



REQUEST FOR ACTION

Council Initiated Action - Reaffirming Rochester as a Compassionate City

MEETING DATE:

February 2, 2026

ORIGINATING DEPT:

City Administration

AGENDA SECTION:

Council Initiated Actions

PRESENTER:

Council Member Doering

Action Requested:

Considering a Council Initiated Action (CIA) requesting City Council adopt a Resolution reaffirming Rochester as a compassionate city.

Report Narrative:

Council Member Doering brings forward this Council Initiated Action for consideration, with Council President Randy Schubring supporting as the second, as required by the Council Rules of Procedure Ch. 2 - Internal Council Conduct, Sec 2.03 - Placing Items on the Business Meeting Agenda, subd. B. This request is as follows:

The resolution reaffirms existing City and Rochester Police Department practices, policies, and commitments that have been in place for several years, including RPD Policy 413 and existing oversight and complaint processes. It does not change legal authority, enforcement responsibilities, or the City's relationship with federal immigration agencies.

The primary impact is clarity and reassurance to the community, City teammates, and partner organizations by formally restating current practices and values. Emphasizes continued communication and trust-building with vulnerable populations, as well as our broader community, consistent with existing roles and responsibilities.

A Council Initiated Action (CIA) allows the Council to publicly discuss and determine whether to advance an initiative as a priority. Adoption of the resolution is affirmational, not programmatic. It reinforces current policy, practice, and values without creating new obligations, programs, or fiscal impacts.

There was some discussion during Open Comment and Other Business during the January 21 Council Meeting regarding the potential desire to file an amicus brief, related to some pending litigation. That alternative or additional action is referenced below.

Priorities & Foundational Principles:

Compassion

Social Equity

Policy Considerations & DEI Impact:

Council Initiated Actions help the Council prioritize its own initiatives through organized coalition building done in a public space and on the record. CIAs provide the Council with a public forum to consider their individual ideas with the body and decide if those ideas warrant prioritization for City teammates within the larger scope of the City's project load. Sometimes they request immediate action, although that is intended to be rare, and is at the pleasure of the Council and the approved motion.

Prior Legislative Actions & Community Engagement:

No previous actions.

Fiscal & Resource Impact:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the resolution request.

The City Attorney is still assessing anticipating costs for support of an amicus brief. If the Council supports this path, in coordination with other cities, the cost of the effort (likely coordinated by the Kennedy and Graven law firm) would be split between all participating cities.

Alternative Action(s):

The Council has discussed, and may wish to consider, providing support or input into ongoing litigation related to the so-called "Operation Metro Surge." Specifically, the State of Minnesota and the Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul have filed federal litigation against various federal agencies and personnel. Numerous municipalities and organizations across Minnesota, as well as across the country, are participating in the case through amicus curiae briefs. The primary purpose of these briefs is to further inform the court of the local impacts of the federal enforcement actions.

Additional Minnesota cities are coordinating with the Kennedy & Graven law firm to submit a joint amicus brief. If the Council is interested in joining this effort, it could do so by motion directing the City Attorney to coordinate amicus participation, with a focus on documenting local impacts of the immigration enforcement action. These impacts may include effects on local businesses, schools, access to medical care, housing stability, and public safety dynamics, among others. Any such amicus brief would be submitted at the next available opportunity in the referenced federal case.

Prepared By:

Ann Kasel

Attachments:

[Council Initiated Action - Resolution Reaffirming Rochester as a Compassionate City](#)

[Resolution - Rochester Compassionate City](#)