

Reimagine Boards and Commissions Tier 3 Actions – Opportunities and Tradeoffs

Action	Opportunity	Tradeoff
Convene fewer, larger advisory groups around similar areas of interest (e.g., by Service Area or Strategic Plan Outcome Area) and form ad hoc or on-going subcommittees out of them as needed.	Would provide flexibility, board integration, and interdisciplinary thinking.	While providing flexibility, ad hoc committees would lack the consistency and expertise of the current structure. Learning curves would be accelerated.
Reserve seats on certain advisory boards for people with lived experience (e.g., seniors, youth, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, etc.).	Distributing members with lived diverse experience throughout the board system, rather than having designated boards, would increase diverse perspectives within each board.	While increasing diversity, this could border on tokenism or be perceived as creating diversity quotas.
Increase communication expectations and level of involvement with Council Liaisons.	Would help boards align more with Strategic Plan and Council priorities. Would reinforce board sense of purpose.	Would require an increased time commitment from councilmembers, who already have heavy workloads and limited availability.
Allocate resources to support interpretation/translation services, transportation, and childcare.	Would reduce barriers to participation by underrepresented populations.	Would add costs and logistical support needs.
Reduce meeting frequency (e.g., semimonthly or quarterly meetings).	Could reduce costs and barriers to participation by underrepresented populations.	Could decrease board member sense of connection and timeliness of advice, regarding Council deliberations.
Hold multiple board meetings at the same location at the same time for efficiency of services (e.g., food, childcare, etc.).	Could reduce costs and barriers to participation by underrepresented populations.	Identifying specific times and locations that would work for multiple boards could be difficult.
Provide monetary and/or nonmonetary incentives to participate to better attract middle- and low-income residents.	Would reduce barriers to participation by underrepresented populations.	Would increase costs. Boards and Commissions have traditionally been a volunteer activity, and once we begin to compensate residents for engagement, it may be expected more broadly.
Recruit and support advisory board members without subject matter expertise.	Would increase diverse perspectives and deliberation within each board.	Would require an intentional recruitment process and thorough onboarding/staff support process to achieve a sufficient comfort level for non-expert participants.