



To: Community Livability and Public Safety Council Committee

May 18, 2026

Honorable Chair Madrone and Community Livability and Public Safety Committee Members,

In 2025 the Council directed City staff to do an assessment of the Council Appointed Advisory Body system, and community engagement strategies. At their April 20, 2026 meeting the Social Justice and Equity Commission received a briefing on the assessment of City Council Appointed Advisory Bodies and draft recommendations on opportunities to further support meaningful and inclusive community engagement. Commissioners continued their discussion of the draft recommendations at their May 18, 2026 meeting. When considered holistically, the Commission expressed support for the package of recommendations. The following is a summary of the Commission's additional recommendations for CLPS to consider:

- Supportive of shift in recruitment timelines and rolling recruitment to ensure vacancies are efficiently filled and new members are engaged in the work plan development process.
- Additional engagement tools like community academy, community connectors and community collaborators are positive steps in reducing existing barriers to participation for community members. Acknowledged that these will not reduce all barriers but are an improvement on the current system.
- Utilizing ad hoc committees and short-term collaborator groups could increase the City's ability to be present in the community, allowing for flexibility, adaptability, and engagement on emergent issues.
- Community Academies could be an effective way to build trust, invite questions, and inspire hands-on learning about City government.
- Multidisciplinary approach to problem-solving makes sense and could more effectively collect diverse perspectives on issues, as opposed to groups where everyone is like-minded.
- These recommendations allow for various degrees of participation and/or commitment.
- Community members most impacted by issues might still not have capacity or sense of safety to be able to directly participate.
- Consider that an overly broad scope may discourage folks from participating who have specific interests and/or areas of expertise. Some community members may not see themselves reflected in the work, resulting in the City's loss of critical perspective.
- Prioritize community outreach programs and partnerships (e.g. schools, businesses, faith-based organizations), and hosting sessions in community as opposed to asking people to come to City Hall.
- Provide robust internal framework so community engagement work is not performative; improve feedback loop and demonstration of how community engagement and feedback have been impactful in policy development and decision making.

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- Staff time would still be required to engage with connectors and collaborators. Potential reduction in advisory bodies could allow staff to shift their time from support of advisory bodies to supporting other engagement tools.
- Explore what motivates community members to participate with the recommended engagement tools.
- Evaluate the stipend system and how to provide meaningful compensation for community connectors or collaborators, especially considering the value of lived expertise and emotional labor in parity with traditional compensated labor and/or education. The process should not be overly burdensome and prohibitive for participants.
- Consider geographic diversity when appointing advisory body members.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft recommendations for Council Appointed Advisory Bodies and community engagement and provide community perspectives on how the recommendations could support community engagement around policy development and decision-making.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin C. Rosen-Evans". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "E".

Robin Rosen-Evans, Chair
Social Justice & Equity Commission

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