

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 4: Public Comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 3:07:26 PM

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EXTERNAL EMAIL

Dear City Council Members -

Three of the 5 originally scheduled Listening Sessions have now been held. While this was a good initial step, there is so much more work to be done.

FAIR-RP attended all 3 sessions and noted about 55 residents attended. Many attended both Sessions 1 and 3. The number of unique RP residents that attended any of the 3 Sessions is estimated to be about 35. The majority of these are very familiar voices and are already active in local government – and most are white.

Each session was punctuated by periods of silence as participants were reluctant to share experiences. Likewise, the question about what city policies should be changed was met with similar silence.

Unfortunately, these sessions fall short of expectations to effectively engage the community to address racial and social inequities together.

But there is still hope!

FAIR-RP recommends the City:

- pivot and re-purpose the 2 remaining sessions to be led by People of Color facilitators. This may mean reaching out to local advocate organizations, like the Sonoma County Chapter of the NAACP.
- utilize new communication channels to draw a broader set of residents to participate.
- use new channels to collect residents' input
- the City should extend the September report deadline to engage the community more broadly.
- the City needs to provide some level of organization how the 32 policy links on the city website (which lead to over 3,500 policy pages) can be digested and reviewed by the public. As it, it is an impossible task.

FAIR-RP has fielded a public survey in English and Spanish to augment the City's efforts and will present a summary report of the survey results in early September to the City Council.

Sincerely,

Chris Borr on behalf of FAIR-RP members