

Neighborhood Councils and Ballot Measures / Lobbying / State and Federal Legislation

Do's Ballot Measures	Don'ts Ballot Measures
Neighborhood Councils may take positions on a ballot measure (City or State) before it is placed on a ballot and communicate their positions to the City Council.	Neighborhood Councils may not spend public funds to publicize their position on the ballot measure (City or State) after it qualifies for the ballot.
Neighborhood Councils may state their position taken on a proposed ballot measure (City or State) in their minutes and may post the minutes on its website if the Neighborhood Council regularly posts its minutes on its website.	Neighborhood Councils may not spend public funds to publicize their position to members of the public on a proposed ballot measure (City or State) such as: paying for ads in newspapers, posting the position on its website, dissemination flyers, organizing rallies, etc.
Neighborhood Councils may host informational forums about ballot measures (City or State). The forums must provide equal time to each viewpoint to enable all sides to present their positions. Neighborhood Councils should refer and adhere to the guidelines provided by the City Attorney regarding forums.	Neighborhood Councils may not provide only one side of the issue when providing information about the ballot measure (City or State) at informational forums. If a representative supporting or opposing the issue is unable to attend the meeting another meeting should be scheduled to allow the unrepresented side to be presented. No Neighborhood Council board member may participate as an advocate for or against a ballot measure at the forum.
Neighborhood Councils may take positions on a ballot measure (City or State) after it is placed on a ballot, provided the position is taken at a regular meeting, opposing and supporting views are treated equally, and it is made clear that the Neighborhood Council is only directing its position to the City Council (although there is greater risk in doing so as court cases are unclear on this point).	Neighborhood Councils may not hold special meetings to take a position on a ballot measure (City or State) after it appears on the ballot; they should agendaize the item at a regular Neighborhood Councils meeting and ensure that supporting and opposing views on the measure are treated equally and should direct their position to the City Council, not the public.

<p style="text-align: center;">Do's Federal or State Legislation</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Don'ts Federal or State Legislation</p>
<p>Neighborhood Councils may advise the City's decision makers regarding what position the City should take on state or federal legislation. Individual Neighborhood Councils members may lobby or advocate their personal position on state or federal legislation, provided no public funds are used.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Councils may not advocate their positions on state and federal legislation to non-City governmental agencies. (Only the Mayor and the City Council have power over intergovernmental relations, which include advocating the City's position on laws that are pending with state or federal agencies or before the state legislature or federal government.)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Do's Neighborhood Council Positions</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Don'ts Neighborhood Council Lobbying</p>
<p>Neighborhood Councils may advise the City's decision makers on their actions taken and reflect those actions in their minutes.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Councils may not advocate their positions to non-Coty governmental agencies because Neighborhood Councils, pursuant to the Charter, are advisory to the <i>City's</i> decision makers.</p>
<p>Neighborhood Councils may encourage stakeholders to attend public meetings to gather information and provide public input on an issue coming before the City's decision makers.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Councils may not use public funds to advocate to members of the public their position taken. Accordingly, Neighborhood Councils may not use public funds to urge members of the public to support the Neighborhood Council's position, e.g., by sending flyers asking them to support a certain position, posting "Vote No on Project X" on its websites, etc.</p>
<p>Neighborhood Council board members, may, in heir individual capacities, and outside of Neighborhood Council meetings, advocate for or against any issue, including ballot measures.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Council board members may not use public resources or funds to advocate, in their individual capacities, for or against any issue, including ballot measures.</p>