

The logo for the County of San Luis Obispo, featuring a dark blue silhouette of the county's shape. The text "COUNTY of SAN LUIS OBISPO" is written in white, with "of" in a smaller font size and lowercase.

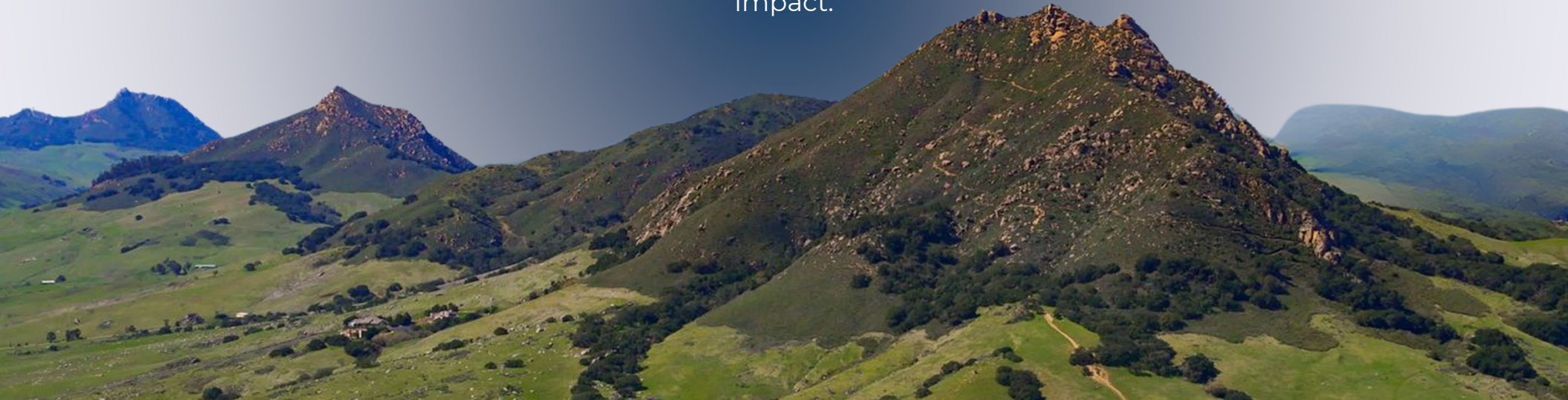
COUNTY
of SAN LUIS
OBISPO

Community Advisory Council Orientation

Planning & Building

Spring 2026

Know your role. Navigate the process. Make an impact.



Department of Planning & Building





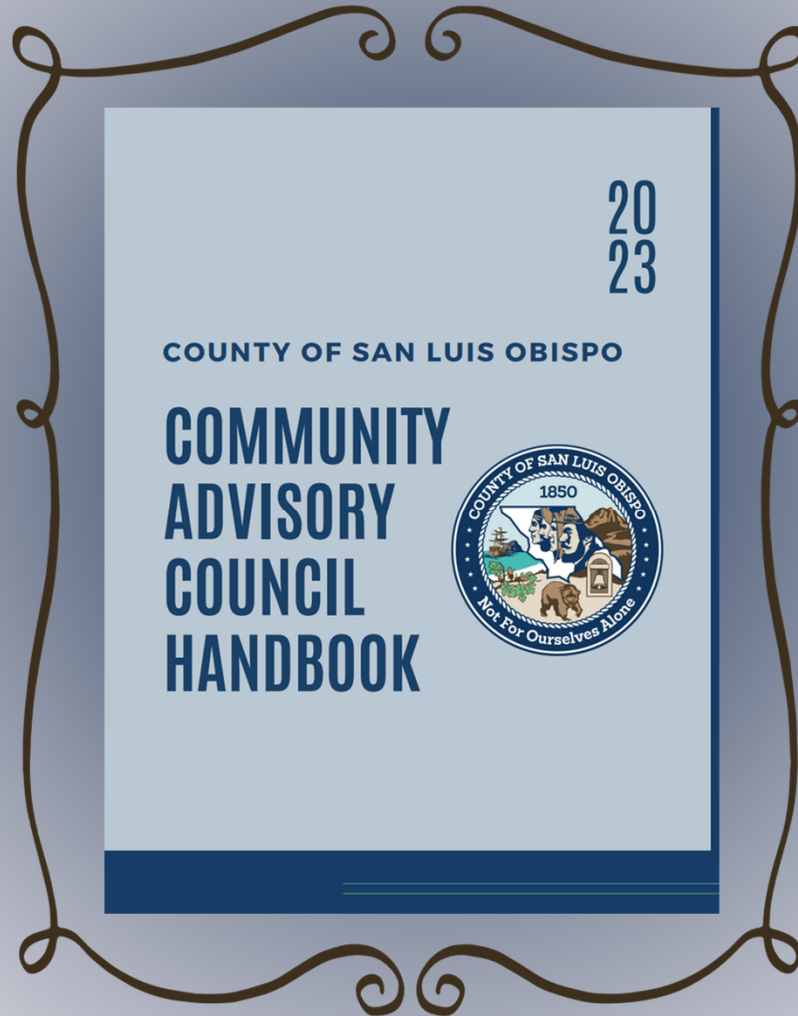
CAC OVERVIEW

PRESENTED BY ERIC TOLLE

Community Advisory Council (CAC) Liaisons

AVILA VALLEY ADVISORY COUNCIL (AVAC):	Jeremy Freund
CAYUCOS CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCIL (CCAC):	Andy Knighton
CRESTON ADVISORY BODY (CAB):	Dominic Dal Porto
LOS OSOS COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (LOCAC):	Mason Denning
NORTH COAST ADVISORY COUNCIL (NCAC):	Dane Mueller
SAN MIGUEL ADVISORY COUNCIL (SMAC):	VACANT
SANTA MARGARITA AREA ADVISORY COUNCIL (SMAAC):	Sam Kinney
SHANDON ADVISORY COUNCIL (SAC):	Blake Maule
SOUTH COUNTY ADVISORY COUNCIL (SCAC):	Lane Sutherland
TEMPLETON AREA ADVISORY GROUP (TAAG):	Eric Tolle
VITALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL OF OCEANO (VACO):	Michael Zepeda

CAC HANDBOOK



CAC Roles



- Community Advisory Councils are independent bodies authorized by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors to represent their communities.
- They provide non-binding recommendations to the Planning Commission, County review authorities, and District Supervisors, who may consider them at their discretion.
- Councils may also offer input on other issues, but decision-making bodies determine whether to consider it.



Overview of Roles



- Upon receiving a referral package from the Planning and Building Department, the advisory council should add the project to the next meeting agenda, send the agenda and any questions to the Planning Liaison one week in advance, and complete a recommendation form if applicable.
- Staff attendance at meetings depends on applicable.



CAC Expectations

- Advisory Council members should follow the Code of Civility to ensure respectful dialogue and effective decision-making. Unprofessional or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated and staff may disengage from meetings if incivility occurs.
- Councils are expected to maintain respectful conduct and run meetings that encourage open discussion, stay focused, and lead to timely decisions and clear recommendations.



Key Responsibilities and Advisory Function

- Comments should be submitted to The Planning & Building Department through the Chairperson or designee within **60 days**.
- If the project description changes substantially, the Project Manager may re-refer the updated materials for additional council review.
- Councils should also request notification of future public hearings as an interested party.




Community Advisory Council Support



Planning & Building
County of San Luis Obispo

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Trevor Keith
Director of Planning & Building

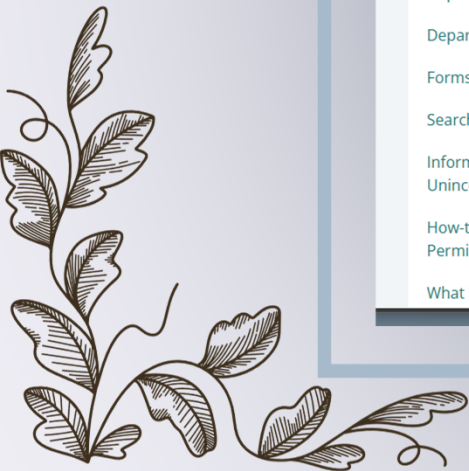
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- What Happens After Applying for a

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 <p>PermitSLO</p>	 <p>Forms & Documents</p>	 <p>Department Services</p>	 <p>Customer Feedback</p>





LAND USE OVERVIEW

PRESENTED BY SAM KINNEY

Role of CACs in The Land Use Process

- Community Advisory Councils play an important role in the land use planning process by representing community perspectives, identifying local issues, and providing residents an opportunity to have their voices heard.
- Members are expected to listen to and consider input from all segments of the community when making recommendations about its future.



CAC Recommendations



- In the discretionary review process, decision-makers evaluate proposed projects using several key factors, including consistency with the General Plan or Specific Plan, county ordinances, state and federal laws, the Subdivision Map Act, available public services, environmental impacts, surrounding development, and public comments.
- When reviewing projects, councils are encouraged to frame their recommendations around these factors so decision-makers can clearly understand how community concerns relate to the criteria used in project approval decisions.



Land Use Application Process

- The County has 30 days to determine whether an application is complete and “Accepted for Processing” or to request additional information. If more information is needed, the project is placed on “Information Hold” until the applicant responds. After resubmission, the County has another 30 days to review; the project remains on hold until all required information is provided and accepted.
- Once deemed complete, the County has 30 days to determine the appropriate level of environmental review under CEQA. The project must then be scheduled for a hearing and approved or denied within State deadlines:
 - 60 days for CEQA-exempt projects
 - 180 days for projects requiring a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration
 - One year for projects requiring an Environmental Impact Report
- Advisory councils must provide timely comments to meet these deadlines. While environmental review may be delayed if additional information is required, projects cannot be delayed due to missing advisory council comments.



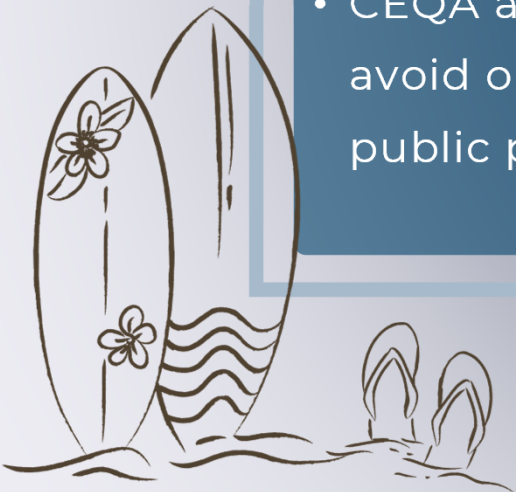
CEQA OVERVIEW

PRESENTED BY ERIC HUGHES

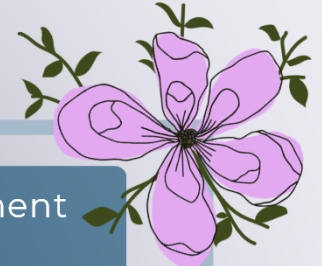
California Environmental Quality Act



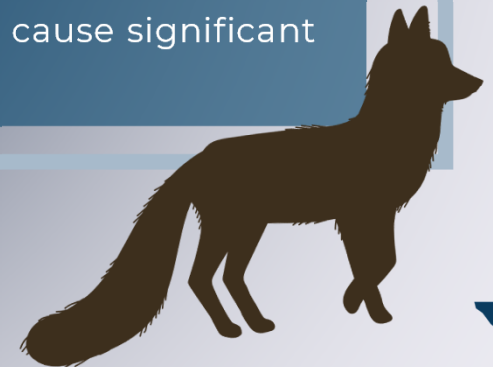
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): Enacted in 1970, CEQA requires public agencies to evaluate and disclose the environmental impacts of projects that need government approval.
- CEQA also encourages projects to be redesigned or mitigated to avoid or reduce environmental harm, while promoting transparency, public participation, and coordination among agencies.



CEQA Review



- Under CEQA, a project is an action that may cause physical changes to the environment and can include land use permits, land divisions, or general plan and ordinance amendments. Projects can be discretionary or ministerial.
- The environmental review process generally involves determining whether the proposal is a project subject to CEQA, and if it is discretionary, conducting environmental analysis (i.e., an Initial Study) to determine the level of environmental review.
- Based on this analysis, the agency may prepare an Exemption (Categorical or Statutory) or Negative Declaration (ND) if no significant impacts are expected, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) if impacts can be reduced to less than significant through mitigation measures, or an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) if the project could cause significant unavoidable environmental effects.



Environmental Issues

Initial Study Checklist:

- Initial Study Checklist:
- Aesthetic
- Agriculture and forestry
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology/ Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazardous / Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology / Water Quality
- Land Use
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities / Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance





PUBLIC WORKS REFRESHER

PRESENTED BY JR BEARD

Public Works

What does Public Works Review?

- Access and Right-of-Way Issues
- Roadway Capacity and Traffic Operations
- Public Improvements/CGSW
- Flood Control (FEMA)
- Stormwater (SWB)
- Drainage
- Subdivisions, Use Permits, Construction Permits

What Level of Detail is Needed for Review?

- Varies with Entitlements vs. Construction Permits





BROWN ACT

PRESENTED BY DANIELA DIAZ

Brown Act Fundamentals

What is the Brown Act?

- The Ralph M. Brown Act requires open and transparent meetings for local legislative bodies, such as city councils, school boards, and county boards of supervisors.
- It ensures the public receives notice of meetings and has the opportunity to participate, preventing secret decision-making and promoting government transparency.

When Is a Committee a Legislative Body?

- A committee is subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act if it has a continuing role or a formal meeting schedule set by the legislative body.
- Committees, including members of the public or staff, are subject to the Brown Act, even if under a quorum of legislative members.

What bodies are subject to the Brown act?

- The Ralph M. Brown Act applies to local governing bodies, including city councils, county boards of supervisors, school boards, special districts, and other commissions, committees, or agencies that meet certain criteria, including some governing private corporations or hospitals.



Brown Act - How it Applies to CAC



Public Meetings & Agendas

- Under the Ralph M. Brown Act, committees must hold public meetings and post an agenda in advance.
- Public meetings are usually held at the location listed on the agenda. If capacity is limited, some bodies provide overflow rooms or tele/video options.

Meeting Minutes

- Advisory councils should designate a primary and backup recorder for meeting minutes, though some may also record meetings. Minutes should be accessible to the public, such as in a library or on the council's website.



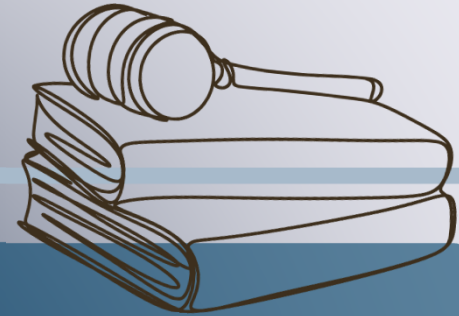
CAC FUNDAMENTALS

PRESENTED BY MARK LARUE

CAC Meeting Decorum

- A healthy democracy depends on the public's right to engage in passionate debate. It not only tolerates disagreement but welcomes it as a way to strengthen ideas and develop policies that serve the greater good.
- This Code of Civility is our shared commitment to conduct all discussions; whether in person, online, or in writing; with respect for differing viewpoints and for the dignity of others.

Overview of Bylaws



Mission Statement

- Community Advisory Councils should adopt a concise Mission Statement.
- It should guide the council's work and be integrated into meetings, operations, and agendas.

Membership

- Advisory councils should have a majority of members elected by the public.
- Elections should be held at least every four years.
- Any membership changes should be reported to the District Supervisor and Planning Liaison.

Meetings

- Advisory councils should meet on a publicly posted annual schedule, with additional meetings as needed.
- Councils should adhere to a Code of Civility and follow Rosenberg's Rules of Order.

Voting & Decision Making

- Advisory council members, or their designated alternates, must be present to vote.
- Business may only be conducted at duly noticed meetings and must be recorded in public minutes.



Maintaining Orderly and Effective Meetings

- Listen First
 - Seek to understand before responding.
- Respect Differences
 - Encourage open, constructive exchange of ideas.
- Be Courteous
 - Treat all participants with professionalism and respect.
- Disagree Constructively
 - Focus on solutions and shared outcomes.
- Debate Issues, Not People
 - Address ideas without personal attacks.
- Foster Inclusion
 - Ensure a welcoming, fair exchange among all participants.
- Encourage Participation
 - Keep meetings open and respectful to all viewpoints.
- Act Promptly
 - Make timely, thoughtful decisions.
- Stay Focused
 - Keep discussions on track and manage time effectively.





QUESTIONS

Thank You!

We appreciate your attendance



Scan the QR for
CAC Support
Information

