



Council Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 8/13/25

Agenda Item: Vision & Ideas

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BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what, when, where, why)

This memo proposes the consolidation of the Community Involvement and Cable TV Commission into the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC). After a careful review of the missions, activities, and priorities of both bodies, it is evident that their goals are aligned in promoting inclusive engagement, civic participation, and equitable access to communication tools and city decision-making.

Community Involvement and Cable TV Commission

The current responsibilities of this commission include:

- Advising the City of Whitewater on coordinated community outreach and engagement strategies.
- Fostering equitable civic engagement and enhancing public participation in municipal decisions.
- Supporting community involvement through media (e.g., cable TV) for cultural, educational, health, social service, and civic purposes.
- Providing feedback on city departments' community involvement plans and reviewing the Comprehensive Community Engagement Plan.

Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)

The EOC was established to:

- Foster a welcoming, inclusive, and affirming environment for all residents and stakeholders.
- Eliminate discrimination and improve quality of life through actionable recommendations related to housing, education, employment, and public services.
- Promote equity through analysis and policy advisement, addressing social, economic, and cultural inequities.

Rationale for Consolidation

The core missions of both commissions converge around civic engagement, equity, and inclusion:

1. **Shared Focus on Equity and Participation:**
Both bodies aim to elevate equitable participation in civic life and city governance. The Community Involvement Commission's emphasis on inclusive outreach directly supports the EOC's mandate to eliminate disparities.
2. **Overlapping Responsibilities:**
The review of city engagement strategies, advising on inclusive communication efforts, and

promoting representation in public forums are responsibilities that both commissions undertake.

3. Operational Efficiency:

Consolidating the commissions would streamline efforts, reduce redundancy, and unify outreach and equity initiatives under one empowered body. This would also optimize staff and commissioner resources while fostering a more cohesive strategic direction.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS (Dates, committees, action taken)

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT (If none, state N/A)
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N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Possible next steps:

- ☐ Draft proposed amendments to municipal code and commission charters.
- ☐ Present the consolidation plan to the Common Council for formal approval.

Recommendation to the Common Council could be:

The EOC Commission support initiating the process to formally consolidate the Community Involvement and Cable TV Commission into the EOC. This consolidation will require coordination with city staff and legal counsel to determine appropriate changes to municipal code and commission bylaws.

We propose that the newly expanded EOC retain responsibilities for public media access, community engagement planning, and oversight of inclusive communication channels in addition to its existing civil rights mission.

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED (If none, state N/A)
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