Be the city of choice for residents, businesses and visitors.

Sparks MISSION Statement

By establishing financial stability and an effective work environment during uncertain times, the City of Sparks will provide a safe environment, economic development, special events, cost-effective sustainable services, and opportunities for citizen involvement.

About the City of Sparks

The City of Sparks is located just east of Reno, NV, at the base of the Sierra Nevada mountain range. The world renowned Lake Tahoe is less than a one hour drive away. Sparks is in a high desert climate at an elevation of nearly 4,500 feet with four seasons and sunshine 80 percent of the year. It is the fifth largest city in Nevada with a population of 92,331 (2010). Reno/Tahoe International Airport, five minutes away, serves Sparks.

Sparks is known as the premiere special events venue for all of northern Nevada, a place where there is always something happening - with attractions on our Victorian Square which bring hundreds of thousands of visitors to such annual events as the Sparks Hometowne Farmer's Market, Hot August Nights, Best in the West Nugget Rib Cook-off, and Sparks Hometowne Christmas. The city's newest destination includes the Legends at Sparks Marina, a premiere shopping and dining experience.

Sparks is filled with more than 50 beautiful parks along with countless recreation programs. The City's landmark gem includes the unique Sparks Marina. The Marina consists of eighty acres of water surrounded by swimming, boating, fishing, scuba diving and picnicking facilities, with breath-taking views of the nearby mountains. Events are always happening at the Marina such as the Scheels Turkey Trot held annually on Thanksgiving Day.

Golden Eagle Sports Complex featuring 1.4 million square feet of artificial turf, hosts hundreds of softball tournaments and sporting events annually. And Rock Park offers an exciting whitewater attraction geared for family fun with pools for kayaking, tubing and rafting for all abilities in a wonderful setting. The list of fun and exciting things to do in Sparks is growing.

Sparks is part of the beautiful Truckee Meadows and is surrounded by picturesque foothills. Whether walking, running, or biking, there are plentiful opportunities to experience the great outdoors year round. And don't forget that the City's rich history can be experienced at the Sparks Heritage Museum.

The city's Community Services Department and the Sparks Redevelopment Agency work closely with current business owners and new developers to provide a "business friendly" environment within which to pursue responsible economic activities.

The Sparks industrial area provides many opportunities for a wide range of businesses to open or expand their operations in western Nevada, with excellent road (I-80 and U.S. 395) rail (Union Pacific) and air cargo (Reno/Tahoe International) transportation at one's doorstep.

The city provides a full range of municipal services including police, fire, public works, wastewater treatment, legal department, municipal court, code enforcement, business licensing, parks and recreation, special events, and much more.

Come experience Sparks, Nevada for yourself. It's happening here!



Sparks Mayor and City Council

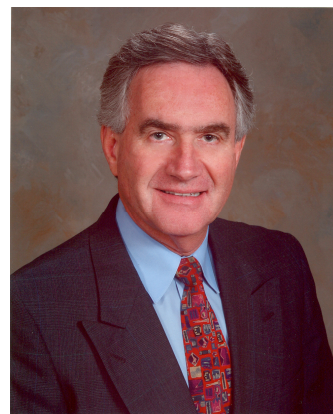
(L-R): COUNCILWOMAN JULIA RATTI (WARD 1), COUNCILMAN ED LAWSON (WARD 2),
COUNCILMAN RON SMITH (WARD 3), MAYOR GENO MARTINI, COUNCILMAN MIKE CARRIGAN
(WARD 4), COUNCILMAN RON SCHMITT, (WARD 5)



**SPARKS CITY ATTORNEY
CHET ADAMS**



**MUNICIPAL JUDGE MUNICIPAL JUDGE
BARBARA MCCARTHY JIM SPOO**



THE SPARKS LEGISLATIVE TEAM REPRESENTING THE SPARKS CITY COUNCIL INCLUDES MAYOR GENO MARTINI AND COUNCILWOMAN JULIA RATTI. THE CITY'S GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS TEAM IS LED BY SPARKS CITY MANAGER SHAUN CAREY AND ASSISTED BY THE CITY'S COMMUNITY RELATIONS MANAGER, ADAM MAYBERRY.

CONTACT: ADAM MAYBERRY, 775.353.7894, -OR - AMAYBERRY@CITYOFSPARKS.US

CITY MANAGER

SHAUN D. CAREY

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS
MANAGER**

ADAM MAYBERRY

LEGISLATIVE STRATEGIST

ROCKY FINSETH



SPARKS STRATEGIC PLAN – (2012-2017)

1. Promote the safety of our residents, businesses and visitors

- 1.1. Provide law enforcement including police services, city attorney, and municipal court
 - 1.1.1. Provide crime prevention strategies to our citizens to sustain a great quality of life
 - 1.1.2. Respond to and solve crime incidents in an effective manner, providing closure to victims
 - 1.1.3. Provide legal representation to the City of Sparks with civil, criminal and victim advocate support
 - 1.1.4. Provide supervision and enforcement of all court orders
- 1.2. Provide the highest level of fire prevention, fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical care, and related services to the citizens, businesses, and visitors of the City of Sparks
 - 1.2.1. Implement the Sparks Fire Department Business Plan
- 1.3. Implement the Truckee River Flood Control Project

2. Explore and promote opportunities for economic development and special events

- 2.1. Explore economic development opportunities
- 2.2. Enhance the vitality of Special Events
- 2.3. Redefine the direction of Victorian Square
- 2.4. Manage the implementation of the Legends DDFA
- 2.5. Implement Comprehensive Plan update
- 2.6. Implement branding efforts and outcomes of the Branding Leadership Team

3. Manage resources to keep pace with technology, infrastructure, and sustainability needs

- 3.1. Develop/maintain the technology framework to support city operations
- 3.2. Keep pace with infrastructure needs
 - 3.2.1. Maintain and manage roadway and signal systems
 - 3.2.2. Find and implement innovative transportation system improvements
 - 3.2.3. Maintain and rehabilitate park system
 - 3.2.4. Maintain and rehabilitate sewer, storm drain, effluent city facilities and TMWRF
- 3.3. Explore and implement opportunities to promote sustainability by conserving energy and developing on-site renewable energy

4. Encourage our citizens to interact with their city government and build strong alliances with other government entities

- 4.1. Promote citizen interaction with city government
- 4.2. Initiate and advance State strategic alliances
- 4.3. Initiate and advance Federal strategic alliances
- 4.4. Initiate and advance Regional/Local Strategic alliances
 - 4.4.1. Shared Services
- 4.5. Develop partnerships with all educational stakeholders

CITY OF SPARKS
Legislative Platform and Policies
City Council Workshop on January 31, 2012

THE THREE P's of the LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

The Three P's of the Legislative Process Defined

The legislative process involves interaction with our state, and local governmental entities and utilizes three P's—Platform, Policy, and Program. These three P's may best be defined as follows:

- Platform –The declared policies of the Sparks City Council for the state and local political processes.
- Policy –The plan or course of action the Sparks City Council wants to engage in order to influence and determine decisions at the state and local levels.
- Program –The specific resources the Sparks City Council is willing to commit to accomplish its legislative goals.

PLATFORM

The city's State Legislative Platform includes the issues the City Council believes are critical to the future of the city and allows the city to continue its growth and prosperity.

The City of Sparks has identified several key issues:

- More local authority for governance from state legislature
- Property taxes, sales taxes, state and local fees and other revenue sources
- Branding and promotion of the city
- Master planning, land use development and use of public lands
- Natural resource management including flood control, wetlands, and recreational opportunities
- Public works management including water, sewer, storm drainage and water treatment
- Economic development, education, and public housing
- Transportation systems, roads and highways and traffic management
- Energy conservation and management
- Redevelopment and Neighborhood Revitalization

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM – DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purposes of developing, implementing, and managing the city’s Legislative Platform, the following terms are defined herein:

“City” means the City of Sparks, Nevada, and all of its political subsets including Boards and Commissions.

“City Management Team” means any City staff designated by the City Manager to review and comment on state or regional legislative issues.

“City Representative” means any person who is elected, appointed, employed or volunteers in any official capacity for the City of Sparks. This includes members of Boards and Commissions.

“Community Relations Manager” means the person assigned by the City Manager of the City of Sparks to be responsible for the city’s legislative processes. This position is responsible for developing and maintaining relationships with legislators, legislative staff members, local government representatives, and the public while coordinating all legislative processes, programs, and activities.

“Legislation” means any legislative or administrative matter proposed or pending before a legislative body involving granting, denial, revocation, restriction or modification of any bill, resolution, amendment, nomination, appointment, report and any other matter pending or proposed in a legislative committee, state or federal, or is before the Governor for consideration, or on any matter which may be the subject to legislative action.

“Legislative” means the law making process of the United States Congress (federal-Senate or House of Representatives), State of Nevada Legislature (state-Senate or Assembly) and local agency (county, municipality, town or regional governing body).

“Legislative Team” means the Mayor and one other Council member, designated by the City Council. When the makeup of the City Council includes members of more than 1 party, we shall endeavor to represent 2 different parties on the legislative team.

“Legislator” means any elected member of a legislative body.

“Lobbying” means appearing in person in an executive or legislative building or any other building in which an executive or legislative body or any of its standing committees hold meetings; and/or communicates directly with a member of the Executive or Legislative Branch on behalf of someone or himself to influence legislative action whether or not any compensation is received for the communication.

“Lobbyist” means any individual who is elected, employed or contracted by the City of Sparks to engage in lobbying activities which include at least one direct communication with a city, county, state or federal official/representative, either personally or through agents, for the purpose of attempting to influence legislation on behalf of any other person.

“**Neutral**” means the official position of the City of Sparks is not aligned with a particular position, and does not support or oppose the specific legislative item or action.

“Oppose” means the official position of the City of Sparks not in favor a specific legislative action.

“Platform” means the official declared political position of the City of Sparks for the federal, state, and local political processes.

“Policy” means the plan or course of action the City of Sparks wants to engage in order to influence and determine legislative decisions at the federal, state, and local levels.

“Programs” means the specific City of Sparks resources committed to accomplishing its legislative goals.

“Support” means the official position of the City of Sparks in favor of a specific legislative action.

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM – PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT MATRIX

The Legislative Platform is maintained by the Sparks City Council in support of its legislative program for a defined time. The Legislative Platform serves as a guidance document regarding the city’s advocacy position which serves to assist the Mayor, Council, City Manager and Government Affairs function in providing prompt and accurate responses to proposed legislation during the legislative process. This is particularly important during the state legislative process where time is often very short between a bill’s drafting and publishing and determining when a position is required by the local entity. Often it is impossible for the Council as a whole to properly meet and deliberate in a public forum to provide direction to the city’s lobbying effort.

The matrix below, is a prioritized list of platform issues derived from current state legislative discussions, as well as council priorities and citywide strategic goals. Platform issues in bold are new from the last approved document.

| LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM ISSUES | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <u>FINANCIAL STABILITY</u> | |
| 1. | General Government: |
| | a. Support legislation that enhances local government’s ability to control the community it is elected to lead. |
| | b. Oppose state legislation that requires the local entity to provide a service or benefit without appropriate, full funding or the ability to enact a funding source (no unfunded mandates). |
| | c. Support legislation that would allow for a local preference in government purchasing. |
| | d. Support legislation that provides local authority over raising revenue when supported by local electorate. |
| | e. Support legislative efforts to review and improve state revenue restructuring that does not negatively impact local government. |
| | f. Support legislation that protects local government revenues from state action. |
| | g. Oppose legislation that requires regional consolidation of services. |
| | h. Support public utility regulations that: |
| | i. Maintain local control over rights-of-way. |
| | ii. Provide compensation for the use of rights-of-way and overseeing public service standards. |
| | iii. Ensure public, educational, and governmental access is available and affordable. [Strategic Goal 4.1] |
| | iv. Provide free access for public information services and announcements. [Strategic Goal 4] |
| | i. Support measures that provide funding for community park facilities, open space, and recreation programs. [Strategic Goal 3.2.3] |
| | j. Support state and federal funding and legislation for the arts that benefit local communities. |
| | k. Support legislation that would enhance the efficiency of the Open Meeting Law and the electoral processes. [Strategic Goal 4] |
| | l. Oppose legislation that limits the city’s ability to grow services as demanded by the citizens (i.e., voter approved initiatives). |

| LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM ISSUES | |
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| | m. Oppose legislation that rolls back property tax assessment levels resulting in limiting the city’s ability to maintain or grow services as demanded by the citizens (i.e., a Nevada version of California Proposition 13 and the Nevada Tax Restraint Initiative). |
| 2. Regional and State-wide Issues: [Strategic Goal 4] | |
| | a. Support efforts that reinforce local entity governance. |
| | b. Maintain a leadership position in mandated regional governance boards and commissions. |
| | c. Support efforts to stabilize the state tax environment. |
| 3. Local Government Finance: | |
| | a. Oppose state legislation that requires the local entity to provide a service or benefit without appropriate, full funding (seek self determination and more local authority). |
| | b. Support measures that safeguard existing revenue sources from pre-emption by the state, or county governments. |
| | c. Oppose any change by the state or county governments in revenue allocations (current or future) that would negatively affect local government, including the redistribution of taxes or fees. |
| | d. Oppose any measure that would limit local entities’ ability to issue or use voter-approved proceeds. |
| | e. Support measures that provide fiscal independence for cities and the retention of all existing local revenue sources. (2011 Nevada Legislature Interim Study) |
| | f. Support legislation that allows the city to maintain and/or control revenues related to franchises (i.e., gas, water, sewer, garbage, telecommunications, etc.). |
| | g. Support legislation that makes funds available to support the building, operations and maintenance of public facilities (i.e., facilities, parks, open space, etc.). [Strategic Goal 3.2.3] |
| | h. Support legislation that provides greater accountability on the part of counties for unincorporated residential services. [Strategic Goal 3] |
| | i. Support greater local authority for tax exemptions and incentives for purposes of economic development. [Strategic Goal 2] |
| | j. Oppose legislation that creates surcharges for state oversight of mandated programs. |
| | k. Support legislation for local governments to maintain and expand the use of special improvement districts. [Strategic Goal 2] |
| | l. Oppose legislation that would further exempt or reduce revenue from fees and taxes of for-profit or non-profit organizations within special improvement districts. [Strategic Goal 2] |
| 4. Labor Relations: | |
| | a. Oppose state legislation that requires the local entity to provide a service or benefit without appropriate, full funding (no unfunded mandates). |
| | b. Support legislation that improves access to, and reduces the cost of, healthcare for public employees. |
| | c. Oppose any measure that mandates the granting of new employee benefits which pose burdensome costs to the city (without forcing the issue to the bargaining table). |

| LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM ISSUES | |
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| d. | Support any measure granting employee benefits that mandate personal accountability components. Mandated personal accountabilities should include exclusion from the benefit for non-compliance. |
| e. | Oppose legislation that increases worker's compensation benefits without providing for concurrent cost controls. |
| f. | Support legislation that limits the ability of employees to receive worker's compensation benefits for occupational injuries and illnesses that result from stress, disciplinary action or performance evaluations, or consultations. |
| g. | Support legislation limiting employer liability if injury occurs due to employee negligence. |
| h. | Oppose changes to mandatory bargaining laws that negatively impact local government. |
| i. | Oppose legislation to include subjective complaints of pain in determining partial disability awards. |
| j. | Support changes in the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) to increase the ability to pay provisions from 8.3 to 16.6 percent |
| 5. Tort Reform: | |
| a. | Support measures to reform Nevada's tort system to reduce or limit liability exposure for public agencies and restore ability of public agencies to obtain affordable insurance. |
| b. | Support legislation that recognizes or broadens immunities for public agencies. |
| c. | Oppose legislation that attempts to limit or restrict existing immunities for public agencies. |
| d. | Oppose legislation that limits local entities' ability to properly use eminent domain. |
| PUBLIC SAFETY | |
| 6. | Public Safety: [Strategic Goal 1] |
| a. | Support legislation that strengthens local law enforcement. [Strategic Goal 1] |
| b. | Support measures that provide a greater share of seized assets to localities and increased latitude for local spending. |
| c. | Support legislation that allows local agencies to recover costs from guilty parties for public property and services in accidents involving driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. |
| d. | Support legislation granting immunity to governmental entities and their employees for purposes of liability for those entities and employees who provide emergency medical instructions or treatment as a part of their public safety job duties. |
| e. | Support legislation that provides the delivery of local emergency medical service to its citizens if no other regional delivery system is available. [Strategic Goal 1.2] |
| f. | Support state homeland security legislation that assists in safeguarding the homeland as well as provides direct funding to cities and high-threat regions with populations less than 700,000. |
| g. | Oppose any broadening of access to law enforcement records. |
| h. | Support legislation that requires parents or legal guardians of minors to pay the cost incurred by offenses of those minors. |
| i. | Oppose legislation that directly or indirectly prohibits a fire department from |

| LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM ISSUES | |
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| | providing additional services to the public. |
| j. | Support enabling legislation that provides expanded utilization of non-sworn officers to issue nuisance citations. |
| k. | Support enabling legislation that provides local authority to impose mandatory court assessments to defray administrative cost of municipal courts. |
| REDEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT [Strategic Goal 2] | |
| 7. | Redevelopment: |
| a. | Oppose legislation that restricts the Sales Tax Anticipated Revenue Bond program. [Strategic Goal 2.4] |
| b. | Support legislation that maintains and enhances redevelopment efforts. [Strategic Goal 2.3] |
| c. | Oppose legislation that prohibits or limits the establishment of new redevelopment project areas or expansion of existing project areas. |
| d. | Oppose legislation that limits or reduces the power of local entities to properly use eminent domain. |
| e. | Support legislation that enhances redevelopment agency authority and financing capabilities. [Strategic Goal 2.3] |
| f. | Support changes in redevelopment legislation that provides greater flexibility to redevelopment agencies to finance and participate in redevelopment projects. [Strategic Goal 2.3] |
| g. | Oppose legislation that diverts future revenues from redevelopment agencies to other public entities. |
| 8. | Economic Development: [Strategic Goal 2] |
| a. | Support legislation that facilitates economic development efforts and encourages businesses to locate or remain in Sparks (2011 Session, AB 449). [Strategic Goal 2.1] |
| b. | Support legislation that facilitates expansion of Free Trade Zones (FTZs) in Sparks. [Strategic Goal 2] |
| c. | Oppose efforts to limit tax incentives that benefit the City and the State. |
| d. | Support legislation that assists in diversifying the economy of Sparks. [Strategic Goal 2.1] |
| e. | Support legislation that reinforces regional efforts to recruit and establish new businesses and industries in Sparks. [Strategic Goal 2.1] |
| f. | Support regional legislation that aids efforts by local and state tourism agencies to expand the opportunities for activities by visitors. [Strategic Goal 2.6] |
| g. | Explore legislation that provides for international economic efforts. [Strategic Goal 2.1] |
| h. | Explore legislative opportunities to bring technology to assist the city in economic recruitment (i.e., WiFi, DSL, fiber optics, broadband cable, voice over IP, etc.). [Strategic Goals 2 and 3] |
| i. | Support legislation that provides for retention of room tax revenue for local utilization in promotion and capital improvements. [Strategic Goals 2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.6] |
| 9. | Housing and Community Development: |
| a. | Support legislation that provides assistance to homeowners in maintaining their mortgages against foreclosure by lending institutions. |

| LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM ISSUES | |
|--|--|
| b. | Support legislation that provides incentives (tax benefits, grants, loans, credits for affordable units) to local agencies, private developers, and non-profit groups in order to rehabilitate residential units and commercial properties without using existing local government resources. |
| c. | Support the streamlining of state reporting. |
| d. | Support efforts to develop state participation, financial support and incentives (tax benefits, grants, loans) for programs that provide adequate, affordable housing (home ownership or rental opportunities for first-time home buyers assistance) for all economic segments of the community including the elderly, handicapped and low-income persons. |
| e. | Support legislation that provides additional funding for rental subsidy assistance programs (such as Section 8) via more vouchers or certificates. |
| f. | Support state participation in funding innovative housing solutions for low-income, elderly, and handicapped individuals. |
| g. | Support legislation that provides incentives for maintaining cultural resources, including historic housing stock. |
| h. | Support streamlined procedures for annexation of land within a city's sphere of influence. |
| i. | Support legislation that maintains city's control over the construction of facilities and/or structures within its sphere of influence (i.e., cellular towers, well heads, power lines, maintenance yards, etc.). |
| j. | Support legislation that encourages energy conservation (green building) design standards that do not overburden state and local governments with tax waiver incentives. [Strategic Goal 3.3.] |
| k. | Explore more effective methods for funding regional planning that does not take away from existing local government resources. |
| l. | Explore alternative models for regional planning implementation. |
| m. | Support legislation that ensures financial institutions or holding/asset management firms are responsive to code enforcement issues on bank owned properties. |
| INFRASTRUCTURE and HIGHWAYS [City Wide Strategic Goal 3.2.] | |
| 10. Transportation: | |
| a. | Support measures that increase the ability of local agencies to finance local transportation facilities and infrastructure. [Strategic Goal 3.2.1] |
| b. | Support measures to finance local and regional transportation facilities and improvements, including alternative modes of transportation and traffic management systems. [Strategic Goal 3.2.2] |
| c. | Support legislation that provides for effective and efficient transportation alternatives. [Strategic Goal 3.2.2] |
| d. | Support legislation that provides for long-term planning and acquisition of rights-of-way (i.e., interchanges, connectors, frontage roads, etc.). [Strategic Goal 3.2.2] |
| e. | Support legislation that encourages emerging employment centers with the end goal of reducing commute miles. [Strategic Goal 3.3] |
| f. | Support legislation that provides funding sources for highway and transportation projects. [Strategic Goal 3] |
| g. | Support measures that safeguard our community and transportation networks from hazardous and toxic materials. [Strategic Goal 1] |
| h. | Support legislation to relocate and expand rail yard operations to enhance the local economy (economic development issue also). |

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM ISSUES

11. Public Works:

- a. Support legislation that provides greater flexibility regarding public works projects and funding sources. (i.e. new funding mechanisms utilizing existing state and federal revenues as well as new sources). [Strategic Goal 3]
- b. Support legislation that provides for well-planned, cost-effective infrastructure. [Strategic Goal 3.2.2.]
- c. Support legislation that maintains city control over its rights-of-way.

12. Flood Control/Water Management:

- a. Advocate federal, state, and local sources of on-going revenue to fund completion of the Truckee River Flood Management Project. [Strategic Goal 1.3.]
- b. Support legislation that retains control over local water supply, distribution, and reclamation.
- c. Support legislation for flood control management to mitigate loss of property and life.

13. Regional Planning

- a. Support legislation that maintains local control through policies governed by the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Governing Board (TMRPGB). [Strategic Goal 4.4.]
 - i. Seek potential amendments or revisions to existing TMRPGB legislation to clarify role, functions, addresses costs to local governments, and/or moves legislative mandates to local agency level.
- b. Maintain a strong working relationship with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and the Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA). [Strategic Goal 4.4.]
- c. Support state legislative review of current state department programs for environmental and wildlife preservation to improve responsiveness and reduce unnecessary regulations.

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM – PROGRAM POLICIES

The legislative platform, as defined by the Sparks City Council, is the basis for the operational policies, procedures, and processes for the effective management of the city’s government affairs program at the federal, state, and local levels.

The operational policies, procedures, and processes suggested to be reviewed and edited by the Council are as follows:

| LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM OPERATIONAL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES | |
|--|--|
| 1. | Platform Development and implementation |
| | a. The Legislative Platform is to be developed by the City of Sparks City Council through consensus. |
| | b. In the interest of the timely operation of the 120-session of the Nevada Legislature, and during special sessions, the Sparks Legislative Team has full discretion to exercise their judgment in implementing the legislative platform which includes items that may not be addressed in the platform. |
| 2. | Platform and Program Message |
| | a. The approved Legislative Platform will be the guide in conducting discussions of legislative issues with Legislators. |
| | b. The approved Legislative Platform message will be coordinated through the Legislative Team as directed by the City Manager. |
| | c. No dissenting opinion on the approved Legislative Platform will be presented. |
| | d. City representatives, in either their elected or appointed capacity, will not lobby or testify on matters related to the city’s Legislative Platform, policies and/or operations without first advising and/or coordinating the testimony with the Legislative Team. |
| | i. Any city representative who lobbies or testifies without coordinating with the Legislative Team may be disciplined, including censure. |
| | ii. Any city representative who speaks against any majority position of the council may be disciplined, including censure. |
| | e. The Legislative Team will be responsible to assist in determining the need for legislative testimony and will coordinate the proper city resources. |
| | i. City elected officials may be utilized to introduce Legislative Platform-driven legislative issues and emphasize their importance to the city. |
| | ii. Staff and/or contract representatives will be responsible to present the technical aspects of Legislative Platform issues to Legislators. |
| | f. The Legislative Team will be responsible to coordinate briefing schedules to communicate city issues and positions on legislative matters. |
| | i. Local government elected boards and staff. |
| | ii. State Legislators and staff (both Sparks and northern Nevada representatives). |
| | iii. State Legislature Leadership. |

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM – COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

The Legislative Platform also defines the City Council’s expectations on “to whom” and “how” the city will communicate with state and federal legislators and other local entities. The current process can be broken down into three categories:

1. State

The Legislative Team holds regular meetings with the Nevada legislators who represent Sparks. The topics of conversation range from concerns or issues raised by the legislators, to pending or proposed bill requests.

During state legislative sessions, the City Manager’s designee coordinates input from city staff and the legislative team to the contract legislative representative and staff in Carson City on business of the day.

Between legislative sessions, the Legislative Team meets regularly with Sparks’ legislators and the legislative leadership to enhance the city’s position on certain legislation and to provide additional, timely information on key issues.

2. Local

The Legislative Team engages in a multitude of local entity correspondence and communications. These include, but are not limited to, individual Council/Commission meetings and retreats; joint Council/Commission meetings and retreats; boards and commissions; public meetings; local, regional, state and federal associations; and local, regional, state and federal task forces and working committees.

3. Intergovernmental

The Legislative Team helps coordinate ongoing relationships between Sparks and our sister cities of Garibaldi Oregon and Longford Ireland. These efforts can include visits between the cities by elected officials as well as staff and Sparks citizenry. These efforts are helpful in promoting city planning, economic development, traffic planning, cultural exchange, and governmental relations.

The Legislative Team engages in communications with other local entities; the Truckee Meadows Intergovernmental Affairs Group; The Chamber of Commerce; the Innovations Group; the Flood Project Coordinating Committee (FPCC) lobbying group; and the International City/County Managers Association (ICMA). The Legislative Team communicates the results of these meetings with the City Council via email and council agenda items that are policy related.

The Legislative Team determines legislative policy based on the Legislative Platform and determines the message, lobbying effort and presenter(s) of testimony to the appropriate legislative committee. If a bill is outside the defined Legislative Platform, the Legislative Team engages the Mayor and City Council as a whole, in the proper public forum, to determine specific policy direction. The Legislative Team meets on an as-needed basis, and at least quarterly, to determine direction on legislative issues.

The Legislative Platform should include an outline of communication policy and processes defined by the City Council. The current communication policies, procedures, and processes are as follows:



LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM COMMUNICATIONS

1. STATE

- a. Mayor, Council member(s), City Manager, Government Affairs function, and contract representative(s) to define meeting frequency and topics for discussion with Sparks' Legislators.
- b. City Manager, Legislative Team, and contract representative(s) to schedule and conduct periodic meetings as defined by the Mayor and Council to address issues relevant to bill draft requests before the legislative session begins.
- c. Legislative Team to schedule and conduct periodic meetings between the Mayor and Council members with Legislators as defined by the partnering program.
- d. Mayor, City Council, and state legislators to appoint members to the Sparks Charter Committee by January of every even numbered year so they may properly convene and discuss Charter issues.
- e. During the legislative session and interim, the Legislative Team and/or contract representative(s) will report at least monthly on the status of the legislative session, interim studies, and issues of importance to the Mayor, City Council, and City Manager.
- f. The City Manager, Legislative Team, contract representative and finance director will attend and actively participate in the Nevada Legislature Interim Taxation Committee meetings.
- g. The Legislative Team will monitor the interim session's committee meetings and studies and keep the legislative team and City Council informed of any impact to the city's policies or legislative processes.

2. LOCAL

- a. The Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and Legislative Team will attend and actively participate in regional and local meetings and retreats to engage in political activities as they develop.
- b. The Mayor, City Council, and City Manager will direct the Legislative Team on policies and procedures in relation to community involvement and political activity.
- c. The Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and Legislative Team will attend and report back on meetings attended with other agencies that involve political and/or legislative issues.
- d. The Legislative Team will actively participate with the other legislative functions in the region and report back to the Mayor, City Council, and City Manager.
- e. The Legislative Team will monitor and/or attend the public meetings and retreats of the other local entities in the region and report back to the Mayor, City Council, and City Manager.

3. INTERGOVERNMENTAL

- a. The Government Affairs Division will act as the liaison between Sparks and the sister cities of Garibaldi Oregon and Longford Ireland.