

Data Driven Detroit Background Research on Advisory Committees

August 2016

Data Driven Detroit staff shared this background research they completed on forming and running advisory committees. The information was summarized in this attachment prepared as part of an update report for the Turning the Corner project. For more context, see the following:

- Cross-site project page: www.neighborhoodindicators.org/turningthecorner/
- Detroit blog: <https://datadrivendetroit.org/blog/2018/03/22/turning-the-corner/>

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Attachment A: Advisory Group Development and Considerations; Next Steps

Development and Considerations

- **Name-** Can signify how much authority the group has (e.g. board v. group or committee)
- **# of Members-** 5-15 standard; Should seek diversity of opinions, demographic backgrounds, economic interests, etc.
- **Write Mission Statement-** Short, to-the-point description of the overall goals and purposes of the committee
- **Purpose of the Group-** This may vary greatly across groups. What is it that the group hopes to achieve? Separate primary and secondary purposes.
 - Do you want an advisory committee that can...
 - *fundraise* or organize funding match activities
 - *advocate for your program* and increase its visibility, both internally and externally
 - *take on specific tasks to support your activities*, or an advisory group that can provide informed input as you plan new activities or develop policies and procedures
 - provide a *structure for keeping partners engaged* and community members informed
 - Partnership collaboration and communication
- **Recruit Members that Fit the Purpose**
 - What skills are needed?
 - If fundraising- seek grantwriters, event managers, marketing skills
 - What resources can each member provide?
 - Does composition of members lead to increased diversity of opinions and experiences
 - Develop a written application which catalogs each members:
 - Skills, Interests, and Motivations
 - Determine policy/plan with members on how to attract new members
 - Determine how new members are recruited and selected
 - Can members be appointed?
 - What voting determines
- **Build Team and Develop Structure**
 - Meeting one- Get acquainted and start working on at least one specific task
 - Develop operating principles (See Appendix 1) and operating procedures:
 - Will there be officers? (See Appendix 2 for Roles and Responsibilities)

- How often will the group meet?
- When and how members will be notified or reminded
- When members will receive agendas of upcoming meetings and minutes of summaries from previous meetings
- How the CAG will make decisions (consensus, majority rules, etc.)
- How communications will be handled across members if issues arise between meetings
- How you will communicate with the community at-large (announce meetings, share information about important issues, milestones, activities)
- What will be the meeting structure?
- What will be the terms of service
- **Decision-Making Power**
 - How much power will the group be given? Can they make financial decisions? How will they communicate with members?
 - Who will staff the advisory committee?
 - Will you need subcommittees?
- **Broader Considerations (Legal Formation)**
 - Does group need to incorporate/seek tax-exempt status?
- **Prepare Members for Their Role**
 - Provide orientation to the program
 - Long-term goals and objectives, current activities, and successes or challenges
 - Clarify limits and explain mission
 - Have a written description of the responsibilities, activities, and limits on authority of the advisory board- share this with prospective members.
 - Consider asking Community Leader to chair the committee
 - For a sample recruitment letter, see Appendix 3

Next Steps

- **Planning Stage**
 - Identify Community Members to be part of CAG
 - Funders
 - Developers
 - Community Organizations
 - Academics
 - Policy Makers
 - Consider the balance of members and how many you want on the committee
- **Actions**
 - Reach out to prospective members, and consider asking them to identify others who should be included. (Draft email below)
 - Outline a general statement about the vague mission (consider allowing group to define mission as one of first acts of business), frequency of meetings and time commitment, and basic details about the group and inclusion processes.
- **Host First Meeting**
 - Start with a brief discussion of the TTC project, goals, mission, etc.
 - You will want to do introductions and ask individuals to describe what skills/resources/etc. they bring to bear on the group. Have this written out and sent to each member after the meeting.
 - Consider advisory group name (name may impact mission and formality)
 - Facilitate discussion of the critical elements outlined above, but maybe start with mission and then move on to decision making structure and bylaws (likely to affect rest of meeting). After this, determine all of the operating principles and procedures. Come to a determination on the major elements outlined above.
 - Determine how new members will be recruited and selected, what the terms of office will be, etc.
 - Determine if there will be officers. If so, decide on roles and responsibilities. See Appendix 3 for a sample of responsibilities by role.
 - Discuss logistics like how to handle communications between meetings, who will host next meeting, who will send out agenda/meeting minutes and when that will occur.
 - Ensure that there is a clear guideline for next steps, and that members have actionable takeaways. Establish this early, and make sure from the first meeting that everyone has some type of task. Create some system of accountability.
 - Consider following up after the meeting with the meeting minutes and individual emails regarding next steps and who is accountable for what.

Appendix 1 - [Example of Operating Principles for a CAG:](#)

- **Transparency:** LBNL staff and CAG members will share relevant information and facts to facilitate productive discussion and progress toward mutual goals.
- **Equal Participation:** All participants will agree to provide one another the opportunity to engage in balanced dialogue and presentation on meeting topics, and will minimize domination of discussion by allowing time for other speakers.
- **Inclusivity:** CAG meetings and related activities will be conducted to ensure the ideas and views of all members are considered. This includes an inclusive process to set and design meeting agendas that includes both Lab staff and CAG members.
- **Respectful Engagement:** CAG members and LBNL staff will show courtesy, honesty and respect for each other during all communications, especially when giving or receiving contrary opinions as well as positive or negative feedback.
- **Accessibility:** Meetings will be scheduled and materials will be developed to enhance availability and ensure equal opportunities for participation based on the needs of the CAG members. All meetings will be open to the public.
- **Facilitated Meetings:** The meeting facilitator will help the CAG manage its agendas and enforce the Operating Principles.
- **Meeting Documentation:** All meetings will be videotaped and made available on the CAG website.

Example of CAG [meeting summary](#)

Appendix 2 - IAB Roles and Responsibilities

Duties and Responsibilities of IAB Officers and Individual Members

The success of the IAB depends, in large part, on the leadership abilities of the IAB officers. IAB officers include the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer (if necessary or allowed by jurisdictional regulations). The duties and responsibilities of the IAB officers should be outlined and documented in the IAB Bylaws. It is not recommended that every duty and responsibility of the officers needs to be included in the Bylaws, but they could be included in the IAB Operating Manual. However for reference purposes, a comprehensive list of the duties and responsibilities of the IAB officers is provided below.

IAB Chair

The IAB Chair is responsible for leading the IAB in its activities and for serving as the primary liaison between the academic program and the IAB. The Chair should possess the following skills and characteristics:

- Experience in business or industry.
- Ability to manage meetings, plan and adhere to schedules, involve members in ongoing activities, and the negotiation and communication skills needed to reach consensus and closure on issues.
- Skills in oral and written communications, as well as, a willingness to make appearances before academic and community groups to present, explain, justify IAB recommendations, and advocate for the academic program.
- Ability to delegate responsibility and a willingness to accept responsibility for the actions and recommendations of the IAB.
- Personal characteristics such as empathy, fairness, tolerance, sound judgment, and attentiveness.

The duties and responsibilities of the IAB Chair include:

- Assist in arranging all IAB meetings and presiding at each meeting.
- Work with IAB members to plan and carry out the Plan of Work.
- Assist in preparing meeting agendas and with the logistics of the meetings.
- Provide accurate and up-to-date information to all IAB members.
- Keep all IAB members focused and involve each member in at least one task.
- Delegate tasks and follow-up work.
- Arrange for presenting background information and reports to the IAB and academic program.
- Appoint standing IAB committees and subcommittees.
- Serve as an ex-officio member on all committees.
- Preside at IAB Executive Committee meetings.
- Appoint all committee chairs and call for membership on those committees.
- Represent the IAB at official meetings and functions.
- Submit recommendations of the IAB to appropriate administrators and external organizations.
- Follow-up on committee recommendations or actions.

- Assist in recruiting new IAB members.

Vice Chair

The skills and responsibilities of the IAB Vice Chair are identical to those of the IAB Chair. The Vice Chair assumes the responsibilities and duties of the Chair due to absence or inability to serve. The duties and responsibilities of the Vice Chair include:

- Attend all IAB meetings.
- Serve on the IAB Executive Committee.
- Understand the duties and responsibilities of the IAB Chair.
- Be able to perform the duties of the Chair.
- Participate as a vital part of the IAB leadership. IAB Secretary The IAB Secretary shall be responsible for record keeping and clerical duties. The duties and responsibilities of the IAB Secretary include:
 - Attend all IAB meetings.
 - Serve on the IAB Executive Committee.
 - Maintain all records, ensure their accuracy, and archive all of the records.
 - Take minutes at meetings, transcribe, and distribute minutes.
 - Send agendas, announcements, minutes, and other information to IAB members.
 - Assist in assembling and distributing necessary background information to IAB members.
 - Correspond with representatives of the academic program and the community, as needed.

Treasurer

The primary duties of the IAB Treasurer are to oversee the financial administration of the IAB. The duties and responsibilities of the IAB Treasurer include:

- Attend all IAB meetings.
- Serve on the IAB Executive Committee.
- Ensure that the IAB is aware of its financial obligations.
- Assist in the preparation of the budget.
- Monitor the budget.
- Ensure the IAB financial policies are being followed.
- Prepare and deliver a Financial Report at the IAB meetings.
- Maintain all bank accounts.
- Oversee all financial transactions.
- Keep up-to-date records, as well as, an audit trail for all transactions.

Individual IAB Members

Individual IAB Members are not officers, but must share in duties and responsibilities of conducting the business and activities of an IAB. These duties and responsibilities include:

- Attend all IAB meetings, functions, and special events.
- Understand the IAB's mission, services, policies, and Plan of Work.

- Suggest and develop agenda items prior to the meetings.
- Review the agenda and supporting materials, prior to the meetings.
- Respect the rights and opinions of other IAB members.
- Serve on committees or task forces and offer to take on special assignments.
- Make a personal financial contribution to the IAB or academic program (where permitted).
- Be an advocate for the IAB and the academic program.
- Suggest possible nominees as new members who can make significant contributions to the IAB.
- Keep current on developments related to the academic program, accreditation, and the industry.
- Assist with the orientation of IAB members.

Orientation of IAB Members

Orientation of IAB members should include existing, as well as, new members. It is suggested that the following items be accomplished during the orientation process:

- Review of the IAB Bylaws and the IAB Plan of Work.
- Review past IAB accomplishments.
- Tour of the facilities of the academic program.
- Presentations by academic administrators, faculty, current students, and graduates.
- Review of the mission, objectives, curriculum, and standards of the academic program.
- Review of accreditation standards that are applicable to the academic program. Following the acceptance to serve on the IAB, a confirmation letter should be sent to new and returning IAB members from the IAB Chair or academic program administrator.

Appendix 3- [Sample Recruitment Letter](#)

Dear _____,

We would like to invite you to join the Advisory Council of WXYZ. This council consists of thoughtful community leaders who meet three times per year to advise the WXYZ board of directors and staff. We admire the work you have done with children in the SW neighborhood of our city, and we would be very grateful to have your thinking as we go forward.

The responsibilities of Advisory Council members are to:

- Attend three meetings per year, each held on a weekday from 8:00 am to 9:45 am
- Contribute your expertise and thinking to the current and future work of WXYZ
- Be available for four to five telephone calls each year from staff seeking advice
- Allow WXYZ to publish your name as a member of the Advisory Council

In return, WXYZ promises you:

- A delicious breakfast three times a year and meetings that start and end on time
- A complimentary membership during your term on the Advisory Council
- An appreciation of your time and a commitment not to abuse your time or your generosity
- Advisory Council terms are for two years.

Enclosed is a roster of current Advisory Council members, and a schedule of meetings for the coming year.

One of us will be calling you within the next few days to answer your questions and to give you a personal invitation to join the council. Thank you, and we look forward to talking with you.

Signed, Chair of the Board of Directors and the Executive Director

References

[HHS CAG Document](#)

[EPA CAG Toolkit](#)

[EPA CAG Toolkit Summary](#)

[Role of Advisory Committees](#)

[Board Committees](#)

[High Impact Industry Advisory Board](#)

[Consumer Advisory Boards](#)