

## PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE GROUND RULES

The General Plan Subcommittee (Subcommittee) was appointed by the San Mateo City Council to provide input to City staff, consultants, Planning Commission, and City Council at key project milestones throughout the General Plan update. These Subcommittee ground rules are intended to describe the Subcommittee role and purpose and promote efficient and collaborative communication and discussion, and fair and civil behavior.

### PURPOSE AND ROLE

The Subcommittee should look upon itself as a knowledgeable body broadly representing the San Mateo community at large. The Subcommittee is independent of the Planning Commission and the City Council. Subcommittee members will reflect their personal insights and preferences, based on their experience as members of the community, as well as their perspectives related to any formal or informal organized group they represent.

The Subcommittee has three main functions, all of which are of equal importance:

- To provide feedback to City staff and the project consultants during the preparation of the General Plan Update with the goal of creating a document that is responsive to neighborhood and community goals, conditions, and aspirations.
- To share project status information to their respective Commission or City Council at key project milestones.
- To communicate information about the General Plan Update to other San Mateo community members and to encourage their colleagues, friends, neighbors, and others in the broader San Mateo community to participate in the process.

### CONDUCT

- 1. Meeting Procedure:** The Subcommittee is subject to the Brown Act, which sets standards for public meetings, agendas, notices and public participation. Business can only be conducted if a quorum of four members is present. Meetings shall run in a parliamentary style. Substantive issues will have higher priority than matters of procedural detail. The Chair has discretion in guiding discussion among Subcommittee members while allowing for appropriate staff and public input.
- 2. Meeting Protocol:** Subcommittee members shall:
  - Do their homework; prepare for and attend meetings. (Notify staff if unable to attend a meeting.)
  - Seek and be open to creative ways to meet multiple needs.
  - Maintain civil and respectful discourse at all times.
  - Respect differing viewpoints, be attentive when others speak, and ask clarifying questions of speakers and each other to aid mutual understanding.
  - Verify assumptions when necessary and avoid assuming motives.
  - Stay focused on the task at hand and share discussion time.
  - Refrain from side conversations and distractions, including the use of cell phones.
  - Concentrate on content and allow the Chair to focus on how to promote productive discussion.
- 3. Meeting Materials:** The agenda and meeting materials will be posted on [StriveSanMateo.org](http://StriveSanMateo.org) the Friday before each meeting.

- 4. Feedback/Input:** The Subcommittee Chair and City staff/consultant will summarize broad themes of the input shared at the end of each agenda item. Should consensus be achieved, it will be noted in the meeting minutes. Differing Subcommittee perspectives will also be noted.
- 5. Clear and Timely Communication:** Every Subcommittee is responsible for communicating their perspective on issues under consideration at the earliest possible time.
- 6. Information Sharing:** The meeting secretary will take action minutes/summaries of Subcommittee meetings, drafts will be made available for review at the next meeting, and once approved, will be posted online and kept on file for any interested person to examine. Subcommittee members who wish to share written information with the Subcommittee shall provide such to City staff at least 72 hours prior to any scheduled meeting to allow for distribution prior to the meeting. Electronic communications shall follow the same protocols for civility that apply during Subcommittee meetings. Subcommittee members may not engage in email, phone or in-person communication that could possibly violate the Brown Act, including serial or group communications.
- 7. Public Participation:** Subcommittee meetings are open to the public. Members of the public will have an opportunity to address the Subcommittee during each meeting for up to 2 minutes on any agenda item and during an open comment period and for items not on the agenda but within the purview of the Subcommittee. Members of the public are encouraged to submit written materials to City staff in advance of the meetings.
- 8. Absences:** Two consecutive unexcused absences by a member from a Subcommittee meeting shall be grounds for dismissal.
- 9. Timely adjournment:** Subcommittee meetings will adjourn by 8 p.m. whenever possible. The Chair, city staff and project consultant will work together to prepare reasonable agendas and, if necessary, expedite Subcommittee proceedings.
- 10. Conflicts of Interest:** Subcommittee members shall remove themselves from all discussions on matters in which they have a conflict of interest pursuant to the Regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission, or where their bias cannot be set aside to allow fair consideration of an issue. If reasonable concerns are raised as to a member's potential conflict or bias, the member is encouraged to refrain from participating in any discussion on that item. Pervasive or recurring conflicts of interest should lead a member to resign from the Subcommittee and may be grounds for dismissal. If there are questions regarding this matter, please contact City staff Julia Klein.
- 11. Subcommittee Representation:** Only a member specifically authorized in advance by the Subcommittee may speak for the Subcommittee outside of Subcommittee meetings. Subcommittee members not so designated who speak at any other meeting shall clearly state they do not represent and are not authorized to speak for the Subcommittee.
- 12. Legal Issues:** Specific legal issues shall be directed through City staff for consideration by the City Attorney.