



City of Sebastopol

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: September 15, 2026

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To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

From: Mary C. Gourley, City Manager

Responsible Department: City Manager's Office

Subject: Direction to Voting Delegate (Mayor McLewis) on Resolution Submitted for Consideration at the League of California Cities 2026 Annual Conference and Expo General Assembly

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RECOMMENDATION(s):

That the City Council review the resolution submitted for consideration at the League of California Cities (Cal Cities) 2026 General Assembly and provide direction to Mayor McLewis, the City's designated voting delegate, on how to cast the City's vote at the General Assembly meeting on Friday, September 25, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

PROCESS OF AGENDA ITEM:

1. Presentation by staff
2. Council questions and discussion
3. Public comment
4. Council deliberation and action

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Cal Cities will hold its 2026 Annual Conference and Expo on September 23–25, 2026, in Anaheim. The conference includes a General Assembly meeting, at which the organization's voting delegates – one per member city – act on resolutions that set Cal Cities' policy priorities and advocacy positions for the coming year. Mayor McLewis is the City's designated voting delegate. Cal Cities received one resolution for consideration this year, and staff is bringing it to Council so the Council can provide direction to Mayor McLewis before the vote is cast.

BACKGROUND:

Under Cal Cities' resolution process, member agencies may submit resolutions in advance of the Annual Conference for consideration by the General Assembly. The Cal Cities president refers submitted resolutions to policy committees for review, and the Resolutions Committee then determines whether a resolution moves forward to the General Assembly. Because the voting delegate casts the City's single vote and does not have independent authority to bind the Council to a position, member cities are encouraged to review resolutions in advance and direct their delegate accordingly.

One resolution was submitted for consideration at the 2026 General Assembly:

Title: *A Resolution of the General Assembly of the League of California Cities Calling for a Working Group to Consider a State Constitutional Amendment or Other Form of Initiative to Ensure Final Local Authority over Housing and Land Use Decisions.*

As proposed, the resolution calls for Cal Cities to convene a working group to study and pursue a state constitutional amendment, statutory change, or ballot initiative aimed at restoring or affirming cities' final authority over local housing and land use decisions, in response to a trend of increasing state preemption of local zoning and land use authority.



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DISCUSSION:

The Cal Cities General Assembly will consider the attached resolution during the Annual Business Meeting.

The City Council is being asked to provide direction to its voting delegate to either support the resolution; oppose the resolution; or abstain from voting.

If a majority of Cal Cities delegates support the resolution, Cal Cities would be directed to:

1. Support the development and advancement of a state constitutional amendment or legislative, policy, or ballot-based strategy that restores and strengthens local authority over housing and land use matters, including general plans, housing elements, zoning, density, design and development standards, project siting, and the approval or denial of housing development applications.
2. Consider establishing a statewide working group or other appropriate committee(s) to evaluate and develop a proposed constitutional amendment or other legislative, policy, or ballot-based strategies to restore and strengthen local authority over housing and land use matters. The resolution states: "conducting legal, fiscal, and policy analyses; engaging cities and other stakeholders; and building a statewide coalition of proponent supporters in preparation for the November 2030 General Election, or within another reasonable time period."

Supporting cities to date are mainly in southern California. City staff reached out to ABAG who stated as of the writing of this report, ABAG staff are not aware of any Bay Area cities formally supporting, but individual politicians in certain cities (Emeryville, Lafayette, Brentwood) have formally come out in support.

Positions taken or anticipated by neighboring jurisdictions, Sonoma County cities, and statewide city associations.

As of the writing of this report; the following local Sonoma County cities have acted upon the proposed resolution as follows:

City of Cotati: Council gave direction to the voting delegate to oppose the proposed resolution unless amended, to ensure that the State retains power to penalize cities who try to circumvent State housing goals.

City of Rohnert Park: No Attendees from City

City of Healdsburg: No Attendees from City

City of Sonoma: Taking Item September 14th to Council

Once the Council has discussed the resolution, staff requests direction to the Mayor to: vote to support, oppose, or abstain on the resolution at the General Assembly; or provide direction to the Voting Delegate to vote if additional information is provided at the General Assembly.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Staff does not have enough information to determine a position on this and would recommend the City abstain unless additional information is provided at the CAL Cities General Assembly Meeting.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS/PRIORITIES AND GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

This agenda item represents the City Council goals/priorities as follows:

Goal 4: High-Performance Organization



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Restoring public trust through transparent and inclusive processes

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However, if staff receives public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report, such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of the agenda item.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact to the City associated with this action. Costs associated with Mayor McLewis's attendance at the Cal Cities Annual Conference and Expo are addressed separately in the City's adopted budget for conference and travel expenses.

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council review the resolution submitted for consideration at the 2026 Cal Cities General Assembly and provide direction to Mayor McLewis, the City's designated voting delegate, on how to cast the City's vote as follows:

OPTIONS:

1. Direct Mayor McLewis to vote in support of the resolution.
2. Direct Mayor McLewis to vote against the resolution.
3. Direct Mayor McLewis to abstain; or
4. Provide no formal direction and defer to the delegate's discretion at the meeting

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment 1 – Cal Cities Resolution: A Resolution of the General Assembly Calling for a Working Group to Consider a State Constitutional Amendment or Other Form of Initiative to Ensure Final Local Authority over Housing and Land Use Decisions
- Attachment 2 – Cal Cities General Assembly and Resolutions Process Overview

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval:

Approval Date: 09/10/2026

CEQA Determination (Planning):

Approval Date: 09/10/2026

The proposed action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Administrative Services (Financial)

Approval Date: 09/10/2026

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: N/A – no cost associated with this action

City Attorney Approval:

Approval Date: 09/10/2026

City Manager Approval:

Approval Date: 09/10/2026