

Work Session

Agenda Item #	5
Meeting Date	January 23, 2012
Prepared By	Jessie Carpenter City Clerk
Reviewed By	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager

Discussion Item	Discussion of Ward Nights and/or Council Engagement with the Community
Background	<p>The City Council conducted Ward Nights in 2010 and 2011 as a way to encourage residents to come out, ask questions, share ideas, and express concerns. Each Ward Night began with a 30-minute reception with refreshments provided by the City and/or neighborhood associations and local businesses. After the reception, the first 30 minutes of the City Council meeting was devoted to hearing from residents. The resident comment portion of the meeting was televised as part of a City Council meeting.</p> <p>Other community engagement opportunities held in recent years included a series of Council walking meetings in some of the wards, an off-night “listening session” in the Community Center to hear about residents’ reactions to the idea of changing alcohol laws in the City, and a session at Tijuana’s Restaurant to meet with residents about the Takoma/Langley Sector Plan process.</p> <p>Mayor Williams has scheduled a discussion on January 23, 2012 for the Council to consider whether to continue with Ward Nights and to see if there is interest in exploring other means of having the Council engage with the community, by ward or otherwise. Other options might include general town hall-type meetings at the Community Center or elsewhere, call-in sessions, topic specific evenings, and so on.</p>
Policy	The Council desires to ensure that residents from all parts of the City have an opportunity to participate and to be heard.
Fiscal Impact	<p>Holding televised meetings outside of the Community Center Auditorium would incur costs for Cable TV staff and additional administrative staff time.</p> <p>Meetings at other locations may require payment for facility rental.</p> <p>The City has paid for refreshments for ward nights – varying from \$50 to \$100 per event.</p>
Attachments	None
Recommendation	Council to discuss options for engaging with constituents.
Special Consideration	