



ACCELERATING HOUSING PRODUCTION



Planning Commissioner Training

Your Role as a Planning Commissioner & Public Meetings



ACCELERATING HOUSING PRODUCTION | TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

SUPPORTED BY:



PROVOST &
PRITCHARD

THEHOUSINGWORKSHOP



URBAN MATH





ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

To Exercise All Powers and Duties Granted to it by Ordinance or Resolution

Makes Recommendations to the City Council/Board of Supervisors, for Adoption, General Plan or Specific Plan for Physical Development

Exercise Such Additional Powers and Duties as may be Provided for by Such General Laws of the State of California as are not in Conflict With Local Procedures

Administrates the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance



ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSIONER

Should Always be
Thinking About the Vision
and How the Community
Should Grow And
Develop

Focus on the “Big
Picture”

Consider the Long-range
Implications of Current
Development Trends
(e.g., precedent setting)

Assess the Impact on
Future Vision And Overall
Quality of Life, Economic
Vitality, Prosperity, and
Cost of Living

ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSIONER

YOU AND THE GOVERNING BODY

Appointed by the Governing Board

Communicating with the Board/Council will Take Various Forms

- Liaison
- Study Sessions and Annual Workshops
- Policy and Procedure Training Sessions
- Public Events

Opportunity to Exchange Ideas, Thoughts and Opinions

Ensure Consistency of the Vision for the Community

ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSIONER

YOU AND STAFF

Link Between the Planning Commission and Staff

- Brings Items Before Commission When Ready
- Make Changes, Additions and Suggestions
- Overall Coordination of the Commission

A Good Planning Commission Will:

- Read Staff Reports and Conduct Site Visits
- Not Blindside Staff – Call Beforehand, Allow Time to Research
- Establish a Collaborative Working Relationship
- Be Respectful

ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSIONER

YOU AND THE PUBLIC

Know Your
Agency's Policy
for
Communicating
with the Public

Talking with the public or an applicant? If so... Report it!

Who can communicate on behalf of the commission?

Interactions
with the Public
Outside of
Meetings

Be seen

Attend events

Speak with residents and encourage their Input

Build relationships/attend events put on by local organizations

ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSIONER

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Be a Role Model

Be Informed

- Read Agenda Materials and Be Prepared
- Ask Questions and Evaluate the Information Presented
- Know What is Going on in the Community
- Attend Council/Board Meetings

Be a Liaison Between the City Council/Board of Supervisors and the Community



RESPONSIBILITIES THE PLANNING COMMISSIONER

Apply Applicable Laws and Ordinances

- Every applicant has a right to be judged by the laws in place at the time
- Evaluate consistency with adopted plans

Participate in Proceedings

- Be an active listener
- Ask questions
- Voice opinions and make recommendations

Encourage the Public to Participate

- Be kind, speakers are usually nervous
- Ask questions
- Thank them for their time



ATTRIBUTES OF EFFECTIVE COMMISSIONS

Develop a sense of
team

Have clear roles and
responsibilities

Honor the
relationship with
staff and each other

Conduct effective
meetings

Hold themselves and
the agency
accountable

Practice continuous
learning and
development

HONOR THE RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFF AND EACH OTHER

Key Characteristics

Officials have the ability to *respectfully* disagree (i.e. to disagree without being disagreeable).

They are able to leave it at the dais; debates are about policy, not personality.

Exceptional officials reflect positive decorum and model leadership by using respectful tone with colleagues.

Effective commissions establish a set of behaviors in advance -- potentially documented in an official code of conduct -- to help promote civility and respect.



CONDUCT EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Key Characteristics

Officials are respectful of each other, the public and everyone's time.

Officials use engaging body language as a way to demonstrate respect.

Issues are not personalized, thoughtful dialogue is the objective.

Agenda packets are read, members come prepared and have an open mind.

Respect is demonstrated for varied opinions.

Everyone strives to be civil and act with decorum.



ETHICS & LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Open Meeting
Laws

Conflicts of
Interest

Social Media
Considerations

Ex Parte
Conversations

When in doubt, consult your agency counsel!



ETHICS TRAINING AND RESOURCES

AB 1234 Training

- ILG – www.ca-ilg.org/AB1234

Fair Political Practices Commission

- www.fppc.ca.gov

Cal Cities Open and Public: A Guide to the Ralph M. Brown Act

- www.calcities.org/resource/open-public-v-a-guide-to-the-ralph-m.-brown-act

ILG Ethics Resources

- www.ca-ilg.org/ethics

PURPOSE OF THE BROWN ACT

- Provide public access to meetings of California local government agencies
- Promote transparency and public participation
- Open to the public
- See Bagley-Keene Act for State government agencies



WHAT DOES THE BROWN ACT REQUIRE?

“All meetings of the legislative body of a local agency shall be open and public, and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting of the legislative body of a local agency, except as otherwise provided in this chapter.” (Government Code § 54953)

OPEN MEETINGS: THE BROWN ACT



- Meetings of local legislative bodies
 - Notice specifying time and place of meeting
 - Published agenda
 - Opportunity for public comment
- Penalties: Invalidate action and/or misdemeanor
- New laws
 - *AB 2257: post agenda or link to agenda on primary website homepage accessible through a prominent, direct link for all meetings after 1/1/2019 (Gov't Code 54954.2)*
 - *AB 1787: members of the public with translators receive twice the allotted time for public comment*

BROWN ACT – AB 2449 TELECONFERENCING

- **AB 2449 – Limited Teleconferencing**

- No need to post location if other requirements are met.
- Requirements:
 - Physical Location. A quorum must participate from a single physical location in the district.
 - Video. The meeting must have either two-way video (e.g., Zoom) or telephone with live webcasting
 - Notice/Participation. Agenda shows how public virtually participates
 - Public Comments. Must allow during meeting; cannot limit to advanced comments
 - Technical Difficulties. Must stop meeting if on district's end

BROWN ACT – AB 2449 TELECONFERENCING

Must have valid reasons for teleconferencing:

- Only two justifications:
 - Just Cause
 - Childcare or family caregiving need
 - Contagious illness
 - A need related to physical or mental disability
 - Travel while on official business of your agency
 - Medical Emergency
 - Physical medical emergency that prevents in-person
 - Family medical emergency that prevents in-person

Notification Requirements

- Just Cause
 - Notice to City at earliest opportunity
 - Must give general description of reasons
- Medical Emergency
 - Must make request of agency at earliest opportunity
 - Council/Board must take action to approve request
 - Must give general description of reasons

**Do not have to disclose confidential medical information*

MEETING PREPARATION

Be Clear About the Process

- Be clear about who is running the meeting and explain the role of the presiding officer (chair of the meeting).
- The chair can help ensure a more successful meeting by:
 - Explaining the meeting process and outlining local rules and procedures at the beginning of the meeting, including any limitations on public participation.
 - Assuring people that they will be allowed to share their views.
 - Reminding all participants (governing body and public) to be compassionate about the fear of public speaking; do not allow heckling or applause.

Be Prepared

- Educate yourself about agenda items before the meeting.
- Make information available to the public before the meeting.
- Reach out to the community; talk to community members one-on-one and to groups at their meetings.
- Invite questions ahead of the meeting.



VIRTUAL MEETING CONSIDERATIONS

Consider lighting, environment, background, potential noises, etc.

Be prepared to show a headshot that ranges between head and chest. Consider using a virtual background.

Inform users, especially those using platforms for the first time, how to use the technology, including how to switch views

Consider scripting your meetings containing specific instructions on how to provide comment for both commission and the public.

Not Business As Usual: No Body Language, Harder to Participate, More Confusing

Presentations Are More Important: Simplify the Slide Deck, Practice the Presentation

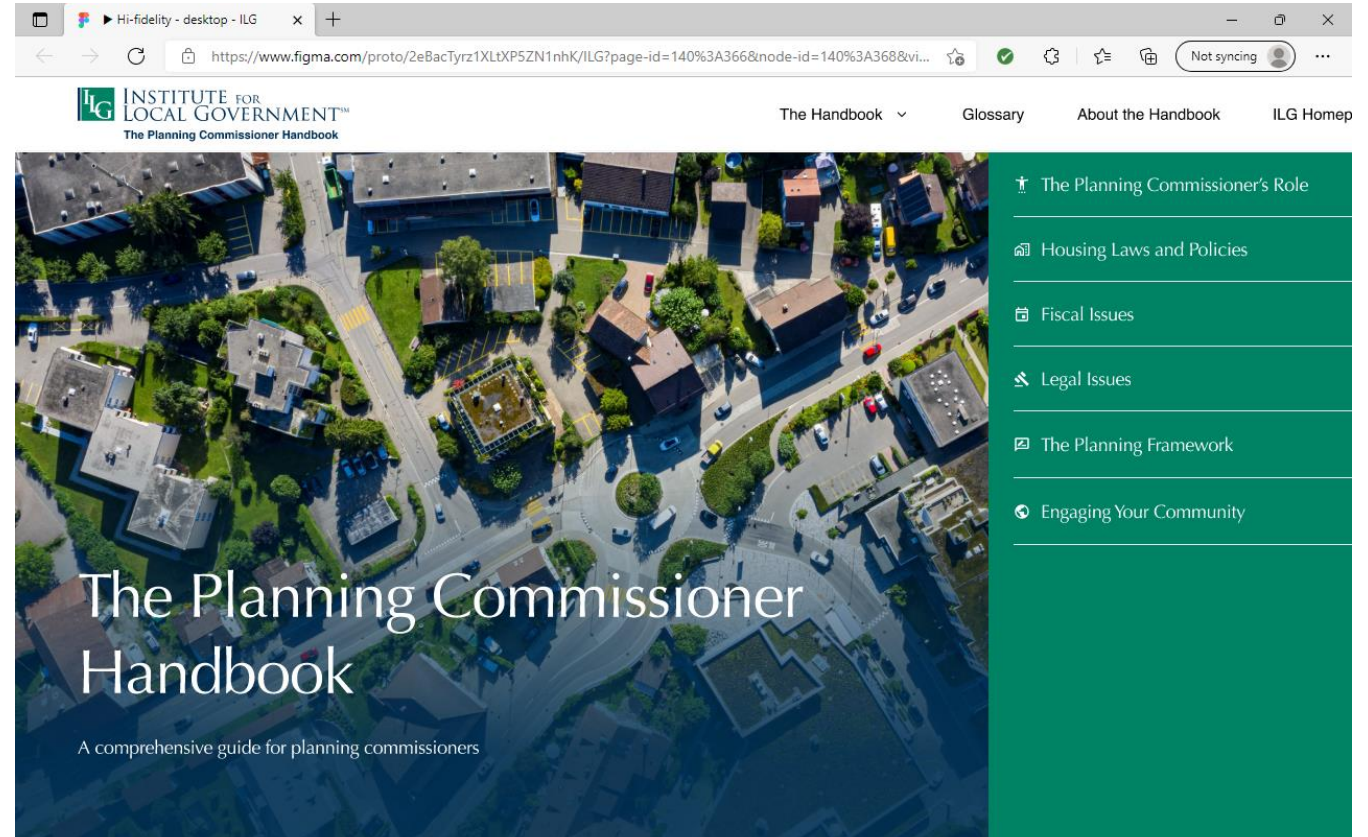


SUGGESTIONS FOR DECISION-MAKERS

- All Microphones are ON! Always, and Recording Too!
- All Video Cameras are ON! Always, and Transmitting Too!
- If It's On the Internet, It's There Forever
- Mute Your Phone, Radio, TV
- Stay on Mute Until You Need To Talk
- Read Comments Into the Record
- Be Patient with Commenters

PLANNING COMMISSIONER HANDBOOK

- New digital toolkit for planning commissioners
- Updated content on:
 - CEQA
 - Community Engagement
 - Legal Issues
 - Housing Laws
 - Financing
 - & More!



ILGPlanningHandbook.org

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Housing and Public Engagement Toolkit:
www.ILGHousingToolkit.org



Housing Planning Hub Site
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/b52bcd2cd9734f02b1c0502bbbe5028d/>



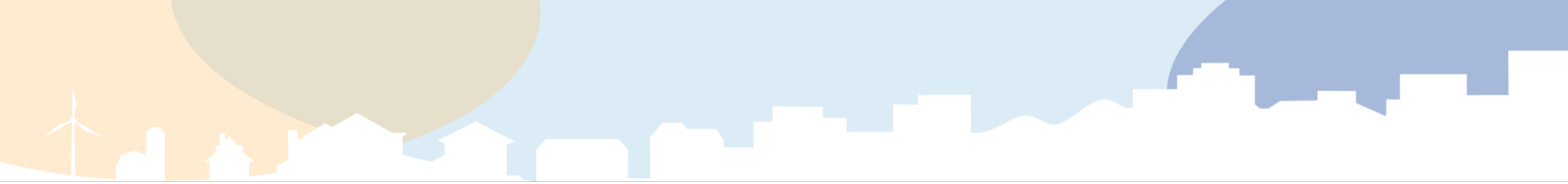
Statewide Housing Plan
<https://statewide-housing-plan-cahcd.hub.arcgis.com/>



Housing Element Video
<https://hcd.wistia.com/medias/9mr2gli886>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- California Office of Planning and Research (OPR)
 - <https://opr.ca.gov/planning/general-plan/guidelines.html>
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
 - <https://opr.ca.gov/ceqa/>
- Environmental Court Decisions
 - <https://ceqaportal.org/>
- California Legislative Information Code Search (laws)
 - <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes.xhtml>
- League of California Cities
 - www.cacities.org/
 - Planning and Community Development Department
www.cacities.org/Member-Engagement/Professional-Departments/Planning-Community-Development
- CalEnviroScreen
 - <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenvirosc>
- Housing and Community Development (HCD)
 - www.hcd.ca.gov/
- State Department of Finance (DOF)
 - www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/
- CEQAnet
 - <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/>



**Thank you
for joining us!**