

ALBANY CALIFORNIA



CITY OF ALBANY
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16 September 2022

MEMORANDUM

To: Albany City Council Members
From: Mayor Jordan
Re: Advisory body work plan item status

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council direct each Advisory Body to provide the status of each item in its work plan for the Council's consideration at one or both of its meetings in November.

BACKGROUND

The City of Albany currently has 11 advisory bodies to the Council. Early in its 2023-2024 session the Council will appoint a 12th advisory body, the Policing Commission. By Section 1.F.6 of the [Advisory Body Handbook](#), each body presents its workplan to the Council every two years. At this time the Council may revise the plan presented to increase focus on respective charge to the body and alignment with the City Council's Strategic Plan goals.

The biannual presentation, adjustment, and approval of work plans occurs in the first six months of each two-year Council session following an election. In 2021 the Council adopted a workplan template that clarified work plans cover the two fiscal years following each election, this being July 1st of one year following an election to June 30th of the next year following an election.

The Council commenced the last review on 4 January 2021. This culminated in the Council adopting four changes on 19 January 2021:

- 1) Sunsetting the Library Board,
- 2) Expanding the charge of the Community Media Advisory Committee to include "advising and working on improving community access and information regarding local government matters",
- 3) Prohibiting appointments to advisory bodies after November 1st of the even years, which is the second year of the session, and

- 4) Converting a vacant seat on the Social and Economic Justice Commission filled by the Council as a whole at the time to one filled by the Board of Education and establishing this seat would also be filled by the Board of Education for the body's 2023-24 term.

In 2016 the Council authorized the review of advisory bodies to be conducted on an "as needed basis". The Council will have two new members after the upcoming election.

DISCUSSION

As a group the members of the Council currently have served approaching 22 years. After the next election this will reduce to 6 years of combined service. Consequently, review of the advisory body structure by the current Council will draw on and benefit from considerably more institutional experience. I recommend the Council avail itself of this experience so it has the opportunity to provide recommendations to the next Council.

As with some past reviews, the Council might affirm the current structure. It might recommend adjustments to improve the effectiveness of some bodies and/or focus others on new priority items for the City. For instance, via its approval of the Working Draft Housing Element, the Council has committed the City to investigating numerous potential policies regarding increasing housing stability for households that rent. It currently has no advisory body focused on this policy area in a manner that would result in substantial progress in the near term. The Planning and Zoning Commission's remit is policy regarding proposed new and expanded residences, not existing residences. Refocusing an existing body, such as the Social and Economic Justice Commission, on this policy area or creating a new body area for such is an example of a recommendation the Council may make to the next Council.

If the current Council is to review the existing advisory bodies individually and cumulatively, each advisory body's progress relative to its work plan provides one set of information for this consideration. As such, I recommend the Council request each body provide the Council with the status of each of its workplan items by November. For this, it can use the past workplan reporting portion of the workplan template. As this must be prepared by each body for the next Council's consideration in December and January anyway, doing so now will not add substantial work.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The recommended action does not have sustainability implications.

SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSIVITY CONSIDERATIONS

The recommended action does not have a social equity and inclusivity implications.

CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

The proposed action does not have a nexus with any Strategic Plan goal, objective, or workplan item.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Staffing an advisory body requires about 20 hours a month of staff time on average. This may be met by one staff member or involve contributions from several staff depending on the body and the issues it is considering. At a minimum this time is to draft and finalize agendas and agenda materials, meet with the Chair periodically, attend meetings of the body, record and post video of the meeting, and document outcomes. In aggregate staffing the 11 bodies requires about 250 hours of effort per month. This is slightly more than a full position equivalent. In addition, each body is typically staffed at least in part by management staff, increasing the expense.

The City has just over 100 staff positions. Consequently, staffing the current advisory bodies requires approximately 1% of City staff's time.