BEST PRACTICES FOR PLACING PEOPLE ON GOVERNMENT BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Applying	Application is In	Placement

The Application Itself
• What does your application process look like?
• How many pages is your application?
• Is there a "common application?"
• Can you apply online? Is the application available in other languages or formats (i.e. Braille)?
• Is there a centralized location where applications go?
• Who does someone contact if they have questions about the process or application itself?
• Who really reviews the applications – staff of that particular board/commission? The chair of the board/commission?
	Receipt of Application
	• Is the applicant notified that their application was received?
	• Do they know how many other people are applying?
	• How often will you be in communication with applicants?
	• What is the timeline from application to notification and appointment?
	• Will applicant be notified of rejection?
		Orientation
		• Do you have one? If you don't here are suggestions on what to cover:
		  ○ Review mission or charter of this board/commission
		  ○ Cover history of the work of the board/commission. What were significant projects or policies passed?
		  ○ Hand out department chart, explain roles and responsibilities of board/commission member versus staff
		  ○ If possible, have other board/commission members share their experiences at the orientation
		• Ideally, hold the orientation before the new board/commission member starts, but no later than 1-2 months after

Outreach
• Who are you currently reaching out to?
• What networks or constituencies are missing from your lists?
• What are other pathways for engagement at your government level?
  • City academies
  • Neighborhood Groups (official and unofficial)
	Communication with Applicant
	• Is this done by email or phone?
	• If applicant is rejected, do you say why?
	• Is this centralized to lead staff to contact or delegated to each board/commission
		Board/Commission Culture
		• What is the decision making process?
		  ○ Parliamentary procedure/Robert's Rules or a consensus process?
		• What criteria are used to make decisions? How explicit are those criteria explained?
		  ○ Are there opportunities to ask about how race, class, gender, sexual orientation or ability impact these policies?
		• What is the board/commission culture?
		  ○ How are decisions made? How is the agenda set?

	board liaison**?**	Is it mostly the executive or a steering committee or staff?
		○ What happens when people disagree?
		○ How are new ideas embraced?
		○ Do you explain acronyms or commonly used language? Can you create a legend or cheat sheet of acronyms to hand out at meetings?
		• Connecting Board/Commission Members. Do you enlist other seasoned board/commission members to be a point of contact, or "board buddy" to new members?
		• Leadership. What is the process to become chair or vice chair? Are there annual elections for this? How do you encourage this opportunity to new members?
Timing • How often do you do announce open seats or when you are accepting applications? • Do you have official/unofficial periods of mass appointments like twice a year (June and December?) • Or do you have strict open/close deadlines or rolling deadlines? • Do you keep rejected (overflow) applicant files on hand for future consideration of other boards?	**Interview** • Is an interview required? If it is with whom? (An elected? Key staff? Several people) • How many people will be in the interview and types of questions they may ask? • Also, how long is the interview?	**Evaluation** • Do you gather data about who currently serves on your boards or commissions (i.e. by age, race, educational attainment, renter/owner, income level, geography, profession, industry, etc.)? Do you use this data to determine future membership? • Do you have an annual board/commission satisfaction survey or create opportunities to check in? • Is there an annual review of board/commission work accomplishments (written or verbal)? • Does the board/commission set aside time to do retreats or a deeper dive on current issues impacting your board/commission?