



CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION AGENDA

6:00 PM - Tuesday, March 28, 2023

via Videoconference and In Person

Please Note: The City Council will meet in person as well as via Telephone/Video Conference

Telephone: 1-669-444-9171 / Webinar ID: 860 8720 0853

<https://losaltosca.gov.zoom.us/j/86087200853?pwd=NnRMb0gzdThEMExQRXhXanFjbGZyQT09>

Passcode: 353132

PLEASE NOTE: Councilmember Lee Eng will participate in the meeting via videoconference from the site listed below. The meeting agenda will be posted on the videoconference site, which is accessible to the public. Anyone wishing to address the Council from the videoconference site will be provided with an opportunity to do so.

**Location:
Courtyard Marriott Room #1151
901 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001**

TO PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON: Members of the public may also participate in person by being present at the Los Altos Council Chamber at Los Altos City Hall located at 1 N. San Antonio Rd, Los Altos, CA

TO PARTICIPATE VIA VIDEO: Follow the link above. Members of the public will need to have a working microphone on their device and must have the latest version of ZOOM installed (available at <https://zoom.us/download>). To request to speak, please use the “Raise hand” feature located at the bottom of the screen.

TO PARTICPATE VIA TELEPHONE: Members of the public may also participate via telephone by calling the number listed above. To request to speak, press *9 on your telephone.

TO SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS: Prior to the meeting, comments on matters listed on the agenda may be emailed to PublicComment@losaltosca.gov. Emails sent to this email address are sent to/received immediately by the City Council. Please include a subject line in the following format:

PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM ## - MEETING DATE STUDY SESSION

Correspondence submitted in hard copy/paper must be received by 2:00 PM on the day of the meeting to ensure distribution prior to the meeting. Correspondence received prior to the meeting will be included in the public record. .

Public testimony will be taken at the direction of the Mayor, and members of the public may only comment during times allotted for public comments.

AGENDA

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

CONFIRM QUORUM

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEM(S)

DISCUSSION ITEM(S)

1. **Los Altos Commission Review:** Receive feedback from City Council on potential changes to Los Altos Commissions. (Carnesecca)

ADJOURNMENT

SPECIAL NOTICES TO THE PUBLIC

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Altos will make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk 72 hours prior to the meeting at (650) 947-2610.

Agendas Staff Reports and some associated documents for City Council items may be viewed on the Internet at <http://www.losaltosca.gov/citycouncil/online/index.html>. Council Meetings are televised live and rebroadcast on Cable Channel 26.

On occasion the City Council may consider agenda items out of order.



AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

Meeting Date: March 28, 2023

Subject: Los Altos Commissions

Prepared by: Anthony Carnesecca, Assistant to the City Manager

Reviewed by: Jon Maginot, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Gabriel Engeland, City Manager

Attachment(s):

1. City Council Retreat Agenda Report 2/21/23: Discussion on Los Altos Commissions
2. Commission Spreadsheet
3. Commission Powers and Duties

Initiated by:

City Council

Previous Council Consideration:

February 21, 2023

Fiscal Impact:

None

Environmental Review:

Not applicable

Policy Question(s) for Council Consideration:

- Does the City Council wish to make changes to the City of Los Altos commissions? Change may include powers and duties, meeting frequency, member composition, or number of commissions, or any other changes as desired.

Summary:

- City Council directed city staff to come back with an analysis of the commissions based upon feedback from commission chairs and liaisons. Feedback included meeting frequency, commissioner composition, and powers and duties or workplan information. City staff has incorporated feedback from the City Council retreat and conversations with individual commissions in this report and presentation.

City Manager

GE

Reviewed By:

City Attorney

JH

Finance Director

JD



Subject: Los Altos Commissions

Purpose

Receive feedback from City Council on potential changes to Los Altos Commissions.

Background

The City of Los Altos has guidelines for the commissions regarding their powers and duties, number of commissioners, and frequency of commission meetings within Los Altos Municipal Code Section 2.08.

During the City Council retreat on February 21, 2023, the Council received a presentation from staff highlighting that Los Altos, when compared to other Cities in the County, have more commissions, with more members, that meet more frequently than is average. Additionally, commissions in other Cities have membership and meeting frequency based on the workplan or powers and duties of the commission, as opposed to a common standard for meetings and membership, as is applied in Los Altos. The agenda report and spreadsheet from the Council retreat have been included as Attachments #1 and #2 to this agenda report and provide more information on how Los Altos compares with Cities in the County.

The primary focus area for potential changes to commissions is in the establishment of Powers and Duties in the municipal Code and the creation of workplans that align with Council priorities, budget, and available resources. Currently, many Los Altos commissions have powers and duties that lack definition and workplans that are not aligned as described above. Los Altos Municipal Code Section 2.08 establishes 11 commissions. It defines specific powers and duties for 3 of these commissions, provides some additional direction to an additional 3 commissions, and no direction beyond advisory powers for 5 commissions. The commissions without defined powers in the Municipal Code rely on the annual work plan to determine deliverables for the year. Workplan creation for commissions without defined powers and duties does not always take Council priorities, budget, or resources into account prior to approval by the commission.

Commissions with powers and duties defined in the Municipal Code have an easier time creating a schedule of meetings and composition of membership that is based on deliverables or the commission workplan. During the meetings with commission chairs it became apparent that commissions with powers and duties that are defined in the Code or are aligned with Council goals had an easier time discussing the role of the commission and commenting on potential changes to meeting frequency and membership composition. These same commission also had less confusion with the role of the commission as compared with the role of the City Council and/or City staff.



Subject: Los Altos Commissions

Discussion/Analysis

At the direction of City Council, staff met with individual commission chairs and liaisons to discuss the role of the commission, the workplan, the meeting frequency, and member composition. These meetings were intended to receive direct feedback on areas that have worked well, areas that could be improved, and potential changes that could be incorporated to improve the effectiveness of the commissions and how they were supported by City staff.

After these meetings, it became evident that the commissions who had the most well-defined roles, either through workplans or powers and duties in the Municipal Code, were positioned the best to continue their roles, even when changes were applied, without decreasing effectiveness.

As an example, the Historical Commission has powers and duties that are well defined. The Chair agrees that the mission can be met by reducing the meeting frequency from monthly to quarterly and the composition from 7 members to 5 members. The Financial Commission, who also has a well-defined scope, agrees the meeting frequency can be reduced without impairing the deliverables as expected by the City Council.

At the conclusion of the meetings, and in preparation for this study session, staff tried to determine which commissions were completing their deliverables in line with Council expectations and budget, were appropriately resourced, and currently had the correct composition and meeting frequency to be successful. Staff believes three commissions, the Planning Commission, Senior Commission, and Youth Commission are all operating in line with these objectives, and can continue to be successful with no or limited changes proposed.

Additionally, there was one commission that agreed changes were necessary and the mission could be completed with fewer members and meeting frequency. As discussed above, the Historical Commission Chair, during the meeting with staff, believed that quarterly meetings with five members would be better suited to meet the expectations of the City Council.

In order for staff to provide recommendations on potential changes to the remaining commissions, Council direction is required. As evidenced by the Los Altos Municipal Code section 2.08 and these conversations, there are a number of commissions that do not have their powers and duties clearly defined, and/or have workplans that are not in line with Council goals, budget/resources, or there has been role confusion between the commissions and staff.

City staff requests direction from City Council to provide additional definition to the expectations from the remaining commissions, listed below, prior to staff making a recommendation on frequency of meetings, membership composition, or potential consolidation.



Subject: Los Altos Commissions

The commissions where staff requests direction are:

- Complete Streets Commission
- Environmental Commission
- Financial Commission
- Library Commission
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Public Arts Commission

Further role definition and clear expectations will allow staff to identify where there could be potential changes to the membership, meeting frequency, or consolidation based upon an analysis into their specific powers and duties or workplan and deliverables.

The following commissions staff believes can operate without additional changes:

- Planning Commission
- Senior Commission
- Youth Commission

If Council agrees with the proposed changes to the Historical Commission, reducing meeting frequency from monthly to quarterly and reducing member composition from seven to five, staff could return with the appropriate changes to the Municipal Code.



AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

Meeting Date: February 21, 2023

Subject: Discussion on Los Altos Commissions

Approved by: Gabriel Engeland, City Manager

Attachment(s):

1. City Council Discussion on Commissions
2. Powers and Duties of Commissions
3. Resolution 2015-09

Initiated by:

City Council.

Previous Council Consideration:

None

Fiscal Impact:

None

Environmental Review:

Not applicable.

Policy Question(s) for Council Consideration:

- Does the Los Altos City Council wish to change how Commission work plans are submitted and approved?
- Does the City Council wish to change the frequency of Commission meetings, the number of Commissioners on Commissions, and/or the total number of Commissions so they are based on the specific duties assigned by the City Council and the annual work plan?
- Does the Los Altos City Council wish to amend the Commission handbook, which was last update prior to the Covid pandemic, to conform to Council direction and expectations?

Summary:

- Los Altos has a greater number of overall Commissions, that meet more frequently, and contain a greater number of appointed members, when compared with cities in Santa Clara County (Please see attachment 1)
- Most Commissions do not have specific powers and/or duties enumerated in the Los Altos Municipal Code (Please see attachment 2)
- Commissions without defined powers and/or duties in the Municipal Code base deliverables, assignments, and expectation on their annual work plan.

Reviewed By:

City Manager

GE

City Attorney

IH



Subject: Discussion on Los Altos Commissions

- Commission work plans are often not “top down” or based on Council priorities or the adopted budget.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the City Council discuss the information in this report and determine if any action is warranted in the following areas:

1. Does the City Council wish to make changes to the establishment of the annual work plan of Commissions to ensure they are “top down” and based on Council priorities and the adopted budget?
2. Does the City Council, with the exceptions noted in this report, wish to change the frequency of Commission meetings, the number of Commissioners on Commissions, and/or number of total Commissions so they are based on the specific duties assigned by the City Council and the adopted budget?
3. Does the City Council wish to provide direction to staff to make amendments or other changes to the Commission Handbook at a later date to conform with Council direction and expectations?

Purpose

This item was requested by the City Council to review composition and expectations of Los Altos Commissions.

Discussion/Analysis

POLICY QUESTION #1: Does the Los Altos City Council wish to change how Commission work plans are submitted and approved?

The Municipal Code establishes and creates 11 City Commissions. The Code defines specific powers and duties for 3 of these Commissions, provides some additional direction to and additional 3 Commissions, and no direction beyond advisory powers to 5 Commissions.

The Commissions without defined powers in the Municipal Code rely on the annual work plan to determine deliverables for the year. Due to the lack of defined powers and duties in the Municipal Code, and work plans that are not coordinated with City Council priorities or the adopted budget, Commission meetings and work plans often create role confusion between the City Council (policy, direction to City Manager), the Commission (advisory or enumerated powers), and Staff (implementation, City Manager direction to staff, resource allocation).

Please see attachment 2 for specific information on the powers and duties of each Commission.



Subject: Discussion on Los Altos Commissions

Commissions With Powers Defined in the Municipal Code:

The Municipal Code enumerates specific powers and duties for the following Commissions:

- Planning Commission (State Planning Act)
- The Historical Commission (2.12.030 of the Municipal Code)
- The Design Review Commission (powers granted by “other provisions” of the Municipal Code)

Commissions Established in Advisory Capacity with Additional Direction:

The Municipal Code establishes the following Commissions as advisory and provides additional direction:

- The Financial Commission (2.08.130) in a review and advisory capacity
- The Public Arts Commission (2.08.150) in a review and advisory capacity
- The Complete Street Commission (2.08.160) in an advisory capacity

Commissions Established in Advisory Capacity:

The Municipal Code establishes the following Commissions in an advisory capacity:

- The Library Commission
- The Parks and Recreation Commission
- The Youth Commission
- The Environmental Commission
- The Senior Commission

In reviewing the establishment of Commissions as they were created in the Municipal Code, the City Council may wish to create a process for work plan approval that is directly related to City Council goals and the adopted budget, for Commissions that do not have powers and duties specified.

POLICY QUESTION #2 Should the Los Altos City Council, based on the findings of the review of Commissions in peer cities, examine and make changes to Los Altos Commissions including the frequency of meetings, number of Commissioners, and/or number of Commissions?

Currently Los Altos has 11 Commissions. Each Commission meets monthly except for the Planning Commission and Design Review Commission which meet twice monthly. All Commissions have 7 appointed members except for the Design Review Commission and the Youth Commission which have 5 and 11 members respectively.



Subject: Discussion on Los Altos Commissions

In reviewing Commissions in peer cities, the findings were:

- Los Altos has more total Commissions (11) than the median peer City which has 8 Commissions.
- 10 of the cities reviewed had fewer total Commissions than Los Altos, 3 had the same number of Commissions, and 1 had more Commissions.
- Los Altos Commissions meet 58% more frequently than Commissions in peer cities.
- The meeting frequency creates 156 meetings annually for Los Altos Commissions. Comparable cities average 99 meetings per year.
- Unlike peer Cities, Los Altos Commissions meet monthly with the same number of members. This is not a common practice as peer cities determine frequency of meetings and number of members based on work plan and Council direction.

In reviewing the findings of the comparison of peer cities, and with the discussion of the Policy Question #1, the City Council may wish to consider:

- 1) Establishing the number of appointed members of Commissions, based on the work plan of the Commission, except for the Planning Commission and Youth Commission.
- 2) Establishing the frequency of meetings of Commissions, except for the Planning Commission, to quarterly, semi-annually, annually, or as needed, based on the work plan of the Commission and the powers and duties enumerated in the Municipal Code.
- 3) Establishing an overall number of Commissions that is based on the vision and priorities of the City Council.

POLICY QUESTION #3: Does the Los Altos City Council wish to amend the Commission handbook to make it consistent with the changes directed by the City Council?

The Commission handbook was last reviewed and updated prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic. There are several inconsistencies or inefficiencies that exist in the handbook, as well as specific areas, such as virtual participation of Commissioners, that Council should consider updating. There are also concerns with the creation and use of subcommittees on Commissions and if they have acted in conformance with the Brown Act. In 2015, the City Council adopted Resolution 2015-09 which affirmed the City's commitment to the Brown Act for certain City created advisory subcommittees (Attachment 3).

Specific updates that may be needed, include the process in which meeting days and times are determined for each individual commission. It has been the history of the City of Los Altos to not schedule commission meetings which overlap with other commission meetings, this is to encourage public participation for all.



Subject: Discussion on Los Altos Commissions

Commission work plans which are in common practice today help to provide clarity and direction to each commission and its assigned staff liaison, this is something that should be standardized for all commissions and must be aligned with Council goals and the adopted budget, as described in this report. Additionally, the Commission handbook should ensure work plans do not implement programs or direct staff to act.

If the City Council wishes to update the Commission handbook based on this report, previous direction, and any direction received at this meeting, Staff could bring back proposed changes at a later meeting.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Council discuss the information in this report and determine if any action is warranted in the following areas:

1. Does the City Council wish to make changes to the establishment of the annual work plan of Commissions to ensure they are “top down” and based on Council priorities and the adopted budget?
2. Does the City Council, with the exceptions noted in this report, wish to change the frequency of Commission meetings, the number of Commissioners on Commissions, and/or number of total Commissions so they are based on the specific duties assigned by the City Council and the adopted budget?
3. Does the City Council wish to provide direction to staff to make amendments or other changes to the Commission Handbook at a later date to conform with Council direction and expectations?

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
CAMPBELL - 6	Bike & Ped Advisory Committee	Once Every Other Month	6	5
POPULATION - 42,696	Civic Improvement Commission	Once A Month	12	7
LAND AREA - 6 SQUARE MILES	Historic Preservation Board	Once A Month	12	5
	Park & Rec Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Planning Commission	Twice A Month	24	7
	Youth Commission	Once A Month	12	N/A
		TOTAL	72	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
CUPERTINO - 10	Bike & Ped Commission	Once A Month	12	5
POPULATION - 60,091	Arts & Culture Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	5
LAND AREA - 11 SQUARE MILES	Housing Commission	Quarterly	4	5
	Library Commission	Once A Month	12	5
	Park & Rec Commission	Once A Month	12	5
	Planning Commission	Twice A Month	24	5
	Public Safety Commission	Once Every Other Month	12	5
	Sustainability Commission	Quarterly	4	5
	Tech Info Communication Commission	Quarterly	4	5
	Teen Commission	Once A Month	12	9
		TOTAL	102	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Gilroy - 7	Arts & Culture Commission	Once A Month	12	7
POPULATION - 55,615	Library Commission	Once A Month	12	5
LAND AREA - 17 SQUARE MILES	Open Government Commission	Quarterly	4	5
	Parks & Rec Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Personnel Commission	Once A Month	12	5
	Planning Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Youth Commission	Once A Month	12	11
		TOTAL	76	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Los Altos - 11	Complete Streets Commission	Once A Month	12	7
POPULATION - 31,361	Design Review Commission	Twice A Month	24	5
LAND AREA - 7 SQUARE MILES	Environmental Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Financial Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Historical Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Library Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Parks & Rec Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Planning Commission	Twice A Month	24	7
	Public Arts Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Senior Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Youth Commission	Once A Month	12	11
		TOTAL	156	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Los Altos Hills - 16	Community Relations Committee	Once A Month	12	7
POPULATION - 8,568	Emergency Communications Committee	Once A Month	12	9
LAND AREA - 9 SQUARE MILES	Emergency Preparedness Committee	Once A Month	12	6
	Environmental Design Committee	Once A Month	12	6
	Environmental Initiatives Committee	Once A Month	12	8
	Finance Committee	Once A Month	12	9
	History Committee	Once A Month	12	4
	Library Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Open Space Committee	Once A Month	12	7
	Parks & Rec Committee	Once A Month	12	7
	Pathways Committee	Once A Month	12	9
	Planning Commission	Once A Month	12	5
	Public Art Committee	Once A Month	12	6
	Senior Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Youth Commission	Twice A Month	24	20
	Technology Committee	Once A Month	12	7
		TOTAL	204	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Los Gatos - 11	Arts & Culture Commission	Once A Month	12	7
POPULATION - 30,601	Bike & Ped Advisory Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	7
LAND AREA - 12 SQUARE MILES	Community Health Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Complete Streets Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Finance Commission	Quarterly	4	7
	General Plan Committee	Twice A Month	24	9
	Historic Preservation Committee	Once A Month	12	5
	Parks Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	7
	Planning Commission	Twice A Month	24	7
	Senior Committee	Once A Month	12	12
	Youth Commission	Once A Month	12	20
		TOTAL	136	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Milpitas - 11	Arts Commission	Five Times A Year	5	9
POPULATION - 74,865	Community Advisory Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	9
LAND AREA - 17 SQUARE MILES	Economic Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	9
	Energy & Sustainability Commission	Once A Month	12	9
	Parks & Rec Commission	Once A Month	12	6
	Planning Commission	Twice A month	24	7
	Public Safety Commission	Five Times A Year	5	9
	Science & Tech Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	9
	Senior Commission	Six Times A Year	6	9
	Veterans Commission	Five Times A Year	5	9
	Youth Commission	Once A Month	12	9
		TOTAL	99	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Monte Sereno - 3	Site & Architectural Commission	Once A Month	12	5
POPULATION - 3,360	Youth Commission	Once A Month	12	15
LAND AREA - 2 SQUARE MILES	Better Streets Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	5
		TOTAL	30	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Morgan Hill - 4	Library, Culture, & Arts Commission	Once A Month	12	7
POPULATION - 44,513	Park & Rec Commission	Once A Month	12	7
LAND AREA - 13 SQUARE MILES	Planning Commission	Twice A Month	24	7
	Youth Commission	Once A Month	12	N/A
		TOTAL	60	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Mountain View - 11	Development Review Committee	Twice A Month	24	3
POPULATION - 81,527	Environmental Planning Commission	Twice A Month	24	7
LAND AREA - 12 SQUARE MILES	Human Relations Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Library Commission	Once A Month	12	5
	Parks & Rec Commission	Once A Month	12	5
	Performing Arts Committee	Once A Month	12	5
	Public Safety Advisory Board	Once A Month	12	7
	Rental Housing Committee	Once A Month	12	6
	Senior Advisory Committee	Once A Month	12	7
	Visual Arts Committee	Once A Month	12	7
	Youth Advisory Committee	Once A Month	12	23
		TOTAL	156	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Palo Alto - 8	Architectural Review Board	Twice A Month	24	5
POPULATION - 69,721	Historic Resources Board	Twice A Month	24	7
LAND AREA - 26 SQUARE MILES	Human Relations Commission	Once A Month	12	5
	Parks & Rec Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Planning & Transportation Commission	Twice A Month	24	7
	Public Art Commission	Once A Month	12	5
	Utilities Advisory Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	7
	Stormwater Management Committee	Once A Month	12	7
		TOTAL	126	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Santa Clara - 8	Board of Library Trustees	Once A Month	12	5
POPULATION - 129,604	Civil Service Commission	Once A Month	12	5
LAND AREA - 18 SQUARE MILES	Cultural Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Historical Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Parks & Rec Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Planning Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Senior Advisory Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Youth Commission	Once A Month	12	17
		TOTAL	96	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Saratoga - 7	Heritage Preservation Commission	Once A Month	12	5
POPULATION - 31,435	Library Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	5
LAND AREA - 13 SQUARE MILES	Parks & Rec Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	5
	Planning Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Public Art Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	5
	Traffic Safety Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	5
	Youth Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	11
		TOTAL	54	

CITY	COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD	FREQUENCY	MEETINGS	MEMBERS
Sunnyvale - 8	Art Commission	Once A Month	12	5
POPULATION - 153,389	Bike & Ped Advisory Commission	Once A Month	12	7
LAND AREA - 23 SQUARE MILES	Board of Library Trustees	Once A Month	12	5
	Heritage Preservation Commission	Once Every Other Month	6	7
	Housing & Human Services Commission	Once A Month	12	7
	Park & Rec Commission	Once A Month	12	5
	Planning Commission	Twice A Month	24	7
	Sustainability Commission	Once A Month	12	7
		TOTAL	102	

Chapter 2.08 CITY COMMISSIONS GENERALLY

Sections:

2.08.010 Creation of commissions.

There are hereby established the following commissions in the city, with the following regular voting members:

- A. Environmental commission: Seven members;
- B. Financial commission: Seven members;
- C. Historical commission: Seven members;
- D. Library commission: Seven members;
- E. Parks and recreation commission: Seven members;
- F. Planning and transportation commission: Seven members;
- G. Design review commission: Five members;
- H. Youth commission: Eleven (11) members; from school grades seven through twelve (12);
- I. Senior Commission: Seven members, age fifty-five (55) or older. Exceptions may be made for individuals with special skills which may benefit seniors;
- J. Public arts commission: Seven members; and
- K. Bicycle and pedestrian advisory commission: Seven members.

(Ord. 08-326 § 1)

(Ord. No. 2011-369, § 1, 8-23-2011; Ord. No. 2011-374, §§ 1, 2, 11-22-2011; Ord. No. 2012-379, §§ 1, 2, 5-22-2012; Ord. No. 2013-391, § 1, 3-26-2013; Ord. No. 2016-420, § 1, 6-28-2016)

2.08.020 Membership.

- A. All voting members shall be appointed by the council, with the following exceptions:
 - 1. Five members of the library commission shall be appointed by the council and two members of the library commission shall be appointed by the Town of Los Altos Hills city council; and
 - 2. Five members of the senior commission shall be appointed by the council and two members of the senior commission shall be appointed by the Town of Los Altos Hills City Council.
- B. All voting commissioners shall be residents of the city, except that:
 - 1. Three voting members of the library commission need not be residents;
 - 2. Two voting members of the historical commission need not be residents provided the criteria of Section 2.12.010 are met; and
 - 3. Two voting members of the senior commission need not be residents.

(Prior code § 2-5.02)

(Ord. No. 2011-369, § 2, 8-23-2011; Ord. No. 2013-391, §§ 2, 3, 3-26-2013)

2.08.030 Terms, appointments, and vacancies.

- A. Commissioners, with the exception of senior and youth commissioners, shall serve for a term of four years and may be reappointed to one additional four-year term. Terms shall be staggered and expire on the last day of March or September. A commissioner shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Council and may be removed prior to the expiration of his or her term by a majority vote of the Council, and such removal may be with or without cause.
- B. Senior commissioners shall serve two-year terms with incumbents eligible to serve a total of four, two-year terms, in addition to an unexpired term. Terms shall be staggered and expire on the last day of March.
- C. Youth commissioners shall be appointed from school grades seven through twelve (12) and shall serve two-year terms with incumbents eligible to reapply for appointment for terms through and including their senior year. Terms shall be staggered and expire on June 30th.
- D. A commissioner appointed to fill an unexpired term may be eligible for reappointment to an additional two terms.
- E. The two term limit shall apply to consecutive terms only. After a lapse of two years, a former commissioner may reapply for an appointment to any commission desired as a new applicant. The two-year lapse between appointments shall apply only to service on one commission. Upon leaving one commission, an individual may apply for an appointment to any other commission at any time.
- F. Appointments to each commission shall be made as terms expire or when unanticipated vacancies occur.
- G. Vacancies on any commission shall be filled by a majority vote of the council, except that the Town of Los Altos Hills City Council may fill two vacancies on the library commission and two vacancies on the senior commission. An individual appointed to fill a vacancy prior to the expiration of the term for which his or her predecessor was appointed shall serve for such unexpired term.

(Prior code § 2-5.03)

(Ord. No. 2011-369, § 3, 8-23-2011; Ord. No. 2013-391, § 4, 3-26-2013; Ord. No. 2016-420, § 2, 6-28-2016)

2.08.040 Compensation.

Commissioners shall serve without compensation. The council may approve payment to commissioners of expenses incurred by them in their official capacity.

(Prior code § 2-5.04)

2.08.050 Organization.

Annually, each commission shall elect one of its members as chair and one as vice-chair, each to serve a one-year term. Each commission shall provide the time, place, and manner for holding regular and special meetings. A majority of the authorized membership of a commission shall constitute a quorum of that commission. All meetings of the commission as a whole, or any standing subcommittees, shall be open to the public and noticed in accordance with the California "Ralph M. Brown Act."

(Supp. No. 39 Update 1)

(Prior code § 2-5.05)

(Ord. No. 2011-369, § 4, 8-23-2011)

2.08.060 Powers and duties of the planning commission.

The planning commission shall have those powers and duties given it by the State Planning Act (Title 7 of Chapter 3 of the Government Code of the state, commencing with Section 65100), as amended from time to time, and such other powers as granted it by the other provisions of this Municipal Code, or as may be entrusted to it by the council from time to time, and shall submit an annual report to the council.

(Prior code § 2-5.06)

(Ord. No. 2012-379, § 3, 5-22-2012; Ord. No. 2017-434 , § 1, 9-26-2017)

2.08.070 Powers and duties of the library commission.

The library commission shall act in an advisory capacity to the council in all matters pertaining to the city library, shall cooperate with other governmental agencies and civic groups in the promotion of adequate and efficient library service to the citizens of the community, shall make budget recommendations to the council with regard to the library, and shall submit an annual report to the council.

(Prior code § 2-5.07)

2.08.080 Powers and duties of the parks and recreation commission.

The parks and recreation commission shall act in an advisory capacity to the council in all matters pertaining to parks and public recreation and shall cooperate with all other governmental agencies and civic groups in the advancement of sound parks and recreational planning and programming, shall make budget recommendations to the council with regard to parks and recreation, and shall submit an annual report to the council.

(Ord. 00-388 § 2: prior code § 2-5.08)

(Ord. No. 2011-374, § 3, 11-22-2011)

2.08.090 Powers and duties of the historical commission.

The historical commission shall have those powers and duties granted it by Section 2.12.030 of the Los Altos Municipal Code and/or as may be entrusted to it by the council from time to time and shall submit an annual report to the council.

(Prior code § 2-5.09)

2.08.100 Powers and duties of the youth commission.

The youth commission shall act in an advisory capacity to the city council on matters relating to youth interests, youth concerns, and the need for outreach services. The city council's youth commission interview committee shall interview commission applicants and recommend appointments.

(Prior code § 2-5.10)

(Supp. No. 39 Update 1)

(Ord. No. 2016-420 , § 3, 6-28-2016)

2.08.110 Powers and duties of the design review commission.

The design review commission shall have those powers and duties granted it by other provisions of this Municipal Code, or as may be entrusted to it by the council from time to time, and shall submit an annual report to the council.

(Ord. 03-255 § 2)

(Ord. No. 2012-379, § 4, 5-22-2012)

2.08.120 Powers and duties of the environmental commission.

The commission shall have those powers and duties entrusted to it by the council from time to time, and shall submit an annual report to the council. The environmental commission studies and makes recommendations to council on issues that affect the natural and built environment in the city and the region. Additional duties include special projects as directed by the council.

(Ord. 08-326 § 2)

2.08.130 Powers and duties of the financial commission.

The commission shall have those powers and duties entrusted to it by the council including:

- A. Annual review of the investment policy;
- B. Annual review of independent financial audit;
- C. Review of auditor selection process;
- D. Review of financial projections and assumptions. This especially relates to review of revenue projections provided in the annual mid-year report which are used biennially as the basis for the service and financial plan;
- E. Special projects as directed by the council, city manager or finance director; and
- F. Submission of an annual report to the council.

The financial commission provides resident input to the council and staff regarding financial policy issues, and promotes resident participation and understanding regarding the financial condition of the city.

(Ord. 08-326 § 3)

2.08.140 Powers and duties of the senior commission.

The joint Los Altos/Los Altos Hills senior commission shall act in an advisory capacity to the council in all matters relating to senior interests and concerns, shall make recommendations aimed at improving the life of seniors, and shall submit an annual report to the council.

(Ord. No. 2011-369, § 5, 8-23-2011; Ord. No. 2016-420 , § 4, 6-28-2016)

2.08.150 Powers and duties of the public arts commission.

- A. The public arts commission shall act in an advisory capacity to the council in all matters pertaining to public arts programs sponsored by the city. It shall take an active role in bringing about public awareness of the visual arts as well as in the definition, execution and promotion of those programs which include, but are not limited to, exhibition of sculpture, paintings, photography, video and other visual arts. The commission shall submit an annual report to the council.
- B. The primary focus of the commission is the public outdoor sculpture loan program. The commission will conduct sculpture searches, evaluate and recommend sculptures, identify sculpture locations and work with city staff on placement and maintenance of sculptures. The commission will also assist the city with ensuring that all conditions and agreements are being met. In addition, the commission will promote artists' works through media exposure of the sculpture program.

(Ord. No. 2011-374, § 4, 11-22-2011)

2.08.160 Powers and duties of the complete streets commission.

- Help to create multi-modal transportation solutions and policies that enable safe, attractive, comfortable and independent access and travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists of all ages and abilities, including connectivity across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Shall advise the council on existing and proposed city policies related to traffic calming and traffic enforcement.
- Shall advise the council on projects and budget priorities for transportation-related capital improvements.
- Provide for community engagement and serve as a conduit for community input.

(Ord. No. 2012-379, § 5, 5-22-2012; Ord. No. 2017-434 , § 1, 9-26-2017)

2.08.170 Role of staff liaison.

The city manager, or his/her designee, shall appoint an individual to serve as liaison to each commission. The role of the staff liaison is to assist the commission in carrying out its responsibilities. Duties of the staff liaison shall include attending all meetings of the commission, preparing agendas in collaboration with the chair, ensuring agendas and reports are posted in compliance with state law and city protocols, researching and preparing reports for the commission, as is consistent with the work plan and/or council direction, preparing action minutes for approval by the commission, preparing reports from the commission to the council, serving as the liaison between the commission and other city staff, communicating directions from the city council to the commission, and staying apprised of new laws and city protocols related to their assigned commission or commissions generally.

(Ord. No. 2016-420 , § 5, 6-28-2016)

Chapter 2.12 HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Sections:

2.12.010 Creation—Qualification and residency of members.

A historical commission consisting of seven unpaid members, with the following qualifications, shall be appointed by the city council:

- A. Two members who, by reason of training and experience, are (1) knowledgeable in the field of construction and structural rehabilitation, such as a licensed architect, engineer or contractor; or (2) social/architectural historian, archeologist and/or urban planner. Such members must either reside or have a place of business within the city; provided, however, with the approval of the city council, any such members who do not maintain an office within the city may reside within the geographic area covered by the 94022 and 94024 U.S. Postal Service zip codes.
- B. Five members appointed at large having demonstrated interest in preservation of the historic resources within the city. Such members must be residents of the city.
- C. The original appointment of members of the commission shall be as provided in Section 2.08.030 of this title.

The term of office of members of the commission shall be as provided in Section 2.08.030 of this title.

(Prior code § 2-8.201)

2.12.020 Organization.

- A. The commission shall elect annually, on or before January 31st, one of its members to serve in the office of chairman, and may elect such other officers from among its members as designated in its charter. Should a mid-year vacancy in any office occur, the commission shall elect a replacement officer at the next regular or noticed special meeting to serve until the next annual election of officers.
- B. The planning director or her/his authorized representative shall act as secretary for the historical commission, shall be the custodian of its records, shall conduct official correspondence, and shall generally supervise the clerical and technical work performed at the request or on behalf of the historical commission.
- C. The historical commission shall meet monthly, or more frequently upon call of the chairman or commission staff, as necessary. All meetings shall be open to the public and a public record shall be kept of all commission proceedings and actions.

A majority of commissioners shall constitute a quorum, with the chairman having a vote. The city council shall prescribe rules and regulations for the conduct of its business, thereafter, giving the powers and authority to perform the duties hereinafter enumerated.

(Prior code § 2-8.202)

2.12.030 Powers and duties.

The historical commission shall be advisory only. It shall advise the city council, the planning commission and the agencies and departments of the city. The historical commission shall establish liaison and work in conjunction with such authorities to implement the purposes of this chapter. The historical commission shall have the following powers and duties:

- A. Conduct, or cause to be conducted, a comprehensive survey of properties within the boundaries of the city for the purpose of establishing the historic resources inventory. To qualify for inclusion in the historic resources inventory, a property must satisfy the criteria listed in this chapter. The inventory

shall be publicized and periodically updated, and a copy thereof shall be kept on file in the planning department;

- B. Recommend to the city council specific proposals for designation as an historic landmark or historic district;
- C. Recommend to the appropriate city agencies or departments, projects and action programs for the recognition, conservation, enhancement and use of the city's historic resources, including standards to be followed with respect to any applications for permits to construct, change, alter, remodel, remove or otherwise affect such resources;
- D. Review and comment upon existing or proposed ordinances, plans or policies of the city as they relate to historic resources;
- E. Review and comment upon all applications for building demolition or grading permits involving work to be performed upon or within a designated historic landmark or historic district, and all applications for tentative map approval, rezoning, building site approval, use permit, variance approval, design review or other approval pertaining to or significantly affecting any historic resource. The commission's comments shall be forwarded to the city agency or department processing the application within thirty (30) days after receiving the request for such comments;
- F. Investigate and report to the city council on the availability of federal, state, county, local or private funding sources or programs for the rehabilitation and preservation of historic resources;
- G. Cooperate with county, state and federal governments and with private organizations in the pursuit of the objectives of historical preservation, with the approval of and at the direction of the city council;
- H. Provide resource information on the restoration, alteration, decoration, landscaping or maintenance of any cultural resource including the landmark, landmark site, historic district, or neighboring property within public view;
- I. Participate in, promote and conduct public information and educational programs pertaining to historic resources;
- J. Perform such other functions as may be delegated to it by resolution or motion of the city council;
- K. Cooperate with the association of the Los Altos historical museum;
- L. Submit an annual report to the city council; and
- M. Review and make its recommendation to the planning director on all permit applications pursuant to Article 3, Sections 12.44.100 through 12.44.170.

(Ord. 08-330 § 1)

Los Altos Commission Discussion

Gabriel Engeland, City Manager
March 28, 2023



Los Altos Commissions

- Los Altos has more Commissions, that meet more frequently, and have more members than peer Cities
- Most Commissions do have specific powers/duties defined in the Municipal Code
- Workplans from Commissions without definition of powers and duties often are not based on Council goals or budget, and lead to role confusion with Staff
- Commissions composition and meeting frequency is based on a “standard” application as opposed to workplan or expectations



Los Altos Commissions

Does the City Council wish to:

- *Make changes to the establishment of the workplan by defining powers and duties?*
- *Make changes to the frequency of Commission meetings, the number of Commissioners, and/or the number of total Commissions?*
- *Provide direction to Staff to make amendments or other changes to Commission handbook with regards to subcommittee use and other items as presented at the City Council retreat?*



Council Discussion and Direction

City staff is proposing the following after meeting with the Commission Chairs:

- 1) Certain Commissions can operate without changes
- 2) Certain Commissions can operate with limited recommended changes
- 3) Certain Commissions require Council direction prior to a recommendation being made



Commissions With No Recommended Changes

- Planning Commission
- Senior Commission
- Youth Commission



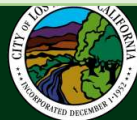
Planning Commission

	Current	Changes Discussed
<i>Powers and Duties Defined</i>	Yes	No
<i>Membership</i>	7	No
<i>Meeting Frequency</i>	Twice Monthly	No
<i>Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Planning Commission is a requirement of the State. • No changes are recommended. 	
<i>Recommendation</i>	Powers and Duties	No Changes Recommended
	Membership	No Changes Recommended
	Meeting Frequency	No Changes Recommended
	Potential Consolidation	Not Eligible



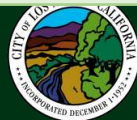
Senior Commission

	Current	Changes Discussed
<i>Powers and Duties Defined</i>	No	No
<i>Membership</i>	7 (2 LAH)	5 (1 LAH), 7 (2 LAH)
<i>Meeting Frequency</i>	Monthly	6, 12
<i>Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powers and duties not clearly defined. • Potential vacancy issue with LAH membership. 	
<i>Recommendation</i>	Powers and Duties	No Changes Recommended
	Membership	No Changes Recommended
	Meeting Frequency	No Changes Recommended
	Potential Consolidation	Eligible: Powers and Duties could be absorbed



Youth Commission

	Current	Changes Discussed
<i>Powers and Duties Defined</i>	No	No
<i>Membership</i>	11	No
<i>Meeting Frequency</i>	Monthly	6, 12
<i>Notes</i>	No changes are recommended.	
<i>Recommendation</i>	Powers and Duties	No Changes Recommended
	Membership	No Changes Recommended
	Meeting Frequency	No Changes Recommended
	Potential Consolidation	Eligible: Powers and Duties could be absorbed



Commissions With Limited Recommended Changes

- Historical Commission



Historical Commission

	Current	Changes Discussed
<i>Powers and Duties Defined</i>	Yes	No
<i>Membership</i>	7	5
<i>Meeting Frequency</i>	Monthly	4
<i>Notes</i>	The powers and duties are defined in the municipal code and can be completed with quarterly meetings.	
<i>Recommendation</i>	Powers and Duties	No Changes
	Membership	Recommendation: 5
	Meeting Frequency	Recommendation: Quarterly (4)
	Potential Consolidation	Eligible (w/Planning Commission)



Commissions With Recommended Changes/Direction Needed

- Complete Streets Commission
- Environmental Commission
- Financial Commission
- Library Commission
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Public Arts Commission



Complete Streets Commission

	Current	Changes Discussed
<i>Powers and Duties Defined</i>	No	Yes
<i>Membership</i>	7	5, 7
<i>Meeting Frequency</i>	Monthly	6, 8, 10
<i>Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The powers and duties in the Municipal Code do not match workplan. • There is role confusion between Commission and Staff. 	
<i>Recommendation</i>	Powers and Duties	Changes are Recommended
	Membership	Changes are Recommended
	Meeting Frequency	Changes are Recommended
	Potential Consolidation	Eligible (w/Planning Commission)



Environmental Commission

	Current	Changes Discussed
<i>Powers and Duties Defined</i>	No	Yes
<i>Membership</i>	7	5, 7
<i>Meeting Frequency</i>	Monthly	6, 8, 12
<i>Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The powers and duties in the Municipal Code do not match workplan. • There is role confusion between Commission and Staff. 	
<i>Recommendation</i>	Powers and Duties	Changes are Recommended
	Membership	Changes are Recommended
	Meeting Frequency	Changes are Recommended
	Potential Consolidation	Not Eligible



Financial Commission

	Current	Changes Discussed
<i>Powers and Duties Defined</i>	Yes	No
<i>Membership</i>	7	5, 7
<i>Meeting Frequency</i>	Monthly	6, 8, 10
<i>Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair agrees that fewer meetings could accomplish workplan. • Discussion on composition/membership requires direction. 	
<i>Recommendation</i>	Powers and Duties	No Changes Recommended
	Membership	Changes are recommended
	Meeting Frequency	Changes are recommended
	Potential Consolidation	Not Eligible



Library Commission

	Current	Changes Discussed
<i>Powers and Duties Defined</i>	No	Yes
<i>Membership</i>	7 (2 LAH)	5 (1 LAH), 7 (2 LAH)
<i>Meeting Frequency</i>	Monthly	6, 12
<i>Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion regarding different entities and their role with the Library. • Workplan does not reflect powers and duties. 	
<i>Recommendation</i>	Powers and Duties	Changes are Recommended
	Membership	Changes are Recommended
	Meeting Frequency	Changes are Recommended
	Potential Consolidation	Eligible: NCLA, County Library JPA, PARC



Parks and Recreation Commission

	Current	Changes Discussed
<i>Powers and Duties Defined</i>	No	No
<i>Membership</i>	7	5, 7
<i>Meeting Frequency</i>	Monthly	4, 6, 12
<i>Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The powers & duties in the Municipal Code do not match workplan. 	
<i>Recommendation</i>	Powers and Duties	Changes are recommended
	Membership	Changes are recommended
	Meeting Frequency	Changes are recommended
	Potential Consolidation	Eligible: Public Arts, Youth, Senior, Library



Public Arts Commission

	Current	Changes Discussed
<i>Powers and Duties Defined</i>	Yes	Yes
<i>Membership</i>	7	5, 7
<i>Meeting Frequency</i>	Monthly	6
<i>Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further clarity could be provided surrounding the use of Public Art Funds. 	
<i>Recommendation</i>	Powers and Duties	No Changes recommended
	Membership	Changes are recommended
	Meeting Frequency	Changes are recommended
	Potential Consolidation	Eligible: PARC, Library



Next Steps

- Receive Council Direction
- Return with recommended changes, if any, at a regular Council Meeting





PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE

The following is public correspondence received by the City Clerk's Office after the posting of the original agenda. Individual contact information has been redacted for privacy. This may *not* be a comprehensive collection of the public correspondence, but staff makes its best effort to include all correspondence received to date.

To send correspondence to the City Council, on matters listed on the agenda please email PublicComment@losaltosca.gov

From: [Jim Wing](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item 01 Meeting Date 03/28/2023 Los Altos Commission Review
Date: Sunday, March 26, 2023 3:31:01 PM

Los Altos Mayor Meadows and Distinguished Council Members,

Subject: Council 03/28/2023 Study Session, Los Altos Commission Review

As a 55 year “individual contributor customer” to Los Altos Commissions, I recommend you do everything possible to reduce amount of Staff time required for support of commissions. Los Altos needs staff doing their jobs, not spending time preparing commission reports, attending long meetings, and sometimes “baby sitting” meeting discussions. In my opinion, commission’s main function is a public forum to educate Council, staff, and consultants on 24 / 7 dynamics of Los Altos. They also serve as a public comment buffer for Council Members. I understand the many man-months of staff time required to administer commission operation and how that limits staff from doing their main jobs. With that in mind, I recommend you disband / change meeting frequency for the following Commissions:

Disband

- **Senior Commission** – Most meetings appear to be social with rambling conversations. I am sensitive to this, since I am an “old guy”. Ad-hoc committee organized by Senior Center staff may be most efficient way to provide a voice to Council on senior needs
- **Design Commission** – Housing Element requires disbandment and is in process. Meetings often led to neighbors disagreeing with each other and friendships broken.
- **Library Commission** – Los Altos has limited control on what Library does.

Meeting Frequency to every other month

- **Environmental** – Almost all projects are done by ad-hoc committees that use full commission meetings to only review status. No need to review status every month. Most projects require several months of committee work.
- **Youth** – In my opinion, this commission’s main function is youth education for how city government works. Most projects are a work in progress and do not need a meeting every month.
- **Public Arts** – Agendas are mostly general discussions of potential projects with very few action items.
- **Historical** – Many meetings are canceled. Los Altos may have already certified our “stock” of historical / Mills Act homes. Not many homes are left that may qualify.
- **Financial** – Except for deadlines in budget cycle, agendas are light. I attended meeting a couple years ago, and was welcomed because almost no public members ever attend.
- **Complete Streets** – Now that CSMP is done, meetings are basically staff reports on engineering project backlog. Project backlog status could be posted on CSC web page and eliminate oral report. With engineering staff at reduced levels, progress on projects remains the same month to month.

Thank you for your consideration! Jim Wing, Milverton Road, Los Altos, CA

Jim Wing, Milverton Road, Los Altos, Ca

