



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Library
Jill Bourne

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: March 27, 2023

Approved

Date

SUBJECT: EXPANDING THE YOUTH COMMISSION AND ENHANCING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN THE CITY

RECOMMENDATION

- Maintain the current Youth Commission ages 14-20 and be more representative of the diversity of the City of San Jose.
- Compensate appointed Youth Commissioners as with stipends. This compensation for service allows for more economically diverse youth the ability to participate as well as increase engagement among Commissioners. This aligns with citywide movement to compensate commissioners from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Expand the advisory and recommendation powers of Youth Commission to City Council and the Mayor and, following the municipal code power and duties, designate youth representatives to other San Jose Commissions.

SUMMARY AND OUTCOME

Adopt suggested changes in the municipal code to provide stipends for appointed Youth Commissioners as a mechanism to include more economically diverse voices on the commission and increase participation, and expand the recommendation and advisory capacity of the San Jose Youth Commission to council legislation that falls under the scope of their adopted work plan and the City of San Jose Children and Youth Master Plan.

BACKGROUND

District 4 Councilmember Cohen shared a memo¹ to city council on October 4, 2022 about expanding youth voice in San Jose. The memo directed staff to:

1. Determine whether the Youth Commission should be expanded to include voices of those ages 21 –25.
2. Identify which additional City of San Jose Commissions would benefit from including a dedicated position for youth (age range 14-20 or 14-25).
 - a. Create a procedure for selecting youth members for the chosen commissions.

¹ <http://sanjose.legistar.com/gateway.aspx?M=F&ID=50a729fb-cf5e-4fd0-8597-a4d656389d4c.pdf>

- b. Direct staff to report the Youth Commission's findings to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee (NSE) by the spring of 2023.

The memo creates an opportunity for us to revisit some of the policies/procedures in place so that we might build a Youth Commission that includes and uplifts the lived experiences of young people in the City of San Jose who are most vulnerable, have been underserved in the past, and are often the hardest to reach.

ANALYSIS

Our analysis incorporates feedback sessions from Youth Commission ad hoc committee and past members as well the Library's Educational Digital Literacy staff.

Age Expansion

The Youth Commission does not recommend the expansion of the age eligibility requirements to be appointed to the Youth Commission.

- The closeness of ages and experiences of current members is essential to how the Youth Commission functions.
 - Youth Advisory Councils (YACs) are primarily after-school time volunteer activities and most recruitment is through high schools within the commissioner's district.
- It would be challenging to offer tailored support to youth with a wide range of ages.
 - High school students have different schedules and needs than graduates.
- Including young adults could create challenging social dynamics.
 - It might be challenging for a first-year high school student and a college graduate to relate to one another.
- It might create unbalanced leadership dynamics.
 - E.g., the ideas of high school members might not be taken as seriously, or their voices would be harder to hear with older youth in the room.
- Many San Jose boards and commissions already have vacancies, many of which young people ages 18 and over can apply.
 - 61 vacancies across city boards and commissions as of March 2023

In order to further open the door to include more youth and young adults who can be strong advocates for how we might better serve target population groups, the Youth Commission recommends adding a statement that prioritizes the diversity of the city in the special eligibility requirements.

2.08.4840 Special eligibility requirements.²

All members shall, at the time of appointment, be at least fourteen years old and under twenty-one years old.

The commission shall consist of individuals with a variety of lived experiences navigating the programs and services available for children and youth and involvement with school or community activities. The members shall represent the diversity of ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, and economic status of the people of the City of San Jose.

Youth Commissioner Stipends

Youth commissioners should receive paid compensation for their service.

- This is a mechanism to include more economically diverse voices on the commission.
- It incentivizes prioritizing Youth Commission work and events with the goal to increase engagement and participation.
- A model for paid of meetings allows for flexibility for Youth Commissioners the ability to still earn needed volunteer hours for any additional duties.

2.08.120 Members - Compensation.³

A. Unless otherwise specifically provided by the City Charter or San José Municipal Code for members of a particular board or commission, effective January 1, 2023, each member of each board or commission established under Chapter 2.08 or the City Charter who is a member of a low-income household, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as at or below eighty percent (80%) of the area median income pursuant to 24 CFR 92.2, shall be eligible to be paid the sum of two hundred dollars (\$200) per month if they have attended a monthly board or commission meeting. Such members shall be eligible to be paid the stipend even if the monthly board or commission meeting is cancelled.

1. Notwithstanding the above, Youth Commissioners may also receive compensation regardless of household income status.
2. Compensation for monthly meeting attendance does not prevent or preempt a commissioner from holding an internship or earning credit for volunteer hours for service with the city.

Expansion of Youth Commission Voice

The directive of including a dedicated youth seat on additional City of San Jose Commissions is complicated as it would increase the number of seats for a quorum on other commissions when we are already looking at a possible increase in commission vacancy due to return to in-person

²https://library.municode.com/ca/san_jose/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT2AD_CH2.08BOBUCO_PT48YOCO_2.08.4840SPELRE

³https://library.municode.com/ca/san_jose/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT2AD_CH2.08BOBUCO_PT1GEP2.08.120MEOM

(AB 2449⁴). As it is, some commissions accept applications for people as young as 18 to appoint in those vacant positions.

In addition, the Youth Commission already has established the power⁵:

"E. To select and designate members of the commission, youths or other persons to act as commission representatives to all other city boards and commissions, and to agencies, authorities, boards and commissions the city has participated in creating in conformance with guidelines approved by the council."

This means the Youth Commission can determine its procedure to build representation and partnership with other city commissions.

The city auditor's recommendation to Article 5 of the San Jose Bill of Rights for Children and Youth⁶ revolves around youth having a contribution in their local government. While the City has certain initiatives in place, such as the Youth Commission, it is unclear how the City meets the other elements in the article. Examples to address the gap are:

- Creating space for youth to provide input on boards, commissions, and committees
- Doing more to inform youth about laws that impact them

Using Roger Hart's Ladder of Children's Participation⁷ to frame the current charge of the Youth Commission, the question loomed, why tokenize youth voice in other city advisory and decision-making bodies rather than strengthen the Youth Commission's role and duty to provide the City Council and the Mayor with "comment and recommendation" on all proposed legislation "that primarily affect the children and youth" of San Jose?

The precedent set by the San Francisco Youth Commission⁸ is a model that emphasizes utilizing the Youth Commission's purpose of "identifying the unmet needs" of San Francisco's children and youth in partnership with the County Board of Supervisors and Mayor and providing them with comments and recommendations on pieces of proposed legislation that would affect San Francisco's young people.

By adopting similar language in the functions, powers, and duties of San Jose's Youth Commission, we are providing a seat at the table for youth to participate in shared decisions with adults. And closing the gap in programs and initiatives that allow youth to provide input in local government as pointed out by the city auditor, by creating a direct line of communication between the City Council and Mayor that affirms the Youth Commission's civic contribution as well as informing them of how local laws impact San Jose's young people.

⁴ <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/94955/638131055374700000>

⁵ https://library.municode.com/ca/san_jose/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT2AD_CH2.08BOBUCO_PT48YOCO_2.08.4850FUPODU

⁶ <https://sanjose.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=11255204&GUID=05724D31-DA9D-4D24-95D2-766FCBC9F96A>

⁷ https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/childrens_participation.pdf

⁸ <https://sfgov.org/youthcommission/charter-and-bylaws>

2.08.4850 Functions, powers, and duties.⁹

The purpose of the commission is to collect all information relevant to advising the City Council and Mayor on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the children and youth of San Jose. Before City Council takes final action on any matter that falls within the scope of the Commission's adopted workplan or the City of San Jose Children and Youth Master Plan, the City Manager's Office shall refer the matter to the Commission for comment and recommendation at least ten (10) days prior to the date of any regular commission meeting. The commission shall provide any response it deems appropriate within three (3) days after the next regular commission meeting. After the response period has elapsed, the City Council may act on the matter whether or not the Council has received a response. This referral requirement shall not apply to any matter where immediate action by the City Council is necessary to protect the public interest.

The commission shall have the following functions, powers, and duties:

- A. To foster greater involvement of youth in municipal government and civic affairs, especially in the City of San José.
- B. To study any problems, activities and concerns of youth as they relate to municipal policies, programs or projects of the city.
- C. To make such studies of any other problems, activities and concerns of youth in any field as, in the judgment of the commission, aid in effectuating its general purposes.
- D. To hold and conduct forums on such problems, activities and concerns of youth in which various governmental and nongovernmental agencies and other community organizations, fraternal and benevolent associations may be invited to participate, to the extent the commission deems such desirable.
- E. To select and designate members of the commission, youths or other persons to act as commission representatives to all other city boards and commissions, and to agencies, authorities, boards and commissions the city has participated in creating in conformance with guidelines approved by the council.
- F. To make such recommendations to the council as the commission may find necessary and desirable to carry out the purposes for which the commission is established.
- G. To cosponsor the annual San José City Hall youth-in-government day program.
- H. To conduct or sponsor activities the commission deems desirable and in the interests of the youth of the city consistent with the Charter, other provisions of this Code, other ordinances, resolutions and other acts of the council.

⁹https://library.municode.com/ca/san_jose/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT2AD_CH2.08BOBUCO_PT48YOCO_2.08.4850FUPODU

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Our analysis incorporates feedback sessions from Youth Commission ad hoc committee and past members as well as the Library's Educational Digital Literacy staff. Next steps include coordinating with the Office of the City Manager and presenting to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee (NSE) in May 2023.

CLIMATE SMART SAN JOSE

The recommendation in this memo has no effect on Climate Smart San José energy, water, or mobility goals.

COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with the Library Department.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT

The memorandum has been developed and recommended in coordination with the Youth Commission.

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

1. ESTIMATED COSTS: We determined this number from the precedent set by Municipal Code 2.08.120¹⁰, beginning January 1, 2023, low-income commissioners¹¹ can earn \$200 per meeting.
 - Youth Commission has approximately 12 meetings per year.
 - Retreat in July/August
 - Meetings in August, September, October, November
 - Retreat in December
 - Meetings in January, February, March, April, May
 - End of Year Recognition Awards event in June
 - Youth Commissioners earn \$200 per month if they have attended a monthly Youth Commission meeting.
 - \$2,400 per commissioner per year. Each commissioner is appointed for a 2-year term and can serve up to 2 terms.

¹⁰https://library.municode.com/ca/san_jose/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT2AD_CH2.08BOBUCO_PT1GEPR_2.08.120MEOM

¹¹https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2022/2022summary.odn?states=6.0&data=2022&inputname=METRO41940M41940*0608599999%2BSanta+Clara+County&stname=California&statefp=06&year=2022&selection_type=county

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- Includes an intern position to support staff with Youth Commission outreach and promote focused on historically underserved communities

2. FISCAL IMPACT: Not significant.

BUDGET REFERENCE

Number of Commissioners	Cost per Meeting	Number of Meetings Per Year	Total per Year per Commissioner	Total for per Year for All Commissioners
11 Youth Commissioners	\$200	12	\$2,400	\$26,400

Jill Bourne
City Librarian

The principal author of this memorandum is Megan Maloy, Librarian II. For questions, please contact Lizzie Nolan, Senior Librarian of Youth Services, at Elizabeth.Nolan@sjlibrary.org or (408) 808-2000.



Youth Commission
COUNCIL DIRECTIVE

March 27, 2023

THE MEMO

Directive 1

Determine whether the Youth Commission (YC) should be expanded to include voices of those ages 21 –25.

Directive 2

Identify which additional City of San Jose Commissions would benefit from including a dedicated position for youth.

- Create a procedure for selecting youth members for the chosen commissions.
- Direct staff to report the Youth Commission’s findings to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee (NSE) by the spring of 2023.



AGE RECOMMENDATION

The Youth Commission does not recommend the expansion of the age eligibility requirements to be appointed to the Youth Commission.

- The closeness of ages and experiences of current members is essential to how the Youth Commission functions.
- It would be challenging to offer tailored support to youth with a wide range of ages.
- Including young adults could create challenging social dynamics.
- It might create unbalanced leadership dynamics.
- Many San Jose boards and commissions already have vacancies, many of which young people ages 18 and over can apply.

In order to further open the door to include more youth and young adults who can be strong advocates for how we might better serve target population groups, the Youth Commission recommends adding a statement that prioritizes the diversity of the city in the special eligibility requirements.



Municipal

CODE

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COMPENSATION

We believe youth commissioners should receive paid compensation for their service.

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- It incentivizes prioritizing Youth Commission work and events with the goal to increase engagement and participation.
- A model for paid of meetings allows for flexibility for Youth Commissioners the ability to still earn needed volunteer hours for any additional duties.



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EXPANSION OF DUTIES

Why Add Youth Seats to Other Commissions?

- You can already apply for any commission vacancy if you are 18 years old.
- It would increase the number of seats for a quorum on other commissions when we are already looking at a possible increase in commission vacancy due to return to in -person (AB 2449).

Functions, Powers, and Duties

The YC already has established the power:

- "To select and designate members of the commission, youths or other persons to act as commission representatives to all other city boards and commissions, and to agencies, authorities, boards and commissions the city has participated in creating in conformance with guidelines approved by the council."



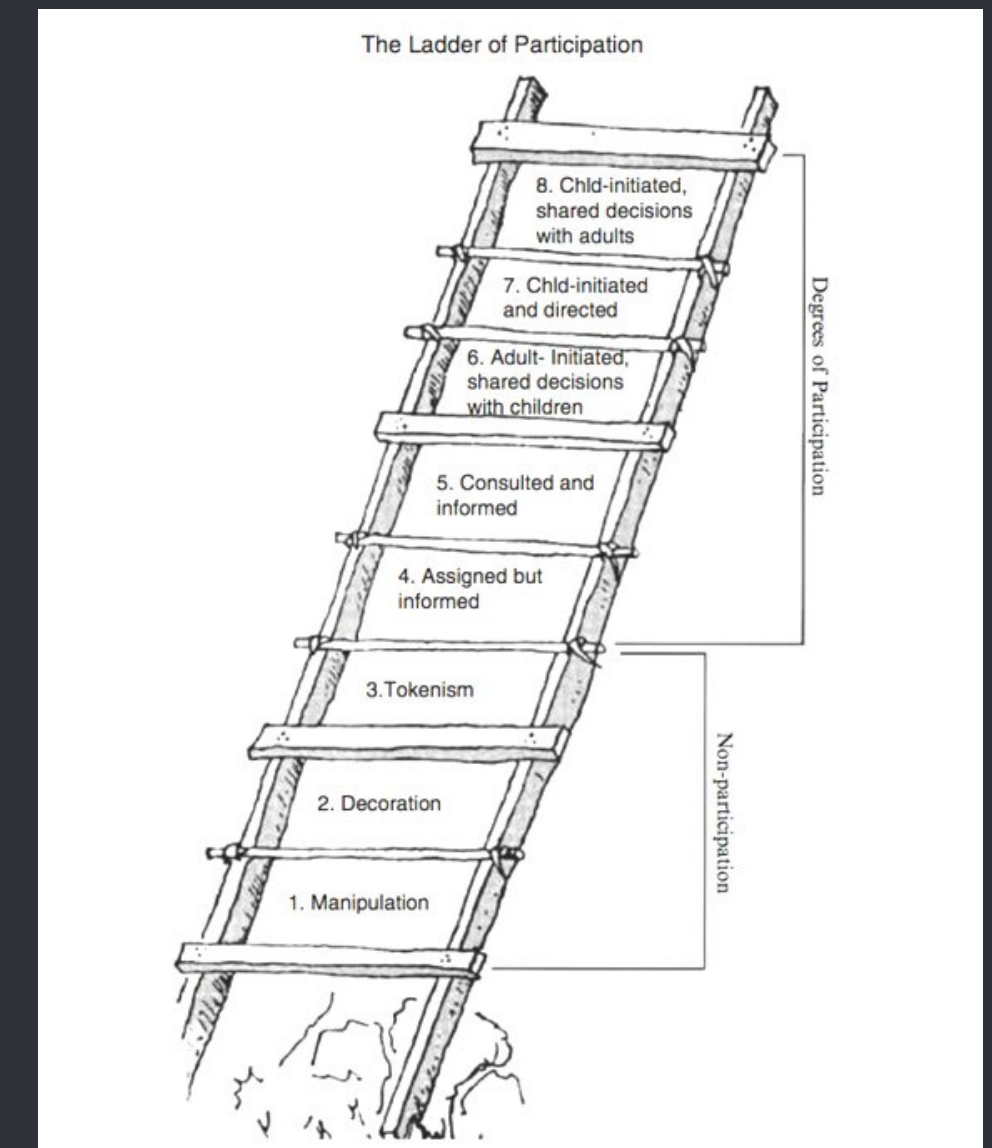
EXPANSION OF DUTIES

Bill of Rights for Children and Youth Audit

- Article 5 revolves around youth having a voice in local government. While the City has certain initiatives in place, such as the Youth Commission, it is unclear how the City meets the other elements in the article. Examples to address the gap are:
 - Creating space for youth to provide input on boards, commissions, and committees
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Roger Hart's Ladder of Children's Participation

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Final



RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations were determined from feedback sessions with the Youth Commission ad hoc committee and the Library's Educational Digital Literacy staff.

Recommendation 1

Maintain the current Youth Commission ages 14-20 but be more representative of the diversity of the City of San Jose.

Recommendation 2

Compensate appointed Youth Commissioners with paid stipends. This compensation for service allows for more economically diverse youth the ability to participate as well as increase engagement among Commissioners.

Recommendation 3

Expand the advisory and recommendation powers of Youth Commission to City Council and the Mayor and, following the municipal code power and duties, designate youth representatives to other San Jose Commissions.

Thank You