



AGENDA REPORT

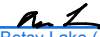
TO: Elizabeth Lake
Acting City Administrator

FROM: Ashleigh Kanat, Director
Economic Workforce
Development Department

SUBJECT: Amendment of the Cultural Affairs
Commission Enabling Ordinance

DATE: July 7, 2026

City Administrator Approval


[Betsy Lake \(Jul 9, 2026 20:37:54 PDT\)](#)

Date: Jul 9, 2026

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt An Ordinance Amending And Reenacting Ordinance No. 13561 C.M.S. For The Cultural Affairs Commission To Enable Quorum With A Majority Of Appointed Members, Establish Its Authority To Create Standing Committees, Allow The Commission To Appoint The Chairperson, And Make Other Clarifying Edits

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

City staff recommends that the City Council adopt an Ordinance amending and reenacting Ordinance No. 13561 C.M.S., which governs the Cultural Affairs Commission. The proposed Ordinance would update the Commission's enabling legislation by revising the quorum requirement to a majority of appointed Commissioners, but no fewer than four members; authorizing the Commission to create, modify, and terminate standing committees following recommendation to and approval by the City Administrator; providing for the Commission to elect its Chair and Vice Chair; and making additional clarifying and administrative amendments to the Commission's enabling ordinance.

The proposed amendments are intended to update the Commission's governance provisions to reflect current administrative practices and provide greater operational flexibility while maintaining the Commission's advisory role to the Mayor, City Council, and City Administrator. The Ordinance does not alter the Commission's purpose, duties, or responsibilities related to advising the City on matters affecting arts, culture, and cultural development in Oakland.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The Cultural Affairs Commission was established pursuant to Section 601 of the Oakland City Charter through [Ordinance No. 11323 C.M.S.](#), effective May 1, 1991, to advise the Mayor, City Council, and City Administrator on matters affecting arts, culture, and cultural development in Oakland.

On July 16, 2019, the City Council adopted [Ordinance No. 13561 C.M.S.](#), which amended the Commission's enabling ordinance to redefine its duties, modify its membership and quorum requirements, and clarify the appointment process.

Since the adoption of Ordinance No. 13561 C.M.S., the Cultural Affairs Commission has continued to advise the City on cultural policy, cultural planning, public art, grantmaking, and other matters affecting Oakland's arts and cultural community. During implementation of the ordinance, the Commission identified several provisions for potential amendment related to quorum, standing committees, the selection of Commission officers, and other administrative provisions.

Working in consultation with the Cultural Affairs Manager and the City Attorney's Office, the Commission reviewed and refined the proposed amendments contained in the attached ordinance. On June 23, 2026, the Cultural Affairs Commission voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council adopt the ordinance amending and reenacting Ordinance No. 13561 C.M.S.

The proposed ordinance would amend the Commission's enabling legislation to revise the quorum requirement to a majority of appointed Commissioners, but no fewer than four members; authorize the Commission to create, modify, and terminate standing committees following recommendation to and approval by the City Administrator; provide for the Commission to elect its Chair and Vice Chair; and make other clarifying amendments to the Commission's enabling ordinance.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The proposed ordinance updates the Cultural Affairs Commission's enabling legislation to reflect current administrative practices, improve the Commission's ability to conduct its business, and support the effective administration of the City's principal advisory body on arts and cultural policy. The recommended amendments are based on the Commission's experience administering Ordinance No. 13561 C.M.S. and were developed in consultation with the Cultural Affairs Manager and the City Attorney's Office.

The proposed revision to the quorum requirement would replace the current fixed quorum of six members with a quorum consisting of a majority of appointed Commissioners, but no fewer than four members. This approach allows the Commission to continue conducting business during periods of vacancies while ensuring that official actions continue to require participation by a majority of appointed members.

The proposed ordinance would also authorize the Commission to create, modify, and terminate standing committees following recommendation to and approval by the City Administrator. Under the current ordinance, establishment of standing committees requires City Council

approval. The proposed amendment provides an administrative process for creating committees while maintaining City Administrator oversight. Any standing committee established under the ordinance would remain advisory to the Commission and would not be authorized to act independently or inconsistently with the Commission's enabling legislation.

The proposed ordinance further provides for the Commission to elect its Chair and Vice Chair. This amendment aligns the enabling ordinance with the Commission's governance practices and provides a consistent process for the annual selection of Commission officers.

In addition to these substantive amendments, the ordinance makes clarifying revisions throughout the Commission's enabling legislation to improve consistency, update administrative language, and reflect current operational practices without changing the Commission's purpose, duties, or advisory role.

The proposed amendments are administrative in nature and are not expected to result in direct fiscal or service impacts to Oakland residents. By supporting the Commission's ability to maintain regular meetings, establish advisory committees as needed, and conduct annual organizational business, the ordinance is expected to strengthen the Commission's capacity to advise the Mayor, City Council, and City Administrator on matters affecting Oakland's arts, culture, and creative economy.

The Commission's existing responsibilities include advising the City on policies and programs that promote equitable access to arts and cultural opportunities and reflecting Oakland's geographic and cultural diversity in its membership. The proposed amendments support the Commission's continued ability to carry out these responsibilities by improving the administration and continuity of its governance.

Ordinance Alternatives

Alternative #	Adopt the proposed ordinance.
Pros	Updates the Commission's enabling legislation, improves administrative flexibility, and aligns governance provisions with current practices.
Cons	None identified.
Reason for not recommending	None identified.

Alternative #	Take no action.
Pros	Maintains the current ordinance.
Cons	Retains existing administrative limitations related to quorum, standing committees, and officer selection, delaying implementation of the Commission's recommended governance updates.
Reason for not recommending	Does not address the operational issues identified by the Commission.

RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

The recommended action supports implementation of the Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP) by updating the governance provisions of the Cultural Affairs Commission, which advises the Mayor, City Council, and City Administrator on matters affecting arts, culture, and cultural development in Oakland.

FISCAL IMPACT

The proposed ordinance has no direct fiscal impact on the City of Oakland and does not require an appropriation of funds. The amendments are administrative in nature and update the governance provisions of the Cultural Affairs Commission. Implementation of the ordinance will be carried out by existing staff within the Economic and Workforce Development Department using existing resources. No additional staffing or ongoing operating costs are anticipated as a result of the proposed amendments.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

The proposed ordinance concerns the governance and administration of the Cultural Affairs Commission and does not establish or modify City programs, services, or funding available to the public. Accordingly, no outreach beyond standard City Council and Commission public noticing requirements was conducted for the development of the proposed ordinance.

The Cultural Affairs Commission considered amendments to its enabling legislation at publicly noticed meetings, including an action item on May 18, 2026, in which the Commission approved revised language related to officer selection procedures, the establishment of standing committees, and updates to term limit provisions. The motion to approve the revised language passed unanimously.

Members of the public had the opportunity to provide comment during the Commission's publicly noticed meetings consistent with applicable open meeting laws. The proposed ordinance reflects the Commission's recommended governance updates as reviewed and approved through this public process.

COORDINATION

This report and legislation have been reviewed by the Office of the City Attorney and the Budget Bureau. The Cultural Affairs Commission and Cultural Affairs Manager coordinated with the Office of the City Attorney in the development of the proposed amendments to the Commission's enabling ordinance. No other City departments are materially impacted by the proposed action.

RACE AND EQUITY

Staff did not complete a Racial Equity Impact Analysis for the recommended ordinance because the proposed action is administrative in nature and relates to the governance and internal procedures of the Cultural Affairs Commission. The ordinance does not change City programs, funding allocations, or public-facing service delivery.

The proposed ordinance does not establish new programs or modify eligibility for City services and, therefore, is not expected to create disproportionate impacts on any particular community.

While no direct racial equity impacts are anticipated, the Cultural Affairs Commission plays an advisory role on cultural policy and programs that affect Oakland's diverse arts and cultural communities. Going forward, the Commission's effectiveness in advising on culturally responsive policies will continue to be evaluated through its regular public meetings, appointment processes guided by cultural equity principles, and its advisory recommendations to the Mayor, City Council, and City Administrator.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt An Ordinance Amending And Reenacting Ordinance No. 13561 C.M.S. For The Cultural Affairs Commission To Enable Quorum With A Majority Of Appointed Members, Establish Its Authority To Create Standing Committees, Allow The Commission To Appoint The Chairperson, And Make Other Clarifying Edits

For questions regarding this report, please contact Lyz Luke, Cultural Affairs Manager, (510) 406-4921 or LLuke@oaklandca.gov.

Respectfully submitted,


Ashleigh Kanat (Jul 9, 2026 19:11:55 PDT)

ASHLEIGH KANAT

Director, Economic & Workforce Development
Department

Prepared by:

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Economic & Workforce Development
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City Council
July 21, 2026