

To: Joel
From: Greg
Re: Early Warning Ordinance

August 15, 2005

I grew frustrated trying to get any help regarding what should be included in an early warning ordinance, so I decided that the best thing would be to have a 10-minute brainstorming session with Deaton.

As we talked, we realized that the solution may be extremely simple.

Right now the general public can get on the Internet and get City Council and Council Committee agendas. But most importantly, it includes the Referral sheet. That's a list of all the communications and matters sent to the City Council, usually from departments, for Council action.

Since we're going to be giving the NCs computers with access to all this, this becomes their early warning system as it is for us in Council.

So the solution seems to be to require (1) the City Clerk to notify the NCs about Council motions that are made, and (2) require city commissions to adopt an equivalent of the referral sheet for their items. It's up to them whether they want to fax or e-mail the information to the NCs, or make it available on the Internet. Right now, I think even the Council offices would like to know about matters that are formally initiated into each commission's system.

What I'm trying to figure out now, is which items that are important to neighborhoods and the people in them, we're missing.

The two commissions were looking to us for leadership on this before they start writing their language, and you wanted it for the GE Cmt.

As time goes on, we will probably find flaws in the system, but we (City Council) can make changes, and the NCs should be strong enough to make sure they are enacted. After a while, we might succeed in changing the culture at City Hall, and the ordinance will be a memory.