

Memorandum

TO: City Council Workshop
FROM: Renee Eisenbeisz , Assistant City Manager
DATE: April 20, 2026
SUBJECT: Discussion on open appointment policy for advisory boards
ITEM NUMBER: 1.b
SECTION: GENERAL BUSINESS

REQUESTED MOTION

INTRODUCTION

The city is fortunate to have residents who are actively engaged in the community, whether that is through a community organization or one of our advisory boards. The city's advisory boards include four commissions (economic development, human rights, parks and recreation, and planning) and three committees (bikeways and trails, environmental quality, and public safety). Commissions are created by ordinance to provide ongoing input in major policy areas. Whereas, committees are created through resolution to provide input in specific areas. We also have the economic development authority and Snail Lake Improvement District Board.

Recognizing the importance of an engaged community, the city's strategic goals or priorities have included an effort to cultivate future leaders from our advisory boards for a number of years. Part of this goal is to ensure our boards have a membership that balances the experience and institutional knowledge of active, long-term members while still providing opportunities for new perspectives. In 2021, the city sent a letter to all advisory board members notifying them of this goal and asking them to keep it in mind when considering reappointment.

The city council is being asked to review our current structure and open appointment policy and provide direction on potential changes moving forward. Please note that this information does not include the Snail Lake Improvement District Board since membership requirements for that board are different and require members to live within the Snail Lake improvement district.

DISCUSSION

In 2015, the city council approved the city's current open appointment policy. Per the attached policy, members may be reappointed to an advisory board an indefinite amount of times. The only exceptions are for the economic development authority and planning commission. Any member who has served one full term (six years) on the EDA or two full terms (six years) on the planning commission needs to reapply in order to be considered for reappointment. Their applications are then considered along with any new applicants and interviewed by the city council.

The policy also outlines general guidelines such as where and how long to advertise and the

appointment process. Typically, staff will reach out in early September to any members whose terms are expiring to see if they are interested in being reappointed. If they are, the city council will consider their reappointment in January. The city will advertise any openings during the October - November time frame. Advisory boards will then review the received applications and make recommendations to the city council in January or February.

Membership information

The city currently has 72 volunteers serving on eight advisory boards. The majority of our advisory boards have three-year terms. The economic development authority is the only board with a longer term of six years. Of these members:

- 47 have served two terms or less
- 16 have served three to four terms
- 2 have served five to six terms
- 7 have served seven terms or more

A list of the current members along with their appointment and term expiration dates is attached. Demographic data is also attached for review.

Below is data showing the number of members who didn't seek reappointment or resigned mid-term, as well as the number of applications received. As you can see, many of the members had served two terms or less. Additionally, the number of applications received exceeds the number of openings available.

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Two terms or less	9	10	7	2
Three to four terms	7	2	1	2
Five to six terms	2	1	2	0
Seven terms or more	0	1	0	0
Total openings	18	14	10	4
Total applications received	20	19	20	18

Benchmark comparison

Staff surveyed many of our benchmark communities to see how they handle term limits. A spreadsheet showing what cities have term limits is attached. A majority of the cities surveyed have term limits with the average number of terms being three.

Options moving forward

Based on this information, staff outlined five options for the city council to review and consider. The pros and cons of each option is attached.

1. Implement a term limit of three terms
2. Implement a term limit of three terms with an option to reapply after a few years
3. Require all members to reapply after two terms
4. Implement option 2 for committee members and option 3 for commission members
5. Continue our current practice

Please note that staff recommend that the current practice for EDA and planning commission members should remain as is. The staff liaisons have reviewed this information and are

comfortable with options two through four.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the city council provide direction on the open appointment process. If the city council wants to implement any of options one through four, staff will bring forward an amended open appointment policy to a future meeting for consideration.

ATTACHMENTS

[Open appointment policy](#)
[Current members](#)
[Demographics information](#)
[Benchmark comparison](#)
[Options](#)