



**Meeting Date:** November 13, 2023

**Subject:** Commission Updates

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### **Purpose**

The City Council have reviewed and changed many aspects of city commissions over the past several months and staff will now provide updates on these changes.

### **Discussion**

This agenda report will cover the following items:

- Meeting frequency, commission composition, and powers/ duties
- Attendance & Participation, including remote attendance
- Workplan & Reporting
- Ad Hoc Subcommittees
- Council Liaisons
- Conflict of Interest
- Commission Reorganization
- Public Comment

### Environmental Commission

The City Council reduced the meeting frequency from 12 meetings annually to 10. The commission composition has not changed.

Furthermore, the City Council adjusted the Powers & Duties to the following as outlined in LAMC 2.08.080:

#### "The Environmental Commission shall:

- A. Submit an annual report to council providing an update on the implementation of the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) as well as updates on any relevant environmental policy or programs;
- B. Review and provide recommendations for the implementation of the CAAP, including prioritization of CAAP action items. Make annual recommendations for changes or updates to the Plan;
- C. Annually provide recommendations to the council that affect the natural and built environment to inform policy, budget, and CIP prioritization;
- D. Serve as a forum for community input and engagement; and
- E. Perform other tasks and duties as assigned by the Council."

### Attendance & Participation

The majority of commission members are required in person for meeting to take place. Commissioners must attend 75% of regularly scheduled meetings and may attend no more than 20% of meetings remotely. Should a commission member be remote, the Chair must ask Commissioner participating via teleconference to confirm the teleconference location was properly noticed according to State Law, the teleconference location is accessible to members of the public and whether anyone is present in the teleconference location besides the member.

### Workplan & Reporting

Commissions will provide a workplan for approval to Council in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of every calendar year and commissions will provide an annual report to Council at the joint meeting.

### Ad Hoc Subcommittees

Commissions can establish Ad Hoc Subcommittees and can no longer have standing subcommittees. These Ad Hoc Subcommittees:

- Do not require posting, meeting in public, staff support, or minutes,
- Must have specific topic and timeframe,
- Cannot be an area of continuing jurisdiction,
- Can only last one year maximum,
- Cannot be established in multiple years,
- Must report findings out to full Commission, and
- Will have commissioners serving on only one subcommittee at a time.

The motion of establishment must include that the Ad Hoc Subcommittee:

- Is comprised solely of members of the Commission establishing the Ad Hoc Subcommittee,
- Consists of less than a quorum of the Commission,
- Includes a defined purpose and the timeframe to accomplish that purpose and is less than one year in duration,
- Will automatically terminate when a final report is given to the Commission, or when the timeframe established by the Commission is met, unless extended by the Commission at a public meeting,
- Will not be re-established or renewed in multiple years, and
- Is advisory in nature and is not established to work on an item where continuing jurisdiction exists.

### Commissioner Liaisons

Commissions may assign individual Commissioners to act as a liaison to other boards, commissions, or agencies, without establishing an Ad Hoc Subcommittee. The full Commission should be updated in public. The positions supported by the liaison are to be in alignment with the positions that the Commission or the City Council have taken if they have considered the topic. This liaison can be member of the public.

### Council Liaisons

Council liaison's attendance is no longer required at every meeting. Council liaison will meet with Commission Chair and Staff liaison once per year at a minimum as well as at joint meeting. Council liaisons shall not direct, guide or unduly influence the policy making work of the City's advisory bodies.

### Perceived Conflict of Interest

Per the Los Altos Handbook, "a perceived conflict of interest for a Commissioner may arise from personal relationships, financial interests, serving on bodies or boards that have shared or overlapping subject matter jurisdiction as those under the jurisdiction of the Commission, or when it appears that the Commissioner's private interests impact the official duties of the Commissioner, or influence his/her decision-making."

Commissioners must notify Staff liaison, disclose perceived conflict of interest before participating in discussion, and seek out advice from City Attorney or FPPC as necessary.

### Conflict of Interest (Incompatible Activities)

Per state law, a public official, including commissioners, may not engage in any activity for compensation that is inconsistent, incompatible, or in conflict with their official duties with the City.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the Commission member to identify whether they may be engaging in incompatible activities or have a perceived conflict of interest. The City Attorney should be consulted as early as possible on any matters regarding incompatible activities.

### Commission Reorganization

Commission appoints Chair and Vice Chair annually at the first meeting in October. No member of a Commission may serve consecutive terms as the chair so this role must change annually.

### Providing Public Comment

Care should be taken to ensure that viewpoints expressed as public officials are consistent with City Council policy and the position of the majority of the Commission. Minority opinions are allowed but Commissioners acting in the role of a Commissioner should support actions taken by a majority of the Commission.

Unless speaking as the official spokesperson for the commission at a City Council or other public forum, commissioners should begin all written or verbal comments with "I am a commissioner for the [insert commission name here], but I am speaking on behalf of myself and my own personal beliefs."