



# City of Sunnyvale

## Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

---

**File #:** 17-1011, **Version:** 1

---

### **SUBJECT**

Review and Rank Study Issues

### ***Background***

In the 1970's, the City of Sunnyvale developed a process for prioritizing local policy concerns that became known as the "study issues process". A study issue is a topic of concern that may result in a new or revised City policy. The study issues process provides both City Council and City staff with a valuable planning and management tool, by providing a method for identifying, prioritizing and analyzing policy issues in an efficient and effective way. It provides a structured approach for addressing the large number of policy issues that are raised each year.

Council reviews all study issues once a year at the Council Study Issues Workshop. The process allows Council to rank the issues, separating those issues that may have seemed important when they were first raised from the truly critical issues. It also allows the City Manager and department directors to set and schedule the examination of issues so the workload does not interfere with the day to day delivery of City services at levels set by Council.

After a study issue is sponsored by Council, a commission, or staff, staff prepares and submits study issue papers to the city manager for review and approval. The study issue paper describes the topic of concern proposed to be studied, identifies how the issue relates to the General Plan, the origin of the issue, expected public outreach, staff hours, any additional resources required for study, and a staff recommendation regarding whether to study the issue. Papers are then routed to the appropriate board and commission for ranking in November/December. Study issue papers not under the purview of a board or commission are routed directly to Council for the annual Study Issues Public Hearing and Council Study Issues Workshop.

### ***Roles in the Process***

The study issues process includes participation by Councilmembers, City staff, board and commission members, and the public. A brief explanation of each of their roles follows:

**Council** - Council's role is to set policy. Regarding the study issues process, policy-related responsibilities include generating (or sponsoring) study issue topics; taking public input; prioritizing or "ranking" issues at the Council Study Issues Workshop early in the calendar year (February for 2018); and approving target completion dates for each study.

**City staff** - City staff manage the annual study issues administrative process; generate study issue topics; prepare the study issue papers; following Council ranking of issues, determine how many issues can be supported with available operating resources; and propose target completion dates for studies able to be completed.

**Boards and commissions** - In their advisory capacity to Council, boards and commissions generate

study issue papers for Council's consideration, and provide a recommended ranking of the issues relevant to their areas of authority. Boards and commissions also provide a forum for public input and, with majority support, can sponsor issues brought to them by members of the public.

Members of the Public - Members of the public may suggest study issue topics to staff, boards and commissions, or directly to Council. In order for a study issue topic to get to the Council Study Issues Workshop it must be "sponsored" by staff, Council or a board or commission. Members of the public also provide input to Council on the relative importance or priorities of individual studies at the annual Study Issues Public Hearing, which is held about a month prior to Council's Study Issues Workshop.

### **Discussion**

Attachment 1 describes the process for ranking study issues. The two study issues referred to the Housing and Human Services Commission (HHSC) for ranking this year are provided in Attachments 2 and 3. These study issues must be ranked by the HHSC at this meeting to meet the deadline for inclusion in the Council Study Issues Workshop materials.

#### Results of HHSC-sponsored 2018 study issue topic:

A new study issue topic was proposed by the HHSC at its September meeting. The topic was, as summarized in the September minutes, "to determine what the City could do to optimize housing opportunities in Sunnyvale given new State legislation and funding measures enacted in 2017."

The Housing staff and the Department Director analyzed this proposal and consulted with the City Manager's Office on study issue procedures, the Department determined that this topic was operational in nature and would be handled through existing City processes, including the annual review of new legislation, and the upcoming 2017 Housing Strategy study issue, both of which are currently underway. Staff will submit a draft work plan on the 2017 Housing Strategy for City Council review at the City Council meeting on December 12, 2017. Staff will also provide a report to Council on newly enacted State legislation at the January 9, 2018 Council meeting, which will include key highlights of anticipated impacts to, or opportunities for the City resulting from the new housing legislation.

The citation below is provided for a reminder and to clarify the Commission's role in the study issues process:

#### *B/C Proposed Study Issue that is Operational (not Policy):*

*Council Policy 7.2.19, Statement 1.B: "Boards and commissions shall not involve themselves in administrative/ operational matters or the implementation of Council policy, except as requested by the city manager or his/her designated staff."*

*Board and commission members have two roles in the study issues process:*

- *To advise Council regarding the identification of policy issues to study.*
- *To advise Council on those issues Council has decided to study.*

### **Tallying the Votes on the Study Issues to be Ranked**

Staff will provide assistance with tallying the votes, as needed. See Attachment 1 for details.

***Recommended Actions:***

Following any questions for staff, hold a public hearing, open the floor for discussion and/or questions by commissioners, and then begin the ranking process consistent with the instructions in Attachment

1. Once the ranking process has been completed, staff will forward the results to Council.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Board/Commission Process for Ranking Study Issues
2. CDD 17-03: Rent Stabilization for Mobile Home Parks (Deferred in 2017)
3. CDD 18-05: Increase Opportunities for more Accessory Dwelling Units