

2009 Audit Recommendations

- Such guidelines might include directing district councils that convey policy opinions to the City to identify the groups participating in the district council vote on the issue; documenting all viewpoints, not just the majority viewpoint; and noting the tally of opinions on all sides of an issue. Some district councils have already adopted this policy. (page 13)
- Require that standards are met if district council and City Neighborhood Council responsibilities include rating and ranking City grants: If the City determines that the district councils and City Neighborhood Council should continue ranking applications for City grants, the City should assure itself that these groups meet City standards for representation and diversity (page 13)
- Establish appropriate conditions for the City's continued support of the district councils and City Neighborhood Council. For example, if district councils or the City Neighborhood Council fail to demonstrate efforts to attract membership that reflects the diversity of the district, the Department of Neighborhoods should attach consequences such as limiting or removing City support services. The City should also provide district councils with current demographic information about their district and contact information for organizations that include or represent under-represented groups. (page 17)
- If education and information-sharing across district boundaries are primary City policy goals for district councils, City assistance for the district councils in the form of web site creation and updating would be appropriate. This might allow district councils to reach a far broader citizen audience, and facilitate two-way communication between the councils and citizens, without requiring attendance at evening meetings, which is a barrier to participation for many citizens. (page 18)
- If the City believes face-to-face networking is an important district council goal, consider multiple ways of achieving this. Several jurisdictions reported that annual or semiannual neighborhood-oriented events were more successful at drawing large, diverse groups than monthly meetings. (page 18)