

**CITY OF ALBANY  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA  
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: July 20, 2009

Reviewed by: BP

**SUBJECT:** Letter to the League of California Cities opposing unfunded mandates and housing allocation requirements

**REPORT BY:** Beth Pollard, City Administrator

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**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council authorize the Mayor to sign and send the attached letter to the League of California Cities urging it to oppose any existing or potential unfunded mandates, and to support a more realistic approach to the housing allocation requirements mandated upon cities.

**BACKGROUND**

At the City Council meeting of July 6, 2009, there were two agenda items involving unfunded mandates from state and/or federal government. The first was a mandate for cities to take certain actions and incur expenses to develop and implement a more expansive sewer management system. The second was a requirement on cities to prepare a Housing Element every seven years, and to take on responsibilities in support of building a certain number of additional housing units in each city, as allocated in this region by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG).

Councilmember Thomsen agreed to draft a letter to the League of California Cities seeking their support for opposition to unfunded mandates and housing requirements. The letter was reviewed and lightly edited by staff, and is attached.

**DISCUSSION**

The issues are at least three-fold: One is the cost that mandates have on cities, without any funds accompanying the requirement. The second is that given the downturn in the economy, there are years worth of supply of vacant housing and therefore it is questionable at best whether additional housing is needed now or in the near future. Thirdly, there is the concern about the impact that increased density mandates have on already built-out cities.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT**

The letter does not dispute support for improving sewer management and water quality, just the fact that the requirements are expensive and there is no accompanying funding. The concern about the housing element requirements is also focused on unfunded mandates, as well as concern about the necessity and feasibility of the number of new housing units needed.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

None.

## **Attachments**

Draft letter