



# City of San Leandro

Meeting Date: October 15, 2012

## Staff Report

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**File Number:** 12-486

**Agenda Section:** ACTION ITEMS

**Agenda Number:** 10.B.

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Chris Zapata  
City Manager

**BY:** Chris Zapata  
City Manager

**FINANCE REVIEW:** Not Applicable

**TITLE:** City Manager Report and Discussion on City Council Committees, Citizen Commissions and External Boards

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### SUMMARY

At the September 17th Council meeting, Councilmember Reed requested, and the Council agreed, that the City Council committees be reviewed as to their necessity. This report provides information on the staff commitment required to support boards, committees and commissions at various levels.

### BACKGROUND

City staff is responsible for representation and/or support for a variety of boards, committees and commissions: at the local level, for City Council committees and City boards and commissions; at the county level, for the boards and commissions of various county agencies, such as the Alameda County Mayors Conference, Alameda County Transportation Commission, StopWaste.Org, and Alameda County HOME Consortium; and at the regional and state level, for the Association of Bay Area Governments, East Bay Green Corridor, East Bay Dischargers Authority, and East Bay Economic Development Alliance.

The support for City Council committees, intergovernmental agency boards on which Councilmembers serve, and the City's boards and commissions, is addressed in greater detail below.

#### City Council Committees

There are currently nine (9) City Council committees. These committees were created by Council action. With the exception of the Disaster Council, which was created by ordinance and codified in the Municipal Code, no reference to the Council committees appears in the City Charter or Municipal Code. Each committee is comprised of less than a quorum of the City Council, and appointments are made annually in January. The meeting frequency varies by committee; the committees meet either monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly. Being standing committees, they must comply with the requirements of the Brown Act and all associated

public noticing requirements.

The City Council committees require a substantial commitment of staff resources to research issues; prepare staff reports; prepare, publish, post and distribute meeting agendas and reports; attend the meetings to present the items and respond to questions; and prepare the meeting highlights. While there have been few changes to the number of committees and the work required to support them, staffing levels have been reduced significantly. Accordingly, staff availability for other projects and programs has been reduced.

#### Intergovernmental Agency Boards

Members of the City Council are appointed annually to serve on nine (9) county and regional agency boards and commissions of which the City of San Leandro is a member agency.

The intergovernmental agencies have their own staff to provide support for board meetings. City staff participates in the meetings of some of these boards; for example, Public Works and Community Development staff attend the meetings of StopWaste.Org and the East Bay Dischargers Authority, and Engineering and Transportation Department staff attend meetings of the Alameda County Transportation Authority.

#### City Boards and Commissions

Section 350 of the City Charter states that: "The Council, by ordinance, shall create boards and commissions as necessary to facilitate governmental operations in all appropriate fields..." There are currently nine (9) City boards and commissions, comprised of San Leandro residents who volunteer their service. Most of the City boards and commissions meet monthly; the Youth Advisory Commission meets twice monthly, and the Personnel Relations Board meets quarterly. All of the City boards and commissions must adhere to the Brown Act.

The Recreation and Human Services Department staffs four of the nine boards and commissions: the Human Services Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission, Senior Commission and Youth Advisory Commission. The Community Development Department is responsible for three: the Board of Zoning Adjustments, Planning Commission, and Rent Review Board. Human Resources supports the Personnel Relations Board, and the Library Services Department staffs the Library-Historical Commission. The staff resources needed to support the boards and commissions are comparable to the resources required to support the City Council committees.

### **ANALYSIS**

All of the various boards, commissions and committees require a significant level of staff resources. Representation on the intergovernmental boards is a requirement of membership, and City boards and commissions are mandated by the Charter. Of the three types of bodies listed above, only the City Council committees are discretionary.

Some of the pros and cons of the City Council committees are:

Pros:

1. Increased opportunities for public participation.
2. Committee members receive a detailed analysis of the subject matter.

3. Routine matters can be reviewed at the committee level rather than by the full Council.

Cons:

1. Excludes the majority of the Council from the benefit of in-depth analysis and discussion.
2. When committee recommendations are inconsistent with final Council determinations, the process can become cumbersome and inefficient.
3. Meetings are held at times that are not necessarily conducive to public participation.
4. Requires a significant commitment of staff resources.
5. Adds an extra step, thereby slowing down the legislative process.
6. Committees don't always have a reason to meet; some rarely meet.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the analysis above, I recommend suspending the City Council committees for one year, for the calendar year 2013. During this one-year trial period, issues that would normally be referred to a Council committee would instead be presented to the full Council at a work session or regular Council meeting.

**PREPARED BY:** Chris Zapata, City Manager, City Manager's Office



# City of San Leandro

Meeting Date: October 15, 2012

## Minute Order - Council

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**File Number:** 12-498

**Agenda Section:** ACTION ITEMS

**Agenda Number:**

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Chris Zapata  
City Manager

**BY:** Chris Zapata  
City Manager

**FINANCE REVIEW:** Not Applicable

**TITLE:** MOTION: Motion Suspending the City Council Internal Committees for Year  
2013

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