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CITY OF SAINT PAUL CITY COUNCIL
Operations Committee

Legislative Drafting Process: Retreat Results and Year Ahead

Presented by Tim Greenfield, Chief Policy Officer



Agenda

- 1. The Legislative Drafting Process**
 - What is the process?
 - CPO's Role and Responsibility
 - Other Roles
 - Other 'Processes'
- 2. Policy Retreat Results and Policy Committee 2026 Calendar**
- 3. Preparing for Policy Committee – Structure and Expectations**



The Legislative Drafting Process – Week 0

- Agreed upon between City Council and CAO before CPO
- Incorporates early revisions made by CPO

Week	Councilmember Initiation
0	Lead Councilmember (CM) decides to initiate legislation. CPO connects with CM or staff on request and scope of work request.



The Legislative Drafting Process – Week 0

- **Initiate legislation can take a variety of different forms:**
 - Email request to CPO
 - Stop by my office
 - Biweekly check-ins or schedule check-ins
- **Other ways CMs have operated outside the process to initiate legislation since I've started:**



Legislative Drafting Process – Week 1-2

- CPO conducts initial research on requested topic, gathers data on the problem, reasons for taking action, solutions tried elsewhere, etc), and if, authorized, may enquire with Admin, CAO, or other external sources for assistance.



Legislative Drafting Process – Week 1-2

- My initial research is balanced against time constraints, effort behind the request, information provided at the time of request, the novelty of the idea, and other CPO responsibilities
- Other ways outside of the process CPO research was not incorporated:
 - All identified ways still find a way back to me
- **Conclusion of steps 1 – 2 – All policy requests should start with my awareness and assistance.**



Legislative Drafting Process (Weeks 2-3)

- **CPO performs initial research and checks in with requestor. If CM wants to move forward with the request, ward office requests a date and time for a hearing at Policy Committee. CPO alerts CAO of the request as part of prioritization process and to start any needed research.**
- **CPO and Ward Office work together on Policy Committee details for the request, including proscribed check-ins, outreach to Admin or the Mayor's Office, prepare a CPO staff report or summary, or any other information as needed related to the request.**



Legislative Drafting Process – Weeks 2-3

- **CPO works with CM and LA to schedule a Policy Committee hearing**
- **Ways legislation introduced without Policy Committee hearing**
 - Under suspension to introduce for first reading - “starting the clock”
 - Under the agreed-upon immigration enforcement-related process where items do not need to proceed to Policy Committee
 - By amendment to existing item
 - Mayoral impetus
 - Technical, noncontroversial, minor change



Legislative Drafting Process (Weeks 4-6)

CPO works with CM and LA to hold Policy Committee meeting* on legislation request. Hearing on item is held (or other regularly scheduled meeting, if Policy Committee is not in session and the item relates to the committee's topic area).

Assignment of responsibilities before a hearing in slides to follow.

Why is Policy Committee important:

- Input from key stakeholders
- Source input from your colleagues
- Allow for more directed feedback before items at the full Council
- We are not taking official action on the item



Legislative Drafting Process (Weeks 5-7)

CM decides, in consultation with CPO, whether to move forward with official request for legislation with CAO. If CM wants to move forward with initiating legislation, CM asks CPO to send DCAO an official work request with the CM copied, and include a link to the Policy Committee agenda and any supporting material prepared.

CPO, DCAO, and assigned CAO connect on official work request to clarify intent, scope, expected timeline, and any additional research or assistance needed from CPO to assist CAO in preparing legislation. Assigned CAO team member follows internal drafting policy and schedules initial meeting, if necessary, with CM and CPO to develop work plan.



Legislative Drafting Process (Weeks 5-7)

Ways requests have gone to CAO outside of our process:
(aka, “just a quick question” is anything but...)

- Lesson: CAO legal resources are finite, do not or cannot currently distinguish between requests for information and draft requests, and as a result, all Council requests are treated equally for purposes of their prioritization and work assignment.



Legislative Drafting Process (Weeks 8-10)

CAO drafts and sends final legislation to CM and CPO. CM 'does the rounds' and gets ordinance entered and approved on Legistar.

There are many ways outside the Legislative Drafting Process that legislative items have gone through this step:



Legislative Drafting Process (CPO Ongoing Tasks)

Trust the process. The Process requires trust.

Ongoing CPO tasks related to legislation requests:

- CPO tracks all policy requests from Council and Administration
- Works with CAO on deadlines for requests
- Negotiates on behalf of CM with CAO or MO – serves as the point of feedback
- Reports on all pending policy requests with CAO and to Leadership Team
- Determines whether a requested legislative item requires a Policy Committee hearing
 - *Ideally – Reviews and analyzes CAO draft language to ensure CM input and interests are met – Approval power?*
 - *Ideally – Drafts language and receives and incorporates CAO/MO feedback to meet Admin Code requirements.*



Questions?



Policy Retreat Results

February 5 – a month later:

- **Focus of the retreat: Building an Effective Council and developing a shared policy agenda for the Council**
- **Identified central staff project assignments**
- **Identified “known knowns,” “known unknowns,” and “unknown unknowns” with regards to ‘policy moving’**
- **Sought feedback from all 7 Council offices**
 - Confirm interest in leading policy topics (assignment)
 - Indicate interest in assisting policy leads (collaboration)
 - Indicate interest in unclaimed items (leadership)
 - Review assigned topics (commitment)

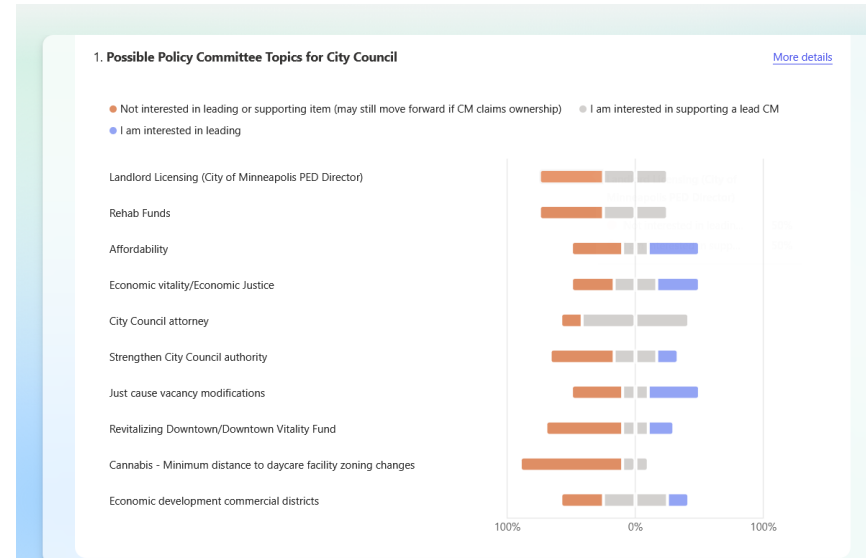


Policy Retreat Results

Claimed Items: Assignment of Council Policy Topics

Unclaimed Item Survey:

- Assigned topics:
 - Economic Vitality/Economic Justice
 - Affordability
 - Strengthen Council authority
 - Just cause vacancy modifications
 - Revitalizing downtown
 - Economic development districts





Policy Retreat Results – 2026 Calendar pt. 1

March 18	Special Assessments policies presentation	OFS (CPO)	
	Trash services presentation	W2	Here
April 1	Youth Wage Repeal	W4	Here
	Non-Compete / TRAPs ban	W4	Here
April 15	Charter Reform Work Session	Central	
	Mid-Session Legislative Update	Admin (CPO)	
May 6	Universal Rental Application + Fee Standardization	W5	Here
	366.03 – Permit fees for events and community festivals	W1	Here
May 20	Downtown Signage	W2	Here
	Downtown Vitality – Revitalizing Downtown	W2	Here
			Here



Policy Retreat Results – 2026 Calendar pt. 2

May 20	Downtown Signage	W2	Here
	Downtown Vitality – Revitalizing Downtown	W2	Here
			Here
June 10	Sustainable Building Ordinance update	W3 - W4	Here
	Autonomous Vehicles Regulatory Update	W4	Here
			Here
June 24	Full Time Council Members	W6	Here
	Strengthening Council Authority	W7	Here
			Here



Policy Retreat Results – 2026 Calendar pt. 3

July 8	Economic Vitality – Economic Justice	W1 – W4	Here
	Affordability	W4 - W7	Here
			Here
July 15	Pedestrian Safety Plan	W3 - W4	Here
	Economic Development Commercial Districts	W4	Here
			Here
August 12	Just cause vacancy modifications	W5 - W7	Here
			Here
			Here



Policy Retreat Results – 2026 Calendar pt. 4

Secondary Calendar – 1 hour for PC, time TBD

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Responsible</u>
September 16		
September 23		
October 7		
October 14		
November 4		
November 18		



Policy Retreat Results – The Need for Leads

The following topics were claimed as “Interested in Supporting Lead CM” across multiple offices with no Lead indicated:

- Landlord Licensing (City of Minneapolis PED Director)
- Rehab Funds
- City Council Attorney



Policy Committee – Structure and Expectations

Once a topic is scheduled for Policy Committee – the following benchmarks are expected of the Councilmember and their office **with CPO's assistance**:

To-do	Start
Topic assigned	Start
Initial project or request check-in (still interested?) between CPO and Ward Office	4 weeks prior
Ward office identifies and books outside presenter on topic, if necessary	4 weeks prior
Ward office requests CPO research	4 weeks prior



Policy Committee – Structure and Expectations

To-do	Start
Second check-in on item between CPO and ward office	2 weeks prior
Admin contact by ward office on scheduled Policy Committee hearing if not already aware or partner in topic.	2 weeks prior
Mayor's Office contact by ward office on scheduled Policy Committee hearing if not already aware or partner in topic	2 weeks prior
Ward office confirms outside presenter will be preparing presentation material	2 weeks prior



Policy Committee – Structure and Expectations

To-do	Start
Ward office, CPO, and outside presenter have check-in on scheduled hearing, Policy Committee logistics, and any final questions answered.	1 week prior
If requested, CPO provides issue summary to ward office on topic	1 week prior
Agenda Published on Legistar by PC Chair legislative assistant	Thursday prior
Presenter Materials received by CPO and uploaded to Legistar	Monday night of



Policy Committee – Structure and Expectations

CPO Tasks	LA to PC Chair tasks	Ward Office Tasks	Central Staff
Draft 2026 calendar and update shared calendar file	Send out committee meeting calendar invites	Determine date and time for PC hearing, recommend items queued for PC move forward	Ensure Outlook updates are sent out and UTD
Provide policy analysis and vet proposals for legal and operational soundness.	Communicates agenda and items to Chair	Frame issue (talking points, etc) and schedule presenters. Manage presenter logistics, do day-of tasks with presenters	Finalize committee agenda draft, draft and publish committee agenda, prepare written materials and technology, post minutes



Policy Committee – Structure and Expectations

CPO Tasks	CM Tasks
Vet policy proposals for legal and operational soundness. Draft or review staff reports, memos, or policy options, prepare briefs	Track deadlines, submission cutoffs, and completeness
Act as neutral liaison between CC and departments, CC and CAO, and CC and other members	Coordinate with other Council offices on any concerns, flags, shared interests, regarding upcoming committee issue/policy request
Ensure items align with policy priorities, precedent, Council strategy, recommend timing and sequencing, attend meetings to answer technical questions, analyze amendments for impact	Work with CM to frame issue for Policy Committee as well as any work direction given to CPO post-Policy Committee hearing.



Questions?