

A photograph of the San Francisco City Hall dome, a large, ornate, light-colored stone structure with a prominent central dome and a spire. The building is set against a clear blue sky. A dark teal rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text "Templates Close-Out" in white.

# Templates Close-Out

**Commission Streamlining Task Force**

August 20, 2025

# Agenda

**1. Contract Approval**

**2. Policy-Making**



## Overview and Purpose

- Last meeting, you decided to call a vote on policy-making and contract approval template components for governance commissions.
- Lingering questions about the definition of policy-making and current state of both sets of approvals.
- Today's goals:
  - Provide additional information
  - Summarize pros and cons from prior conversations
  - Provide a staff recommendation
  - Vote

*This will be last conversation on template components until November meetings*

# Contract Approval

10 minutes

# Contract Approval

### Key Questions:

Should a commission have contract approval authority?

### Options:

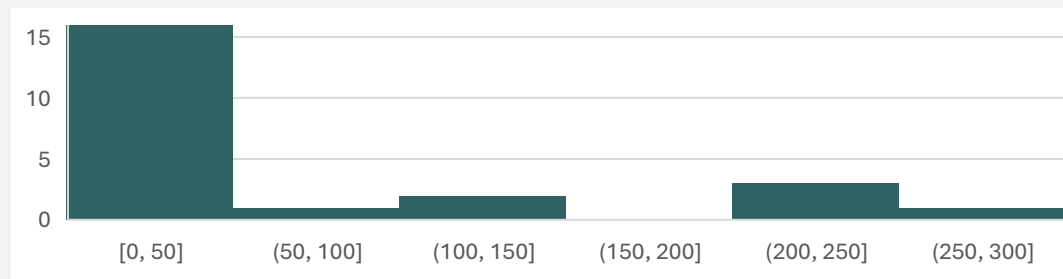
Yes | Only in specific circumstances | No

### Current State

#### Status Quo

- BOS must approve all contracts with 10+ year terms, \$10M+ expenditures, or \$1M+ revenue and leases of 10+ years (per charter).
- Department heads have authority to administer day to day work of departments, including contract awards (per charter).
- Commissions:
  - Not granted contract approval authority by Charter.
  - Granted Ch 6 construction contract authority by BOS ordinance.
  - May develop policy to require approval of contracts, but this is not legally binding.

#### Average # of Contracts Reviewed in 2024



- Bodes that approved 0 contracts include those without contract approval authority
- Almost 75% of governance commissions did some contract approval\*
- Only a few bodies approve 200+ contracts annually

*\*17 out of 23 governance commissions we have detailed contract approval information for*

## Contract Approval

### Key Questions:

Should a commission have contract approval authority?

### Options:

Yes | Only in specific circumstances | No

### Arguments **Against**

- May introduce more bias into the process
- More difficult and time consuming to award contracts
- Transparency is possible through regular reports and presentations to commission

### Arguments **For**

- Important for Ch. 6 construction contracts
- Important safeguard to ensure rule following and transparency.
- Many bodies play a role in reviewing contracts.
- Problems with commissioner bias and meddling are with the individual, not the process.

### Staff Recommendation:

- Yes, commissions should have option to approve contracts.
- Should create clear structures for when they should have powers vs. not.
- Defer decision on specifics of those structures.

# Policy-Making

10 minutes

## Policy-Making

### Key Questions:

Should the body set policy for departments?

### Options:

Yes | Only in specific circumstances | No

### Current State

- Could include **approval of** and/or **creation of** policies
- Work varies based on functions listed in the authorizing legislation and actual practices developed.
- Some authorizing legislation gives specifics:
  - E.g. “The Department shall issue permits for the use of all property under the Commission's control, pursuant to the policies established by the Commission.”
- Some authorizing legislation is broad:
  - E.g. “...Commission is empowered to prescribe and enforce any reasonable rules and regulations that it deems necessary to provide for the efficiency of the Department...”

### Examples

#### Department-Specific Policies

Department  
operational  
policies

Contract  
approval  
policies

Strategic  
plans

Project  
approval

#### Policies with Citywide Impact

Project  
approval

Resolutions  
introducing  
ordinances

Citywide  
policies

Issuing  
bonds

Setting  
rates and  
fees

#### Initiating or Participating in Work

Initiating  
Community  
Needs  
Assessments

Area plans



### Policy-Making

#### Key Questions:

Should the body set policy for departments?

#### Options:

Yes | Only in specific circumstances | No

#### Arguments **Against**

- Voters **elect Mayor, BOS to set policy.**
- **Not appropriate** role for volunteers. Commissioners' role should be approving budgets and informing implementation of policy.

#### Arguments **For**

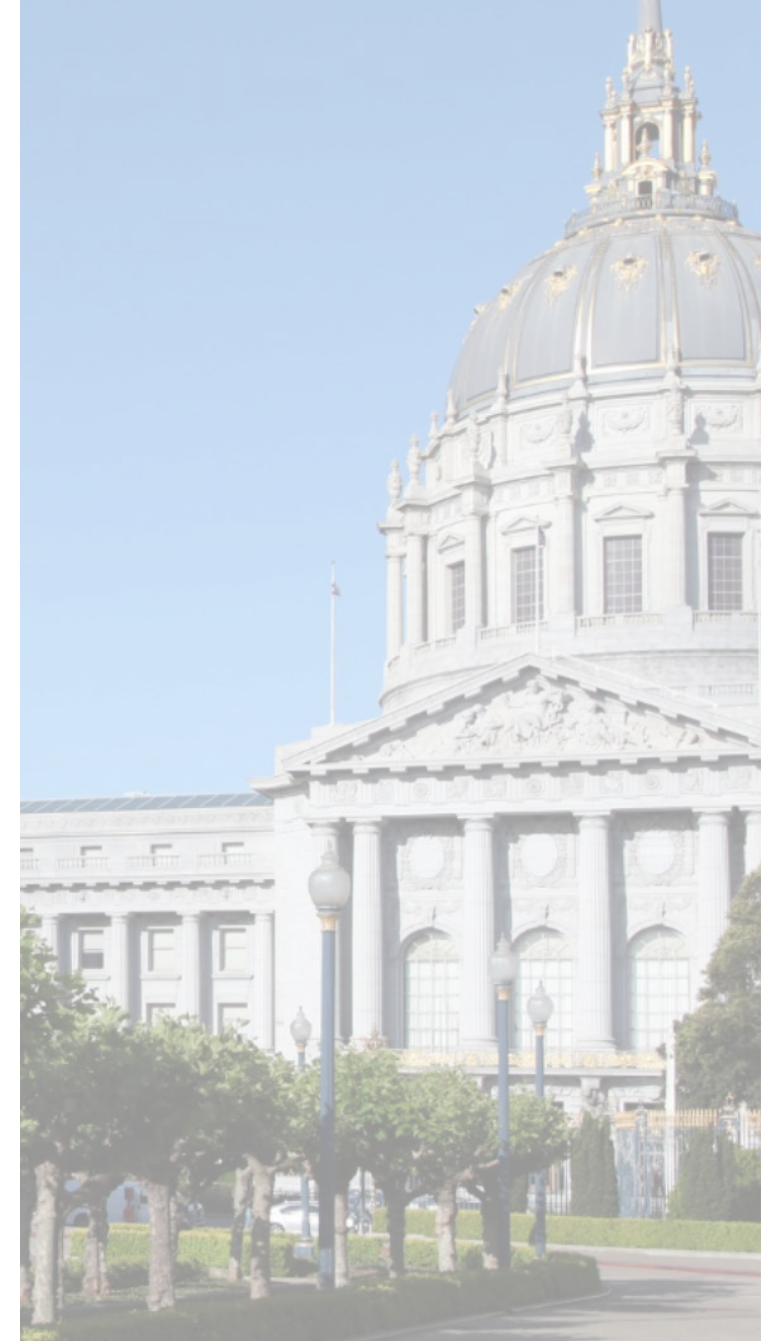
- Without this power, why have a commission?
- Mayor and BOS will never have time to touch all policy matters; commissioners are able **to act as an extension of the Mayor** and set policy.
- Provides forum for public discussion; **public input can inform policy.**

#### Staff Recommendation:

- Yes, commissions should have ability to approve specific policies that the Department creates. They should not generate their own policies.
- Defer decision on specifics of scope.

## Next Steps

- Staff will add decisions into templates
- Staff will include template components in staff recommendations
- If any decisions were deferred, will revisit in November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting



# Appendix



# Deferred Decisions from Templates

Table template component decisions that the Task Force elected to defer to November 19, 2025 meeting

Component	Template
Establishing authority	Governance Commissions Appeals Boards
Compensation and Benefits	Governance Commissions (No decision on Government Commissions; decided to omit this component from Appeals Boards templates)
Appointing authority	Appeals Boards (Decided to leave status quo for current bodies, deferred decision about application to future bodies)
Member removal	Appeals Boards (Agreed that members are “removeable” but deferred decision on details)

# Calendar

Date	Topic
Jul 16	Inactive bodies; Templates & Criteria for Advisory bodies
Aug 6	Templates & Criteria for Governance, Appeals, and Regulatory bodies
Aug 20	BLA findings; Borderline inactive bodies; Final Templates; Legally required bodies; Staff Working Groups
Sep 3	Public Safety
Sep 17	Infrastructure, Climate, and Mobility
Oct 1	Housing and Economic Development
Oct 15	Public Health and Wellbeing
Nov 5	General Administration and Finance
Nov 19	Complex, deferred decisions re: templates or bodies; Operational improvements
Dec 3	Review draft report
Dec 18	Operational improvements
Jan 7	Discuss legislation (charter amendment + ordinances)
Jan 21	Approve final report (in advance of Feb 1st deadline)
Feb 4	Present final draft legislation (charter amendment + ordinances)
Feb 18	Approve legislation (charter amendment + ordinances in advance of Mar 1st deadline)