



LEGISLATIVE POLICY COUNCIL

Service Guide and Strategic Goals

SERVICE GUIDE

Background:

In an effort to fully integrate GMA's membership outreach, policy and lobbying efforts, the GMA Board of Directors revamped the Association's policy development process in 2002 and created a permanent body called the Legislative Policy Council. The LPC's responsibility begins each spring after the conclusion of the legislative session and continues throughout the year. GMA's elected leadership, policy committee structure and district outreach program are important components of the Council.

Purpose:

The Legislative Policy Council is the focal point for the Association's legislative policy effort, combining the efforts and input of GMA's six standing policy committees with its district outreach effort. The LPC is charged with annually preparing a proposed Legislative Platform for consideration by GMA's six policy committees at the Annual Convention in Savannah. Following the policy committee meetings at Convention, the LPC will make any further refinements to the Legislative Platform it deems necessary before presenting it to the membership for approval at the annual business meeting. Any changes subsequent to the Annual Convention must be approved by the GMA Board of Directors. During the legislative session, the LPC provides real-time feedback and advice on critical policy issues at the Capitol. Members testify before committees on specific legislation. They also maintain close contact with legislators in and out of session.

Expectations:

Expectations for membership and participation in each aspect of the Legislative Policy Council include the following:

- *Attend at least three (3) of the four (4) LPC meetings over the course of the year;*
- *At a minimum, attend one (1) Spring Listening Session per year;*
- *Attend a Fall District Meeting as a representative from the LPC;*
- *Have no more than three (3) unexcused absences from the weekly LPC conference call during the legislative session;*
- *Be available to GMA staff when requested to make a strategic visit to the Capitol at least one (1) time during the legislative session;*
- *Share correspondence, email and information that involves legislators with governmental relations staff;*

- *Consult with GMA governmental relations and communications staff about the possibility of setting up an editorial board meeting with your local newspaper;*
- *Provide an introduction to your local Chamber of Commerce to discuss the importance of strong city government to the economic vitality of a community (perhaps even by securing a speaking engagement for GMA elected leadership or GMA staff);*
- *Host at least one (1) Hometown Connection event over the course of the year at your city;*
- *Encourage and support two (2) other Hometown Connections in your district; and*
- *Help identify city officials who could be future candidates for LPC membership, committee chairs or other task force activities.*

Membership:

The Executive Director, in consultation with the President, shall appoint a Legislative Policy Council each year to guide the development of the Association's legislative policies. The Council's work program will begin each spring following adjournment of the session of the Georgia General Assembly. The First Vice President shall chair the Council and assume the chairmanship at the start of the Annual Convention while serving as Second Vice President. Elected and appointed municipal officials may be appointed to the Council, and each of the Association's districts shall be represented by at least one member. The Officers and chairs of the standing policy committees shall serve as ex-officio members.

STRATEGIC GOALS

ADVOCACY *Pursuing legislative policies important to GMA’s members, protecting local control, home rule, and municipal revenue sources, increasing Washington, D.C. connections, supporting the lobbying team.*

GOAL

Legislative Strategy Coordination: *Achieve a coordinated strategic interaction with legislators by identifying and building relationships year-round. Lead your region of the state and set an example for other officials’ participation in GMA’s legislative efforts.*

IMPLEMENTATION

- Maximize Legislator Interaction** Strategically plan conversations throughout the year and during visits to the Capitol. Deliver GMA policy positions to ingrain the importance of city governments and municipal services in legislative decision-making.
- Strengthen Grassroots Efforts** Identify and leverage local relationships including chamber and other community leaders.
- Hometown Connection Program** Host a Hometown Connection and encourage and help recruit at least two (2) nearby cities to host a Hometown Connection.
- Rework Listening Sessions** Encourage staff to review the framework of listening sessions to ensure membership is prepared to participate and contribute in policy development.

MARKETING AND BRANDING *Understanding the public relations connection to policy and advocacy, partnering with external organizations to further GMA policies, and making the LPC a recognizable name amongst legislators and civic organizations.*

GOAL

Brand Recognition: *Increase internal and external awareness of the LPC and its central role in helping establish and nurture GMA’s policy goals.*

IMPLEMENTATION

- Participation in Policy Issues** LPC members will partner with GMA’s governmental relations, policy, communications and research staff at GMA to identify policy initiatives and foster interactions with partner organizations, congressional representatives and staff, state agencies and the Governor’s staff.
- Capitol Visibility** Schedule visits for city officials and aim to have a LPC member present at other cities’ Capitol visits to create a heightened awareness of the importance of fulfilling GMA’s policy goals.
- Create Partnerships** Seek to partner with other organizations and their leadership.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT *Identifying and cultivating future policy leaders and members of the LPC.*

GOAL

Sustained LPC Leadership: *Create a culture of collaboration between LPC members and the broader GMA membership to ensure the effectiveness of the LPC in helping shape the reputation and success of GMA at the General Assembly.*

IMPLEMENTATION

- Mentor Program** Create long term mentor-mentee relationships between LPC members and other city officials to increase interest in GMA’s legislative advocacy and services.