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August 8, 1994

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Law and Legislation Committee
Sacramento, California

SUBJECT: Citizen Use of Reports Prepared at Public Expense

Honorable Members in Session:

LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

RECOMMENDATION

This report presents Councilmember Terry Kastanis' proposal that the City place a statement on each City report prepared at public expense to encourage the public to make use of information contained in the report.

CONTACT PERSON: Diane B. Balter, Deputy City Attorney, 264-5346

FOR COMMITTEE MEETING OF: August 16, 1994

SUMMARY

Numerous studies are prepared by or for the City at public expense. The information contained in these reports can be very useful for other purposes. Councilmember Terry Kastanis proposes that a statement encouraging public use of the information contained in these reports be placed on each such report, on the cover or inside cover or title page. The statement could be included when the report is prepared or be on a label to be affixed to a report when it is disseminated.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Councilmember Terry Kastanis, as the chair of the Sacramento Public Library Authority, asked Library staff to explore ways in which the information in reports prepared at public expense can be made more available for public use. The usefulness of these reports for reference purposes beyond the original purpose of the report is confirmed by Library staff who frequently refer to environmental impact reports and other city reports for reference data sought by citizens.

It appeared to Library staff and the City Attorney's office that the appropriate bodies to adopt such a policy are the City Council and the Board of Supervisors, the bodies for which most of the reports are prepared. If the City Council adopts the proposed policy, that fact will be brought before the Library Authority Board and the Board is likely to recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt a similar policy.

Library staff and the City Attorney's office worked with Councilmember Kastanis to devise a simple, low-cost approach to encouraging the use of public reports. The recommended proposal involves placing in a prominent place on the cover, inside cover, or cover page a written statement encouraging use of the report:

"THIS DOCUMENT IS A PUBLIC RECORD

This document was prepared at public expense for the City of Sacramento. You are invited and encouraged to make use of the information contained in this document. Because this document is a public record, it may be duplicated for non-commercial use."

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This report has no financial implications. The cost of implementing the policy would be nominal. It is hoped that the results of the policy will be greater utility, for the benefit of the public, of the moneys spent on City reports.

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POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

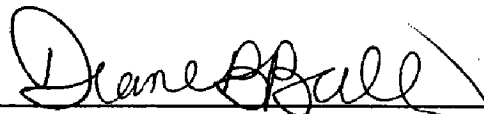
The Council, by adopting this proposal, would be declaring its policy that reports prepared at public expense should be available for additional uses by members of the public.

MBE/WBE

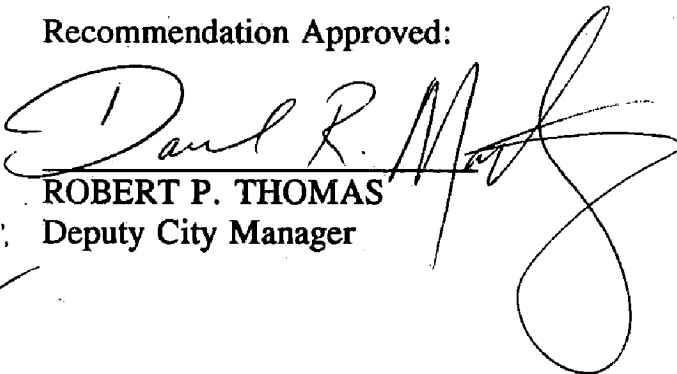
This report does not concern procurement of goods or services.

Respectfully submitted,

SAMUEL L. JACKSON, City Attorney

By: 
DIANE B. BALTER
Deputy City Attorney

Recommendation Approved:


ROBERT P. THOMAS
Deputy City Manager

for: