

# WELCOME NEW PLANNING COMMISSIONERS



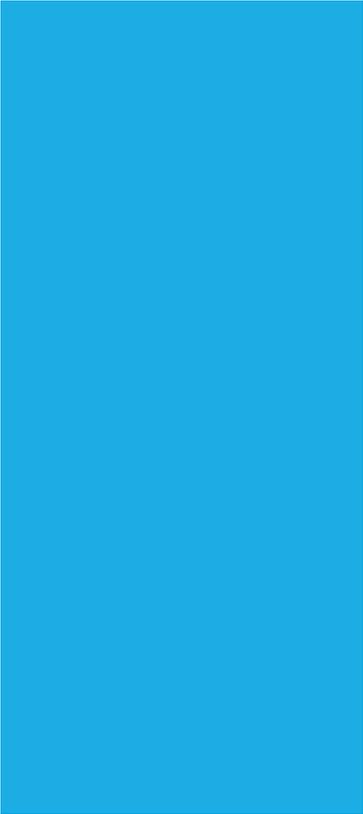
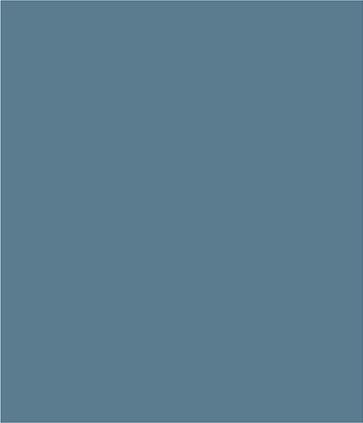
CITY OF NEEDLES

WORKSHOP - PLANNING  
COMMISSION ROLES AND  
RESPONSIBILITIES

FEBRUARY 4, 2026



# AGENDA

- What is the Planning Commission?
  - Commission Duties & Responsibilities
  - Making Ethical and Legal Decisions
  - Tips for Success
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# WHY PLANNING MATTERS IN NEEDLES

Shapes how our city grows  
and looks

Balances development  
with community character

Protects health, safety,  
and environmental quality

Supports housing, business,  
and infrastructure goals

# WHAT IS THE PLANNING COMMISSION?

Advisory body  
to City Council  
on land use  
matters

Reviews and  
makes decisions  
on planning  
applications

Implements  
General Plan  
and zoning  
ordinances

# LEGAL FRAMEWORK & COMPOSITION

Governed by CA Planning & Zoning Law and City Code

7 members appointed by the City Council

Meetings subject to Brown Act (public & open)



## COMMISSION'S CORE DUTIES

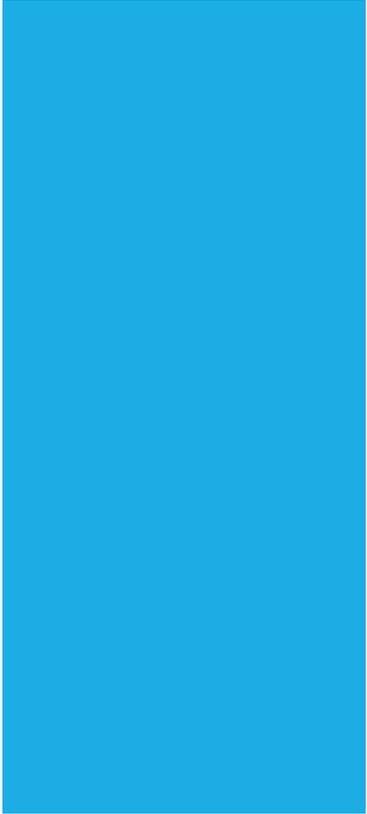
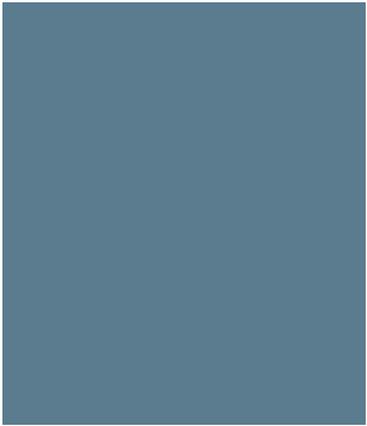
Review permits,  
variances, subdivisions

Policy role in General  
Plan & zoning updates

Recommend actions to  
City Council



# QUASI-JUDICIAL DECISIONS

- Affect property rights
  - Apply adopted standards consistently without bias
  - Ensure fair public hearings
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# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



Listen to public  
testimony



Review written  
comments



Balance input with  
adopted plans &  
codes

# ETHICAL STANDARDS

- Serve public interest, avoid private gain
- Maintain impartiality, avoid conflicts
- Disclose ex parte communications
- Disclose potential conflicts before participating in discussions or votes

- Brown Act (open meetings)
- Political Reform Act (conflict disclosures)
- Respect due process (fair notice & hearings)

**LEGAL OBLIGATIONS**

# BEST PRACTICES FOR DECISION MAKING

- Review staff reports and plans
- Ask clarifying questions
- Base decisions on facts and evidence
- Treat everyone with courtesy

# TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Be prepared and fair
- Be transparent
- Be collaborative with staff, commissioners, and public
- Rely on Planning staff for technical guidance, legal interpretation, and process management.
- The role of staff is to support Commissioners in making informed decisions.

# WHAT'S AHEAD

- Expedite planning review and refine zoning policies encourage development.
- Streamline application processed and development code review.
- Specific Plan Downtown Core
- Technology upgrades online permitting.

# DISCUSSION



- Thoughts or concerns
- Staff is available for guidance