



Commissioner Handbook

Updated 2022



City of Sierra Madre Mission Statement

The City of Sierra Madre provides quality, cost-effective public services that preserve the small downtown character and enhance the health, safety and welfare of the community.

Goals

Achieve Water Supply Stability and Independence

Achieve Financial Stability and Sustainability

Finalize and Implement the General Plan Update

**Provide High Quality, Cost-Effective, and Achievable
Public Services**

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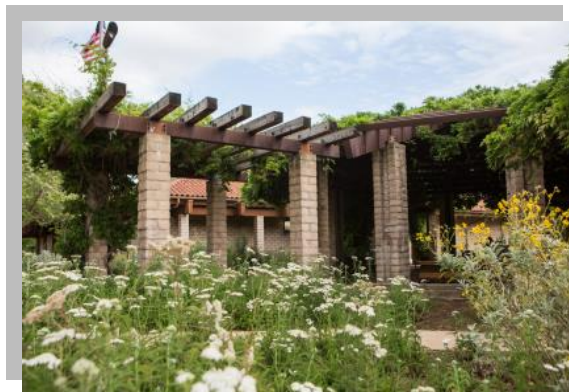
“None of us is better than all of us! Commissions which utilize all the resources among its members will solve problems, render decisions and make accomplishments of a quality that exceeds the best of an individual in the group”

INTRODUCTION

Sierra Madre is noted for its outstanding and dedicated volunteers and its residents' civic involvement. The Sierra Madre City Council encourages citizen participation in its decision making process, particularly through the use of citizen advisory commissions. Currently, there are five (5) citizen commissions established by the City Council to advise and assist them in specific areas. These advisory bodies are able to study a variety of issues and problems in detail. After gathering all pertinent information, hearing arguments, and weighing facts, they recommend to the City Council what they consider the best action to take. In certain situations, commissions are empowered to make specific decisions, subject to appeal to the City Council.

Members of commissions are appointed by the City Council. Appointments to commissions are for terms of up to four years. Residents of the City interested in serving in such a capacity may indicate their desire to serve by completing an application form available at City Hall or on the City's website at www.cityofsierramadre.com. The City of Sierra Madre is extremely fortunate to have many thoughtful and concerned citizens who give generously of their time to assist the City Council and the community by serving on various commissions.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide commission members with guidelines for conducting meetings in accordance with adopted laws and policies of the body on which they have been asked to serve. In order to assist you in performing your duties with the most confidence and professionalism, the handbook has been prepared to present policies and procedures and information to help you understand your responsibilities as a City Commissioner. General procedures, policies, authority for setting up each Commission, Commission job descriptions, and other important information is presented. A signed copy of your receipt of this Handbook will be kept at City Hall.



SCOPE OF AUTHORITY

Perhaps the best way to conceptualize the function of commissions and committees within the City organization is to describe briefly the responsibility and functions of the several bodies and officers to which authority has been given by State statutes and City ordinances.

1. City Council

The City of Sierra Madre operates under the Council-Manager form of government. The Council is responsible to the electorate to be the policy-making body of the City. The City's five Council members are elected at large for four-year, staggered terms of office. The Council reorganizes every year and elects one of its members to serve as Mayor. The Mayor presides over all the Council meetings and is the ceremonial head of the City for official functions. The City Manager is the administrative head of the City under the direction of the City Council. The City Manager is responsible for carrying out policy and the efficient administration of the City's affairs.

2. Commissions

All appointed Commissions are asked to serve the City in an advisory capacity to the City Council. The benefits derived from Commission deliberations are:

- a. Focusing attention on specific problems;
- b. Encouraging broad citizen participation in formulating alternative community goals;
- c. Weighing community values in a functional area of municipal responsibility; and
- d. Making recommendations based on thoughtful and thorough consideration of the alternatives.

3. City Manager and City Attorney

The City Manager and the City Attorney are appointed by the City Council. The City Manager is responsible for advising the Council on the needs of the City, carrying out Council policies, and administering the personnel, financial affairs and the day-to-day functions of the municipal corporation. The City Attorney is responsible for advising the Council, commissions, committees, and administration on legal matters.

The City Manager may assign a department head the responsibility for providing staff assistance to a committee or commission. In no case does a commission have the authority to supervise or direct the work of a department.

4. Department Heads

There are eleven (11) City Departments: Administration, Community Services, Finance, Fire, Human Resources, IT, Library Services, Planning & Community Preservation Services, Police, Public Works, and Utilities. The head of each department is appointed by the City Manager and is responsible to him/her for the efficient and effective operation of assigned functions.

GENERAL MEETING PROCEDURES

Agenda

An agenda is prepared for each meeting. It must be posted at least 72 hours before every regular meeting, on the City Hall bulletin board and on the City's website at www.cityofsierramadre.com. The agenda must contain a brief general description of each item listed and the nature of the action proposed.

The legislative body may act on items of business not appearing on the posted agenda only under the following conditions:

- Upon determination by a majority vote that an emergency situation exists.
- Upon determination by a two thirds vote, or if less than two thirds of the members are present, a unanimous vote of those members present, that the need to take action arose subsequent to the agenda being posted and that action is necessary prior to the next regular meeting.

Members of the public wishing to address an item not appearing on the agenda and within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body may do so. However, the legislative body may not act on any item not appearing on the agenda unless authorized as indicated above.

Basic Format for Agenda Item

1. Announce the agenda item
2. Report of the item, usually from staff
3. Commissioners ask questions of staff regarding staff report
4. Open for Public Comment (before taking any final votes or decisions)
5. Close Public Comment
6. Discussion and debate by the Commission
7. Invite the Commission to make a motion
8. Second for the motion
9. Review the motion for clarification
10. Take a vote
11. Announce the result for the audience

Minutes

Action minutes of all meetings must be kept and will generally be prepared by staff. Written minutes, when approved by commissions, constitute the official record of its activities. Additions and corrections of the minutes may be made only in public meetings, with the approval of the commission.

Procedures

Meetings are conducted according to parliamentary procedure. The chairperson directs the meeting, and his/her rulings must be followed unless they are overruled by the body.

When a member wishes to propose an idea for the Commission to consider, the member must make a motion. This is the only way an idea or proposal from a member can be presented to the body for discussion and possible action. If the idea is spelled out in written form, a motion is needed to adopt the statement. A motion goes through the following steps:

1. The member asks to be recognized by the Chairperson.
2. After being recognized, the member makes the motion (e.g. "I move...").
3. Another member seconds the motion.
4. The Chairperson asks if there is any further discussion (by Commissioners only).
5. When the Chairperson feels that there has been enough discussion, the debate will be closed (e.g. "Are you ready for that question?"; "Is there any further discussion?").
6. If no one asks permission to speak, the Chairperson then puts the question to vote.
7. After the vote, the Chairperson announces the decision ("The motion is carried" or "The motion is lost"). A tie vote is "no vote," and the matter remains undecided.

Motions

If you make a motion you can't argue against it, however you retain the right not to vote in support of it. However, the member who seconded the motion may argue against it. There are 3 types of motions.

- The basic motion
- The motion to amend
- The substitute motion

"...THE IDEAL MOTION IS INTRODUCED EARLY, IS WORDED IN A WAY ACCEPTABLE TO A MAJORITY, AND INCLUDES ENOUGH DETAIL TO BE CLEAR WITHOUT BEING OVERLY RIGID. NOTHING FOCUSES A DISCUSSION BETTER THAN A MOTION, AND NOTHING IS WRONG WITH OFFERING ONE THAT IS NOT ADOPTED. A REJECTED MOTION MERELY POINTS THE WAY TO ONE THAT WILL BE ACCEPTED." - Dr. Darwin Patnode, a certified professional parliamentarian.

Making a Motion

Commission action can only take place when somebody from the Commission makes a motion. As a Commissioner you should try to get a motion as soon as feasible. The secret to a good motion is the wording. Try to draft your motion or think of before coming to the meeting and be ready to answer questions that might arise. More than 60 percent of those hearing a motion make up their minds about it within 60 seconds. Your goal is to get the other members to accept your concept; exact wording can be amended.

The Chairperson should repeat the motion clearly and to ensure that it is recorded correctly, and that each member has a clear understanding of the motion. Most motions need a second, then the Chairperson should encourage questions and pertinent discussion.

Sample Motions

Introduce an item:	I move that
Amend a motion:	I move to amend by
Limit or extend debate:	I move to extend or limit debate to
Request more study:	I move to refer this to staff / Committee for further study
Delay Consideration:	I move to table the motion until
Close Debate:	I move to the previous question
Reconsider a Vote:	I move to reconsider the vote on
Object to Procedures:	Point of Order
Recess the Meeting:	I move to recess until
Adjourn the meeting:	I move to adjourn

To debate or not to debate

The basic rule is that all motions are subject to debate or discussion except:

- Motion to adjourn
- Motion to recess
- Motion to fix the time to adjourn
- Motion to table (postpone discussion of something)
- Motion to limit debate

Adjournment

When a commission has finished its business, a motion to adjourn is in order. If the body wishes to meet before the next regularly scheduled meeting, the motion to adjourn may include a statement adjourning the meeting to a stated time and place. If this is done, a notice of the adjourned meeting must be posted within 24 hours after the time of adjournment. Adjourned meetings must be set forward to a day and time that allows the agenda to be posted 72 hours in advance of the meeting unless the adjourned meeting is a continuation of the regular meeting and no new items are added to the original agenda.

Hearings

Public hearings requiring public notice shall be published in a local paper of general circulation in a timely manner as prescribed by law. Hearings should be fair and impartial.

Persons who may be affected by the hearing shall be given sufficient notice of the hearing and a reasonable opportunity to be heard. They may be represented by counsel if they wish and are permitted to present oral and written evidence for the record. They are also permitted to ask questions of anyone who speaks to ensure a full and true disclosure of the facts.

The Chairperson of the Commission opens the hearing with a statement somewhat as follows: "This is the time and place for a hearing on ... (state the subject of the hearing). Please come forward to the podium and state your name and address for the record." The City Council and each respective commission/board has discretion to establish a time limit policy for speakers in a Public Hearing. When everyone who wishes to speak has had an opportunity to be heard, the Chairperson announces that the hearing is closed.

Meetings

The time and place for commission meetings is established by the City Council by ordinance.

Special Meetings

A special meeting may be called at any time by the Chairperson or a majority of the members of a commission. Written notice of the special meeting must be delivered to each member at least 24 hours before the time of the meeting and must indicate the business to be considered at the meeting (Government Code Section 54956). Notice must also be given to the local newspapers 24 hours in advance and posted on the City Hall posting Board. Only those items listed on the agenda may be addressed at a special meeting.

Joint Commission Meetings

Commissions may hold joint Commission meetings on an issue or issues pertaining to both Commissions. Commission chairs shall determine the lead Commission for such meeting. Please note that joint Commission meetings must follow Brown Act requirements.

Adjourned Meetings

A commission may adjourn any meeting to a time and place specified in the order of the adjournment. If all members are absent from a meeting, the staff may declare the meeting adjourned to a stated time and place. Notice of the adjournment shall be posted on or near the door of the Council Chamber or other meeting places within 24 hours after the meeting was adjourned. An adjourned regular meeting is considered a regular meeting for purposes of transacting businesses.

City Council Liaison Policy

City Council Members are assigned as liaisons to either one or two commissions every year. A City Council Liaison is not a member of the Commission. The role of a City Council Liaison to a commission is to attend the meetings and provide background or clarification to the commission when needed, and to communicate back to the City Council.

Role of Administrative Support Staff

The role of the administrative support staff is to provide professional recommendations and information to commissions, committees and boards. While the commission or board is encouraged to f

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

1. Start on time.
2. Stick to the agenda.
3. Adoption of the minutes should take no more than five minutes.
4. Corrections to the minutes may be made orally or in writing and copies given to staff and each member.
5. The Chair should rarely, if ever, state his/hers opinion on content in advance of the discussion; only on procedure.
6. Close discussions in a timely manner. Meetings need to move at a comfortable pace.
7. Commissioners must be prepared for the meeting. Read the agenda, minutes, and agenda reports beforehand. Have ready material needed for any report that is your responsibility.
8. All members actively participate in the meeting. No one person should dominate the discussion.
9. Do not engage in distracting side conversations during the meeting.
10. End the meeting at a reasonable time.



COMMISSIONER ROLES

Abilities Desired for all Commissioners

To serve as a commissioner successfully, an individual should demonstrate the following competencies:

Teamwork - Balances team and individual responsibilities, exhibit objectivity and openness to other's views, provide and welcome feedback, and works well with staff and volunteers.

Professionalism - Approaches others in a tactful manner and reacts well under pressure, treats others with respect regardless of their status or position.

Quality - Demonstrates accuracy and thoroughness. Looks for way to improve and promote quality programs and services to residents.

Adaptability - Adapts well to changes in the work environment. Changes approach or method to fit the situation and financial constraints.

Dependability - Attends regularly scheduled Commission meetings and serves as an advocate on various projects and events.

Initiative - Volunteers readily. Undertakes self-development activities and seeks to gain more knowledge about the programs and services provided to the Community.

Problem Solving - Identifies creative solutions to concerns of a community wide interest, after listening to both sides of an issue.

Oral and Written Communication - Speaks clearly and persuasively in positive or negative situations. Upon occasion presents and speaks before other bodies or civic organizations about the Commission and Department regarding programs and services provided to the community.

Leadership - Exhibits confidence in self and others. Inspires others to perform well.

Innovation - Displays original thinking and creativity. Generates suggestions for improving services and programs.

Commission Reorganization and Selection of Chairperson

Terms of office for commission and board members commence the first day of July. Therefore, as soon as practical after July 1st annually, each commission and board shall organize by electing one of its members as Chairperson, and another as Vice-Chair depending upon the code requirements for the particular commission.

The role of the Chairperson

- Must understand the rules of running a meeting
- Moves the meeting and agenda along in a timely manner
- Takes the lead role on process
- Takes a less active role in debate, most often speaks last

Courtesy and Decorum

- Create the right atmosphere
- Only one person at a time should speak
- Point of privilege
- Point of order
- Appeals
- Withdrawing a motion

An effective Commissioner and Board Member

- Is involved
- Listens to the needs of the community
- Knows the locations and status of city facilities and projects
- Comes prepared to meetings
- Attend events highlighting their areas
- Is an advocate



TIPS FOR THE CHAIRPERSON

How you as Chairperson carry out your role has much to do with the success of the board. A weak chair often fails to move a board along and may be unable to save the board from indecisiveness and the tendency to dance around issues. Conversely strong chairs have been known to run roughly over dissent and participation. The point is not simply that you should be either retiring or strong. The point is that you should lead individuals to become a *leadership group* in which members never assume they can relax their responsibility because the chair will be responsible on their behalf. Here are a few tips for chairing more effectively:

1. Be the Chairperson, not an intermittent CEO. Do your own job. The City Manager has already designated the top staff person. Your role is to help the commission do its job, not to run the organization/department. Be clear about the role of the board/commission.

2. Lead the Board/Commission, not City staff. Your focus should be on the board/commission, not on staff. Staff may provide information but does not serve an administrative role for the commission.

3. Lead the Board to define its own job. Your purview is not to work your own agenda for the organization. Even your desire for better governance has to become the commission's commitment before you can have much effect. Press the commission to explore the ramifications of its moral (or sometimes legal) trusteeship and to define just what its job is. When the job is thus defined in its relatively permanent form, have the commission set annual targets within segments of that job.

4. Lead the Commission to design its discipline. When you enforce the rules, it will be better if you are enforcing the commission's rules, not yours. Help the commission examine and plan its processes, including how the board will deal with dissent, renegade members, attendance, and coming to meetings unprepared. Decisions about rules the commission chooses for itself should be written and adopted as formal commission policy.

5. Lead the Commission to evaluate its performance. Regularly return the commission to what it adopted about its own job. Has it followed through? Is it behaving the way it said it would? Be sure you stick to what the commission has adopted as expectations and intentions for itself. Evaluations done apart from the job description are not as useful and may be a waste of time.

6. Run participative but effective meetings. Keep it open, but keep it moving! Encourage debate and differences; bring people out; make it acceptable to disagree. Create an atmosphere of respectful diversity. Yet do not allow the commission to talk an issue to death. Using a simple poll- "How many have your minds made up already?" - can yield surprising and enlightening results.

Reprinted from Board Leadership: A Bimonthly Workshop with John Carver.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Leave of Absence Policy

In a policy established by the City Council on September 23, 2002, Commissioners may request up to a six-month leave of absence in one term. A Commissioner needs to write a letter to the Mayor to request the leave of absence. The letter should state the duration of the leave of absence desired. Upon receiving the request, the Mayor will ask that the request be placed on a City Council agenda for consideration.

Drugs and Alcohol

It is City policy that employees and volunteers shall not be under the influence of or in possession of alcohol or drugs; not possess alcohol or drugs while on City property, at work locations, or while on duty or subject to being called on duty; shall not utilize such substances while they are subject to City duty, sell or provide drugs or alcohol to any other employee or to any person while such employee is on duty or subject to being called, nor have their ability to work impaired as a result of the use of alcohol or drugs.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency, please dial 911.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in City facilities. Please remember it is unlawful for persons under the age of 18 to be in the possession of tobacco.

Disability Discrimination Policy and Complaint Procedure

It is the City's policy not to discriminate on the basis of physical or mental disability, as defined by the City's Rules & Regulations and Volunteer Policy. Retaliation against an individual for filing a discrimination charge or making a discrimination complaint is also prohibited. Disciplinary action up to and including termination (removal from appointment) will be instituted for violation of this Policy. All complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability will be promptly and objectively investigated.

Harassment

This Policy prohibits harassment and discrimination on the basis of any of the following protected classifications: an individual's race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation (including heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality), ethnic or national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, uniformed service member status, marital status, pregnancy, age, medical condition and physical or mental disability (whether perceived or actual), genetic information, gender expression, and veteran status.

Personal Information

Please submit any change in your name, address, or phone number in writing immediately, so that the city may update its records.

Community Services Commission

Job Title: Community Services Commissioner

Commission Liaison: Community Services Manager

Meeting Time: The Community Services Commission meets the third Monday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Summary and Purpose

The Community Services Commission is a five-member advisory body to the Sierra Madre City Council. The fundamental nature of the Community Services Commission is to improve and enhance the quality of life throughout the community. The Commission oversees the general use of parks, public facilities, and matters relating to the community's recreational and service needs.

Commissioners serve as a communication link between the community, City Council and the Community Services Department regarding recreation and community service items assisting in formulating policies that govern the department, programs, and services; recommend rules and regulations to the City Council regarding the City's parks, facilities and programs, make recommendations regarding department priorities.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

1. Act in an advisory capacity and be responsible to the City Council in all matters pertaining to parks, public recreation and community services;
2. Act as a communications link between the residents, City Council, and Community Services Department, in all matters pertaining to parks, facilities, recreation, and community services, and cooperate with other governmental agencies and civic groups in the advancement of sound park, recreation, and community service planning and programming;
3. Plan and recommend community service programs and evaluate community service programs and services designed to meet community needs in areas of youth, recreation, adults, seniors, parks, aquatics, and events, and transportation;
4. Parks and facilities:
 - a. Act in an advisory capacity to the City Council in all matters pertaining to the acquisition, improvement, development, maintenance, and use of all public parks and facilities in the city;
 - b. Recommend regulations, rules, and policies for City Council adoption including hours of operation, fees, programs, organizations and operational procedures,
 - c. Review the items in subsection (b) of this section annually and provide recommendations to the City Council;
 - d. Advise for long range capital improvements;

5. Recreation and community services:
 - a. Formulate policies on services and programs for approval by the City Council, including agreements with the Board of Education of the school district and the City Council for the best possible joint use of parks and recreation facilities and similar agreements with other civic groups,
 - b. Interpret the policies and functions of the Community Services Department to the community,
 - c. Make periodic inventories of community services that exist or may be needed, assess and communicate the needs of the community to the Community Services Manager and the City Council,
 - d. Aid in the coordinating of community services with the programs of other governmental agencies and voluntary organizations;
6. Advise in the preparation of the Community Services Department work plan and goals and budget and make recommendations to the City Council;
7. Perform all other duties referred to and requested of the Community Services Commission by the City Council;
8. Improve and enhance the quality of life throughout the community through people, parks, and programs;
9. Be knowledgeable of and adhere to the Brown Act; and
10. Report regularly to the governing official and the general public.

Qualifications

Members of the Community Services Commission must be Sierra Madre residents and with the exception of the youth member must be at least 18 years of age. The City Council may appoint a minor member, between the ages of 13 and 17, to one of the regular positions on the Community Services Commission as a full voting member of the Commission.

Terms

The youth member of the Commission serves for a one-year term beginning in July 1 and ending on June 30th. The remaining Commissioners are appointed for four-year terms and can be re-appointed for an additional consecutive term.

Library Board of Trustees

Job Title: Library Board of Trustee

Board Liaison: City Librarian/Library Manager

Meeting Time: The Library Board of Trustees meetings are set by a resolution of the Board. Meetings are held the fourth Monday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers

Summary and Job Purpose

The five-member Library Board strives to understand the needs of the community and transform them into the policies that govern the Library. The Board creates long and short term plans to ensure that the Library thrives, and oversees progress toward their implementation. It reviews and makes recommendations for library budget proposals; monitors expenditures; acts as the steward of the library's present and future; and supports adequate funding for library operations.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

The specific and primary purpose of the Board is to:

1. Determine and, by resolution, adopt rules and regulations governing the use and operation of the city Library and public spaces associated with it.
2. Determine the purposes of the Library and secure adequate funds to carry on the Library's program.
3. Know the program and needs of the Library in relation to the community; keep abreast of standards and library trends; cooperate with the Librarian in planning the Library program, and support the Librarian and staff in carrying it out.
4. Establish, support and participate in a planned public relations program.
5. Assist in preparation of the annual budget.
6. Know local and state laws; actively support library legislation in the state and nation.
7. Attend all Board meetings and see that accurate records are kept on file at the library.
8. Attend regional trustee meetings and affiliate with appropriate professional organizations.
9. Be aware of the services of the State Library.
10. Report regularly to the governing official and the general public.

11. Be knowledgeable of and adhere to the Brown Act.
12. Recognize the Library volunteers annually.
13. Support the Friends of the Library.

Qualifications

Members of the Library Board of Trustees must be either a Sierra Madre resident, a non-resident owner of property in the city or a non-resident professional who represents a specialized expertise and who is employed within the city limits and must be at least 18 years of age.

Terms

Trustees serve for a term of four years beginning July 1 and ending June 30th, and are eligible upon request to serve one additional consecutive term. A trustee shall serve no more than two consecutive full terms, but a trustee may be reappointed after one year.



Planning Commission

Job Title: Planning Commissioner

Commission Liaison: Director of Planning and Community Preservation

Meeting Time: The Planning Commission meets the first and third Thursdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Summary and Job Purpose:

The Sierra Madre Planning Commission is a five-member volunteer citizen body. The Planning Commission conducts public hearings and makes decisions and/or recommendations on a variety of land use applications, including use permits, variances, General Plan amendments, zone changes and subdivision maps. The Planning Commission is responsible for the City's long-range planning, and reviews and studies other such land use and planning issues as assigned by the City Council.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

Be knowledgeable of and adhere to the Brown Act and report regularly to the governing official and the general public.

The responsibilities of the Planning Commission fall into two broad categories:

1. Consideration of current land use issues (i.e. applications for General Plan amendment, zone changes, specific plans, conditional use permits, tract maps, variances, and appeals of staff land use decisions); and,
2. Advising the City Council on City-initiated amendments to the General Plan.

According to the Government Code, the legislative body of each county and city must establish a planning agency by ordinance. The powers and duties of the Planning Commission are set forth in state law and are described below:

The Planning Commission may approve or deny the following:

1. Conditional use permits;
2. Variances;
3. Appeals of staff actions (ie. special use and development permits);
4. Tentative Parcel maps.

The Commission may not approve, but may make recommendations for approval or denial of the following:

1. Tentative Tract maps;
2. Amendments to the General Plan;
3. Specific plans and amendments to them.

Qualifications:

Members of the Commission must have a willingness and dedication to commit both time and personal energy to the Planning Commission as well as have an interest in comprehensive community planning, zoning and subdivision of land, and the protection of the environment. A desire to assist in implementing the City of Sierra Madre's land use policies, including the General Plan, Subdivision Ordinances, Zoning Ordinances and environmental policy, for the purpose of protecting the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the City is required. Commissioners must have a willingness to encourage and accept input from citizens, organizations and those directly affected by land use related actions made by the Commission. Lastly, Commissioners must have the ability to maintain an objective approach to community development issues in order to promote the highest quality of life possible for the residents of Sierra Madre.

Terms:

Commissioners are appointed for four-year terms and can be re-appointed for an additional consecutive term.



Senior Community Commission

Job Title: Senior Community Commissioner

Commission Liaison: Community Services Manager

Meeting Time: The Senior Community Commission meets the first Thursday of each month at 3:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Summary and Job Purpose

The Senior Community Commission is a five-member advisory body to the Sierra Madre City Council. The Senior Community Commission is responsible for advising on the welfare and well-being of older Sierra Madreans, by defining their needs, locating and publicizing available resources, coordinating and initiating services and opportunities. The fundamental nature of the Senior Community Commission is to improve and enhance the quality of life for older Sierra Madreans throughout the community.

Commissioners serve as a communication link between the community and Community Services Department regarding seniors' recreational and service needs, as well as assisting in formulating policies governing the programs and services.

Members of the Senior Commission are hands-on volunteers who assist in the Senior Center's operation and in the programs and services offered to the community. Commissioners oversee areas of Health & Safety, Recreation, Transportation, Housing and Resources.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

The specific and primary purpose of this Commission is to provide an effective vehicle for the welfare and well-being of senior citizens of Sierra Madre by:

- A. Assessing and defining their needs;
- B. Locating and publicizing available resources;
- C. Coordinating and initiating services and opportunities for older Sierra Madreans, such as serving hot meals;
- D. Informing the community of the needs of older Sierra Madreans and suggesting ways to participate in creating solutions to those problems; and
- E. Monitoring expenses and revenues directly relating to senior programming and services.
- F. Report regularly to the governing official and the general public.
- G. Be knowledgeable of and adhere to the Brown Act.

Qualifications

Members of the Senior Community Commission must be either a Sierra Madre resident, a non-resident owner of property in the city, or a non-resident professional who represents a specialized expertise in senior/elder issues and who is employed within the city limits, and must be at least 18 years of age. There shall be only one non-resident member of the Commission at any one time.

Terms

Commissioners serve for a term of four years beginning July 1 and ending June 30th, and can be re-appointed for an additional consecutive term.



Natural Resources Commission

Job Title: Energy, Environment, and Natural Resources Commissioner

Commission Liaison: Public Works Director and/or Management Analyst

Meeting Time: The Energy, Environment, and Natural Resources Commission meets the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Summary and Job Purpose

The Natural Resources Commission is a five-member advisory body to the Sierra Madre City Council and City staff. The Commission is responsible for carrying out specific assignments from the City Council as well as general environmental and sustainability topics which may have current or anticipated effects on the Sierra Madre community. The fundamental purpose of the Commission is to monitor current programs and effectively plan for environmental challenges that are now affecting, or may confront the City.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Be knowledgeable of and adhere to the Brown Act and report regularly to the governing official and the general public.

The Commission has been tasked with four primary functions by the City Council: The Community Forest, Water Quality and Sustainability, State or Federally Mandated Environmental Regulations, and Public Outreach concerning environmental topics.

Community Forest – Working with staff and the recently updated Tree Protection and Preservation Ordinance, the Commission will review certain construction projects as they pertain to trees. The Commission also enacts provisions of the recently developed Community Forest Management Plan and oversees Arbor Day events and the City’s recognition as a “Tree City USA.” The Commission may also at times consider appeals to decisions that have been reached by city staff regarding the Community Forest.

Water Quality and Sustainability – Water topics continue to be a paramount duty of the Commission. As Sierra Madre’s water sources become threatened due to periodic drought events, water conservation and similar programs are often agenda items for the Commission meetings. Water Quality topics are centered on storm or non-storm discharges that enter the Rio Hondo Watershed. These are stringently regulated and affect environmental quality for surface and ground waters in the area. The Commission regularly works with staff to research, analyze and discuss such topics as they often present specific challenges to the City of Sierra Madre.

Mandated Environmental Regulations – The EENR Commission is charged with tracking developing regulations or programs in a wide variety of environmental arenas. Working with Public Works staff, the Commission will seek efficient and fiscally responsible means of meeting current and anticipated requirements in such areas as solid waste, climate change,

energy efficiency, recycling, hazardous waste management, air quality, storm water quality, water conservation and more.

Public Outreach – The fourth of the current and specific duties that have been assigned to the Commission by City Council is development and management of public outreach efforts in environmental policies and programs. The Commission works toward a variety of outreach efforts and frequencies to provide timely and accurate environmental information to the residents.

Terms

Commissioners serve for a term of four years beginning July 1 and ending June 30th, and can be re-appointed for an additional consecutive term.



General Laws and Policies

Maddy Act

Whenever a commission, committee, or board vacancy occurs, a special notice is posted announcing the vacancy. A final appointment shall not be made by the City Council for at least 30 working days after such notice is posted. However, such appointments may be made on an acting basis until the final appointment is made (pursuant to Government Code 54974).

Commission Appointments

Unless the City Council directs otherwise or the law otherwise requires, appointments to any City Board or Commission shall be made by the City Council, pursuant to Municipal Code Section 2.04.

Limitation on Consecutive Terms of Office

Sierra Madre Municipal Code Section 2.04.070 (c) states that members of council-appointed committees, commissions, and boards may not serve more than two, consecutive, full terms on the same committee, commission or board.

ADA Compliance

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54953.2, all meetings of a legislative body, that are open and public shall be held in a location and conducted in a manner that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. In addition, if requested, the agenda and documents in the agenda packet shall be made available in alternative formats to persons with a disability. (Section 54954.1.) The agenda shall include information regarding how, to whom, and when a request for disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, may be made by a person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in the meeting. (Section 54954.2.)

Brown Act

The Ralph M. Brown Act is California's sunshine law for local government. In a nutshell, it requires local government business, including city commission business to be conducted at open and public meetings, except in limited situations. The Brown Act is based upon state policy that the people must be informed so they can keep control over their government.

More specifically, the Brown Act requires all meetings to be open and public, requires legislative bodies to post agendas prior to their meetings and prohibits action or discussion of items or subjects not listed on the posted agenda. The definition of meeting is very broad and includes any discussion by a majority of the members for the commission on any matter within the commission's jurisdiction, whether the discussion occurs in person, through intermediaries or through use of a technological device (such as a telephone answering machine, e-mail or voice mail), even though a majority of members never gathers in the same place at the same time.

More detail regarding the Brown Act is included in your AB 1234 training as provided by the City Attorney's office. Commissioners/board members are encouraged to contact the

commission/board staff liaison or City Clerk's Office with any questions regarding how the Brown Act may apply in a particular situation.

Conflicts of Interest Laws

From time to time matters will come before a commission in which an individual member may have a direct or indirect personal interest. When this happens, the member must disqualify him/herself from participating in the deliberations and must abstain from voting or trying to influence other members of the commission or staff.

The member needs to explain the reason(s) for abstaining before the item is discussed.

The conflict of interest laws and related prohibitions on the receipt of gifts and honoraria are complex and the consequences of a violation can be very serious. These, too, are discussed in your AB 1234 training through the City Attorney's office.

There are three principal conflict of interest laws that apply to local agency decisions:

A. Political Reform Act of 1974

The Political Reform Act of 1974 (Government Code Section 81000 *et seq.*, "Act") is the principal law in California governing conflicts of interest for public officials. Its conflict of interest provisions are found at Government Code Section 87000 *et seq.* The Fair Political Practices Commission ("FPPC") has interpreted the Act in a series of Regulations found at 2 Cal. Code of Regulations, Section 18110 *et seq.*^{1/}

The Act requires public officials to disqualify themselves from making, participating in the making, or in any way attempting to use their official position to influence a decision in which they know or have reason to know they have a financial interest (Section 87100). New law specifies that if a public official has a financial interest in a government decision, he or she must identify the financial interest that gives rise to the conflict of interest, recuse himself or herself from the discussion and vote, and leave the room until the matter is concluded. One exception permits the member to return to the public area of the room to speak on the issue during the time the general public speaks on the issue (Section 87105). In such circumstances, the member may listen to public comment on the matter at issue and may speak from the same area as the public, not from the dais (Regulation Section 18702.5(d)(3)).

An official has a financial interest in a decision if the decision will have a reasonably foreseeable material financial effect, distinguishable from its effect on the public generally, on the official, or on a member of his or her immediate family, or on certain listed financial interests. Those listed financial interests are:

“(a) Any business entity in which the public official has a direct or indirect investment worth Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) or more.

^{1/} All statutory references are to the California Government Code. Regulations of the FPPC are referred to as "Regulation Section."

(b) Any real property in which the public official has a direct or indirect interest worth Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) or more.

(c) Any source of income, other than gifts and other than loans by a commercial lending institution in the regular course of business on terms available to the public without regard to official status, aggregating five hundred dollars (\$500) or more in value provided to, received by, or promised to the public official within 12 months prior to the time when the decision is made.

(d) Any business entity in which the public official is a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or holds any position of management.

(e) Any donor of, or any intermediary or agent for a donor of, a gift or gifts aggregating five-hundred dollars (\$500) or more in value provided to, received by, or promised to the public official within 12 months prior to the time when the decision is made. . . .” (Section 87103.) Gifts aggregating \$50 or more in the reporting period must be disclosed on a Form 700

The Regulations of the FPPC provide interpretation and guidance to most of the terms used in the Act as well as standards for determining if each element of the Act’s prohibitions has been satisfied. Some of the most significant regulations address standards for determining if a decision has a material financial effect on a business entity (Regulation Section 18705.1), or on various types of interests in real property (Regulation Section 18705.2).

B. Government Code Section 1090

Government Section 1090 provides in relevant part:

“Members of the Legislature, state, county, district, judicial district, and city officers or employees shall not be financially interested in any contract made by them in their official capacity, or by any body or board of which they are members. . . .”

The prohibition contained in Section 1090 is intended to preclude a public official from using his or her position as a government officer or employee to obtain business or financial advantage. The purpose of the prohibition is to remove the possibility of any personal influence which might bear on an official’s decisions on contracts entered into by the governmental entity.

Section 1090 is unlike the Political Reform Act and the Common Law Doctrine Against Conflicts of Interest (discussed below), which each permit the public official with the conflict of interest to abstain from participation in the decision but otherwise allow the decision to go forward. Section 1090 prevents *the City* from making the contract, unless an exception applies. Because the application of this rule can have serious consequences for the City (and because there are criminal penalties for violating it), it is important that you consult the City Attorney’s about any City contract in which you may have an interest.

C. Common Law Doctrine Against Conflicts of Interest

The common law doctrine against conflicts of interest is the courts' expression of the public policy against public officials using official positions for private benefit. This doctrine has been primarily applied to require a public official to abstain from participation in cases where the public official's private financial interest may conflict with his or her official duties

Laws That Prohibit Certain Gifts, Honoraria and Loans

The conflict of interest laws set forth above do not prohibit an official from having an interest in a business or real property, they merely prevent the official from participating in a decision that would materially affect those interests. However, state law has been amended to preclude elected local officials from receiving certain gifts, honoraria and loans. These prohibitions apply whether or not the source of the gift, honorarium or loan is, or will ever be, affected by a decision of the official's agency. Additionally, these limitations apply to certain other designated local officials, including planning commissioners.

A. Limitations on the Receipt of Gifts

Government Code Section 89503 (a) and (c) provides:

(a) No elected state officer, elected officer of a local government agency, or other individual specified in Section 87200 shall accept gifts from any single source in any calendar year with a total value of more than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250).

Gifts aggregating \$50 or more in the reporting period must be disclosed on a Form 700

We hope that this material is helpful to you. However, please remember that this overview of conflict of interest laws and regulations does not cover every potential decision of the City in which conflict of interest laws are implicated. The application of these laws must be analyzed on a case by case basis in light of each Commissioner's individual circumstances. Thus, while certain generalizations can be drawn, it is important to seek conflict of interest advice from the City Attorney's office or from the Fair Political Practices Commission ("FPPC") whenever questions arise. The FPPC can be reached directly at (916) 322-5901 or (866) 275-3772.



City of Sierra Madre

ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I understand that I am responsible to know the contents of the following City Policies and Programs, and that I am obligated to comply with the provisions therein:

Disability Discrimination Policy and Complaint Procedure

It is the City's policy not to discriminate on the basis of physical or mental disability, as defined by the City Policy. Retaliation against an individual for filing a discrimination charge or making a discrimination complaint is also prohibited. Disciplinary action up to and including termination (removal from appointment) will be instituted for violation of this Policy. All complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability will be promptly and objectively investigated.

Harassment Policy and Procedure

I understand that harassment of a City employee on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, handicap, disability, medical condition, marital status, sex or age is prohibited. Disciplinary action up to and including removal will be instituted for harassment.

Any retaliation against a person for filing a harassment charge or making a harassment complaint is also prohibited. All complaints of harassment will be promptly and objectively investigated.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy

It is City policy that employees and volunteers shall not be under the influence or in possession of alcohol or drugs while on City property, at work locations, or while on duty or subject to being called on duty; shall not utilize such substances while they are subject to City duty, sell or provide drugs or alcohol to any other employee or to any person while such employee is on duty or subject to being called, nor have their ability to work impaired as a result of the use of alcohol or drugs.

Commissioners Handbook

I understand that as a Commissioner/Board member of the City of Sierra Madre, I am obliged to conduct my duties in a professional manner and agree to follow the policies as outlined herein.

I have received a copy of the City of Sierra Madre Commissioner's Handbook. This signed document will be maintained in the City Clerk's Office.

I, _____ have read and understand all the above policies. I also further understand that non-compliance with these policies or procedures may result in my removal from appointed position.

Commissioner Signature

Date