



Mayor's Advisory Panel

A Mayor's Advisory Panel is a group of citizens selected by the mayor to serve in an advisory capacity to the mayor on city policy and city operations. It can be called the mayor's "kitchen cabinet," citizen's advisory team, mayor's advisory team, etc. The group's name and formality can be determined by the mayor and may not be the same in each city; however, its purpose and goals are the same.

The purpose of the group is for these citizens to learn more about how city government works, its budget and sources of revenue, the services that are provided, and the challenges that the city may face in the short and long term. The format of how this can be accomplished will be left up to each individual mayor and city, but it could take the form of a series of workshops, seminars, hands-on learning experiences, etc. At the conclusion of the education period, the group could, depending on the will of the mayor and city, offer insight and recommendations for the mayor to consider.

The goal is to enlighten and broaden the knowledge of these citizens on how the city operates and the issues that the mayor and other elected and appointed officials face. It may also be necessary to enlist the assistance of city staff, including city managers and department heads, in this effort. However, this effort will not require a significant commitment of city resources.

The committee's scope can be as broad or as narrow as the mayor wishes. It is recommended that it be made up of prominent business leaders, community opinion leaders, key community constituent group leaders and others. It also is recommended that it include a diverse make-up of city residents. The group can be in place for as long as the mayor wishes and for as long as it takes to meet the goals of a full overview of the city and its operation.

An ancillary, but extremely important, goal of this effort has sustaining value to the city and to the aims of the mayor. It is believed that this effort will create ambassadors for the city because of the intense education that will take place. Because they will have a better understanding of "how a city works," these citizens will be more informed and better able to understand the impact of other governmental entities' policies on their city. They may even become "defenders" of the city who can be recruited by the mayor to lobby on the city's behalf and work with the mayor to educate other residents on the impact of state and federal policy initiatives.

