

# CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS . 11465 WEST CIVIC CENTER DRIVE . AVONDALE, AZ 85323

**WORK SESSION**  
**January 12, 2009**  
**6:00 PM**

## **CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR ROGERS**

### **1 ROLL CALL BY THE CITY CLERK**

### **2 PROPOSED 2009 STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

This report describes the City's proposed state legislative agenda for the First Regular Session of the 49th Arizona State Legislature and the federal legislative agenda for the One Hundred Eleventh United States Congress. The Arizona State Legislature will commence on Monday, January 12, 2009. The new Congress will meet for the first time January 6, 2009. For information, discussion and direction only.

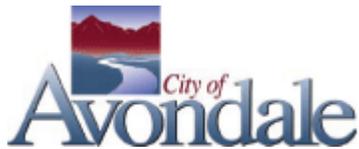
### **3 ADJOURNMENT**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carmen Martinez".

Carmen Martinez  
City Clerk

Any individual with a qualified disability may request a reasonable accommodation by contacting the City Clerk at 623-333-1200 at least 48 hours prior to the council meeting.



# CITY COUNCIL REPORT

**SUBJECT:**  
Proposed 2009 State and Federal Legislative  
Agenda

**MEETING DATE:**  
January 12, 2009

**TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** Shirley Gunther, Intergovernmental Affairs Manager (623)333-1612  
**THROUGH:** Charlie McClendon, City Manager

**PURPOSE:**

Staff is requesting that the City Council review and provide guidance to the Intergovernmental Affairs Manager on the proposed 2009 state and federal legislative agenda. The agenda will define the City's state and federal legislative priorities and guide the City's lobbying activities in 2009.

**BACKGROUND:**

This report describes the City's proposed state legislative agenda for the First Regular Session of the 49th Arizona State Legislature and the federal legislative agenda for the One Hundred Eleventh United States Congress. The Arizona State Legislature will commence on Monday, January 12, 2009. The new Congress will meet for the first time January 6, 2009.

Legislation enacted at both the federal and state level can have significant effects on the ability of municipal government to serve its citizens. Therefore, it is important to identify the City of Avondale's Legislative priorities regarding potential or pending legislative actions. Prior to each legislative session, the Intergovernmental Affairs Manager seeks Council's input and direction regarding the City's federal and state legislative agenda.

The Governmental Affairs Manager will appear before the Avondale City Council on a regular basis throughout the session to provide updates and seek additional direction as bills are introduced and debated.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Guiding Principals**

In order to prioritize and guide staff's lobbying efforts, staff recommends that the Council endorse the following two key guiding principles as our highest priorities:

1. Maintain and enhancing fiscal sustainability
2. Protect local authority

**Fiscal Sustainability** – The City's budget includes revenues from a number of State sources, most importantly "shared revenues" from state income, sales and vehicle license taxes. Shared revenues make up one-third of the City's General Fund, helping to pay for police, fire, streets, parks, and other critical City services. Staff recommends that the City oppose any reduction of shared revenues.

As the state works to balance their deficit, attempts may be made to shift costs to cities in the way of new unfunded mandates. Staff recommends approval to oppose any unfunded mandates.

Also important, staff recommends that the City work to maintain other state revenue sources such as highway user revenue (HURF), local transportation assistance (LTAF), and other funds such as federal or other grants passed through the State to the City.

**Local Authority** - Like other municipalities, Avondale has unique needs and characteristics and those needs are best met by policies set by its local governing body. Statewide preemptive efforts to remove the ability to set policy at the local level should be opposed.

Staff recommends supporting efforts to ensure continuing local decision making authority and to prohibit preemption.

## **AVONDALE'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

In addition to the guiding principals described above, staff recommends the review and consideration of additional issues to include in its agenda for 2009. These issues have been identified to respond to the specific needs of the community.

### **Neighborhood Stabilization**

As part of the \$4 billion Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) authorized by Congress in July 2008, Avondale received a direct allocation of \$2.5 million to redevelop neighborhoods blighted by abandoned and repossessed homes. Avondale was eligible for the funds based on a formula based on population, foreclosures and the concentration of subprime mortgages. While this amount will help approximately 60 properties – much more is needed to do concentrated revitalization. Staff recommends seeking an extension and direct allocation of additional NSP funds.

**Neighborhood Grants** - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), and Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) consist of programs that provide communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. Staff recommends supporting additional funding to CDBG, CSBG and LIHEAP eligible communities. Staff recommends continuing to work with other stakeholders to persuade Congress and the Administration to ensure that any funding formula revisions account for the funding disparities between older cities and fast growing cities like Avondale.

**Foreclosures** - The foreclosure crisis is plaguing the nation and southwest Maricopa County has been one of the hardest hit areas in the nation. Of the 23,073 single family housing units in Avondale, 1,696 (7.4%) are in foreclosure and an additional 891 (4%) have delinquent mortgages. Avondale projects a 12% average foreclosure rate by the end of 2009. Some neighborhoods are already reporting foreclosure rates as high as 21% where one in five homes currently sit vacant.

In December, Avondale hosted the Southwest Valley Mayors Foreclosure Forum wherein the members from the public and the presenters agreed, that some foreclosures are preventable if mortgage holders are given an opportunity to modify their loans. There are a variety of loan modifications that are currently being considered.

Staff requests approval to seek a change in state law to ensure that no foreclosure takes place unless the lender checks the feasibility of modifying the loan first. Further, staff recommends supporting federal loan modification legislation and recommends supporting legislation that regulates predatory lending practices.

### **Infrastructure**

The National League of Cities (NLC) and the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) are important forces on the Washington scene that will play a significant role with the new Administration and

Congress. Avondale has been working closely with both entities for months as they work to advocate for the infrastructure stimulus projects that have been identified as needed local projects to jump start the local economy. Staff recommends seeking federal funds that provide direct appropriations or direct allocations to the City's needs.

## **Jobs**

States like Arizona and communities such as Avondale recognize important development opportunities and quality jobs in renewable energy, the film industry and other diverse industries. Opportunity's for job creation in broad sectors is critical to improving the state's economy as well as the local economy.

**Tax Credit Renewal** - In 2005, the legislature authorized the film and motion picture production tax incentives as a means to promote production of commercial motion pictures in the state. The law includes a sunset provision eliminating the tax incentives in 2010. Economic development and media groups will pursue legislation that extends the 2010 sunset on the current tax incentives program, as well as minor changes to streamline the application process. Staff requests approval to support the Coalition's efforts to extend and enhance Arizona's film and motion production tax incentives program.

**Renewable Jobs** - The Quality Jobs through Renewable Industries program is designed to stimulate new investments in manufacturing and headquarter operations of in-state and out-of-state renewable energy companies, including solar, wind, biofuel, geothermal and other renewable technologies. It is designed to generate net new revenue to the state. Staff recommends supporting legislation that provides direct funding to projects that use renewable energy or that provides incentives to local entities that promote the use of renewable energy.

## **Transit**

Federal law allows urbanized area formula grants to be spent on operating expenses only in urbanized areas with less than 200,000 population, but Section 3009(c)(2) of SAFETEA-LU provided for a transition period for urbanized areas that cross the 200,000 threshold. Staff recommends seeking federal approval of a provision in the new reauthorization bill extending funding for Avondale's Urbanized Arizona for a minimum of 2 years to fill the gap caused by the downturn and losses in Proposition 400 funding.

## **Water**

Avondale is entering its second year as a member of Arizona Municipal Water Users Association (AMWUA) member. During this past year Council Member Charles Wolf and staff worked work with stakeholders discussing water policy to address challenges of continued growth both in and out of the urban areas. The City has been a leader with sound expertise in advocating sound, sustainable water policy, and has developed a secure water resource portfolio for the continued growth and vitality of our community. Staff requests approval to engage in water policy discussions at the State legislature that continue those policies.

## **Protection of Luke Air Force Base**

Established in 1941, Luke Air Force Base and the Barry Goldwater Range has evolved in the decades since to a major economic force in the West Valley region. Avondale is partnering with West Valley cities and Maricopa County to protect and enhance Luke Air Force Base (AFB) and maintain significant installations such as the BGR. Staff recommends supporting legislation that protects the mission of Luke AFB by ensuring property owner participation and cooperation in federally-funded acquisition of land and advocating for follow-on and joint missions for Luke AFB. Further, staff recommends supporting legislation that maintains necessary installation facilities

at BGR.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff seeks input and direction from the Council reading the proposed 2009 state and federal Legislation agenda.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

[Click to download](#)

No Attachments Available