

# Why reform the CWG leadership structure?

The CWG is a community-led planning initiative whose proposals and recommendations will impact the lives of current and future generations of community members. For this reason, we should acknowledge our accomplishments while recognizing our shortcomings and make good-faith efforts to improve our work. Exploring alternatives to the current leadership structure is important for several reasons:

- **The diverse population and interests of our community should be reflected in the leadership structure of the CWG**
  - The legitimacy of the CWG depends on the initiative's leaders and for whom they are working
  - The current co-chair structure is not representative of the many people and interests in our community. The majority of the people in our community are Chinese and Latino working families and small business owners. Proportional representation in the voting and leadership structure is necessary to protect the interests of the majority of people in the community.
  - A broader, more diverse leadership body would address the concerns of not just some voting members, but those not at table who deserve representation
  
- **The CWG can encourage greater community participation by ensuring that more members take leadership**
  - Many voting members generally agree that the CWG would be stronger if more community stakeholders were at the table. Many groups are still vastly under-represented:
    - Small businesses
    - Small property owners
    - African American, Chinese, and Latino public housing residents
    - Tenant associations and Coop boards
    - Churches and other congregations
  - A more representative leadership structure that understands the obstacles to community participation would help remove existing barriers that have limited the CWG's reach in our community
  
- **The day-to-day administration of the CWG is far too burdensome for two chairs.**
  - The description of the co-chairs' duties shows how the CWG's administrative tasks can easily overwhelm one or two chairs
  - The heavy burden on one or two people limits the effectiveness of other equally important tasks, such as more extensive outreach to the community.
  - Spreading the workload among, for example, members of a more active steering committee, would ensure that important tasks are completed and that more people are actively involved
  
- **We need bold, collaborative leadership that puts our community first**
  - The current co-chair structure encourages the belief that one or two capable leaders will help the CWG fulfill its potential as a democratic community initiative and has allowed the rest of us to pass the buck
  - For us to achieve a truly inclusive process and a comprehensive, effective plan, the CWG must encourage more members to take leadership

# How should we reform the CWG leadership structure?

In the past couple weeks, voting members have been involved in a variety of discussions about how to improve the structure of CWG leadership to encourage more active participation and ownership and to make our planning process more representative of the community. Below is a compilation of the email, phone, and in-person conversations. The summary is an attempt to structure some of the thoughts and ideas that have been discussed, but by no means represents any final decision made by any one group of people. Rather, this summary encourages further thought and discussion.

## **I. Steering Committee Chairs & Responsibilities**

Based on the vast amount of work performed by the co-chairs in the past couple years, responsibilities have been broken down into various chair/committee duties. With this type of structure, the various chairs could rotate facilitation of full CWG and steering committee meetings or a specific chair could take on that task. The chair(s) that facilitate that particular meeting would be responsible for ensuring minutes are posted by a particular agreed up on deadline. Minutes at meetings could be taken by one of the various chairs or different voting members. The steering committee would meet monthly with an agenda and set of goals for the month to ensure follow up between meetings.

The below responsibilities and shared duties are derived largely from the “Duties of a CWG Co-Chairperson” provided by Jim Solomon, but could change based on further discussion and refinement.

1. Outreach Chair/Committee: Responsible for broader outreach to community, identifying additional stakeholders, coordinating outreach among CWG voting members, meeting with interested parties; address inquiries about membership
2. Fundraising, Finance, and Budget Chair/Committee: Responsible for identifying potential sources of funding, dealing with state and city agencies that have committed funding, working with CWG to brainstorm fundraising ideas, managing CWG’s budget and expenses
3. Government Relations Chair/Committee: Responsible for maintaining close contact with Community Boards, communicating with any relevant state and city agencies
4. Meetings and Events Chair/Committee: Responsible for administrative duties associated with meetings, including coordinating sufficient copies, taking attendance, registering votes, ensuring all meetings are posted; coordinating special events like the meeting with U.S. Transportation Secretary Lahood; ensuring meeting room is set up and cleaned

5. Technology & Email Chair/Committee: Responsible for maintaining website, listserv and/or other electronic means of communication; emailing announcements to CWG listserv
6. Communications Chair/Committee: Responsible for communications with media as approved by steering committee; maintaining updated CWG stationary
7. Internal Relations Chair/Committee: Responsible for communications among various Committees with completed PAPs or PAPs in progress, drafting regular progress reports sent to full CWG, drafting agendas for meetings after full discussion with steering committee
8. Additional other chairs or responsibilities added (and/or subtracted) as needed: For example, once we begin the planner selection process, we may want to add coordination of those responsibilities and communication with relevant parties to a new chair's position or add these duties to an existing chair's position.

## **II. Co-Chairs / No Co-Chairs**

One of the bigger unsettled questions is whether we should maintain co-chairs even while introducing a revamped steering committee structure. Some members have expressed concerns that the buck must stop somewhere. Others have also noted that one of the co-chairs should continue to be someone from a Community Board to recognize the Community Boards as cosponsors and to ensure that the Community Boards continue to be aware and focused on our work. Other pros and cons about such a structure have been outlined in Danny Chen's document "Restructuring: Pros and Cons."

However, we should note that having or not having co-chairs is not mutually exclusive of a revamped steering committee, which would greatly help spread the work in this important community planning effort. The options that seem to be on the table now include:

Option 1: Leave the current structure as is with co-chairs and no revamped steering committee

Option 2: Introduce revamped steering committee chairs and keep co-chairs

Option 3: Introduce revamped steering committee chairs without co-chairs