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# M E M O R A N D U M

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**DATE:** January 22, 2008  
**TO:** City Council Members  
**FROM:** Jennifer Bruno, Policy Analyst  
**RE:** Subcommittee Process Options

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Attached is a matrix outlining a variety of process options for the Council to discuss in terms of increasing public involvement in the subcommittee/policy and legislation development process. They are numbered 1 - 10.

In the past, Council Members have elected to create a subcommittee for a variety of reasons:

1. To work through issues in an informal atmosphere;
2. To provide an opportunity for the Administration or others to present preliminary, sometimes unconfirmed, sometimes confidential information for Council consideration;
3. To provide staff with feedback on preliminary research options identified;
4. To provide an opportunity for the Council Subcommittee to give input to the Administration on strategy or negotiations;
5. To identify potential common ground as well as issues that need further research.

In the past, some subcommittees have elected to invite a larger audience to participate in their discussions, on specific topics. The Riparian Corridor Subcommittee recently conducted a meeting with a variety of community members representing various positions. This provided an informal atmosphere for community members to speak more directly with Council Members about specific concerns. This strategy is reflected in options 8 and 9 in the attached matrix.

The Council may wish to discuss these options and may wish to consider them further at the Council's retreat on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

Subcommittee Options

	Process	Outstanding Questions	Options	Pros	Cons	
1	Public notice under some circumstances, as determined by the subcommittee	Notify public of subcommittee meetings in a similar manner as existing Council meetings (web, listserv, and/or mail, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; What would determine when to give public notice?</li> <li>&gt; Options - every meeting, "mid-process" meeting, or only the "final" meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Establish policy to determine notice (no notice in the following circumstances - similar to exec session: if information is still being refined, legislative strategy, negotiation, preliminary update)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Open/transparent process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Process to determine when to notice a meeting</li> <li>&gt; Public perception of meetings that are not noticed</li> </ul>
2	Staff Notes - detailed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Notes would be as detailed as staff time allows</li> <li>&gt; Possibly involve an additional staff member to take notes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Would CMs want to send an additional staff person to take notes (primary staff person attends to provide analytical, policy, and research support and may not have time in meeting to take detailed notes)?</li> <li>&gt; Would notes be expected for all meetings or just certain issues?</li> <li>&gt; How would staff handle sensitive/confidential issues?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Use scanned PDFs of secondary staff's handwritten notes or have secondary staff type notes</li> <li>&gt; Primary staff member would review notes for accuracy</li> <li>&gt; Make notes available upon request</li> <li>&gt; Make notes available on web</li> <li>&gt; No notes for attorney-client issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Open/transparent process</li> <li>&gt; Record of subcommittee findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Difficulty in assuring staff notes accurately reflect perception of all CMs</li> <li>&gt; Difficulty in assuring staff can capture in notes complete meeting discussion</li> <li>&gt; Staff time availability issues</li> <li>&gt; Public is made aware but is not necessarily "engaged"</li> </ul>
3	Staff Notes - abbreviated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; notes would only contain attendees, general items discussed (no detail), action items (if applicable)</li> <li>&gt; Possibly involve an additional staff member to take notes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Would CMs want to send an additional staff person to take notes (primary staff person attends to provide analytical, policy, and research support and may not have time in meeting to take detailed notes)?</li> <li>&gt; Would notes be expected for every meeting or just certain issues or just "final meetings"?</li> <li>&gt; How handle sensitive/confidential issues?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Use scanned PDFs of secondary staff's handwritten notes or have secondary staff type notes</li> <li>&gt; Make notes available upon request</li> <li>&gt; Make notes available on web</li> <li>&gt; Just post "status" on the web (pending information, final recommendation, etc) with a staff contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Open/transparent process</li> <li>&gt; Record of subcommittee action items</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Difficulty in assuring staff notes accurately reflect perception of all CMs</li> <li>&gt; Staff time availability issues</li> <li>&gt; Some meetings do not have clear resolutions or action items to summarize</li> <li>&gt; Public is made aware but is not necessarily "engaged"</li> </ul>
4	Audio Recordings	Record sub-committee meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Record all meetings or some?</li> <li>&gt; How determine?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Make recordings available on web</li> <li>&gt; Portable recording equipment would need to be purchased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Open/transparent process</li> <li>&gt; increased accuracy in reporting of subcommittee findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Shifts discussion from informal brainstorming to more formal discussion</li> <li>&gt; Public is made aware but is not necessarily "engaged"</li> </ul>
5	Quarterly Reports (added to policy, not yet implemented)	Sub-committee or staff would give quarterly status update to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Does staff author or do CMs report orally?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Council Members could give verbal reports in public meetings to their peers</li> <li>&gt; Status updates could be in writing</li> <li>&gt; Council Members could report on all subcommittees once a quarter - comprehensive review of all subcommittees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Public information benefit</li> <li>&gt; Potential for increased accuracy in reporting of subcommittee findings</li> <li>&gt; Reporting idea already in policy (though not yet implemented)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Public is made aware but is not necessarily "engaged"</li> </ul>

Subcommittee Options

	<b>Process</b>	<b>Outstanding Questions</b>	<b>Options</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>	
6	Progress Reports as necessary	Sub-committee or staff would give status updates to Council as issues arise or are resolved	> Does staff author or do CMs report orally?	> Council Members could give verbal reports in public meetings to their peers > Status updates could be in writing	> Public information benefit > More efficient workload management from staff perspective	> Public is made aware but is not necessarily "engaged"
7	Post meeting dates and staff contact on website - verbal communication	Post meeting dates on website, members of each subcommittee and staff contact. Constituents could contact staff directly for updates.	> There could be staffing coordination issues (if a staff member is not able to attend a meeting)?	> Keep a running list of subcommittees and staff assigned to subcommittees - list on the web for public reference	> Public information benefit	> Difficulty in assuring staff verbal representations accurately reflect perception of all CMs > On important issues, staff time availability issues (high volume of calls) > Some meetings do not have clear items to summarize for public > Public is made aware but is not necessarily "engaged"
8	Factfinding Meetings to collect public input	> Subcommittee holds "Factfinding Meeting" to get input from public > Recorder could attend these meeting and record audio - in COW or 1st floor room	> How to determine when to hold factfinding? > At what point in the process? > Would these be evening or day meetings? > How would meeting be structured? > How would participants be determined?	> Sub-committee could decide together when a fact finding is necessary > Sub-committee could inform the rest of the Council > Notice could be given in typical forums (web, listserv, newspaper)	> Open/transparent process > Engages public during the process and not at the end > Increased accuracy in reporting information gathered from staff perspective > Public benefit from close/informal interaction with CMs	> Difficulty in assuring adequate time for equal participation by all interested parties. > May raise public's expectation for a specific outcome > Would have a staffing impact for Council and Recorder.
9	"Facilitated Public Process"	> Subcommittee holds a meeting with key stakeholders or specific community members and may or may not involve a professional facilitator > Goal is to have members of the community representing differing opinions discuss options	> How to determine when to hold this process? > At what point in the process? > How to determine which community members to invite?	> Sub-committee could decide when fact finding is preferable > Sub-committee could inform the rest of the Council	> Open/transparent process > Engages public at middle of process and not at the end > Using a facilitator may help achieve consensus more effeciently	> May duplicate planning process unnecessarily (open houes, PC Hearings, etc) > May raise public's expectation of involvement and favorable outcome > Would have a staffing impact for Council and Recorder.
10	Enhanced Written Public Comment	> Subcommittee invites and encourages written public comment on specific topics	> Would primary staff or liaison monitor and compile comments?	> Comments could be made available on the web > Council subcommittee could review	> Encourages public comment in the "middle" of the process	> Limited interaction between public and subcommittee