

**CITY OF BELMONT
CITY COUNCIL AND BELMONT FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**



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CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, January 23, 2024

6:30 PM

City Council Chambers

City Hall, One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont, California

The meeting will be broadcast live to Belmont residents on Comcast Cable Channel 27, streamed live via the City's website at www.Belmont.gov. The public may also attend the meeting in the City Council Chambers and address the council from the chambers.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

To maximize time for live public comment, we encourage members of the public to provide comments by joining the City Council meeting via Zoom : For web, visit <https://belmont-gov.zoom.us/> select "Join" and enter **Meeting ID: 95745673035**. Use the Raise Hand feature to request to speak. You may rename your profile if you wish to remain anonymous.

For dial- in comments, call *67 1-(669) 900-6833 (your phone number will appear on the live broadcast if *67 is not dialed prior to the phone number), enter **Meeting ID: 95745673035**, and press *9 to request to speak. All public comments are subject to a 3-minute time limit unless otherwise determined by the Mayor.

If you wish to submit written public comment, you may send an email to cclerk@belmont.gov before the council considers the item. Please indicate the agenda item topic or agenda item number you wish to comment on in your email's subject line. Any public comment regarding agenda items that are received from the publication of the agenda through the meeting date will be made part of the meeting record, but will not be read during the Council meeting.

1. ROLL CALL

2. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Persons wishing to orally address the Council on the items of business listed below will be given an opportunity to do so before or during the Councils consideration of the item.

3. STUDY SESSION

A. State Legislative Advocacy for the city of Belmont 2024 Update

Recommendation: Motion to reaffirm Belmont's State and Federal Legislative Platform as

presented

Attachment(s):

[Staff Report](#)

[2024 Legislative Platform Update](#)

4. ADJOURNMENT

If you need assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at (650) 595-7414.

Notification in advance of the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure

accessibility to this meeting. Meeting information can also be accessed via the internet at: www.belmont.gov.

All staff reports will be posted to the web in advance of the meeting, and any writings or documents provided to a majority of the City Council/District Board or Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office, One Twin Pines Lane, during normal business hours and at the Council Chambers at City Hall, Second Floor, during the meeting.



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: January 23, 2024
Agency: City of Belmont
Staff Contact: Afshin Oskoui, City Manager, (650) 595-7410, aoskoui@belmont.gov
Agenda Title: State Legislative Advocacy for the City of Belmont 2024 Update
Agenda Action: Motion

Recommendation

Motion to reaffirm Belmont's State and Federal Legislative Platform as presented.

Strategic Focus Area

Fiscal and Organizational Sustainability

Background

The City's Legislative Platform was amended by the Council on February 28, 2023. For the past four years the City has retained Renne Public Policy Group (RPPG) to provide State Legislative Advocacy and Consulting Services. RPPG was engaged to provide guidance and advocacy services when appropriate on state legislation regarding housing initiatives, infrastructure, regional transportation improvements, environmental sustainability, community services, public safety and emergency management and other policies that may affect the City's operations or finances.

On November 15, 2023 RPPG distributed an End of the Year report detailing activities on behalf of the City over the past year. In 2023, RPPG worked with the City on state legislative measures in the areas of housing, land use, mental health, climate, homelessness, elections, political reform, as well as on governmental operations and employment issues. This resulted in over 332 individual "touchpoints," either with the City or on behalf of the City. Deliverables included drafting memos, providing legislative analysis, advising City staff, meeting with state lawmakers or their staff, and drafting state position letters

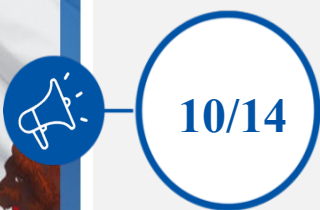
Over the past year RPPG monitored and/or engaged on over 1,400 pieces of state legislation on the City's behalf. The City actively positioned on 13 pieces of state legislation in 2023, including two measures the City engaged on informally with favorable outcomes. Additionally, RPPG represented the City's fiscal interests, working with San Mateo County advocates and other impacted stakeholders to successfully secure the City's \$500+million portion of critical Vehicle Licensing Fee Revenue Backfill funding.

In an effort to drive awareness and to implement a successful legislative advocacy strategy, RPPG hit five key performance indicators in the last 12 months under contract with the City of Belmont:



PIECES OF LEGISLATION TRACKED ON BEHALF OF THE CITY

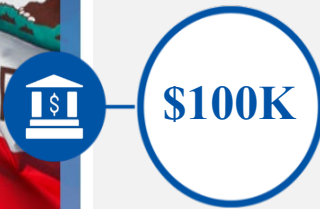
Legislation tracked and assessed for impacts on City operations, legal and/or local decision making.



SUCCESS RATE ON LEGISLATIVE ENGAGEMENT — MAKING THE CITY'S VOICE HEARD

The City of Belmont adopted formal positions on 14 pieces of legislation and one fiscal item in 2023. RPPG achieved the desired outcome on 10

**Several two-year support bills that continue forward in 2024 are among those not counted as a desired outcome.*



IN STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING SECURED

Combined funds that RPPG secured for the City from state and federal grants and from direct state funding in the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget.



COMBINED DELIVERABLES AND TOUCHPOINTS PROVIDED TO AND ON BEHALF OF THE CITY

Legislative updates, legislative and budgetary position letters, policy, and political analysis, meetings with City and/or state legislature on behalf of the City.

**Updated as of December 31, 2023*



IN REVENUE PROTECTED

Amount of funds that RPPG was able to secure in previously promised vehicle license fees (VLF) in the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget that was owed to the City.



Analysis

2023 Legislative Platform Analysis

The objective in pursuing a legislative program for the City is to keep the City Council, staff and residents abreast of proposed legislation that may have the potential to impact the City. The City's Legislative Platform contains broad policy statements pertaining to a variety of issues important to us. Additionally, it provides a policy framework for the City to respond to issues in a timely manner, including correspondence from the Mayor or City Manager to the Legislature and/or Congress. The City's primary legislative focus includes protecting local government control, improving public safety, maintaining local government revenues, obtaining funding for environmental sustainability, transportation, recreational, technology and infrastructure improvements.

By implementing and maintaining an active legislative advocacy program/platform, the City can ensure the City Council and staff continue to be fully apprised of evolving state initiatives that may affect the City's key priorities, programs, or operations.

Review of Current Legislative Platform –

In accordance with the adopted Council strategic priorities and in advance of the 2024 Legislative session, RPPG engaged City staff in conducting "Deep Dive" meetings with all City department heads, key staff, and the City Manager. The purpose of these meetings are for RPPG to work with City staff to better assess current City priorities and projects and which legislative policy areas and funding opportunities should be focused on moving into 2024.

RPPG conducted a review of the 2023 Belmont Legislative Platform informed by these discussions. The platform continues to provide specific direction for city staff and RPPG to engage on a variety of policy issues. As detailed in Attachment A, RPPG made minor suggested amendments in the area of Governmental Transparency and Public Access. These *suggested* changes serve as a starting point for Council to discuss and provide direction for city staff and RPPG. After receiving feedback from Council, RPPG plans to work with staff to make additional modifications for the Council's consideration for adoption. The legislative platform is designed to be an evolving document. As part of a multi-layered approach, it is intended that this document be updated at least once prior to the start of every two-year legislative session, with annual review and update as needed to ensure that RPPG and city staff continue to engage on policies that matter most to Belmont.

Legislative Timing:

The legislature resumed the 2023-24 legislative session on January 3rd. Between the month of January through the February 17 bill introduction deadline, it is likely that we will see over 2,000 individual pieces of legislation be introduced. Lawmakers have already introduced a number of bills primarily focusing on public safety, homelessness, climate and energy, and the use of artificial intelligence. We anticipate several measures touching on policies of importance to the City including housing, transportation, and general governmental operations.

All measures that are introduced in their respective chambers (Assembly or Senate) must sit for 30 days prior to being heard in the applicable legislative policy committee. Two-year bills continue to be heard and had to be out of the first house policy committee January 19 and must pass off the Floor of the house



they were introduced in by January 31. Between the months of March and May there will be hundreds of policy committee hearings to dispense with the measures introduced this year. With the release of the Governor's FY 2024 January Proposed Budget, Budget committees will begin to meet as will negotiations over what is not included to be funded or reductions. These lead up to the release of the May Revise, which precedes the statutorily required June 15 budget to be passed by the Legislature and the July 1 start of the new fiscal year.

Key legislative dates are outlined below:

January 10: Governor must present his budget proposal to the Legislature

January 31: Last day for each house to pass two-year bills introduced in that house

February 16: Last day for bills to be introduced

May 15: Governor must present the May Revise by this date

May 24: Last day for each house to pass 2024 bills introduced in that house (House of origin deadline)

June 15: FY 24-25 Budget must be passed by the Legislature

June 27: Last day for a legislative measure to qualify for the ballot

June 30: Governor must sign FY 24-25 budget

July 3-August 4: Legislative Summer Recess

August 5- August 31: Final month of the Legislative session

September 30: Governor must take action on all measures passed by the Legislature

California State Budget Highlights, Timing and Process –

On January 10, Governor Newsom unveiled his proposed Budget Plan with an introductory narrative as “a story of correction, a story of normalization, after a period of tremendous amount of distortion.” The theme of his presentation was one of meeting promises, stretching tax dollars, and corrective action to close the gap while also inserting a new narrative regarding how big that gap really is. The Governor stated that the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) reports of a \$68 billion deficit were in error, with the real number of \$37.9 billion, and the state was simply experiencing “normalization” of state revenues following the massive surpluses in 2021 and 2022. Contributing factors to the state's budget challenges – beyond the state's overreliance on the top one percent of taxpayers to supply half of all income tax revenue – were stock market declines in 2022, and income tax collection delays in 2023. The Governor proposes to close the gap with \$18.8 billion in from internal borrowing and pulling from state reserves, \$11.9 billion in spending reductions and fund shifts, and \$7.2 billion in delays and deferrals, all while “keeping promises” to important state policy priorities. Clarification surrounding the budget deficit is expected to be made during the Governor's May Budget Revise. The Governor himself stated in his press conference that the “May Revise is the prime time,” this January proposal seems poised as a warmup to calculations that will be predicated on more real numbers at a later date.

At a brief glance, the \$291.5 billion Budget (a 1.9% decrease from 2023-24) continues to support major projects and programs in the homelessness, public safety, and economic development realms. However, major reductions, delays, or shifts to climate change, housing, workforce and sustainable infrastructure programs have been proposed in order to balance the Budget. Additionally, the proposal includes a \$350 million reduction to Legislative Requests – which is the funding that lawmakers are able to draw on to provide dedicated funding for district projects. It is unclear if this will apply to previously approved projects or if additional funding will be placed in the budget at a later date, however it emphasizes a reality that it will be difficult to secure (legislative) “district-specific” special funding requests. More specifically



for San Mateo County and its taxing agencies, the Administration—as expected—did not include the Vehicle Licensing fee claim submitted to the Department of Finance. This will be an ongoing issue and the City and RPPG will continue to work with the County and stakeholders to seek a permanent policy-based solution.

FY 2024-25 SNAPSHOT: BY THE NUMBERS

Total Budget: \$291.5 billion	• \$208.7 billion general fund ◦ Decrease of about \$22 billion from FY 23-24 • \$18.4 billion in reserves • \$900 million in safety net reserve withdrawal • \$11.1 billion in rainy day fund
Total Deficit: \$37.9 billion	• Increase of \$6.4 billion in deficit from FY 23-24
Measures Taken to Address Shortfall:	• Reserves withdrawn: \$13.1 billion • Reductions: \$8.5 billion • Borrowing: \$5.7 billion • Delays: \$5.1 billion • Shifts: \$3.4 billion • Deferrals: \$2.1 billion
(LAO Total Deficit Projection: \$68 billion)	• \$58 billion: Revenue outlook below budget act assumptions across 2022-23 through 2024-25 • \$30 billion: Identified as an annual state operating deficit per year

Timing

The Administration will work with the State Legislature over the next six months to consider the merits of the Governor’s budget proposal. Deliberating items through various budget subcommittees, the Administration and the Legislature will come to a consensus to adhere to the Constitutional deadline of June 15, 2023, to adopt a balanced budget. It is important to note that the June 30 constitutional deadline for the Governor to sign a balanced budget does not apply to Budget Trailer Bills (BTBs), which are bills that ‘trail’ behind the main Budget bill for purposes of augmentation. BTBs are typically germane to one specific policy category. However, it is commonplace that a general BTB, also referred to as a “Budget Bill Jr,” is introduced which amends many sections of the adopted balanced Budget. There can be several iterations of a Budget Bill Jr in any given Budget year.

Given the flux in revenues and the budgetary disagreements that will ensue between the Governor and Legislature and between lawmakers and stakeholders as program cuts are proposed and identified, RPPGs anticipates this year to have “Budget Bill Jr” iterations, however, given this is also an election year, lawmakers are likely to cut a final deal in advance of the end of August. August 31 is the last day of the Legislative session.



RPPG identified the following areas of general interest to local agencies in the following categories and provided detailed update on the budget proposals in these areas in their January 12 memo to the City:

1. Housing and Land Use
2. Homelessness and Mental Health
3. Resources and Environment
4. Energy
5. Transportation
6. Economic Development
7. Public Safety

RPPG will continue to work with the City to identify priorities, monitor budget negotiations and engage as directed, and stay in close communication with City staff.

RPPG Work Plan –

RPPG continues to engage the San Mateo County legislative delegation, the Office of the Governor as well as Senate and Assembly leadership to ensure the City of Belmont is apprised of all relevant actions taking place that may have a material impact on the City. As we move through the legislative session, RPPG will continue to keep the City updated on all actions and movements important to Belmont, such as the VLF shortfall issue. Throughout this legislative session RPPG will continue to work on the following deliverables including:

- Update and development of the City’s legislative platform and advocacy materials.
- Monitoring, tracking, engaging, and reporting on key legislation regarding the City’s priorities and interests.
- Representation at legislative committee meetings on matters of interest to the City.
- State Administration outreach.
- Assistance with the identification of relevant grant opportunities and other funding sources and development of strategies for securing them.
- Other duties as directed.

Alternatives

1. Provide direction and postpone for future discussion.

Attachments

- A. Redlined Draft revisions and comments to 2023 Legislative Platform

Fiscal Impact

☐ No Fiscal Impact

☒ Funding Source Confirmed:

Reaffirming Belmont’s State and Federal Legislative Platform has no direct fiscal impact. Budget for legislative advocacy and related consulting services have been incorporated in the current fiscal year in the General Fund.



Source:

Staff

Purpose:

Council Vision/Priority

Public Outreach:

Posting of Agenda



City of Belmont
STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM
2023 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM UPDATE

Platform Overview

The Legislative Platform contains broad policy statements pertaining to a variety of issues that impact the City of Belmont—reflecting the mission, vision and values of the City to enrich the quality of life for our community with services that provide for a safe, fulfilling and vibrant life. The Legislative Platform provides a policy framework for the City to respond to state and federal legislative issues important to the City in a timely manner. Outlining policy guidelines will also serve to provide direction to City staff and legislative consultants to engage on state legislation on behalf of the City in real time—including correspondence from the Mayor or City Manager to the Legislature and/or Congress.

The City’s primary legislative focus include: protecting local government control, improving public safety, maintaining local government revenue, obtaining funding for environmental sustainability, transportation, recreational, technology and infrastructure improvements. Furthermore, our focus remains committed to finding ways to work collaboratively with federal, state and local partners to further our City’s ability to achieve its strategic goals.

Legislative Issues

Local Control

The City values its ability and authority to exercise local control and to protect and enhance the quality of life for Belmont’s residents. Support Legislation that enhances local control of resources and that allows cities to address the needs of local constituents within a framework of regional cooperation. Encourage the use of federal and state incentives for local government action rather than mandates (funded or unfunded).

Oppose preemption of local authority whether by state or federal legislation or ballot propositions. Support efforts to streamline regulations that simplify the job of running a city and oppose efforts that erode the city’s authority to control its own affairs.

Governmental Transparency and Public Access

Support legislation that balances increased public trust, confidence, and access to public meetings while realizing the fiscal and operational constraints of local government.

Support legislation that would increase civic participation and engagement, including the **continued** allowance of legislative subcommittees, advisory committees, and commissions to

participate virtually (~~post-COVID-19 state of emergency~~) without physical location posting requirements under the Ralph M. Brown Act.

Monitor and Evaluate proposed policies related to the use of technology in government operations including the use of artificial intelligence pertaining to ethical considerations, privacy, and emerging technologies, and cybersecurity measures and funding opportunities for local governments to bolster capabilities to protect our communications infrastructure and capabilities.

Fiscal and Administrative Initiatives

Support fiscal sustainability and ‘best in class’ administrative initiatives to ensure the delivery of superlative city services. Monitor initiatives which seek changes in fiscal relationships at the local, state and federal level, and support legislation that guarantees ongoing revenue sources for local government.

Support opportunities that allow the City to compete for its fair share of regional, state and federal funding, and that maintain funding streams. Opportunities may include competitive grant and funding programs. Pursue funding opportunities for public facilities and services including capital improvement projects, public works projects, homeland security, library, parks and social service facilities.

Support legislative, administrative and/ or funding mechanisms that enable the City to better provide core services and respond to the needs of its residents. Options may include regional service delivery, flexibility around seasonal workforce, project specific workforce or other innovate tools to adapt to changing fiscal conditions and resident’s needs.

Support long term statutory solutions to adequately reimburse cities from the Vehicle License Fee (VLF) Swap of 2004 as well as short term, temporary adjustments.

Oppose efforts to decrease, restrict, eliminate, seize, divert, supplant, or otherwise restrict local revenues. Oppose any efforts at the state level to eliminate, restrict, or redirect revenues currently dedicated to local government for state purposes.

Housing and Land Use

Support incentive-based housing legislation to encourage expanding affordable housing supply including development of fiscal tools and incentives to assist local governments in their efforts to encourage housing, finance the infrastructure to support housing, establish an ongoing state commitment to funding affordable housing, and fund and support affordable housing programs, including supportive housing programs and necessary infrastructure.

Support funding programs that promote the development and enhancement of safe, affordable, and accessible housing within the City for all economic segments of the population, including workforce housing.

Support reforms and improvements to housing element law to provide clear processes and flexibility to allow regional cooperation and establish realistic housing goals and performance standards—including modifications in criteria to meet the State’s Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) goals.

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.

Monitor and evaluate housing proposals that take a “one-size-fits-all” approach. Specifically, advocate for modifications in proposals to recognize and incentivize communities like Belmont that are good actors in addressing community-housing needs.

Oppose state mandated attempts to usurp local discretion over matters relating to local housing and land use policies.

Advocate for recognition and use of inclusionary housing requirements as a condition of development and other tools in an effort to incorporate affordable housing into market rate development.

Support funding opportunities provided to local jurisdictions through statewide bond efforts.

Support efforts to provide dedicated funding and technical assistance to local governments to adopt and implement plans and process improvements and for the administration and ongoing compliance of state housing programs.

Review and evaluate legislation that would directly tie production mandates to the regional housing needs assessment process.

Transportation

Support state and federal legislation that enhances the safety of the City’s streets for automobile, bicycle and pedestrian traffic, including issues related to speed enforcement, traffic congestion reduction programs and regional transportation improvements.

Support protection of dedicated transportation-related tax revenues and enhance the ability of local agencies to finance local transportation programs and facilities (e.g. Gas Tax, State bond funds).

Support efforts to maximize the State's purchasing power to lower materials costs for local streets and road repair.

Support federal and state funding and policy goals to enhance multi-modal transportation efforts.

Support and advocate for clear investments to make public transportation an accessible, affordable, and sustainable alternative to driving, especially efforts to enhance local multi modal transportation options.

Environmental Sustainability

Support cost-effective, sustainable and responsible environmental policy programs in the areas of energy efficiency, greenhouse gases, climate change, wastewater, solid waste removal and stormwater, among others. Support measures that expand markets for recyclable materials and maintain local authority and flexibility to regulate solid waste and recyclables.

Oppose waste and resource recovery measures imposing state-mandated costs when there is no guarantee of local cost recovery or offsetting benefit.

Community Services

Support funding for ADA facility and park upgrades. Promote legislation that provides for increased services to or funding for youth and at-risk populations such as the frail elderly, homeless, disabled and other challenged populations.

Support funding for vital regional and community services including access to parks, open space, bike lanes, after school programming, youth services, senior services, food programs, facilities that provide critical community services, protect natural resources, promote resource management, and strengthen safety and security. Oppose efforts that erode funding for these vital regional and community services.

Infrastructure Maintenance and Rehabilitation

Support legislation and policies that promote investing in the maintenance and rehabilitation of aging infrastructure (streets, stormwater, wastewater, parks and facilities). Support the lowering of the threshold for voter-approved capital financing and opportunities for innovative public financing.

Support legislation and funding opportunities that would help the City fund improvements for parks, open space, green infrastructure, and fuel mitigation and reduction.

Support legislation and funding opportunities that enhance the capacity of local government to enact climate change adaptation and mitigation, promote disaster risk reduction and community resilience, and/or advance sustainability through capital improvement to City facilities.

Utilities

Support efforts that maintain the ability to retain existing fees on telecommunications services and for public, educational and governmental channels. Oppose efforts to restrict the authority of cities to zone and plan for the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure. Support the ability of cities to maintain and manage the public right-of-way and receive compensation for its use.

Support California PUC efforts to require enhanced, more effective and timely notification for planned and unplanned repairs resulting in power outages to customers. Monitor California PUC regulatory system for impacts to overall safety, health, and quality of life of the residents of Belmont.

Public Safety

Support legislative efforts to improve local law enforcement, fire suppression and prevention, hazardous materials mitigation, rescue, emergency medical services, and disaster preparedness. Including legislation and grant funding opportunities for innovate fire suppression technology.

Support legislation that promotes and strengthens law enforcement and first-responder access to mental health services, including peer support, training, family resources, suicide prevention, and other promising practices for wellness programs.

Support forward thinking legislative, administrative and funding policies that promote civic engagement, community partnerships and public education.

Support legislative efforts to grant state and federal funding to supplement local law enforcement to increase staffing, equipment and capital improvements to maintain public safety.

Evaluate legislation on implementation of best practices regarding law enforcement procedures and policies.