



# REPORT TO COUNCIL

## City of Sacramento

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**DRAFT Progress Report**  
**June 23, 2009**

**Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council**

**Title: Charter Review Committee Progress Report**

**Location/Council District: Citywide**

**Recommendation:** This report transmits the June Charter Review Committee Progress Report as required by Council Resolution R2009-095.

**Contact/Presenter:** William H. Edgar, Chair, Charter Review Committee, (916) 392-4909

Respectfully Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
William H. Edgar, Chair  
2009 Sacramento Charter Review Committee

### **Table of Contents:**

Report

### **Attachments**

- 1** Background
- 2** Benchmark Cities
- 3** Benchmark Cities Matrix
- 4** Work Plan
- 5** Pool of Potential Speakers
- 6** FAQ Document
- 7** Reference Materials
- 8** Outreach Plan

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Introduction**

On February 17, 2009, the Sacramento City Council unanimously adopted Resolution R2009-095 which created the 2009 Sacramento Charter Review Committee. The Committee was established as an advisory body to the City Council and directed to review the current City Charter and make recommendations for possible amendments.

Resolution R2009-095 requires the Committee to provide the City Council progress reports in the months of June, August and October. Additionally, a preliminary set of recommendations is required to be presented to the City Council by December 15, 2009 and a final report is required to be presented to the City Council by January 26, 2010. All Committee meetings are open to the public and publicly noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act.

### **Meetings to Date**

A short summary of each Committee meeting conducted to date is provided below.

#### **April 2, 2009**

- Introduction of Committee Members and Staff
- Brown Act Orientation
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Meeting Calendar

#### **April 20, 2009**

- Selection of Chair/Vice Chair
- Review of the City Charter
- Review of City's Governance Structure
- Review of Strong Mayor (Mayor-Council) Proposal
- Work Plan Discussion

#### **May 7, 2009**

- Committee Meeting Topics/Speakers
- Strategies For Receiving Information
- Decision Making Process

#### **May 18, 2009**

- Panel Discussion – Governance/Budget Process (Academic Focus)
  - Raphael Sonenshein, Ph.D., CSU Fullerton
  - James Svara, Ph.D., Arizona State University
  - Robert Waste, Ph.D., CSU Sacramento
- Updated Work Plan
- Public Outreach Plan

## June 4, 2009

- Panel Discussion – Governance/Budget Process (Practitioner Focus)
  - Henry Gardner, Executive Director, Association of Bay Area Governments
  - Gerald Newfarmer, CEO and President, Management Partners, Inc.
  - Daniel Whitehurst, Former Mayor, City of Fresno
- Public Outreach Plan
- Resource/Reference Materials

## June 15, 2009

- Panel Discussion – Governance/Budget Process (Budget Practitioner Focus)
  - Russell Fehr, City Treasurer, City of Sacramento
  - Jay Goldstone, Chief Operating Officer, City of San Diego
  - Matthew Hymel, County Administrator, County of Marin
- Format/Materials for Community Meetings

## **Work Plan**

The Committee has developed a comprehensive phased work plan to facilitate its efforts to develop recommendations within the above timetable. The work plan consists of five distinct phases:

1. Organization Phase
2. Information Gathering Phase
3. Outreach Phase
4. Tentative Decision Making Phase
5. Final Decision Making/Report Writing Phase

### Organization Phase

The Organization Phase was devoted to orientation, review and planning. The bulk of the work completed during the Organization Phase consisted of developing the framework for the phased work plan approach. During the course of this Phase, several strategies were also developed by the Committee to assist in receiving information including:

- Selecting 12 benchmark cities to study and contrast with the Sacramento governance structure (see Attachment 2).
- Developing a matrix reference document (see Attachment 3) to provide Committee members with information about the benchmark cities and their governance structures.
- Developing a comprehensive Work Plan calendar (see Attachment 4) to identify important deadlines, outreach meetings, and the meeting dates when various topics are to be discussed.
- Developing a pool of potential speakers on various topics to assist with coordination of testimony (see Attachment 5).
- Establishing a website ([www.cityofsacramento.org/charter](http://www.cityofsacramento.org/charter)) to provide information to the public about the Committee. Committee meetings are video streamed and can

be viewed live on the City's website. Archived video of meetings can be accessed on the website as well.

- Developing a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document to post on the website (see Attachment 6).
- Creating a bibliography of resources (see Attachment 7) of all education materials received by the Committee.

Other tasks completed during this phase included reviewing the Ralph M. Brown Act, parliamentary procedure and the City's Charter, and selecting William Edgar and JoAnn Fuller, respectively, to serve as Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.

### Information Gathering Phase

The Information Gathering Phase was launched on May 18, 2009 when the Committee convened a panel of academic experts to discuss governance structure and budget processes. The Committee plans to receive testimony from academics, practitioners and organizations on subject matter consistent with the Council's charge through October. The purpose of this Phase is to obtain a variety of perspectives on the issues the Committee is studying. A pool of potential speakers has been identified to assist in recruiting speakers for Committee meetings. To date, the Committee has received approximately six hours of testimony via three different panel discussions with nine individuals.

The Committee has also created an opportunity to receive information from members of the public via the Committee's website. The website includes a "Share Your Comments" link where comments can be provided to the Committee. All comments received are included in the correspondence materials Committee members receive before each meeting. The Outreach Phase will also include a "feedback" process to provide the Committee additional information.

### Outreach Phase

During the Organization Phase, the Committee developed an Outreach Plan (see Attachment 8) to inform and engage the community in the Charter Review process. The Outreach Phase is intended to run concurrent with the Information Gathering Phase when it begins in June. The Outreach Phase will extend through January 2010 when the Committee's final report is due to the City Council.

Initial outreach efforts will focus on education and information. For example, the Committee is planning to present information about the Charter Review process and how to become involved at four community meetings in July. An informational brochure explaining the Charter Review Committee and process is also being developed for distribution. Concurrent with this effort, the Committee intends to engage in a focused dialogue with a variety of community interests to solicit their feedback on the City's Charter. Initial outreach is planned in June with focused dialogue beginning in August. Soliciting feedback on developing alternatives will be the focus of the Outreach Phase beginning in September through completion of the report in January 2010.

### Tentative Decision Making Phase

The Committee's Work Plan includes a Tentative Decision Making Phase beginning in

August that will facilitate the Committee's efforts to develop written recommendations. Because the Work Plan is organized by subject matter, the Committee intends to allocate time after each topic is discussed for tentative decision making. This will allow the Committee to benefit from the recent testimony and focus on subject areas during the course of their Work Plan rather than postpone discussion months after testimony is received. The Committee also anticipates this strategy will provide an efficient means of developing recommendations for Council consideration because tentative decision making will begin to shape the forthcoming report months before the report is due.

#### Final Decision Making/Report Writing Phase

The Final Decision Making/Report Writing Phase is intended to begin in November. This Phase will benefit from the work performed by the Committee during its Tentative Decision Making Phase. This Final Decision Making/Report Writing Phase will incorporate a discussion and feedback process before the preliminary set of recommendations are presented to the City Council by December 15, 2009 and final report is presented to the City Council by January 26, 2010.

#### What We've Learned So Far

Although there is much more work to be done including more information gathering, receiving additional testimony, and analyzing more data there are some things that we've learned already which are:

- The question, "Why Change" should probably be addressed first prior to the consideration of specific proposals for structural change and/or reform.
- There has been a great deal of useful information and material about charter reform that is available from many sources. This information has been and will continue to be very helpful in our effort to provide the City Council with a thorough, well documented, and thoughtful report by the January 26, 2010 deadline prescribed in the City Council Resolution.
- In each case that we reviewed so far where a charter change was implemented, the circumstances seemed unique to that city, and the changes that were made seemed to be tailored to match their specific needs and their community values and culture. There hasn't seemed to be a "one size fits all" solution for the problems that were defined in each locality.
- Academics, practitioners, and organizational/citizen advocates who are experts and/or advocates of charter reform and change have been very generous with their time in sharing their knowledge, experience, and information with the Charter Committee. This has been and will continue to be very helpful in informing our final report to the City Council.