



City of Tacoma

Joe Lonergan
Position 5

April 27, 2017

On April 19, 2017, the Government Performance and Finance Committee held a discussion on the Council Consideration Request (CCR) process in response to some concerns raised by councilmembers. It was determined that enhancements could be made to the process to clarify next steps for councilmembers as well as staff.

One of the main issues we are attempting to address is the lack of clearly defined expectations for next steps. Currently, CCRs are not addressed in any of our adopted rules or procedures for the Council or committees. While CCRs are addressed in some meeting notes and minutes from 2013, those notes do not adequately outline even a suggested process for introducing, presenting, or processing these requests. As a result, CCRs are sometimes introduced the day of the meeting with council and the public given no chance for review. Occasionally this results in staff drafting resolutions for city council business meeting that same evening. During the meeting, staff indicated that only having a few hours to draft resolutions does not make for the best work product; I would contend it is also not in the best interest of the public. In order to provide a more transparent process and give policy the proper time to be vetted, the committee suggested the following:

- A CCR should include a clear statement of policy and intent which generally will require further research and possibly recommendations from staff.
- CCRs should always include signatures of a sponsor and two co-sponsors. This ensures there is enough support for staff to proceed in developing the policy.
- CCRs should be included as part of the study session agenda. This would include the item listed on the agenda with the written CCR attached. This would allow council and the public to adequate time to read the item prior to its presentation at study session. This would allow sufficient time for additional questions and comment.
- The CCR should include anticipated next steps. This should include laying out whether we anticipate the content of the CCR going to the appropriate committee or straight to city council for a formal action. This will allow timelines and expectations to be more clear.

While acknowledging there may be need for exceptions, I believe any resolution or ordinance coming out of a CCR should not be placed on the city council agenda for consideration until the week after being discussed at study session. Once again this allows proper notice to the public so that they may have time to review the matter and attend city council to comment on it if so desired.



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I believe these changes would give council additional time to craft responsible legislation, as well as allow staff additional time to draft and review legislation. This would culminate in better public policy and allow the public additional opportunities to comment and enjoy increased transparency in the policy making process.

I would hope that we might be able to formalize the finalized process by amending our Rules of Procedure or more simply by adding the process to Section 4 of our Standing Committee Process Manual.

I would welcome any additional suggestions from my colleagues on how to craft a more transparent process for advancing our policy goals.

Thank you very much.

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District 5