



EDINA MINNESOTA

City Council Work Session Meeting Agenda

June 2, 2026, 5:30 PM

Edina City Hall, Community Room, 4801 W. 50th St.



Accessibility Support:

The City of Edina wants all residents to be comfortable being part of the public process. If you need assistance in the way of hearing amplification, an interpreter, large-print documents or something else, please call 952-927-8861 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting.

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Meeting Topics

3.1. 2027-2028 Commission Work Plan Kick-Off

3.2. Human Rights & Engagement Task Force and Commission Review

4. Adjournment



Item Number: 3.1

Department: Administration

Item Activity: Discussion

Prepared By: MJ Lamon, Special Projects & Engagement Manager

Item Title: 2027–2028 Commission Work Plan Kick-Off

Action Requested:

Discussion only.

Information/Background:

The City Council establishes commissions to provide residents with opportunities to serve the community, advise City Council, and contribute to City projects and priorities. In December 2024, the City introduced a new two-year commission work plan process to support longer-term planning and better alignment with Council priorities.

Purpose of the Work Session

This joint work session is intended to help launch the 2027–2028 work plan process. The session provides an opportunity for City Council and commissions to discuss priorities, clarify direction, and identify where commissions can best support Council goals before formal work plans are developed.

There will be no formal presentations. The discussion will focus on future priorities and areas of focus for each commission.

Expectations for Commission Members

Commission members should be prepared to:

- Share ongoing responsibilities, areas of work, and key themes for consideration in the two-year work plan
- Ask questions about priorities, scope, or direction
- Listen to Council feedback and guidance
- Share City Council feedback and direction with the full commission during future work plan discussions

Expectations for City Council

City Council members should be prepared to:

- Provide direction on potential work plan topics and priorities
- Identify where commissions can add the most value
- Share any policy, legal, staffing, or budget considerations that may affect commission work
- Ask clarifying questions to support shared understanding

Two-Year Work Plan Framework

Work plans should:

- Focus on 4–5 major initiatives or ongoing responsibilities
- Align with City priorities, budget values, or required duties in City Code or State Statute
- Consider a phased approach, such as study and report in Year 1 and recommendations in Year 2
- Be realistic based on commissioner and staff capacity

Next Steps

Following the work session:

- Commissions will continue developing their proposed work plans
- Final draft work plans will be submitted to Administration in September 2026
- Commission chairs will present proposed work plans in October
- Staff review commission work plans in November
- 2027–2028 work plans will be approved in December

Presentation Order

1. Community Health Commission
2. Arts & Culture Commission
3. Parks & Recreation Commission

Resources/Financial Impacts:

Work plan priorities may impact future budgets, staff capacity, consultant support, and departmental work plans. When providing direction, Council should consider the level of staff resources, project funding, and ongoing operational support needed to complete proposed work plan items.

Relationship to City Policies/Plans/Budget Pillars:

The commission work plans are part of the City’s broader operational work planning framework, similar to departmental work plans. They help organize, prioritize, and align commission work with City priorities, operational needs, and budget pillars.



Better Together

Values Impact:



Engagement

The commission work plan process creates an opportunity for City Council and advisory bodies to align priorities, clarify expectations, and support meaningful resident participation in local government. The two-year planning framework also encourages more intentional and transparent conversations about where commissions can provide the greatest value to City decision-making.



Stewardship

Establishing focused and realistic work plans helps ensure City staff time, commissioner efforts, and public resources are used effectively. Aligning commission work with organizational priorities and operational capacity supports responsible stewardship of City resources while reducing duplication and inefficiencies.

Supporting Documentation:

Documents marked with "Board Portal" do not meet [ADA Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(URL\)](#) and are not included in the public packet. To request a board portal document, please [submit a data request \(URL\)](#).

None



Item Number: 3.2

Department: Administration

Item Activity: Discussion

Prepared By: MJ Lamon, Special Projects & Engagement Manager

Item Title: Human Rights & Engagement Task Force and Commission Review

Action Requested:

Discussion only.

Information/Background:

PART I: Closure of Human Rights & Engagement Task Force Work (Fall 2025)

1. Summary

The Human Rights and Engagement Task Force was established in accordance with Council-approved Task Force charge. The Task Force was asked to participate in the development of an Equity Strategic Action Plan (ESAP), examine barriers and opportunities related to community participation in decision-making, and provide recommendations to Council related to improvements to engagement practices and the structure and scope of advisory commissions.

The Task Force completed its work and submitted a final set of recommendations to City Council prior to December 2025. The Task Force provided thoughtful input on equity, engagement, and participation in City decision-making. Based on the nature and scope of the recommendations, staff requested the opportunity to evaluate the recommendations within the context of the City's broader organizational structure, advisory system, and evolving approach to community engagement. City Council agreed to allow staff time to complete this broader review before considering potential next steps.

2. Background and Formation of the Task Force

The Equity and Engagement Task Force was established by City Council in December 2024 and began meeting in January 2025. The Task Force was composed of current members of the Human Rights and Relations Commission and was charged with examining how the City engages residents in decision-making processes, with a focus on equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Consistent with its charter, the Task Force was asked to:

- Review best practices for community engagement and commission structures
- Assist staff in the development of the Equity Strategic Action Plan (ESAP)
- Participate in the completion of the Diamond Inclusiveness Assessment and review related survey data
- Examine barriers and opportunities related to inclusive participation in City decision-making
- Develop recommendations for improvements to commission structure and community engagement practices

3. Summary of Task Force Work

The Task Force met throughout 2025 and engaged in discussions, research, and community input consistent with its chartered methodology. This included:

- Reviewing best practices for community engagement and advisory structures
- Engaging in discussion regarding barriers to participation in commissions and civic processes
- Considering survey data and input from existing commissioners and applicants
- Exploring alternative models for community participation in decision-making
- Identifying opportunities to improve how the City integrates equity and inclusion into engagement practices

The Task Force produced a set of recommendations intended to inform improvements to both community engagement practices and the structure of advisory commissions.

- **Recruitment:** Broaden participation in the selection process and strengthen applicant understanding through expanded interview panels, video screening, and clearer role expectations.
- **Inclusion:** Enhance equity and belonging by improving commissioner onboarding, partnering with community nonprofits, and expanding student voting rights.
- **Communication:** Increase clarity and transparency in the communication flow between City Council, staff, and commissions.
- **Roles & Collaboration:** Create structured opportunities for cross-commission collaboration on shared priorities.
- **ABC Commission:** Establish an Accessibility, Belonging & Community (ABC) Commission to advance equity, inclusion, and community engagement as a core advisory function.

These recommendations reflected a broad range of ideas, including potential changes to commission structure, engagement methods, and approaches to incorporating community voice in City decision-making.

4. Current City Approach to Human Rights, Equity, and Engagement Work

Over the years, the City has developed and expanded multiple structures and initiatives that address many of the same themes:

- The Multicultural Advisory Committee provides ongoing cultural and community perspective to City staff through Police Department liaisons, including culturally appropriate responses to sensitive community incidents.
- The Community Health Commission integrates equity, inclusion, and access into its work through consideration of the social determinants of health.
- The City has incorporated the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) framework into its community engagement practices to support more intentional, accessible, and inclusive

public participation processes.

- The City's engagement framework strengthens inclusive participation and transparency across projects and initiatives.
- The City participates in regional partnerships, including the Joint Community Policing Partnership, which provides opportunities to collaborate on community relationship-building, policing practices, and regional engagement efforts.
- The City's updated special events and community support processes provide structured pathways for partnerships with organizations that also champion human rights, inclusion, and engagement in Edina.
- The City's budget and work plan initiative to refine community engagement efforts has expanded shorter-term, project-based engagement opportunities, including programs such as Edina U.
- The City has launched efforts to connect with renters and recently formed a cross-departmental team dedicated to identifying effective ways to engage residents who rent, management companies, and property owners.

5. Structural Assessment: Commission Model

Based on this review, staff does not recommend establishing a standalone advisory commission related to accessibility, belonging and community engagement. Several factors informed this assessment:

- The City has expanded community engagement methods that are more flexible and accessible to residents with varying levels of availability and interest.
- Human rights, equity, inclusion, and engagement considerations are increasingly integrated across City operations, policies, projects, and engagement efforts rather than concentrated within a single advisory body.
- The City's current approach emphasizes embedding these perspectives throughout decision-making processes and community engagement practices.
- The City's organizational staffing structure has evolved and professionalized over the years with more established processes, staff support, and engagement tools to incorporate equity and inclusion considerations across departments and initiatives.
- The City has an operational responsibility related to accessibility, which includes an ADA Coordinator position responsible for supporting compliance, accessibility planning, and organizational coordination related to accessibility needs.

For these reasons, staff recommends continuing to strengthen equity, accessibility, inclusion and engagement efforts through integrated City processes, operational practices, and flexible community engagement opportunities rather than through the creation of an additional advisory body structure.

6. Conclusion: Transition to System-Wide Review

While the Human Rights & Engagement Task Force provided valuable insight, it also highlighted broader questions about how the City structures advisory input. Staff conducted a review of all boards

and commissions to evaluate how well current structures support City Council decision-making and community engagement.

PART II: Boards & Commissions System Review

7. Review Objectives & Opportunities

The purpose of this review was to evaluate the City's existing advisory structures and identify opportunities for process improvements related to commission purpose, alignment, participation, communication, and overall effectiveness. The review was informed by three primary sources: 1) the Spring 2025 Board & Commission Experience Survey (43 responses), 2) staff liaison feedback, and 3) findings and discussions from the Human Rights & Engagement Task Force.. Through the review process, several key objectives emerged:

- Clarify the role of advisory bodies in City decision-making
- Better align commission work with Council priorities and community needs
- Create more flexible and accessible participation opportunities
- Improve communication and expectations between Council, commissions, and staff
- Support effective, collaborative, and responsive advisory discussions

The review also identified strengths within the current system that should continue to be supported. Feedback from commissioners and staff showed advisory bodies are most effective when they:

- Provide community perspective on City projects and initiatives
- Serve as a sounding board on emerging issues
- Build relationships between residents and local government
- Bring forward lived experience and community perspectives
- Create opportunities for civic participation and community leadership

The recommendations included in this report are intended to build on these strengths while addressing the structural challenges identified throughout the review process.

8. Key Themes from Survey and Staff Liaison Feedback

Key Themes

Theme 1: Unclear
Role and Purpose

- Commissioners expressed uncertainty about authority and scope
- Need clarification regarding the advisory function: the role

is to advise the Council, not the staff.

- Lack of clarity on how work plans are developed and supported

Theme 2: Disconnect Between Work Plans and City Needs

- Difficulty advising on emerging issues when commission input is valuable
- Perception that work is created to sustain commissions rather than respond to need
- Work plans can be disconnected from real-time City priorities

Theme 3: Communication and Feedback Gaps

- Limited clarity from Council on expectations for commission work
- Inconsistent feedback on recommendations
- Lack of clear “close the loop” communication after work is completed

Theme 4: Meeting Structure and Effectiveness

- Meetings described as too long or unfocused
- Desire for more efficient and outcome-driven meetings

Theme 5: Engagement, Inclusion and Accessibility

- Desire for broader and more diverse participation
- Interest in shorter-term, more flexible engagement opportunities
- Concerns about representation and accessibility within standing commissions

Theme 6: Value of Targeted Advisory Input

- Strong value when commissions are engaged on specific, defined projects
- Less value when work is disconnected from active City priorities
- Commissions are most effective as structured sounding boards rather than ongoing work generators

9. Decision-Making Effectiveness Considerations

Research on effective decision-making groups indicates that smaller groups tend to function more efficiently and effectively, particularly when focused on deliberation and consensus-building. Larger groups can introduce challenges related to participation balance, meeting efficiency, and decision clarity.

This research, combined with City feedback, suggests the importance of evaluating both the size and structure of advisory bodies to ensure they are appropriately designed for their intended purpose.

10. Staff Recommended Actions

Before outlining the specific recommended actions, it is important to note that these recommendations diverge from more traditional approaches to advisory body structures and respond directly to the recurring themes identified through the review. The recommendations are intended to improve flexibility, clarity, and effectiveness while balancing the need to be responsive to feedback without creating additional structural or operational challenges through overly reactive changes. Collectively, they aim to support a more adaptable and sustainable advisory system aligned with the City's decision-making and community engagement goals.

Recommendation 1: Discontinue Formal Work Plans for Select Commissions

Discontinue formal work plan requirements for the Planning Commission and Heritage Preservation Commission, recognizing their distinct statutory and project-based responsibilities. This would reduce unnecessary administrative processes and allow these commissions to focus on their core functions and emerging project needs.

Themes Addressed: Misalignment of Work Plans and City Needs; Unclear Role and Purpose

Recommendation 2: Allow Flexible Commission Meeting Schedules

Allow commissions to determine their own meeting schedules, with the expectation that they will meet at least six times annually. This would allow meeting frequency to better reflect workload, project activity, and operational needs rather than a fixed monthly schedule.

Themes Addressed: Meeting Structure and Effectiveness; Staff Capacity and System Burden

Recommendation 3: Evaluate Consolidation of Overlapping Commissions

Conduct a targeted review of commissions with overlapping subject matter or scope to identify opportunities for consolidation, improved alignment, or restructuring. This approach could support broader perspectives, reduce siloed discussions, and create more efficient use of staff and volunteer resources.

Themes Addressed: Unclear Role and Purpose; Engagement, Inclusion, and Accessibility; Staff Capacity and System Burden

Recommendation 4: Reduce Overall Commission Size and Membership

Reduce the number of commissioners serving on individual advisory bodies to improve deliberation, individual ownership, and meeting effectiveness. Research on effective decision-making groups indicates that smaller groups tend to function more efficiently and effectively, particularly when focused on discussion and consensus-building. Studies referenced by decision-making researcher Erik Larson identify an optimal decision-making group size of approximately 4–6 people, with effectiveness declining as groups become larger. Larger groups can create challenges related to participation balance, meeting efficiency, coordination, and decision clarity. [Forbes article](#).

Themes Addressed: Meeting Structure and Effectiveness; Engagement, Inclusion, and Accessibility

11. Implementation Considerations

If Council chooses to move forward with any of the recommendations above, implementation should consider:

- Phased or pilot-based approaches prior to permanent structural changes
- Clear communication with current commissioners regarding changes in structure and expectations
- Process for evaluating changes, if any

12. Conclusion

This review demonstrates that while Edina's boards and commissions system provides opportunities for community engagement, it also presents structural challenges related to clarity of purpose, alignment with City priorities, and participation effectiveness. The intent of the recommendations is not to reduce community involvement, but to ensure that advisory structures are intentionally designed around City needs, support effective decision-making, and provide meaningful and accessible opportunities for resident participation.

Future direction will depend on Council discussion and identification of recommendations to consider, if any.

Supporting Documentation:

Documents marked with "Board Portal" do not meet [ADA Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(URL\)](#) and are not included in the public packet. To request a board portal document, please [submit a data request \(URL\)](#).

None