

# Thirteen Suggestions For Developing and Maintaining Solid Relationships With Your Elected Officials

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# Suggestion 1

**Remember that members come to the City Council with their own set of priorities.**

**So, identify what is important to each member and serve as a resource to help him or her accomplish these priorities.**

# Suggestion 2

**Never dismiss or ignore a City Council member, even if that person has been rejected or ostracized by the majority of the other Council members, or has been openly critical of you.**

# Suggestion 3

**Treat irate, unreasonable, or discourteous citizens that you interact with as if someday they will become a City Council member, because it will happen!**

# Suggestion 4

**Be candid with your Council members about which issue on an agenda is, or is not, important to you or staff before they make a final decision.**

# Suggestion 5

**Remember that there is no one, “right” answer to the vast majority of problems handled by the City Council.**

**So, don’t believe your recommendation is the only acceptable solution.**

# Suggestion 6

**Never play games with the budget!**

# Suggestion 7

**Make sure that information sent to one City Council member is sent to every Council member.**



# Suggestion 8

**Encourage City Council members to interact directly with City staff and not filter every inquiry through you.**

# Suggestion 9

**Continuously communicate with each and every City Council member on, at least, a weekly basis.**

# Suggestion 10

**Avoid surprising the City Council!**

**Tell Them, Tell Them, and Tell Them Again.**

# Suggestion 11

**Each year schedule a workshop to formally identify collective goals for the City Council and tasks for which you will be held accountable.**

**In addition, at this meeting agree on established procedures that the Council will follow in regards to interacting with themselves, the citizens, and City staff.**

# Suggestion 12

**It's all about building TRUST with your City Council!**

# Suggestion 13

**If the first twelve suggestions fail and you choose to pursue a new job, then do your homework and seek a city with a stable political environment and a history of long-tenured managers.**