

DISCUSSION ITEM

Case Number	Not Applicable
Issue	Conduct a review of the Planning Commission (CPC) membership structure, role, potential consolidation opportunities, and discuss the development of a Citywide governance resolution.
Project Location	Citywide
Wards	All
Staff Planner	Maribeth Tinio, City Planner (951) 826 - 2307 mtinio@riversideca.gov

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. Review & Discuss the CPC membership structure, role, potential consolidation opportunities, and the development of Citywide rules of procedure and order of business resolution for boards and commissions; and
2. Provide any comments or recommendations to the Governmental Processes Committee for consideration

BACKGROUND

The Inclusiveness, Community Engagement, and Governmental Processes Committee (ICGC) received and discussed the Rules of Procedure and Order of Business for the City Council through a series of meetings held between January 2022 and November 2023. As part of that review process, on July 6, 2022, the ICGC received and discussed an update to City Council Rules of Procedure and Order of Business related to the number and role of Boards and Commissions. Through discussion the ICGC requested that the item be continued for further review and discussion.

On September 7, 2022, ICGC further discussed an update to the City Council Rules of Procedure and Order of Business related to the number and role of Boards and Commissions. The committee directed staff to review the number and role of Boards and Commissions outside of the City Council Rules of Procedure and Order of Business with the intent to bring a resolution specific to the Boards and Commissions back for consideration at a later date.

On June 8, 2023, as a preliminary exploration of possible structural changes, the Airport Commission received a report and discussed the potential of merging with the Transportation Board. This discussion was intended to serve as a pilot or case study to evaluate the feasibility of consolidating advisory bodies with related subject matter. Ultimately, the Airport Commission did not support the recommended merger, citing distinct responsibilities and technical focus. Following this, staff paused the broader review to assess how effectively the newly implemented Workplans guided each body's work and to determine whether a standardized resolution was needed to streamline operations. On March 14, 2025, the Budget Engagement Commission (BEC) received a report proposing a reduction in the Commission's membership from eighteen to eleven

members. The proposal was intended to improve the Commission's ability to meet quorum and streamline participation. After discussion, with 2 members absent, 6 yes votes and 4 no votes, the BEC voted to recommend amending Riverside Municipal Code (RMC) section 2.90.030 to reduce its composition to seven Ward-appointed seats and four Citywide seats. The Commission recommended that reductions be implemented through a phased approach by immediately eliminating vacant seats and allowing additional reductions to occur as current member terms expire. The Commission's recommendation was referred to the Governmental Processes Committee (GPC) for further discussion.

On May 7, 2025, the Governmental Processes Committee (previously named ICGC) conducted a workshop to consider the discussions at prior meetings. At the workshop, the GPC received a presentation (Attachment 1) from the City Manager's Office which discussed membership challenges, quorum issues, overlapping responsibilities and opportunities for consolidation and standardizing governance framework. After receiving public comment, the GPC members requested that all boards and commissions for the City receive the report and be provided the opportunity to provide comments back to the GPC for consideration. The GPC will consider comments and recommendations from each board and commission at its August meeting.

DISCUSSION

Boards and Commissions serve an important role as advisory bodies that provide recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on various matters affecting the community and give residents an additional outlet to engage in local government. There are currently 16 active Boards and Commissions, with more than 150 volunteer seats combined. The Planning Commission is established in the Charter of the City of Riverside with 9 seats (Attachment 2).

The City Council has expressed ongoing interest in evaluating the structure and effectiveness of the City's Boards and Commissions. Over time, issues such as declining participation, difficulty achieving quorum, overlapping duties, and outdated structures have prompted discussion about possible restructuring, consolidation, or standardization efforts. The intent is to align advisory functions with City priorities, improve efficiency, and ensure meaningful community engagement. The following questions have guided this review:

- Is membership size optimized for functionality?
- Are quorum and attendance issues affecting performance?
- Are there opportunities to consolidate or streamline?
- Is there a need for a standard governance framework?

Standardizing Governance Framework

As it stands currently, each Board or Commission is responsible for developing and reviewing its own standing rules or bylaws (Attachment 3). The adoption of a Citywide Resolution that sets clear and consistent rules for all Boards and Commissions could be considered. This resolution could be similar to the Council's adopted Rules of Procedure (Attachment 4) and would cover:

- How members are appointed and number of members
- What each group's role and responsibilities are
- How meetings are run and quorum requirements
- What kind of training new members should receive
- What's expected of members in terms of participation and engagement

Board members recommendations will be forwarded to the Governmental Processes Committee for consideration.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

This item aligns with Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Priority 5, High Performing Government, Goal 5.3 – Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making.

It aligns with Envision Riverside 2025 Cross Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – This review enhances transparency and public accountability by ensuring that Boards and Commissions are functioning effectively, meeting consistently, and serving their intended advisory roles. Community involvement remains a priority through ongoing opportunities for public comment and participation in advisory processes.
2. **Equity** – Streamlining membership structures and clarifying responsibilities ensures more equitable access to participation and improves representation across all Wards. A standardized governance framework helps ensure all commissions operate under fair and consistent expectations.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Reducing inactive or overlapping commissions and right-sizing membership supports more efficient use of City resources, including staff time and administrative support. Resources saved can be redirected toward higher-impact programs and services.
4. **Innovation** – The proposed standardization and restructuring provide an opportunity to modernize how Boards and Commissions operate, including clearer onboarding, digital access to materials, and improved collaboration tools for commissioners and the public.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Establishing a consistent framework for governance and participation supports long-term stability, reduces redundancy, and helps ensure that advisory bodies remain relevant and effective in adapting to future community needs.

EXHIBITS LIST

1. May 7, 2025 Governmental Processes Committee Staff Report & Presentation
 2. Municipal Code Sections 19.050.080, 19.050.030 and Section 806 of the City Charter
 3. Planning Commission By-Laws
 4. City Council Rules of Procedure
 5. Presentation
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