



Office of the City Manager

May 6, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: *DWR* Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Subject: **Resumption of certain Board and Commission meetings**

As you are aware, on March 12, 2020, I directed that most board and commission meetings be suspended for at least 60 days in order to help minimize the spread of COVID-19. Exceptions can be made if a board or commission has time-sensitive, legally mandated business to complete, subject to approval by the City Manager and Health Officer. On April 13, 2020, the City Council Agenda & Rules Committee recommended that this action remain in effect until it is determined by the City Manager, as the Director of Emergency Services, and the Health Officer that conditions are appropriate to resume meetings, while maintaining the health and safety of the community.

The purpose of this memo is to notify you that as of today, the Health Officer and I are authorizing certain board and commission meetings to resume with a virtual meeting format. In-person board/commission meetings are not authorized until further notice. Board/commission meetings will be held via Zoom, similar to the format being used by the City Council and City Council policy committees that have resumed meetings during the Shelter-in-Place Order.

Resuming certain board/commission meetings is necessary at this time to enable action on a range of time-sensitive issues. Examples include pending land use permit applications (some of which carry legal mandates for action within set time frames), land use policy efforts which are time-sensitive to address the acute housing crisis, and input required for pending tax decisions, such as to the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission regarding tax rates under Measure GG.

Board and commission meetings will be scheduled with enough lead time to allow agendas to be finalized, applicants and interested parties to be contacted, and public hearing notices to be posted. Staff are contacting board members/commissioners to let them know that certain boards/commissions are resuming. Members of the public may also reach out to commission secretaries (contact information is included on each commission webpage) to inquire about dates of future board/commission meetings.

Depending on the board/commission, initial virtual meetings will be scheduled in late May and June. Some commission meetings will take longer than others to schedule, as some of the same staff who are responsible for preparing commission meeting packets and notices are also serving as Disaster Service Workers. We appreciate everyone's patience as we move forward with next steps.

Boards/commissions that are authorized to resume meeting remotely are:

- Ashby and North Berkeley BART Station Zoning Standards Community Advisory Group
- Design Review Committee
- Disaster & Fire Safety Commission
- Fair Campaign Practices Commission
- Homeless Services Panel of Experts
- Housing Advisory Commission (limited to quasi-judicial activities)
- Joint Subcommittee on the Implementation of State Housing Laws
- Landmarks Preservation Commission
- Open Government Commission
- Personnel Board
- Planning Commission
- Police Review Commission
- Zoning Adjustments Board

I will consider authorizing additional boards/commissions to resume meeting on a case-by-case basis.

Web-based platforms allow board members/commissioners, staff, applicants, and members of the public to participate from their respective shelter-in-place locations. Commissioners who do not have access to a computer or internet will be provided with hard copies of all materials and can participate via phone.

Departments are organizing training on online meeting facilitation for staff and commission chairs, and we will hold practice runs to test out the technology.

Please contact me directly with any questions or concerns.

cc: Senior Leadership Team