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City of Sacramento Ethics Commission 2025 Annual Report and 2026 Workplan

File ID: 2026-01337

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: Receive and file.

Contact: Mindy Cuppy, City Clerk, (916) 808-5442, mcuppy@cityofsacramento.org, Office of the City Clerk

Presenter: None.

Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

2-2025 Annual Report and 2026 Workplan

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: Advisory bodies of the City are required to provide an annual report and workplan for review by the Personnel and Public Employees (P&PE) Committee as outlined in the City Council Rules of Procedure, Chapter 17. The P&PE Committee shall review advisory body annual reports and give staff direction on those reports' stated projects, priorities, and recommendations. Before forwarding the report to the City Council, the Committee may request supplemental information from staff or the advisory body.

The P&PE Committee has reviewed the attached City of Sacramento Ethics Commission ("Commission") 2025 Annual Report and 2026 Workplan and passed a motion forwarding it to the City Council.

Policy Considerations: Chapter 17 of the Council Rules of Procedure outlines the Advisory Body reporting process.

Economic Impacts: Not Applicable.

Environmental Considerations: California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): This action is not a project that is subject to CEQA because it is an organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (CEQA Guidelines §15378(b)(5)).

Sustainability: Not Applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: On March 23, 2026, the Commission passed a motion forwarding their Annual Report and Workplan to the P&PE Committee for consideration. On June 23, 2026, the P&PE Committee reviewed the Annual Report and Workplan and passed a motion forwarding it to the City Council.

Rationale for Recommendation: Annual Reports by city advisory bodies ensures they effectively incorporate their important role, voice, and work and provide thoughtful community recommendations to the City Council on a consistent basis.

Financial Considerations: Not Applicable.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not Applicable.



City of Sacramento Ethics Commission Annual Report

January through December 2025



Table of Contents

Introduction: Establishment, Commissioners, and Staff.....	3
Purpose, Powers and Duties of the City of Sacramento Ethics Commission.....	4
Message from the City of Sacramento Ethic Commission Chair.....	6
Key Accomplishments	7
A. Complaint Review.....	7
B. Community Engagement.....	8
A. Ethics Training.....	8
Commission Resources Expended	9
Recommended Workplan for Upcoming Year	10
A. Community Outreach (Continued from 2025 Workplan)	10
B. Ethics Training (Continued from 2025 Workplan)	10

Introduction: Establishment, Commissioners, and Staff

The City of Sacramento Ethics Commission was established in 2017 by ordinance 2017-0026 and is codified in Sacramento City Code Section [2.112](#).

The commission consists of 5 members which are nominated by the Personnel and Public Employees Committee and appointed by the mayor with the concurrence of a majority of the city council.

Current City of Sacramento Ethics Commissioners

The following commissioners are currently serving on the commission.

- Linda Ng, Chair
- Alan LoFaso, Vice Chair
- Deanna Adams
- Annette Emery
- Nicole Velasquez

City of Sacramento Ethics Commission Staff

The commission is supported primarily by the following staff members.

- Mindy Cuppy, City Clerk, Office of the City Clerk
- Jacob Bredberg, Administrative Analyst, Office of the City Clerk
- Gary P. Lindsey, Deputy City Attorney, Office of the City Attorney

City of Sacramento Ethics Commission Staff Contact Information

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Purpose, Powers and Duties of the City of Sacramento Ethics Commission

Purpose of the City of Sacramento Ethics Commission

The commission is established for the purpose of reviewing and considering complaints against elected and appointed city officials, as further described in section [2.112.030](#), to ensure those city officials are conforming their conduct to the city's laws and policies.

Powers and Duties of the City of Sacramento Ethics Commission

- A. Subject to subsections B and C below, the commission has the power and duty to do the following:
- I. Review, investigate, and consider complaints alleging violations of:
 - a) Section [35](#) of the Sacramento City Charter ("Limitation on future employment");
 - b) Chapter [1.20](#) ("Fair Campaign Practices");
 - c) Chapter [2.13](#) ("Campaign Contribution Limitations") and chapter [2.14](#) ("Campaign Spending Limits and Public Campaign Financing"), if the city has not contracted with the Fair Political Practices Commission for enforcement of those chapters;
 - d) Chapter [2.15](#) ("Lobbyist Registration and Reporting Code");
 - e) Chapter [2.16](#) ("Conflict of Interest");
 - f) Chapter [4.02](#) ("Code of Ethics");
 - g) Chapter [4.04](#) ("Transparent Government and Public Engagement"); and
 - h) Chapter 3 ("Conduct of Members") and Rule 6.E ("Closed Sessions") of the [Council Rules of Procedure](#).
 2. Enforce administrative penalties for violations of provisions covered in subsection A.I above, in accordance with the policy adopted pursuant to section [2.112.030](#).C.6. Penalties for each violation may not exceed the greater of (i) \$5000, or (ii) in the case of campaign contributions, three times the amount that the violator failed to report properly or unlawfully contributed or accepted.
 3. At least annually, report to the city council regarding the activities of the commission, with recommendations, if any, regarding the subjects of its purview as described in subsection A.I.
 4. Every two years, review any contract the city has with the Fair Political Practices Commission, for the purpose of reporting to the council on the contract's efficacy. The commission may also make recommendations regarding renewal of the contract.
 5. Provide annual input to the city attorney on the list of law firms used by the city attorney to conduct investigations of sexual harassment claims against city officials.
 6. Provide input on the initial selection of an evaluator under subsection C.4; make recommendations for subsequent contracts with an evaluator; and make recommendations regarding the retention or replacement of an evaluator.

7. Act as the screening panel for selection of independent redistricting commission candidates, as provided in article XII of the Sacramento City Charter.
- B. The commission's authority under subsection A extends only to city elected officials, candidates for city elected office, independent expenditure committees, members of boards and commissions, the city manager, the city clerk, the city attorney, the city treasurer, the city auditor, the director of the office of public safety accountability, and lobbyists as defined in chapter [2.15](#).
- C. Complaint, Investigation, and Hearing Procedure.
 1. In consultation with the city attorney, the commission shall adopt regulations and procedures for investigations and hearings to be conducted by the commission.
 2. The commission's review, investigation, and consideration of complaints shall be in accordance with its adopted regulations and procedures.
 3. A complaint filed with the commission may be investigated only if the complaint identifies the specific alleged violation which forms the basis for the complaint and contains sufficient facts to warrant a formal investigation.
 4. The council shall cause to be retained an independent and neutral evaluator to review and investigate complaints and to make recommendations to the commission.
 5. Notwithstanding anything else in this code, complaints, investigative files, and information contained therein shall be considered confidential to the maximum extent under the law and shall not be disclosed to any person other than a respondent or respondent's representative, the city attorney or district attorney, a court, a law enforcement agency, designees of the foregoing, or otherwise as necessary to the conduct of an investigation.
 6. The commission shall adopt a policy setting forth its standards for imposing penalties and exercising enforcement discretion. The evaluator shall follow that policy when making recommendations to the commission.

Message from the City of Sacramento Ethic Commission Chair

I'm honored to present the 2025 Annual Report of the City of Sacramento Ethics Commission.

This year, our work has centered on one core goal: upholding public trust through transparency, accountability, and ethical leadership.

We reviewed eight formal complaints this year—more than in previous years—reflecting increased public engagement and awareness of our role. We also connected with eight community organizations to share resources and raise awareness of the city's ethics standards.

In addition, the City Auditor recently released a report identifying five areas where we can improve:

- Strategy
- Training and Advice
- Internal Controls
- Operational Improvements
- And our Role in Contract Review

We agree with the Auditor's findings, and we plan to align our goals with their recommendations. That said, we can't do it alone. To truly modernize and strengthen our ethics infrastructure, the Commission needs more resources to operate effectively and efficiently.

Our progress depends on continued support from the City Council, the dedication of our commissioners and staff, and—just as importantly—the active involvement of our community.

As my term on the Commission comes to a close, I want to thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your commitment to ethical governance.

It has been a privilege to serve, and I am confident the Commission will continue to be a fair, trusted, and equitable voice for our city.

Thank you.

Linda Ng
2025 Chair
City of Sacramento Ethics Commission

Key Accomplishments

Below are key accomplishments made by the Sacramento Ethics Commission for the period January through December 2025.

A. Complaint Review

During this period there were 15 complaints submitted.

The commission deliberated on the following eight items and below is their determination and details on each complaint.

On August 25, 2025 the Commission received the Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report, adopted the report and the findings therein, and dismissed each of the below complaints and closing the files in each matter without further action. Five of the eight complaints were made by the same complainant.

Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report: Complaint Against Mayor Kevin McCarty
Fees for Independent Evaluator Investigation: \$5,250.

Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report: Complaint Against Councilmember Caity Maple
Fees for Independent Evaluator Investigation: \$4,000.

Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report: Complaint Against Councilmember Roger Dickinson
Fees for Independent Evaluator Investigation: \$3,000.

Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report: Complaint Against Councilmember Lisa Kaplan
Fees for Independent Evaluator Investigation: \$3,000.

Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report: Complaint Against Complaint Against Mayor Kevin McCarty and Councilmembers Caity Maple, Lisa Kaplan, and Roger Dickinson
Fees for Independent Evaluator Investigation: \$2,500.

Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report: Complaint Against Interim City Manager Leyne Milstein
Fees for Independent Evaluator Investigation: \$2,250.

Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report: Complaint Against Former City Manager Howard Chan
Fees for Independent Evaluator Investigation: \$4,000.

Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report: Complaint Against City Clerk Mindy Cuppy
Fees for Independent Evaluator Investigation: \$3,500.

On October 27, 2025 the Commission received the Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report, adopted the report and the findings therein, and dismissed the below complaint and closed the file without further action.

Independent Evaluator's No-Cause Report: Complaint Against Interim City Manager Leyne Milstein

Fees for Independent Evaluator Investigation: \$5,500.

B. Community Engagement

The commission had a goal of expanding community engagement and outreach in their 2022 annual report. In 2025 the commission approved a PowerPoint presentation to be given to community groups, a 3-fold brochure, and postcard that share commissions scope.

Fulfilling a goal in their 2025 Workplan, commissioners made presentations regarding the scope and activities of the Sacramento Ethics Commission to the following organizations:

- City of Sacramento NDAT (Neighborhood Development Action Team) Community Ambassadors Program – Commissioner Emery
- Gardenland Northgate Neighborhood Association – Commissioner Emery
- Marshall-New Era Neighborhood Association – Vice Chair LoFaso
- Meadowview Neighborhood Association – Commissioner Emery
- North Natomas Coalition – Commissioner Emery
- North Laguna Creek Valley Hi Community Association – Vice Chair LoFaso
- Oak Park Neighborhood Association – Commissioner Velasquez
- South Natomas Improvement Association – Commissioner Emery
- Tahoe Park Association – Vice Chair LoFaso

A. Ethics Training

In furtherance of the city's ethics program goal of clear guidelines on expectations of city officials in the conduct of city business, the commission reviewed existing ethics training that is provided by the city.

To ensure best practices in commission hearings, the commission discussed additional training that might be provided to Ethics Commissioners.

Commission Resources Expended

The estimated cost to support the City of Sacramento Ethics Commission meetings in 2025 was \$15,570.

In 2025 we held four meetings. Below is a breakdown of expenditures made to support commission meetings during this review period.

The estimated cost per meeting is as follows:

	Meetings	Hours	Rate	Total
Annual calendar creation	1	10	\$59	\$590
Department coordination with commissioners	4	4	\$117	\$469
Staff report creation and review – department staff	4	4	\$117	\$1,872
Staff report review – city attorney staff	4	3	\$216	\$2,592
Agenda review, preparation, and publishing – city clerk	4	10	\$35	\$1,400
Meeting presentation preparation	4	2	\$117	\$936
Meeting attendance – department staff	4	4	\$117	\$1,872
Meeting attendance – city attorney staff	4	2	\$216	\$1,728
Meeting attendance – city clerk staff	4	4	\$58	\$928
Meeting attendance – IT staff	4	4	\$53	\$848
Meeting attendance – building security	4	4	\$33	\$528
Post meeting tasks: minutes, legislative document processing, attendance tracking	4	5	\$35	\$700
Commissioner stipend processing (quarterly)		12/year	\$42	\$504
Commissioner stipends (5 commissioners)	4	5	\$50	\$600
Total Meetings Cost				\$15,567

Additional Expenditures:

Independent Evaluator: Hanson Bridgett LLP

\$33,000

Staff time was also spent on processing complaints and preparing this annual report.

Recommended Workplan for Upcoming Year

A. Community Outreach (Continued from 2025 Workplan)

1. Commissioners will outreach to the community and offer to present regarding the scope and activities of the Sacramento Ethics Commission.
2. Cost: Negligible, commissioners to attend meetings, cost to print materials and likely to be done in house.

B. Ethics Training (Continued from 2025 Workplan)

1. In furtherance of the city's ethics program goal of clear guidelines on expectations of city officials in the conduct of city business, the commission will review existing ethics training that is provided by the city and make recommendations regarding additional training as appropriate.
2. To ensure best practices in commission hearings, the commission will review and make recommendations about additional training to be provided to Ethics Commissioners.
3. Cost: Staff time to provide report to commission. Commission to develop recommendations which will include cost estimation for additional training if suggested.