



Human Relations Commission Staff Report

From: Mahealani Ah Yun, City Clerk

Meeting Date: October 10, 2024

Report #: 2409-3515

TITLE

Discussion of the Proposed 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Schedule and the draft citywide list of holidays and dates of significance

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Human Relations Commission (HRC), with input provided by the community during the meeting, review, discuss, and provide feedback to the City Council on:

1. The Proposed 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Schedule in context of dates to avoid, and
2. The draft citywide list of holidays and dates of significance to increase awareness.

BACKGROUND

City Council Meeting Schedule

Every December, the City Council adopts a schedule of City Council meetings for the upcoming calendar year. An adopted calendar allows the City Council to more efficiently conduct the City's business and offer the City Council, staff, and community stakeholders the opportunity to better plan for meetings as well as other obligations.

Municipal Code Section 2.04.010 sets regular City Council meetings on the first three Mondays of each month at 5:30pm and requires the City Council to schedule its vacations for the year. Staff, in partnership with the Mayor and Vice Mayor, has also modified the City Council calendar to add additional Special meetings should they be necessary for conducting City Council business.

In previous years, modifications to Regular City Council meeting dates have been based on dates to avoid scheduling a meeting, which included:

1. City Holidays
2. Local election days in even numbered years which fall on the first Tuesday of November (this typically impacts Council Committee meetings that fall on Palo Alto election night)
3. A religious or cultural date of significance per Council direction

Citywide List of Holidays and Dates of Significance

In addition to the Regular City Council meeting schedule, the City Council began an exploration of ways to expand the list of dates of significance with the intention of increasing inclusivity as

part of the City's equity goals. The expanded list of holidays and dates of significance can be used for general awareness, recognition, or sometimes, proclamations. This process has been and will continue to be iterative, with staff continuing to progress this effort with the intention of refining the list as appropriate each year. In the 2024-2025 Equity Action Plan, Action Item 1.3 states:

Create a process that includes the HRC for annual calendar setting related to holidays and heritage months

This Equity Action Plan item is intended to help the City organization review these two lists annually including public feedback about the dates to avoid for the City Council calendar as well as the list of holidays and dates of significance. It is not assumed that the HRC would be experts on the details of every observance included on the list, but instead that the HRC could review the list, provide insight, and welcome public feedback about the list at this HRC meeting.

ANALYSIS

City Council Meeting Schedule

The proposed 2025 City Council Meeting Schedule is:

- January 6, 2025 Regular Meeting
- January 13, 2025 Regular Meeting
- January 21, 2025 Special Meeting
- January 27, 2025 Special Meeting – Annual Priority Setting Meeting
- February 3, 2025 Regular Meeting
- February 10, 2025 Regular Meeting
- February 24, 2025 Special Meeting
- March 3, 2025 Regular Meeting
- March 10, 2025 Regular Meeting
- March 17, 2025 Regular Meeting
- March 24, 2025 Additional Special Meeting, if needed
- March 31, 2025 Additional Special Meeting, if needed
- April 7, 2025 Regular Meeting
- April 14, 2025 Regular Meeting
- April 21, 2025 Regular Meeting
- April 28, 2025 Additional Special Meeting, if needed
- May 5, 2025 Regular Meeting
- May 12, 2025 Regular Meeting
- May 19, 2025 Regular Meeting
- June 2, 2025 Regular Meeting
- June 9, 2025 Regular Meeting
- June 16, 2025 Regular Meeting
- June 17, 2025 Additional Special Meeting, if needed

- August 4, 2025 Regular Meeting
- August 11, 2025 Regular Meeting
- August 18, 2025 Regular Meeting
- August 25, 2025 Additional Special Meeting, if needed
- September 8, 2025 Regular Meeting
- September 15, 2025 Regular Meeting
- September 29, 2025 Special Meeting
- October 6, 2025 Regular Meeting
- October 20, 2025 Regular Meeting
- October 27, 2025 Special Meeting
- November 3, 2025 Regular Meeting
- November 10, 2025 Regular Meeting
- November 17, 2025 Regular Meeting
- December 1, 2025 Regular Meeting
- December 8, 2025 Regular Meeting
- December 15, 2025 Regular Meeting

The proposed City Council Summer and Winter Recesses are:

June 20, 2025 – August 3, 2025 – Summer Recess

December 19, 2025 – January 4, 2026 – Winter Recess

The proposed list of days to avoid for meetings is listed below. This list includes days that the City has recognized as holidays and days that City administrative offices and facilities are closed in observances of holidays. It also includes some religious or cultural days of significance where celebrations begin in the evenings and could conflict with regularly scheduled meetings. The dates related to some religious or cultural days of significance have varied in previous years. This draft list is open for feedback.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Eid al-Fitr
- Passover
- Memorial Day
- Eid Al-Adha
- Juneteenth
- The Fourth of July (Independence Day)
- Rosh Hashanah
- Yom Kippur
- Indigenous Peoples' Day

- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day

Staff would like feedback from the HRC and the community on the draft list of dates to avoid for meetings.

Citywide List of Holidays and Dates of Significance

As referenced in the Background section of this report, staff is implementing Equity Action Plan Item 1.3 in bringing this discussion to the HRC. It is really important that there is a public discussion about the list of dates to avoid and the list of holidays and dates of significance. This provides the community with the opportunity to engage with the City to help expand awareness about the many observances significant to members of the Palo Alto community. The Action Plan item is intended to firm up this process by making this an annual discussion with the HRC and continuing to refine it over the years as needed. Similarly, the list of dates of significance is an iterative process and will continue to be refined over the years. Staff welcomes feedback on the list.

The purpose of the list of holidays and dates of significance is to increase awareness and expand visibility of dates that are important to members of the Palo Alto community. The list of dates may be used for general recognition or sometimes proclamations. It also includes themed months that the City Council has previously recognized. **Attachment A** contains the list of holidays and dates of significance for review.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Staff in multiple departments including the City Manager's Office, City Clerk's Office, and Community Services Department collaborated on this report. The Human Relations Commission discussion is an opportunity to hear from the community about the two items proposed in this report. Staff also informed members of the Palo Alto faith community that it has contacts for of this discussion opportunity at the HRC and invited them to provide feedback.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Action on this item is a continuing administrative activity and therefore is not a project as defined by CEQA. CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(2).

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Holidays and Dates of Significance

APPROVED BY:

Mahealani Ah Yun, City Clerk