



Policy Relating to Correspondence

Revision #	1
Implementation Date	03/21/2019
Last Reviewed/Update Date	6/14/2024
Resolution #	32045

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to implement a system for determining the appropriate method for receiving, forwarding, and responding to correspondence.

2. Applicability

This policy applies to all correspondence received from residents or members of the public via any method including USPS, email, hand delivery, or any other method.

3. General

When correspondence is addressed to a specific individual or group of individuals, the correspondence and all attachments, or a copy thereof, shall be forwarded to each specific addressee.

When the correspondence is addressed to a specific department/s, the correspondence and all attachments, or a copy thereof, shall be forwarded to the appropriate staff member in each addressed department. Each department shall determine who all incoming correspondence is forwarded to and how the correspondence is handled within the department.

When correspondence is not addressed to a specific person, group, or department, the Administrative Assistant, City Clerk, or other staff person responsible for the collection and distribution of correspondence shall read the correspondence and determine which individual/s or department/s the correspondence shall be directed to and shall forward said correspondence and all attachments to the appropriate individual/s or department/s.

If it is determined that the correspondence may be relevant to additional staff or departments, the person initially receiving the correspondence may forward said correspondence to additional parties, including Council members or the Mayor. Correspondence may be sent to Council members and/or the Mayor without adding it to the agenda.

City staff and elected officials may request that any correspondence be added to the agenda to be received and filed if there is a need or desire to discuss or act upon said correspondence in an open meeting.

Any items forwarded to Council should not be discussed in an email chain to maintain compliance with Iowa Code Chapter 21. It is recommended to use separate emails, rather than a group email and to avoid using "reply all" to any such emails.

4. *Items Requesting Action*

It is not necessary to add all requests for action to the Council agenda. Each department shall determine how requests for action shall be handled or discussed within the department.

The individual or department receiving the correspondence should then determine if the request for action requires discussion or action by Council.

Requests that do not require discussion or action by Council include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Requests for actions that are routine actions or tasks performed by staff, including records requests received by the City Clerk.
2. Requests from residents or members of the public for actions related to on-going projects or planned projects for which staff can respond with an update on the status of said action.
3. Requests from parties to a contract with the City related to that contract that are within the scope of said contract.
4. Requests for actions which are impossible, illegal, outside the scope of City authority, or constitute a threat to public safety.
5. Requests which would require additional information or action on the part of the requestor.

If a request does not require discussion or action by Council, City staff may respond to the correspondence and/or take appropriate action as is warranted in the circumstance. If the request for action requires additional information from or action on the part of the requestor, staff may direct the requestor to provide such information or take such action prior to adding the item to the Council agenda.

In the event that City staff are unsure as to whether or not discussion or action by Council is desired, staff may forward the request on to Council and the Mayor in separate emails. Any Council member or the Mayor may then request that the item be added to the agenda. No discussion of any correspondence in person, in any electronic format, telephone conference calls or in any other format should occur if said discussion includes a quorum of Council. All such discussions must occur at a Council meeting for which an agenda listing said discussion has been published in compliance with Iowa Code.

5. *Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) Requests*

Correspondence requesting changes or action related to parking, signage, or other traffic regulations shall be handled as follows:

1. Prior to being added to the Council agenda, any such request must be accompanied by the following:
 - a. For a request to add or remove street parking the City Engineer shall determine which of the following will be required on a case by case basis: either a minimum of 20 signatures of the people using the street or 80% of households affected by the requested change.

- b. For a request to change the speed limit it requires a minimum of 20 signatures of those using the street.
 - c. For a request to add a traffic control device, including but not limited to a traffic signal, yield sign, stop sign, rapid flashing beacon it requires a minimum of 20 signatures of those using the street.
 - d. For a request regarding painting or sign modifications it requires 10 signatures of those using the street.
 - e. For a request to add or remove street lights the City Engineer shall determine which of the following will be required on a case by case basis: either a minimum of 20 signatures of the people using the street or 80% of households affected by the requested change.
 - f. For a request to add an embargo it requires 10 signatures of those using the street.
2. All Petitions should clearly state the request, including an approximate location, and shall include the printed name, address, and phone number for each signor.
 3. If a request is received without such a petition, staff shall refer the original requestor to this policy and notify them that they must provide such documentation prior to the request being added to the Council agenda.
 4. When a request and accompanying petition are received, staff shall add the item to the Council agenda for Council discussion and possible referral to TAC.
 5. Council shall review and discuss the requests added to the agenda to determine whether or not the request should be referred to TAC for further evaluation. Council may consider the request as written in the request and petition, additional correspondence received on the matter, information and recommendations from staff, and any other information Council determines relevant.
 6. If Council determines that the request should be referred to TAC, they may do so by motion.
 7. Once TAC has evaluated the request and issued recommendations, staff shall place the item on the agenda for public hearing and further action and shall notify the original requestor and the other affected property owners of the time and date for said public hearing.

6. Correspondence Related to Planning and Zoning

Correspondence requesting action by the Planning and Zoning Commission will be added to the City Council Agenda to be received and filed.

7. Questions

Any questions related to the above policy may be directed to the City Clerk at 319-743-6327 or cityclerk@cityofmarion.org.