

Meeting Framework  
Version 4.2

Adopted March 12, 2024

The Commission adopted amendments to the Meeting Framework Version 4 to facilitate final conversations about conclusions and recommendations on the General Plan efficiently.

**Ground Rules** – These ground rules will be posted in the room, and members or staff can refer to them as necessary. The draft ground rules include:

- 1) Come prepared to take action.
- 2) Review the material and prepare cogent positions on any changes you feel are necessary ahead of the meeting.
- 3) Be prepared to state your position concretely and succinctly.
- 4) Be willing to accept the majority position and move on.
- 5) Share the air; we want equitable contributions among Commissioners.

**Purpose** – Our purpose is to develop a recommendation to the Council supported by the majority, if not consensus, on changes to the drafts of the General Plan Elements, including the Gateway Area Plan dated December 12, 2023.

**Objective** – Our objectives are:

- 1) Address Commission and public comment on the drafts;
- 2) to provide concise changes in policy referring explicitly to the draft provided by staff;
- 3) to work to build consensus efficiently; and
- 4) if consensus cannot be reached to advance to a vote, to work towards a recommendation that the majority can support.

**Outcome** – The outcome of this work will be revised drafts of each Element that will receive a consensus, or lacking consensus a majority, recommendation.

**Meeting Method**

- 1) Materials will be posted in the meeting agendas and tracked using a running tally in a spreadsheet.
- 2) Items that are likely to have majority support will be placed on a list for en mass adoption. Commissioners will consider whether to pull policies off the consent list before adopting the list. Any items removed from the en mass list will be taken up before the remaining items.
- 3) To remove an item from the en mass list, a majority of Commissioners must vote to do so. This may be done through a mix of polling techniques (negative voting, straw polls, Gradients of Agreement, etc.)
- 4) Each item is taken in turn for polling. A simple majority in each vote sways the decision.
- 5) Policies are generally voted on in the following way:
  - a. Proposal is shown on the screen.
  - b. Proposer is allotted 45 seconds to succinctly provide an argument for the change.
  - c. Commissioners may ask staff for a recommendation.
  - d. Staff or Chair conducts a negative vote: Is anyone opposed to this change?
  - e. If no, the change is made, if yes, go to f.

- f. Allow debate rules deliberations: any commissioner provides their counter proposal or argument, the proponent provides an up to 2-minute response, the counter proposal is allowed a 1-minute rebuttal.
  - g. Consider whether there are other points of view that need to be considered. If no, move to h, if yes, move to f with alternative point of view.
  - h. Show of hands vote for each of the various proposals on the table. Simple majority resolves the matter.
- 6) Staff will track the votes and changes in real time on the screen.
  - 7) Staff will provide a table or other visual to track progress.

Polling Options – There are several polling techniques that the Commission can use to efficiently resolve policy changes and/or disagreements. Staff will help facilitate when each is best used, but the Commission should consider the options to ensure they concur with the process. Among the polling options, staff recommends at a minimum, the Commission use simple straw polling, negative polling, and gradients of agreement.

Straw polling is familiar to the Commission. This is a show of hands for or against when the question is called. Straw polling can be used in combination with negative polling to quickly resolve matters in an equitable and efficient way. Negative polling is essentially asking whether there are any in opposition to a proposal.

Negative polling and straw polling result in binary (for or against) decisions. Often, decision makers feel that they land along a continuum. That is, they do not feel completely for or against, or they have mild objections but would not necessarily vote for or against.

Gradients of agreement is a polling technique that allows non-binary consensus building. The range of polling responses in a gradients of agreement are: 1) I fully support this and will vote for it; 2) I have some reservations, but I will vote for it; 3) I am neither for nor against it, and will go with the consensus; 4) I have concerns about passing it, but will not block it; and 5) I have serious concerns and will vote against it. Polls are conducted by each participant holding up their hand with the number of fingers showing that corresponds to their position along the gradient.