

Honorable Colleagues,

We write to request that a meeting be agendized to empanel a Charter Review Commission (CRC) to conduct a full review of the Sunnyvale City Charter, with the goal of placing proposed amendments on the November 2024 ballot.

The last major review of the Sunnyvale City Charter was conducted in 2007, with a smaller review in 2012. In 2018, a CRC was empaneled to review provisions for filling vacancies, leading to a successful charter amendment, while in 2020 the Charter was amended to switch to district elections for councilmembers (without a CRC). Given that it has been more than 15 years since the full charter has been reviewed, and given the substantial changes introduced by the switch to district elections, we believe that empaneling a CRC to conduct a general review of the charter may be in order.

While the proposed CRC would have scope to review all provisions in the charter and to freely propose amendments, the following are some specific items we would like to have the proposed CRC examine if empanelled:

- Allowing Councilmembers appointed to fill vacancies to serve until the next feasible November general election, as opposed to the next feasible election (i.e., appointees could no longer go up for election in a primary)
- Changing the charter provision that requires two council meetings per month to instead require at least 24 meetings per year
- Examining citizenship requirements and member counts for charter-defined commissions
- Examining the role of the mayor, including whether the position of mayor should be considered full-time
- Examining Council salary and compensation
- Updating language to be gender neutral, e.g. using "they" instead of "he/she"
- Evaluating whether to adopt an alternative voting system, such as ranked-choice or approval voting, or retain the existing first-past-the-post system for districts and mayoral elections
- Evaluating whether to include a statement on the role of district councilmembers, and to explicitly bar the concept of "district prerogative" and emphasize representing "all of Sunnyvale"
- Establishing rules for empanelling Redistricting Commissions
- Other items proposed by Council or raised by the Charter Review Commission

Respectfully submitted,

Alysa Cisneros



Larry Klein



Richard Mehlinger

