



Las Vegas

Agenda Item No.: 63.

**AGENDA SUMMARY PAGE**  
**CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF: OCTOBER 1, 2008**

DEPARTMENT: CITY MANAGERS OFFICE

DIRECTOR: TED J. OLIVIAS

Consent  Discussion

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

ADMINISTRATIVE:

Report and possible action on the status of the 2010 Federal Legislative Action Plan and municipal issues before the 110th United States Congress - All Wards

**Fiscal Impact**

No Impact

Budget Funds Available

Augmentation Required

**Amount:**

**Funding Source:**

**Dept./Division:**

**PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:**

Our Federal Lobbyist, Vicki Cram of Ball Janik LLP, will present an updated report on federal issues regarding the City of Las Vegas from the 110th US Congress.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Accept the report and direct staff accordingly.

**BACKUP DOCUMENTATION:**

None

Motion made by GARY REESE to Approve to accept the report

Passed For: 7; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

RICKI Y. BARLOW, LOIS TARKANIAN, LARRY BROWN, OSCAR B. GOODMAN, GARY REESE, STEVE WOLFSON, STEVEN D. ROSS; (Against-None); (Abstain-None); (Did Not Vote-None); (Excused-None)

Minutes:

TED OLIVIAS, Director of Government Affairs, stated staff is working on the 2009 plan and hopes to complete it within the next month. This plan will differ from previous plans due to new issues with the economy, the IRS ruling relative to the Public Employees Retirement System, zoning for cell towers and sustainability. There are also additional reauthorization bills dealing with transportation, federal aviation administration, Amtrak and the Workforce Investment Act. The objective is to identify projects that are important to the City and have a plan before Council for approval in early December. He introduced VICTORIA CRAM from Ball Janik LLP, Washington, D.C., who is the Director of Government Relations.

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MS. CRAM gave a summary on the legislative agenda and an update on some primary key issues for the City.

Regarding the Fiscal Year 2009 (FY 09), the City made five appropriation requests for congressionally directed spending, known as Federal earmarks. Congress ultimately decided upon three bills relating to military construction, defense and homeland security, which would be used as a resolution in funding the remaining federal government agencies until March 2009. There are various scenarios as to the outcome depending upon which senator is elected as the next president of the United States.

It is unknown as to how many projects will be funded; to date, there is \$400,000 for copper wire theft prevention program, \$500,000 for the Bonneville Clark couplet and \$150,000 for the plug-in hybrid program. Additional appropriations from FY 08 are \$156,511 for the Batteries Included Youth program and \$383,187 for the EMOLVE program.

The Neighborhood Stabilization Act provides for four billion dollars nationwide to stabilize neighborhoods due to the surmounting foreclosures. JAMES RODMAN has testified and asked that some of the funding be given directly to cities and not to the state. In addition, MS. CRAM has been working with groups and the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to seek maximum flexibility and direct loan financing. As a result HUD has made available 15 million dollars to the city of Las Vegas.

Regarding the Nevada Cancer Institute legislation, the House has passed a bill converting 80 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to a non-profit cancer institute. The Senate is still in session and may pass this bill.

There are no funds available in the Highway Trust Fund, as it is funded by the gasoline tax. Individuals have also changed their driving habits and are driving more fuel efficient vehicles. As a result, with Congress approval, the President has signed a transfer of funds from the general fund to this fund in the amount of eight billion dollars.

A petition has been filed by the wireless industry regarding prohibiting local zoning of cell phone towers, and delegates are working with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in an effort to prevent this from happening.

The Senate will be voting on a new bill increasing the insured dollar amount from the Federal Deposit Insured Corporation (FDIC) to \$250,000. A tax extender package has been included in hopes of acquiring additional votes from the House to pass the bill.

MS. CRAM continued by stating 80 percent of the American population reside in cities but only 20 percent of federal transportation funds are applied to urban areas. Efforts will be made to re-address this issue, as well as make funding more accessible. The bill is project driven, so even if Senator McCain, if voted, vetoed the bill, there is sufficient support to override the veto.

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There will be additional bills coming forward pertaining to federal aviation re-authorization, water/sewer infrastructure and work force investment act. Congress will also be addressing climate change and sustainability.

In closing, MS. CRAM commented on the FY 10 appropriations process. Both Congress and the Appropriations Committees feel strongly about their constitutional role in directing federal spending. Some projects will be available should the delegates desire to pursue them.

Next year will be difficult fiscally but her staff will be working diligently with delegates to ensure the City has a chance to take advantage of some of the opportunities that arise, to prevent the pre-emption of local authorities and/or any unfunded mandates.

COUNCILMEN WOLFSON, BARLOW and REESE thanked MS. CRAM for her regular updates and efforts in dealing with the process in Washington, D.C. In response to COUNCILMAN BARLOW'S query regarding the home mortgage crisis, MS. CRAM replied that the bill, Housing and Economic Recovery Act, can only be used to purchase and rehabilitate homes that have been foreclosed. The bail-out bill may have some provisions in it that could prevent future foreclosures.

MAYOR GOODMAN questioned what conversations are taking place in Washington, D.C. relative to the mortgage crisis. MS. CRAM responded that conversations are taking place. The Mayor looks forward to a consensus and some meaningful action so that the City can remain healthy; he thanked MS. CRAM for her report.

