

**FINAL REPORT OF THE  
TASK FORCE ON THE STRUCTURE OF  
CITY GOVERNMENT**



**November 20, 2019**

## **MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE ON THE STRUCTURE OF CITY GOVERNMENT**

Eileen Harrington, Chair  
John Rothschild, Vice Chair  
Justice Castañeda  
Aldersperson Keith Furman  
Roger Goodwin  
Aldersperson Rebecca Kemble  
Maggie Northrop  
Aldersperson Paul Skidmore  
Ron Trachtenberg  
Eric Upchurch  
[One Vacancy]

### **Former Members of the Task Force**

Aldersperson Syed Abbas  
Aldersperson David Ahrens  
Aldersperson Sheri Carter  
Aldersperson Sara Eskrich  
Cathy Patton  
Jerry Vang

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

A.	Executive Summary.....	4
B.	Methodology.....	10
C.	Recommendations Related to the Common Council.....	20
D.	Recommendations Related to Boards, Commissions and Committees.....	26
E.	Recommendations Related to the Mayor’s Office.....	32
F.	Recommendations on Resident Participation and Engagement.....	36
G.	Conclusion.....	38

### Appendices

Appendix A - Resolution Establishing the Task Force

Appendix B - List of Subcommittees

Appendix C - Interim Report of the Task Force

Appendix D - Summary List of Task Force Final Recommendations

Appendix E - List of Topics in Online Documents

Appendix F - Links to Government Officials, Staff, and Resident Survey Results

Appendix G - Sample Open House Flyer

## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Common Council created the 11-member Task Force on the Structure of City Government (“TFOGS” or “Task Force”) to consider issues related the powers and duties of the City’s Common Council (“Council”), Mayor’s Office, and Boards, Commissions, and Committees (“BCCs”). The Council directed the TFOGS to examine these issues through a specific lens: whether the City’s current government structure ensures that municipal decision-makers are representative of and accountable to all of the City’s residents, not just to those who have the time, resources, and knowledge to actively participate in the City’s current government structure. Of preeminent concern to the Council at the time it created the TFOGS was whether the City’s current government structure adequately represents people of color and those living with lower incomes.

The Task Force and its subcommittees met ninety (90) times over an almost two-year period. During that time, the Task Force gathered and studied information to understand the issues; created and conducted unique outreach programs to gather input from current and former government officials, current City staff, and City residents; and engaged in extensive and lively debate on nuances of local government rarely examined in great detail. Having done this work, the Task Force believes that the City’s current government structure is an impediment to full participation and representation and, therefore, that the City’s structure is fundamentally unfair to a large portion of the City’s population, including, most notably, the City’s residents of color and low income.

### **1. Common Council**

Regarding the Council, the City’s current 20-member part-time Council members represent roughly 12,500 residents each. In addition, Council members must serve on the City’s nearly 100 BCCs. For their service, Council members are paid approximately \$13,570 per year.

A part-time “volunteer” Common Council is a public service model of government that many value as a critical part of Madison’s historical fabric and progressive history. It would be easy to rely on this history – and the sense of pride and nostalgia that accompanies it – to maintain the status quo. However, former and current Council members have stated that as Madison has grown so too has the complexity of the challenges it faces; and that adequately representing constituents facing these challenges require a full-time Council. Moreover, in looking closely at how this part-time system works, the Task Force found that some alders already work full-time on City business, either because they are retired, do not need additional income, or have a second job with flexibility that permits them to devote a large amount of time to serving as alder. These “full-time” alders tend to spend more time working with their constituents and serving on the City’s BCCs. Not all alders can afford to do this. Thus, in its current structure, the City’s aldermanic districts have disparate levels of representation based, at least in part, on how much time their alder is able to devote to City work.



As a result of this and other considerations, the Task Force recommends that the City transition to a full-time Council. The Task Force also recommends that the City transition to four-year aldermanic terms and that it pay Council members eighty percent (80%) of the Adjusted Median Income for Dane County for a single parent with two children (approximately \$67,000.00 per year). The Task Force believes that a full-time Council would allow all residents to have full-time representation. This new structure could have the additional benefit of inviting people into leadership who may not have otherwise been able to serve because of financial, time commitment or personal reasons, including people of color and low income. Additionally, the Task Force believes that a full-time Council would be better equipped to implement other important recommendations contained in this report, including overhauling the City's Boards, Commissions, and Committees ("BCC") structure, providing ongoing oversight and accountability of the BCC system, and pursuing specific initiatives aimed at improving resident engagement, such as establishing an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support to support BCCs, and implementing a robust technology plan. However, the Task Force was not unanimous in recommending that the City transition to a full-time Common Council. Those who opposed a full-time Council noted the importance of maintaining, among other things, a public service form of Council free from some of the perceived pitfalls that befall a professional full-time legislature.

In addition to recommending a full-time Council with four-year terms and increased pay, the Task Force also recommends that the size of the Council be reduced from twenty (20) to ten (10) members. However, as with the decision to transition to a full-time Council, the decision to reduce the size of the Council was not unanimous. Some believed that reducing the size of the Council would be a financial necessity of transitioning to a full-time Council. Others argued that such a rationale conflates the two issues, which should be considered individually because each structural characteristic impacts issues of representation in different ways. For example, while a full-time Council may allow all residents to have a full-time alder, a smaller Council (and, thus, larger districts) may prevent alders from connecting with each constituent. Ultimately, as detailed below, the only successful motion regarding the size of the Council was for a ten (10) member Council. Other motions, including motions to retain or increase the current size of the Council, all failed.

Thus, taken together, the Task Force recommends that the City transition to a smaller full-time Council. The majority of the Task Force observed that Madison is a national outlier in terms of the population of alderperson's districts, and that cities that have full-time Councils, like Minneapolis, do not necessarily suffer from a professional politics plague.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the majority of the Task Force did not share the view that having professional politicians was necessarily a negative, as is often implied from the use of that phrase. Rather, they viewed transitioning to a full-time Council as a way to fully

---

<sup>1</sup> Minneapolis' thirteen (13) full-time Council members are paid approximately \$98,000.00 per year.

harness the talents and skills of the people who choose to run for elected office. Finally, the Task Force noted that the City's current part-time structure has existed in Madison for decades on the premise that it provides genuine representation to its residents. However, while the Task Force agrees that the current structure provides genuine representation for some residents, it does not believe it does so for all residents -- particularly not for people of color and those living with low incomes.

## **2. Boards, Commissions, and Committees**

Regarding the structure of the City's Boards, Commissions, and Committees ("BCCs"), the City currently has nearly 100 BCCs. These BCCs require approximately 700 total members made up of residents and Council members. In addition, BCCs are supported by City staff, who schedule meetings, create agendas, provide public notice, maintain minutes, and supply substantive information BCCs need to make decisions.

The Task Force recognizes that the original intent of the current BCC structure was to support a part-time Council, serve as a robust forum for public discussion, and maximize public participation. The Task Force also appreciates the dedication of the alders and residents who serve on the City's BCCs and the City staff that supports them. However, the Task Force believes that the current BCC structure has become one that lacks diversity, clarity of purpose, and accountability. The BCCs also tend to vary widely with regard to levels of authority and resources available to support BCC work. Further, the current BCC system has become so large and confusing that navigating it favors those with the time, resources, and knowledge to do so. Therefore, the Task Force believes that the BCC structure itself serves as another impediment to full resident participation and representation.

One characteristic the Task Force noted is the BCC system's lack of diversity. As detailed in the BCC Subcommittee Report, 38% of BCC members (268/699) come from Aldermanic Districts 4, 6, 11, 13, and 19 while only 12.5% (88/699) of members come from Aldermanic Districts 1, 7, 8, 9, and 16. Also, the number of BCCs served by each alder tends to vary depending on the alder. Of the twenty (20) alders, six (6) alders serve on as many as 9 to 14 BCCs while five (5) alders serve on as few as 2 to 4 BCCs. In addition to a lack of geographic diversity, the BCCs also suffer from a lack of racial diversity, with only 21% of BCC members being people of color. Finally, while the Task Force did not have data related to the socioeconomic status of the BCC members, it suspects residents living with low income are also greatly underrepresented on the City's BCCs.

Another glaring characteristic of the current BCC system is its sheer size and complexity as compared to cities of similar size and nature.<sup>2</sup> First, there is no

---

<sup>2</sup> City staff conducted a survey of cities similar to Madison. Most cities of similar size (~250,000) generally have between 25 and 50 BCCs. Other state capital cities with flagship universities have between 12 and 33 BCCs, except Salt Lake City, which has 77. Other Big Ten Cities have between 11 and 50 BCCs.

organizational chart of the BCCs and not all BCCs are listed in the City's Legislative Information Center ("Legistar"). As an initial matter, therefore, it was difficult for the Task Force to even ascertain exactly how many BCCs exist in the City. Next, the Task Force found the nearly 100 BCCs that are listed in Legistar lack clarity of purpose and are subject to policies and rules of procedure that further increases the complexity of the BCC system. For example, BCC topic areas often overlap, either making them redundant or unnecessary. BCCs do not always keep within their jurisdiction, in part, because they do not fully understand where their jurisdiction ends and another BCC's jurisdiction begins. Furthermore, BCC meetings themselves often take place once or twice a month, in the evenings, in downtown locations. These meetings require an enormous amount of alder, resident, and staff time and resources, the extent of which the City cannot reliably track. Finally, the practices and procedures governing these BCC meetings (e.g., time and location of meetings, intricacy of Robert's Rules of Procedure, time limits for speaking, etc.) make an already daunting structure even more difficult for residents to access.

A final characteristic of the current BCC system noted by the Task Force is that the BCCs vary widely with regard to the impact of their recommendations on City decision making. Some BCC recommendations tend to be adopted more often by the Council than others, resulting in a kind of de-facto authority that is not necessarily rooted in the ordinance or resolution that created the BCC. Furthermore, BCCs tend to vary widely in terms of staff and resource commitment. In other words, some BCCs command a significant amount of power, of time, and of resources, while others struggle to be heard or be adequately staffed.

Thus, the Task Force believes the City's current BCC structure better represents some districts than others, unfairly favors people with the time, resources, and knowledge to influence government decisions, and facilitates a system where some BCCs act with considerably more power and resources than others. Accordingly, the Task Force recommends that the Council create an organizational chart of all BCCs, an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Services and an Administrative Support Team to support the BCC structure, and organize the BCCs around lead committees. The Task Force necessarily believes this will require the Council to eliminate or combine current BCCs that are redundant or no longer necessary and to implement new procedures, policies, and resources to make it easier for residents to provide input to them.

### **3. Mayor's Office**

Regarding the Mayor's Office, the Task Force believes that the City should maintain its current Mayor-Council form of government instead of switching to a City Manager form of Government as allowed under state law. Moreover, the Task Force does not believe the City should seek first-class city status or take other actions that would legally change the powers of Mayor. However, the Task Force recommends that the City look closely at the current span of administrative control to ensure that the Mayor's Office is able to adequately supervise day-to-day operations of the City as required by state law and city ordinance. The Task Force also recommends that the City stop creating new

positions or agencies that report directly to the Mayor, reduce direct reports to the Mayor by consolidating existing departments or agencies, look for opportunities to establish or re-establish natural groupings of agencies, and require annual performance evaluations of each department and department head. The Mayor should also maintain an organizational chart of the government's administrative structure, including what departments report to which deputy mayors, and make the organizational chart accessible to all Madison residents. And, finally, the process by which the Mayor appoints members to the BCCs should include a more robust review by the Common Council Executive Committee ("CCEC") and, if the City moves to a full-time Council, the power to appoint alders to BCCs should shift to the CCEC, subject to confirmation by the full Council.

#### **4. Resident Participation and Engagement**

On July 30, 2018, the Task Force held a meeting at the Pinney Library. The Task Force invited Abha Thakkar from the Northside Navigators and Annette Miller from EQT By Design to discuss public outreach strategies. Also at that meeting, Member Justice Castañeda gave a presentation on how historical discrimination in housing, current housing patterns, and extreme housing instability in Madison presents a major barrier to participation in government by people of color and low income.

As captured in the minutes from that meeting, Abha Thakkar acknowledged Castañeda's point, stating that there is a fundamental difference between outreach and turnout and that many factors, like housing challenges, prevent people of color, low income, or those living in marginalized communities from participating in government. She broke it down very simply: "being poor and being poor and black are exhausting and that just trying to survive the day leaves little resource leftover to attend City meetings." Thus, the presenters emphasized the importance of addressing residents' basic needs and finding ways for residents to engage with the government other than through the traditional City meeting format.

The Task Force recognizes that it is not within its purview to recommend that the City do a better job of ensuring that these basic needs are met. However, as described above, the Task Force believes that the current structure of the Council and BCCs and the policies and procedures that apply to the BCC structure create impediments to participation for all residents and, in particular, residents of color and low income. Thus, in addition to the recommendations being made with regard to the Council and BCCs, this Final Report also offers additional common-sense recommendations to facilitate participation once these structural barriers are removed. For example, one of the major challenges facing the Council and BCCs is the City's inability to facilitate resident engagement and participation through technology. The Task Force believes that the City needs to invest in and prioritize those technological advancements that would address this problem, including the ability to 1) hold Common Council and other official City meetings from a variety of locations in the City, 2) facilitate remote resident and member participation, and 3) facilitate other forms of resident engagement through the use of

technology. The Task Force acknowledged the City's current limitation but noted that other local governments have been doing many of these things for quite some time and questioned why the City has not invested the resources to do it as well.

## 5. Opportunity for Change

The recommendations highlighted in this Executive Summary are just a few of many recommendations detailed below and summarized in Appendix D. The Task Force recognized and struggled with the fact that the issues it was asked to address are often inextricably intertwined, such that a decision on one issue necessarily results in a particular decision on another. This was tough work. Thus, the recommendations below represent the Task Force's best attempt to set forth a series of recommendations that it believes are most likely to remove the impediments to participation and representation that exist in Madison today.

As you will see, the Task Force did not unanimously agree on all of the following recommendations, often passionately debating the pros and cons of these consequential decisions. In particular, while at one meeting the Task Force approved its official recommendation to reduce the size of the Council to ten (10) members, a subsequent motion for reconsideration of this recommendation narrowly failed and revealed significant, not majority, support for retaining the present size of twenty (20) or possibly more members.

Whether the Council decides to proceed with these recommendations or not, the Task Force believes that the City must address - in some real and tangible way - the challenges and unfairness the Task Force found imbedded in many aspects of the City's current structure. Madison is a great city for many, but not all. The Task Force therefore submits this Final Report with the hope that it will assist the Council make the City great for all of its residents.

In submitting these recommendations, the Task Force is indebted to the many government officials, staff, and City residents who took time to share their perspective and experience. In particular, the Task Force wishes to thank the group of seven (7) community liaisons with whom it worked. These Liaisons served as a direct connection between the Task Force and some of Madison's most challenged neighborhoods. The Liaisons' perspectives and participation was invaluable to the Task Force's efforts to fulfill the preeminent purpose for which the Council created this Task Force.

## B. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the Methodology Section is to provide an overview of how the Task Force completed its work and references to the information it studied and discussed as part of its deliberations.

### Step 1 - The Resolution

The Common Council created the Task Force by Resolution (RES-1700714, Legistar File 47707). The Resolution provided that the Mayor appoint five (5) Task Force members, the President of the Council appoint five (5) Task Force members, and that the Chair be jointly appointed by the Mayor and the President of the Council. The Resolution further provided that the Task Force be staffed by the Office of the City Attorney with the assistance of other City staff. See Appendix A.

The preamble of the Resolution notes some of the reasons for creating the Task Force:

- The increase in size and diversity of Madison’s population over the past three decades brought new challenges and opportunities for the City;
- The City of Madison places a high value on democratic civic engagement;
- The City of Madison is committed to Racial Equity and Social Justice;
- The City of Madison has not reviewed its government structure since the 1980s when the population was lower and less diverse; and
- The 2020 Census and annexation of the Town of Madison in 2022 is further impetus for reviewing the City’s government structure.

The Resolution then listed the issues the Task Force is to address under the headings “General,” “Common Council,” “Mayor,” and “Committees, Commissions, and Boards,” including:

- Best practices for ensuring municipal decision makers are representative of, connected to, and accountable to all members of the community;
- The powers and duties of the Council;
- The attributes of councils with full-time members and part-time members;
- The number of Council members and its effect on representation;
- Payment of Council members;
- Whether Council members should be elected from geographic districts or at-large;
- The size of Council staff;
- The powers and duties of the Mayor’s office;
- The power of the Mayor to appoint residents and Council members to City committees; and
- The frequency and time of both Council and committee meetings.

In considering these issues, the Resolution directed the Task Force to:



- Hold public hearings, obtain written reports, conduct research as necessary to prepare a report for the Mayor and Council;
- Create an innovative and public input process to learn about residents' perceptions of and experiences with governance in Madison; and
- Seek input from the Effective Government Guidance Team members, current and former BCC members and chairpersons, neighborhood associations, current and former Alders, and current and former Mayors.

Finally, the Resolution states that the Final Report should describe the impact on people of color and those living with lower incomes of any potential changes to the government's structure.

## Step 2 - Information Gathering

The Task Force began meeting on February 22, 2018 and spent its first several months gathering information to understand the issues before it. This included receiving information from staff and other members of the Task Force. A list of the information the Task Force received and considered is included in Appendix E.

Information reviewed by the Task Force included details on the difference between the Mayor-Council, City Manager, and Commission forms of government.<sup>3</sup> The Task Force also studied the characteristics of a first-class city and the steps necessary to become a first-class city.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, the Task Force spent several meetings reviewing the government structures of cities throughout the country that are similar in size to Madison.<sup>5</sup> Specifically, the Task Force reviewed the structure of forty-six (46) cities across the country with populations ranging from 200,000-700,000 residents. The Task Force also reviewed the government structures of "Big Ten" university cities. Finally, the Task Force reviewed the structure of other state capital cities that contain universities in states that voted Republican in 2016. For each group of cities, the Task Force considered each city's population; whether the city operated under a Mayor-Council, City Manager, or some other form of government; the size of the legislative council; and the number of Boards, Commissions, and Committees.

In addition to receiving information about purely structural considerations, the Task Force also received information about the City of Madison's Board, Commission and Committee structure. Included in this information was comprehensive information regarding the number of BCCs and BCC members,<sup>6</sup> the aldermanic districts in which BCC members live, and the total number of BCCs on which each alder serves.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6652712&GUID=FE669ED9-AE3A-4FA2-BFD6-EA1AB34E03E5>

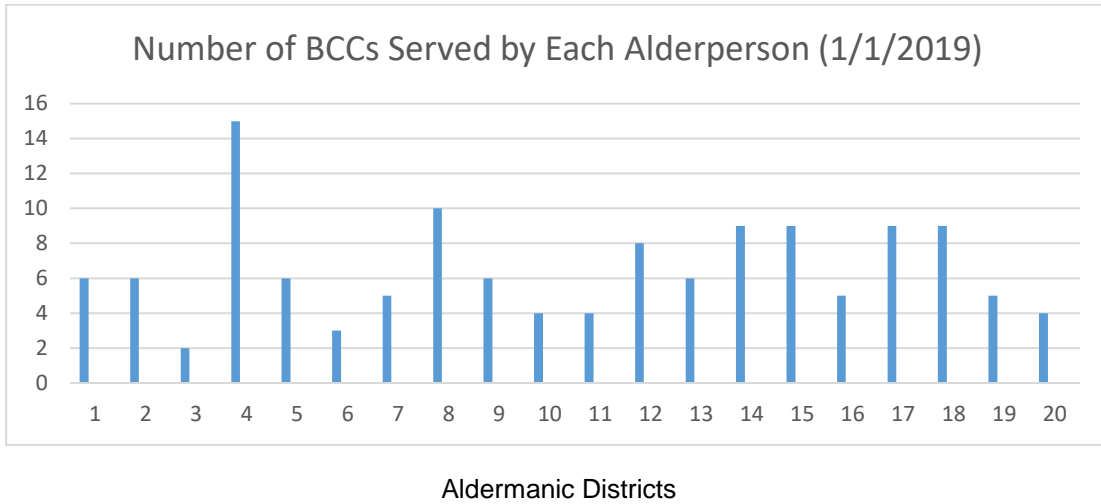
<sup>4</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6652754&GUID=3342A681-196B-40A8-ACA1-28C3A9B6C032>

<sup>5</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6652755&GUID=F4F1A018-35A9-49A1-8919-7D62DD6A00E8>

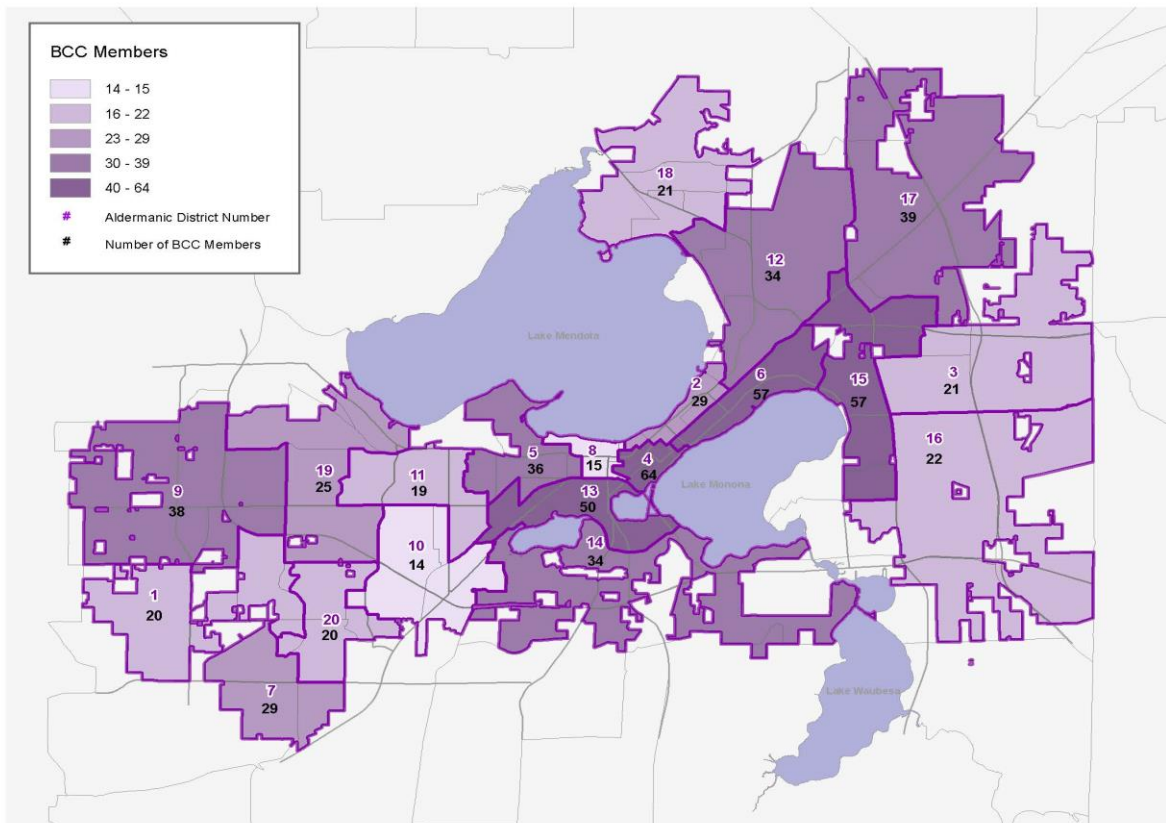
<sup>6</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6652678&GUID=4943E8A0-37E3-4CFC-9172-1FD5924586ED>

<sup>7</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6652681&GUID=2E68881C-3429-4179-A433-31C3243F299D>

For example, the following graph shows the number of BCCs served by each alderperson:

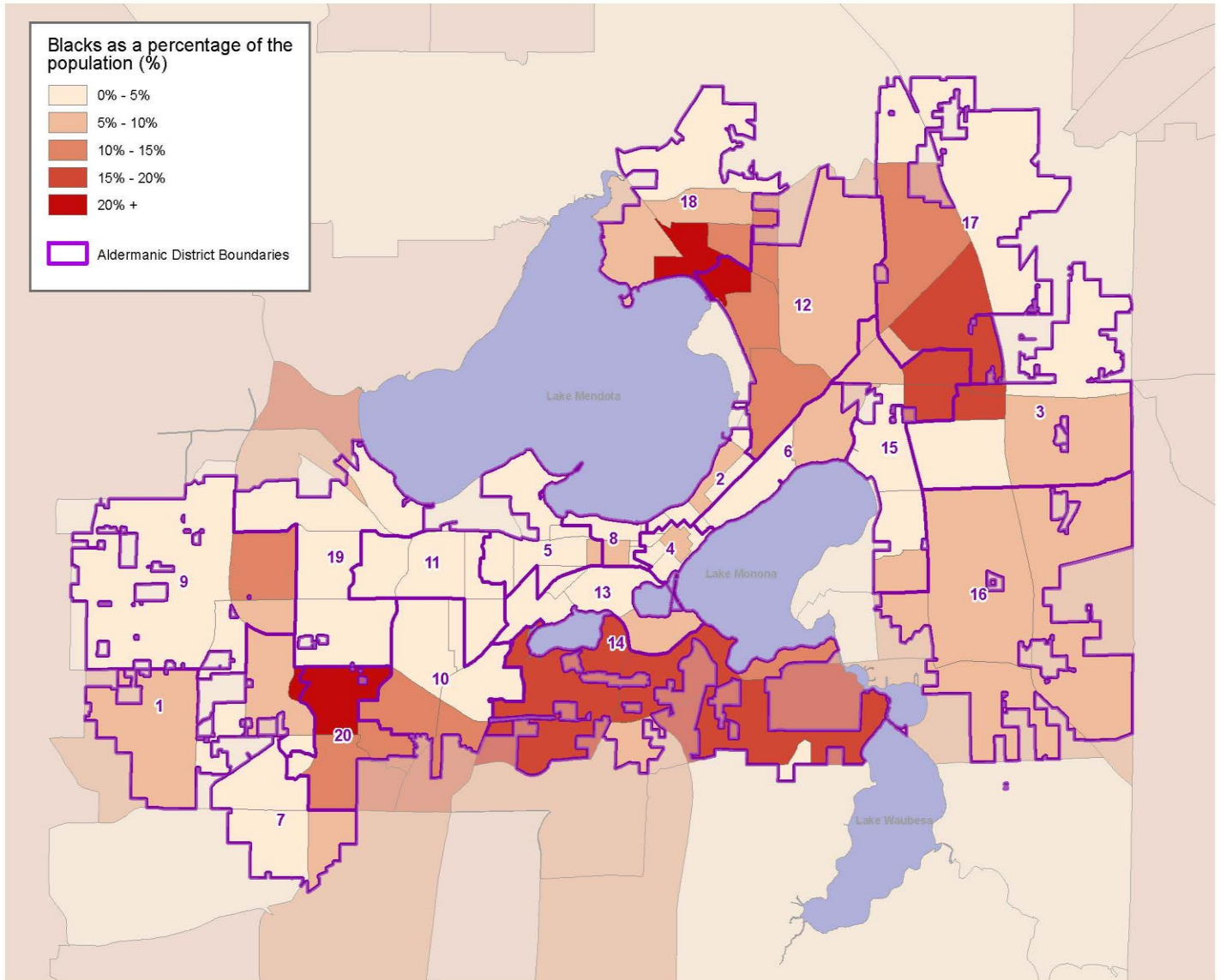


Similarly, the Task Force reviewed in which aldermanic districts BCC members live, as shown by this map.

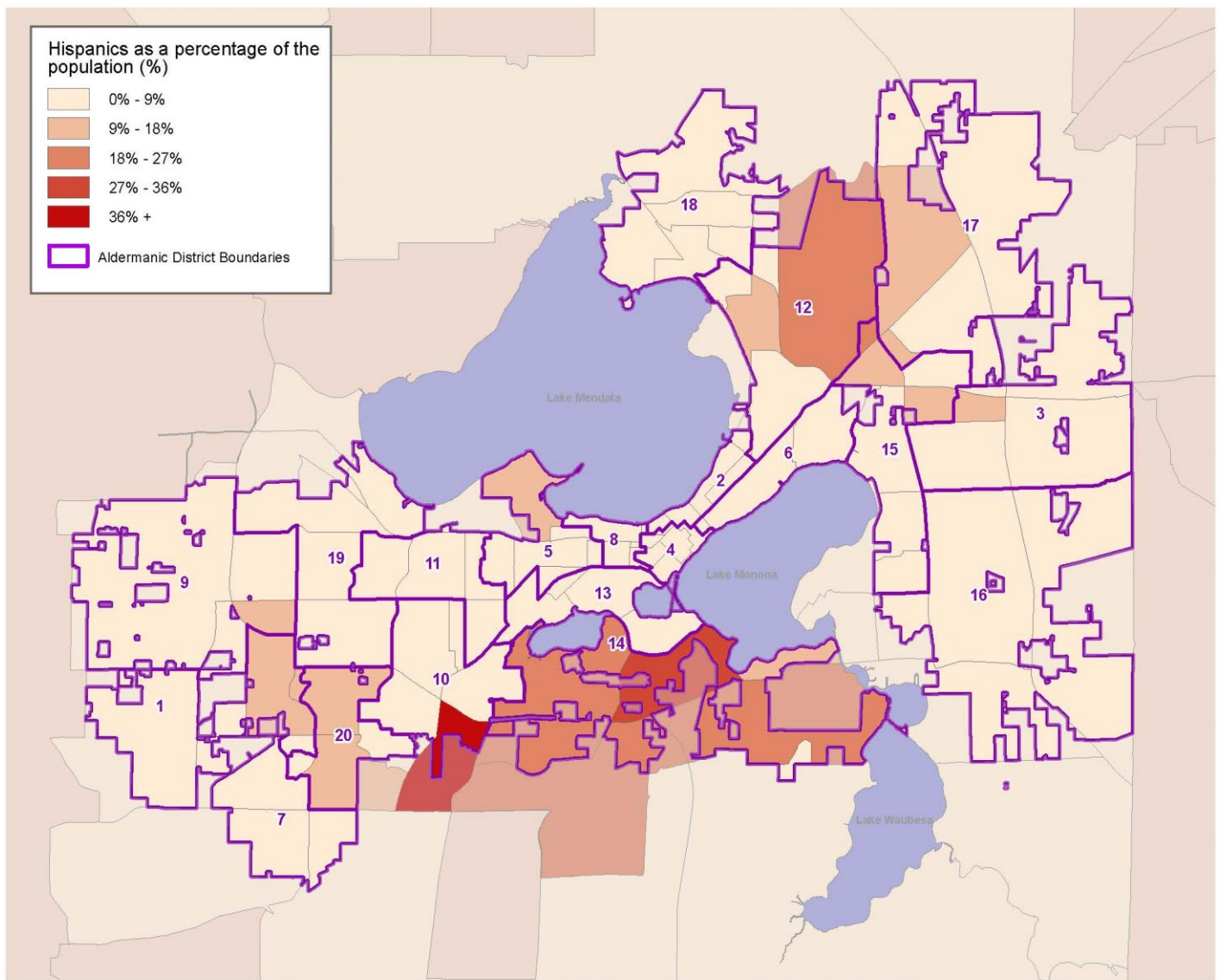




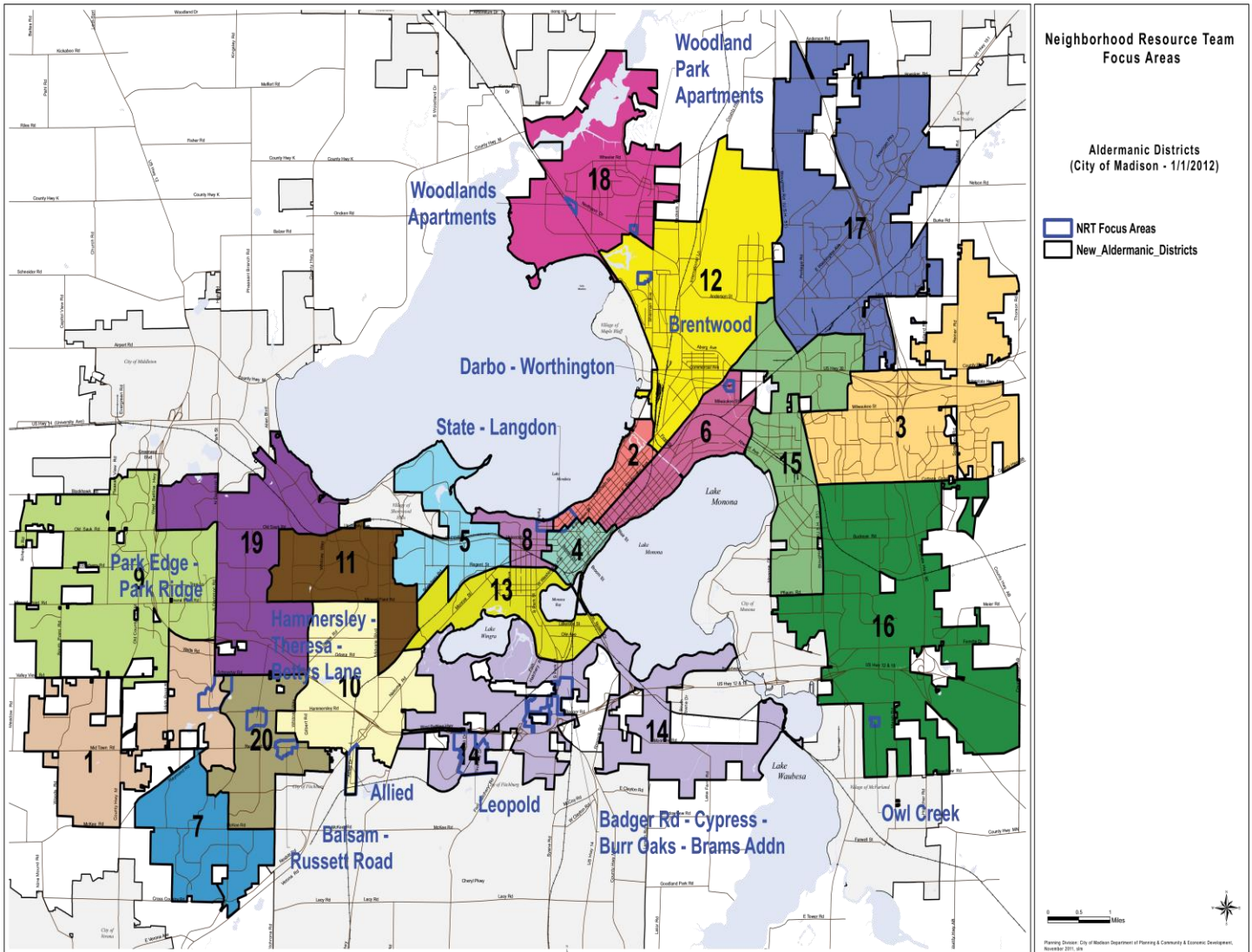
The Task Force also considered information regarding where people of color live in the City. The following map uses 2016 American Community Survey (ACS) data to show Blacks as a percentage of population by housing tract.



Similarly, the following map uses 2016 American Community Survey (ACS) data to show Hispanics as a percentage of population by housing tract.



The Task Force then compared this population data to areas in which the City's Neighborhood Resource Teams (NRTs) focus.<sup>8</sup>



In addition to the materials mentioned above, the Task Force also received other valuable information, including information on the structure, function, and budget of the Mayor's office<sup>9</sup> and a report and presentation from the City's Effective Government Team, including additional information relative to the size of Madison's Council as compared to cities when considering the number of residents represented by each alder.<sup>10</sup> Readers are encouraged to review the list of topic areas listed in Appendix E.

<sup>8</sup> The mission of the Neighborhood Resource Teams is to promote racial equity and improve the quality of life for Madison residents by understanding and elevating the needs, issues, and priorities of people living in areas with NRTs. Learn more about NRTs at: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/programs/neighborhood-resource-teams>

<sup>9</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7019113&GUID=C591C3DD-C5FD-486B-A34F-D386158423F1>

<sup>10</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6734626&GUID=EFE88BD1-E617-4F0E-8737-700A33070635>

### Step 3 - Subcommittee Work

After gathering information, the Task Force created five subcommittees to take on certain Task Force jobs and dig into the issues the Task Force was asked to examine.

#### 1. Executive Subcommittee

The purpose of the Executive Subcommittee was to plan and arrange the work of the Task Force and take on certain tasks as needed. The Executive Subcommittee met ten (10) times. Agendas, minutes, and materials from Executive Subcommittee meetings can be found in Legistar.<sup>11</sup>

#### 2. Government Officials Subcommittee

The purpose of the Government Officials Subcommittee was to create a method for obtaining feedback and perspective from former and current Government Officials. It did so by creating and distributing a survey to government officials and inviting government officials to meetings. The Government Officials Subcommittee met five (5) times. Agendas, minutes, and materials from Government Officials Subcommittee meetings can be found in Legistar.<sup>12</sup> The Government Officials Survey and Survey results are also in Legistar.<sup>13</sup> Finally, City Channel covered one meeting with the then current and former mayors and former Mayor Bauman spoke to the Executive Subcommittee in a subsequent meeting.<sup>14</sup>

#### 3. Communications Subcommittee

The purpose of the Communications Subcommittee was to create, organize, and implement the Task Force's public outreach and to supplement its public information efforts. This included creating content for the Task Force website, creating public information strategies, and creating and coordinating the distribution of the Task Force's resident survey. Finally, the Communications Subcommittee planned the Task Force's two resident Open Houses. The Communications Subcommittee met sixteen (16) times. Agendas, minutes, and materials from the Communications Subcommittee meetings can be found in Legistar.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4. Common Council Subcommittee

The purpose of the Common Council Subcommittee was to examine the issues contained in the Resolution pertaining to the Council. The Common Council

---

<sup>11</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3692730&GUID=19BDA21A-BC21-4ECC-9895-5C154B0A9186&Options=ID|&Search=53381>

<sup>12</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3692687&GUID=21206565-157D-40F0-9C4B-7EC43ADD74C7&Options=ID|&Search=53380>

<sup>13</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7875926&GUID=A5B4ED81-271C-48CC-9ACB-B3375580DFDC>

<sup>14</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6703152&GUID=A49BC5C7-26E9-438F-913A-9342DF4CCC1F>

<sup>15</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3692759&GUID=BD3D6AF5-6839-4F2D-85CA-2FAD146AA784&Options=ID|&Search=53382>



Subcommittee met ten (10) times. Agendas, minutes, and materials from the subcommittee meetings can be found in Legistar.<sup>16</sup> In addition, the Common Council Subcommittee issued a Report to the Task Force, which was included as part of the Interim Report to the Mayor and Council.

#### 5. Boards, Commissions, and Committees Subcommittee

The purpose of the Boards, Commissions, and Committees Subcommittee was to examine the issues contained in the Resolution pertaining to the City's BCCs. The Subcommittee met sixteen (16) times. Agendas, minutes, and materials from the subcommittee meetings can be found in Legistar.<sup>17</sup> In addition, the BCC Subcommittee issued a Report to the Task Force, which was also included as part of the Interim Report to the Mayor and Common Council.

#### **Step 4 - Interim Report to the Mayor and Common Council**

On May 17, 2019, the Task Force submitted an Interim Report to the Mayor and Common Council, which contained both subcommittee reports and recommendations pertaining to three issues raised by the resolution. The Interim Report can be found at Appendix C.

#### **Step 5 – Outreach and Input**

The Task Force reached out to former government officials, City staff, and the general public.

##### 1. Government Officials

First, the Task Force reached out to former government officials, including then current and former mayors, Council members, and former chairs of the City's Boards, Commissions, and Committees. It did so by creating and distributing a survey and inviting former government officials to testify before the Government Officials Subcommittee. Legistar file 50732 contains survey results<sup>18</sup> and the government officials' testimony is captured in the Government Officials Subcommittee minutes.<sup>19</sup> Finally, the testimony of former mayors was captured by City Channel.<sup>20</sup>

##### 2. City Staff

Next, the Task Force sought input from City staff regarding staff's perspective on the Council and BCC system. In particular, the BCC Subcommittee wanted to ask staff

---

<sup>16</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3712917&GUID=19073190-C3B4-42D1-BAB2-BA9442FDF39D&Options=ID|&Search=53673>

<sup>17</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3712890&GUID=E0CF56D3-53AF-4C5B-B261-C88E7E0CE1AF&Options=ID|&Search=53672>

<sup>18</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.aspx?M=F&ID=7875926&GUID=A5B4ED81-271C-48CC-9ACB-B3375580DFDC>

<sup>19</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3692687&GUID=21206565-157D-40F0-9C4B-7EC43ADD74C7&Options=ID|&Search=53380>

<sup>20</sup> <https://media.cityofmadison.com/Mediasite/Showcase/madison-city-channel/Presentation/af66d575d0f4487f917bbb6b44e9d47d1d>

about their experience staffing the BCCs and their professional interactions with Council members. To gain this perspective, the BCC Subcommittee created and distributed a survey and invited City staff to a meeting to discuss the issues. Legistar file 50732 contains survey results<sup>21</sup> and a transcription of the meeting with City Staff.<sup>22</sup>

### 3. The Public

Finally, the Communications Subcommittee led an effort to create a unique resident engagement and outreach program. Led by Member Eric Upchurch, the Communications Subcommittee identified aldermanic districts 1, 7, 9, 14, 17, and 20 as districts that tend to serve transit dependent populations with children aged 0-4 and have been traditionally underrepresented in City government. Next, the subcommittee sought leaders from those districts and neighborhoods to serve as liaisons between the neighborhoods and the City for purposes of receiving input. Ultimately, the Task Force teamed with seven (7) community liaisons:

John Brown	Pat Butler
Evelyn Hammond	Terri Hatchett
Alice Howard	Sheray Wallace
Wanda Smith	

The Liaisons attended several subcommittee and Task Force meetings, entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the City detailing payment and expectations,<sup>23</sup> developed the questions for the resident survey, and distributed the survey to residents in their neighborhoods. In total, the liaisons collected over one-thousand two-hundred (1,200) surveys from residents in their neighborhoods. The survey was also distributed to the whole City through Facebook advertisements, alder e-mails, and other means. The Legistar file 50732 contains the survey and survey results.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to creating and distributing a resident survey, the Communications Subcommittee also organized two resident Open Houses. The first open house took place on August 28, 2019 at The Atrium on South Park Street. The second open house took place on September 24, 2019 at Warner Park Community Center. At both open houses, the Task Force provided food and childcare to all participations. In addition, the Task Force provided transportation to and from the first open house. Approximately fifty (50) residents attended each open house. Participants rotated through stations regarding the Council, BCCs, the resident survey, and participation and engagement issues. At each station, participants were able to review information and leave comments and suggestions on Post-it notes. In addition, the participants could engage in conversation

---

<sup>21</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7875928&GUID=1467E7A9-31BF-4B50-A529-A075BAC94F31>

<sup>22</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7550904&GUID=5DE564E6-8DA6-408A-9F1A-82B9867AB56A>

<sup>23</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7876407&GUID=E1B1D1E7-1570-4977-B2D3-96FF30F8E24C>

<sup>24</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7875927&GUID=A7522EB5-98A0-454B-96D9-908F9AB2D8D0>

with Task Force members who were present near each station. Summaries of the Post-it note comments can be found in the Legistar file.<sup>25</sup>

To promote its public outreach efforts, the Task Force created a video<sup>26</sup> featuring Member Eric Upchurch and Community Liaison Wanda Smith introducing the resident survey, posted open house flyers in English, Spanish, and Hmong in the community,<sup>27</sup> used alder and City public information officers to advertise the survey and open houses, and contracted with social media platforms to advertise and promote the resident survey and open houses.

The Communications Subcommittee met and debriefed after this extensive public outreach program and reflected on how the outreach could be improved. The Legistar file contains a report of their perspective.<sup>28</sup>

### **Step 6 - Discussion, Debate, and Final Recommendations**

After gathering information, allowing the subcommittees to dig into the issues, and engaging in outreach, the Task Force spent its remaining meetings discussing, debating, and making recommendations to be included in the Final Report. The remainder of the Final Report will detail and give context to those recommendations. Minutes from those discussions can be found in Legistar File 50732. Additionally, the Task Force encourages readers to read the Subcommittee Reports that were made part of the Task Force's Interim Report to the Mayor and Council for further context of the considerations pertinent to each issue.

---

<sup>25</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3355669&GUID=2F84E907-F381-4CAF-B277-C87566A1FAFC&Options=ID|&Search=50732>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.cityofmadison.com/task-force-on-government-structure>

<sup>27</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3692759&GUID=BD3D6AF5-6839-4F2D-85CA-2FAD146AA784&Options=ID|&Search=53382>

<sup>28</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3692759&GUID=BD3D6AF5-6839-4F2D-85CA-2FAD146AA784&Options=ID|&Search=53382>

## C. RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE COMMON COUNCIL

### 1. Madison should transition to a full-time Common Council.

The Task Force recommends that the City move to a full-time Common Council. Throughout the two years the Task Force considered this issue, the Council Subcommittee and the Task Force noted and debated the pros and cons of moving to a full-time Council.

The Task Force noted the possible positive effects of transitioning to a full-time Council, including having alders who are able to dedicate all of their professional time to the work of the City instead of balancing multiple jobs and responsibilities; making the position of alder more attractive to candidates who may otherwise be unable to participate on a part-time council with part-time pay; having alders who would likely have larger districts, making Madison's residents per council member closer to other cities, thus possibly changing the level of influence a small group of residents can have on a single alder; and having alders who may be better positioned to consider the best interest of the entire City and not necessarily just their individual districts or small groups therein.

The Task Force also noted that moving to a full-time Council could have some negative effects, like professionalizing the position of alder, resulting in more expensive campaigns, and more influence from special interests; creating alders who may be less connected to their constituents and more removed from local or district issues; discouraging individuals from running for alder for fear of leaving a current job and then losing reelection at the next election; and possibly losing the varied backgrounds and job experiences often found on a part-time Council.

As the Task Force moved closer to making a recommendation on this issue, the negative effect most revisited by the Task Force was the risk of professionalizing the Council in a way that would bring big-money influence to local politics. Members of the Task Force and others from the Community noted their perception that moving from a part-time to full-time Legislature damaged state government and that they feared the same thing would happen to Madison's government if it transitioned to a full-time Council.

The Task Force took two separate votes on this issue. On October 2, 2019, a motion to move to a full-time Council passed 4-2.<sup>29</sup> When the issue was reconsidered on October 16, 2019, a motion to move to a full-time Council passed again, this time 6-2.<sup>30</sup>

On each vote, Task Force Members Trachtenberg and Goodwin voted no, stating their concern that moving to a full-time Council would professionalize Madison politics, invite big money to influence local issues, and jeopardize the varied experience of a large part-time Council. The majority of the Task Force, however, felt that these possible

---

<sup>29</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7823192&GUID=E0D942EA-5A46-460C-9D30-A860E572EB16>

<sup>30</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7827163&GUID=966728E9-792C-440D-9101-1E879395D294>



negative effects were outweighed by the potential benefits of ensuring that all residents had equal representation.

Proponents for a full-time Council noted that some alders already work full-time because they do not work second jobs. Thus, residents who live in those districts have full-time representation. Meanwhile, other alders cannot afford to do this. This creates a structure in which some residents have a full-time alder and others do not. The Task Force believes that this basic framework for providing representation is fundamentally unfair. Moving to a full-time Council would ensure that all residents have an alder who can devote all of their time to City work.

Proponents for a full-time Council also noted that adequately carrying out the duties of alder require a large amount of time. In addition to responding to constituent concerns and requests and working on policy and legislation, alders are also required to serve on BCCs. The number of BCCs on which each alder serves varies between four (4) and fourteen (14). In either case, serving on BCCs requires substantial alder time and energy. Thus, the Task Force believes that the City should recognize alders for that commitment, pay them accordingly, and give them the time and resources necessary to fully harness their talents and represent their districts.

Proponents also noted that moving to a full-time Council would better position the Council to consistently and effectively pursue policy initiatives, including initiatives related to improving resident engagement and participation in the City. For example, one of the recommendations the Task Force makes below is for the City to conduct a critical review and overhaul of the City's BCC system. The Task Force believes following through on this recommendation is critical to ensuring equal participation and representation in City decision making. The Task Force also believes that the Council, aided by City Staff, is the appropriate body to conduct and direct this critical overhaul. Moreover, with the BCC system restructured, a full-time Council would be equipped with the time and resources necessary to provide ongoing accountability of the BCC system.

Proponents for a full-time Council disagreed that a fear of professionalizing politics should stand in the way of this recommendation. They disagreed that having professional politicians was necessarily a negative, as the phrase implies. The Task Force pointed out that other City governments around the country have smaller full-time Councils and do not necessarily suffer from these same perceived problems of professionalization and big money influence. Rather than demonizing professional politicians, the Task Force believes that the City could look at a full-time Council as a way to fully harness the skills and talents of those who choose to run for elected office. A full-time Council may also encourage some members of the community to run for Council who previously would never have been able to do so because of financial or personal (e.g., family) reasons, including specifically people of color and low-income. Having those voices on the Council would greatly benefit the City.

Finally, proponents for moving to a full-time Council noted the simple fact that Madison has had a large part-time Council for most of its existence. Yet, Madison has acknowledged its struggle to adequately represent and serve people of color and low income. Two examples of steps the City has taken to address this struggle have been establishing the Racial Equity and Social Justice initiative and creating this Task Force. While moving to a full-time Council will not, alone, resolve this challenge, neither will doubling down on the current structure.

## **2. Madison should reduce the size of the Common Council to ten (10) members elected concurrently with the Mayor.**

The Task Force recommends that if the City elects to transition to a full-time Council, the City should also transition to a ten (10) member Council with members being elected concurrently with the Mayor (i.e., four-year terms).

The Task Force debated the appropriate size of the Council throughout its work. In doing so, the Task Force noted the interconnectedness of this issue with that of whether to move to a full-time Council. For example, the Task Force noted that if the City decides to move to a full-time Council, then it may, for financial reasons, decide to reduce the size of the Council. Conversely, the Task Force noted that if the City was inclined to keep a larger Council, it may, for financial reasons, decide to keep the Council part-time. The Task Force therefore noted that the positive and negative effects of reducing the size of the Council are essentially the same as those discussed above for moving to a full-time Council. Additionally, as noted in the Council Subcommittee Report, the Task Force discussed at length the fundamental question of whether alders in Madison should be viewed as resident-alder “volunteers” focused on public service or full-time politicians. Finally, the Task Force noted that many former government officials did not necessarily support reducing the size of the Council.

Like the issue of whether to transition to a full-time Council, the Task Force officially considered this issue twice. On October 2, 2019, the Task Force voted unanimously to reduce the number of alders to ten (10). However, when the Task Force reconsidered the issue on October 16, 2019 with additional Task Force members present, it could not agree on a size other than ten (10). At that meeting, several motions were made to keep the number of alders at or around 20, all of which failed. A motion to retain the current size of the Council failed on a 5-5 vote. A motion that the Common Council have at least 20 members with the possibility of more failed 3-6. A motion that Common Council members represent 14,000 residents (with the total number of alders changing as a function of population change) failed 5-5. Finally, a motion to retain a 20 member Council if the City does not transition to a full-time Council failed 5-5. Throughout the meeting, Task Force members engaged in a lively debate about whether residents would be better represented with more or fewer alders.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7827163&GUID=966728E9-792C-440D-9101-1E879395D294>

Task Force members who favored a larger Council with smaller districts believed that it was still possible to personally reach each constituent. This, they believed, was critical to ensuring effective representation across the City. For these same reasons, smaller districts would still allow door-to-door campaigning, perhaps reducing the cost of future campaigns. These members believed that effective representation was tied more closely to the size of the Council, rather than whether Council members worked full- or part-time.

Task Force members who favored ten (10) alders noted the positive effects of having larger districts, including that larger districts would mean that those populations who tend to be more transient, moving from district to district, would be less likely to cross district lines when they move. These residents may then become more familiar with and invested in their districts and their alder. Larger districts may also allow these residents to run for Council when they may not otherwise have considered doing so since a relatively short move would have resulted in crossing district lines. In response to opponents who favored smaller districts so that alders could contact each resident, those in favor of fewer alders stated that there are many ways to contact residents and that just knocking on each door does not necessarily guarantee good representation. Ultimately, Task Force members reiterated that the City's current system of representation is not fair to those residents whose alders cannot work full-time and that, if reducing the total number of alders is necessary to achieve the goal of full and fair representation, then achieving that goal outweighs any negative effects that may come with having a smaller Council.

Thus, the motion to reduce the size of the Council to ten (10) members was the only motion that passed.

**3. Madison should increase Common Council member pay to 80% of the area median income for a single parent with two children (approximately \$67,000).**

The Task Force recommends that, if the City elects to transition to a full-time Council, the City raise the salary for Council members to 80% of the Area Median Income ("AMI") for a single parent with two children, which is approximately \$67,000.00. The basis for this recommendation is to properly compensate Council members for the work that they do and to encourage people to run for Council who may not otherwise have been able to do so for financial reasons.

Proponents for this recommendation favored using the AMI for a single parent with two children to ensure that serving on the Council was financially feasible for a larger portion of the City's population. The Task Force recognizes that for some prospective candidates \$67,000 would represent a pay cut but that for most of Madison's residents the recommended amount would represent an increase in pay. One Task Force member voted against this recommendation.

#### **4. Madison should maintain geographic aldermanic representation.**

The Task Force unanimously recommends that the City maintain geographic aldermanic representation rather than move to at-large or a hybrid form of representation. The Task Force noted the importance of residents having a district specific representative and could not find that transitioning to at-large or a hybrid system would necessarily improve representation of residents or diversity on the Council.

#### **5. Madison should increase aldermanic terms to four (4) years.**

The Task Force unanimously recommends increasing aldermanic terms to four (4) years. The Task Force noted that transitioning to four-year aldermanic terms has some potential negative effects, including perhaps professionalizing campaigns, discouraging potential candidates who may not want to make such a long commitment, and creating the possibility that, if people resign because they move or are no longer committed, vacancies would result in aldermanic seats being filled for longer periods of time by political appointees rather than by elected officials. However, the Task Force believed that many of these possible negative effects could be addressed by new rules such as, for example, requiring special elections (or, elections at the next general election) for vacant seats.

Ultimately, the Task Force found that the positive effects of transiting to four-year terms outweighed any potential negative effects. For example, in the current two-year term system, new alders must run again for reelection just when they are becoming familiar with their position and their Council colleagues. A four-year term will remove this negative effect by allowing Council members to settle in and pursue policy objectives without having to turn around and run for reelection. Transitioning to four-year terms may also reduce overall campaign costs (for both the alder and the City) by requiring less frequent elections. Finally, the Task Force noted that, due to reduced turnover, longer terms could allow residents to become more familiar with their alder over the course of a four-year term and allow alders to pursue more robust and cohesive policy initiatives.

#### **6. Madison should impose term limits of twelve (12) consecutive years.**

The Task Force unanimously recommends that the City impose aldermanic term limits of twelve (12) consecutive years. The Task Force noted that this is particularly important if the City transitions to a full-time Council. Term limits will result in fresh candidates and new ideas, discourage career politicians, and perhaps result in more competitive elections and less influence from outside groups.

#### **7. Madison should increase Council leadership terms to two (2) years if the Council terms are increased to four (4) years.**

The Task Force unanimously recommends that if aldermanic terms are increased to four (4) years, then Council leadership terms should be increased to two (2) years. The current one-year term of the Council President and Vice-President results in frequent turnover of the positions. As a result, by the time the Council President becomes

comfortable in the role of Council President their term is almost over. Increasing the term to two years would alleviate this problem. However, the Task Force notes specifically that it does not endorse this recommendation if aldermanic terms are not increased to four years.

**8. That any structural changes to the Council take place at the election immediately following redistricting.**

One of the driving reasons for creating the Task Force was the 2020 Census, resulting redistricting, and the 2022 attachment of the Town of Madison. Therefore, the Council unanimously recommends that the optimal time to make the structural change recommended by this report is at the election immediately following redistricting.

**9. That any changes to the size of the Council or the terms of its members be made by charter ordinance subject to binding referendum of the electors.**

Many of the recommendations contained in this Report can be implemented by ordinance, resolution, or administrative policy change. However, any changes to the size or terms of the Council must be made by binding referendum.

In 1987, the City reinstated Sec. 3.01 of the Madison General Ordinances as a Charter Ordinance, organizing the City under the Mayor-Council form of government. Among other things, the ordinance provides that the City be composed of twenty (20) alderpersons, one (1) from each district, elected for term of two (2) years.

Wis. Stat. § 66.0101(8) states that “a charter ordinance enacted or approved by a vote of the electors controls over any prior or subsequent act of the legislative body of the city.” Therefore, the Task Force notes that any structural changes recommended herein related to the size of the Council or terms of Council members must be accomplished by Charter Ordinance, adopted by the electorate in a binding referendum.

## D. RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, and COMMITTEES

The Task Force recognizes that the City's BCC structure was intended to serve as a robust forum for resident participation in a progressive City that highly values resident input and robust participatory democracy. In theory, the nearly 100 BCCs create numerous avenues for resident participation on issues and decisions facing the City. These BCCs may also serve to support a part-time council, with members who, because they are working part-time, rely on BCCs for advice and recommendation on complex issues facing the City.

The Task Force found that the current BCC system faces serious challenges with respect to core issues of diversity, accountability, effectiveness, representation, and resident participation. Moreover, with nearly 100 total BCCs, the current BCC structure is large, confusing, and difficult for residents to access. Thus, as detailed more fully in the BCC Subcommittee Report,<sup>32</sup> the Task Force believes the current BCC structure, though well intended, serves as little more than a veneer of representation and participation.

The Task Force agreed with the findings of the BCC Subcommittee. In its Report, the BCC Subcommittee noted that the current BCC system:

- Lacks geographic and racial diversity;
- Results in a drain on resident, staff, and alder time;
- Lacks consistent accountability;
- Varies in levels of authority and influence;
- Includes BCCs that lack a well-defined purpose, have outlived their purpose, or have purposes that overlap;
- Requires logistical processes (meeting times, locations, rules, and infrastructure) that do not facilitate resident participation; and
- Is often inadequately staffed or has inadequate resources to complete its work.

In considering possible solutions to these challenges, the BCC Subcommittee and Task Force focused on three critical areas – organization, training and support, and use of technology. It considered possible plans to organize the BCCs around “lead committees” by subject area. It considered the possibility of creating an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support (“ORENS”) to provide support and training to BCC members and staff and to reach out to residents most impacted by BCC decisions. And, finally, it considered ways to use technology to alleviate some of the key logistical impediments to participating in BCC decision making.

---

<sup>32</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7089649&GUID=26CA8AA3-0F0C-4FEF-BA6F-94626C32E668>

Based on its discussion and considerations, the Task Force recommends the following with regard to the City's BCC structure:

**1. Create an organizational chart of all BCCs and organize BCCs around lead committees.**

The Task Force recommends that the City create a comprehensive organizational chart of all BCCs and then organize BCCs around lead committees.

The BCC Subcommittee Report discussed and included sample organizational charts that organized the BCCs around lead committees according primarily to subject area. The Task Force stops short of endorsing a specific organizational chart, but recommends that something similar to the ones it reviewed be considered as a way to organize the BCCs in a way that, among other things, makes the BCC system more transparent and accountable.

**2. Eliminate or combine BCCs that are redundant or have outlived their purpose.**

With an organizational chart in hand, the Task Force believes that the City will see that many of its BCCs could be eliminated or combined. For example, the Task Force recognized that some topic areas (e.g., housing, environment, parks and recreation) have numerous committees related to that topic. Examining the purpose and role of the BCCs in these groupings revealed that many BCCs are redundant or have, perhaps, outlived their purpose. The sample organizational charts reviewed by the BCC Subcommittee and the Task Force include some examples of BCCs that could, subject to a more thorough review, be combined or eliminated.

Reducing the total number of BCCs by eliminating or combining BCCs that are redundant or have outlived their purpose will decrease time required of residents, staff, and alders, make the BCC structure easier to support and access, and ensure greater clarity of purpose for each BCC.

In making this recommendation, the Task Force also notes that the City's nearly 100 BCCs is a major outlier when compared to other cities across the country, which are more likely to have between 20 and 40 total BCCs.

**3. Reorganize BCCs to increase accountability.**

The Task Force recommends that the City's reorganization of BCCs around lead committees be done in a way that ensures BCCs are accountable to their intended purpose and function. The Task Force believes the Common Council Executive Committee ("CCEC") should take on this significant task and encourages the Council to consider the deliberations of the BCC Subcommittee and the basic framework of the organizations for accountability considered by the Task Force.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7089649&GUID=26CA8AA3-0F0C-4FEF-BA6F-94626C32E668>



#### **4. Review BCC enabling ordinances and resolutions to ensure clarity of purpose and authority.**

In reviewing the BCCs, the Task Force noted that many of the ordinances and resolutions creating individual BCCs are not clear as to the BCCs purpose or jurisdiction. This results in BCCs either not fulfilling their duties or exceeding their jurisdictions. The Task Force noted that staff and BCC members are not always clear on what their BCC is supposed to or able to do. Ensuring clarity in the ordinances and resolutions that created the BCC would be a first step to addressing this challenge.

#### **5. Create an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support (“ORENS”) to support BCC system staffing, training, and resident engagement.**

The Task Force noted the critical need for the BCC system to improve resident engagement and participation. Accordingly, the Task Force recommends that the City create ORENS, a separate department within the City that would be responsible for, among other things, staffing, training, minutes/reporting for BCC meetings and for engaging residents on key issues coming before the City’s BCCs.

In considering such an office, the Task Force considered a more specific proposal that described the ORENS function.<sup>34</sup> In discussing this option, the Task Force recognized that creating such a department would be a significant undertaking and require a considerable financial commitment. Nevertheless, the Task Force believes the importance of dedicating City staff and resources to resident engagement and participation justifies including this important recommendation in its Final Report.

This recommendation is rooted in a recurring theme that the City needs to improve representation on and engagement with the Common Council and the City’s BCCs. The Task Force identified many barriers to representation and engagement, including:

- Times and places of City meetings;
- Requirements for in-person participation;
- Lack of childcare and adequate transportation;
- Inadequate training and support for BCC members;
- Uneven level of staff support and resources for BCCs;
- Lack of a clear BCC purpose;
- Lack of general civic education;
- Heavy workload of alders; and
- Historical housing patterns and current landlord practices that result in high mobility of people earning low incomes, many of whom are people of color and single-parents.

---

<sup>34</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7089649&GUID=26CA8AA3-0F0C-4FEF-BA6F-94626C32E668>



ORENS seeks to address these and other concerns in a department that would be jointly supervised by the Mayor and Common Council Executive Committee. This new structure of shared responsibility would be an innovation in City government that would, among other things, assist in the recruitment of a more diverse BCC structure, train BCC members and staff, provide administrative support to BCCs, and organize and facilitate neighborhood meetings.

The Task Force recognizes that staff throughout the City perform some of these functions for individual departments. It would not be the Task Force's intent to remove these individuals from their departments, but to supplement, in a major and significant way, the work that they do.

**6. Immediately create an Administrative Services Team to support the BCC system and improve resident engagement.**

While the City works toward establishing ORENS, the Task Force recommends immediately creating an Administrative Services Team consisting of staff from the offices of the Council, Mayor, Human Resources, and City Clerk who are already involved with BCC support. This Administrative Services Team should be housed in the Council Office and be charged with working on the issues listed above for which ORENS would ultimately be responsible. The Team should also be charged with developing systems for BCCs to use for resident participation in decision making and ensuring that prompt and direct feedback is given to issues about which residents have expressed interest.

**7. That the mayor continue appointing residents and alders to the BCCs, but that the process be changed to ensure a robust review of nominations by the Common Council Executive Committee.**

Section VI.c. of the BCC Subcommittee Report discussed whether the Mayor should continue appointing members to the BCCs. Currently, nearly all appointments are made by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council without any referrals. The Task Force discussed the need to improve transparency and increase diversity of representation on the BCCs and suggested that requiring greater collaboration between the Mayor's office and Council could help achieve these goals.

Accordingly, the Task Force recommends that the Mayor nominate residents and alders for positions on the BCC. Upon introduction of the nominations at the Council, the nominations shall be referred to the Council Executive Committee ("CCEC"). The CCEC shall promptly consider the nominations and either recommend approval, referral back to the Mayor's Office, or referral to the Mayor's Office with suggestions of possible new or different nominations. In making its recommendations, the CCEC shall consider, among other things, the need to improve transparency and diversity of representation on the City's BCCs. The CCEC recommendations should then return to the full Council for action.

Implementing this process will require appropriate changes to the Madison General Ordinances, including setting an outside time limit for CCEC action.

**8. That if the City transitions to a full-time Common Council, alder appointments to the BCCs should be made by the CCEC, subject to confirmation by the full Council.**

The Task Force Recommends that if the City moves to a full-time Council then the above recommendation related to appointment to BCCs be amended to transition the power of appointing alders to BCCs from the Mayor to the Common Council Executive Committee, subject to confirmation by the entire Council.

**9. Common Council members should not serve as chairs of BCCs with resident members.**

The Task Force recommends that the City retain its general rule that Council members not serve as chair, co-chair, or vice-chair of a BCC with resident members. Although this rule has been modified by ordinance for some BCCs, the Task Force noted the BCC Subcommittee's observations that service on BCCs is one of the major duties that consumes alder time and the BCC Subcommittee and Task Force see no reason to change that rule, potentially adding more responsibility to an alder's BCC responsibilities.

**10. That the City review City processes and procedures applicable to BCCs so that it is easier for residents to participate in BCCs.**

As noted in Section F. below, the Task Force recommends that there are several actions the City can take to improve resident participation and engagement. Many of the recommendations made in Section F. relate to reviewing and changing City processes and procedures in a way that makes it easier for residents to participate in BCCs, including reviewing policies for the day, time, and location of BCC meetings. It was noted throughout the Task Force discussions how difficult it is for residents to make it downtown for a meeting. The timing of meetings can also be problematic because they often begin at or near when residents who work the day shift are getting off work and during when residents who work a night shift are at work. Meetings can sometimes last late into the night, making it difficult for residents with families or who are transit dependent to attend until the end of a meeting.

One tangible step the Task Force took during its meetings to address this challenge was to suspend Robert's Rules to stand informally and allow for public discussion and engagement of any agenda item. In fact, the Task Force and its subcommittees did this over seventy-five (75) times over the nearly two-year period. This allowed residents attending meetings to participate in the meeting in a normal free-flowing conversational way. The Task Force found this very helpful to understanding each resident's point of view and believes that residents who took advantage of this opportunity felt that the time and effort expended to attend the meeting was worth it based on the feedback they were allowed to give. The Task Force recognized allowing this free-flowing

discussion may not be appropriate for some meetings, but should be considered, when possible, as a way to make attending and participating in meetings more worthwhile for City residents.

**11. That the City implement a technology plan to improve representation and engagement on the City's BCCs.**

The Task Force believes a key component to increasing representation and resident engagement is to create a robust technology plan that will create new avenues for resident engagement. These include but would not be limited to: 1) remote participation of BCC members and the public in BCC meetings; 2) notification or alerts of issues coming before BCCs, including the ability to follow items based on interest, impact, category, and geography and promptly report any decisions which are made by BCCs on these issues; 3) platforms on which to submit feedback to certain items under consideration prior to the consideration of the items ("agenda commenting"); and 4) creation in one accessible place of a display of the current and upcoming vacancies on BCCs to facilitate the application process.

## **E. RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE MAYOR'S OFFICE**

### **1. That Madison should retain the Mayor-Council form of Government.**

The Task Force recommends that Madison retain the Mayor-Council form of government, rather than switching to a City Manager form of government as allowed by state law.

Switching from a Mayor-Council to City Manager form of government would shift the power of administering the City from the Mayor's office to the Council. In fact, under the City Manager plan the City is not required to have a mayor. Though some cities under the City Manager plan also have a mayor, the mayor's role in such cities is largely symbolic.

From 1947-1950, Madison operated under the City Manager form of government. In November 1946, the Council passed a charter ordinance, which provided:

"That the government of the City of Madison be and hereby is reorganized under Chapter 64 of the Statutes providing for the City Manager plan, with a council composed of seven members to be nominated and elected from the city at large for a term of two years,„

For most of the three years the City operated under this plan, Leonard Howell served as the City Manager. In June of 1949, Councilman Garner introduced a resolution proposing that there be a City wide vote on a charter ordinance keeping the City Manager form of government but increasing the size of the council from 7 members to 9, with 4 members to be elected from districts and 5 to be elected at-large. By August of 1950, Leonard Howell retired and was replaced by George Forster, who held the titles of Acting City Manager, Acting Director of Public Works, Director of Finance and Auditor and Comptroller. On November 5, 1950, rather than adopting Councilman Garner's resolution to keep the City Manager plan and increase the size of the council by two, the City elected to return to the Mayor-Council form of government with twenty (20) alderpersons. The Charter ordinance published on January 12, 1951 provided:

"That the government of the City of Madison be and hereby is reorganized under Chapter 62. .. providing for the City Mayor and Aldermanic Plan, with a council composed of twenty Alderman, one from each ward."

Council Proceeding Notes did not provide a rationale for why these changes took place between 1946 and 1951. The City Attorney prepared a memorandum for alternative forms of government that contains a more thorough explanation of these forms.

After reviewing this information, the Task Force decided that it was in the best interest of the City to remain in the Mayor-Council form of government. The Task Force believed there was nothing to be gained from changing to a different form of government, especially in light of Madison's previous experience with the City Manager form of government.

## 2. That Madison should not pursue First-Class City Status.

To become a first class city, Madison would need to change its ordinances to comply with state laws regarding the governance of first class cities.<sup>35</sup> By estimate of the City Attorney's Office, over 300 different laws apply or may apply to first class cities. Thus, amending City ordinances to comply with the mandatory laws and determining whether to adopt the optional laws would take significant time and effort. Furthermore, as the City went through all those changes, almost any item could become an insurmountable matter, killing the entire process. Finally, since no city has ever gone from second class status to first class status, the transition process is unknown.

As the City contemplated changes in its ordinances to comply with state laws, it would see that many of these state laws were enacted with only Milwaukee in mind and, therefore, do not fit Madison. So, in addition to amending its ordinances to match state law, Madison may also need to approach the Legislature about changing certain state laws in order to accommodate Madison's transition to a first class city.

Beyond, logistics, the Task Force reviewed a handful of the approximately 300 state laws applicable to first-class cities:

1. As a general matter, first class cities are not included in the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS). Currently, all Madison employees are in the WRS.
2. Unlike all other cities, a first class city retains all the parts of its special charter existing before 1923, and does not fully fall under the general charter law of chapter 62. It is unknown if or how this would apply to a city transitioning from second class to first class.
3. The rules for governing police departments and the powers of the Police and Fire Commission (PFC) are very different in a first class city. In a 1<sup>st</sup> class city, the PFC sets policy for the department. Police and Fire chiefs are appointed for a 10-year term; in other cities, the chiefs serve unless removed for cause. In a first class city, an officer suspended or sought to be discharged by the chief is not paid before review of that discipline by the PFC. The officer, if reinstated, gets back pay. In Madison and other cities, the officer is paid until the PFC acts.

---

<sup>35</sup> Madison's population is already sufficient for it to become a first class city. Thus, the biggest obstacle to becoming a first class city would be for Madison to change its ordinances to comply with state laws applicable to first class cities.

4. In Madison, high-level employee-managers are appointed to 5-year terms. In a first class city, those officials serve at the pleasure of the Mayor.
5. There are very different budget procedures for first-class cities, and the Mayor has a line-item veto.
6. There is an entire chapter devoted to the school system in a first class city, chapter 119, Stats. The rules for operation are very different. The school district is coterminous with the city's boundaries, meaning that in most annexations, students move to the city school system. While the district has its own board and authority, it is closely entwined with the first class city. For example, the city attorney provides all legal services to the school district.

The Task Force noted that certain aspects of being a first-class city could be advantageous to the City, but that, on the whole, transitioning to a first-class city would be a tremendous undertaking that may prove futile. Instead, the Task Force believes more immediate change and improvement would come from implementing other recommendations contained in this Report. The Task Force recommends that instead of pursuing first-class city status, the City could review those aspects of being a first-class city that would be most advantageous to Madison and possibly approach the Legislature about giving those powers to second-class cities.

### **3. That Madison should not restrict or expand the Mayor's current veto power.**

Wis. Stat. § 62.09(8) provides that "the Mayor shall have the veto power as to all acts of the Council, except such as to which it is expressly or by necessary implication otherwise provided." It takes a 2/3 vote of all members of the Council to override a mayoral veto.

The Task Force noted that, as a practical matter, the City's hands are tied by state law with regard to altering the form of the Mayor's veto power. The Task Force also noted that even if that were not the case they had not heard from former government officials or others of a need to change the Mayor's veto power. Given this, the Task Force does not recommend changing the Mayor's veto power.

If the City believes changing the Mayor's veto power would be advantageous to the City, such as giving the Mayor line-item budget veto power as provided to mayors of

first-class cities, Madison could approach the Legislature about giving mayors of second-class cities that same power.

**4. That the City review the Mayor's administrative span of power and take steps to ensure that the Mayor and Deputy Mayors can adequately supervise all direct reports.**

The Task Force created a Mayor's Office workgroup to review and discuss the Mayor's current administrative span of control, including the Mayor's authority to hire, fire, and supervise department heads. The Task Force noted that Madison has been fortunate to have mayors who have generally done a good job discharging their duty to oversee the day-to-day administration of the City. The Task Force also noted that it makes sense each mayor will have a different strategy or approach to overseeing the administration of the City, including how they use deputy mayors.

However, the Task Force believes the City could benefit from examining the Mayor's span of control and take steps to ensure that any future growth of the administrative structure does not make it more difficult for the Mayor's Office to oversee the day-to-day administration of the City. Thus, the Task Force recommends that the City stop creating new departments or agencies that report directly to the Mayor. Next, the Mayor's Office should create and maintain an organizational chart of the City's administrative structure and that this chart be easily accessible by the public. And, finally, the Mayor's Office should conduct annual performance evaluations of department heads and others reporting directly to the Mayor's Office.



## **F. RECOMMENDATIONS ON RESIDENT PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Task Force noted throughout its discussion that there are many things the City could do in addition to changing its basic government structure to improve resident engagement and participation. The Task Force noted that in 2016 the City of Austin, Texas did an engagement study that focused on five major themes: 1) Make information clear, relevant and easily accessible; 2) Make it easier for people to give input in ways that are convenient, accessible and appropriate for them; 3) Explain how input will be used and show how that input had an impact on the decision made; 4) Ensure that everyone who cares about an issue or is impacted has an opportunity to engage; and 5) Ensure that City staff has the support, training, tools and resources to do engagement well. After discussing resident engagement and participation over the two-year period and conducting public outreach of its own, the Task Force agrees with these five themes identified in the Austin study and, based on these themes, created a list of possible initiatives that could improve resident engagement and participation.

- Provide childcare at meetings;
- Validate parking for people attending meetings;
- Make Council proclamations before the legislative business begins at 6:30 p.m.;
- Allow video testimony or live electronic participation such as through the internet, from remote centers of the City, or other electronic means;
- Allow public comments to be made and considered prior to a meeting, such as through a system that notifies residents of decisions to be made, asks for their input, and then relays that input to decisionmakers;
- Separate public testimony from legislative debate and action by allowing individuals to provide input at the beginning of Council meetings regardless of when the item on which they wish to speak is considered;
- Vary meeting locations throughout the City;
- Make written comments available to the public and Council members at the time of the meeting;
- Avoid late-night meetings and reduce overall length of meetings;
- Adhere to and/or change current rules regarding the length of alder statements at Council meetings;
- Improve accessibility and functionality of Legistar;
- Create a way for people to provide input in Legistar or some other appropriate platform;
- Provide classes for the public to learn how to use Legistar;
- On the City website, allow option for having a chat with a City employee who can direct a resident in the right direction should they have an issue or question about government services;
- Continue working towards having a 311 number for City services;



- Maintain subscription lists for Council and BCC items so that residents can be made aware of issues coming before a body through an email blast or text message and report back promptly when a decision has been made;
- Review customer relation software options that may create better processes for residents to navigate City services, such as through a ticketing system where issues are ticketed, followed up on by staff, and then the results reported back to the person requesting the service; and
- Add more than just the name of meetings to the City calendar so that more information can be obtained with one (1) click, instead of requiring multiple clicks to get relevant and substantive information about a meeting.

In considering these possible ideas, the Task Force heard a presentation from City Information Technology regarding the cost of providing some of the technological services that could help improve resident engagement and support.<sup>36</sup> The Task Force recommends that the City create a technology plan, like the one suggested by the BCC Subcommittee in Section VI.d. of its Report.

The Task Force employed some of these recommendations in its own work. It held Task Force meetings at various locations throughout the City, including at the Urban League, Warner Park Community Center, Pinney Library, and others. It provided childcare, transportation, and dinner at its Open Houses. And it used social media to promote its activities and events. Moreover, at its meetings, the Task Force suspended Robert's Rules of Order over seventy-five (75) times and invited residents to the table to speak. While the Task Force recognizes that keeping order is an integral part of running an efficient and productive meeting, there are times when BCCs and the Council could allow individuals time to speak.

---

<sup>36</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7020419&GUID=F547BD73-2DCC-409E-8C13-A8C0FD43AF1E>

## **G. CONCLUSION**

Reviewing the structure and processes of Madison's government, and judging these against Madison's civic goals of inclusion, participation, and representation, is important and difficult work. Having done this work, the Task Force submits these recommendations to address significant structural inequities in Madison's government that result in unequal representation and prevent many residents, including especially people of color and low income, from participating in City decision making.

The Task Force understands that its recommendations will not produce a perfect government – no set of recommendations ever will. But preserving the status quo is not an option if the City is truly intent on pursuing racial equity and social justice. Thus, whether or not the Mayor and Common Council pursues these specific recommendations, they must find meaningful, measurable ways to address the structural inequities in Madison's government so that Madison can truly and actually be a robust participatory democracy for all of its residents.

# APPENDIX A



Legislation Details (With Text)

**File #:** 47707      **Version:** 5      **Name:** Creating a special task force on city governance to examine the structure and powers of the Common Council and its committees and the structure and powers of the Mayor's office.

**Type:** Resolution      **Status:** Passed

**File created:** 6/14/2017      **In control:** COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**On agenda:** 6/20/2017      **Final action:** 9/5/2017

**Enactment date:** 9/8/2017      **Enactment #:** RES-17-00714

**Title:** AMENDED 3rd SUBSTITUTE - Creating a special task force on city governance to examine and make recommendations on elected officials; the structure and powers of the Common Council and its committees and the structure and powers of the Mayor's office.

**Sponsors:** Rebecca Kemble, Denise DeMarb, Sara Eskrich

**Indexes:**

**Code sections:**

**Attachments:** 1. 47707 v 1.pdf, 2. 7/11/17 Eskrich Memo: Governance Task Force CCEC.pdf, 3. 7/18/17 Email\_C Landsness.pdf, 4. 47707 v 2.pdf, 5. 47707 v 3.pdf, 6. 2nd Substitute Legislative File No. 47707\_Clean Copy.pdf, 7. 47707 Memo D 18.pdf, 8. Amendments to 47707 2nd Substitute D 18\_15.pdf, 9. 47707 Version 4.pdf

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
9/5/2017	4	COMMON COUNCIL	Amend the Substitutue	Pass
9/5/2017	4	COMMON COUNCIL	Adopt Substitute As Amended	Pass
8/1/2017	4	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER	Pass
7/18/2017	2	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Re-refer	Pass
7/11/2017	2	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Re-refer	Pass
6/20/2017	2	COMMON COUNCIL	Refer	Pass
6/14/2017	1	Council Office	Referred for Introduction	

The proposed resolution authorizes the creation of a Task Force to examine the City of Madison's governance structure. The work of the Task Force will culminate with their recommendations by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018. Operating costs associated with the Task Force are anticipated to be \$30,000; these costs may include public engagement, language interpretation and translation, facilities rental and any other research-related costs. Funding for these costs are subject to appropriation in the 2018 Operating Budget.

AMENDED 3rd SUBSTITUTE - Creating a special task force on city governance to examine ~~and make recommendations on elected officials;~~ the structure and powers of the Common Council and its committees and the structure and powers of the Mayor's office.

WHEREAS, increases in the size and diversity of Madison's population over the past three decades have brought new challenges and opportunities for the City; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Madison places a high value on democratic civic engagement with a long tradition of resident participation in City government through its committees, commissions, and boards as well as planning councils, neighborhood and business associations; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Madison has made a commitment to and has invested resources in the Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative, which aims to eliminate racial and social inequities in municipal government; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Madison has not had a formal committee to examine and report on the best structure of City government since the 1980's when the population of Madison was much lower and less diverse; and,

WHEREAS, the impending challenges of legislative redistricting based on the upcoming 2020 census and the annexation of the Town of Madison in 2022 provide further impetus to review the structure of City government,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council create a Task Force on Structure of City Government with a total of 11 ~~12~~ eleven (11) members, ~~made up of Five (5) members, including two (2) Council members, are to be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Common Council, five (5) members, including two (2) Common Council members, are to be appointed by the President of the Common Council, to include 2 Council members and confirmed by the Common Council,~~ and a Chair is to be jointly appointed by the Mayor and the President of the Common Council. All appointments are subject to confirmation and confirmed by the Common Council, ~~and the Mayor or a Deputy Mayor as an ex-officio, non-voting member;~~ and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Task Force appointments, as much as practicable, represent the City based on geographic interests, and reflect the ethnic and racial makeup of the population of the City as well as varying business, social, and economic viewpoints; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force be staffed by the City Attorney's office with the assistance of other city staff as determined by the City Attorney's office and the Council President; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force examine and report on the following issues, and such other relevant topics that become visible in the course of the review as they relate to our current form of governance and models for reform:

BE IT STILL FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force examine and report on the following issues and such relevant topics that become visible in the course of the review as they relate to our current form of governance and models for reform:

General:

- The state statutes that impact the operation of local government, as they may affect including the function of the charter, ordinances and rules for program operations;
- Governance models and practices of similar cities in the population range of 250,000-500,000 from states with similar statutory municipal requirements as Wisconsin and the efficacy of such models;
- ~~The ways in which equity and accountability factor into different governance models;~~ Effects of governance models on efforts to increase racial equity and social justice;
- ~~Optimal methods~~ Best practices for ensuring municipal decision makers are representative of, connected to and accountable to all members of the community;
- Other systems/methods for creating multiple avenues for resident participation in government without privileging decision-making based on the time and ability to attend meetings.

Common Council:

- The powers and duties of the Common Council;
- Powers of Council members to chair meetings of the Common Council, Finance Committee and other committees, commissions and boards;
- The attributes of councils with full-time members, part-time members, and those considered to be volunteer councils performing duties for a nominal salary or honorarium;

- Number of Council members and the impact on effective representation of residents in general and people of color and those living with lower incomes in particular, functionality of the body, and city governmental services;
- District vs. at large elections for Council members;
- Remuneration of Council members including a process for a change in pay;
- The size and cost of Council staff.

Mayor:

- The powers and duties of the mayor including the hiring and firing of department and division heads, veto, line item veto and emergency management powers;
- The size and cost of Mayoral staff;
- **Powers of the Mayor to chair meetings of the Common Council and Finance committee;**
- **Powers of the Mayor to appoint members of the Common Council to Council committees;**
- **Powers of the Mayor to appoint members to City Committees.**

Committees, Commissions and Boards:

- The committee system, and the use of resident, Common Council and staff members;
- The scope and nature of the powers of committees, commissions and boards, including how they report to the Common Council and how their recommendations are received;
- ~~Powers to appoint Council members and residents to City committees, commissions and boards;~~
- The frequency and time of day of both Council and committee meetings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall hold public hearings, obtain written reports, and conduct research as the Task Force determines to be useful and necessary to prepare its report to the Mayor and the Common Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force cooperate with the City's RESJI Core Team to design and implement an innovative public input process to learn about residents' perceptions of and experiences with governance in Madison, and their opinions about different structural options, including results in the final report; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in addition to the public engagement process developed by the Task Force as described above, the Task Force intentionally seek input from the following stakeholder groups:

- Members of the Effective Government Guidance Team;
- Current and former Committee, Commission and Board members and Chairs;
- Neighborhood Associations;
- Current and former Alders;
- Current and former Mayors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the final report describe the impact on people of color and those living with lower incomes of any potential changes as well as the optimal opportunities for the timing of such changes; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED funding for Task Force will be considered for inclusion in the 2018 Operating Budget; potential uses for this funding may include public engagement, language interpretation and translation, facilities rental and any other research-related costs; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Task Force dissolves upon the issuance of its recommendations on any potential structural changes to city government and the presentation of recommendations to the Mayor and Common Council by December 31, 2018.

# APPENDIX B



## **Appendix B**

### Subcommittees of the Task Force on the Structure of City Government

#### Boards, Commissions, and Committees Subcommittee

Common Council Subcommittee

Communications Subcommittee

Executive Subcommittee

Government Officials Subcommittee

Mayor's Office Workgroup

# APPENDIX C

**TASK FORCE ON THE STRUCTURE OF CITY  
GOVERNMENT**

**INTERIM REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND COMMON  
COUNCIL**

**May 17, 2019**

**TASK FORCE ON THE STRUCTURE OF CITY GOVERNMENT  
INTERIM REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL**

**May 17, 2019**

**A. Background and Purpose**

The Common Council created the Task Force on the Structure of City Government (also known as the Task Force on Government Structure or “TFOGS”) (RES-17000714, Legistar File 47707) (“Resolution”) to consider issues related to governance and government structure, such as the powers and duties of the Common Council, the powers and duties of the Mayor’s Office, and the scope and nature of powers of the City’s Boards, Commissions, and Committees (“BCC”). The Common Council also charged the Task Force with considering the effects of the government structure on efforts to increase racial equity and social justice and create multiple avenues for resident participation in government without privileging decision-making based on the time and ability to attend meetings. Finally, the Common Council required that part of the TFOGS process include extensive public outreach to get resident input on issues the TFOGS considers. The Resolution creating the TFOGS and detailing the issues to be examined is attached to this Interim Report as **Exhibit A**.

**B. Composition<sup>1</sup> and Subcommittees**

The TFOGS is comprised of eleven (11) members:

- Alder Syed Abbas (4/30/19-Present)
- Justice M. Castañeda (2/1/18-Present)
- Alder Keith Furman (4/16/19-Present)
- Roger Goodwin (2/5/2019-Present)
- Eileen Harrington, Chair (2/1/18-Present)
- Alder Rebecca Kemble (2/1/18-Present)
- Maggie Northrop 2/1/2018-Present)
- John E. Rothschild (2/1/18-Present)
- Alder Paul Skidmore (2/1/18-Present)
- Ronald Trachtenberg (10/16/18-Present)
- Eric S. Upchurch (2/1/18-Present)

---

<sup>1</sup> This is a list of current TFOGS members. The following individuals have also served as members of TFOGS: Alder David Ahrens (8/17/18-4/16/19), Alder Sheri Carter (2/1/18-4/16/19), Alder Sara Eskrich (2/1/19-8/18/18), Cathy Patton (2/1/18-10/16/18) and Jerry Vang (2/1/18-2/5/19).

To help it complete its work, the TFOGS created the following five subcommittees comprised of various members of the TFOGS.

- Executive Subcommittee
- Communications Subcommittee
- Common Council Subcommittee
- Boards, Commissions, and Committees Subcommittee
- Government Officials Subcommittee (disbanded after completion of the government officials survey and interviews)

### **C. Current Work Status**

The TFOGS has met twenty-three (23) times since February 22, 2018. It used the first several months of meetings to become familiar with issues raised by the Resolution. This involved several staff presentations. During this time, TFOGS also decided to seek input from current and former government officials, including former Mayors, Common Council Members, and Chairs of BCCs. To do so, the TFOGS created the Government Officials Subcommittee, which gathered information from government officials by distributing a written survey and inviting them to speak at meetings. They distributed the survey to current and former mayors, current and former alders elected on or after April 2003, and chairs of BCCs during the two-year period January 1, 2009-December 31, 2010 and the two-year period January 1, 2016-December 31, 2017. A number of current and former government officials agreed to attend meetings and provide their opinion on the issues facing the TFOGS, including Satya Rhodes-Conway, Lucas Dailey, Keith Furman, Scott Resnick, Chris Schmidt, and Nan Fey. Their opinions are documented in the Government Officials Subcommittee meetings they attended. In addition, former Mayors Bauman, Cieslewicz, Sensenbrenner, Skornicka, and then current Mayor Soglin also spoke to the TFOGS. City Channel recorded the meeting of former mayors:

<https://media.cityofmadison.com/Mediasite/Showcase/madison-city-channel/Presentation/af66d575d0f4487f917bbb6b44e9d47d1d>.

Mayor Bauman's testimony, provided at a separate meeting, was captured in the minutes attached as **Exhibit B**.

On October 26, 2018, near the end of its information gathering stage, the TFOGS discussed and voted on what, if any, recommendations to make to the Common Council regarding four of the issues raised by the Resolution. First, the TFOGS voted unanimously to recommend that the City retain the current mayoral form of government instead of switching to a city manager or commission form of government as allowed by state statute. Second, the TFOGS extensively



discussed whether city ordinances should be changed to have the president of the Common Council chair Common Council meetings instead of the Mayor. Noting that then Mayor Soglin had recently introduced an ordinance that would have created this change, the TFOGS voted unanimously not to make a recommendation at this time. Since then, the Common Council Executive Committee placed the proposed ordinance on file. Third, the TFOGS voted unanimously to retain the current form the mayor's veto power instead of expanding or restricting it. Finally, the TFOGS voted unanimously to recommend against pursuing first class city status but that the TFOGS should be mindful that there are certain aspects of first class cities that could benefit the City of Madison and that it could recommend exploring alternative ways to achieve the positive aspects of being a first class city. Minutes from this meeting are attached as **Exhibit C**. Importantly, in discussing and voting on these issues, the TFOGS noted that these decisions were not necessarily final and that TFOGS could revisit them prior to issuance of a final report to the Common Council.

Around this same time, the TFOGS recognized that the issues raised by the Resolution with regard to the structure of the Common Council and the City's BCCs required and deserved a significant amount of time and exploration. Therefore, the TFOGS created two subcommittees consisting of five members each to explore these issues. The Common Council Subcommittee and the BCC Subcommittee then met extensively between November 2018 and March 2019, with their work culminating in Final Reports submitted to the TFOGS on March 12, 2019. Those Reports are attached as **Exhibits D and E**.

After receiving the Subcommittee Reports, the TFOGS discussed the reports and then set a meeting for purposes of formerly discussing and voting on issues related to the Common Council and Boards, Commissions, and Committees. At that meeting, members raised concern regarding whether the TFOGS was ready to make these decisions, noting that the TFOGS had not yet conducted public engagement and that the make-up of the TFOGS itself, due to resignations and replacements, was becoming less and less diverse. At that meeting, the TFOGS decided not to vote on these issues until after conducting an extensive public engagement process. Having previously assigned public outreach to the Communications Subcommittee, the TFOGS asked that the Communications Subcommittee discuss its ideas and plans for public outreach at the next TFOGS meeting. While the TFOGS decided not to discuss and vote on possible recommendations at this meeting, it has recognized there is general consensus regarding five issues raised by the Resolution and Subcommittee Reports:

- Common Council members should have 4-year terms.
- Common Council members should not have term limits.

- Common Council members should not chair BCCs.
- The City should pursue the creation of some form of Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Services (“ORENS”).
- The City should consider restructuring the City’s BCC structure to include some form of “lead committees” as discussed in the BCC Subcommittee Report.

See **Exhibit F**.

Since then, the Communications Subcommittee, with some delay due to the mayoral and Common Council president transition, has been working on a public engagement process that is likely to last until August 2019. The current public engagement work plan is attached at **Exhibit G**.

The Communications Subcommittee also recently created and issued a brief staff survey to get staffs’ perspective on what it is like to work with the City’s Boards, Commissions, and Committees. The Subcommittee sent the survey to Department Heads (with a request to forward the survey to all members of their Department who have contact with City BCCs) and to the Committee Staff List (maintained by the mayor’s office). In total, 90 of the 239 staff members who received the survey provided responses (38%). The TFOGS will continue discuss the survey results upcoming meetings. In addition, it intends to invite interested staff to future meetings to share their experiences in person.

#### **D. Future Work and Final Report**

Currently, the TFOGS has meetings set through the end of June and is in the process of scheduling meetings through the middle of October, including those for the purpose of public engagement. The Resolution currently requires that the TFOGS submit a final report to the Common Council by December 31, 2019. The TFOGS current work plan for completion of its work is attached at **Exhibit H**.

**This Interim Report was approved by the Task Force on Government Structure on May 15, 2019.**



# EXHIBIT A



# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
www.cityofmadison.com

## Legislation Text

---

File #: 47707, Version: 5

---

The proposed resolution authorizes the creation of a Task Force to examine the City of Madison's governance structure. The work of the Task Force will culminate with their recommendations by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018. Operating costs associated with the Task Force are anticipated to be \$30,000; these costs may include public engagement, language interpretation and translation, facilities rental and any other research-related costs. Funding for these costs are subject to appropriation in the 2018 Operating Budget.

AMENDED 3rd SUBSTITUTE - Creating a special task force on city governance to examine and make recommendations on elected officials; the structure and powers of the Common Council and its committees and the structure and powers of the Mayor's office.

WHEREAS, increases in the size and diversity of Madison's population over the past three decades have brought new challenges and opportunities for the City; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Madison places a high value on democratic civic engagement with a long tradition of resident participation in City government through its committees, commissions, and boards as well as planning councils, neighborhood and business associations; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Madison has made a commitment to and has invested resources in the Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative, which aims to eliminate racial and social inequities in municipal government; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Madison has not had a formal committee to examine and report on the best structure of City government since the 1980's when the population of Madison was much lower and less diverse; and,

WHEREAS, the impending challenges of legislative redistricting based on the upcoming 2020 census and the annexation of the Town of Madison in 2022 provide further impetus to review the structure of City government,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council create a Task Force on Structure of City Government with a total of 44 ~~eleven (11)~~ eleven (11) members, ~~made up of Five (5) members, including two (2) Council members, are to be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Common Council, five (5) members, including two (2) Common Council members, are to be appointed by the President of the Common Council, to include 2 Council members and confirmed by the Common Council,~~ and a Chair ~~is~~ is to be jointly appointed by the Mayor and the President of the Common Council. ~~All appointments are subject to confirmation and confirmed by the Common Council, and the Mayor or a Deputy Mayor as an ex-officio, non-voting member;~~ and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Task Force appointments, as much as practicable, represent the City based on geographic interests, and reflect the ethnic and racial makeup of the population of the City as well as varying business, social, and economic viewpoints; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force be staffed by the City Attorney's office with the assistance of other city staff as determined by the City Attorney's office and the Council President; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force examine and report on the following issues, and such other relevant topics that become visible in the course of the review as they relate to our current form of governance and models for reform:

BE IT STILL FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force examine and report on the following issues and such relevant topics that become visible in the course of the review as they relate to our current form of governance and models for reform:

General:

- The state statutes that impact the operation of local government, as they may affect including the function of the charter, ordinances and rules for program operations;
- Governance models and practices of similar cities in the population range of 250,000-500,000 from states with similar statutory municipal requirements as Wisconsin and the efficacy of such models;
- ~~The ways in which equity and accountability factor into different governance models;~~ Effects of governance models on efforts to increase racial equity and social justice;
- ~~Optimal methods~~ Best practices for ensuring municipal decision makers are representative of, connected to and accountable to all members of the community;
- Other systems/methods for creating multiple avenues for resident participation in government without privileging decision-making based on the time and ability to attend meetings.

Common Council:

- The powers and duties of the Common Council;
- Powers of Council members to chair meetings of the Common Council, Finance Committee and other committees, commissions and boards;
- The attributes of councils with full-time members, part-time members, and those considered to be volunteer councils performing duties for a nominal salary or honorarium;
- Number of Council members and the impact on effective representation of residents in general and people of color and those living with lower incomes in particular, functionality of the body, and city governmental services;
- District vs. at large elections for Council members;
- Remuneration of Council members including a process for a change in pay;
- The size and cost of Council staff.

Mayor:

- The powers and duties of the mayor including the hiring and firing of department and division heads, veto, line item veto and emergency management powers;
- The size and cost of Mayoral staff;
- Powers of the Mayor to chair meetings of the Common Council and Finance committee;
- Powers of the Mayor to appoint members of the Common Council to Council committees;
- Powers of the Mayor to appoint members to City Committees.

Committees, Commissions and Boards:

- The committee system, and the use of resident, Common Council and staff members;
- The scope and nature of the powers of committees, commissions and boards, including how they report to the Common Council and how their recommendations are received;
- ~~Powers to appoint Council members and residents to City committees, commissions and boards;~~
- The frequency and time of day of both Council and committee meetings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall hold public hearings, obtain written reports, and conduct research as the Task Force determines to be useful and necessary to prepare its report to the Mayor and the Common Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force cooperate with the City's RESJI Core Team to design and implement an innovative public input process to learn about residents' perceptions of and experiences with governance in Madison, and their opinions about different structural options, including results in the final



report; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in addition to the public engagement process developed by the Task Force as described above, the Task Force intentionally seek input from the following stakeholder groups:

- Members of the Effective Government Guidance Team;
- Current and former Committee, Commission and Board members and Chairs;
- Neighborhood Associations;
- Current and former Alders;
- Current and former Mayors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the final report describe the impact on people of color and those living with lower incomes of any potential changes as well as the optimal opportunities for the timing of such changes; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED funding for Task Force will be considered for inclusion in the 2018 Operating Budget; potential uses for this funding may include public engagement, language interpretation and translation, facilities rental and any other research-related costs; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Task Force dissolves upon the issuance of its recommendations on any potential structural changes to city government and the presentation of recommendations to the Mayor and Common Council by December 31, 2018.

## EXHIBIT B



**City of Madison**  
**Minutes – Approved**  
**Task Force on Structure of City Government**  
**Executive Subcommittee**

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
www.cityofmadison.com

Monday, October 8, 2018

2:00 p.m.

City-County Building, Room GR-27  
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.

**NOTE: POSSIBLE QUORUM OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
EXISTS AT THIS MEETING.**

If you need an interpreter, translator, materials in alternate formats or other accommodations to access this service, activity or program, please call the phone number below at least three business days prior to the meeting.

Si necesita un intérprete, un traductor, materiales en formatos alternativos u otros arreglos para acceder a este servicio, actividad o programa, comuníquese al número de teléfono que figura a continuación tres días hábiles como mínimo antes de la reunión.

Yog hais tias koj xav tau ib tug neeg txhais lus, ib tug neeg txhais ntawv, cov ntawv ua lwm hom ntawv los sis lwm cov kev pab kom siv tau cov kev pab, cov kev ua ub no (activity) los sis qhov kev pab cuam, thov hu rau tus xov tooj hauv qab yam tsawg peb hnuv ua hauj lwm ua ntej yuav tuaj sib tham.

Office of the City Attorney (608) 266-4511

Legislative File No. 50732 - DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE TASK FORCE

**1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

Meeting Called to Order at 2:00 p.m.

Present: Harrington, Rothschild, Castañeda, Northrop

Absent: Upchurch (arrived at 2:08 p.m.)

Also Present: Alder Carter, City Attorney May, Council Chief of Staff Obeng, Assistant City Attorney Strange

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Rothschild, second by Castañeda, to approve minutes of July 27, 2018 meeting.

Approved by voice vote.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment at this meeting.

**4. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS**

There were no disclosures or recusals from the members present.

**5. TESTIMONY FROM FORMER MAYOR SUE BAUMAN**

Former Mayor Sue Bauman provided comments to the Subcommittee. Among her topics were:

First, Mayor Bauman stated that she supported making the council smaller, but not making it a full-time professional council. She suggested that when the council was reduced from 22 to 20

members the idea was that several years later it would be reduced again to 16-18 members. She believes a 16-18 members, while still large, would be more manageable, and not keep Madison out of line compared with the Councils in other cities of comparable size. Mayor Bauman also voiced her support for reducing the overall number of Boards, Commissions, and Committees and creating a structure that consisted of aldermanic committees and citizen subcommittees that reported to the aldermanic committees. She emphasized the importance of making Board, Commission, and Committee service more accessible to the average resident, noting that it is a tremendous challenge for a single mother of three children to make the time necessary to serve within the current Board, Commission, Committee structure. As a result, she noted, public participation on Boards, Commissions, and Committees tends to come from individuals who have the time and resources to participate, and that this often means the same or similar voices are heard over and over again.

Finally, Mayor Bauman noted that the City has a tendency to plan too much and implement too little. She suggested that the City take a look at its planning process so that it is positioned to plan and implement those plans, rather than plan and let them then sit on the shelf.

**6. QUESTIONS FROM THE TASK FORCE**

After her initial comments, Mayor Bauman answered numerous questions from the Task Force, including questions related to the challenges of school and city boundaries not being coterminous, historical housing segregation, the pros and cons of neighborhood vs. SAGE schools, and the challenge and opportunities associated with rethinking the way the City engages residents for purposes of public participation.

A recording of Mayor Bauman's comments and answers to Subcommittee questions will be available soon on the Task Force website:

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/task-force-on-government-structure>

**7. DISCUSSION OR ORGANIZATION AND PLAN FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FULL TASK FORCE ON STRUCTURE OF CITY GOVERNMENT AND ITS SUBCOMMITTEES**

Chair Harrington noted that this item is on the agenda for the full Task Force meeting on October 12 and therefore the subcommittee did not discuss this item.

**8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

No Discussion.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Castañeda, second by Rothschild, to adjourn. Passed on voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.



# EXHIBIT C



# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
www.cityofmadison.com

## Meeting Minutes - Approved TASK FORCE ON STRUCTURE OF CITY GOVERNMENT

---

Friday, October 26, 2018

6:00 PM

Urban League of Greater Madison  
2222 S. Park Street, Room Evjue A (101)

---

**NOTE: POSSIBLE QUORUM OF THE COMMON COUNCIL EXISTS AT THIS MEETING**

50732 Documents related to the Task Force on the Structure of City Government.

**THE TASK FORCE MAY SUSPEND THE RULES TO STAND INFORMALLY AND ALLOW FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND ENGAGEMENT OF ANY AGENDA ITEM**

**1 CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Present:** 7 - Paul E. Skidmore; David Ahrens; Ronald M. Trachtenberg; John E. Rothschild; Maggie Northrop; Eric S. Upchurch and Eileen Harrington

**Absent:** 3 - Sheri Carter; Rebecca Kemble and Justice M. Castañeda

Kemble arrived at 6:02 p.m.; Carter arrived at 6:09 p.m.

Also present: City Attorney Michael May and Assistant City Attorney John Strange

**2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Rothschild, second by Ahrens to approve the minutes of October 12, 2018. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**3 APPROVE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 11, 2018 AND DISBAND THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL SUBCOMMITTEE**

This item was referred to the next agenda because staff did not provide the Task Force with the minutes from the last government officials subcommittee meeting.

**4 PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment at this meeting.

**5 DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS**

There were no Disclosures or Recusals at this meeting.

6      **CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE MADE TO THE  
COMMON COUNCIL**

a. The Task Force first discussed whether it should recommend that the City retain the mayoral form of executive or switch to the city manager or commission form of government. Member Trachtenberg stated his support for retaining the mayoral form of executive power because, among other things, it is appropriate for the executive of the city to be elected at large by the people. Member Northrop stated that she has seen nothing in the information received from the Task Force thus far indicating a need to change the current structure of executive power. Member Skidmore agreed that he saw no reason to change and noted that vesting executive power in an elected mayor helps to ensure an appropriate balance of power between the executive and legislative branches of local government. Member Skidmore made a motion, seconded by Rothschild, to recommend retaining the current form of mayoral executive power. The chair took a roll call vote, which resulted in the unanimous approval of the motion.

b. The Task Force next discussed what, if any, recommendations it should make regarding whether the mayor or the president of the Common Council should chair meetings of the Common Council. Member Kemble noted that the mayor recently sponsored an ordinance that, if enacted, would allow the mayor to delegate the responsibility of chairing Common Council meetings to the president of the Common Council. The Task Force discussed at length how such a delegation would impact the relative powers of the mayor and president, including who would vote in the event of a tie and who could participate in discussion. Member Upchurch suggested that any recommendation the Task Force make on this topic be accompanied by an explanation of how power might shift depending on who is chairing the meeting, including how this might affect the Mayor's ability to vote in the event of a tie. A motion was made by Member Kemble, seconded by Rothschild, for the Task Force to make no recommendation on this topic but to include in its report to the Common Council the concerns expressed about how power shifts if the mayor delegates the duty of presiding over the common council to the council president. The Chair took a roll call vote, which resulted in the unanimous approval of the motion.

c. Third, the Task Force discussed what, if any, recommendations it should make to the Common Council regarding whether the mayor's veto power should be expanded, restricted, or remain the same. Member Trachtenberg stated his opinion that the mayor's veto power should not be expanded or restricted. Member Rothschild and Carter agreed. Member Skidmore noted that the Task Force had thus far received no indication from former government officials or the public that the mayor's veto power should be changed. A motion was made by Upchurch, seconded by Carter, for the Task Force to recommend to the Common Council that the mayor's current form of veto power be retained. The Chair took a roll call vote, which resulted in the unanimous approval of the motion.

d. Finally, the Task Force discussed what, if any recommendations the Task Force should make to the Common Council regarding whether Madison should pursue becoming a first-class city. Members Trachtenberg and Skidmore agreed that, given the challenges of becoming a first-class city as outlined by

the information received by the Task Force, Madison should not pursue first-class city status. However, Member Kemble and others noted that while they agree Madison should not pursue first-class status as currently defined in the state statutes, there are some characteristics of first-class cities that would be helpful to the city of Madison. Member Kemble suggested that the Task Force Report should note those characteristics of first-class cities that would be beneficial to the city. Thus, a motion was made by Member Trachtenberg, seconded by Member Upchurch, to recommend that Madison not pursue first-class city status but that the Task Force Report should reflect the characteristics of first-class cities that could be helpful to Madison. The Chair took a roll call vote, which resulted in the unanimous approval of the motion.

7 UPDATE ON STATUS OF EXECUTIVE SUBCOMMITTEE, COMMUNICATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE, AND BOARD, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES  
SUBCOMMITTEE

The Task Force received an update on the work of each subcommittee.

8 UPDATE ON TASK FORCE FUTURE MEETINGS, SCHEDULES, AND MEETING  
LOCATIONS

Staff noted that the November 19, 2018 Task Force meeting will be held in Room 260 of the Madison Municipal Building.

9 OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

No discussion.

10 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

No discussion.

11 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Rothschild, seconded by Carter, to adjourn. Passed on voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

## EXHIBIT D



# Common Council Subcommittee Report to the Task Force on Government Structure

March 12, 2019

## I. Introduction

The Resolution (**RES-17-00714**; **Legistar File 47707**) creating the Task Force on Government Structure (“TFOGS”) specifically charged the TFOGS with considering the following issues with regard to the structure of the Madison Common Council (“CC”):

- The powers and duties of the Common Council;
- The powers of Council members to chair meetings of the Common Council, Finance Committee, and other boards, commissions, and committees (“BCCs”);
- The attributes of councils with full-time members, part-time members, and those considered to be volunteer councils performing duties for a nominal salary or honorarium;
- The number of Council members and the impact on effective representation of residents in general and people of color and those living with lower incomes in particular, functional of the body, and city government services;
- District vs. at large elections for Council members;
- Remuneration of Council members include a process for a change in pay;
- The size and cost of Council staff;
- Best practices for ensuring municipal decision makers are representative of, connected to and accountable to all members of the community; and
- Other methods for creating multiple avenues for resident participation in government without privileging decision-making based on the time and ability to attend meetings.

The Task Force created the Common Council Subcommittee (“Subcommittee”) to help to assist in the consideration of these issues. The Subcommittee consisted of John Rothschild (chair), Justice Castañeda, Eric Upchurch, Alder David Ahrens, Ronald Trachtenberg, and Maggie Northrop (alternate). The Subcommittee met ten (10) times between November and the writing of this Report. Materials considered by the Subcommittee can be found in **Legistar file 50732**, including agendas, detailed minutes of each meeting, and copies of documents discussed by the Subcommittee.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, Madison resident and former alder Brenda Konkel attended,

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3712917&GUID=19073190-C3B4-42D1-BAB2-BA9442FDF39D&Options=ID|&Search=53673>



participated in, and recorded most of the Subcommittee's meetings. The recordings can be viewed on Ms. Konkel's website.<sup>2</sup>

This Report will describe the process used by the Subcommittee to consider the issues listed above, identify the key issues and themes that arose out of the Subcommittee's discussions, and highlight the positive and negative aspects of alternatives considered by the Subcommittee.

It is not the intent of this Report to recommend that the TFOGS take a specific course of action, but rather, to identify the key considerations of changing any one component of the Common Council structure. The Report also identifies some tangible actions the City could take to improve resident engagement and Common Council decision-making even if no structural changes are made to the Common Council.

**II. The Subcommittee created a detailed work plan to discuss each issue listed in the Resolution.**

The Subcommittee used the issues identified in the Resolution to inform the topics and issues it would discuss:

1. Full vs. part time alders or hybrid;
2. Alder terms (2 v 4 years);
3. Number of alders/districts;
4. Staggered terms;
5. At-large vs. geographic districts or hybrid or numbered districts;
6. Term limits;
7. Redistricting considerations including diversity representation;
8. Compensation levels;
9. Compensation and term of Council President and Vice President;
10. Support staffing levels and training for Council members;
11. Alders serving on BCCs;
12. Appointment of alders to BCCs;
13. Appointment of residents to BCCs;
14. Alders as chairs of BCCs; and
15. Structural and procedural issues relating to equity and meaningful engagement of residents in council decision-making, including time, place and length of Council meetings, budget development, barriers to resident participation and accountability.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/user/BrendaKonkel/videos>. These recordings were not done by the City and are not part of the Official Record of the proceedings. However, they could be useful to anyone wishing to learn more about the Subcommittee and its work.

<sup>3</sup> In discussing these issues below, they are rearranged to group them by subject area.

The Subcommittee worked through this plan twice. In doing so, it observed that while the Resolution posed these issues separately, they are very much intertwined. For example, the Subcommittee noted that switching to a Common Council comprised of full-time alders (Topic Area 1) would require a reduction in the number of districts/alders (Topic Area 3) and, very likely, the provision of additional staff for alders (Topic 10).

Despite this interrelatedness, the Subcommittee believes that any overall recommendations the full Task Force makes should take into account the pros and cons of making changes to each specific issue or topic area so that the Task Force can be aware of the overall impact of any decision. Thus, for each issue, the Subcommittee compiled a list of pros and cons to making changes in each topic area.

When considering these issues, the Subcommittee urges the Task Force to also address underlying philosophical issues that relate to the purpose and function of city government. For example, when considering whether to have full-time alders or increase alder pay, the Task Force should consider more basic questions, such as whether membership on the Common Council should be viewed as a "government job" or a "volunteer public service."

**III. The Subcommittee identified the positive and negative aspects of the various issues raised by the Resolution and, in a few instances, reached consensus regarding which alternative may be best for the City.**

***a. Full-time vs. part-time alders.***

The choice between full-time or part-time alders is a critical decision that probably should be the first decision made. Some very significant issues are effectively decided by the choice made here.

The Subcommittee noted that moving to a Common Council with full-time alders could have the following positive effects:

- Having alders who are able to dedicate all of their professional time to the work of the city instead of balancing multiple jobs and responsibilities;
- Making the position of alder more attractive to candidates who may otherwise be unable to participate on a part-time council with part-time pay;
- Having alders who would likely have larger districts, making Madison's residents per council member closer to other cities, thus possibly changing the level of influence a small group of residents can have on a single alder (could also be viewed as a negative); and
- Having alders who may be better positioned to consider the best interest of the entire city and not necessarily just their individual districts.

The Subcommittee also noted possible negative effects of moving to a full-time council, including:

- Professionalizing the position of alder, resulting in bigger campaigns, more money, and more influence from moneyed interests;
- Creating alders who may be less connected to their constituents and more removed from local or district issues;
- Discouraging individuals from running for alder for fear of leaving a current job and then losing re-election two years later; and
- Risk losing the varied backgrounds and job experiences often found on a larger part-time Common Council.

In addition, the Subcommittee noted it was unsure whether moving to a full-time Council would have a tangible impact on representation or participation by communities of color and low income.

Ultimately, the Subcommittee did not reach consensus on whether the TFOGS should recommend moving to full-time alders. However, as noted above, any decision made by TFOGS on this issue would likely drive the decisions on other issues listed below. Accordingly, the Subcommittee recommends that TFOGS strongly consider deciding this issue first.

***b. 2-year vs. 4-year terms for alders.***

The Subcommittee noted that the current 2-year term requires more frequent campaigns and, thus, more direct alder-constituent contact. However, the more frequent campaigns also end up requiring new alders to run for reelection just as they are becoming familiar with the position and, potentially, has the effect of driving up overall campaign costs (for both the alder and the city) by requiring more frequent elections.

The Subcommittee noted that 4-year terms may also have some negative effects, including professionalizing campaigns, discouraging candidates who may not know whether they will be living in a district for longer than two years, and creating the possibility that vacancies would result in aldermanic seats being filled for longer periods of time by political appointees rather than by elected officials.

The Subcommittee reached consensus that moving to 4-year terms was likely in the best interest of the City and that some of the negatives associated with a 4-year term could be addressed by new rules such as, for example, requiring special elections (or, elections at the next general election) for vacant seats. The Subcommittee noted that this change would be especially critical if the TFOGS recommends moving to full-time alders, as discussed above.

***c. Term limits for alders.***

The Subcommittee noted that term limits may result in fresh candidates and new ideas. Moving to term limits may also result in more competitive elections and, perhaps, less influence from outside groups. At the same time, the Subcommittee noted that imposing term limits would deprive the Council of experienced leaders, infringe on the democratic process, increase the



influence outside professionals or staff may have on short-time alders, and impact the ability of alders to follow through on long term projects or funding.

The Subcommittee also noted that the part-time council tends to term limit itself, with most alders likely to spend 6-8 years or less on the Common Council. Thus, while term limits may be a good idea if the City moves to a full-time Council by discouraging "career" politicians, it likely is not necessary for the current part-time structure. Accordingly, the Subcommittee reached consensus that it is not in the best interest of the City to impose term limits unless, perhaps, the City moves to full-time alders.

***d. Length of Council president and vice-president terms.***

The current 1-year term of the Council president and vice-president results in frequent turnover of the positions. As a result, the Subcommittee noted that by the time the Council president becomes comfortable in the role of Council President their term is almost over. Increasing the term to two (2) years would alleviate this potential problem. However, increasing the term to 2 years (the length of a current Common Council term) would mean that some members only serve under one President. Moreover, it would reduce by half the number of members who are allowed to cycle through the position and become familiar with the role.

During the time period that the Subcommittee met, an ordinance was introduced and referred to the TFOGS that would increase the Council President's term to two years. The TFOGS noted that the Subcommittee had not reached consensus on the issue and the full TFOGS had not yet addressed it and, therefore, chose to recommend to place the ordinance on file without prejudice.

On Tuesday, March 5, 2019, the Common Council voted to place the proposed ordinance on file without prejudice.

***e. Total number of alders/districts.***

The Subcommittee noted that reducing the number of alders and districts was intertwined with the issue of whether to have full- or part-time alders. For example, if the TFOGS recommends moving to full-time alders, then it would likely, for financial reasons, need to reduce the number of alders and districts. Thus, many of the positive and negative effects noted for moving to full-time alders would apply to a potential reduction of alders and districts as well:

**Positive Effects of Full-Time Council (and larger districts):**

- Having alders who are able to dedicate all of their professional time to the work of the city instead of possibility balancing two jobs and any other responsibilities they may have;
- Making the position of alder more attractive to candidates who may have otherwise been unable to participate on a part-time council with part-time pay;

- Having alders who would likely have larger districts, making Madison’s residents per council member closer to other cities, thus possibly changing the level of influence a small group of residents can have on a single alder (could also be viewed as a negative); and
- Having alders who may be better positioned to consider the best interest of the entire city and not necessarily just their individual districts.

Negative Effects of Full-Time Council (and larger districts):

- Professionalizing the position of alder, resulting in bigger campaigns, more money, and more influence from moneyed interests;
- Creating alders who may be less connected to their constituents and more removed from local or district issues;
- Discouraging individuals from running for alder for fear of leaving a current job and then losing re-election two years later; and
- Risk losing the varied backgrounds and job experiences often found on a larger part-time Common Council.

The Subcommittee revisited this discussion in a later meeting. After much discussion, the consensus of the Subcommittee was that reducing the size of the council would not necessarily result in better representation. In fact, they noted that larger districts could reduce the likelihood of electing a person of color by eliminating districts (like District 14) that were drawn to give people of color a greater chance of being elected.

The Subcommittee also explored the philosophical underpinnings of the job of alder and indicated support for the resident-alder “volunteer” focused on service rather than professional politics. This could be impacted by moving to a smaller council with larger districts.

Finally, the Subcommittee discussed the possibility of increasing the size of the Council or keeping the size of the Council the same (20 alders) but having 10 larger districts (with two alders per district). Neither possible change gained much momentum.

Ultimately, the Subcommittee did not reach consensus that changing the size of the Council was the best way to address issues like representation. Furthermore, they noted that 70% of the Government Official survey and nearly all former Mayors opposed reducing the size of the Council. Subcommittee members noted, however, that such a response isn’t necessarily a reason to maintain the status quo, which has historically worked well for some, but not all, Madison residents.

***f. At-large vs. geographic districts.***

The Subcommittee noted that having geography in and of itself as a basis for district delineation can be an inherent problem that promotes parochialism and strengthens the impact a neighborhood association or other local interest group can have on a particular alder. Thus,

the Subcommittee noted that moving from geographic to at-large districts could have the positive effect of requiring alders to consider issues in relation to what is good for the entire city, not just their district or the individuals who are able to participate in the discussion. The Subcommittee noted that, though unknown for sure, moving to at-large districts may increase representation with more people of color being elected.

These potential positive effects of at-large districts could, the Subcommittee noted, come at the cost of forgoing some of the positive effects of geographic districts, including 1) promoting a greater awareness of district specific issues, 2) giving residents a direct connection to their geographic alder and making resident engagement easier, 3) making it easier for alders to directly interface with particular neighborhood groups or associations. Moreover, the Subcommittee noted that while moving to at-large districts could increase representation, it could also have the opposite effect, citing Janesville as an example of a city with at-large districts with all members hailing from the wealthy side of town.

The Subcommittee also discussed the possibility of moving to a hybrid system of both at-large and geographic districts. This would make it possible to combine some of the positive aspects of both. However, the Subcommittee noted that many cities using a hybrid system have a City-Manager form of government where the mayor is the only at-large member of the Common Council. The Subcommittee noted that were there more than one at-large member, this could result in an unequal power dynamic where the at-large members have (or at least claim) more influence than geographic members. It may also create a slate of potential contenders to the mayor because at-large alders are elected city-wide.

When the Subcommittee revisited this issue, some members grew more comfortable with the idea of moving to at-large districts, citing the long history of Madison having an under-representative Common Council (compared to the history of the Madison School Board), thus questioning whether there could be any real downside to trying an alternative form. Ultimately, the Subcommittee did not reach consensus whether the City should change the numbers of alders/districts.

*g. Compensation levels for alders.*

One of the core issues facing the Common Council is the amount of time required for service, which raises, among other issues, whether alders are being properly compensated for their time. The time alders spend on city business depends on the alder, with some working 10-20 hours per week and others upwards of 30-50 hours per week. Their time is spent attending BCC and Common Council meetings and completing the general work of an alder (addressing constituent concerns, pursuing policy objectives, and communicating with City staff). Thus, the Subcommittee considered whether increasing the compensation level for alders would 1) properly compensate alders for time spent on city business, 2) attract more candidates to run for alder, or 3) make it more feasible for low-income individuals to serve on the Common Council.



The Subcommittee agreed that they generally view the position of alder as being one of service, not profession -- thus affirming the traditional Madison view of the Council -- suggesting that pay should not be the primary feature of the position. Also, Subcommittee members questioned whether, as a matter of principle, alders should be paid more than the living wage set by the City unless and until the City raises the living wage. Other members noted, however, noted that the current salary (roughly \$13,000 per year) may discourage certain residents, including those of low income, from running for alder because of the significant time commitment and lack of compensation or other resources (childcare, parking, etc.) to make the job more feasible. Thus, the Subcommittee noted a quandary: pay alders too little and you risk discouraging participation and making the job of alder more difficult given the significant time requirements; pay alders too much and you risk professionalizing the position and using money for alder compensation that could be used for resident services. Brenda Konkel pointed out that, in addition, some low-income residents may actually be dissuaded from becoming an alder if the salary was too high that it risk other benefits, although, under state law, elected officials may decline all or part of their salary.

The Subcommittee did not reach consensus on whether the salary should be raised, but suggested the TFOGS should obtain rough estimates of what certain increases may cost. Further, and as detailed below, the Subcommittee noted that the TFOGS could recommend initiatives other than a bump in salary (such as providing child care, providing more staff assistance and reducing the level of required service to BCCs) that may help alleviate some of the stresses of being alder. These alternative initiatives may reduce the hours required of alders, effectively giving them an increase in pay.

***h. Support staff for alders.***

The Subcommittee noted that adding staff support for Common Council members, either through direct staffing in the Common Council office or through support provided by an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Services (ORENS), would reduce time pressure on alders and effectively be an increase in compensation.

***i. Alders service to BCCs.***

The Subcommittee deferred this issue to the BCC Subcommittee but noted that BCC services is one of the major draws on alder time, and, as noted above, reduction of time spent on BCCs related to alder compensation.

***j. Staggered alder terms.***

The Subcommittee reached consensus that the TFOGS should recommend against moving to staggered terms. It saw no real advantages to moving to staggered terms, even if the City were to increase Common the Common Council to 4-year terms, make it full-time, or change the characterize of district representation (i.e., at-large versus geographic). One specific negative



aspect of moving to staggered terms would be to potentially end up with low turnout for elections staggered opposite the mayoral election.

***k. Redistricting considerations and diversity representation after the 2020 Census.***

The Subcommittee does not believe the TFOGS is in a position to make any recommendation on this issue. It noted the limitations of the federal census in identifying all residents, the complex nature of Madison's historical housing patterns, and how these two combine to make "districting" a difficult marker for representation. The Subcommittee suggests that an expert be consulted after the 2020 census to consider this issue in a way that takes into account these two challenges.

***l. Power to appoint alders to BCCs.***

This power now resides with the Mayor, except for the Common Council Executive Committee (CCEC). Madison's decision to grant to the executive the authority to appoint alders as members of all committees, including legislative committees, is very unusual. For example, neither in Congress nor in the Wisconsin Legislature does the executive appoint members of the legislature to the legislative committees.

The doctrine of separation of powers suggests changing this process. A good argument can be made that the appointments of alders to committees ought to be made by the Council President, perhaps with input from the CCEC. The current system concentrates authority and power in the Mayor. Moving this power to the Council President would be more congruent with the separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches.

The Subcommittee noted that Madison (and perhaps other municipalities) differs from the state and federal models in that some of Madison's BCCs serve both administrative and legislative roles. As such, the Subcommittee suggested that this argument may have less force for those BCCs that are more administrative or operational in nature, compared to BCCs that are legislative or policy making.

***m. Power to appoint residents to BCCs.***

Many of the arguments about separation of powers for alder appointments could also be made for resident appointments, since the residents also serve on many legislative committees. However, the Subcommittee noted some key differences that may argue against transferring the power to appoint residents to the Council President. For example, the Mayor remains the only office elected citywide and, as such, the Mayor deserves the right to appoint those who are likely to understand Mayoral policy initiatives. Additionally, appointment of residents is not as invasive of separation of powers as appointment of members of the legislative body because it does not involve the executive branch exercising power over the legislative branch. Finally, there is a very practical problem with the Council President having the time, even assuming some expanded staff assistance, to make and maintain some 700 BCC appointments.

The Subcommittee discussed an alternative where the Mayor would retain the appointive authority, but the City would codify a consultative process with the Council President on appointments. The Council participation might provide a broader perspective of potential appointees, with a wider range of potential appointees. A similar idea is discussed in Section VI. c. of the BCC Subcommittee Report.

The Subcommittee suggested that if the City moves to full-time alders, the above analysis could change.

*n. Alders serving as chairs of BCCs.*

The Subcommittee deferred this issue to the BCC Subcommittee.

*o. Structural and procedural issues relating to equity and meaningful engagement of residents in council decision-making.*

The Subcommittee noted several structural and procedural aspects of the current Common Council structure that discourage or inhibit resident engagement. Currently, Common Council meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. every other Tuesday. Members of the public are allowed to speak at Common Council meetings for five (5) minutes at public hearings and three (3) minutes for other agenda items. Meetings are run according to Robert's Rules, which assist the Common Council to run an orderly meeting. Finally, the Common Council utilizes the consent agenda to quickly move through non-controversial items.

Despite these known characteristics, the Subcommittee noted many challenges to the current structure of Common Council meetings, including:

- Meetings continue into the night and sometimes into the early morning because there is no time limit for debate. Also, meetings often begin with lengthy proclamations that delay the more substantive work of the Common Council. Finally, Madison is, relatively speaking, unique in that it allows extensive public input at each meeting. Meetings may become lengthy because there is no limit to the number of public attendees who may testify. The Subcommittee noted that late meetings can be a major barrier to residents who work early the next day, take public transportation that stops operating after a certain hour, or have other evening commitments. Furthermore, late meetings tax older members and residents as well as anyone who tends not to function well late at night or on little sleep. Yet, many very important decisions are made late at night or early in the morning, such as the budget.
- It is good to allow public comment, but this may be less impactful than it should be because the current structure requires physical presence at a downtown location, a limited amount of time to speak, and the uncertainty of knowing when a specific item will be called to the floor. Thus, public engagement in this form tends to be anecdotal rather than empirical and objective, and policy decisions can be manifestation of input received by those few who are able to attend and express their personal opinions.

- It is good to have a known time and place for meetings, but this may serve as a permanent barrier to entry to those who cannot travel downtown or work at night. Moreover, a lack of parking downtown and lack of childcare may further inhibit participation by privileging those who can afford to pay for childcare and parking so that they can attend a Council meeting.
- Robert's Rules provide some structure, but other rules are often enforced unevenly or not at all. For example, there is a rule regarding how long alders can talk on any one item, but it is not enforced.
- Robert's Rules themselves can be problematic because few know and understand them and they may be intimidating or confusing to anyone who is not familiar with them.
- The physical set up of the Council chambers is, in and of itself, not conducive to public engagement because the public is pushed off to the side.

The Subcommittee also noted many challenges surrounding other aspects of the Common Council decision-making process, including primarily that Legistar is very difficult to use and, therefore, information regarding upcoming Council decisions is difficult to obtain.

**IV. The Subcommittee identified a range of possible solutions to address any negative aspects of the current structure of the Common Council.**

The Subcommittee generally agreed on a range of possible actions the City could take could improve resident engagement even if not changes are made to government structure:

- Provide day care for people attending meetings.
- Validate parking for people attending meetings.
- Do proclamations at another time, possibly at 5:30 p.m. before the legislative business begins at 6:30 p.m.
- Allow videos to be submitted for testimony.
- Allow live public participation at Council meetings by electronic means such as the internet or from remote centers of the city.
- Allow public comments on agenda items to be considered in advance of a meeting by allowing individuals to register in favor or opposed through a system that notifies residents of decisions to be made and asks for input.
- Separate Public testimony from legislative debate and action by allowing individuals to provide input at the beginning of Council meetings regardless of when the item on which they wish to speak is taken up by the Council. This may prevent residents from leaving the meeting when their item is not taken up until late at night.
- Vary meeting locations.
- Make written comments available to the public and Council members at the time of the meeting.
- Avoid late-night meetings. Reduce overall length of meetings.



- Adhere to and/or change current rules regarding the length of alder statements at Common Council meetings.
- Improve accessibility of Legistar.
- Create way for people to provide input in Legistar or some other appropriate platform.
- Provide classes for the public to learn how to use Legistar.
- On city website, allow option for having a chat with a city employee who can direct a resident in the right direction should they have an issue or question about government services.
- Continue working towards having 311 number for city services.
- Maintain subscription lists for Common Council and BCC items so that residents can be made aware of issues coming before a body through an email blast or text message.
- Review customer relation software options that may create better processes for residents to navigate city services, such as through ticketing system where issues are ticketed, followed up on my staff, and then the results reported back to the person requesting the service.
- Consider the option of bifurcating public testimony and legislative sessions.
- Add more than just the name of meetings to the city calendar so that more information can be obtained with 1 click, instead of requiring multiple clicks to get relevant and substantive information about a meeting.
- Consider the possibility of creating an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support (ORENS).
- Consider incorporating specific recommendations from the Austin (TX) 2016 Engagement Study, which focuses on five major themes: 1) Make information clear, relevant and easily accessible; 2) Make it easier for people to give input in ways that are convenient, accessible and appropriate for them; 3) Explain how input will be used and show how that input had an impact on the decision made; 4) Ensure that everyone who cares about an issue or is impacted has an opportunity to engage; and 5) Ensure that City staff has the support, training, tools and resources to do engagement well. For a complete list of specific recommendations consider reviewing Austin's engagement report.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6955161&GUID=A177A6EB-EE87-4A04-9F61-627040D223BF>

**V. The Subcommittee further explored the current state of City Technology and what changes are necessary to increase resident engagement through technology.**

As noted above, one of the major challenges facing the Common Council, regardless of the structure it ultimately takes, is the inability to facilitate resident engagement and participation through technology. The Subcommittee received a presentation from City IT Director Sarah Edgerton and IT Media Leadworker Boyce Johnson to discuss the City's existing and future capabilities.

A memorandum prepared by City IT is attached to this Report summarizing their presentation. The Subcommittee came away from the presentation believing that the City needed to invest in and prioritize those technological advancements that would address this problem, including the ability to 1) broadcast or stream Common Council meetings from a variety of locations in the City, 2) facilitate remote resident and member engagement, and 3) facilitate other forms of resident engagement through the use of technology.

The Subcommittee acknowledged the City's current limitations, but noted that other City's have been doing some of these things for quite some time and questioned why the City has not invested the resources to do it as well. The Subcommittee thus requested that City IT to prepare an estimate of the cost of the technological advancements discussed that would allow the City greater ability to hold meetings in remote locations and allow residents to participate from remote locations. The Subcommittee will provide this Report to the TFOGS as soon as it is received.

**VI. Conclusion**

The individual structure issues addressed by the Subcommittee are, in most cases, very intertwined. Thus, the Subcommittee pointed out the positive and negative aspects of each changes so that the TFOGS can analyze to potential impact of any recommendation it makes.

The Subcommittee strongly believes that, even if no structural changes are made, the TFOGS can make recommendations about specific actions that could greatly improve resident participation and engagement and, hopefully, result a more inclusive and representative Common Council decision-making process.

**This Report was accepted and approved by the Common Council Subcommittee on March 8, 2019.**

CITY OF MADISON  
**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL**  
CORRESPONDENCE

 DATE: February 1, 2019 

TO: Task Force on the Structure of City Government ("TFOGS")

FROM: Sarah Edgerton, IT Director  
Boyce Johnson, Digital Media Manager

SUBJECT: **Information Technology Presentation to TFOGS Subcommittee** on existing and future capabilities to hold meetings or take public testimony from remote locations

### Background

One of the most significant deterrents to public participation in local government, identified by TFOGS, is attending meetings downtown. Therefore, TFOGS would like to pursue the idea of offering remote locations for meetings.

The TFOGS Task Force asked Information Technology (IT) staff to prepare a memo to discuss what it would take to hold meetings or take public testimony from remote locations. They also asked IT to discuss what capabilities the City currently has to do these things now, and what it would take in terms of investment, such as, the costs of such a system, staffing, and/or what alternatives might exist to provide these services to our residents.

### The Current State and Future State: Madison City Channel Coverage by the Media Team

The Media Team currently covers regular meetings of eight bodies for an average of just under 12 meetings a month. In addition to 137 such meetings covered in 2018, we covered 55 special meetings, including presentations before the Common Council, Department/Division Head Meetings, and meetings of bodies such as the Oscar Mayer Advisory Committee, Police Policy Review Committee, Work Group on Surveillance Policies, and Task Force on Government Structure. We also covered 56 non-meeting events including press conferences, award ceremonies, and panel discussions. Additionally, there were 77 studio productions, 85 field productions for video projects, and 56 Monona Terrace productions.



## Future State: Testimony Via Video Recording

Allowing public testimony via video recording could mean one of two things: It could mean submitting some kind of pre-recorded video file to a body or it could mean using some kind of videoconferencing technology to present live testimony to a body from a remote location.

If it's the former, the video recording could either be accepted by the body as a communication or correspondence or it could be treated as testimony. In either case, there would have to be rules about what formats are acceptable and submissions would have to be received with ample time allowed to be reviewed by staff and transcoded into a format that would be accessible to members of the body. This would likely mean publishing them as streaming files that could be accessed via a link. If it's treated as correspondence, a link could be provided along with other letters, email messages, etc. received by the body. Presumably, open records laws would apply in the same way for any of these formats. If it's treated as testimony, the meeting would have to be held in a room with video playback equipment that would allow it to be seen and heard by members of the body and any staff or members of the public in attendance. If the meeting was covered for Madison City Channel, it would need to be in a room in which that content can be captured so that it can be seen and heard by the television and/or streaming audience. People who testify in person have to fill out a form to verify their identification and address and identify affiliations or lobbying activity. There would have to be an online process to gather that information and match it to submitted video testimony. Video correspondence or testimony has the same drawback as written correspondence in that it affords no opportunity for members of the body to ask questions. It's also potentially problematic in that not everybody has access to technology to record testimony, and there could be a large range in quality among submissions based on the kind of technology and expertise accessible to various users.

If it's the latter, videoconferencing methods identified for use by members of the body could also be employed by the public. In either case, equipment would need to be available in the room to ensure that members of the body could see and hear the person on the far end of the conference, and that the person on the far end of the conference could see and hear all members of the body and any presentation materials that are visible and audible in the room. Madison City Channel coverage would require the person on the far end of the conference to be seen and heard by the television and/or streaming audience, as well. There are currently no rooms that allow this functionality. One of the rooms in the remodeled Madison Municipal Building was designed for integrated videoconferencing and Madison City Channel coverage, but the videoconferencing features have not been added yet.



# EXHIBIT E

# Boards, Commissions, and Committees Subcommittee Report to the Task Force on Government Structure

March 12, 2019

## I. Introduction

The Resolution (RES-17-00714; **Legistar File 47707**) creating the Task Force on Government Structure (“TFOGS”) specifically charged the TFOGS with considering the following issues with regard to the City’s Boards, Commissions, and Committees (“BCC”) Structure:

- The use of resident, Common Council and staff members in the City’s BCC System;
- The scope and nature of the powers of the City’s BCCs, including how they report to the Common Council and how their recommendations are received;
- The frequency and time of day of both Council and BCC meetings;
- The extent to which state statutes impact the City’s BCC structure;
- The efficacy of BCC models and practices of cities similar to Madison;
- The effects of the City’s BCC structure on efforts to increase racial equity and social justice;
- Best practices for ensuring municipal decision makers are representative of, connected to and accountable to all members of the community; and
- Other methods for creating multiple avenues for resident participation in government without privileging decision-making based on the time and ability to attend meetings.

The Task Force created the Boards, Commissions, and Committees Subcommittee (“Subcommittee”) to help to assist in the consideration of these issues. The Subcommittee consisted of Justice Castañeda (Chair), Eric Upchurch, Maggie Northrop, Alder Rebecca Kemble, and John Rothschild. The Subcommittee met eleven (11) times between October and the writing of this Report. Materials considered by the Subcommittee can be found in **Legistar file 50732**, including agendas, detailed minutes of each meeting, and copies of documents discussed by the Subcommittee.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, Madison resident and former alder Brenda Konkel attended, participated in, and recorded most of the Subcommittee’s meetings. The recordings can be viewed on Ms. Konkel’s website.<sup>2</sup>

This Report will describe the process used by the Subcommittee to consider the issues listed above, identify the key issues and themes that arose out of the Subcommittee’s discussions, and identify alternatives meriting further discussion by the full TFOGS. It is not the intent of this

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3712890&GUID=E0CF56D3-53AF-4C5B-B261-C88E7E0CE1AF&Options=ID|&Search=53672>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/user/BrendaKonkel/videos>. These recordings were not done by the City and are not part of the Official Record of the proceedings. However, they could be useful to anyone wishing to learn more about the Subcommittee and its work.

Report to recommend that the TFOGS take a specific course of action, but rather, to lift up major issues for further discussion by the Task Force and highlight a range of possible actions that could address those issues.

**II. The Subcommittee created a work plan to discuss the issues identified in the Resolution.**

The Subcommittee developed a work plan that required it to: 1) discuss the current structure of the City's BCCs, 2) identify the strengths and potential of the current structure, 3) identify the challenges of and potential alternatives to the current structure; and 4) issues related to appointment to and service on BCCs. The Subcommittee discussed each of these items through the lens of equity, representation, accountability, and participation.

**III. The City's current BCC structure was intended to serve as a robust forum for resident participation.**

The Subcommittee began by discussing Madison's history as a progressive city that values resident input and a robust participatory democracy. It noted that the City's BCC structure was likely conceived to typify these notions. For example, the Subcommittee noted that the current BCC structure contains nearly 100 BCCs which create numerous avenues for resident participation on issues and decisions facing the City. In addition, the BCCs can serve as a way to educate residents about local government and the various ways they may be able to participate in it, thus encouraging future involvement, perhaps even inspiring some to chair a committee or run for elected office. Also, because the current structure requires alders to serve on the BCCs, the Subcommittee noted that the BCCs provide a forum in which residents can have direct and substantive interaction with their alders on issues facing the City.

The Subcommittee further recognized that residents aren't the only ones who potentially benefit from this large structure. As a city that has 20 part-time alders, the large BCC structure provides a tangible way for alders to gain resident perspective and analysis that supplement their own perspective and analysis and assist in Common Council deliberations.

Finally, the Subcommittee noted that the current BCC structure could benefit the structure as a whole by diluting the influence of any one alder or BCC by spreading alders and issues out of over many BCCs.

**IV. Though well intended, the City's BCC structure is challenged by inadequate representation, lack of defined purpose and accountability, low levels of resident participation, and inequitable distribution of staffing and resources.**

Despite these potential positive characteristics, the Subcommittee discussed how, in practice, the current BCC structure faces serious challenges with respect to core issues of accountability, effectiveness, representation, and resident participation. Thus, the Subcommittee fears that the current BCC structure, though perhaps initially intended to serve as



a robust forum for resident democracy, may, in fact, serve as little more than a veneer of representation and participation.

The Subcommittee noted these key challenges:

***a. The high number of BCCs results in a drain on resident, staff, and alder time.***

The Subcommittee noted it is very likely there are simply too many BCCs and that, as a result, they create a significant drain on city resources.

The City's current BCC structure includes nearly 100 separate BCCs<sup>3</sup> with approximately 700 membership positions. Of those 700 membership positions, approximately 126 of them must be filled by alders. Additionally, city staff provides support to all of these BCCs. Each BCC has city staff dedicated to administrative matters such as arranging meetings, creating agendas, taking notes, generating minutes, and acting as liaison between the BCC, chair, staff, and alders. Additionally, other city staff often must attend BCC meetings to provide substantive information relative to issues or topics that come before the BCC. Finally, the City must provide the infrastructure for these meetings, which comes at a financial cost.

The Subcommittee noted that all of this (many BCCs requiring much time and resources) is not, in and of itself, a bad thing, unless it fails to produce a quality product that is representative of the entire city. Other indicators suggest the current BCC structure lacks effectiveness and is not representative of the entire city.

***b. The current BCC structure appears to lack diversity.***

The current BCC structure appears to lack diversity of members with respect to the aldermanic districts in which members live, the number of BCCs on which each alder serves, and race. For example, 38% of members (268/699) come from Aldermanic Districts 4, 6, 11, 13, and 19 while 12.5% of members (88/699) come from Aldermanic Districts 1, 7, 8, 9, and 16. Also, the number of BCCs served by each alder varies depending on the alder. Of the twenty (20) alders, six (6) alders serve on as many as 9-14 BCCs while five (5) alders serve on as few as 2-4 BCCs. Finally, of the current BCC members, 21% are people of color. Although the Subcommittee does not have data pertaining to the socioeconomic status (SES) levels of BCC members, it also noted the possibility that individuals with lower SES levels are underrepresented on the City's BCCs.

The Subcommittee noted that this suggests the current composition of the City's BCCs lack diversity in a number of ways, potentially making it unrepresentative of the entire City. Thus, while the BCC system is supposed to create a robust forum for resident democracy, the

---

<sup>3</sup> City staff conducted a survey of cities similar to Madison. Most cities of similar size (~250,000) generally have between 25 and 50 BCCs. Other state capital cities with flagship universities have between 12 and 33 BCCs, except Salt Lake City, which has 77. Other Big ten cities have between 11 and 50 BCCs. Moreover, the nearly 100 BCCs cited in this Report are only those BCCs that are listed in Legistar. Other BCCs, like Subcommittees and some ad hoc committees, are not listed in Legistar. Therefore, the true number of BCCs in the City likely exceeds 100.

opposite may well be true, providing only a forum for those with the time and resources to work within it. As a result, the decisions and recommendations made by the BCCs are likely being informed by just a subset of the city's population.

*c. The current BCC structure lacks consistent accountability.*

The Subcommittee noted that the current BCC structure does not promote accountability. Some BCCs appear to operate on their own with little or no accountability to another BCC or the Common Council. For example, some BCCs appear to take on issues that are not within their stated purpose or jurisdiction. Moreover, there is no system in place for the City to periodically evaluate whether a BCC remains necessary. Finally, there is no formal system in place to ensure that BCC members and chairs are educated on the purview of their BCC and trained on matters related to BCC work. This lack of accountability results in an unevenness in how BCCs function within the BCC structure.

*d. BCCs vary in levels of authority and influence.*

The Subcommittee noted that the level of authority of BCCs varies widely. Some BCCs are required by state statute and have final authority on certain decisions. Other BCCs are creatures of city ordinance or resolution. These BCCs have varying levels of authority ranging from final authority subject to appeal to the Common Council to strictly advisory recommendations to the Common Council. While the Subcommittee recognizes the need for BCCs to have varying levels of authority, it does not believe that these levels necessarily indicate the level of influence the BCCs have on City decision making. In other words, some BCCs with only advisory authority may have varying levels of influence on the Common Council. This disparity in authority may also have an impact on a resident's desire to serve on a BCC if they believe their time will be wasted because the BCC on which they serve has little to no authority or influence.

*e. Some BCCs lack a well-defined purpose, have appeared to outlive their stated purpose, or have a purpose that overlaps the purpose of other BCCs or city staff.*

The Subcommittee noted that some BCCs lack a well-defined purpose in the ordinance or resolution creating them. These BCCs are more likely to venture into areas or considerations that are outside of their topic area. Moreover, these BCCs tend to become more akin to discussion groups with, perhaps, agendas that contain few, if any, action items. As a result, the work of these BCCs may or may not end up having any discernable effect on City government yet remain a significant draw down of resident, staff, and alder time.

The Subcommittee also noted that some BCCs may have outlived the stated purpose. As a result, there may be some BCCs that could be eliminated with little or no impact on city decision-making, thus making the overall BCC structure more streamlined and easier to support.

Finally, the Subcommittee noted that numerous BCCs appear to have a purpose that either overlaps with other BCCs or are topics or issues that are or could be handled by staff or Non-



Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Again, the Subcommittee noted that eliminating or combining some of these BCCs could further serve the purpose of streamlining the BCC structure.

The Subcommittee thinks it is beyond the capability of the Subcommittee to identify individual BCCs that should be recreated with a more defined purpose, eliminated because no longer necessary, or combined because of redundancy, the TFOGS may be able to do so or to at least recommend that the Common Council consider reducing the size of the BCC structure, in part, by looking at these three recurring factors among current BCCs. The Subcommittee noted that one of the alternative organizational structures discussed in Section VI.a. of this Report and developed by the Office of the City Attorney does attempt to eliminate and/or combine certain BCCs using this method.

***f. The high number of BCCs with varying and sometimes overlapping purposes can result in multiple referrals that slow down City processes and frustrate residents.***

The Subcommittee noted that it is not the role of government to be “efficient.” At the same time, the Subcommittee noted that the current BCC structure can result in a single action item being referred to multiple BCCs with overlapping jurisdiction. At times this not only slows down City processes but makes processes unclear and decisions elusive.

***g. The logistical processes (meeting times, locations, rules, and infrastructure) used by the current BCC structure may not facilitate member or resident participation.***

The Subcommittee noted that as public bodies the City’s BCCs are subject to state open meetings and public records rules and Robert’s Rules of Order. With these rules as a foundation, the City’s BCC system encourages (and in many ways requires) an individual’s physical presence in order to participate in a meeting, either as a member of the BCC or an interested resident. Moreover, the BCC meetings are often held at night in a downtown location where parking is limited. Meetings tend to run long and the public is generally restricted, by rule, from speaking longer than three (3) or five (5) minutes.

The Subcommittee also noted that the City’s legislative information system (Legistar) is difficult to use, thus inhibiting the public’s ability to learn about meetings, find agendas, review minutes, or look at documents related to decision making.

Finally, the Subcommittee believes that the City lacks the technology and resources to record or livestream all BCC meetings or to facilitate any remote participation by BCC members or the general public.

The Subcommittee noted that these logistical processes and infrastructure challenges inherent in BCC meetings make the current structure uninviting and, therefore, difficult for all residents to access. In one meeting, the Subcommittee noted the reluctance of people to serve on BCCs either because it is a “waste of time” or that they had a more valuable use for their time, such as working or caring for their children. The Subcommittee suspected this may be particularly true for those with a lower socioeconomic status (SES).



***h. Staffing, training, and resources provided within the current BCC structure tends to be inadequate and uneven.***

The Subcommittee noted that the level of support for BCCs in the current structure varies widely. Some BCCs are supported by highly trained and knowledgeable staff, some are not. Some BCCs are run by highly trained and experienced chairs, some are not. Some BCCs are comprised of members who have been trained on or otherwise understand the purview of the BCC on which they serve, some are not. Some BCCs are afforded and or demand more city resources, some struggle to get staff input or resources.

The Subcommittee noted that this is not necessarily the fault of the BCC or individuals involved, but is likely a symptom of trying to support such a large BCC structure. Nevertheless, it tends to have the result of producing mixed results depending on which BCC is involved.

***i. The appointment process within the current structure could contribute to the lack of diversity and high vacancy rate on BCCs.***

In addition to the possible lack of diversity of members noted above, the Subcommittee also noted the high vacancy rate. Of the almost 700 BCC positions, there are currently approximately 200 vacancies.

Under the current structure, the Mayor appoints all members (alder and resident) to BCCs subject to confirmation by the Common Council. This system affords power to the chief executive to determine the policy direction of the BCCs. Yet, it also rests all of the responsibility for supporting the BCC members in one office. The Subcommittee noted that other cities split the appointment powers up between the executive and legislative branches and that, while some of Madison's BCCs serve dual executive and legislative functions, dividing up appointment powers could impact the City's ability to fill the BCCs with more diverse candidates.

In discussing this issue the Subcommittee noted the pros and cons of allocating some appointment power away from the mayor's office. Pros included having more hands on deck to address vacancies and find more diverse applicants. Cons included shifting the power of the Mayor, the city's chief executive elected city-wide, to a Council that is elected by geographic district. The Subcommittee noted that similar issues were addressed and discussed in Sections IV. i. and VI. c. and in Sections IV.i. and IV.d. of the Report. Additionally, further discussion of appointment powers and potential issues involving the separation of powers doctrine is contained in the Common Council Subcommittee Report.

***j. Alder service on BCCs and as chairs of BCCs***

The Subcommittee noted several times in this Report that service on BCCs is one of the major duties that consumes alder time. The Subcommittee also noted how some individual alders serve on significantly more BCCs than other alders. These issues could be addressed by reducing the

overall number of BCCs in the structure, reducing the obligation of alders to serve on current BCCs, and/or limiting the number of BCCs on which one alder could serve.

Additionally, the Subcommittee discussed whether alders should be allowed to serve as chairs of BCCs, something that is currently prohibited by City ordinance. The Subcommittee saw no reason to change this rule.

**V. The Subcommittee identified potential actions that could address some of the issues listed above.**

After discussing the above challenges to the City's current BCC system, the Subcommittee identified some actions that could address them:

- Reorganize the BCC structure to increase accountability and require annual review of BCCs relevance and usefulness.
- Combine BCCs that work on the same or similar subject areas.
- Eliminate BCCs that have outlived their usefulness.
- Eliminate BCCs that perform work that would better be performed by staff or a non-government organization.
- Provide better clarity of purpose for BCCs either through ordinance amendments or otherwise.
- Provide better training for chairs, members, and staff on the role of each BCC and the rules and procedures for running an effective meeting and achieving a meaningful result.
- Change the time, place, rules, and procedures of BCC meetings to create a greater likelihood of achieving diversity in participation and representation.
- Explore alternative forums of resident participation that may or may not take the form of a traditional BCC, including greater use of technology.
- Consider creating an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support that would be responsible for, among other things, staffing, training, minutes/reporting for BCC meetings and for engaging residents on key issues coming before the City's BCCs.
- Employ a greater use of ad-hoc committees, with clearly defined mission, authorities, oversight, staffing and reporting requirements. Dissolve the ad-hoc committee once it completed its task.
- Increase representation and participation by conducting impact analysis for city decisions to determine which residents will be most highly impacted by a decision and put processes in place to reach out to those residents.
- Consider alternatives to the current BCC member appointment process such as splitting up appointment responsibilities between the Mayor and Common Council.

**VI. The Subcommittee further developed some of these potential actions.**

The Subcommittee further developed some of the potential action items it identified above for the TFOGS consideration.

- a. Reorganize current BCC structure around "lead committees," require alders to only serve on those committees, and have all other resident committees organized to report to one lead committee.*

Throughout its discussions, the Subcommittee consider alternative ways to organize the current BCC system that may alleviate the time required by alders to serve on committees and to increase the usefulness and accountability of all BCCs.

Possible alternatives centered on the idea of designating lead committees and resident committees. Alders would serve on lead committees which would oversee the resident committees grouped beneath it. The resident committees would be grouped, generally by topic area, under each lead committee and would be required to report to the lead committees.

Each year, all committees would be responsible for conducting a self-evaluation to consider its continued relevance and usefulness. These ideas are represented in both Option A developed by John Rothschild and B developed by the Office of the City Attorney, attached. Further, Option B considers the possibility of eliminating or combining some existing BCCs that have perhaps outlived their usefulness or have jurisdictions overlapping other BCCs. The Subcommittee noted that these are just two examples of possible structures that could be considered. Other possibilities were also suggested, including organizing the BCCs around the key components identified in the Comprehensive Plan and by Department/Topic area. The Subcommittee encourages the Task Force to discuss and consider various alternatives and concepts.

- b. Consider the creation of an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support (ORENS).*

The Subcommittee noted that some of its concerns related to diversity, representation, staffing, resident engagement, and logistics could be addressed by a new office of staff dedicated to resident engagement and neighborhood support. The mission of this department would be to work toward better representation on BCCs and the Common Council of people of color and those living with low income.

The Subcommittee discussed that such an office could be responsible for the conducting the administrative functions associated with BCCs (agendas, minutes, etc.), assist with membership staffing of BCCs, the degree of resident engagement, representation, as well as many other functions.

The Subcommittee reviewed a draft proposal, which is attached to this report. As noted on the proposal, the Subcommittee recognizes that existing city staff could not be moved into this



new department without considering replacing that staff in their former department or reconsidering the duties of the impacted departments.

***c. Consider options for changing appointment powers.***

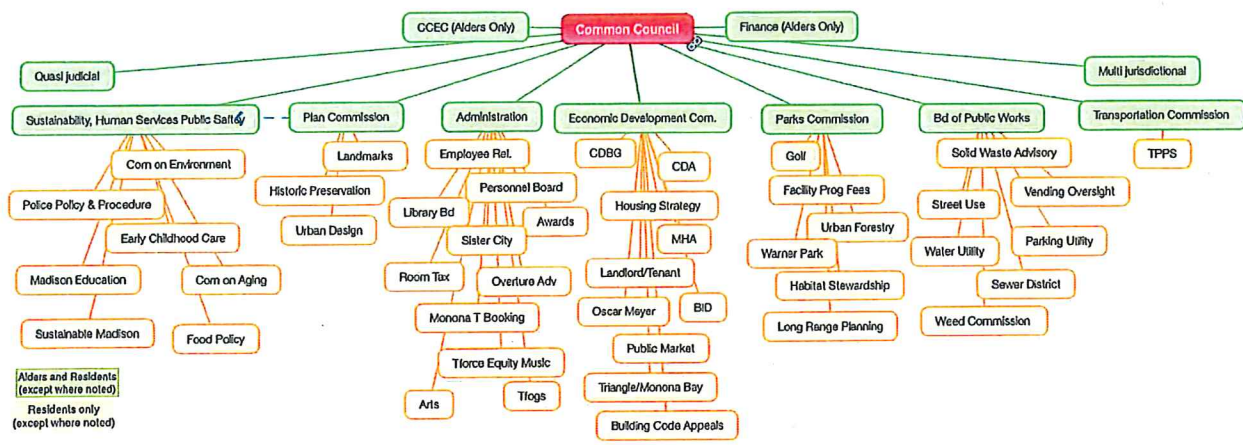
The Subcommittee identified three options for how to handle appointments to BCCs other than how they are currently handled. First, the mayor appoints all resident members and the CCEC appoints all alder members. Second, the CCEC appoints all members to policy-related BCCs and the mayor appoints all members to administration-related BCCs. And third, either the mayor or CCEC appoints all members but ordinance changes are made to allow the non-appointing entity have some identified right of refusal of appointees.

***d. Creating a technology plan that will improve resident engagement.***

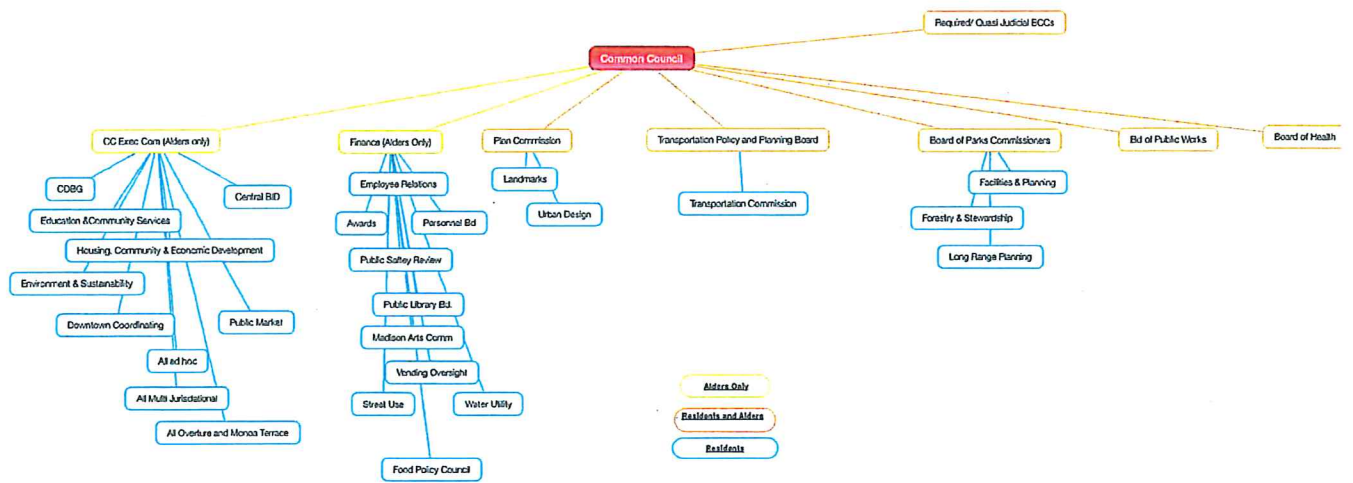
The Subcommittee believes a key component to increasing representation and resident engagement is to create a robust technology plan that will create new avenues for resident engagement. These include but would not be limited to 1) remote participation of BCC members and the public in BCC meetings, 2) notification or alerts of issues coming before BCCs, 3) platforms on which to submit feedback to certain items under consideration, and 4) a ticketing system that would allow residents to follow items of interest and see how they are resolved.

This Report was approved by the TFOGS BCC Subcommittee on March 8, 2019.

Proposed BCC Org Chart



City Alliance Proposed Alternative  
Committee Structure





Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support

DRAFT PROPOSAL (Changes after 2-5 BCC Sub meeting)

{DISCLAIMER: The subcommittee recognized that staff from existing departments could not be moved into a new department without considering replacing the staff that move or reconsidering the duties expected of the department from which they moved}

A recurring theme arising from the work of the Task Force on the Structure of City Government has been the need for better representation on Common Council and on City of Madison boards, commissions and committees from people of color and those living with low incomes. TFOGS has identified many barriers to participation, including:

- times and places of city meetings
- requirements for in-person participation
- lack of child care and adequate transportation
- uneven quality of training and support for members
- uneven level of staff support and resources amongst boards, commissions and committees
- unclear purpose of some boards, commissions and committees
- unclear expectations of board, commission and committee members
- difficulty in understanding and using Legistar
- general lack of civic education/knowledge about city government
- heavy workload of Alders
- historical housing patterns and current landlord practices that result in high mobility of people earning low incomes, many of whom are people of color and women raising their children without a partner

Additionally, in considering the current work-load of Alders, TFOGS subcommittees have noted that the time and work commitments for membership on boards, commissions and committees are significant, leading to questions about compensation levels and whether or not the position should be considered a full time job. TFOGS subcommittees also heard that city staff are overburdened with the work of supporting boards, commissions and committees and public engagement, pulling them away from other work commitments.

This proposal seeks to address these concerns through the establishment of an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support (ORENS). The ORENS would be jointly supervised by the Mayor and the Common Council Executive Committee, since both offices have strong, practical interests in constituent engagement and community direction for city initiatives. This new structure of shared responsibility would be an innovation in city government that strongly

promotes cooperation between the Mayor and the Council while maintaining the integrity, distinctive character and powers of each branch of government.

The Office would be an independent office of the City, to be headed by one director who would be a CG-21 employee chosen by the process for Department and Division Heads.

While the City of Madison purports to place a high value on resident participation, racial equity and social justice in government, there is much room for improvement in how these values are actualized. The ORENS would combine many already-existing staff positions into one office that is singularly focused on creating racial equity and social justice through training, support, facilitation and outreach to enable residents to engage at various levels of policy development and project implementation while removing barriers to participation.

ORENS functions would include:

- Recruitment of and communication with potential board, commission and committee members
- Orientation, training and support of board, commission and committee chairs and members
- Administrative support for boards, commissions and committees
- Training of staff, Alders, and board, commission and committee members in Legistar
- City-wide and District-specific communications on behalf of Council, Mayor and other city departments with no communication staff, including coordinating responses by the City-wide public information officer
- Organization and facilitation of neighborhood and community meetings
- Outreach and education about city initiatives in collaboration with other city agencies
- Organizational support for community-led initiatives
- Engage and advocate for new ways for residents to participate in decision making and give prompt and direct feedback on issues that people have expressed interest in
- Facilitate annual evaluation of boards, commissions and committees
- Provide Language access services

Already-existing staff positions that might be brought under the umbrella of ORENS include:

- Constituent Service staff – Common Council office
- Neighborhood Resource Officer – Mayor's office
- Administrative Coordinator in charge of boards, commissions and committees – Mayor's office
- Racial Equity and Social Justice Coordinator – Department of Civil Rights

- Neighborhood Planner (x2?) – Planning
- Community Building & Engagement staff (x2?) – Community Development
- Organizational Development staff (x2?) – Human Resources
- City-wide Public Information Officer – proposed new position
- Other administrative support staff (3-4) – TBD
- IT staff?
- Language access staff
- City Channel?

DRAFT

# EXHIBIT F





# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
www.cityofmadison.com

## Meeting Minutes - Approved TASK FORCE ON STRUCTURE OF CITY GOVERNMENT

---

Tuesday, March 12, 2019

6:00 PM

Madison Municipal Building, Room 153  
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.

---

### POSSIBLE QUORUM OF THE COMMON COUNCIL EXISTS AT THIS MEETING

50732 Documents related to the Task Force on the Structure of City Government

### THE TASK FORCE MAY SUSPEND THE RULES TO STAND INFORMALLY AND ALLOW FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND ENGAGEMENT OF ANY AGENDA ITEM

Called to order at 6:00 p.m.

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

**Present:** 9 - Paul E. Skidmore; David Ahrens; Rebecca Kemble; Ronald M. Trachtenberg; John E. Rothschild; Roger Goodwin; Justice M. Castañeda; Maggie Northrop and Eileen Harrington  
**Absent:** 2 - Sheri Carter and Eric S. Upchurch

Also Present: Brenda Konkel, Grant Foster, Karen Kapusta-Pofahl, Karl Van Lith, Linette Rhodes and Keith Furman

#### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Rothschild, second by Goodwin, to approve minutes of February 6, 2019. Motion passed on voice vote.

#### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Motion by Kemble, seconded by Northrop to suspend the rules and stand informally on items 6 and 8 to allow for public discussion and engagement of those items. Motion passed on voice vote with Skidmore voting nay.

#### 4. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals for this meeting.

Note: At this point, the Chair took Items 9, 7 and 8 out of order



5. REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES,  
INCLUDING:

Prior to item 5, the chair asked that the vice chair take over chairing the meeting. At this point, Justice Castañeda, provided a summary of the Boards, Commissions, and Committees Subcommittee Report and lifted up issues the Subcommittee thought important to the TFOGS consideration of issues raised by the authorizing Resolution. He also discussed some possible recommendations to address these issues that were identified in the report.

6. INITIAL DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FULL TFOGS  
TO DECIDE REGARDING BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

After giving the summary of the Boards, Commissions, and Committee written report, a straw poll was taken regarding several key questions related to the Common Council.

A. Should the City move to some form of "lead committee" structure?

Yes – 8  
No – None  
Don't know – none

B. Does the TFOGS support the concept of an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support as a separate department.

Yes – 7  
No - None  
Don't know – one

7. REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE COMMON COUNCIL INCLUDING:

The Chair asked that the Chair of the Common Council Subcommittee give that Subcommittee's Report First. John Rothschild provided a summary of the Subcommittee's written report and noted areas where the subcommittee reach consensus and where it did not. He also pointed out one source not mentioned in the report, which was a summary he prepared of overall costs associated with Madison's Common Council compared to costs of other Cities' Councils.

8. INITIAL DISCUSSION OF SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND POSSIBLE  
RECOMMENDATIONS

After giving the summary of the Common Council Subcommittee's written report, a straw poll was taken regarding several key questions related to the Common Council.

A. Should the City switch to a full-time Council?

Yes - None  
No - 5  
Don't know - 3

B. Should the City continue with geographic districts, move to at-large districts, or use a hybrid form of representation?

Geographic districts - 6  
At Large - 0  
Hybrid - 2

9. **DISCUSSION OF PLAN FOR FORMULATING REPORT TO THE COMMON COUNCIL  
AND CONCLUDING THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE BY JULY 1, 2019, INCLUDING:**

The Chair discussed the plan for formulating a report to the Common Council and concluding the work of the Task Force by July 1, 2019, including that on March 27 the Task Force would begin making decisions on certain recommendations, with more decisions to follow on April 9. The Chair hopes to begin drafting the TFOGS Report to the Common Council after the April 9 meeting with an initial draft ready by May 1. Engagement would take place in May with a finalization of the TFOGS Report at its June 11 meeting. During this Discussion, the chair of the Communications Subcommittee discussed the status of public engagement ideas the subcommittee is discussing.

10. **DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL TFOGS DISTRICT REPORTS INTERVIEW**

The TFOGS approved of having Rebecca Kemble and Justice Castañeda appear on the District Reports show to discuss the TFOGS.

11. **FUTURE MEETING AND AGENDA ITEMS**

Discussed above in Item 9.

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Castaneda, second by Trachtenberg to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.



# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
www.cityofmadison.com

## Meeting Minutes - Approved TASK FORCE ON STRUCTURE OF CITY GOVERNMENT

---

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

6:30 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Madison Municipal Building, Room 215

---

### POSSIBLE QUORUM OF THE COMMON COUNCIL EXISTS AT THIS MEETING

50732 Documents related to the Task Force on the Structure of City Government

### THE TASK FORCE MAY SUSPEND THE RULES TO STAND INFORMALLY AND ALLOW FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND ENGAGEMENT OF ANY AGENDA ITEM

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

**Present:** 10 - Paul E. Skidmore; David Ahrens; Rebecca Kemble; Ronald M. Trachtenberg; John E. Rothschild; Roger Goodwin; Justice M. Castañeda; Maggie Northrop; Eric S. Upchurch and Eileen Harrington

**Absent:** 1 - Sheri Carter

Eileen Harrington and Ron Trachtenberg appeared by telephone.

Others present: Keith Furman, Karl van Lith, Peter Cannon, Nick Zavos, Michael May and John Strange

#### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Northrop and second by Kemble to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2019 meeting. Approved on a voice vote.

#### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Cannon, formerly of the Legislative Reference Bureau, made a presentation urging the Task Force not to decrease the size of the Common Council. His presentation will be part of the record.

#### 4. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals at this meeting.

#### 5. CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION TO INCLUDE IN TFOGS REPORT TO COMMON COUNCIL REGARDING THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

Chair Harrington turned the conduct of the meeting over to vice-chair John Rothschild. On the issue under item A., Ahrens moved and Castañeda

seconded to recommend that the Council become a full-time body. There was no discussion. The motion failed on a vote of 6 noes and 3 abstentions.

At this point, Justice Castañeda raised a point of order on the procedure being followed. He objected to the process being used by the TFOGS, and to the lack of adequate representation by people of color on TFOGS. A lengthy discussion ensued on the process to be followed and the nature of the draft report to be prepared by the TFOGS. One suggestion was to use the Subcommittee reports as the Draft Report to take for public engagement and participation. Others suggested taking preliminary votes, but including the pros and cons as set out in the Subcommittee reports.

John Rothschild moved and Justice Castañeda seconded that the Task Force take up item 8, the Communications Subcommittee Report and to discuss the type of public participation that the TFOGS wished to engage in. That motion failed on a voice vote.

The Task Force engaged in further discussion on the nature of the draft report and whether it should include draft recommendations or not, before full public participation. Eventually, Eric Upchurch moved to defer voting on items 5, 6, and 7 of the Agenda until the Task Force conducted public engagement and participation. He modified the motion to allow discussion of those items, if desired, but defer any voting until after the public participation phase. The motion was seconded by Justice Castañeda. Motion approved on a vote of 6 Ayes, 3 Noes.

Rebecca Kemble asked the City Attorney about a Council with some or all at large alders. The City Attorney responded that it was possible but would take a charter ordinance, requiring a 2/3 vote.

The TFOGS moved back to a discussion of Item 5. There were no more comments on 5A. On 5B, the question of at large or a hybrid council, Justice Castañeda noted that this structural change might or might not increase representation of underrepresented communities. He then reiterated a point made in the Common Council Subcommittee Report that given the long history of Madison having an under-representative Common Council (compared to the history of the Madison School Board), there really may be no downside to trying an alternative form versus maintaining the status quo, which has historically not worked well for people of color and low income. There was further discussion on increasing such representation.

**6. CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCLUDE IN TFOGS REPORT TO COMMON COUNCIL REGARDING THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES (BCCs)**

There was no discussion of agenda item 6 other than to note a majority of the TFOGS looked positively on a BCC restructuring at the last meeting.

**7. CONSIDERATION OF OTHER POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCLUDE IN THE TFOGS REPORT TO THE COMMON COUNCIL, INCLUDING:**

The TFOGS noted that there was relative consensus on item B (4 year terms for alders), item C (no term limits needed for alders) and item I (alders should not



chair committees). There also had been a general consensus on item A (creation of the ORENS department) in theory, although not on the details.

Roger Goodwin asked if the ORENS would be a separate department and was advised it would. He also commented on item G (Mayoral appointment to BCCs) and warned that if the Council president were given the power to appoint members of BCCs, it might be an overwhelming task. He thought it should stay with the Mayor. Justice Castañeda agreed that most appointments should stay with the Mayor, but the President of the Council could do more. Rebecca Kemble said that she liked the idea of collaboration between the Mayor and the President on appointments.

Eric Upchurch noted that the ORENS proposal should have included the need to address the impacts on various communities when considering proposals. Rebecca Kemble said she had heard from city staff who were concerned with this proposal.

The TFOGS decided that if any of them had comments on the draft Staff Survey, they should be given to Mike May or John Strange by Friday. The survey would then either go out or be revisited at the next TFOGS meeting on April 9.

8. UPDATE FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

As its last order of business, the TFOGS decided that item 8, the Communications Subcommittee report and proposals for participation should be the first agenda item on April 9.

9. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS

Nothing to report on Agenda Item No. 9.

10. ADJOURNMENT

John Rothschild moved to adjourn. Justice Castañeda seconded the motion. It was approved on a voice vote and the TFOGS adjourned at 8:45 pm.



# EXHIBIT G



\* The Comms subcommittee envisioned one open house vent. Additional opportunities for feedback/input and community engagement could be provided at regular TFOGS meetings in August and September (TFOGS regular meetings can be publicized as listening sessions).

### Survey effort details

**Goal:** To receive a minimum of 750 survey responses. The survey version that includes incentives will be capped at 1,200 responses and will remain open for 3-4 weeks. Expected closing date will be July 31.

**Target audience:** Individuals, groups, populations and neighborhoods underrepresented in city processes, public input and feedback collection; underserved neighborhoods and persons (e.g. low-income people, highly mobile individuals/groups; wards and districts with low voter turnout and low levels of representation on BCCs).

### **Role of the liaisons:**

- Review subcommittee reports.
- Provide feedback on pertinence of issues to their community, impact of potential recommendations, any gaps/missing information or considerations.
- Provide input into messaging, survey questions, and video, plus other materials we may need to create to communicate with communities.
- Disseminate survey and ensure community members are aware of it and able to submit responses through a mode most convenient/appropriate for the target audience (paper, electronic, over phone, etc.).

**Suggested number of liaisons based on goal:** Approximately 10 liaison organizations/individuals (appx. 100 survey responses/liaison).

### **Incentives for liaison organizations/individuals and survey respondents:**

Provide a baseline of \$500 for input into survey and video, messaging and process (first three bullet points under responsibilities). \$10/survey response to be split evenly between the liaison (\$5) and the survey respondent (\$5).

### **Estimated cost:**

We anticipate that each liaison/organization will receive a total of around \$1,500 (based on 100 survey responses estimate). It is very likely that some larger organizations or more connected liaisons may be able to surpass the 100 responses target while others may be well below it. Estimated total cost will be around \$15,000-\$18,000. The survey version involving incentives will be capped at 1,200 responses.

# EXHIBIT H





# APPENDIX D

## **Appendix D**

### **Summary List of Final Task Force Recommendations**

- Retain the mayor-council form of government.
- Do not pursue first-class city status.
- Review attractive characteristics of first-class city status and consider petitioning the legislature to apply those characteristics to second-class cities.
- Retain current form of mayoral veto power.
- Review the Mayor's administrative span of power and take steps to ensure that mayors can effectively supervise all direct reports.
- Transition to a full-time Common Council.
- Reduce the size of the Common Council from twenty (20) to ten (10) members.
- Increase Common Council member pay to 80% of the Area Median Income in Dane County for a single parent with two children (approximately \$67,000).
- Maintain geographic aldermanic representation.
- Increase aldermanic terms to four (4) years and, at that time, increase Common Council leadership positions to two (2) years.
- Impose term limits on Common Council members of twelve (12) consecutive years.
- Create an organizational chart of all BCCs and organize BCCs around lead committees.
- Eliminate or combined BCCs that are redundant or no longer necessary.
- Take concrete steps to increase BCC accountability.
- Take steps to ensure that BCC enabling ordinances and resolutions clearly state BCC jurisdiction and purpose.
- Take steps to address discrepancy in BCC levels of authority, staffing, and resources.

- Train BCC members, chairs, and staff on BCC jurisdiction, purpose, and procedures.
- Create an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support (“ORENS”) to support BCC system staffing, training, and resident engagement.
- Create an Administrative Services Team to help BCCs develop systems for engaging residents most impacted by city decision making and providing feedback to residents on decisions made.
- Retain Mayoral authority to appoint resident and alder members to BCCs, except that if the City transitions to a full-time Common Council, then the Common Council Executive Committee should appoint alder members to BCCs.
- Create clear processes where mayoral nominations for BCC members are reviewed and commented on by the Common Council Executive Committee.
- Retain rule that Common Council members not serve as chairs of BCCs with resident members.
- Simplify city processes and procedures applicable to all BCCs, including time and location of meetings, rules of procedure, and methods for providing input.
- Implement a robust technology plan to improve representation and engagement on BCCs.
- Pursue concrete common sense initiatives to improve resident engagement and participation as detailed in Section F of the Final Report.

# APPENDIX E

## Appendix E

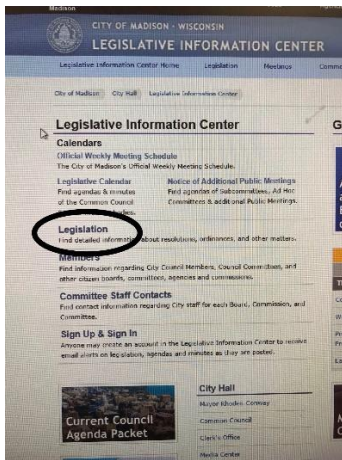
### List of Topics and Legistar Numbers for On-Line Documents

Legistar File Number	Topic
50732	Task Force Documents
53352	Task Force Agendas
53353	Task Force Minutes
53382	Communications Subcommittee Documents
53672	BCC Subcommittee Documents
53380	Government Officials Subcommittee Documents
53381	Executive Subcommittee Documents
53673	Common Council Subcommittee Documents
53354	Information Received from City Staff
53396	Information Received from Task Force Members
53397	Information Received from the Public

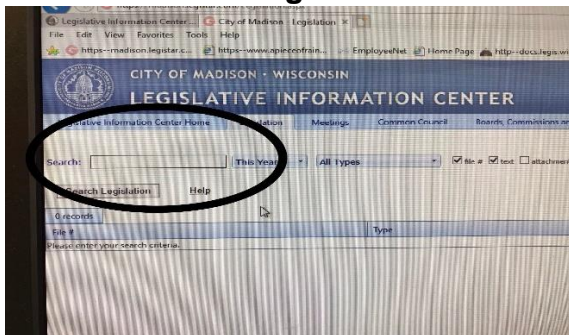
To access documents in these files:

1. **Go to the City of Madison Legislative Information Center and select “Legislation.”**

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/cityhall/legislativeinformation/>



2. **Search Desired Legislative File Number From Above.**





# APPENDIX F

## Appendix F

### Legistar Links to Government Officials, Staff, and Resident Survey Results

Government Officials Survey Results:

<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7875926&GUID=A5B4ED81-271C-48CC-9ACB-B3375580DFDC>

Staff Survey Results:

<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7875928&GUID=1467E7A9-31BF-4B50-A529-A075BAC94F31>

Resident Survey Results:

<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7875927&GUID=A7522EB5-98A0-454B-96D9-908F9AB2D8D0>

# APPENDIX G

# OPEN HOUSE: *We Want to Hear From You*

**August 28, 2019, 5:00–8:00pm**

The Atrium, 2300 South Park Street, Rooms A, B and C

Do you know when the City is making key decisions that will impact **your neighborhood**?

Or **who** is making those decisions?

Do you have the time, resources, or know-how to voice **your opinion** to City Government?

The **Task Force on Government Structure** is asking these questions to find out if changes to city government could help the City work more effectively for **all residents**, including specifically, residents of color and low income.

## We Value Your Input

August 28, 2019 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. at The Atrium, 2300 South Park Street. Help shape Madison’s government at the **Open House**, where together we will explore ways Madison can improve resident engagement and city decision making.

● ● ● ● ● ●  
**CHILDCARE, DINNER, and Transportation Provided!**

Dinner from **El Pastor** and **McGees Chicken!** Bring the kids. Drinks provided

● ● ● ● ● ●  
**September 24 Open House**  
*Join us for another Open House at Warner Park Community Center, 1511 Northport Drive on September 24, 2019 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.*



# Join the Conversation!



Union Cab shuttle vans will be running to and from the locations listed below:

**TO THE ATRIUM FROM:**

**Leopold School**, 2602 Post Road  
(4:45; 5:15; 6:00; 6:45)

**Badger Rock Middle School**, 501 E Badger Road  
(4:45; 5:15; 6:00; 6:45)

**Boys and Girls Club of Dane County**, 1818 W Beltline Hwy  
(4:30; 5:15; 6:00; 6:45)

**FROM THE ATRIUM TO:**

**Leopold School**, 2602 Post Road  
(6:30; 7:15; 8:00)

**Badger Rock Middle School**, 501 E Badger Road  
(6:30; 7:15; 8:00)

**Boys & Girls Club of Dane County**, 1818 W Beltline Hwy  
(6:30; 7:15; 8:00)