

A photograph of the San Francisco City Hall dome, a large, ornate, light-colored stone structure with a dark, ribbed dome and a golden spire. The building is set against a clear blue sky. A dark green rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title text.

Template Components

Commission Streamlining Task Force

Joanna Bell

Overview and Purpose of this Presentation

- Heard the task force discuss several functions or operational considerations each type of body should include.
- Other discussions and presentations planned for 5/21 will touch on **key decision points** that need to be made and invite **discussion on functions and attributes** of boards and commissions. This deck is designed to be a single location to start to bring together discussions and future decision points. Some slides are blank because there is not yet a draft approach discussed. We will plan to continue to flesh out this deck based on Task Force discussions and proposals.
- The goal of this deck is to:
 - Provide concrete starts to templates that:
 - Summarize initial proposed approaches already discussed
 - Highlight where decisions still need to be made
 - Provide space for additional discussion on each template component
 - Provide an overview of proposed decision-making tools
 - Highlight a few key decisions still to be made

Template Components



Template Components

Commissioner Attributes and Processes	
Appointment and removal processes	Terms lengths
Commissioner qualifications	Benefits

Commission Operations and Attributes	
Sunset dates	Commission size
Establishing authority	Ability to act independently
Meeting cadence	

Role in Department Oversight	
Hiring and firing authority	Authority over department operations
Policy-making	Setting meeting agendas
Contract approval	Budget approval
Disciplinary matters	Department performance review

Additional Functions	
Enabling public participation	Calling public hearings
Watching for fraud and corruption	Upholding and enforcing laws

Discussion Questions

For each template component:

- What other considerations should the Task Force take into account?
- Is there agreement among Task Force members on the draft decisions for each function, where applicable?
- What additional discussion needs to be had?

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Commissioner Appointment Processes

Key Questions:

Who should be appointing authorities? Should there be confirmations from other branches of government?

Considerations:

- Split appointments make it harder to enact Mayor’s vision.

Draft approach:		
<u>Governance:</u> Mayor appointments only. Governance bodies are an extension of the executive branch. There may be exceptions (Police, MTA).	<u>Advisory:</u> Appointments from different authorities. Goal is to increase diversity of opinions/voices.	<u>Regulatory:</u> <u>Staff Working Groups:</u> <u>Other:</u>

Commissioner Removal Process and Authority

Key Questions:

How are commissioners removed from their role? What is the process? Who is able to remove them?

Considerations:

- Related to question of if a commissioner is an extension of their appointing authority. What happens if an appointee has different opinions or actions from the appointing authority?

Draft approach:		
<u>Governance:</u>	<u>Advisory:</u>	<u>Regulatory:</u>
		<u>Staff Working Groups:</u>
		<u>Other:</u>

Commissioner Term Lengths, Term Limits, and Other Term Requirements

Key Questions:

Should terms be limited to a certain length? Should there be term limits? What other considerations are there?

Considerations:

Draft approach:		
<u>Governance:</u>	<u>Advisory:</u>	<u>Regulatory:</u>
		<u>Staff Working Groups:</u>
		<u>Other:</u>

Commissioner Qualifications

Key Questions:

Where are minimum qualifications appropriate? Should they be at the seat or body level? What conflict of interest policies should be in place?

Considerations:

Draft approach:		
<u>Governance:</u>	<u>Advisory:</u>	<u>Regulatory:</u>
		<u>Staff Working Groups:</u>
		<u>Other:</u>

Commissioner Payment, Benefits, and Other Professionalization Considerations

Key Questions:

What benefits should commissioners get? Should they be paid more than a stipend? Should they remain part-time volunteers? Is there a space for full time commissioners in certain situations?

Considerations:

- If commissioners are only volunteers, does that have adverse equity implications?
- Task Force has flagged that it may make sense to professionalize to have people occupy full time roles for regulatory functions.

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

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Sunset Dates

Key Questions:

Should there be set and consistent sunset dates?

Considerations:

- Where does it make sense to go back and add sunset dates to existing bodies?
- Does it make sense to codify a rule about sunset dates in the charter?

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

Template Components: Commission Operations and Attributes

Commission Size

Key Questions:

What should the maximum number of commissioners be? Should there always be odd numbers of commission seats?

Considerations:

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

Purpose

☐ Accountability and Oversight ☐ Effective Resource Management ☒ Government Transparency ☒ Equity and inclusiveness ☐ Contribute Expertise ☒ Public Participation

Establishing Authority

Key Questions:

Where should bodies be established in the charter? Where should they be in the admin code only? When should establishing or removing a body be taken to the voters?

Considerations:

- Having in the charter means the bodies will last, may add more weight to their decisions/actions.
- Having in the charter makes it difficult to modify or eliminate bodies.
- How much input do we think voters want to have in boards and commissions?

Draft approach:

Governance:

- Should be in the charter

Advisory:

- Should only be in ordinance

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

Ability to Act Independently

Key Questions:

Should members be able to deviate from what appointing authorities want them to do or say? Should they be able to make their own decisions?

Considerations:

- Does the task force see commissioners as an extension of the Mayor/other appointing authority?

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

Meeting Cadence

Key Questions:

How often should bodies meet? Does it make sense to standardize meeting cadence or establish minimum meeting frequency?

Considerations:

Draft approach:		
<u>Governance:</u>	<u>Advisory:</u>	<u>Regulatory:</u>
		<u>Staff Working Groups:</u>
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Hiring and Firing Authority

Key Questions:

Should the public bodies have the ability to hire and fire department heads?

Considerations:

- Ensures that the department head will follow commission decisions
- Conflicts with Mayoral form of governance. Does it give too much power to volunteers rather than to City leaders?

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

- No authority

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

Authority Over Department Operations

Key Questions:

What department decisions or actions need to go before the commission, and what does not? Can the body direct departments to take specific actions? Do departments have to listen to what boards/commissions say?

Considerations:

- If departments don't have to listen to boards/commissions, what authority do they really have?

Draft approach:		
<u>Governance:</u>	<u>Advisory:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• By definition, they only advise (departments not obligated to take recs).	<u>Regulatory:</u> <u>Staff Working Groups:</u> <u>Other:</u>

Policy-Making Authority

Key Questions:

Should the body set policy for departments?

Considerations:

- Commissioners may have more capacity to pay attention to details that Mayor's Office does.
- Could having volunteer commissioners set policy actually reduce accountability, since they're not elected by the public?

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

Setting Meeting Agendas

Key Questions:

Who is responsible for setting meeting agendas?

Considerations:

- Do appointees have a stronger idea of what is important for the public? Is part of their role to surface issues that public cares about, which may require them to have the power to set meeting agendas?

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

- Department head, however appointees can request topics.

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

Contract Approval

Key Questions:

In what situations should a board or commission have contract approval authority? When are departments required to bring contracts in front of their board or commission.

Considerations:

- Should procurement process make a difference (e.g. sole source vs. RFP)
- When is this an effective oversight mechanism, and when is this slowing the ability to act?

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

Budget Approval

Key Questions:

What authority should public bodies have over budgets submitted to the Mayor?

Considerations:

Draft approach:		
<u>Governance:</u>	<u>Advisory:</u>	<u>Regulatory:</u>
		<u>Staff Working Groups:</u>
		<u>Other:</u>

Disciplinary Matters

Key Questions:

Do boards and commissions have a role to play in employee discipline?

Considerations:

Draft approach:		
<u>Governance:</u>	<u>Advisory:</u>	<u>Regulatory:</u>
		<u>Staff Working Groups:</u>
		<u>Other:</u>

Department Performance

Key Questions:

Does the body have the authority to oversee or review the performance of a department? What does that involve, and what actions can they take to address performance?

Considerations:

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

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Enabling Public Participation

Key Questions:

Should meetings be public? Besides public comment, are there other ways boards and commissions should be enabling public participation?

Considerations:

- Issues that would have otherwise gone unnoticed have been raised, and commissions have been able to change department decisions.
- Ongoing space for continuous engagements
- If people don't have time to attend commission meetings, will they have time to participate in other methods?
- 3-minute testimony practice is outdated.

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

- This is a key function of advisory bodies

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

Other:

Calling Public Hearings

Key Questions:

Should the body be bringing information to the public that otherwise would not be public?

Considerations:

- Balance of authority of electeds vs. boards and commissions.

Draft approach:

Governance:

Advisory:

Regulatory:

Staff Working Groups:

No

Other:

Watching for Fraud or Corruption

Key Questions:

Should boards and commissions have a role to play in preventing fraud and corruption in departments?

Considerations:

- Multiple other mechanisms to watch for fraud and corruption exist within government. Should this be a core function of bodies?

Draft approach:

Governance:

- Yes, for sole source contracts. They lack the ability and expertise to do this for other areas.

Advisory:

- No- they lack the ability and expertise

Regulatory:

No- they lack the ability and expertise

Staff Working Groups:

No

Other:

Template Components: Additional Functions

Upholding and Enforcing Laws

Key Questions:

Where should boards and commissions play a role in interpreting, upholding, and enforcing laws?

Considerations:

- Should this only be a function of regulatory bodies? When does it make sense for governance bodies to also include this function?

Draft approach:

Governance:

- For sole source contract approvals

Advisory:

- No role

Regulatory:

Key role

Staff Working Groups:

No

Other:

Purpose

☒ **Accountability and Oversight** ☐ Effective Resource Management ☐ Government Transparency ☐ Equity and inclusiveness ☐ Contribute Expertise ☐ Public Participation

Additional Decision-Making Tools

Proposal for Items to Support Decision-Making

Templates

Description:

- Templates for each primary type of body. Will include decisions on functions, processes, and operations for different commission types.

Will be used for:

- Developing recommendations for changes to individual commissions and overall commission structure.

Decision-Making Criteria

Description:

- List of criteria to use to evaluate each commission. Will be developed based on ongoing Task Force discussion.

Will be used for:

- Identifying which commissions should be modified, eliminated, or consolidated.

Holistic Evaluation of Final Proposal

Description:

- List of questions, criteria, and/or process to assess final proposal holistically.
- No concrete proposal yet.

Will be used for:

- Primarily will be used to assess equity impacts of final proposal. May include the public engagement process.

Timeline:

Current Work
(Spring-Summer 2025)



Summer 2025



Likely Summer/Fall
2025

Example of Decision-Making Criteria

This will have to be fleshed out based on ongoing discussions from the task force. However, here is an excerpt of the current draft as an example.

Criteria	If yes	If no	How will the task force gather the information required to answer this question?
Authorizing Authority Goal is to assess if State/Federal government requires either the body itself or the functions of the body.			
1a) Does State or Federal law explicitly require the existence of this specific body?	Keep, stop with review except to assess potential consolidation with other bodies.	Continue with assessment	Workbook
1b) Does this body currently fulfill a function required by State or Federal law?	Go to 1c	Continue to next section	Workbook
1c) If YES to 1b, could another body potentially fulfill this function?	Continue with assessment	Keep	Workbook
Inactivity and Sunset Dates Goal is to assess at its most basic level if the commission is actively working to meet whatever mandate they have.			
2a) Does the body meet our definition of inactive?	Consider if <u>body</u> is necessary, investigate further why it's not meeting.	Continue with assessment	Workbook
2b) Does the commission generally meet on the cadence required under statute or ordinance?	Continue with assessment	Consider if <u>body</u> is necessary, investigate further why it's not meeting.	Department engagement
3a) Does this body have a sunset date?	Go to 3b	Continue with assessment	Workbook
3b) If YES to 3a, has the sunset date already passed?	Should this body be removed from charter/admin code language?	Continue with assessment	Workbook

Remaining decision points for evaluating bodies

When does it make sense to have commissions?

What needs are boards and commissions fulfilling? Where does the City need the additional capacity that does not exist or cannot exist internally? What additional capacity should boards and commissions provide?

Examples may include:

- Providing additional oversight over department operations; extending mayoral capacity for oversight
- Interpreting law
- Adjudicating disputes or appeals
- Gathering policy input from impacted communities

Remaining decision points for evaluating bodies

- Where are governance commissions appropriate?
 - Only for specific department functions? (e.g. “only appropriate where departments deliver services to the public”).
 - How should funding source be taken into account? Are governance commissions only appropriate for departments primarily using general fund dollars? (e.g. not enterprise departments?)
- Where are advisory commissions appropriate?
 - Should special funds have specific advisory commissions (e.g. Our City Our Home, Sugary Drinks Tax)? Where are decisions best left up to departments?
- How should the task force evaluate bodies that do not clearly fit into a category?

Questions?
