

Commission Impossible?

Getting the Most from San Francisco's Commissions



June 20, 2024



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

2023–2024 CIVIL GRAND JURY

About the San Francisco Civil Grand Jury

The San Francisco Civil Grand Jury (the “Jury”) is a government oversight panel of volunteers who serve for one year. Each Jury determines which local government entities within San Francisco it will investigate. Private citizens also may submit written complaints to the Jury, for investigation at the Jury’s discretion. The Jury cannot investigate disputes between private parties, criminal activity, or activities outside its jurisdiction, which is the government of the City and County of San Francisco and any other local governments within city limits.

In reports made available to the public, the Jury documents findings and recommendations based on its investigations. Reports do not generally identify individuals by name, and disclosure of the specific identity of anyone interviewed by the Jury is prohibited.

The San Francisco Civil Grand Jury consists of 19 city residents impaneled by a Superior Court Judge. By state law, a person is eligible for Civil Grand Jury service if the person is a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age or older, of ordinary intelligence and good character, and has a working knowledge of the English language.

2023–2024 Civil Grand Jurors

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Summary

Starting with the first 21 commissions created with the San Francisco City and County Charter in 1898, the number of commissions, advisory boards, and other appointed bodies in the city has grown to 115 today. In this report, we refer collectively to these entities as *commissions and boards, commissions and other appointed bodies*, or simply *commissions*.¹ Our investigation looked into how well these bodies serve San Franciscans.

The Jury's challenges began with determining how many commissions San Francisco currently has. We discovered there is no centralized list of commissions, and there is no department or agency that is responsible for overseeing their effectiveness.

This lack of a single, authoritative list of commissions was the first of the Jury's several discoveries and indicated to us that the entire commission system suffers from a lack of transparency and structure. We believe this lack of clarity and structure has contributed to a declining level of confidence in the commission system.

The Jury compiled what we believe is the first accurate and comprehensive list of commissions in San Francisco. Our list describes their roles and responsibilities, meeting requirements, the area of city government they advise or oversee, sunset dates, and more.

Compared to peer cities in California, San Francisco has a lot of commissions. Because San Francisco is both a city and a county, we compared our commissions to city and county commissions relevant to peer cities and made adjustments when necessary. After accounting for this and adjusting for population, we determined that San Francisco has approximately twice as many commissions as its peers in California.

¹ For a discussion of the different types of appointed bodies, see "[Commissions Go by Many Names](#)" in Background.

Our investigation uncovered many essential commissions that run effectively and are integral parts of San Francisco government. We also discovered other commissions whose benefits do not appear to outweigh their costs.

The primary value of San Francisco's commissions are their oversight role in city and county government, public engagement, transparency and accountability, but these benefits come with costs. Commissions with oversight power and decision-making responsibilities require dedicated staff, office space, and legal support.

Commissions' biggest costs are the amount of time that city staff incur preparing for commission meetings and responding to requests from the commission for information and various analyses. We determined this can be as high as 10% of staff time.

Staffing the nearly 1,200 seats on San Francisco's many commissions is a particularly burdensome process. At various points during our investigation, we found up to 15% of commission seats were unfilled. These open seats often prevent commissions from having quorums — that is, a required minimum number of attendees — which leads to canceled or rescheduled meetings, delaying such vital business as approving contracts.

We recommend that the city create a permanent Commission Oversight Board (COB) whose purpose will be to: i) regularly evaluate the performance of San Francisco's commissions; ii) create standards for the duties, responsibilities and performance of commissions and the commissioners and members who serve on these bodies; and iii) periodically identify commissions that should be changed or abolished.

The rich irony of recommending a new commission to reduce the number of commissions is not lost on us. However we believe such a body is vital in order to optimize and streamline the city's byzantine commission system.

While most commissions play a necessary role in San Francisco governance and perform well, some are of questionable value. The system needs significant reform which includes fewer commissions, centralized oversight, consistent standards, and performance assessments.

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Background

Several media stories have asserted that San Francisco’s many commissions – more than Los Angeles, more than San Diego, all unelected – add a layer of bureaucracy that constrains the city’s ability to address our most pressing problems.² In interviews with the Jury, city officials and employees shared similar concerns. We interviewed nearly 100 of them as we sought to learn how commissions originate, how they operate, and whether they are effective. The results of that work follow in this report.

A Brief History of San Francisco’s Commissions

The California state constitution was ratified in November 1849. In February 1850, the state legislature divided California into counties, including San Francisco. In April of the same year, the City of San Francisco was established by the state and in September statehood was granted by the US Congress. Six years later, in April 1856, the state legislature passed the Consolidation Act, which consolidated the county and city government of San Francisco and established the physical boundaries that we have today.³

San Francisco voters passed our first city charter in 1898 (the 1898 Charter), which became law in 1900. The Charter establishes “home rule” authority, whereby San Francisco is able to make its own laws at the local level, and exercise wide-ranging authority in municipal matters. The 1898 Charter embodied a “strong mayor” model: the Mayor was the presiding officer of the Board of Supervisors, had veto power over legislation and the budget, and had sole appointment authority for commissioners. City government consisted of an executive branch (Mayor),

² Josh Koehn, [“Only 1 Person at SF City Hall Knows the Answer to This Simple Question,”](#) *The San Francisco Standard*, July 6, 2023. Adam Lashinsky, [“Why Creating a Homeless Accountability Commission is the Epitome of What’s Wrong with San Francisco,”](#) *San Francisco Examiner*, October 14, 2022.

³ *The Consolidation Act and Other Acts Relating to the Government of the City and County of San Francisco*, (United States: Wm. M. Hinton & Company, 1887).

legislative body (Board of Supervisors or Board), and 21 charter boards and commissions to provide oversight of core city departments.⁴

A revised City Charter approved by voters in 1932 gave voters the power to create policy by amending the Charter through ballot measures, and the Board of Supervisors the power to create boards and commissions by ordinance which must be signed by the Mayor.⁵

San Francisco's 1996 Charter, enacted as November 1995's Proposition E, took effect on July 1, 1996.⁶ Since then a number of new commissions have been added to the Charter by amendment, and the Charter has also been amended to incorporate changes to existing commissions including changes as to which elected officials make appointments.

San Francisco Has Many Commissions

San Francisco has 115 active commissions. That's more than the cities of San José (27),⁷ Los Angeles (48),⁸ and San Diego (49).⁹ Even on a county basis, with the exception of Los Angeles, San Francisco has more commissions: Santa Clara (70),¹⁰ Los Angeles (151)¹¹ and San Diego (96).¹²

The growth in San Francisco commissions started in earnest in the 1970s, increasing nearly four-fold between 1970 and 2020. Not surprisingly, the proliferation of commissions has outpaced the city's ability to keep track of them. The Jury compared numerous lists of

⁴ William Issel and Robert Cherny, "[San Francisco City Charters 1916-1932](#)," *FoundSF*. San Francisco Charter Commission, *San Francisco Charter Commission Records, 1931-1980*, San Francisco Public Library SFH 25.

⁵ San Francisco Board of Supervisors Budget and Legislative Analyst, "[Analysis of City Commissions, Boards, Task Forces and other Oversight and Advisory Bodies \(Project 100152.2\)](#)."

⁶ [San Francisco City Charter](#).

⁷ City of San José, "[Boards & Commissions](#)," *City of San José*, Accessed May 8, 2024.

⁸ City of Los Angeles, "[Boards and Commissions](#)," *City of Los Angeles*, Accessed May 8, 2024.

⁹ City of San Diego, "[Boards and Commissions](#)," *City of San Diego*, Accessed May 8, 2024.

¹⁰ Santa Clara County Advisory Commission on Consumer Affairs, "[Maddy Report \(Local Appointments List\)](#)," Accessed May 21, 2024.

¹¹ County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, "[Membership Roster](#)," *Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors*, Accessed May 8, 2024.

¹² San Diego County, "[Committees](#)," *PrimeGov Portal*, Accessed May 8, 2024.

commissions and boards provided by various city departments – and found none of them to be complete, or fully consistent with one another.

Accordingly, we conducted an extensive review of these lists and other sources to produce [Appendix A: Active San Francisco Commissions and Boards](#), a compilation of every active appointed body that we discovered during our investigation.

The Jury also collected information about each commission, including its purpose, statutory basis, sunset date, frequency of meetings, vacancies and much more. Throughout this process, we gathered insights and information from a large number of city employees and officials familiar with commissions, as well as a number of commissioners themselves.

This process required constant vetting, as new commissions are created and sunset dates for existing commissions are extended on a regular basis. In addition, some commissions are difficult to find in the Municipal Code.

This list does not include appointed bodies that we determined to be inactive – or possibly so – but that still appear in the Charter or Municipal Code and often in lists provided by city departments. For a discussion of these apparently inactive bodies, see [Appendix C: Inactive Bodies](#).

Commissions Go By Many Names

Appointed bodies established by the city employ an astounding array of descriptors, including *commission*, *board*, *committee*, *task force*, *council*, *working group*, and so on. In fact, the Jury found 25 different permutations of these terms.

Table 1: Permutations of names for appointed bodies in San Francisco

Different Names of San Francisco Boards, Commissions and other Bodies	
Advisory Board	Coordinating Council
Advisory Committee	Council
Advisory Council	District
Advisory Group	Executive Committee
Authority	Group
Authority Board	Oversight and Advisory Committee
Board	Oversight Board
Board of Directors	Oversight Committee
Board of Trustees	Partnership
Commission	Public Authority
Committee	Task Force
Coordinating Board	Working Group
Coordinating Committee	

Other than the use of *commission* to refer to the appointed bodies outlined in Article IV of the San Francisco Charter, we could not find consistent naming standards. (What’s more, there are non-Article IV bodies called commissions.) It’s unclear what criteria, if any, define a commission as opposed to a board or a council.

In this report we use the terms *commissions and boards*, *commissions and other appointed bodies*, and sometimes simply *commissions* to refer collectively to the appointed bodies whose purview includes one or more of the following responsibilities:

- Overseeing city departments, with the power to approve budgets and in some cases hire and remove department heads
- Advising city departments and/or the Mayor’s Office
- Adjudicating issues (appeals boards)
- Advising the Board of Supervisors
- Advising other commissions. For example, a citizens advisory committee may advise a commission that oversees a city department.

We also refer to commissions and boards as being either “decision-making” or “advisory.” This is largely based on classifications from the Office of the City Attorney and the Jury’s research. Decision-making bodies exercise the sovereign powers of the city and others are advisory.

Not All Commissions Are Alike

Nearly all commissions are authorized by either the San Francisco Charter¹³ or the Municipal Code. Within the Municipal Code, most commissions are authorized by the Administrative Code, although some are authorized by the Planning Code, Building Code, Health Code, and Police Code. Some commissions are created by the Charter but with composition or responsibilities defined by an ordinance. Their roles, authority, size, and requirements for membership vary greatly.

This report delves into these differences in an attempt to classify and evaluate San Francisco’s myriad commissions.

¹³ San Francisco City Charter, [Article IV: Executive Branch—Boards, Commissions and Departments](#).

Analysis

The Jury found it useful to distinguish commissions based on their *statutory origin* and *authority*, which among other things reveals how much power — or how little — a particular body has. We developed this approach from commission lists provided by the City Attorney’s Office and other city entities, provisions in the City Charter and Municipal Code, and interviews with city officials and employees who work with or regularly appear before commissions.

Commissions Created by Charter

Charter commissions are created by and derive their authority from the City Charter. The oldest existing commissions — some of the most powerful — were created by Charters adopted in 1898 and 1932. For example, the predecessors for the current Recreation and Park, Fire and Police commissions were established in 1898. Out of the 115 commissions we identified, 42 are charter commissions.

Most charter commissions oversee major components of the city’s executive branch — the Mayor, city departments, and other units of government. Although the Board of Supervisors cannot directly engage city departments regarding day-to-day operations, the board can have an oversight role in investigating departmental operations.

Only through voter approval of a charter amendment or adoption of a new Charter can a charter commission be created, dissolved, or modified. The Board of Supervisors can place a charter amendment on the ballot with a simple majority (6 out of 11 votes), while citizens can do so with signatures from at least 10% of the total number of voters in the most recent election.¹⁴

¹⁴ City of San Francisco, “[Guide to Qualifying San Francisco Initiative Measures](#),” *City of San Francisco*, Accessed May 21, 2024.

Depending on the requirements outlined in the Charter, members of a charter commission may be appointed exclusively by the Mayor (for example, the Health Commission, Human Rights Commission), jointly by the Mayor and Board of Supervisors (Planning Commission, Police Commission), or jointly by the Mayor, Board, and other entities (Elections Commission, Ethics Commission).

There are important caveats, however. Certain mayoral appointments to charter commissions take effect immediately and the Board of Supervisors has 30 days to reject such appointments by a supermajority of 8 out of 11 votes (Airport Commission, Civil Service Commission) or a simple majority (Police Commission, Public Utilities Commission). In some cases, the Mayor's choice is limited to the Commission's own nominees (Asian Art Commission).

The Mayor, on the other hand, has no power to approve or reject appointments made by the Board of Supervisors. This imbalance means that the Board of Supervisors generally has more power than the Mayor over who is appointed to charter commissions.

Commissions Created by Ordinance

An *ordinance* is a law that either has been passed by the Board of Supervisors with a simple majority, with presentation to the Mayor for signature, non-signature, or veto, or has been adopted by the voters at an election. Most commissions created by ordinance are authorized in the Administrative Code, such as the Immigrant Rights Commission, Ballot Simplification Committee, and the Film Commission. A few are established by other municipal codes like the Building Code (Access Appeals Commission) and the Health Code (Commission of Animal Control and Welfare). Out of the 115 commissions we identified, 73 were created by ordinance.

Depending on the commission, members may be appointed: i) solely by the Mayor; ii) solely by the Board of Supervisors; iii) jointly by the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, or other entities such as the Controller's Office; or iv) jointly or solely by other entities other than the Mayor and Board of Supervisors.

Commissions created by ordinance are generally easier to establish, amend, or abolish, than charter commissions because they don't require voter approval unless the commission had originally been established by the voters.

Commissions Associated with State or Federal Law

The city has created commissions to meet requirements for receiving state and federal funds, or to otherwise implement state or federal legislation. For example, the Children and Families Commission (formerly First 5 of San Francisco) is authorized by the administrative code to guide the local distribution of Prop 10 funding, which uses monies from a statewide tobacco tax.

Decision-Making Commissions

Decision-making commissions oversee the department or agency with which they're associated. They can create, revise, and approve department policies, programs, and proposed budgets. Depending on their purview, they can also hear testimony and conduct investigations into departmental operations, and they can recommend for appointment or remove department heads. Out of the 115 commissions we identified, 52 are decision-making.

Nearly all charter commissions are decision-making, although a few, like the Youth Commission and the Public Utilities Rate Fairness Board, are advisory. In addition, while some commissions created by ordinance are decision-making, such as the Film Commission and Assessment Appeals Board, most are advisory.

Quasi-Judicial Commissions

Some decision-making commissions have a *quasi-judicial* function, meaning they can hear evidence, make findings, and issue rulings based on evidence and applicable law. Quasi-judicial functions include issuing and revoking permits, and adjudicating matters between the city and

its employees, and between the city and private parties. Out of the 115 commissions we identified, 26 have quasi-judicial authority.

For example, the Police Commission, in addition to overseeing the Police Department, has a quasi-judicial role, specifically:

[T]he chief of the police department ... may temporarily suspend a member of the department pending a hearing before the police commission on disciplinary charges against the member....¹⁵

As noted, this provision gives the Police Commission authority to adjudicate employee discipline matters through a hearing process.

Similarly, the Planning Commission oversees the Planning Department and issues development permits through its quasi-judicial hearings. The Board of Appeals, on the other hand, is an example of a quasi-judicial commission with no oversight power — its only role is to hear and decide appeals on licenses and permits that have been denied by city agencies or departments.

Advisory Commissions

In contrast to decision-making commissions, *advisory bodies* have no real authority or oversight power. Typically they are created to provide broader and deeper opportunities for community engagement, such as to collect feedback and make recommendations for matters being considered by the Board of Supervisors, city departments, and the Mayor. These bodies often have a narrow focus and connections to specific city constituencies. For the most part, advisory bodies did not come into existence until the 1970s — decades after the first decision-making commissions were created under the 1898 Charter. Out of the 115 commissions we identified, 63 are advisory. While most advisory commissions were created through the Administrative Code, a few, like the Youth Commission, are charter commissions.

¹⁵ San Francisco Charter, Appendix A, § A8.343, "[Fine, Suspension, and Dismissal in Police and Fire Departments](#)."

Does San Francisco Have Too Many Commissions?

The Jury reviewed the historical growth of commissions. We identified all commissions in several cities and counties in California of similar size and character, and compared these to San Francisco's commissions. We also analyzed the benefits and costs of commissions.

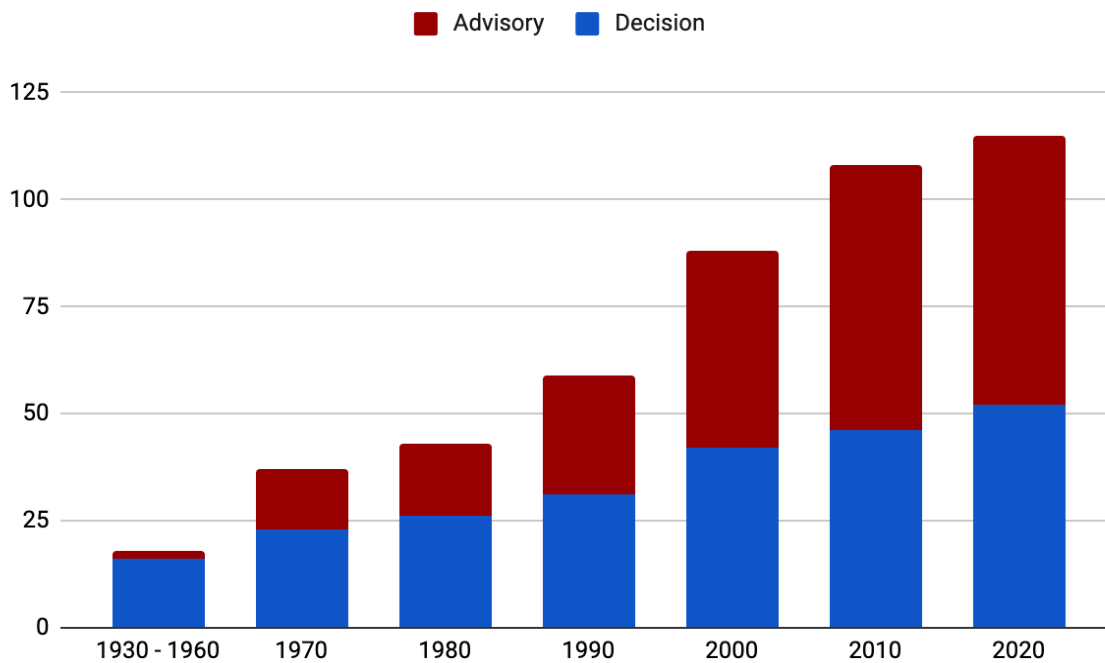
San Francisco has 115 Active Commissions

The proliferation of San Francisco's appointed bodies began in earnest in the 1970s, when the city had about 30 of them, and has grown nearly fourfold, to 115 active commissions today. (For the criteria we used to include or exclude appointed bodies from our list, see [Appendix A: Active San Francisco Commissions and Boards](#).)

Growth in Commissions

Figure 1 shows the number of San Francisco commissions beginning to increase in the early 1970s. This growth was largely driven by the introduction of advisory boards into the Municipal Code.

Figure 1: Growth of advisory and decision-making bodies in San Francisco¹⁶



Today, San Francisco has more advisory boards (63) than decision-making commissions (52). In addition, the number of advisory boards and other types of bodies (73) now greatly exceeds the number of charter commissions (42).

Growth in Charter Commissions

Several charter commissions have been added in recent years: Public Works Commission (newly formed in 2020), Sanitation and Streets Commission (2020), Sheriff's Department Oversight Board (2020), and Homelessness Oversight Commission (2022). Other charter commissions added since the 1970s include the Youth Commission, Asian Art Commission (previously an advisory body), Airport Commission, Human Rights Commission, Commission on the Status on Women, Health Commission, Small Business Commission, Ethics Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, and Building Inspection Commission.

¹⁶ See [Methodology](#) for a description of the Jury's use of historical commissions documents.

Growth in Advisory Boards

Beginning in the 1970s, the Board of Supervisors got into the practice of creating new advisory boards to address specific issues. Although Section 2.21 of the Board of Supervisors Rules of Order provides that advisory boards should sunset after three years, many advisory bodies have been in existence for decades. Repeatedly, many of these bodies have been legislatively reviewed and renewed by the Board.

Among the changes introduced by the 1996 City Charter was a transfer of the power to appoint certain department heads from their related commissions to the Mayor. In the ensuing years, however, the Board of Supervisors has endeavored to take some of this new authority away from the Mayor by initiating legislation that gives the Board more power to appoint commissioners.

For example, starting in 2000, the Board created several ballot measures, subsequently approved by voters, that gave them more power over a number of important commissions including the Planning Commission, Board of Appeals, and Police Commission. One critical change approved by the voters: the threshold by which the Board can reject certain mayoral commission appointments was reduced from a supermajority to a simple majority.

Veteran city officials and employees indicated to the Jury that these changes accelerated the creation of more advisory bodies, such as the Park, Recreation and Open Space Advisory Committee (2000) and the Public Utilities Commission Citizens Advisory Committee (2004). since these bodies provided more opportunities for departmental oversight.

Comparison to Peer Cities and Counties

To put the total number of San Francisco's commissions in context, the Jury compared San Francisco's commissions to those in metropolitan Los Angeles, San Diego, and San José.

This analysis was not without a few challenges. Because San Francisco is unique in its status as a city and county, it was necessary to analyze peer cities *and* their surrounding counties. Certain types of commissions exist on a city-only basis (for example, police), some cover city *and* county (health, airport) and others are county-only (sheriff).

Second, because commissions with similar functions had varying names, we had to develop a system of classifying these commissions to facilitate an apples-to-apples comparison.

Third, counties spanning large geographical areas often had many commissions of the same type across the county. For example, Los Angeles County has 48 water commissions.

Fourth, the cities and counties we selected have much larger populations. This difference required us to compare both the absolute number of commissions as well as the number of commissions *per capita*.

The analysis was quite revealing: although San Francisco has the smallest population compared to its peers, the city has about *one and a half times* as many commissions and, if we adjust for population, about *five times* as many commissions.

Table 2: Number of San Francisco commissions as compared to peer cities and counties

Peer Comparison— <i>Cities</i>				
City	San Francisco	Los Angeles	San Diego	San José
Number of Residents	848,000	4,050,000	1,420,000	1,078,000
Number of Commissions	115	48	49	27

Peer Comparison— <i>Counties</i>				
County	San Francisco	Los Angeles	San Diego	Santa Clara
Number of Residents	848,000	9,539,730	3,298,000	1,840,000
Number of Commissions	115	151	96	70

Our peer cities and counties analysis demonstrates that it is possible to run large cities and counties with many fewer commissions and boards than we have in San Francisco.

Benefits of Commissions

However challenging a commission-counting exercise may be, their absolute number is less important than their value to citizens and the city entities that they oversee or advise.

We conducted interviews with about 100 city officials and employees familiar with the workings of specific commissions. Given the number of commissions, it was not practical to speak with representatives from each of them, but we believe our large sample set made it possible to apply what we learned to all of San Francisco's appointed bodies.

Commissions Are Valuable Checks and Balances

When San Francisco's commission structure was created in the first Charter, its objective was to oversee the office of a strong mayor. The power that the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor wield in regard to commissions has see-sawed over the years, yet commissions continue to provide important checks and balances by preventing the Board or the Mayor from having undue influence over city departments.

The greatest benefits of our commissions and boards are the opportunity for the public to learn what their government is doing and to provide forums for inquiry and feedback, through a body that is largely independent of the Mayor and Board of Supervisors.

Commissions Provide Citizen Engagement

San Franciscans are notably vocal and involved in local politics. Commissions are a primary means by which they can engage directly with the government. Nearly all commissioners are residents of San Francisco and together reflect the wide variety of constituencies that make up the city.

Most commissions hold regular public meetings and engage in public outreach to connect people to their elected and appointed officials. Ideally, these officials then make more informed decisions.

Commissions Foster Transparency

The primary benefits of citizen engagement are transparency and accountability. By soliciting public feedback and encouraging public inquiry, departments know that the citizens they serve are paying attention.

Many commissions work directly with the departments they oversee to create policies and operating plans that are presented to the public. As a result, the public can see department goals, proposed budgets, and programs. By preparing annual reports, commissions also enable citizens to evaluate departments' effectiveness and oversight.

Commissions Promote Accountability

Accountability flows from transparency. Because decision-making commissions often have responsibilities for approving budgets and contracts and conducting department heads' performance evaluations, these commissions' very existence communicates to elected and other city officials that the public is paying attention, ideally leading to more careful decisions by these officials.

Commissions Provide Oversight

The commissions in the 1898 Charter were created to provide an important oversight role in the "strong mayor" model. Today, when a department has an oversight commission, the department head reports to both the Mayor and the commission. With few exceptions, decision-making commissions have the power to approve contracts, approve department budgets for submission to the Mayor, conduct the performance evaluation of the department head and, if necessary, remove the department head.

Because it's not feasible for the Board of Supervisors to manage the day-to-day operations of departments, commissions provide a certain level of scrutiny and oversight that would otherwise not happen. However, notwithstanding the buffer that commissions provide between the Mayor and department heads, veteran city officials let us know that if the Mayor were determined to remove a department head, the effort would likely be successful.

Commissions Contribute Expertise

Commissioners contribute a wide range of knowledge, experience, and community connections. Many are experts in fields related to the departments they oversee, bring decades of other relevant experience, and are deeply connected to communities that benefit from their commissions' work.

Commissioners, who are essentially part-time volunteers, can't be expected to have as deep and nuanced understanding of day-to-day issues facing departments as full-time departmental staff. However, we learned from many higher-level department figures that there is a general appreciation for the guidance commissioners provide to departments.

Costs of Commissions

As volunteers, members of decision-making bodies generally receive small stipends for attending meetings, and some commissioners are also entitled to San Francisco health insurance benefits, although very few take advantage of it. In the context of the San Francisco budget, these costs are insignificant.

Costs come in the form of time and effort spent by administrative and department management staff to support commissions. Other costs, harder to gauge but real enough, include decisions deferred and programs delayed as a result of the Board of Supervisors appointing a board to study an issue and make recommendations, rather than the Board or the appropriate city department taking action themselves.

Administrative Costs

For nearly every commission, one or more employees of the department that the commission oversees or advises is responsible for scheduling meetings, preparing and circulating meeting materials, exchanging documents with the City Attorney's office, and coordinating public meeting broadcasts with SFGovTV. In part, their work is mandated by San Francisco's Sunshine

Ordinance¹⁷ and California's Brown Act,¹⁸ which require that meetings be open to public comment and that related materials be publicly available.

The Jury determined that the average advisory board required 0.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, while the average decision-making commission required double the staffing resources, or 1.5 FTE. In the case of a few advisory bodies, a member of the body performed administrative tasks, but for most advisory and all decision-making bodies, the role is typically filled by a commission secretary or other administrative staff who are city employees.

In addition to administrative staff, many commissions also require assistance from the City Attorney's Office for tasks such as preparing and reviewing contracts. Although the Office does not precisely track how much time their attorneys spend supporting commissions, it was clear, from discussions with the Office, that their assistance adds up to a significant amount of time.

Department Management Costs

In addition to their day-to-day job, city department heads, senior department staff, and analysts must also work to support the city's commissions. They routinely prepare presentations and reports for commission meetings — and often must present similar reporting to multiple appointed bodies.

From interviews, the Jury found that these tasks consume about 8% of senior department staff time, with decision-making commissions requiring an average of 10% and advisory commissions an average of 6.5%. We also learned that the preparation and presentation of departmental reports to commissions can be a major distraction from the department's focus on the delivery of city services. This time spent supporting commissions represents the most significant driver of commissions' cost.

¹⁷ SF Admin. Code Chapter 67.

¹⁸ Cal. Government Code § 54950 *et seq.*

Appointment Costs and Vacancies

Approximately 1,200 seats are authorized for San Francisco commissions. The process for recruiting, vetting, and approving so many commissioners is arduous, time-consuming — and inadequate.

The Jury obtained data on both required and actual membership of 110 commissions and advisory bodies. In nearly a quarter of cases, these bodies had less than three fourths of their required members. We researched the number of expired terms among all seats on 98 commissions, and found 228, representing over 15% of commission seats. Members of non-charter commissions with expired terms often continue in their roles until they are replaced,¹⁹ but the volume of holdovers is evidence that the city's appointment processes struggle to keep up.

Table 3: Commission metrics for advisory and decision-making bodies

	Vacancies	Meetings Canceled	Members
Advisory Bodies	20%	25%	13.0
Decision-Making Bodies	11%	10%	8.2

To navigate the many and varied requirements governing the commissioner appointment process, a full-time staffer in the Mayor's Office manages mayoral appointments to commissions, while the Board of Supervisors' Rules Committee and the Clerk of the Board spend significant time managing that body's appointments and approvals. After each potential commissioner is recruited, a Notice of Appointment is submitted to the Rules Committee for approval.

The Jury determined that if the number of commissions were reduced from 115 to 100, and the average number of seats per commission decreased from 12 to 10, then the number of commissioners would decrease by almost 20%.

¹⁹ Cal. Gov't Code § 1302.

In addition to decreased appointment costs, the benefits of fewer commissions seats would be more fully-staffed commissions, more selective appointment of commissioners, and fewer meetings canceled for lack of quorum — resulting in more work performed.

Nearly 20 Percent of Meetings Canceled in 2023

In 2023, almost 20% of commission and board meetings were canceled. Advisory boards were more likely to have canceled meetings (25%) than decision-making boards (10%). In addition to wasted administrative resources and inconvenience to members of the public who may have traveled to attend the meeting, canceled meetings are particularly problematic when a commission is responsible for approving contracts. Delayed contract approvals can result in late payments to organizations that furnish vital services to the city's most vulnerable residents.

Deferred Decisions, Delayed Policies and Programs

Several city officials cited a perception that officials tend to refer difficult decisions to commissions instead of taking action directly, resulting in delays. Through resolution and ordinance, the Board of Supervisors has created task forces to address a myriad of issues in which decisions might have proven politically controversial or unpopular.

We found more than 40 resolutions and ordinances to establish task forces or advisory bodies to study, provide input, and make recommendations. A typical resolution created a committee “to supervise a consultant study to develop policy criteria and recommendations.”

Annual Reports Required But Not Readily Available

Nearly all San Francisco commissions are required to provide annual reports. Per the City Charter, annual reports for charter commissions must document the commission's activities, areas of jurisdiction, authority, purpose, and goals. The Administrative Code requires reports to provide a general summary of commission services, programs, and achievements.²⁰

²⁰ San Francisco Administrative Code § 1.56, “[Annual Reports](#).” San Francisco City Charter, § 4.103, “[Boards and Commissions – Annual Report](#).”

Crucially, however, the Jury found no consistent or simple means of obtaining this reporting. We observed that some commissions post reports on their website, some append them to annual budget proposals, and some furnish them to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors for inclusion in the Board meeting agenda — although we did not find evidence that the Board discussed or acted on these reports. Links to some reports, but not all, are available on a San Francisco Public Library webpage.²¹

The reports themselves varied greatly in their composition and reporting depth. These ranged from two simple paragraphs to glossy reports of many pages.

Because of the effort required to obtain these reports, they provide little to no benefit for monitoring the performance of commissions, nor do they furnish transparency for the public.

The Jury believes the city would be well served by having clear requirements for comprehensive annual reports. Such reporting ought to include statements of purpose, areas of jurisdiction, authorities, goals, summaries of services and programs, highlights of achievements, commission/body members, commissioner attendance, history of vacant seats, meeting frequency, canceled meetings, support staff, other costs and more.

Evaluating Commission Performance

To evaluate the effectiveness of commissions and boards, the Jury collected data on each commission, including its purpose, statutory basis, corresponding city department, number of seats and vacancies, meeting requirements, and actual meetings. We also reviewed meeting agendas, minutes to assess each body's accomplishments and level of public comment and participation. This research was supplemented by over 100 interviews with officials, commission members, and city employees.

²¹ San Francisco Public Library, "[Annual Reports of City Agencies](https://www.sfpl.org/annual-reports)," *SFPL.org*, Accessed May 21, 2024.

Charter Commissions

The City Charter has a total of 42 commissions of which a majority, 23, are established in Article IV. The remaining commissions are established in other articles, including Article V (for example, the Arts Commission), Articles VIIIA (Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors) and VIIIB (Public Utilities Commission), Article X (Civil Service Commission), Article XII (Retirement Board), Article XIII (Elections Commission), and Article XV (Ethics Commission).

The decision-making charter commissions are essential oversight bodies for key departments and agencies. In general, the Jury found these commissions to be professionally run and to perform their oversight roles adequately; that is, the benefits of nearly all these commissions exceeded their costs. That said, we encourage these commissions to consider the Jury's recommendations regarding commission structure and management.

Table 4: Charter Article IV commissions

Charter Article IV Commissions	
Airport Commission	Human Services Commission
Board of Appeals	Planning Commission
Building Inspection Commission	Police Commission
Commission on the Environment	Port Commission
Commission on the Status of Women	Public Utilities Commission
Disability and Aging Services Commission	Public Works Commission
Entertainment Commission	Recreation and Park Commission
Fire Commission	Sanitation and Streets Commission
Health Commission	Sheriff's Department Oversight Board
Historic Preservation Commission	Small Business Commission
Homelessness Oversight Commission	Youth Commission
Human Rights Commission	

Charter Article V Commissions

Article V represents the arts commissions. The museum commissions (Asian Art, Fine Arts, and War Memorial Board of Trustees) are charitable trust departments, which differ from other

charter commissions in several respects. They acquire, protect, and conserve art and other assets; make them available to the public; and raise money to further these goals. The Jury found these commissions to be serving their purpose well.

Table 5: Article V commissions

Arts Commissions	
Arts Commission	Fine Arts Museums Board of Trustees
Asian Art Commission	War Memorial Board of Trustees

Other Charter Commissions

The Jury identified 15 commissions established in other Articles of the Charter, including Articles VII, VIII, VIIIA, VIIIB, X, XII, XIII, XV, and XVI. Our evaluations found that most of these boards and commissions perform well. We encourage them to review our recommendations at the end of this report.

Table 6: Other Charter commissions

Other Charter Commissions	
Children, Youth and Their Families Oversight and Advisory Committee	Library Commission
Civil Service Commission	Municipal Transit Authority Board of Directors
Dignity Fund Oversight and Advisory Committee	Municipal Transportation Agency Citizens' Advisory Council
Elections Commission	Rate Fairness Board
Elections Task Force	Retiree Health Care Trust Fund Board
Ethics Commission	Service Provider Working Group
Health Service Board	Retirement Board
Juvenile Probation Commission	

Quasi-Judicial Bodies

Out of the 115 commissions the Jury identified, we determined that 26 have quasi-judicial authority. These bodies hear evidence, make findings, and issue rulings based on the evidence and applicable law. Their functions include issuing and revoking permits, adjudicating matters between the city and its employees, and between the city and private parties. They play an important role in the functioning of our government. In general, these bodies perform their functions well. We believe they should continue, and we encourage them to review our recommendations at the end of this report.

Table 7: Quasi-judicial bodies

Quasi-Judicial Bodies	
Abatement Appeals Board	Historic Preservation Commission
Access Appeals Commission	Human Rights Commission
Assessment Appeals Boards 1, 2 and 3	Juvenile Probation Commission
Board of Appeals	Planning Commission
Board of Examiners	Police Commission
Building Inspection Commission	Refuse Rate Board
Civil Service Commission	Relocation Appeals Board
Entertainment Commission	Residential Rent Stabilization and Arbitration Board
Ethics Commission	Residential Users Appeal Board
Fire Commission	Retirement Board
Health Commission	Shelter Monitoring Committee
Health Service Board	Sheriff's Department Oversight Board

Bodies Associated with State or Federal Laws

Out of the 115 commissions the Jury identified, we determined that 16 are either required by state or federal law or are set up to access state and federal funds. They play an important role supporting the City's relationships with other related governments. In general, these bodies perform their functions well. We encourage them to review our recommendations at the end of this report.

Table 8: Bodies associated with state or federal laws

Bodies Associated with State or Federal Laws	
Access Appeals Commission	Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council
Airport Commission	Juvenile Probation Commission
Behavioral Health Commission	Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors
Child Care Planning and Advisory Council	Paratransit Coordinating Council
Children and Families Commission	Relocation Appeals Board
Citizens' Committee on Community Development	Residential Rent Stabilization and Arbitration Board
Committee on City Workforce Alignment	Treasure Island Development Authority
Community Corrections Partnership	Workforce Investment San Francisco Board

Advisory Bodies

Out of the 115 commissions the Jury identified, we determined that 63 are advisory, shown in Table 9. Advisory bodies typically have limited or no authority or oversight power, but nonetheless still provide broad and deep opportunities for diverse participation and community engagement. We found more variation in advisory board and commission performance than with other types of commissions. They were more likely to have canceled meetings, member vacancies, and overlapping responsibilities with other bodies. Our recommendations for abolishing or retaining advisory bodies follow in Table 10.

Table 9: Advisory bodies

Advisory Bodies	
Advisory Committee of Street Artists and Craftsmen Examiners	Market and Octavia Community Advisory Committee
Advisory Council to the Disability and Aging Services Commission	Mayor's Disability Council
Age & Disability Friendly SF Implementation Workgroup	Mental Health SF Implementation Working Group
Ballot Simplification Committee	Mission Bay Transportation Improvement Fund Advisory Committee
Bayview Hunters Point Citizens Advisory Committee	Municipal Green Building Task Force
Behavioral Health Commission	Municipal Transportation Agency Citizens' Advisory Council
Bicycle Advisory Committee	Our City, Our Home Oversight Committee
Cannabis Oversight Committee	Paratransit Coordinating Council
Capital Planning Committee	Park, Recreation, and Open Space Advisory Committee
Child Care Planning and Advisory Council	Permit Prioritization Task Force
Children, Youth and Their Families Oversight and Advisory Committee	Public Utilities Commission Citizens' Advisory Committee
Citizens' Committee on Community Development	Public Utilities Revenue Bond Oversight Committee
Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee	Rate Fairness Board
City Hall Preservation Advisory Commission	Reentry Council
Code Advisory Committee	Sentencing Commission
Commission of Animal Control and Welfare	Service Provider Working Group
Committee on City Workforce Alignment	Shelter Grievance Advisory Committee
Community Corrections Partnership	Shelter Monitoring Committee
Dignity Fund Oversight and Advisory Committee	SOMA Community Stabilization Fund Community Advisory Committee
Disaster Council	South of Market Community Planning Advisory Committee
Early Childhood Community Oversight and Advisory Committee	Southeast Community Facility Commission
Food Security Task Force	State Legislation Committee
Free City College Oversight Committee	Structural Advisory Committee
Graffiti Advisory Board	Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee
Housing Stability Fund Oversight Board	Sunshine Ordinance Task Force
Immigrant Rights Commission	Sweatfree Procurement Advisory Group

Advisory Bodies	
In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority	Treasure Island/Yerba Buena Island Citizens Advisory Board
Inclusionary Housing Technical Advisory Committee	Treasury Oversight Committee
Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council	Urban Forestry Council
LGBTQI+ Advisory Committee	Veterans' Affairs Commission
Local Homeless Coordinating Board	Youth Commission
Long Term Care Coordinating Council	

Abolish or Retain? The Jury Recommends

The Jury recommends abolishing boards that it found to be redundant or otherwise unnecessary, shown in Table 10. Only one, the Sanitation and Streets Commission, is a charter commission.

In the course of interviewing officials and employees at different levels for most major city departments, the Jury found no shortage of appointed bodies to advise them. A few noted that boards advise them in areas where city department heads and staff are themselves quite knowledgeable.

The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) has an oversight commission and four advisory boards. One oversight commission and five other boards advise the Department of Public Health (DPH). The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has them all beat with one oversight commission and six additional boards. Moreover, five bodies affiliated with children's services advise several city departments.

Inevitably, multiple advisory bodies working in the same area leads to redundant efforts and wasted time and funding. City department staff and managers often must present the same report to more than one board. To get an idea of how much overlap there is among boards and commissions, see [Appendix B: Abolish or Retain](#), with appointed bodies grouped by similar purview.

Other factors that went into the Jury recommendations to abolish various boards include, according to the Jury's research, numerous canceled meetings, little public comment or engagement at meetings, and a lack of substantive achievements.

Table 10: Commissions recommended by the Jury for abolishment

Commission Name	Comments
Advisory Committee of Street Artists and Craftsmen Examiners	Redundant; we recommend the Arts Commission perform this activity.
Advisory Council to the Disability and Aging Services Commission	Redundant; we recommend this body be merged into the Disability and Aging Services commission.
City Hall Preservation Advisory Commission	Redundant; we recommend this body be merged with the Historic Preservation Commission.
Early Childhood Community Oversight and Advisory Committee	Redundant; we recommend this body be merged into the Children and Families commission.
Food Security Task Force	Redundant; we recommend the Human Services Agency perform this activity.
Free City College Oversight Committee	Redundant; we recommend the City College Board of Trustees perform this activity.
Housing Stability Fund Oversight Board	Redundant; we recommend the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development perform this activity.
Long Term Care Coordinating Council	Redundant; we recommend the Department of Disability and Aging Services perform this activity.
Mayor's Disability Council	Redundant; we recommend this body be merged into the Disability and Aging Services commission.
Public Utilities Revenue Bond Oversight Committee	Redundant; we recommend the City Service Auditor perform this activity.
Rate Fairness Board	Redundant; we recommend the Public Utilities Commission perform this activity.
Sanitation and Streets Commission	Obsolete; Sanitation and Streets Department no longer exists.
Service Provider Working Group	Redundant; we recommend this body be spun off as an entity unconnected to the city.
Shelter Grievance Advisory Committee	Redundant; we recommend the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing perform this activity.
Sweatfree Procurement Advisory Group	Redundant; we recommend the Office of Labor Standards perform this activity.

Inactive Bodies

The Jury found 20 bodies, all but one advisory, that appear to be inactive. (See [Appendix C: Inactive Bodies](#) for more detailed information.) Most of these bodies have not met in several years; are past their sunset dates with no indication of having been reauthorized; have been subsumed into other commissions; or otherwise appear inactive. However, their authorizations still appear in the Administrative Code. Moreover, a May 7, 2024 memo from the City Attorney's office, *List of Boards, Commissions, and Advisory Bodies Created by Charter, Ordinance, or Statute*,²² shows all of these bodies, and some still appear on other recently published lists as well.

Table 11: Inactive bodies

Inactive Bodies	
Adult Day Health Care Planning Council	Industrial Development Authority Board
Advisory Council on Human Rights	Our Children, Our Families Council
Citizens Advisory Committee for Street Utility Construction	Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee
Close Juvenile Hall Working Group	Real Estate Fraud Prosecution Trust Fund Committee
Commission on Aging Advisory Council	Residential Rehabilitation Area Citizen Advisory Committees
Committee for Planning Utility Construction Program	Residential Rehabilitation Area Rent Committees
Committee for Utility Liaison on Construction and Other Projects	Single Room Occupancy Task Force
Eastern Neighborhoods Community Advisory Committee	Street Utilities Coordinating Committee
Family Violence Council	Supportive Housing Services Fund Committee
Housing Conservatorship Working Group	Workforce Development Advisory Committee

²² City and County of San Francisco, "[List of Commissions & Boards](#)," *City Attorney of San Francisco*, Accessed May 22, 2024.

Commission Sizes: From the Few to the Many

The membership rosters for San Francisco commissions range from 3 to 38 – or 42, if you count bodies that the Jury considers inactive.

On the whole, charter and other decision-making commissions tend to have fewer members than do advisory boards. Ten active commissions have 20 or more members, all but two of which are advisory. Advisory bodies average 13 members, while for decision-making bodies it's just over 8 members. Article IV charter commissions are smaller still, averaging 5 to 7 members. It's worth noting that the most powerful commissions typically have the fewest members.

It goes without saying that if commissions and boards had fewer members, keeping them fully staffed would be a smaller administrative burden.

Appointment Criteria: Complex and Varied

With few exceptions, commissioners must be residents of San Francisco and of voting age (18 or older). One or more members of most charter and other decision-making commissions need professional experience or expertise that relates directly to the commission's purview. Beyond that, appointment criteria can vary widely.

Many bodies require relevant "lived experience," such as homelessness (for the Homelessness Oversight Commission), residing in an area of concern to the commission (Bayview Hunters Point Citizens Advisory Committee), or fitting a particular demographic served by the commission (Disability and Aging Services Commission). Both the Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors and its Citizens Advisory Council require most members to ride MUNI regularly throughout their terms.²³

For more than a few advisory bodies, each of the 11 supervisors must appoint at least one person to the body from that supervisor's district. Moreover, it's often the case that one body

²³ San Francisco Board of Supervisors, "[2024 Annual Listing of Active Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces With Requirements for Membership, Qualifications, Appointment and Term Dates, and Terms Expiring in 2023](#)," Board of Supervisors, Accessed May 22, 2024.

requires appointments by multiple department heads and a different set of qualifications for each appointment.

Consider the Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee. The appointing authorities for this 16-member body include the Board of Supervisors, Department of Public Health, Office of Economic and Workforce Development, Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families, San Francisco Unified School District, and Recreation and Park. The qualifications for *each respective appointment* are distinct: a nonprofit advocate for communities disproportionately affected by consuming sugar-sweetened beverages, a medical employee with experience treating diseases linked to these beverages, a DPH employee who treats chronic disease, a person with expertise in oral health, someone with expertise in “food security” or access, an employee of Park and Rec, a parent of an SFUSD student, and so on.²⁴

Interviews confirmed the importance of staffing a commission with people who have a connection to the constituencies the commission serves. However, the Jury also found that recruiting and appointing commission members is most time-consuming — and can lead to more vacancies — for bodies with a wide range of requirements. Where possible, the Jury recommends relaxing membership qualifications to facilitate the appointment process.

The Appointment Process

The majority of appointments to commissions come from the Mayor's Office and the Board of Supervisors, although other city departments make quite a few as well. Most mayoral appointments to charter and other decision-making bodies require some level of approval from the Board of Supervisors, while the Mayor has no say over Board appointments. (For more detail on these requirements, see the table in [Appendix A: Active San Francisco Commissions and Boards](#) and its Appointed By column.)

At least one full-time employee in the Mayor's office sources candidates for Mayoral appointments. All supervisors and their staff spend significant time sourcing Board

²⁴ San Francisco Board of Supervisors, “[2024 Annual Listing of Active Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces](#),” *Board of Supervisors*, Accessed May 22, 2024.

appointments. The Mayor's office submits notices of appointment to the Clerk of the Board for processing, and the Board of Supervisors Rules Committee holds hearings for appointments.

Commission secretaries also assist with staffing commissions. They keep track of term expiration dates, encourage appointing bodies to find new members, and track appointment status with the Rules Committee to help facilitate quorums for meetings.

As outlined in Charter Section 3.100(18), a Notice of Appointment includes statements of qualifications including how the appointment represents the communities of interest, neighborhoods, and diverse populations of San Francisco. Appointees for most decision-making commissions also must complete a California Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700). In reviewing these statements, we found short biographies (usually three paragraphs) and appointee résumés or CVs. Compared to the detailed applications the San Francisco Civil Grand Jurors completed, or the applications for redistricting commissions for the State of California and some counties, these statements do not provide enough information for thorough applicant reviews.

An Overly Political Process?

In conversations with the Jury, city officials made the common observation that the process for appointing commissioners is overly political. Although it's not surprising for politicians to appoint people sympathetic to their views, we heard distinct concerns over an inclination to appoint supporters and friends, with qualifications being secondary.

One way to provide more political transparency to the commissioner appointment process is to ask appointees to disclose their political activities. This information includes service as an officer, employee, consultant, or volunteer for a political party or campaign committee, as well as campaign contributions and lobbying.

Commissioners Are Generous Political Donors

We found that commissioners and members of advisory bodies are active political donors. According to the San Francisco's Ethics Commission, a little over 400 (about a third of the total)

have contributed an average of \$2,500 (median \$900) to political campaign committees over the past several years. This compares with the slightly less than 3% of registered voters who have contributed an average of \$525 (median \$300) to political campaigns as tracked by the Ethics Commission.

This data is based on donations reported on behalf of individuals. There are other ways to effectively donate to political campaigns that are not captured in this data.

More than 75 Percent of Advisory Bodies Have No Sunset Dates

A sunset statute or provision establishes a date, or the occurrence of a specific event, on which an entity, law, or benefit will expire without specific legislative action to continue it, usually through reauthorization by the legislative body that created the statute or provision. Sunset provisions give governments the latitude to reconsider the merits of a past decision in light of current needs, policies, and public sentiment.

The sunset provision (if any) for a commission or advisory board is embedded in the legislation that establishes the body. Perhaps understandably, no charter commissions have sunset dates, as most of them are decision-making bodies with ongoing oversight responsibilities for key city departments and agencies. That said, we determined that 6 charter commissions are advisory bodies, and of the 63 advisory bodies on the Jury's list, only 15 have sunset dates.

Rule 2.21 of the Board of Supervisors Rules of Order holds that "Whenever the Board creates or reauthorizes, by ordinance or resolution, a board, committee, task force, or other multi-member body,... [t]he enabling legislation shall include [among other requirements] a sunset clause not to exceed three years."

Yet the Board pays scant heed to its own rules. For example, the sunset clause in the Administrative Code for the South of Market Community Planning Advisory Committee states: "Notwithstanding Rule 2.21 of the Board of Supervisors Rules of Order, which provides that advisory bodies created by the Board should sunset within three years, the Board intends the Committee to exist for longer than three years." That committee, established in 2019, has a

sunset date of January 1, 2035. We noted that several other advisory bodies containing the “Notwithstanding Rule 2.21” language were given sunset dates of 10 years or more.

Many advisory bodies with sunset dates have been reauthorized multiple times by the Board. Sunset clauses in the Municipal Code for all but one of these advisory bodies qualify the sunset provision with “unless the Board of Supervisors by ordinance extends the term” or similar language.

Sometimes an advisory body will actually sunset. But that’s no guarantee it will not resurface. The Graffiti Advisory Board, established in 1993 and renewed on multiple occasions, was finally allowed to sunset in 2022. But the sun rose again on this board in late 2023 when it was reauthorized by the Board of Supervisors, with 15 voting members (the previous board had 25).²⁵

No Formal Evaluation Process for Commissions

The Jury did not find any formal process for evaluating the effectiveness of commissions in San Francisco. To learn more about how the performance of oversight bodies can be evaluated, we searched for examples from other municipalities. We found numerous articles indicating that measuring performance is critical to improving performance. The Jury consulted articles from the Georgia City-County Management Association,²⁶ *Harvard Business Review*,²⁷ and EY (Ernst & Young).²⁸

Comprehensive commission evaluations can involve many criteria and be challenging to administer. One of the most effective methods we discovered was self-evaluation and peer evaluation in which commissioners are given questionnaires that cover different aspects of overall commission performance and individual commissioner contributions.

²⁵ Adam Shanks, Craig Lee, and Evan Wyloge, “[San Francisco Wants to Reestablish Graffiti Advisory Board](#),” *San Francisco Examiner*, October 26, 2023.

²⁶ Georgia City-County Management Association, “[Resources](#),” GCMA, Accessed May 21, 2024.

²⁷ Jeffrey A. Sonnenfeld, “[What Makes Great Boards Great](#),” *Harvard Business Review* (September 2002).

²⁸ Jamie Smith, “[How Boards are Strengthening Their Self-Assessments and Related Disclosures](#),” *Board Matters* (November 2021).

Given the large number of commissions in San Francisco, any process for evaluating commission performance needs to be easy to implement and any questionnaire simple to complete. Further, we believe that it would be possible for an organization responsible for managing San Francisco commissions to develop a relatively short self-evaluation form that could be administered on an annual basis which would generate valuable insights leading to significant improvements in the effectiveness of commissions.

Commissioner Performance: Mixed

We heard from a broad range of city officials and employees that commissioner performance is mixed. In particular, members of charter commissions, which oversee departments that provide the most crucial city services (Police, Fire, Public Health, and so forth) must be knowledgeable, exercise sound judgment, and act in the public interest. However, we did not find evidence of any formal processes for evaluating commissioner performance. The Jury assumes that some evaluation of performance is done when a commissioner or advisory body member is reappointed, but we did not find any standard process for this, either.

Given the anecdotal nature of the data regarding commissioner performance, we don't have a firm idea of how many commissioners are performing well and how many are not. During interviews, we frequently heard that it would be valuable to have a more formal commissioner performance evaluation system.

Valuable Commissioners

The Jury found many deeply committed individuals who bring relevant expertise, experience, and passion to their commission duties and who engage constructively with the public. They show up prepared for every meeting, and the heads of the departments they oversee value their input and seek it out. Although it's rare that commissioners have more expertise or knowledge of core department issues and policies than department managers, these commissioners do provide counsel and perspective that improves decision-making. Some commissioners, while

lacking directly relevant experience, nevertheless have valuable connections to their community and are productive members of their commissions.

Not-So-Valuable Commissioners

Some commissioners frequently miss meetings or arrive unprepared, and generally lack necessary levels of engagement. Although it's certainly not the norm, we even learned of commissioners who fall asleep at meetings.

We learned from the literature cited above that a common method for gauging the effectiveness of members of appointed bodies is self- and peer-evaluations. We believe that the performance of boards and commissions would benefit from an ongoing, consistent process that includes self- and peer-review.

Commissioner Training: Yes, Please

Our investigation found a relatively ad hoc system for onboarding and training commissioners. The primary resource is the network of commission secretaries who provide reports, agendas, and other materials commissioners need to prepare for meetings. Commission secretaries do not have any formal organization through which they can support each other and commissioners, although the Director of Boards and Commissions in the Mayor's Office organizes a voluntary quarterly meeting that had been well attended pre-COVID.

Commissioners receive the Good Government Guide from the City Attorney's Office, and they receive sunshine and ethics training from that office under the auspices of the Ethics Commission.

Notwithstanding this training, 24 commissioners and board members missed the April 2 deadline²⁹ to file a Statement of Economic Interest (Form 700), which requires city officials to

²⁹ Kelly Waldron, "[450+ San Francisco Officials Have Not Disclosed Financial Interests](#)," *Mission Local*, April 9, 2024.

disclose possible conflicts of interest with their government role. (Members are barred from voting and participating in meetings until they file Form 700.)³⁰

From numerous interviews, we learned that some members of advisory boards need to “stay in their respective lanes” — that is, to grasp the limitations of their roles in regard to the city departments or oversight commissions that they advise. Administrative staff are sometimes asked to analyze and report on matters that are not within an advisory board’s purview, resulting in unnecessary time and effort by city employees.

We believe that providing training on the roles and responsibilities of commissions could help commissioners “stay in their lane” and would lead to improved commission performance and lower administrative costs.

³⁰ San Francisco Ethics Commission, “[List of Officers & Employees Without Current Annual Filings](#),” *San Francisco Ethics Commission*, Accessed May 21, 2024.

Findings and Recommendations

The Jury made the following findings and recommendations.

Finding 1: No up-to-date, accurate list of active appointed bodies exists, which impedes government transparency

Most city departments are overseen or advised by one or more commissions and boards. Yet there is no readily available, reliable way to identify all currently active bodies.

Recommendation 1.1 By October 1, 2024, the City Attorney's Office shall prepare and publish an up-to-date, accurate list of active commissions and other appointed bodies each year. In preparing the list, the City Attorney's Office should consult this report, including especially the list created by this Civil Grand Jury as shown in [Appendix A: Active San Francisco Commissions and Boards](#), and the list of inactive bodies shown in [Appendix C: Inactive Bodies](#).

Recommendation 1.2 By December 17, 2024 if feasible, or by January 31, 2025 if not feasible, the Board of Supervisors shall pass an ordinance requiring the City Attorney's Office by January 31 of each year to prepare and make available to the public an up-to-date, accurate list of active commissions and other appointed bodies, as described in Recommendation 1.1.

Recommendation 1.3 The report referenced in Recommendation 1.1 shall be posted not only on the City Attorney's website, but also on a new Commissions Oversight Body (COB) website (see Recommendation 2.1) or on a city website that is used more frequently by the public to obtain information about city programs and services. Good examples include Los Angeles County³¹ and San Diego County.³²

³¹ County of Los Angeles. "[EO & County Commissions](#)." *LA County Board of Supervisors*. Accessed May 21, 2024.

³² County of San Diego. "[San Diego County Boards and Commissions](#)." *County of San Diego*. Accessed May 21, 2024.

Recommendation 1.4 In the event the ordinance referenced in Recommendation 1.2 is not enacted in time to take effect by January 31, 2025, the City Attorney shall prepare and make available to the public by January 31, 2025 an up-to-date, accurate list of appointed bodies.

Finding 2: It's difficult to evaluate appointed bodies, because no authority systematically reviews their performance

Recommendation 2.1 By May 1, 2025, the City shall enact an ordinance to create the Commissions Oversight Body (COB), or a body by another name as the Board of Supervisors deems appropriate. This ordinance shall set forth the membership requirements and the duties of the COB.

Recommendation 2.2 The ordinance described in Recommendation 2.1 shall set forth the membership requirements of the COB as follows:

- One representative from the Controller's Office, who will chair the COB. The Controller's Office shall provide the professional expertise and administrative assistance necessary to support the COB's duties.
- One representative from the Mayor's Office.
- One representative from the Office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.
- Four residents of San Francisco who do not work in city government, who are not members of any commission or board, and whose professional experience or civic participation qualify them for this role. The Controller, Mayor, Board of Supervisors and City Attorney shall each appoint one of these residents, with no confirmation requirement.

Recommendation 2.3 The ordinance described in Recommendation 2.1 shall require the COB, by June 30 each year, to i) evaluate all appointed bodies on the list that will be issued by the City Attorney per Recommendation 1.1, and ii) produce an annual report containing the COB's

evaluations and recommendations pertaining to all commissions (COB Annual Report) that shall be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor for further action.

Recommendation 2.4 For each appointed body to be evaluated per Recommendation 2.3, the ordinance described in Recommendation 2.1 shall require the COB to collect and include the following information in the annual report:

- Statement of purpose
- Effective date
- Sunset date (if any)
- Body's classification as decision-making or advisory, quasi-judicial, associated with state or federal law
- Legal authorization, whether by charter, ordinance, resolution, or by other means
- Appointing authority
- Summary of the body's key actions and accomplishments
- Link to the body's most recent annual report, if applicable
- Link to the body's website
- Number of members
- Number of required meetings per year
- Number of actual meetings
- Number of canceled meetings
- The number of board or commission member self- and peer-reviews completed
- Number of vacancies
- Number of expired terms with holdover members

Recommendation 2.5 For each appointed body to be evaluated per Recommendation 2.3 and 2.4, the ordinance that is described in Recommendation 2.1 shall require the COB to recommend changes (if any) regarding the appointed body, to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor, and to other entities as necessary to implement these recommendations. These recommendations can include, but are not limited to, a recommendation to remove members of a body, abolish the body, or retain the body with changes to its composition, duties, authority, meeting requirements, and sunset date.

Recommendation 2.6 The ordinance described in Recommendation 2.1 shall require the COB to evaluate advisory bodies annually, and to evaluate all other bodies every three years, with the option to do so on a rotating basis (evaluating about one-third of such bodies in year 1, one-third in year 2, and one-third in year 3).

Recommendation 2.7 The Mayor's Office shall include funding in the fiscal 2025 budget for additional staff or other resources, as needed, for the Controller's Office to perform the duties required by the COB as described in Recommendation 2.2.

Finding 3: The high number of advisory bodies creates unnecessary administrative burdens

The sheer number of advisory bodies results in redundancy (multiple bodies with a similar purview) and administrative burdens for city departments in staffing the bodies and in preparing for meetings.

Recommendation 3.1 The ordinance described in Recommendation 2.1 shall require that for each appointed body, the COB recommend retaining, abolishing, or merging with another appointed body, as part of the evaluation process described in Recommendations 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5. To aid in making its initial recommendations, the COB shall review [Appendix B: Abolish or Retain](#).

Finding 4: Unfilled seats can result in canceled meetings, which imposes extra costs and delays decision-making

The primary reason for canceled meetings is the lack of a quorum. The process of recruiting and appointing members is a time-intensive, significant cost of commissions and boards. Reducing the size of commissions and boards and limiting specific member requirements can reduce the time and cost of appointing members.

Recommendation 4.1 The City shall enact an ordinance limiting the membership of new decision-making bodies to 7 members or fewer and limiting the membership of new advisory boards to 11 members or fewer.

Recommendation 4.2 The ordinance described in Recommendation 2.1 shall require the COB to recommend reducing the size of all existing commissions and boards according to Recommendation 4.1.

Recommendation 4.3 The ordinance described in Recommendation 2.1 shall require the COB to develop guidelines for simplifying and streamlining the criteria for who can serve on commissions and boards.

Finding 5: Most appointed bodies have no sunset dates, which affects their relevance and accountability

More than 75 percent of advisory bodies do not have sunset dates despite the guidance in the Board of Supervisors' Rules of Order that all advisory bodies have a sunset date that does not exceed three years.

Recommendation 5.1 By May 1, 2025, the City shall enact an ordinance or propose a ballot measure to codify a sunset date that does not exceed three years for all advisory bodies for which it has the authority to pass such an ordinance or propose such a ballot measure. If passed, this law shall apply immediately to advisory bodies that currently have no sunset date. For advisory bodies with a sunset date, this law shall apply if or when the body is reauthorized.

Recommendation 5.2 The Clerk of the Board shall notify the City Attorney six months before a body is scheduled to sunset so that the City Attorney can remove the body from the code if it is sunsetted.

Finding 6: The descriptors for commissions are varied and confusing

Recommendation 6.1 By May 1, 2025, the City shall enact an ordinance or policy to standardize the names of future commissions and other appointed bodies. The Jury recommends the following naming conventions and recommends that the Board of Supervisors present the text of the ordinance or policy to the COB for approval:

- Commission or Board for a decision-making body, for example, Film Commission or Assessment Appeals Board.
- Advisory Committee or Task Force for an advisory body. For example, Advisory Committee for bodies with a broad scope that have a longer duration (Bicycle Advisory Committee) and Task Force for bodies with a narrow scope and shorter duration (Permit Prioritization Task Force).

Finding 7: Annual reports vary in content and availability, which greatly undermines their value

The requirements for annual reports that commissions and other appointed bodies must submit are vague; the annual reports vary greatly in substance and quality; and they are difficult to find, all of which limits their value.

Recommendation 7.1 By May 1, 2025, the Board of Supervisors shall amend as follows Administrative Code Section 1.56 requiring appointed bodies to submit annual reports:

- (a) Annual reports shall be submitted to the COB for its review by March 31 of the following year.
- (b) Annual reports shall include the information specified in Appendix D: Annual Report Requirements.

Recommendation 7.2 If the COB is not enacted, the Board of Supervisors shall amend Administrative Code Section 1.56 requiring appointed bodies to submit annual reports as follows:

- (a) Annual reports shall be submitted to the COB for its review by March 31 of the following year.
- (b) Annual reports shall include the information specified in Appendix D: Annual Report Requirements.

Finding 8: The appointment process lacks visibility into appointee political activities

The current process for appointing board and commission (including advisory body) members has minimal requirements for information relevant to the appointee's activities and qualifications, especially political activity.

Recommendation 8.1 By May 1, 2025 the City shall enact an ordinance requiring appointee Notice of Appointment statements for an appointed body to include the following information:

- Previous service as a member of a commission or board;
- Political activity, including service as an officer, employee, consultant, or volunteer for a political party or campaign committee;
- Lobbying activity, including contacting any legislative member, legislative staff, or government employee to influence the support or opposition to specific legislation;
- Local political campaign contributions in excess of \$500 per campaign;
- Relevant work or life experience that qualifies the appointee for the commission and reasons for wanting to serve.

Finding 9: A lack of training and performance reviews hampers commissioner effectiveness

Recommendation 9.1 By May 1, 2025 the City shall enact an ordinance requiring that within three months of an individual's initial appointment to a commission or board (including advisory bodies), the individual must undergo training to serve with excellence in the role. This training would be in addition to any other training required by law.

Recommendation 9.2 The Jury recommends that the training required by the ordinance described in Recommendation 9.1 be no less than two hours and no more than four hours in length. The ordinance shall designate one or more city departments as responsible for developing and administering the training program. The ordinance could but need not specify components of the training program. In addition to its being required for new commissioners, the program would be available on an optional basis to all commissioners.

Recommendation 9.3 By May 1, 2025 the city shall enact an ordinance requiring that commissioners (including advisory body members) participate in an annual performance review program that includes self- and peer-reviews. This ordinance shall designate one or more city departments as responsible for this performance review program.

Required and Requested Responses

Pursuant to California Penal Code §933, the Jury requires responses to the findings and recommendations below.

- Mayor and City Attorney within 60 calendar days
- Board of Supervisors within 90 calendar days

Required responses

Respondent	Findings	Recommendations
Mayor	F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9	R1.2, R1.3, R2.1, R2.2, R2.3, R2.4, R2.5, R2.6, R2.7, R3.1, R4.1, R4.2, R4.3, R5.1, R6.1, R7.1, R7.2, R8.1 R9.1, R9.2, R9.3
Board of Supervisors	F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9	R1.2, R1.3, R2.1, R2.2, R2.3, R2.4, R2.5, R2.6, R2.7, R3.1, R4.1, R4.2, R4.3, R5.1, R5.2, R6.1, R7.1, R7.2, R8.1, R9.1, R9.2, R9.3
City Attorney	F1, F5	R1.1, R1.3, R1.4, R5.2

The Jury requests responses to the findings and recommendations within 60 calendar days.

Requested response

Respondent	Findings	Recommendations
Controller's Office	F2	R2.7

Methodology

To prepare this report, the San Francisco Civil Grand Jury:

- Created an up-to-date, accurate list of commissions and boards largely derived from the following sources:
 - Office of the City Attorney, “List of City Boards, Commissions, and Advisory Bodies Created by Charter, Ordinance or Statute,” dated May 7, 2024³³
 - Office of the City Attorney, Memorandum re: “Mayoral Appointments to and Seats on Boards, Commissions, and Other Bodies,” dated May 7, 2024³⁴
 - Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, “2024 Annual Listing of Active Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces with Requirements for Membership, Qualifications, Appointment and Term Dates, and Terms Expiring in 2023,” dated December 29, 2023
 - San Francisco Boards & Commissions website³⁵
 - Jury discussions with the Office of the Mayor, San Francisco.
- Conducted interviews with nearly 100 city officials and employees including various commissioners and board members.
- Submitted and reviewed surveys provided to city employees in order to assess the costs of administering commissions.

³³ City and County of San Francisco, “[List of City Boards, Commissions, and Advisory Bodies Created by Charter, Ordinance, or Statute](https://www.sfcityattorney.org/good-government/list-of-commissions-boards/),” *City Attorney of San Francisco*, Accessed May 7, 2024. <https://www.sfcityattorney.org/good-government/list-of-commissions-boards/>.

³⁴ Deputy City Attorney Jon Givner to Mayor London N. Breed, “Mayoral Appointments to and Seats on Boards, Commissions, and Other Bodies,” May 7, 2024.

³⁵ City and County of San Francisco, “[Boards](#),” *Granicus*. April 15, 2024.

- Reviewed commission meeting videos, agendas, and minutes.
- Reviewed the websites and related Municipal Code for all commissions and for the city departments that they oversee or advise.
- Obtained from the Ethics Commission itemized political campaign donations for each commissioner over a 10-year period.
- Analyzed data from peer cities San José, San Diego, and Los Angeles.

Appendix A: Active San Francisco Commissions and Boards

The Civil Grand Jury compiled an up-to-date list of what we believe to be all active commissions and other appointed bodies whose exclusive purview is the City and County of San Francisco.

About this list, please note:

- We excluded bodies whose jurisdiction is not limited to the city (for example, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission).
- We excluded bodies that govern agencies distinct from the city (Housing Authority Commission).
- We excluded bodies in the Municipal Code and in the City Attorney's 2024 list of boards and commissions that we determined to be inactive (see [Appendix C: Inactive Bodies](#)).
- We excluded all elective bodies (San Francisco Board of Supervisors).
- In addition to bodies created by ordinance or charter, we included advisory bodies approved through executive authority rather than legislation (Mayor's Disability Council).
- For commissions that constitute more than one body, we included the total number of bodies (the Assessment Appeals Board consists of three separate boards).

In the Appointed By column, some entries for Mayoral appointments are marked with asterisks to denote conditions for approval:

* Each appointment is effective immediately unless rejected by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Supervisors within 30 days following the transmittal of the Notice of Appointment to the Clerk of the Board.

** Each appointment is subject to approval by a majority vote of the Board of Supervisors. If the Board does not act on the nomination within 60 days following the transmittal of the Notice of Appointment to the Clerk of the Board, the nominee is deemed approved and the appointment becomes effective.

*** Each appointment is subject to approval by a majority vote of the Board of Supervisors. If the Board does not act within 30 days following the transmittal of the Notice of Appointment to the Clerk of the Board, the nominee is deemed approved and the appointment becomes effective.

**** Each appointment is subject to approval by a majority vote of the Board of Supervisors. These appointments are not effective until the Board approves them.

Active San Francisco commissions and boards

Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members	
Animal Care											
1	Commission of Animal Control and Welfare	Holds hearings and makes recommendations to the city on animal-related issues.	Board of Supervisors (BoS), city depts	San Francisco Animal Care and Control (SFACC)	A	N	Health Code § 41.1	1973	None	11	11
Appeals											
2	Abatement Appeals Board	Hears appeals against orders of abatement, which are issued when a building code violation is not fixed. Members belong to the Building Inspection Commission.	Mayor, BoS	Department of Building Inspection (DBI)	D	N	Building Code § 105A.2	1932	None	12	6
3	Access Appeals Commission	Conducts hearings on DBI's interpretations of disability access regulations and enforcement.	City depts	Department of Building Inspection (DBI)	D	N	Building Code § 105A.3	1973	None	24	5
4	Assessment Appeals Board # 1	Hears tax assessment appeals regardless of value, type, or location.	BoS	BoS, Office of the Assessor	D	N	Admin Code § 2B.1	1967	None	n/a	8
5	Assessment Appeals Board # 2	One of two boards that hear tax assessment appeals on all residential property of four units or less and property assessed at less than \$50 million.	BoS	BoS, Office of the Assessor	D	N	Admin Code § 2B.1	1967	None	n/a	8
6	Assessment Appeals Board # 3	One of two boards that hear tax assessment appeals on all residential property of four units or less and property assessed at less than \$50 million.	BoS	BoS, Office of the Assessor	D	N	Admin Code § 2B.1	1967	None	n/a	8

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
7	Board of Appeals	Hears and decides appeals of decisions made by various city departments, commissions, and officers in regard to permits, licenses, and other use entitlements.	Mayor, ** BoS**	San Francisco Planning Department, multiple other agencies	D	Y	Charter § 4.106	1932	None	28	5
8	Relocation Appeals Board	Hears appeals from residents whose homes or businesses are displaced by city building projects and who are dissatisfied with the terms of a relocation package.	Mayor	Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD)	D	N	Admin Code § 24.7	1972	None	n/a	5
Arts and Culture											
9	Advisory Committee of Street Artists and Craftsmen Examiners	Advises the Arts Commission on the certification of artists to sell their work in designated spaces, including street vending locations throughout San Francisco.	Mayor	San Francisco Arts Commission	A	N	Police Code §§ 2400–2402	1975	None	4	5
10	Arts Commission	Approves designs for all public structures and public works of art, maintains works of art owned by the city, and controls arts expenditures made by the Board of Supervisors.	Mayor,* BoS	Arts Commission	D	Y	Charter § 5.103, § 16.106	1932	None	12	15
11	Asian Art Commission	Determines policy for and oversees the administration of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.	Mayor	Asian Art Museum	D	Y	Charter § 5.104	2011	None	10	27
12	City Hall Preservation Advisory Commission	Advises the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and others on maintenance, operation, and preservation of City Hall.	Mayor****	City Administrator	A	N	Admin Code §§ 5.240–5.244	2004	None	12	5
13	Entertainment Commission	Oversees the planning, permitting, and regulation of events and venues in San Francisco.	Mayor,** BoS	City Administrator	D	Y	Charter § 4.117, Admin § 90.3	2002	None	24	7

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
14	Film Commission	Develops and promotes opportunities for filmmaking and related activities in San Francisco.	Mayor*	Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD)	D	N	Admin Code § 57	1988	None	12	11
15	Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco Board of Trustees	Oversees the de Young Museum and the Palace of the Legion of Honor.	Self-appointing	Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco	D	Y	Charter § 5.105	1972	None	4	6
16	Historic Preservation Commission	Advises the city on historic preservation matters, including the approval, disapproval, or modification of landmark designations and historic district designations.	Mayor**	San Francisco Planning Department	D	Y	Charter § 4.135	2008	None	24	7
17	Library Commission	Sets policy and oversees the library budget for the San Francisco Public Library system.	Mayor*	San Francisco Public Library (SFPL)	D	Y	Charter § 8.102	1923	None	12	7
18	War Memorial and Performing Arts Center Board of Trustees	Governs the War Memorial and Performing Arts Center, a city department consisting of the War Memorial Opera House, Veterans Building (Herbst Theater and Green Room), Davies Symphony Hall, Zellerbach Rehearsal Hall, Memorial Court, and adjacent grounds.	Mayor*	San Francisco War Memorial & Performing Arts Center	D	Y	Charter § 5.106	2000	None	12	11
Cannabis											
19	Cannabis Oversight Committee	Advises the Board of Supervisors and Mayor on the implementation and enforcement of cannabis laws and regulations.	BoS, city depts	Office of Cannabis	A	N	Admin Code § 5.38	2018	1/1/2025	5	16

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
Community Development										
20 Bayview Hunters Point Citizens Advisory Committee	Advises the City on planning and land use policy for Zone 2 and Survey Area C of the Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Project Area.	Mayor, District 10 supervisor, City Administrator	City Administrator, San Francisco Planning Department	A	N	Admin Code § 5.71	1993	None	12	12
21 Citizens Committee on Community Development	Makes recommendations to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors on HUD-based funding allocations and policy matters that are directly related to community development efforts in the city.	Mayor, BoS	Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD)	A	N	Admin Code § 2A.290	2009	None	6	9
22 Market and Octavia Community Advisory Committee	Advises the Planning department, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors, on the development of the Market and Octavia area.	BoS, Mayor	San Francisco Planning Department	A	N	Planning Code § 341.5; Board of Supervisors Res. No. 474-08	2007	None	4	9
23 SOMA Community Stabilization Fund Community Advisory Committee	Advises the Mayor's Office of Community Development, Board of Supervisors, and the Mayor on recommended expenditures of the SOMA community stabilization fund.	BoS	Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.27	2005	1/1/2035	12	7
24 South of Market Community Planning Advisory Committee	Advises city agencies regarding the implementation of the Central SoMa, East SoMa, and Western SoMa Area Plans.	BoS, Mayor	San Francisco Planning Department, multiple other agencies	A	N	Admin Code § 5.26	2019	1/1/2035	4	11
25 Southeast Community Facility Commission	Advises the Public Utilities Commission about the operations of the PUC-managed Southeast Community Facility, including educational and job skills programs, child care, a senior activities center, budget matters, and proposed leases with qualified tenants.	Mayor	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)	A	N	Admin Code §§ 54.1–54.4	1987	None	12	7

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members	
Criminal Justice											
26	Community Corrections Partnership	Advises the City on the use of evidence-based practices in sentencing and probation.	Multiple agencies dealing with criminal justice system	Adult Probation Department	A	N	Cal. Penal Code §§ 1228–1233.8	2009	None	n/a	13
27	Reentry Council	Coordinates local efforts to support adults exiting the jail and prison system.	BoS, Mayor, DPH, HSA, multiple depts. dealing with criminal justice system and courts	Multiple agencies dealing with probation, courts, law enforcement, human services	A	N	Admin Code §§ 5.1-1–5.1-6	2008	6/1/2029	12	25
28	Sentencing Commission	Advises the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors on strategies to improve public safety, reduce recidivism, and reform criminal sentencing.	Multiple agencies dealing with criminal justice system	Multiple agencies dealing with probation, courts, law enforcement, human services	A	N	Admin Code §§ 5.25-1–5.25-4	2012	6/30/2026	3	13
Economic Development											
29	Committee on City Workforce Alignment	Develops a Citywide Workforce Development Plan to coordinate workforce development services across city departments.	Mayor, BoS, multiple city depts.	Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD)	A	N	Admin Code § 30.5	2014	None	4	17
30	Small Business Commission	Analyzes how laws can affect and further the interests of small businesses.	Mayor,* BoS	Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD)	D	Y	Charter § 4.134	2003	None	12	7
31	Treasure Island Development Authority	Guides economic development of Treasure Island and administers municipal services to Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island.	Mayor	City Administrator	D	N	Cal. Health & Safety Code § 33492.5	1997	None	n/a	7

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
32	Treasure Island/Yerba Buena Island Citizens Advisory Board	Provides additional as-requested expertise to the TIDA Board of Directors.	Mayor, BoS	Treasure Island Development Authority	A	N	Board of Supervisors Res. No. 89-99	1999	None	12	9
33	Workforce Investment San Francisco Board	Oversees San Francisco's workforce development strategies and receives and manages the City's workforce funding through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).	Mayor	Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD)	D	N	Admin Code § 30.4	2014	None	4	28
Education											
34	Free City College Oversight Committee	Advises the Board of Supervisors, relevant city departments, and City College on the use of funds from the Free City College Program.	Mayor, BoS, City College entities	San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and their Families (DCYF)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.2	2018	6/30/2029	4	15
Elections											
35	Ballot Simplification Committee	Writes summaries of local ballot measures and assists the Director of Elections in preparing San Francisco's Voter Information Pamphlet.	BoS, Mayor	Department of Elections	A	N	Municipal Elections Code §§ 610, 610, 620	1997	None	n/a	5
36	Elections Commission	Sets general policy for the Department of Elections and approves policies and procedures for each election.	Mayor, BoS, multiple city depts.	Department of Elections	D	Y	Charter § 13.103.5	2001	None	12	7
37	Redistricting Task Force	Reconfigures the districts for the Board of Supervisors following each decennial federal census.	Mayor, BoS, Elections Commission	Department of Elections	D	Y	Charter § 13.110	2002	None	n/a	9

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members	
Environment											
38	Commission on the Environment	Sets policy for the Department of the Environment and advises the Mayor and Board of Supervisors on environmental matters.	Mayor*	San Francisco Environment Department	D	Y	Charter § 4.118	2003	None	10	7
39	Municipal Green Building Task Force	Advises the city on green building issues and the integration of green building practices into city departments.	Mayor, 20 city depts and divisions	San Francisco Environment Department	A	N	Environment Code § 702	2004	None	12	21
40	Urban Forestry Council	Develops an urban forest plan and tree care standards and facilitates tree management responsibilities among agencies.	BoS, Mayor, 5 city depts	San Francisco Environment Department	A	N	Environment Code §§ 1200–1209	2016	None	6	15
Governance											
41	Citizens’ General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee	Oversees general obligation bond programs, ensuring public facilities are built to the highest standards and that funds are spent in accordance with voter authorization.	Mayor, BoS, Controller, Civil Grand Jury	Controller's Office	D	N	Admin Code §§ 5.30–5.36	2002	None	n/a	9
42	Ethics Commission	Enforces laws related to campaign finance, governmental ethics, conflicts of interest, and reporting by lobbyists, permit consultants, and major developers.	Mayor, BoS, City Attorney, D.A., Assessor	Ethics Commission	D	Y	Charter § 15.100	1993	None	12	5
43	State Legislation Committee	Recommends endorsement, opposition, or neutrality on proposed state legislation that affects the interests of San Francisco.	Mayor, BoS, Controller, Assessor, City Attorney	Mayor's Office	A	N	Admin Code § 5.5	1939	None	12	7

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
44	Sunshine Ordinance Task Force	Advises the Board of Supervisors, city departments, and commissions on the implementation of the Sunshine Ordinance and ensures deliberations of city agencies are conducted in public view.	BoS	BoS	A	N	Admin Code § 67.30	1993	None	12	11
45	Treasury Oversight Committee	Oversees the city's surplus funds and investments.	Treasurer	Office of the Treasurer & Tax Collector	A	N	Admin Code § 5.9	2000	None	3	7
Government Employees											
46	Civil Service Commission	Oversees the city's merit system to make sure the city hires and promotes workers fairly.	Mayor*	Mayor's Office	D	Y	Charter §§ 10.100, 10.101	1900	None	24	5
47	Retiree Health Care Trust Fund Board	Oversees the city's contribution to the health care premiums of its retirees and their survivors.	Controller, Treasurer, SFERS	San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS)	D	Y	Charter § 12.204	2008	None	4	5
48	Retirement Board	Oversees administration, pension fund investment, member benefits, and actuarial funding of the city employees' retirement plan.	Mayor,* BoS, Retirement Board	San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS)	D	Y	Charter § 12.100	2022	None	12	7
Homelessness											
49	Homelessness Oversight Commission	Oversees the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH). Approves budgets, establishes departmental performance standards, conducts audits of service delivery, and holds hearings.	Mayor,** BoS	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH)	D	Y	Charter § 4.133	2023	None	12	7

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
50	Local Homeless Coordinating Board	Works to ensure a unified Continuum of Care strategy that is supported by city officials, nonprofit agencies, and homeless people.	BoS, Mayor	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.31	1996	None	12	9
51	Our City, Our Home Oversight Committee	Advises the Mayor and Board of Supervisors on the allocation of the Our City, Our Home fund, directed at homelessness and financed by Proposition C, the Homelessness Gross Receipts Tax Ordinance.	BoS, Mayor, Controller	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.41	2018	None	12	9
52	Shelter Grievance Advisory Committee	Receives denial of service complaints from shelter residents and recommends to HSH a response to such complaints.	Homelessness Oversight Commission, DPH	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.36	2022	4/30/2032	4	13
53	Shelter Monitoring Committee	Documents conditions of shelters and resource centers to improve the health, safety, and treatment of residents, clients, and staff.	Homelessness Oversight Commission	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH)	A	N	Admin Code § 20.305	2004	7/1/2027	12	12
Housing											
54	Citywide Affordable Housing Loan Committee	Reviews proposed project funding evaluations in order to vote on allocating funding for affordable housing development.	Mayor	Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD)	A	N	Admin Code § 120.1, Ord. No. 202-19	1990	None	24	5
55	Housing Stability Fund Oversight Board	Advises the Mayor's Office of Housing & Community Development (MOHCD) on the use of the Housing Stability Fund.	BoS, MOHCD	Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.45	2020	None	12	11
56	Inclusionary Housing Technical Advisory Committee	Advises City Controller on the triennial Economic Feasibility Analysis of the city's inclusionary and affordable housing obligations as set forth in the Planning Code.	BoS, Mayor	Controller's Office	A	N	Admin Code §§ 5.29-1–5.29-7	2016	None	4	8

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
57	Residential Rent Stabilization and Arbitration Board	Conducts rent arbitrations and mediations, investigates wrongful evictions, and provides information on the Rent Ordinance.	Mayor *	BoS	D	N	Admin Code § 37.4	1979	None	12	5
Human Services											
58	Advisory Council to the Disability and Aging Services Commission	Advises the Disability and Aging Services (DAS) Commission on specific needs of older adults and adults with disabilities.	BoS	Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.54	1985	None	12	22
59	Age & Disability Friendly SF Implementation Workgroup	Oversees implementation of the Age & Disability Friendly Action Plan, a long-range and collaborative initiative to incorporate an age- and disability-friendly lens to all San Francisco policies, programs, and priorities.	Mayor	San Francisco Human Services Agency (SFHSA)	A	N	Not available	2017	None	4	Not available
60	Child Care Planning and Advisory Council	Creates and drives the child care and early education agenda to meet the needs of children birth to age 12 and their families in San Francisco.	BoS, Board of Education	Children and Families Commission (Department of Early Childhood)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.200	1991	None	12	25
61	Children and Families Commission	Oversees the local distribution of Prop 10 funds, which use monies from a tobacco tax to support statewide education and outreach programs for young children and their families. (Formerly First 5 San Francisco.)	BoS, DPH, Human Services Agency, Dept of Children, Youth, and Their Families	San Francisco Department of Early Childhood	D	N	Admin Code § 86.1	1998	None	4	9
62	Children, Youth and Their Families Oversight and Advisory Committee	Participates in the administration of the Children and Youth Fund.	Mayor, BoS	San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and their Families (DCYF)	A	Y	Charter § 16.108-1	2014	None	6	11

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
63	Dignity Fund Oversight and Advisory Committee	Participates in administering the Dignity Fund, which helps seniors and adults with disabilities secure necessary services to age in their own homes and communities.	Mayor,*** DAS Commission and associated boards	Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS)	A	Y	Charter § 16.128-11	2016	None	12	11
64	Disability and Aging Services Commission	Oversees the Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS) and acts on DAS staff recommendations to fund programs that promote health, safety, and independence for older people and adults with disabilities.	Mayor*	Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS)	D	Y	Charter § 4.120	2019	None	12	7
65	Early Childhood Community Oversight and Advisory Committee	Advises the Department of Early Childhood on providing early care and education for children five years old and younger.	Mayor, BoS	San Francisco Department of Early Childhood	A	N	Admin Code §§ 5.13-1 – 5.13-6	2014	None	4	9
66	Human Services Commission	Oversees the Department of Benefits and Family Support (part of the Human Services Agency) by formulating, evaluating, and approving policies for city social service programs.	Mayor*	San Francisco Human Services Agency (SFHSA)	D	Y	Charter § 4.111	1964	None	12	5
67	In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority	Assists in finding personnel to deliver IHSS services, which maximize the potential of older adults and people with disabilities to live independently.	BoS	San Francisco Human Services Agency (SFHSA)	A	N	Admin Code § 70.2	1979	None	Not available	13
68	Long Term Care Coordinating Council	Advises the Mayor and city on policy, planning, and service delivery issues for older adults and people with disabilities.	Mayor	Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS)	A	N	Admin Code § 10.100-12	2004	None	12	16
69	Mayor's Disability Council	Recommends policies to improve coordination of care within different settings (home-based, community-based, and institutional care) and service sectors (health, supportive services, housing).	Mayor	Mayor's Office	A	N	N/A; passive meeting body	1998	None	10	11

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
70	Service Provider Working Group	Advises the Oversight and Advisory Committee of the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families on funding priorities, policy development, and other concerns related to the Children and Youth Fund.	Children, Youth, and Their Families Oversight and Advisory Committee	San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and their Families (DCYF)	A	Y	Charter § 16.108-1	2015	1/1/2039	4	10
71	Veterans' Affairs Commission	Holds hearings and submits recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor regarding the needs and concerns of veterans.	BoS, Mayor	San Francisco Human Services Agency (SFHSA)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.100	1982	None	11	13
Parks and Recreation											
72	Park, Recreation, and Open Space Advisory Committee	Acts as a liaison between the Recreation and Park Commission and the residents, neighborhood groups, and organizations dedicated to park and recreational issues in their districts.	BoS, Mayor	San Francisco Recreation and Park Department	A	N	Park Code § 13.01	2000	None	12	13
73	Recreation and Park Commission	Establishes policies for the Recreation and Park Department.	Mayor*	San Francisco Recreation and Park Department	D	Y	Charter § 4.113	1890	None	12	7
Planning and Building											
74	Board of Examiners	Determines whether new construction methods and materials comply with safety standards established by the San Francisco Construction Codes.	Building Inspection Commission	Department of Building Inspection (DBI)	D	N	Building Code § 105A.1	1956	None	As needed	13
75	Building Inspection Commission	Manages the Department of Building Inspection and oversees enforcement of the city's building codes.	Mayor,** BoS	Department of Building Inspection (DBI)	D	Y	Charter § 4.121	1994	None	12	7
76	Capital Planning Committee	Reviews the proposed capital expenditure plan and monitors the city's ongoing compliance with the final adopted capital plan.	BoS, City Admin, Mayor, Controller, Planning, other depts	Office of Resilience and Capital Planning (ORCP)	A	N	Admin Code § 3.21	2005	None	19	11

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
77	Code Advisory Committee	Advises the Building Inspection Commission on building codes, related rules and regulations, and proposed ordinances that may affect construction permits.	Building Inspection Commission	Department of Building Inspection (DBI)	A	N	Building Code § 105A.4	1994	None	12	17
78	Permit Prioritization Task Force	Recommends list of prioritized permits and project types, reviews existing permit prioritization guidelines, and recommends appropriate modifications.	DBI, Planning, DPW, BoS, Permit Center	Department of Building Inspection (DBI)	A	N	Campaign and Government Conduct Code § 3.400	2023	6/30/2030	1	5
79	Planning Commission	Maintains the San Francisco General Plan and approves all permits and licenses subject to the Planning Code.	Mayor,** BoS	San Francisco Planning Department	D	Y	Charter § 4.105	1929	None	52	7
80	Structural Advisory Committee	Provides independent expert review to the Director of Building Inspection on the design and construction of buildings with special features or special design procedures.	DBI director	Department of Building Inspection (DBI)	A	N	Building Code § 105A.6	2021	None	As needed	3
Public Health											
81	Behavioral Health Commission	Advises the Board of Supervisors, Health Commission, and Department of Public Health as to how the City's mental health services are administered and provided.	BoS	Department of Public Health (DPH)	A	N	Admin Code § 15.12	1956, 2019	None	12	12
82	Food Security Task Force	Recommends legislative action and city-wide strategies to increase participation in federally funded food programs.	BoS, DAS, DPH, HSA, HSH, other city depts.	Department of Public Health (DPH)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.10	2005	7/1/2026	12	20
83	Health Commission	In coordination with the Department of Public Health (DPH), oversees the city hospitals and emergency medical services.	Mayor*	Department of Public Health (DPH)	D	Y	Charter § 4.110	1984	None	24	7

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
84	Health Service Board	Administers health plans, reviews costs, and sets policies for the San Francisco Health Service System (SFHSS), which provides medical benefits to current and retired city employees.	Mayor,* Controller, BoS	San Francisco Health Service System (SFHSS)	D	Y	Charter § 12.200	2004	None	12	7
85	Mental Health SF Implementation Working Group	Advises the Department of Public Health, and many other health entities on the implementation of Mental Health SF, which provides mental health services and substance abuse treatment to people who are homeless, uninsured, or enrolled in Medi-Cal or Healthy San Francisco.	BoS, Mayor, City Attorney	Department of Public Health (DPH)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.44	2019	9/1/2026	12	13
86	Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee	Makes recommendations on the effectiveness of the Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax.	BoS, DPH, other city depts.	Department of Public Health (DPH)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.33	2016	12/31/2028	12	16
Public Safety											
87	Disaster Council	Develops plans for disaster response requiring the mobilization of public and private resources, and advises the Board of Supervisors on regulations needed to implement these plans.	Mayor, BoS, city depts.	Department of Emergency Management (DEM)	A	N	Admin Code §§ 7.3, 7.4	1970	None	4	6
88	Fire Commission	Oversees the Fire Department, prescribing and enforcing regulations and reviewing Fire Department personnel matters.	Mayor*	San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD)	D	Y	Charter § 4.108	1890	None	24	5
89	Police Commission	Oversees and makes policy for the Police Department and the Department of Police Accountability, investigates citizen complaints of police misconduct, and adjudicates police discipline cases.	BoS, Mayor**	San Francisco Police Department (SFPD), Department of Police Accountability	D	Y	Charter § 4.109	1878	None	36	7

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
90	Sheriff's Department Oversight Board	Appoints and evaluates the work of the Sheriff's Office of Inspector General (OIG), recommends custodial and patrol best practices, and reports on Sheriff's Department operations to the Board of Supervisors.	BoS, Mayor	Office of the Inspector General	D	Y	Charter § 4.137	2020	None	12	7
Public Works											
91	Graffiti Advisory Board	Advises the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor on issues relating to the prevention and abatement of graffiti in the city.	BoS, Mayor, DPW, SFPD, Director of Cultural Affairs	Department of Public Works (DPW)	A	N	Admin Code § 5.18-1	2023	11/11/2026	Not available	15
92	Public Works Commission	Sets policy for the Department of Public Works, which is responsible for building and maintaining city-owned facilities, maintaining the public right of way, and planting street trees.	Mayor,** BoS, Controller**	Department of Public Works (DPW)	D	Y	Charter § 4.141	2020	None	24	5
93	Sanitation and Streets Commission	Holds public hearings and recommends policies to DPW regarding sanitation standards and protocols, and maintenance of the public right of way. Originally established to oversee the Sanitation and Streets department, which no longer exists..	Mayor,** BoS, Controller**	Department of Public Works (DPW)	D	Y	Charter § 4.139	2020	None	12	5
Social Justice											
94	Commission on the Status of Women	Recommends policies for and advocates on behalf of women and girls to reduce domestic violence, sexual harassment, and employment discrimination.	Mayor*	Department on the Status of Women	D	Y	Charter § 4.119	1975	None	12	7
95	Human Rights Commission	Investigates and mediates complaints of unlawful discrimination in public contracting, employment, housing, and public accommodations.	Mayor*	San Francisco Human Rights Commission	D	Y	Charter § 4.107	1964	None	24	11

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
96	LGBTQI+ Advisory Committee	Advises the Human Rights Commission on discrimination against and other issues affecting the queer community.	Mayor	San Francisco Human Rights Commission	A	N	Admin Code § 12.A.(6)(c)	1975	None	Not available	26
97	Immigrant Rights Commission	Guides the Mayor and Board of Supervisors on issues and policies that affect immigrants who live or work in the city.	BoS, Mayor	Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs	A	N	Admin Code § 5.201	1977	None	12	15
98	Sweatfree Procurement Advisory Group	Evaluates the implementation, administration, and enforcement of the city's Sweatfree Contracting Ordinance, which requires city contractors and subcontractors to abide by minimum wage and labor standards as required by the Office of Labor Standards Enforcement.	BoS, Mayor, city depts	Office of Labor Standards Enforcement	A	N	Admin Code § 12U.6	2005	None	26	11
Technology											
99	Committee on Information Technology	Develops and approves information and communication technology (ICT) plans, budgets, and projects for all city departments.	BoS, Controller, City Admin, other city depts.	Department of Technology	D	N	Admin Code § 22A.3	2010	None	12	16
Transportation											
100	Airport Commission	Oversees San Francisco International Airport (SFO) Airport and establishes policies by which SFO operates.	Mayor*	San Francisco International Airport (SFO)	D	Y	Charter § 4.115	1970	None	24	5
101	Bicycle Advisory Committee	Advises the SFMTA, Board of Supervisors, and other city agencies on how to make bicycling safer and more accessible.	BoS, city depts.	SFMTA, SF County Transportation Authority, BoS	A	N	Admin Code § 5.130	1990	None	12	17

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
102	Mission Bay Transportation Improvement Fund Advisory Committee	Advises city departments regarding allocation of monies in the Mission Bay Transportation Improvement Fund.	Mayor, BoS, other depts.	San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA)	A	N	Admin Code §§ 5.23-1–5.23-6	2015	None	2	5
103	Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors	Establishes policies that govern the Municipal Railway (MUNI), traffic-related changes, parking enforcement, the taxicab industry, and city-owned parking facilities.	Mayor****	San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA)	D	Y	Charter § 8A.100 - 115	2000	None	24	7
104	Municipal Transportation Agency Citizens' Advisory Council	Provides recommendations to the Municipal Transportation Agency regarding any matter within the jurisdiction of the Agency	BoS, Mayor	San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA)	A	Y	Charter § 8A.111	1999	None	12	15
105	Paratransit Coordinating Council	Advises the SFMTA and MTA Board of Directors on issues that pertain to the SFMTA's paratransit program.	Paratransit Coordinating Council Executive Committee	San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA)	A	N	State Law	2000	None	7	38
106	Port Commission	Oversees the Port of San Francisco, which operates, maintains, manages, and regulates the port area of San Francisco, a 7.5-mile stretch of waterfront adjacent to San Francisco Bay.	Mayor****	The Port of San Francisco	D	Y	Charter § 4.114	1968	None	14	5
Utilities											
107	Public Utilities Commission	Provides operational oversight over rates and charges for service, approval of contracts, and organizational policy.	Mayor****	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)	D	Y	Charter § 4.112	1996	None	24	5
108	Public Utilities Citizens' Advisory Committee	Provides recommendations for the PUC's long-term strategic, financial, and capital improvement plans.	BoS, Mayor	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)	A	N	Admin Code §§ 5.140–5.142	2004	None	12	17

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
109	Public Utilities Rate Fairness Board	Reviews and advises the PUC on water, power, and sewer rate matters.	Mayor, BoS, Controller, City Administrator	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)	A	Y	Charter § 8B.125	2002	None	1	7
110	Public Utilities Revenue Bond Oversight Committee	Oversees the city's use of utility revenue-bond funds.	Mayor, BoS, Controller, Bay Area Water Users Association	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)	A	N	Admin Code §§ 5A.30–5A.36	2003	1/1/2025	12	7
111	Refuse Rate Board	Reviews the costs and operations of the city's refuse collectors and adopts rate orders.	Mayor,* SFPUC	Office of the Refuse Rates Administrator (Controller's Office)	D	N	Health Code § 290.6	2022	None	Not available	3
112	Residential Users Appeal Board	Reviews the determination of the wastewater volume discharged to the city's sewer system for the purpose of assessing the user's sewer service charges.	SFPUC	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)	D	N	BOS Ordinance	1978	None	N/A	3
Youth											
113	Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council	As mandated by state law to be eligible for certain funding, develops and implements a continuum of responses to juvenile crime and updates the Multi-Agency Local Action Plan to serve youth in the juvenile justice system.	Chief Probation Officer, BoS	Juvenile Probation Department	A	N	State Law	1996	None	Not available	20
114	Juvenile Probation Commission	Reviews policies and procedures of the Juvenile Probation Department to ensure that the department promotes the safety and welfare of juveniles entering the juvenile justice system, and follows state and court mandates for protection of juveniles.	Mayor *	Juvenile Probation Department	D	Y	Charter § 7.102	1989	None	11	7

Active San Francisco commissions and boards (cont'd)

	Name	Purpose	Appointed By	City Affiliation	Decision / Advisory	Charter Commission	Authorization	Start Date	Sunset Date	Required Mtgs /Yr	Members
115	Youth Commission	Advises the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor on the effects of legislative policies, needs assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the children and youth of the city.	BoS, Mayor	BoS	A	Y	Charter § 4.122	1996	None	22	17

Appendix B: Abolish or Retain

Most commissions perform well, or well enough. The Jury found 15 that appear to duplicate the work of other bodies and/or whose minutes and other documents show numerous canceled meetings, little to no public engagement, or a lack of concrete achievements.

Boards and commissions, with recommendations to abolish or retain

Name	Recommendation	Charter	Decision/ Advisory	Comments
Animal Care				
Commission of Animal Control and Welfare	Retain	N	A	
Appeals				
Abatement Appeals Board	Retain	N	D	
Access Appeals Commission	Retain	N	D	
Assessment Appeals Board # 1	Retain	N	D	
Assessment Appeals Board # 2	Retain	N	D	
Assessment Appeals Board # 3	Retain	N	D	
Board of Appeals	Retain	Y	D	
Relocation Appeals Board	Retain	N	D	

Boards and commissions, with recommendations to abolish or retain (cont'd)

Name	Recommendation	Charter	Decision/ Advisory	Comments
Arts and Culture				
Advisory Committee of Street Artists and Craftsmen Examiners	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend the Arts Commission perform this activity.
Arts Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Asian Art Commission	Retain	Y	D	
City Hall Preservation Advisory Commission	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend this body be merged with the Historic Preservation Commission.
Entertainment Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Film Commission	Retain	N	D	
Historic Preservation Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Fine Arts Museums Board of Trustees	Retain	Y	D	
Library Commission	Retain	Y	D	
War Memorial Board of Trustees	Retain	Y	D	
Cannabis				
Cannabis Oversight Committee	Retain	N	A	
Community Development				
Bayview Hunters Point Citizens Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Citizens Committee on Community Development	Retain	N	A	
Market and Octavia Community Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
SOMA Community Stabilization Fund Community Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	

Boards and commissions, with recommendations to abolish or retain (cont'd)

Name	Recommendation	Charter	Decision/ Advisory	Comments
South of Market Community Planning Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Southeast Community Facility Commission	Retain	N	A	
Criminal Justice				
Community Corrections Partnership	Retain	N	A	
Reentry Council	Retain	N	A	
Sentencing Commission	Retain	N	A	
Economic Development				
Committee on City Workforce Alignment	Retain	N	A	
Small Business Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Treasure Island Development Authority	Retain	N	D	
Treasure Island/Yerba Buena Island Citizens Advisory Board	Retain	N	A	
Workforce Investment San Francisco Board	Retain	N	D	
Education				
Free City College Oversight Committee	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend the City College Board of Trustees perform this activity.
Elections				
Ballot Simplification Committee	Retain	N	A	
Elections Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Elections Task Force	Retain	Y	D	

Boards and commissions, with recommendations to abolish or retain (cont'd)

Name	Recommendation	Charter	Decision/ Advisory	Comments
Environment				
Commission on the Environment	Retain	Y	D	
Municipal Green Building Task Force	Retain	N	A	
Urban Forestry Council	Retain	N	A	
Governance				
Ethics Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee	Retain	N	D	
State Legislation Committee	Retain	N	A	
Sunshine Ordinance Task Force	Retain	N	A	
Treasury Oversight Committee	Retain	N	A	
Government Employees				
Civil Service Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Retiree Health Care Trust Fund Board	Retain	Y	D	
Retirement Board	Retain	Y	D	
Homelessness				
Homelessness Oversight Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Local Homeless Coordinating Board	Retain	N	A	
Our City, Our Home Oversight Committee	Retain	N	A	

Boards and commissions, with recommendations to abolish or retain (cont'd)

Name	Recommendation	Charter	Decision/ Advisory	Comments
Shelter Grievance Advisory Committee	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing perform this activity.
Shelter Monitoring Committee	Retain	N	A	
Housing				
Citywide Affordable Housing Loan Committee	Retain	N	A	
Housing Stability Fund Oversight Board	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development perform this activity.
Inclusionary Housing Technical Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Residential Rent Stabilization and Arbitration Board	Retain	N	D	
Human Services				
Advisory Council to the Disability and Aging Services Commission	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend this body be merged into the Disability and Aging Services commission.
Age & Disability Friendly SF Implementation Workgroup	Retain	N	A	
Child Care Planning and Advisory Council	Retain	N	A	
Children and Families Commission	Retain	N	D	
Children, Youth and Their Families Oversight and Advisory Committee	Retain	Y	A	
Dignity Fund Oversight and Advisory Committee	Retain	Y	A	
Disability and Aging Services Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Early Childhood Community Oversight and Advisory Committee	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend this body be merged into the Children and Families commission.
Human Services Commission	Retain	Y	D	
In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority	Retain	N	A	

Boards and commissions, with recommendations to abolish or retain (cont'd)

Name	Recommendation	Charter	Decision/ Advisory	Comments
Long Term Care Coordinating Council	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend the Department of Disability and Aging Services perform this activity.
Mayor's Disability Council	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend this body be merged into the Disability and Aging Services commission.
Service Provider Working Group	Abolish	Y	A	Redundant; we recommend this body be spun off as an entity unconnected to the city.
Veterans' Affairs Commission	Retain	N	A	
Parks and Recreation				
Park, Recreation, and Open Space Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Recreation and Park Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Planning and Building				
Board of Examiners	Retain	N	D	
Building Inspection Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Capital Planning Committee	Retain	N	A	
Code Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Permit Prioritization Task Force	Retain	N	A	
Planning Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Structural Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Public Health				
Behavioral Health Commission	Retain	N	A	
Food Security Task Force	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend the Human Services Agency perform this activity.

Boards and commissions, with recommendations to abolish or retain (cont'd)

Name	Recommendation	Charter	Decision/ Advisory	Comments
Health Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Health Service Board	Retain	Y	D	
Mental Health SF Implementation Working Group	Retain	N	A	
Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Public Safety				
Disaster Council	Retain	N	A	
Fire Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Police Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Sheriff's Department Oversight Board	Retain	Y	D	
Public Works				
Graffiti Advisory Board	Retain	N	A	
Public Works Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Sanitation and Streets Commission	Abolish	Y	D	Obsolete; Sanitation and Streets Department no longer exists.
Social Justice				
Commission on the Status of Women	Retain	Y	D	
Human Rights Commission	Retain	Y	D	
LGBTQI+ Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Immigrant Rights Commission	Retain	N	A	
Sweatfree Procurement Advisory Group	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend the Office of Labor Standards perform this activity.

Boards and commissions, with recommendations to abolish or retain (cont'd)

Name	Recommendation	Charter	Decision/ Advisory	Comments
Technology				
Committee on Information Technology	Retain	N	D	
Transportation				
Airport Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Bicycle Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Mission Bay Transportation Improvement Fund Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors	Retain	Y	D	
Municipal Transportation Agency Citizens' Advisory Council	Retain	Y	A	
Paratransit Coordinating Council	Retain	N	A	
Port Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Utilities				
Public Utilities Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Public Utilities Commission Citizens' Advisory Committee	Retain	N	A	
Public Utilities Revenue Bond Oversight Committee	Abolish	N	A	Redundant; we recommend the City Service Auditor (CSA) perform this activity.
Rate Fairness Board	Abolish	Y	A	Redundant; we recommend the Public Utilities Commission perform this activity.
Refuse Rate Board	Retain	N	D	
Residential Users Appeal Board	Retain	N	D	

Boards and commissions, with recommendations to abolish or retain (cont'd)

Name	Recommendation	Charter	Decision/ Advisory	Comments
Youth				
Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council	Retain	N	A	
Juvenile Probation Commission	Retain	Y	D	
Youth Commission	Retain	Y	A	

Appendix C: Inactive Bodies

The Jury found 20 bodies that appear to be inactive. Most of these bodies have not met in several years, are past their sunset dates with no indication of reauthorization, or are subsumed into other commissions. However, their authorizations still appear in the Administrative Code and all are listed on the May 7, 2024 memo from the City Attorney's office, *List of City Boards, Commissions, and Advisory Bodies Created by Charter, Ordinance, or Statute*.

Inactive bodies

Name	Purpose	Last Meeting	Sunset Date	Authority	Comments
Adult Day Health Care Planning Council	Prepares a plan to develop a community-based system of quality adult day health care.	Likely in 2000	None	Admin. Code § 44.1	No public activity since 2000. Adult Day Health Care is now provided by Community-Based Adult Services.
Advisory Council on Human Rights	Advises the Human Rights Commission.	n/a	None	Admin. Code § 12A.6	No evidence of public activity.
Citizens Advisory Committee for Street Utility Construction	Provides citizens' input on issues related to digging up streets and sidewalks.	n/a	None	Admin. Code § 5.64-6	This citizens advisory committee appears to have been either replaced by or absorbed into the PUC CAC.
Close Juvenile Hall Working Group	Prepare a plan to close Juvenile Hall no later than December 31, 2021 and expand community-based alternatives to detention.	12/1/2021	See note	Admin. Code § 5.40-1	The Juvenile Probation Department confirmed this commission is no longer active.
Commission on Aging Advisory Council	Advises the Disability and Aging Services Commission.	n/a	None	Admin. Code § 5.54	Commission merged into the Disability and Aging Services Commission.

Inactive bodies (cont'd)

Name	Purpose	Last Meeting	Sunset Date	Authority	Comments
Committee for Planning Utility Construction Program	Plans a construction program of street utilities, including traffic regulations during utility construction or maintenance, and other duties as assigned by the Street Utilities Coordinating Committee.	n/a	None	Admin. Code § 5.63	No evidence of public activity.
Committee for Utility Liaison on Construction and Other Projects	Coordinates scheduling of utility work connected with Department of Public Works projects and plans the utilities undergrounding construction program.	7/2017	None	Admin. Code § 5.63	No evidence of public activity.
Eastern Neighborhoods Community Advisory Committee	Provides input to the city agencies with regard to activities related to the implementation of the Eastern Neighborhood Area Plans.	12/4/2023	1/1/2024	Admin. Code § 5.32-1	No evidence of being reauthorized.
Family Violence Council	Recommends programs and policies to reduce family violence and to optimize system responses when family violence occurs.	11/17/2021	5/1/2024	Admin. Code § 5.19-1	No evidence of a meeting since 2021.
Housing Conservatorship Working Group	Evaluates and reports on the city's implementation of housing conservatorship policies, in accordance with Chapter 5 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code, to address the needs of people with serious mental illness and substance use disorders.	12/4/2023	12/23/2023	Admin. Code § 5.37-1	Sunset in December 2023, no evidence of reauthorization.
Industrial Development Authority Board	Ensures compliance with provisions of the California Industrial Development Financing Act.	n/a	None	Admin. Code § 42.1	No evidence of public activity. This board was possibly replaced by the Office of Economic and Workforce Development.
Our Children, Our Families Council	Aligns city, school district, and community efforts to improve outcomes for children and families by developing a five-year plan to reach those outcomes.	8/14/23	None	Charter § 16.127; Admin. Code § 102.1.	No evidence of public activity since August 2023.
Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee	Makes recommendations on pedestrian safety, convenience, ambiance, and planning to the Board of Supervisors and other city departments.	Prior to 2020	10/1/2020	Admin. Code § 5.4-1	Sunset in 2020.

Inactive bodies (cont'd)

Name	Purpose	Last Meeting	Sunset Date	Authority	Comments
Real Estate Fraud Prosecution Trust Fund Committee	Created to distribute dedicated funds for the prosecution of real estate fraud within San Francisco.	03/2009	None	Admin.Code § 8.24-5	This committee hasn't met since 2009, according to the City Administrator's Office.
Residential Rehabilitation Area Citizen Advisory Committees	Assist Planning and other city departments on the development of plans for public improvements in residential rehabilitation areas.	n/a	None	Admin. Code §§ 32.30, 32.30-1	No evidence of recent public activity.
Residential Rehabilitation Area Rent Committees	Assist Planning department and other city departments in developing plans in residential rehabilitation areas.	n/a	None	Admin. Code § 32.34	No evidence of recent public activity.
Single Room Occupancy Task Force	Coordinates communication between city departments, SRO owners and managers, nonprofit agencies, and tenants.	10/17/2019	12/31/2021	Admin. Code § 5.28-1	Last agenda dated 10/17/19.
Street Utilities Coordinating Committee	Formulates policy as it affects the use of public streets by public and private utilities.	n/a	None	Admin. Code § 5.60	No evidence of recent public activity.
Supportive Housing Services Fund Committee	Prepares and distributes announcements and requests for grant proposals to existing providers of affordable housing and supportive services.	n/a	None	Admin. Code § 10.100-131(f)	No evidence of recent public activity.
Workforce Development Advisory Committee	Advises the First Source Hiring Administration on workforce development and program policy and oversight.	n/a	None	Admin. Code § 83.8	No evidence of recent public activity.

Appendix D: Annual Report Requirements

- Statement of purpose
- Description of activities including:
 - Public engagement programs
 - Activities resulting in increased government transparency
 - Other important activities leading to positive public outcomes
- List of commission members that shows:
 - Member demographics
 - For each member the number of meetings attended and number of meetings missed (excused and not excused)
- Average percentage of seats filled, for example:
 - If all seats filled for the year, the average percentage of seats filled would be 100%
 - If 2 of 7 seats were vacant during the year, the average percentage of seats would be $(7-2)/7 = 71.4\%$
 - If 2 of 7 seats were vacant for half the year and then filled for the other half, the average percentage of seats filled would be $((7-2)/7)/2 + (7/7)/2 = 85.7\%$
- List of commission support staff and other material costs
- Meeting data—for the reporting year and the preceding two years
 - Number of meetings required by municipal code or bylaws
 - Number of meetings held with quorum and without
 - Number of public commenters and public comments (excluding presenters and city staff) at each meeting
- Summary of commissioner evaluations and commission performance