INTRODUCTION

The 2017 Legislative Platform provides a framework for the City of Indian Wells’ core legislative principles for the purpose of advocacy efforts at the regional, state and federal level. The legislative platform sets forth the City’s position on a variety of topics and provides direction for the City’s legislative advocates, City Council, and City staff as they work to secure clear and strategic initiatives in Sacramento and Washington, D.C.

The legislative platform is developed and updated using the goals and objectives of the City Council, a review of legislative platform from the League of California Cities, League’s Riverside County Division, input from City Council and Staff, research of current law and pending legislation, as well as, discussions with local legislative staff and the City’s legislative advocates.

Approval of the legislative platform streamlines the City’s process and allows the City to effectively respond and take immediate action on pressing legislation. For proposed legislation, either consistent with the City’s legislative platform or consistent with past City legislative positions; City staff shall be authorized to prepare position letters for signature. Items not addressed in the City’s Legislative Platform may require further Council direction. The legislative platform may only address issues directly relevant to or impacting the provision of municipal services.

City departments are encouraged to monitor and be knowledgeable of any legislative issues related to their discipline. However, any requests for the City to take positions on a legislative matter must be directed to the City Clerk.

Legislative Contacts

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

I. Local Control
Support legislation to preserve the city’s local authority as a charter city to enact policy pertaining to local affairs. Oppose legislation preempting local control without the concurrence of the City.

II. Fiscal Responsibility
Support legislation promoting fiscal stability, predictability, and financial independence at the local level. Support efforts to preserve and promote the City’s ability to maintain and grow its revenue base. Oppose legislation to diminish the City’s revenue sources required to maintain critical city services.

III. Economic Development
Support legislative efforts designed to provide local governments with the tools necessary to bolster economic development. Support legislation and regulatory streamlining initiatives to enhance the City’s ability to attract and retain businesses as well as encourage business expansion and job retention.

IV. Public Safety
Support legislation for local governments to access resources to provide quality police, fire, emergency management, emergency medical services, violence prevention initiatives, and community efforts.

V. Funding Opportunities
Support legislation allowing the City to compete for its fair share of regional, state, and federal funding. Support efforts promoting dedicated funding streams to cities for critical service areas.

VI. Regional Partnerships
Support opportunities to work collaboratively with local and regional partners on areas of mutual interest. Maintain strong relationships with other municipalities, local transportation agencies, special districts, regional government agencies, local elected officials, college boards, and school districts.
The League of California Cities board of directors adopted the following strategic goals for 2017:

1. **Increase Funding for Critical Transportation and Water Infrastructure.** Provide additional state and federal funding and local financing tools — such as reducing the vote threshold for local initiatives — to support California’s economy, transportation (streets, bridges, trade corridors, active transportation and transit) and water related needs (supply, sewer, storm water, flood control, beach erosion, etc.) including maintenance and construction. Support appropriate streamlining of storm water regulations and CEQA to avoid duplication and reduce litigation.

2. **Develop Realistic Responses to the Homeless Crisis.** Increase state and federal funding and support to provide additional shelter and services to California’s homeless, and advance the recommendations of the CSAC-League Homelessness Task Force.

3. **Improve the Affordability of Workforce Housing and Secure Additional Funds for Affordable Housing.** Increase state and federal financial support, reduce regulatory barriers, and provide additional incentives and local financial tools to address the affordability of workforce housing and increase the availability of affordable housing.

4. **Address Public Safety Impacts of Reduced Sentencing Laws, Protect Local Priorities in the Implementation of AUMA, and Preserve City Rights to Deliver Emergency Medical Services.** Provide tools and resources cities need to respond to recent changes in statewide criminal sentencing policies. Protect local priorities during development of regulations and legislation to implement the Adult Use of Marijuana Act. In addition, continue to preserve city rights to deliver emergency medical services (Health and Safety Code 1797.201).
POLICY STATEMENTS

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Elections, Ralph M. Brown Act, Public Records Act, Political Reform Act, conflict of interest, insurance tort reform, and open and transparent government.

Support:

- Efforts consistent with the doctrine of local control especially in the areas of city revenues, police powers, land use planning, community development, public safety, local public meeting procedures, and other municipal activities. Apply the Brown Act to the state legislature to the same extent that it applies to local government.
- Preserve the integrity and fundamentals of the Ralph M Brown Act while opposing legislation constraining communication among staff and local officials.
- Amending rules limiting and restricting local government’s ability to achieve greater transparency of governmental business by improving the platform in which agencies can publish and advertise notices, ordinances, or other matters required by law.
- Certification of a new voting system and establish funding for the acquisition of a new system.
- Statewide measure lowering the voter approval threshold for local special taxes to either 55% (same as school districts) or to a simple majority, especially for the purposes of economic and local development, and public safety needs.
- Reduce and provide for recovery of costs, maintain privacy, and eliminate attorney’s fees for public records laws.
- Efforts to recognize or broaden immunities for public agencies and oppose any attempts to limit or restrict existing immunities.
- Limitations on the joint and separate liability of governmental agencies to a liability equal to their percentage of their wrongdoing. Require plaintiffs to make a good faith showing of liability prior to filing a lawsuit against a public entity.
- Reform California’s tort system to curtail unreasonable liability exposure for public agencies, including tort immunities for public entities for unauthorized use of public property, and restore the ability of public agencies to obtain affordable insurance.

Oppose:

- Efforts to prohibit or limit the ability of local government to conduct closed session consistent with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- Mandated district-based elections without analyzing the specific needs of a community.
Legislative efforts to impose binding arbitration that would remove local government authority on matters of local interest. Specifically, support all legislative and legal efforts to overturn any legislation that implements binding arbitration on local government.

Creating or granting powers to sub-regional or regional bodies, which may result in infringement on clearly local concerns, unless all affected local entities agree to do so.

Efforts to limit local government’s ability to hold contractors accountable for their work product.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Labor relations, employee relations, worker's compensation, retirement system, and medical insurance.

Support:

- Reform workers’ compensation formulas to rely on more evidence of work-related causation to determine compensability, to reduce employers’ costs through the reduction of system abuse, while still protecting workers. Limit the ability of employees to receive workers’ compensation benefits for occupational injuries/illnesses resulting from stress, disciplinary action, or performance evaluations/consultations.
- Efforts to achieve and/or maintain sustainable California Public Employee’s Retirement System employer rates, and lessen the impact of CalPERS investment losses on employer rates. Reform to the CalPERS medical insurance program to address cities’ future liability for retiree medical insurance.
- Improve access to and reduces the cost of healthcare, and expands ability to offer health, welfare and wellness services for public employees.

Oppose:

- Mandates upon local governments for any additional employee benefits as such benefits impose financial costs and administrative burdens on local governments. Increases to employee benefits without system reforms to offset increased employer costs.
- Unreasonable increases to employer medical costs for workers’ compensation.
- Efforts to increase employer liability for unemployment compensation, or reduction of local discretion to manage this risk.
- Impose federal or state mandates on the collective bargaining process. Undermine good faith negotiations between employee organizations and local agencies.
- Reduce local control over public employee disputes and/or imposes regulations from an outside agency.
COMMUNITY AND HUMAN SERVICES

Parks, recreation, cultural arts, senior programs, community and human services programs.

Support:

- Federal and state funding opportunities for senior citizen nutrition programs, prescription drug benefits, transportation, adult care, technology improvements, education, and emergency education for seniors.
- Efforts to protect society against identity theft, senior citizens from criminal exploitation, and juveniles from sexual predators on the internet.
- Federal and state funding opportunities that promote the ability to provide public access to technology at community facilities.
- Federal and state funding opportunities for cultural arts programs, parks, and recreation and human services in the community.
- Funding for transportation services, especially for those homebound and elderly.
- Funding and resources for local governments to implement Healthy Cities programs and policies aimed at reducing obesity, high rates of diabetes, heart disease, and other health conditions.
- Reinstatement of funding for community-based programs serving seniors.
- Increase opportunities for community-wide citizen volunteer programs.
- Supportive services for special populations such as people with health and mental health conditions, impairments, and/or disabilities.
- Efforts to promote and fund programs to combat pet overpopulation, increase pet adoptions and spay/neuter programs and educate citizens on the dangers and nuisance of roaming, uncontrolled animals and other animal control issues that risk public health and safety and quality of life.

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Air and water quality, energy and water efficiency, sustainability, CEQA, integrated waste management, and hazardous materials.

Support:

- Support and encourage legislation, and federal and state funding to address the revitalization and restoration of the Salton Sea.
- Salton Sea Authority request for more accurate accounting of costs for producing energy eligible for consideration in the state Renewable Energy Portfolio.
- Resources and funding to local governments for the implementation of climate action plans for the reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through coordinated transportation and land use planning with the goal of more sustainable communities.
Streamline environmental processing for federal regulatory permits issued by various state and federal agencies for the purpose of expediting public infrastructure developments.

Reform of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to streamline the approval of development and infrastructure projects, reduce the prevalence of frivolous lawsuits resulting from inadequate safeguards written into CEQA regulations while ensuring the environment is adequately protected, and promote job creation. Flexibility for local government in determining how best to notify the public of projects requiring California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review to take advantage of technology and social media trends.

Continuation of California Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939) waste diversion requirement and the new state goal of 75% diversion by 2020 (AB 341), and programs assisting cities to go beyond the 75% diversion goal. Diversion measurement and reporting improvements that do not adversely impact the assessment of compliance efforts made by cities.

Efforts for the safe and cost effective disposal of solid, hazardous and medical waste.

Financial incentives for water reuse and legislation that encourages the treatment of municipal wastewater for non-potable reuse and promote the development of reasonable regulations to encourage and maximize the responsible use of reclaimed water as an alternative to California’s fresh water supply.

Support and encourage legislation for critical water infrastructure maintenance and construction projects and local financing tools.

Energy and water efficiency incentives including tax deduction for installation of solar systems, equipment such as energy storage systems, and efficiency programs that reduce demand. Funding and resources for retrofitting municipal buildings to increase energy efficiency.

Encourage the use of drought-tolerant plant material and waste conservation techniques.

Maintain and enhance local decision-making authority in the development and implementation of air quality attainment strategies.

Local government discretion on adopting a Green Building policy that offers property tax relief for certified green homes or buildings.

Funding and resources for alternative fuel vehicles for replacement of municipal fleet equipment, adequate charging station infrastructure for emerging electric vehicle technology, and retrofitting municipal buildings to increase energy efficiency.

Requiring Department of Transportation and CALTRANS to increase the use of rubberized asphalt and crumb rubber made from recycled tires.

Resources and funding to local governments for implementation of SB 375 – California’s Sustainable Communities Strategy and Climate Protection Act.
Oppose:

- Actions to weaken local government’s ability to enforce environmental impact report (EIR) mitigation measures now defined as “takings.”
- Imposing of undue hardship on local agencies to implement environmental regulations.
- Air quality legislation that restricts the land use authority of cities.
- Efforts to circumvent local government’s ability to regulate, approve and/or deny “green technology” projects.
- Expansion of the state listing of endangered or threatened species without economic impact analyses and valid scientific data.
- Preemption of local planning decisions regarding solid waste facility sites, and local solid waste and AB 939 fee setting authority, or imposes taxes or fees on local solid waste programs to fund State programs not directly related to solid waste management.
- Actions by Regional Water Quality Control Boards to impose mandates on local government that exceeds state or federal regulations and/or are outside the Boards jurisdictional authority to impose or enforce.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Economic development, tourism, transient occupancy tax, vacation rentals, business retention and attraction.

Support:

- Protect cities’ rights to levy and collect full share of Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) from hotels, vacation rentals, including any online hotel intermediaries, short-term housing rental agencies, and home sharing platforms such as Airbnb. This includes opposing any federal or state legislation providing immunity to online hotel intermediaries and/or prohibiting cities from collecting (retroactively or otherwise) their fair share of TOT.
- Efforts to require online home sharing platforms to provide information to local governments to support the collection of TOT from vacation rentals within the cities’ boundaries.
- Preserve funding mechanisms to promote continued economic development, including initiatives to provide financing for infrastructure and affordable housing. Efforts to expand economic development tools and reduce regulation, including advocating for meaningful and useful tax increment financing, economic finance improvement districts, and other economic development financial tools and supporting reductions in burdensome state regulations.
- Federal and state efforts to fund economic stimulus programs and jobs.
- Enhances the City’s efforts to retain existing businesses and attract new businesses.
- Extending sales tax to e-commerce as a means of fairness to “main street” retailers.
o Incentives (tax benefits, grants, loans, credits for affordable units) to local government to **rehabilitate** residential and commercial properties.

o Exemptions to the application of Labor Code Section 1720 for **economic development** projects. Restore “safe harbor” for affordable housing projects exempting them from state prevailing wages.

**Oppose:**

- Legislative or administrative efforts by online travel companies to circumvent remittance of **transient occupancy taxes** to local government from hotel reservations purchased using the internet or short-term housing rental platforms.
- Attempts to eliminate or limit the traditional **tax exemption** for municipal bonds, and to cap the investor tax deduction on municipal securities investments.
- Erodes the ability of cities to condition and deny projects with inadequately **mitigated impacts** to the community.
- Imposition of unwarranted restriction on local **businesses**.

**HOUSING, LAND USE PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Land use, development, building standards, affordable housing, medical and recreational marijuana, homelessness, and massage establishments.

**Support:**

- **Housing element** reform providing flexibility for local government to achieve realistic goals and support funding of mandated General Plan Housing element updates and flexibility in meeting the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) requirements.
- New financing tools for local government to support, build and preserve **affordable housing**, and the creation of a long-term funding source dedicated to financing affordable housing. Tax incentives to promote investment in the production of multi-family rental housing including expansion of Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program to create mixed-income developments.
- Removing restrictions on the quantity of **senior affordable housing** buildable in a local community under various redevelopment dissolution rules.
- Amendments and cleanup language to 2011 AB 1X26 the **Redevelopment Dissolution** process. Remedies to allow city controlled housing authorities the ability to receive the $150,00 annual “housing entity cost administrative cost allowance” as defined in 2014 AB 471, and to fully realize outstanding loan amounts between the City and its former Redevelopment Agency.
- Legislation and grants increasing funding for **housing programs** within the City, including incentives from private sector investment in housing projects.
o Consolidate and streamline the administration and reporting requirements for **Community Development Block Grant** (CDBG) program.

o Efforts to repeal or modify the Davis-Bacon Wage Act, as it relates to charter cities, that set a **prevailing wage** scale for public projects, substantially increasing the cost of publicly assisted housing developments.

o Maintain or strengthen local control over **medical marijuana dispensaries** and uphold cities’ ability to regulate and ban dispensaries.

o Strengthen the concept of local control/local home rule for local decision making on **land use** and zoning matters.

o Preserve municipal authority over the **public right-of-way** including fair and reasonable compensation for use of the right-of-way, and streamline the acquisition process.

o **Local control** over the establishment and placement of group, sober living, sex offender, and parolee homes within the city limits. Increase the City’s ability to reasonably oversee the location of community care facilities.

o Funding for the identification, acquisition, maintenance and restoration of **historic** sites and structures.

o Funding for community-based local efforts to address the **homelessness** problem.

**Oppose:**

- Restrictions of California cities use of **eminent domain** for public purpose projects.
- Efforts to erode the ability of local government to condition and deny projects that inadequately **mitigate impacts** to the community.
- Weaken local government’s ability to regulate **massage establishments** through zoning code provisions.
- Legislative and regulatory efforts to weaken the authority of cities to zone and plan for the development of **telecommunications infrastructure**, including the siting of cellular communications towers or transmission sites.
- Mandatory cap on local **parking standards** in transit intensive areas.
- Efforts by any regulatory commission from promulgating rules and regulations that infringe on local **land use** decisions and management of the **public right-of-way**.
- Additional affordable housing production mandates without necessary funding to support said **housing mandate**.
- Efforts that prohibit local government’s ability to prohibit and/or regulate the act of **sleeping in an unlawful location** (i.e. vehicle).
- Limiting local government’s ability to address **homelessness** issues.
PUBLIC SAFETY

Law enforcement, fire safety, emergency services, disaster preparedness, nuisance abatement.

**Support:**

- Legislation and funding for the **Urban Area Security Initiative** and other funding initiatives administered by the Department of Homeland Security to enhance the City’s ability to respond to regional or national threats.
- Requiring the transfer of information to local officials regarding threats to local safety as threats occur.
- Efforts to secure Federal funding sources for **Dignitary** (Presidential) visits.
- Increased frontline funding for police services associated with the **early release of prisoners** as a result of state-mandated criminal justice realignment provisions.
- Funding and integration of **video recording system** between police officers (body cameras) and in-vehicle (dash cams), and the development of policies related to public records, discovery, privacy, and storage.
- Legislation to streamline local and regional efforts to form **regional public safety departments** to take advantage of economies of scale and preferential pension positions.
- Efforts to equally allocate State Local Assistance Funding approved by voters with **Proposition 30** to all city police departments, including cities that contract for police services.
- Funding support for **disaster preparedness**, earthquake preparedness, Homeland Security, hazardous material response, State COPS program, booking fee reimbursement and other local law enforcement activities. Support statewide efforts to coordinate disaster preparedness programs in local jurisdictions and support guidelines to identify the strengths and weaknesses of local preparedness efforts.
- Efforts to strengthen local **law enforcement**’s ability to prevent and reduce crimes, and specifically relating to illicit drugs, burglary, assault, domestic violence, and sobriety.
- Programs that enhance the benefits of **mutual aid** agreements between local governments.
- Funding for interoperability initiatives to better facilitate coordinated and effective **emergency response** by police, fire, EMS, and non-public safety departments in cities and across regional jurisdictions.
- Increases **home rule** in adopting Fire and Life Safety Codes.
- Efforts which strengthen and provide additional funding for local **fire and life safety** services. Resource and funding opportunities related to wildfire prevention and wildfire response.
Reimbursement of local government for overtime costs, training, and equipment, paid to and for fire suppression personnel who are fighting statewide wildland fires, attending regional trainings, and promoting interoperability through the upgrade and replacement of outdated equipment.

Legislation that provides local law enforcement agencies authority to recover costs associated with complying with any federal, state or court-ordered licensing, registration and testing requirements.

Oppose:

- Limiting or restricting local government’s ability to collect fees for the expense of an emergency response (e.g., non-resident medical aid fee)
- Attempts to expand “early release” for low-risk, serious and violent offenders without an increase in sustained funding to ensure responsible supervision by parole agents.
- Legislation that alters distribution of revenues from traffic and parking violations, resulting in lower revenue for local governments.
- Legislation impeding local law enforcement from addressing crime problems and recovering costs resulting from a crime committed by the guilty party.
- Legislation that restricts local authority jurisdiction over the enforcement of fire and life safety regulations.
- Legislation or other administrative actions seeking to limit the police departments’ ability to collect and utilize asset forfeiture funds for a wide variety of police services.

REVENUE AND TAXATION

Finance administration, taxation reform, general and special revenue.

Support:

- Efforts to allow states and cities to require remote sellers to collect state and local sales and use taxes already owned from online sales.
- Reform of reporting requirements for the former Redevelopment Agency that simplify the process.
- Efforts to maintain and expand the types of municipal investment-grade revenue bonds.
- Modify local government’s property tax rate, returning it to pre-ERAF rate levels.
- Facilitate and enable the timely collection of delinquent assessments and strengthens or maintains the lien position of those assessments.
- Reinstatement of City Vehicle In-Lieu Fee revenue from newly annexed areas.
- Efforts to protect local government revenue sources and the provisions of Proposition 1A. Support legislation/initiatives that ensure that all local funding sources remain a dedicated revenue source for local governments.
Full cost reimbursement to the City for all federal, state and county-**mandated programs**.

**Oppose:**

- Decrease, restriction or elimination of local government **revenue sources**. Any efforts by the state to retain additional revenues currently dedicated to local government for state purposes. Shifting of revenues from local government to the state for any purpose.
- Any effort by federal or state government to preempt cities’ **right to levy and collect** taxes, fees, and assessments.
- Change in **revenue allocations** (current or future) that negatively affect local government, including the redistribution of sales tax, property tax, COPS grants, Proposition 172 funds, gas tax (HUTA), transient occupancy tax (TOT), and vehicle in-lieu fee (VLF).
- Legislation to make local government more dependent on the State for **financial stability** and policy direction.
- Imposition of State **mandated costs** for which there is no guarantee of local reimbursement or offsetting benefits.

**TRANSPORTATION, UTILITIES AND PUBLIC WORKS**

Transportation, construction, and general public works related areas.

**Support:**

- Funding directly to cities for the preservation, maintenance, rehabilitation, and development of **local street** and road systems.
- Long-term federal and state **transportation authorization** providing a stable and reliable funding stream for critical roads, bridges, freight, and transit. Federal, state, and local partnerships to fund regional transportation projects.
- Streamline **environmental processing** for federal regulatory permits issued by Caltrans and various other State and Federal agencies for the purpose of expediting public infrastructure development
- Enhance the ability of local government to finance local **transportation** and other infrastructure and provide greater flexibility in the use of transportation and other infrastructure-related funds.
- Efforts to lift the minimum requirement of payment of **prevailing wages** on municipal Public Works projects.
- Funding to local governments for local **transportation, water, sewer, and storm sewer system** projects.
o Legislation that provides clarification and improvements to Infrastructure Financing District (IFD) Law that will enable local agencies to use this tool for a variety of infrastructure financing needs

o Legislation from the PUC that increases the access and reliability of the service and reduces overall cost to the end users.

o Efforts to provide passenger rail service between Los Angeles and the Coachella Valley.

Oppose:

- Efforts to redirect, eliminate, or reduce amount of Highway User Tax Account (HUTA) that cities receive for street maintenance and improvements.
- Any legislation that diminishes or does not assure local franchise fees for all utilities’ use of City right-of-way.
- Efforts to lessen the City’s ability to enforce contractual language agreed to and contained within existing franchise documents.
- Efforts to place the burden and liability of replacing all sidewalks solely on cities.

FEDERAL

Support:

- Support and encourage legislation to address the revitalization and restoration of the Salton Sea and to provide sustainable federal funding for the Salton Sea.
- The continued reauthorization of MAP-21 surface transportation bill in order to provide ongoing critical funding for highways, highway safety and public transportation.
- Funding from Department of Justice for resources critical to enable local law enforcement to adequately provide public safety services, including updating safety equipment, training and education, and fully funding the Byrne/JAG and COPS programs.
- Streamlined environmental processing for federal regulatory permits issued by the US Army Corp of Engineers, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Federal Highway Administration and various other state and federal agencies for the purpose of expediting public infrastructure projects.
- Continued funding for the Energy Efficiency Block Grant Program in order to provide resources directly to local governments for programs that improve energy efficiency, develop and implement energy conservation programs, and promote and develop alternative and renewable energy sources.
- Efforts to streamline or eliminate the Medicare Secondary Payer process.
- Legislation to include consideration of the economic impacts of proposed species listings, as well as, support the delisting of species no longer threatened or endangered.
- Collecting and remitting state and local **sales taxes** to the state and city in which the purchaser is residing, (e.g., purchases made over the Internet; by mail order; by catalog, etc.).
- **Local/regional control** and administration of federal programs and strategic placement of federal personnel to ensure expedited decision-making.
- Support legislation to modify inappropriate sections of the **Federal Fair Labor Standards Act** (FLSA) as it relates to regulating public sector employment.
- Efforts to ensure protection of sufficient **radio spectrum** to meet public safety’s current and future needs. Public safety needs should have priority over private, or for-profit communication systems.

**Oppose:**

- Legislative or administrative actions that prohibit or hinder local government’s ability to implement **Property Assessed Clean Energy** (PACE) programs.
- Legislation and the promulgation of rules and regulations that allow any regulatory agency to encroach on, or supersede, **local authority**, including, but not limited to, the City’s right to franchise for the right to operate in the public right-of-way.
- Funding cuts to **Community Development Block Grant** (CDBG), HOME program and Section 8 Housing funds. Advocate for a more streamlined application process and for greater flexibility of local appropriation and use of monies.