



Park and Recreation Commission

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

DATE: AUGUST 18, 2025

FROM: PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION STRUCTURE AND ROLE

ISSUE:

Conduct a review of the Park and Recreation Commission's membership structure, role, potential consolidation opportunities, and the development of a Citywide Governance Resolution.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Park and Recreation Commission conduct a review of the Park and Recreation Commission membership structure, roles, potential consolidation opportunities and the development of a Citywide Governance Resolution and provide any recommendations to Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department Staff.

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 once 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.

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.

Recently, on March 14, 2024, 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 for further discussion.

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 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?

Membership Challenges and Quorum Issues

Many Boards and Commissions have experienced ongoing difficulty in meeting quorum. Quorum is determined based on the total membership of the body – not on the number of seats that are currently filled. For example, if a Commission has 9 membership seats, five members must be present to meet quorum, even if several seats are vacant. This structure creates challenges, particularly for larger Commissions that have difficulty filling or maintaining appointments. As a result, 18 meetings in total were canceled in 2024, due to the inability to meet quorum:

- Commission on Aging: 1 cancelled meeting
- Airport Commission: 1 cancelled meeting
- Budget Engagement Commission: 3 cancelled meetings
- Community Police Review Commission: 3 cancelled meetings
- Commission of the Deaf: 1 cancelled meeting
- Commission on Disabilities: 2 cancelled meetings
- Human Resources Board: 3 cancelled meetings
- Park and Recreation Commission: 3 cancelled meetings

- Transportation Board: 1 cancelled meeting

Standardizing Governance Framework

As it stands currently, each Board and Commission is responsible for developing and reviewing their 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:

- 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

Commissioners should submit any recommendations regarding the bullet points listed above to Sandra Campbell via e-mail at scampbell@riversideca.gov by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 21, 2025, for submission to the Governmental Process Committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the receipt of this report.

Prepared by: Sandra D. Campbell, Senior Administrative Assistant
Approved by: Pamela M. Galera, Parks Recreation and Community Services Director
Attachment: Presentation