



City of Salem Council Liaison Framework

Background

The Moss Adams Governance Assessment report recommended the City develop a framework deciding when a governance group should be assigned a Councilor liaison. The Boards and Commissions Appointments Committee (BCA) members decided during the BCA Session 2 in October 2024 to recommend that some groups, but not all, should have a Council liaison and provided some feedback on what criteria that should be included in the framework.

This document includes a framework on when Council liaisons may be assigned to a governance group.

Council Liaison Framework Recommendation

Definition: A Councilor liaison is a Council Member who is specifically assigned to a governance group to act as a connection between the group and Council.

Requesting or Recommending a Liaison: Governance groups may request a Councilor liaison from Council. This request should be based on a majority vote from the group. In the request, the group should include why the group is requesting a liaison and what support they are hoping to receive.

Council may also recommend a group be assigned a Councilor liaison if Council identifies a group needs additional support (e.g., the council lacks information from the group, the group struggles to make progress on the groups purpose).

Liaison Appointments:

Council will review all requests and consider the following criteria on whether to assign a Councilor liaison or not. In general, governance groups that broader or more complex scopes of activities may be more likely to require Councilor support and input.

- **Complexity or nature of issues:** Governance groups that deal with highly complex or technical issues may be more likely to require Council member support or input. Additionally, groups that require funding or policy changes to effectively achieve their goals and objectives may benefit from a Councilor liaison to operate effectively.
- **Scope/impact on the community:** Groups whose work has large-scale impacts on the community may benefit from a Councilor liaison who can provide information about community matters from Council. In addition, matters that have large-scale impacts on the community should have greater oversight to support positive engagement with the larger community.
- **Alignment with Council priorities:** Groups whose purpose and initiatives are strongly tied to work the Council is doing may benefit from a Councilor liaison who can ensure there is alignment in priorities and initiatives as well as provide relevant information between the group and Council.
- **Council member capacity:** Council should consider the capacity of Council members to act as group liaisons. Liaisons should only be assigned if someone has availability to support the group.



The Council will have final approval of assigning a Councilor liaison to adequately assess Council capacity and desire. If a request is denied, groups may submit another request in six months. Council may also consider if other resources may provide additional support to a group, in lieu of assigning a Councilor liaison (e.g., a group may send more frequent reports or memos to Council to communicate issues or challenges).

Assignment Review: Councilor liaison assignments should be reevaluated on an annual basis as part of the annual review process. This reevaluation should consider the same criteria listed above along with a consideration of the impact of the Councilor liaison on the group. If the Councilor liaison had little impact or was not used or needed, the Councilor liaison should not be reassigned.

Decision

This framework was presented on behalf of the BCA to City Council on December 2, 2024. Staff were directed to develop a related Council Policy.