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Staff Report for a City of San Leandro City Council Resolution to Approve an Adjustment to the Planning Commission’s Regular Meeting Dates

**SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends amending the City’s Administrative Code to establish the regular meeting date for both hearing bodies to be on the first Thursday of each month. This action relates to the merger of the Board of Zoning Adjustments and the Planning Commission, consistent with City Council direction.

**BACKGROUND**

Following a recommendation by the City Council Rules Committee, the City Council considered a merger of the Planning Commission (PC) and Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA) at its June 4, 2018 meeting. The circumstances for merging the two bodies will be optimal at the end of this calendar year, given that both bodies have a total of eight pending vacancies (four on each). The City Council plans to reopen a new appointment process so that future appointees will serve as both a planning commissioner and a board member. Staff will return to the City Council with a follow up action regarding the reappointment process for both hearing bodies. The attached June 4, 2018 staff report provides further background information.

**Analysis**

Tonight’s proposal before the City Council is the second step in formalizing a merger of the PC and BZA, by establishing the regular meeting date for both bodies to fall on the same evening in the City’s Administrative Code. Staff recommends the Planning Commission’s regular meeting date be changed to occur on the first Thursday of each month beginning next year, consistent with the regular date of the BZA. The first Thursday of the month is optimal for hearing items that need to be scheduled for follow-up before City Council the following month. The proposed change will have no

impact on the processing or timing of any applications in progress.

In the future, the City Council will need to authorize the City Clerk to announce the call for new nominations. The new appointees beginning next year will serve as both a planning commissioner and a board member. The remaining board members and commissioners would end their two-year terms prematurely but would be eligible for re-nomination.

During this interim period, the bodies will function similarly to when the City Council also served as the former Redevelopment Agency. A dual hearing will be held, opening and closing the public hearing as one body or the other until agenda business is completed. With approval of tonight's resolution, both hearing bodies will meet concurrently on the first Thursday of each month beginning in January 2019.

### **Committee Review and Actions**

The City Council Rules Committee considered the merits of a potential merger of the Planning Commission and BZA at its February 26, 2018 meeting, attended by Councilmembers Ballew and Thomas. There were no public comments. Both committee members in attendance were supportive of the concept of a merger and forwarded the item for further consideration by the City Council on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

### **Applicable General Plan Policies**

**Policy ED-5.5** - Quality Services and Accessible Government. Maintain and promote the high quality of City services and the accessibility and responsiveness of City government to prospective businesses and new employees.

**Action LU-7.3.A** - Zoning Review. Regularly review the Zoning Code to respond to real estate market and development trends, as well as changes in technology.

### **Environmental Review**

A merger of the PC and BZA does not constitute a project under the California Environmental Quality Act and is exempt from environmental review.

### **Legal Analysis**

The City Attorney continues to advise staff on the process. The City Attorney reviewed and approved this staff report and the associated resolution.

### **Fiscal Impacts**

A merger of the PC and BZA would result in substantial cost savings to the City due to the reduced number of hearings, public notices, and staff time involved.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

- 18-479, Resolution Approving an Adjustment to the Planning Commission's Regular Meeting Date
- 18-164, June 4, 2018 Staff Report Regarding Discussion of a Potential Merger of the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Adjustments

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