

Agenda Report

DATE: January 31, 2000

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CYNTHIA J. KURTZ, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is for information only.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Pasadena currently has twenty-three advisory commissions and committees. Established over the last twenty years, each commission was created to provide in-depth analysis on key issues facing the community and to provide recommendations to support the City Council decision-making process. As the dynamics of the community change, however, the important issues within the community tend to change also, making it appropriate to periodically re-evaluate the structure and focus of advisory commissions.

The following issues may be appropriate considerations at this time:

Direction and Results

A review of advisory bodies must begin with the most basic premise of each advisory body – the purpose and functions. Title II of the Pasadena Municipal Code outlines the purpose and functions of each commission. (Attachment A) Does the code provide clear and specific direction to each commission? Following this, if the staff and commission members are clear on their purpose and functions, are the commissions providing adequate response to this direction? In other words, is the Council finding their analysis and recommendations to be timely and useful in making decisions?

Appropriateness of Focus

Although a commission may be functioning appropriately, Council may not find their support helpful simply because the issues they review are no longer current issues of concern or do not require additional analysis. Are the current commissions addressing the most important public policy issues facing the City today? Are there other important policy issues that are not currently being addressed by an advisory commission? If yes, could these issues logically be addressed by an existing commission or would they require a new commission? Before creating new advisory bodies, Council may want to consider if any existing commissions could be restructured, combined, or sunsetted in favor of addressing more current issues.

Appointments

On June 14, 1999, options for commission appointments were presented by the City Manager and a recommendation regarding restructuring of appointment authority was presented by the Mayor. The City Manager's report (Attachment B) put forth a policy to reduce the total number of members on commissions when possible and to maintain an uneven number of members. The Mayor's recommendation provided for one direct appointment by the Mayor, equal to the appointment power accorded to other Council members, and one at-large member. In addition, the Mayor's recommendation provided for a reduction in the number of commission members in five cases. (Attachment C) No action was taken and the discussion was deferred to the Council work session scheduled for July, 1999. No further action was taken in July.

Commissions with Development Review Authority in Northwest Pasadena

The City is encouraging reinvestment in the northwest portion of Pasadena, however, the process to approve a project with public support is more complex and requires more time than projects elsewhere in the City or within other redevelopment project areas.

The citizen review process for projects located in Northwest Pasadena may involve review by a Project Area Committee, the Northwest Commission, the Community Development Committee, the Business Enterprise Committee and the City Council and/or the City Council acting as the Community Development Commission. These reviews are in addition to any land use/design approval required by the Municipal Code. In addition, the current approach is inconsistent in that there are five project areas in Northwest Pasadena, only two have project area committees.

Council may want to examine this citizen participation process. If so, staff will be present to suggest alternatives that will streamline the process while maintaining the following objectives; (1) provide citizen review, (2) eliminating duplication of review, (3) provide for a consistent review process.

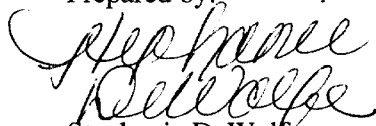
FISCAL IMPACT

This report is for information only and has no associated fiscal impacts.

Respectfully submitted,


Cynthia J. Kurtz,
City Manager

Prepared by:


Stephanie De Wolfe

Special Assistant to the City Manager