



# Board of Ethics

*City of Arts & Innovation*

---

**TO: BOARD OF ETHICS**

**DATE: JUNE 5, 2025**

**FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE**

**WARDS: ALL**

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF BOARD OF ETHICS STRUCTURE AND ROLE**

## **ISSUE:**

Conduct a review of the Board of Ethics (BOE) membership structure, role, potential consolidation opportunities, and discuss the development of a Citywide governance resolution.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the BOE:

1. Review the BOE membership structure, role, potential consolidation opportunities;
2. Discuss the development of a Citywide rules of procedure and order of business resolution for boards and commissions; and
3. Forward any recommendations for potential revisions to the membership structure, roles, consolidation, and a board/commission governance resolution to the Governmental Processes Committee for consideration.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Charter Section 202 requires the adoption of a Code of Ethics and Conduct for elected officials and members of appointed boards, commissions, and committees to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation. The first Code of Ethics and Conduct, adopted by a Resolution of the City Council on July 1, 2005, was amended several times.

On April 5, 2016, Ordinance No. 7328 was adopted adding Chapters 2.78 and 2.80 to the Riverside Municipal Code, adopting a revised Code of Ethics and Conduct, and establishing the Board of Ethics (BOE). Riverside Municipal Code Chapter 2.80 (Attachment 1) outlines the purpose, membership, and duties and powers of the Board of Ethics.

On September 7, 2022, GPC 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 May 7, 2025, the Governmental Processes Committee received a presentation on the review of boards and commission membership structure, consolidation opportunities, and development of citywide governance resolution. The committee requested feedback from each individual board and commission for consideration.

### **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.

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 Board of Ethics has been asked to review the following questions for this review:

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

### **Standardizing Governance Framework**

As it stands currently, each Board or Commission is responsible for developing and reviewing its own standing rules or bylaws. 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 and would cover:

- Is there a need for a standard governance framework?
- How members are appointed and number of members
- What each group's role and responsibilities are
- How meetings are conducted and quorum requirements
- What kind of training new members should receive
- What is expected of members in terms of participation and engagement

BOE recommendations regarding the bullet points listed above 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.

Prepared by: Donesia Gause, City Clerk

Attachments:

1. RMC 2.80
2. Presentation