

To: Community, Vitality and Safety Committee
From: Council Member Sarah Rumbaugh and Senior Council Policy Analyst Lynda Foster
Topic: **Handout B: Feedback collected on CBC Emerging Leader proposal**
Date: July 11, 2025

Outreach Timeline

First round of feedback: On May 5, CM Rumbaugh attended a Mayor's Youth Commission leadership team meeting to share that she was beginning outreach to gather feedback on proposed changes to CBC youth seats and to gather their feedback. In May and June of 2025, CM Rumbaugh contacted CBC staff liaisons to request feedback on alignment of CBC youth seat processes.

Second round of feedback: In June, CM Rumbaugh revised her proposal and re-shared it with CBC liaisons and CBC members. Two listening sessions were held for CBC members to discuss the proposal directly with CM Rumbaugh on Monday 6/23 over the lunch hour and Wednesday 6/25 in the evening.

Future outreach: In July, CM Rumbaugh will finalize a proposal to bring to the Community, Vitality and Safety Committee for consideration. This proposal will be shared again with stakeholders. CM Rumbaugh has also requested the Tacoma Art Commission recommend at their August 11 meeting if Council should include their CBC in this proposed update.

FIRST ROUND FEEDBACK

Value of youth participation:

- A youth perspective on [the subject area] is important.
- Youth come "from a lot of different communities" than more older people sitting on the CBCs.
- Youth bring extra insight on what's going on out in the public.
- Like the idea of including young adults who may not feel like they have enough experience to be considered/competitive for a "regular" CBC seat.
- Value expressed by staff: [The youth position] was a great addition to the funding process last year. Evaluated 30+ applications that were youth focus. Scores were very in line with other Commissioners, indicating they rated pretty fair and reasonable. Participated during oral presentations of applicates and asked very specific and appropriate questions to presenters.
- Value expressed by staff: A youth seat representative helped make in roads with the school district and build connections to other youth. The project depended on their participation.

Recruitment timeline:

- Alignment with standard CBC recruitment process: There are four recruitment periods for CBCs each year, and each CBC is assigned one. Multiple people shared the value of aligning youth seat recruitment to this standard timeline. Benefits of this recruitment is it reduces staff time (recruitment and training takes a lot of work), and onboard all volunteer on the same timeline so they're fully involved in work plans (such as reviewing applications or proposals).
- Alignment with school year: This could be August to July or July to June, or in the fall. Multiple people shared the value of aligning youth recruitment with the school year. This could potentially improve recruitment and help with retention. It also could create a "cohort" of youth

seat participants, who could be onboarded together and support each other. However, staff identified additional staffing need to recruit and train a “cohort” like this. Additionally, there was a concern that the youth position would feel “othered”.

- Note on “cohort” recruitment: Even if the youth seat was not formally recruited as cohort, there could be benefit from gathering for networking and support purposes.

Term years:

- One suggestion for extending term limits to two years with the option of renewing. There had been several valuable youth commissioners who left too soon, just as they were finding their footing, and a longer term might support their volunteering and the organization.
- One suggestion to lengthen the term from one year to three years, bringing it into alignment with other CBC positions and making it easier on youth participants by not making them reapply.

“Youth Seat” name:

- A recommendation was made to change the name of these positions. The concern was “youth seat” may not be appealing, and may sound younger than high school or college. Additionally, it does not convey a leadership/professional growth opportunity. Suggested alternatives:
 - Emerging Leader
 - Youth Leader Seat

Age range:

- A volunteer who works in education commented that there are already many leadership opportunities for HS students at their schools, or at various teen councils in the community, but there aren’t as many opportunities that are specifically for 18-24-year-olds. Support was expressed for engaging this demographic in civic leadership.
- Mayor’s Youth Commission asked if there could be prioritization given to a high school student first, and if a high schooler is not available then consider an older person. There is a distinction between a high school person and someone in college. A lot of that has to do with independence. However, they don’t want to see the seat left vacant.
- Different age groups offer different values/serve different purposes:
 - 20-year-olds might be more useful to a committee because they have more experience, so you might get less 16-18.
 - 16-18 age range might get youth involved in government which could lead to civic engagement in the future.

Tacoma Arts Commission:

- As reflected in the policy pathway document, the Tacoma Arts Commission does not currently have a youth seat. That is because, while a resolution directed a youth seat, it was not codified. A youth seat was implemented administratively in the past, but due to struggles to fill it the practice ended. This would be an opportunity to formally clarify legislative direction – which could include not codifying a youth seat. Were one codified, it would need to be determined how that seat would be created. The Arts Commission is already quite large, it might be unwieldy to add a new position. It might require changing an at-large to a youth position.

SECOND ROUND FEEDBACK:

CBC liaison feedback:

- Request for clarifications:
 - Are emerging leaders able to apply for multiple emerging leader terms? Are there any term limits?
 - Are emerging leaders allowed to serve full terms if they age out during their time of service?
- Is there a possibility for common outreach strategies? If these seats go through the regular recruitment process for each CBC, and each CBC will be individually responsible for outreach to the age 16-24 demographic, it would be lovely to have some shared approaches and perhaps a shared document/webpage that lists all the opportunities, as a resource for area high schools and colleges as well as for direct comms to eligible individuals.
- Several CBC liaisons expressed support for the re-naming of the position.

Notes from Listening sessions:

- Attendees from: Tacoma Arts Commission, Tacoma Creates Advisory Board, Community Police Advisory Committee
- Key themes:
 - All participants expressed the desire to see more youth seat participation while acknowledging shared historic challenges to filling these positions.
 - Term limits: there was robust discussion on how to structure terms to successfully recruit youth. There were concerns that applying for more than 1 year would be daunting to a youth and they may not feel like they're able to make the commitment. Simultaneously, there were concerns that making youth apply more frequently could be burdensome.
 - Outreach: much of the conversation focused beyond the scope of the shifting qualifications of youth seat. CBC members shared valuable advice on how to effectively reach various youth communities, and how to break down barriers for youth to learn about and join CBCs. There was a strong, clear message that the policy alone would not address the issue. There would need to be intentional communications to key communities.
 - Value to youth: Emerging Leader seats could be structured to be more appealing and meaningful to youth. Appreciation was expressed for renaming the positions to "Emerging Leader," which was considered a better title for resumes and professional goals. CBC members envision mentorship opportunities, a supportive cohort environment, and other professionalization opportunities to have Emerging Leader seats be meaningful and sought after opportunities.
 - Orientation: conversation about ensuring that every member of a CBC understands what the role of CBC member is, in order to feel prepared for their role.
 - Eligibility requirements: there was discussion about whether additional eligibility requirements or direction on what is looked for in these positions. For example, specific GPA, Tacoma residency, extracurricular activities, how the youth balance this position with other activities.