



Human Relations Commission Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION **DATE: MAY 22, 2025**

FROM: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE **WARDS: ALL**

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION STRUCTURE AND ROLE

ISSUE:

Conduct a review of the Human Relations Commission membership structure, role, potential consolidation opportunities, and the development of a Citywide governance resolution.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Human Relations Commission conduct a review of the Commission's membership structure, roles, potential consolidation opportunities and the development of a Citywide governance resolution and provide any recommendations to City Manager's Office staff.

BACKGROUND:

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 Human Relations Commission (HRC), formerly known as the Community Relations Commission, was established in 1966 through the passage of Ordinance #3389. The membership composition, objectives, and powers, duties, and functions of the HRC are outlined in Chapter 2.16 of the Riverside Municipal Code.

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 again 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.

DISCUSSION:

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. The City Charter authorizes each Board and Commission to create its own rules and regulations. The adoption of a Citywide Resolution that sets clear and consistent rules for all Boards and Commissions could be of value. This resolution could be similar to the Council's adopted Rules of Procedure 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

Commission members should submit any recommendations regarding the bullet points listed above to Krystelle Schneider via e-mail at KSchneider@riversideca.gov by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 6, 2025, for submission to the Governmental Processes Committee.

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: Krystelle Schneider, Senior Management Analyst