



Title: 2021 Citizen Advisory Committee Assessment (CAC) Process

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Purpose:

Staff will provide an overview of the planned CAC assessment process that will be completed in 2021 and kick off the discovery process by asking CAC members to reflect on their experiences as advisory committee members.

Background:

Since 2016, MCWD has systematically evaluated and realigned each of its programs to best support the organization's goals laid out in the 2016 Strategic Plan. The result of this wholesale shift in MCWD's work has been a more focused, aligned, and successful suite of programs working toward the vision outlined in MCWD's *In Pursuit of a Balanced Urban Ecology* policy.

The CAC is the only program within the organization that has not yet undergone this reassessment since 2016. As a result, the Executive Team has expressed a desire to clarify the role of the committee to ensure it is providing maximal value for the District and for its members. At the Q3 Executive Team meeting, the committee noted that MCWD must define the strategic value of the CAC and adjust the structure, schedule, and meeting formats accordingly.

During the first half of 2021, District staff will work with the CAC and Board to follow the same evaluative approach it has applied to its other programs in order to achieve this clarity and alignment.

Assessment Goals and Process:

To ensure the strategic alignment and focus of the CAC in 2021 and beyond, the District will undertake an assessment process with the following goals:

1. The CAC is focused on work which provides value to the organization and its value is proportional to its organizational cost. MCWD is currently at a strategic juncture where it is moving from planning various strategic and change management initiatives to implementing those initiatives. During this process, the CAC has played the role of strategic advisor by vetting ideas, providing insight and flagging considerations. This work has been supported by a District staff liaison, Board liaisons and additional staff as needed.

Now that the focus of the District has changed, the focus and role of the CAC will need to change accordingly. As the District's focus for 2021 and beyond is clarified, how the CAC supports the District's future work will need to be evaluated by the value it provides and the level of organizational support needed.

2. The committee's structure and operations are determined by the needs of the CAC's new scope of work. The committee's structure and operations have been determined by historic past practices rather than being driven by the needs of the committee's work. Future operational considerations such as agenda focus, meeting structure, frequency and other logistics, will need to flow from a clearly refined strategic picture.
3. The work of the CAC is satisfying to committee members. Advisory committees are most effective when they are providing value to the organization they advise and the work is satisfying to its members. This dynamic increases

member engagement in the work of the committee by drawing on the skills, experiences and knowledge of its members.

This re-assessment will follow a six-step process based off Bardach's Path for Policy Analysis, which the District has used to evaluate each of its program areas:

1. Set process with policy stakeholders
2. Discovery and insight generation
3. Frame and evaluate strategic options
4. Review progress with policy stakeholders
5. Set direction and identify operational and implementation considerations
6. Board decision

Next Steps:

Staff will provide an overview of the CAC assessment process and forecast the anticipated timeline at the December 9th, 2020 CAC meeting. As part of the discovery phase of the process, staff will facilitate break-out group discussions in which CAC members will be asked to reflect on their experiences as advisory committee members. Subsequently, staff will review the assessment process with the Board at the December 17th, 2020 meeting. Upon approval by the Board, staff will begin implementing the approved CAC assessment process.