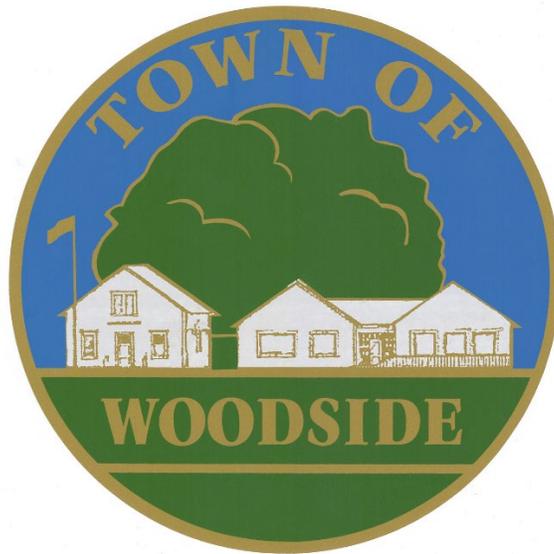


# TOWN OF WOODSIDE VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



Updated December 2024

**Town of Woodside Volunteer Handbook:  
A Handbook for members of the Planning Commission, the Architectural and Site Review  
Board, and the Citizen Advisory Committees**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b>	<b>2</b>
Geography and Demographics	2
History of Woodside	2
<b>TOWN GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE</b>	<b>4</b>
General Plan	
Municipal Code	4
Town Council	4
Town Manager	4
Town Clerk	5
Town Attorney	5
Planning Director	5
Town Engineer	6
Building Official	6
Advisory Bodies	6
Ad Hoc Committees	7
Current Committee Information	7
<b>RULES OF OFFICE</b>	<b>8</b>
Qualifications and Appointment to Office	8
Conflict of Interest	9
Terms of Office	10
Orientation for Members	10
Limit on Advisory Body Meeting Length	10
Advisory Body Attendance Confirmation/Quorum Determination	10
Meeting Attendance	10
Voluntary Resignation	11
Compensation	11
Reimbursement	11
Benefits/Insurance/Immunity	11
Travel Expenses	11
Authority of Advisory Bodies	11
<b>CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT</b>	<b>12</b>
I. Preamble	12
II. Scope	13
III. Core Values	13
IV. Implementation and Enforcement	15

<b>OPERATING PROCEDURES</b>	<b>16</b>
Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code § 54950 et seq.)	16
Regular Meeting Procedures	16
Public Meeting Decorum	17
Motions	17
Motion for Adjournment	18
Quorum Requirements	18
Adjourned Regular Meetings	19
Special Meetings	19
Public Hearings	19
Role of the Chair	20
Role of the Vice Chair	20
Rotation of the Chair	20
Role of the Secretary	21
Agendas	21
Jurisdiction	22
Minutes of Meetings	22
Agenda Packets	23
Subcommittees	23
Annual Reports	24
<b>RELATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC, TOWN COUNCIL, AND TOWN STAFF</b>	<b>25</b>
Relations with the Public	25
Relations with Town Council	25
Relations with Staff	26
<b>MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVISORY BODIES</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>PLANNING COMMISSION</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE REVIEW BOARD</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEES</b>	<b>28</b>
Arts and Culture Committee	28
Audit Committee	28
Circulation Committee	28
Climate and Sustainability Committee	29
Emergency Preparedness Committee	29
Environment and Open Space Committee	29
Livestock and Equine Heritage Committee	29
Recreation Committee	30
Trails Committee	30
Volunteerism Committee	31
Woodside History Committee	31

<b>HANDBOOK REVISION HISTORY</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Attachment A - Organization Chart</b>	<b>33</b>

## INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides information about the functions and activities of the Town of Woodside's Planning Commission, Architectural and Site Review Board, and Citizen Advisory Committees, all generally referred to hereinafter as the “Advisory Bodies” (or “Advisory Body” if singular).

Woodside citizen participation in the operation of Town government is critical to the Town Council's and the Town staff's success in serving the community. The Town Council established several standing boards, commissions, and committees composed of volunteers and establishes ad hoc committees as needed. Town Council appoints members to the Advisory Bodies and charges them with the responsibilities of gathering, synthesizing, and analyzing the information relevant to their areas of responsibility and providing the Town Council and Town staff with advice and recommendations, which they rely upon for the development and execution of Town policies. Citizen involvement is a hallmark of Woodside government, and the Town Council encourages and is grateful for all resident participation.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Geography and Demographics

Woodside is a small, rural, primarily residential community, with no industrial land-use base and with few retail, commercial and professional services located in the Town Center and the Skylonda area. The Town, approximately 14 square miles in area, works hard to preserve its wooded hillsides, natural stream corridors, fields of grasses and wildflowers, historic buildings, scenic vistas and equestrian heritage.

Woodside's population consists of 5,131 residents who live in 1,761 households, according to the 2020 census. In 2022, there were 4,180 registered voters.

### History of Woodside

Hundreds of years ago, the Woodside area was thick with redwood and oak trees, while mountain lions, coyotes, and grizzly bears roamed the land. The original inhabitants were Native Americans, whose population declined with the arrival of the Spanish and the establishment of missions in the late 18th century.

Following Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821, Spanish mission lands were transferred to Mexican loyalists. These large land grants were known as ranchos. Rancho Cañada de Raymundo included much of present-day Woodside.

The abundance of redwood trees resulted in a thriving lumber industry in Woodside during the 1840s. The 1849 Gold Rush and California statehood in 1850 created a demand for more lumber. Logs were taken from the surrounding hillsides and hauled through present-day Woodside to the Port of Redwood City. Supporting businesses such as sawmills, blacksmith shops, and dry goods stores opened along the routes.

After the forests were depleted in the 1880s, land use shifted from lumbering to agriculture. Settlers built houses, farms, ranches and vineyards in the area.

Near the end of the 19th century, residents from San Francisco were attracted to Woodside as an ideal place to build country estates and summer cottages in order to enjoy the more temperate climate. The use of horses for transportation and work shifted to that of recreation and pleasure, leading to Woodside's equestrian heritage that today encompasses horse trails, barns, and arenas.

Woodside grew rapidly during the first part of the 20th century. By the 1920s, the Town had a library, fire department, school and a church, as well as several general stores and inns, which developed along former logging crossroads.

Following World War II, the Peninsula experienced a surge in population. As a means to maintain local governance and the Town's rural character, residents debated about the prospect of incorporation. In 1956, Woodside voted to become the 14th municipality in San Mateo County.

Since incorporation, volunteers have been essential to the successful governance of the Town. The Town of Woodside continues to thrive, thanks to enduring community efforts to preserve its natural beauty and celebrate its colorful heritage.

## **TOWN GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE**

Woodside is a general law town, operating under the council-manager form of government (see Attachment A, Organization Chart). The Town Council provides the Town with public policy direction and the Town Manager provides professional administration and policy implementation. Approximately 80% of the towns and cities in California operate under general law, which means they are organized pursuant to general state law concerning town government structure contained in the State of California's Government Code.

The general law system of municipal government provides that the Town has no powers except those it receives under a constitutional or statutory grant of authority. The powers so granted are enumerated in Article XI of the California Constitution, which provides two kinds of powers for general law towns: 1) the power to regulate people's actions (known as regulatory power), and 2) the power to provide services for the benefit of the Town's inhabitants (known as commercial power). Section Seven of Article XI states that the Town government has the authority to enact regulatory ordinances for the benefit of its citizens so long as those ordinances are not in conflict with state or federal law. Section Nine of Article XI provides that the Town may also establish and operate public works to furnish its inhabitants with light, heat, power, transportation, water, and means of communication.

### **General Plan**

The General Plan guides the future development of the Town, describes the desired character and quality of the community, sets forth the goals that govern the Town, and states the policies that the Town government will follow to achieve those goals. The Plan's primary goals are to preserve and enhance Woodside as a scenic, rural residential community, to conserve the natural environment and its open space, to protect people and their property from exposure to hazards, to assure access to utility services, to manage and maintain the Town's system of roads, trails, paths, and bikeways, and to allow minimal commercial development. A copy of the Plan is on file with the Town Clerk and on the Town's website ([woodsidetown.org](http://woodsidetown.org)), and interested parties are encouraged to peruse it.

### **Municipal Code**

The Woodside Municipal Code is the systematized collection of regulatory and administrative laws of general application. The Town Council modifies the Municipal Code by introducing and adopting ordinances in public meetings. The Municipal Code serves as the basic law of the Town and is available for review in the Town Clerk's office and on the Town's website.

### **Town Council**

The Town Council is the legislative body of the Town of Woodside, with all the regulatory and corporate powers provided under California state law. It provides the policy direction that guides the operation of the Town, adopts ordinances and resolutions that constitute the legislative intent of the Town, and sets the Town's priorities through the adoption of an annual budget and the provision of direction to the Town Manager. The Town Council represents the Town's residents through these actions and through the conveyance of constituent requests and concerns to the Town staff. It also appoints members to all Advisory Bodies.

The five members of the Town Council are elected to four-year terms, but each representing one of five Town Council districts. Elections occur in November of even-numbered years, and the terms are staggered so that no more than three Town Council seats are up for election at any one time. The Council selects one of its members to serve as Mayor for a one-year term. The Mayor presides at the Town Council meetings and represents the Town as the official head of the Council on public and ceremonial occasions, but the Mayor has no special authority beyond that of the other Council members.

The regular public meetings of the Town Council are held the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month and, unless otherwise noticed, start at 7:00 p.m. The meetings are adjourned by 11:00 p.m., unless extended by motion of the Town Council. The regular meeting place of the Town Council is Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road, Woodside, California.

### **Town Manager**

The Town Manager is appointed by the Town Council. The Woodside Municipal Code, Sections 31.15 through 31.23, provides for the establishment of the office of Town Manager and delineates the powers and duties of the office. The Town Manager serves as the chief executive of the Town, administering its day-to-day affairs. Manager responsibilities include: enforcing the Town's laws; preparing the annual budget and submitting it to the Town Council for approval; hiring, developing, and disciplining staff; directing and organizing staff in the execution of Council policies; providing information and recommendations to the Council; and investigating complaints concerning the Town's administration.

### **Town Clerk**

The Town Clerk is appointed by the Town Manager. The Clerk serves as the Secretary to the Town Council at meetings, performs the official recordation of Town Council actions, and composes the minutes. The Clerk administers and organizes all municipal elections and coordinates the filing of Political Reform Act conflict of interest statements. The Clerk also manages the Town's records and is responsible for the care and custody of all official records and documents of the Town. Those records include all Town deeds, contracts, leases, ordinances, resolutions, minutes, and the Municipal Code. The Clerk publishes public notices and ordinances as required by law and assists staff and the public in researching information contained in the Town's official records. The Clerk is responsible for ensuring timely responses to Public Records Act requests.

### **Town Attorney**

The Town Attorney is appointed by the Town Council. The Town Attorney acts as legal advisor to the Town Council, Town Manager, the various Town departments, and all Town Advisory Bodies. The Town Attorney prepares and approves for legality all proposed Town ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and other legal documents. The Attorney also represents the Town in litigation and prosecutes violations of Town laws.

### **Planning Director**

The Planning Director is appointed by the Town Manager. It is the responsibility of the Director to provide current and long-range planning to ensure the balanced physical development of the Town in accordance with the Town's adopted General Plan and to administer the Town's adopted zoning ordinances. The Director is the Town's zoning administrator and enforces the zoning codes of the Town.

### **Town Engineer**

The Town Engineer is appointed by the Town Manager. The Town Engineer is responsible for the work of the Department of Public Works. This work encompasses the oversight of the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure, primarily sewers, roads, and other public rights-of-way. This work also includes a variety of engineering support services that are provided to the Town's planning, building regulation, and public utility functions.

### **Building Official**

The Building Official is appointed by the Town Manager. The Building Official is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Building Regulations adopted in Chapter 150 of Title XV of the Municipal Code and related codes, regulations, and standards.

### **Advisory Bodies**

The Town of Woodside is assisted by its Advisory Bodies. When convened, each body is charged with the following responsibilities:

- Advise the Town Council and the Town Manager on matters within their area of responsibility or jurisdiction, under articles of the General Plan, as prescribed by the Town Council and its ordinances and resolutions.
- Help focus attention on specific issues and problems within their scope of responsibilities and recommend actions and alternatives for Council consideration.
- Act as channels of communication and information between Town government and the general public, including groups with interests related to the work of the Advisory Bodies.
- Consider and assist in reconciling contradictory viewpoints and provide direction toward achievement of Town-wide goals.
- Encourage citizen participation in the definition and formulation of Town goals and actions for their achievement.
- Balance community desires with municipal responsibilities and resources.
- All meetings held by Advisory Bodies are open to the public.

The membership and responsibilities of the Advisory Bodies are outlined in pages 29-33.

### **Ad Hoc Committees**

From time to time the Town Council appoints ad hoc committees to gather information on a particular area of interest or concern and make recommendations to the Town Council as a whole. These committees meet at the direction and call of the Town Council. Ad hoc committees will identify key issues, research alternative solutions, and make recommendations to the Town Council for policies related to their assignment. Once the ad hoc committee has completed a final report or recommendation on the area of assignment and the report is accepted by the Town Council, the ad hoc committee is disbanded.

### **Current Committee Information**

An updated list of members of the Advisory Bodies, as well as the approved committee size and regular meeting dates and times, is available on the Town website.

# RULES OF OFFICE

## Qualifications and Appointment to Office

### Qualifications

Interested citizens who live within the Town of Woodside are encouraged to submit applications for positions on Advisory Bodies. The Town Council may, on a case-by-case basis, waive the Town residency requirement, depending upon the membership needs of the involved Advisory Body at the time appointments are being considered and the availability of sufficient applications from which to fill existing vacancies.

### Appointment Process

#### *Application*

The application form for the Advisory Bodies is available on the Town website. Applications may be submitted at any time. In addition to filed applications, the Town Council may make its own nominations to Advisory Bodies.

Notice of openings and requests for applications for the Advisory Bodies are shown on the Town website where Advisory Body members are listed.

#### *Application Process*

Regular appointments to all Advisory Bodies are made by the Town Council in February of each year at a duly noticed meeting of the Town Council. Requests for applications for candidates to fill unexpected vacancies will be solicited when the vacancies arise. All vacancies will be filled by the Council in as timely a manner as is practicable. The members of the Advisory Bodies are appointed by simple majority vote of the Town Council.

- Planning Commission and ASRB: The process by which appointments are made to the Planning Commission and the ASRB is different than that used to appoint Citizen Advisory Committee members. In the case of the Planning Commission and the ASRB, the Town Clerk will distribute the applications to the Council with the Council packets for the meeting designated for the interview and appointment of Planning Commission and/or ASRB candidates. The Town Clerk will include the attendance records of all incumbent applicants in the packet. During the Council meeting when the interviews and appointments occur, each applicant will be interviewed by the Town Council and will be allowed to address the Council on his/her qualifications. After all applicants have been interviewed, the Town Council undertakes the appointment process.
- Citizen Advisory Committees: Completed applications to Citizen Advisory Committees are accepted by the Town and distributed to the Town Council Committee Appointments Subcommittee. Applications will also be distributed to the relevant Committee's Chair for review; if needed, the Chair will make recommendations by providing input to the Subcommittee directly. The Subcommittee may at its discretion interview some or all of the applicants; they will make determinations based on the body's vacancies, size, and

needs, though the Subcommittee shall be more inclined to recommend accepting applications in order to encourage Town volunteerism. The Subcommittee will present its recommendation to the Town Council at a duly noticed public meeting. The Council will vote on the entire slate of recommended appointments at one time.

### *Appointment*

When making appointments, the Town Council will favor applicants who do not already belong to another board, commission, or committee. Members of the Planning Commission are prohibited by Town Council Resolution No. 2003-6376 from holding a voting membership on any of the Town's other Advisory Bodies. The Council seeks a diverse body of membership for each Advisory Body to encourage new volunteers and achieve a broad balance of views. The Town Council may decide to refrain from appointing candidate(s) if, in its judgment, the qualifications and/or experience of the candidate(s) are insufficient. When this occurs, the Town Clerk will again advertise the vacant position(s) and the appointment process will be included on a subsequent Town Council agenda.

### **Conflict of Interest**

It is necessary for the Town's officers to diligently avoid any circumstance in which their personal and public interests or responsibilities create a conflict of interest, or in which Town officers could be tempted to use their positions for personal gain.

Furthermore, per State Government Code Section 87200, the Fair Political Practices Act, the members of the Town Council, Planning Commission, ASRB, key staff members and consultants must file Statements of Economic Interest upon assumption of office, on an annual basis, and when leaving their elected or appointed positions or office. The proper forms are supplied by staff. In these statements, Advisory Body members must disclose all investments, business positions, sources of income, and interests in real property which could be materially affected by the decisions made by their Advisory Body. The completed statements are kept on file by the Town Clerk and are available for public inspection.

The requirement of filing Statements of Economic Interest does not apply to Citizen Advisory Committees. The Town Council has the discretion to require other appointed officials to file the Statements when it reviews the Town's Conflict of Interest Code in every even-numbered calendar year. The spirit of the state law as well as the letter of the Town's Code of Ethics and Conduct demands that members avoid any conflict between their personal or financial interests and their public duties.

When a member of the Town's Advisory Bodies has a financial interest in a matter that comes before the body upon which he or she serves, he or she must recuse him/herself from the body's discussion of and action upon that matter. The member must announce that he or she has such a conflict and physically leave the meeting room until the body has concluded its action on that matter. The Town Attorney will assist members in identifying what constitutes a "financial interest" under the Fair Political Practices Act.

It is important that Town officers conform to all conflict of interest laws because violations will taint the fairness of the democratic process and may also subject the offending official to fines,

criminal penalties, and forfeiture of office. If any questions arise in this area for Advisory Body members, the Town Attorney can discuss them ahead of time to help prevent problems from developing.

### **Terms of Office**

The terms of office of members of the Advisory Bodies end in February. The only exception is the Audit Committee, the terms for which are of an unlimited duration. The specific terms for each Advisory Body are included in a later section of this handbook in the specific entries for each body. The terms are staggered so that no more than half-plus-one of the seats on any given body are up for appointment at the same time.

### **Orientation for Members**

Shortly after appointment, each new member is provided a current copy of the “Town of Woodside Volunteer Handbook.” The Town Manager, Town Attorney, or other appropriate Town staff will provide periodic training sessions with each of the Advisory Bodies to reacquaint all members with Town goals, the responsibilities of appointment, current issues before the Town, and any new rules, regulations, or laws.

### **Limit on Advisory Body Meeting Length**

The length of Advisory Body meetings will be limited to two hours. This limit may be extended only by a successful motion of the majority of the members present when additional time is needed because of the complexity of or community interest in an item being considered. Town staff will work with the Advisory Bodies Chairs to ensure that agendas are not overly ambitious and can be addressed within the two-hour limit.

### **Advisory Body Attendance Confirmation/Quorum Determination**

Town staff will email Advisory Body members at least seventy-two hours prior to each meeting, seeking confirmation of the members’ attendance. Members should respond to this email no later than twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled meeting time. If a quorum is reached within this time period, the meeting will move forward. If not, the meeting will be cancelled and members will be notified. If a member does not reply within the defined time period, staff will assume the member does not plan to attend.

### **Meeting Attendance**

The Town Council has attendance standards for members of its own body, and for all of the Town’s Advisory Bodies. Members of the Planning Commission and the ASRB must attend at least 75% of all regular meetings held within a calendar year, and Citizen Advisory Committee members must attend at least 60% of all regular meetings held within a calendar year. No member of any Advisory Body shall miss four consecutive regular meetings. If a member does not meet the attendance requirement for their respective Advisory Body but applies for reappointment to the Body upon the end of his or her term, Town Council may hold the reappointment for further review.

An Advisory Body Chair may also report an attendance problem to the Town Council for its action. The Town Council's Committee Appointments Subcommittee will review attendance records once each calendar year to determine the need for removal action.

Town staff tracks the attendance of members of the Advisory Bodies. When a regular meeting is canceled for lack of a quorum, an absence will be counted for those members who: (1) did not respond to the Town's meeting confirmation email; (2) responded that they would not attend; or (3) do not show up for a meeting for which the existence of a quorum was assumed.

### **Voluntary Resignation**

If an Advisory Body member wishes to voluntarily resign from office before the end of his or her term, the member should write a letter announcing the resignation and deliver it to the Town Manager or Town Clerk, who will forward copies to the Town Council and the Advisory Body Chair.

### **Compensation**

Service on an Advisory Body is purely voluntary; there is no monetary compensation.

### **Reimbursement**

In the event that a member purchases an item, with prior approval from the Town Manager, for the benefit of the Advisory Body or for a Town sponsored activity or event, reimbursement will be paid upon submission of a Check Request Form and receipt to staff.

### **Benefits/Insurance/Immunity**

Advisory Body members are covered by Workers' Compensation and, in the event of an accident while serving in an official capacity, the member will be required to file an accident report. Members are also covered under the Town's general liability insurance policy for actions taken in the course and scope of their duties. The Tort Claims Act limits municipal liability. Advisory Body members have immunity for actions taken in their official capacity.

### **Travel Expenses**

Any Advisory Body member who is authorized to travel outside of the geographic boundaries of Woodside, in the performance of his or her duties, or to attend an authorized meeting or conference which is of benefit to the Town, will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred for transportation, meals, lodging and incidentals. A request for reimbursement should be made to the Town Manager prior to the occurrence of the travel, in order to ensure that budgetary authority exists. Partners who wish to accompany these members cannot be covered for any such expenses.

### **Authority of Advisory Bodies**

Members of any Advisory Body are not authorized to expend public funds, enter into agreements or contracts, employ staff, sign documents on behalf of the Town, or bind the Town in any way. This authority can only be granted by a resolution of the Town Council.

## CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

The Town Council first adopted a Code of Ethics and Conduct in 1994. On October 9, 2018, the Town Council adopted a revised Code of Ethics and Conduct for the members of the Town Council, Planning Commission, ASRB, and Citizen Advisory Committees.

Public officers owe an undivided duty to the public they serve and are not permitted to place themselves in a position which will subject them to conflicting duties or expose them to the temptation of acting in any manner other than in the best interest of the public. Town officers may not, under any circumstances, use their official position to their own benefit or for the benefit of anyone except the Town itself, nor may they represent the Town in any transaction in which they are personally interested in obtaining an advantage.

The Code of Ethics and Conduct reads as follows:

### I.

#### PREAMBLE

It is the intent of this Code of Ethics and Conduct (the “Code”) to achieve fair, ethical, and accountable local government for the Town of Woodside. The people of Woodside expect public officials, both elected and appointed, to comply with both the letter and the spirit of the laws of the State of California, the United States of America, the Town of Woodside Municipal Code and General Plan, and the laws and established policies of the Town of Woodside affecting the operations of local government. In addition, public officials are expected to comply with the provisions of this Code. All persons covered by this Code will aspire to meet the highest ethical standards in the conduct of their responsibility as an elected or appointed official of the Town of Woodside.

This Code addresses various aspects related to the governance of the Town of Woodside and supplements but does not supplant other laws and rules that prescribe the legal responsibilities of Town officials. These include, but are not limited to, the Federal and State Constitutions, various provisions of the California Government Code (such as the Brown Act and the Political Reform Act), the Labor Code, laws prohibiting discrimination and harassment, and the Town of Woodside Municipal Code. Elected and appointed officials are expected to be familiar with these laws to ensure that they exercise their public responsibilities in a proper fashion. This Code is not designed to be used as a tool to remove appointed officials, as the Town Council retains the right under the Municipal Code to remove appointed officials in accordance with those provisions.

While it is not possible to anticipate and provide a rule of conduct and ethics for all situations that public officials may face, this Code is designed to provide a framework to guide public officials in their daily duties.

## II.

### SCOPE

The provisions of this Code shall apply to the Mayor and members of the Town Council, and to all members of the boards, commissions, and committees appointed by the Town Council or the Mayor or the Mayor and Town Council, including any ad hoc committees. Further, the provisions of this Code shall only apply to these officials and members acting in their official capacities and in the discharge of their duties.

The Town values participation from all of its residents, and therefore, residents who do business with the Town are not precluded from seeking election to the Town Council or from seeking appointment to the Planning Commission, Architectural and Site Review Board, or Citizen Advisory Committees. Members of the Town Council who do business in the Town are not required to recuse themselves when voting to appoint members of the Planning Commission, Architectural and Site Review Board, or Citizen Advisory Committees.

## III.

### CORE VALUES

Attitudes, words, and actions should demonstrate, support, and reflect the following qualities and characteristics for the well-being of our community. The five core values and expressions that reflect these core values are as follows:

#### **INTEGRITY/ HONESTY**

- I am honest with my fellow elected officials, the public and others.
- I do not promise what I believe to be unrealistic.
- I am prepared to make unpopular decisions when my sense of the public's best interests requires it.
- I credit others' contributions to moving our community's interests forward.
- I do not knowingly use false or inaccurate information to support my position or views.
- I safeguard the ability to make independent, objective, fair and impartial judgments by scrupulously avoiding financial and social relationships and transactions that may compromise, or give the appearance of compromising, objectivity, independence, and honesty.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY/PROTECTING THE PUBLIC'S INTERESTS**

- I do not accept gifts, services, or other special considerations because of my public position.
- I excuse myself from participating in decisions when my or my immediate family's financial interests may be affected by my agency's actions.
- I disclose any personal or financial interest which may be affected by my agency's actions even though it would not require a recusal from hearing or deciding an issue, or considering

and enacting an ordinance, or considering an appointment to a commission, board, or committee.

- I disclose whether a policy under discussion may affect a current or pending client of mine.
- I do not give special treatment or consideration to any individual or group beyond that available to any other individual.
- I refrain from disclosing confidential information concerning litigation, personnel, property, or other affairs of the Town, without proper legal authority, nor use such information to advance my financial or other personal interests.

#### **FAIRNESS/ACCOUNTABILITY**

- I promote meaningful public involvement in the agency's decision-making processes.
- I treat all persons, claims, and transactions in a fair and equitable manner; I make decisions based on the merits of the issue.
- If I receive substantive information from sources outside the public decision-making process that is relevant to a matter under consideration, I publicly share it with my fellow governing board members and staff.
- I work to contribute to a strong organization that exemplifies transparency and open communication.

#### **RESPECT FOR FELLOW ELECTED OR APPOINTED OFFICIALS, STAFF, AND THE PUBLIC**

- I treat my fellow officials, staff and the public with patience, courtesy, and civility, even when we disagree on what is best for the community; I strive to resolve disagreements amicably.
- I work toward consensus building and gain value from diverse opinions.
- I respect the distinction between the role of office holder and staff; I involve staff in meetings with individuals, those with business before the agency, officials from other agencies, and legislators to ensure proper staff support and to keep staff informed.
- I conduct myself in a courteous and respectful manner at all times during the performance of my official Town duties.
- I encourage full participation of all persons and groups; I acknowledge important celebrations and events which reflect the values of our diverse population.

#### **PROPER AND EFFICIENT USE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES**

- I do not use public resources, such as agency staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes.
- I make decisions after prudent consideration of their financial impact, taking into account the long-term financial needs of the agency, especially its financial stability.
- I demonstrate concern for the proper use of agency assets (such as personnel, time, property, equipment, funds) and follow established procedures.
- I am a prudent steward of public resources and actively consider the impact of my decisions on the financial and social stability of the Town and its residents.

#### IV.

### IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Town of Woodside Council and Advisory Body members have the primary responsibility to assure that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of government. This Code will be most effective when the elected and appointed officials are thoroughly familiar with it and embrace its provisions.

Town Council and Advisory Body members shall be given a copy of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and asked to understand its provisions, and pledge to conduct themselves by it. Upon election, re-election, appointment or re-appointment, members of the Town Council and Advisory Bodies, shall be given a copy of this Code to understand its provisions, and pledge to conduct themselves by it. Additionally, all members of the Town Council and Advisory Boards, as part of their AB1234 training, shall be provided additional training clarifying the provisions and application of this Code. The Town Attorney, or his/her designee, shall serve as a resource person to those persons covered by the Code to assist them in determination of appropriate actions consistent with the Code.

Complaints of possible violations of this Code of Conduct and Ethics should be submitted to the Town Manager. The Town Manager will take steps to determine the validity of the complaint including speaking to the parties. If the complaint can be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties, the Town Manager should effect such a solution. If the complaint cannot be informally resolved, the Town Manager will determine the appropriate action. Actions may include taking no further action, consulting with the Town Attorney, consulting with the Mayor, referring the matter to the Town Council for action, or referring any serious alleged violation of law to the appropriate enforcement authority.

If the complaint is about a member of the Town Council, the complaint should be submitted to the Mayor. If the complaint is about the Mayor, the complaint should be submitted to the Mayor Pro Tempore. The Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore will take steps to determine the validity of the complaint including speaking to the parties. If the complaint can be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties, the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore should effect such a solution. If the complaint cannot be informally resolved, the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore will determine the appropriate action. Actions may include taking no further action, consulting with the Town Attorney, referring the matter to the Town Council for action, or referring any serious alleged violation of law to the appropriate enforcement authority.

A periodic review of the Code shall be conducted to ensure that the Code is an effective and vital document.

This Code of Conduct and Ethics is intended to be a reflection of the community's values as articulated by the Mayor and Town Council as they represent the will of the people of the Town of Woodside.

The Town's customized Oath of Office includes a promise to uphold and abide by the tenets of the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

## OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Advisory Bodies do all their official work in meetings open to the public. A detailed set of formal procedures govern the conduct of such meetings addressing public business. These formal rules are designed to ensure Woodside's compliance with State law, to guarantee a fair and democratic process and equal treatment of citizens, to encourage citizen participation in civic affairs, and to foster a productive climate which encourages the communication of constructive ideas.

### **Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code § 54950 et. seq.)**

The Brown Act is a State law, first enacted in 1953, requiring that all local government business be conducted in open and public meetings, with the exception of a limited number of defined subjects that may be discussed in a Closed Session of a local government body. These exceptions generally apply only to the Town Council and not to the appointed Advisory Bodies. This requirement is based upon the belief that the people must remain informed about the activities of government in order to retain control over it. The Brown Act applies to all members of the Advisory Bodies. Any time in which a majority of the members of an Advisory Body meet face-to-face or use intermediaries or technological devices (such as phone, fax, email, text, or letters) to hear, discuss, or deliberate upon any public business, a "meeting" is taking place under the definition in the Brown Act. Such meetings must be open to the public and must be announced at least 72 hours ahead of time for a regular meeting and 24 hours ahead for a special meeting with a posted agenda indicating the time and place of the meeting and describing each item of business which is to be discussed. No action may be taken at any meeting unless a quorum is present. Action may be taken by the body only on items which properly appear on the meeting agenda. Minutes of the proceedings must be taken for entry into the public record.

Copies of the Brown Act are available for examination at Town Hall. All members should be sure to understand this law. Staff will be happy to assist in interpreting its requirements and will provide members with summaries of any relevant changes the State legislature may make to the provisions of the Brown Act.

### **Regular Meeting Procedures**

Meetings of the Advisory Bodies are conducted according to the rules in the parliamentary procedure manual, *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, except as modified by this handbook, the Brown Act, and the Code of Ethics and Conduct. Parliamentary procedures are intended to help meetings run in a smooth and orderly fashion.

Most of the Advisory Bodies are scheduled to meet at designated times in Independence Hall. Such meetings are considered regular meetings. At least 72 hours before a regular meeting takes place, an agenda must be posted by the Town Clerk or relevant Town staff member at Roberts Market, the Woodside Library, the U.S. Post Office, and Town Hall. The agenda must announce the scheduled time and place of the meeting and provide a brief description (which need not exceed 20 words per item) of each item of business which is to be discussed. Agendas and their contents are discussed in a later section of this handbook.

Meetings are overseen by the Chair of the convening body. The Chair begins by calling the meeting to order and then guides the meeting through the items on the agenda. The usual order of business after the Chair calls the meeting to order and ensures that attendance is noted, is to allow Public Communications on matters not on the agenda, approve the minutes of the previous meeting, and then to take up each item of Old Business, New Business, and Reports from Staff or Subcommittees, as included on the agenda. It is the responsibility of the Chair to keep the proceedings of his or her Advisory Body within the spirit and the letter of the Brown Act. This means that the Chair must ensure that discussion and the adoption of motions and resolutions are limited to items listed on the posted agenda, and the Chair must not allow digression to other items. This includes subjects that members of the public may raise during the “Public Communication” period. Members of the public may make comments or ask questions pertaining to items not on the agenda or may suggest new items to be placed on future agendas. The public may also submit written statements or requests to be entered into the record.

If it is known in advance that there is a lack of business for the Advisory Body to address, a scheduled meeting may be canceled. The Town Clerk or relevant Town staff member shall post a notice within 24 hours of the decision to cancel the meeting. A notice shall also be posted to the meeting room door, informing the public that the next scheduled meeting has been canceled due to a lack of business.

### **Public Meeting Decorum**

The Town of Woodside supports the free expression of all points of view as being fundamental to the democratic process in our community. Essential to the decision-making process is a strong culture of civility in which all participants are treated with respect. The rules below are intended to encourage fair and open discourse on issues that affect our residents.

- Remarks and questions should be addressed to the Town Council or Advisory Body and not to the public or Town staff members.
- All participants in and attendees of public meetings are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous manner and refrain from disruptive behaviors such as applauding, shouting, and talking while others are speaking.
- Any person who wishes to make their viewpoint known shall refrain from personal attacks or making slanderous, impertinent, and profane remarks about other individuals.
- Each speaker will be afforded one opportunity to express their viewpoint per agenda item. At their discretion, the Mayor or Chair may call speakers back to the podium to obtain further information.
- Individuals should be prepared to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes. Groups or organizations are encouraged to appoint a spokesperson who should be prepared to express the group’s viewpoint in 5 minutes or less. Comments should be limited to points not made by previous speakers.

### **Motions**

A motion is a formal proposal made by a member of an Advisory Body asking that the body discuss or act on an idea or proposition. Several different kinds of motions exist for different

purposes. These motions are detailed in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised. Motions may only be made in the context of business items that are on the body's posted agenda.

Motions are usually not made until after the Advisory Body has: (1) received a report from the staff, a subcommittee of its own body, a member of its body, or a member of the public, as appropriate; (2) allowed an opportunity for members of the Advisory Body to ask questions; and (3) asked for public comment and input on the subject or issue at hand.

A motion which brings an action before an Advisory Body is called a main motion. There are four steps through which a main motion is brought before a body:

1. A member asks to be recognized by the chair.
2. Once recognized, the member makes the motion, saying "I move that..." Members should try to avoid including more than one proposal in the same motion. If a member would prefer to see a proposal divided and voted upon separately, the member should ask the Chair to divide the motion.
3. Another member must second the motion in order for discussion to be allowed.
4. If the motion is seconded, then the Chair asks for discussion.

Once a motion has been brought before the body through the above steps there are three further steps through which the motion is discussed and acted upon:

1. After a motion has been brought before the Advisory Body and the Chair has asked for discussion, he or she will turn to the member who made the motion and grant that member the floor if he or she wants it.
2. When everyone who wishes to speak has done so, the Chair will put the question to a vote. When doing so it is very important that the Chair restate the motion to assure that the members all clearly understand what they will vote on.
3. After the vote, the Chair announces the result by saying either "The motion has carried [or "is adopted"]," or "The motion has failed." To be carried, a vote requires the support of a majority of the members present, excluding those who abstain. Tied motions fail. No proxy or absentee voting is allowed.

### **Motion for Adjournment**

When an Advisory Body has finished its business, a motion to adjourn is in order. This motion is not debatable; therefore, it is the duty of the Chair to see that no important business is overlooked.

### **Quorum Requirements**

A quorum must be present in order to conduct a meeting. For the Planning Commission and ASRB, a quorum is present when a majority of the number of potential members is in

attendance. For the Citizen Advisory Committees, the Council establishes the number of members required for a quorum. The Chair must determine that a quorum is present before business may be undertaken, and the quorum must be maintained throughout the meeting in order to continue to carry out business.

If a member has a conflict of interest with a matter that is before his or her Advisory Body and has recused him/herself from participation (see “Conflict of Interest” under the “Rules of Office” section of this handbook), that member no longer counts towards a quorum.

If it is known in advance that a quorum cannot be achieved, members and interested parties should be notified. The Town Clerk or relevant Town staff member must post a notice on the door of the meeting room within 24 hours of the cancellation, advising the public that the meeting has been canceled due to a lack of quorum.

### **Adjourned Regular Meetings**

If for any reason the business to be considered at a regular meeting cannot be completed, the body may then adjourn to a specified time and location. The Town Clerk or relevant Town staff member must post a notice announcing the adjournment at the standard locations (Roberts Market, Woodside Library, the U.S. Post Office, and Town Hall) within 24 hours of adjournment. This type of meeting is referred to as an adjourned regular meeting.

### **Special Meetings**

Special meetings are those called by an Advisory Body in order to consider an important issue that needs to be addressed immediately. Written notice, signed by the Town Clerk or relevant Town staff member, calling the special meeting, and describing the item(s) to be discussed, shall be delivered to the members of the body, and to the public and press, and posted at Roberts Market, the Woodside Library, the U.S. Post Office, and Woodside Town Hall at least 24 hours in advance of the convening of the special meeting.

### **Public Hearings**

Public hearings are conducted during meetings for the purpose of soliciting testimony from the general public on issues for which public hearings are required by state law and/or the Municipal Code. These issues typically fall under the purview of the Town Council and Planning Commission and include consideration of such matters as subdivisions, use permits, site development permits, variance applications, and amendments to the zoning code and General Plan.

Official notice of public hearings will be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Woodside at least ten days before the hearing. Members of the public who wish to submit written statements may do so. Members of the public may also speak during the hearing. However, if there are numerous people who would like to speak and represent the same views, the Chair may ask that a spokesperson be designated for the group or require that each speaker's comments be limited to a set amount of time, such as three minutes. If a time limit is to be imposed, the Chair should be sure to announce it before any members of the public have begun speaking.

As the hearing commences, the Chair shall open the hearing and explain the hearing procedures. The staff will then present the staff report, followed by Advisory Body members' questions relating to that report. The applicant or advocate of the matter is then given the opportunity to make a presentation, followed by the opportunity for any other interested members of the audience to present their cases. After all interested parties have been heard, the hearing will be closed, ending the audience participation. The members may then discuss the proposal and take action on it.

### **Role of the Chair**

The principal qualification to be Chair of an Advisory Body should be the ability to preside at meetings. This requires tact, courtesy, and familiarity with parliamentary procedures and Town Advisory Body policies, as outlined in this handbook. The responsibility of the Chair is to direct the discussion of and deliberation over the matters at hand. The Chair should encourage the input of ideas, clarify ideas, and re-state motions so all members understand the item on which they are voting. The Chair must ensure that the body operates within the confines of all rules and regulations and must act as the key liaison between the body and the Town Council and Town staff. The Chair should ensure that all members of the body have an opportunity to express their thoughts and opinions and should not allow any individuals to dominate the proceedings to the detriment of the remaining members or the public.

Since the Chair presides over meetings, he or she must maintain a certain degree of impartiality and allow all views on an issue to be expressed. However, the Chair may also participate in debate, expressing his or her own views, and may make or second motions.

The Chair is responsible for trying to resolve and mediate any conflicts within the body itself. If a conflict cannot be resolved, the Chair should approach the Town Council's appointed Liaison or the Town Manager.

The Chair is responsible for coordinating with the Town Clerk or relevant Town staff so that all necessary meeting notices can be posted in a timely manner pursuant to the Brown Act. The Chair should also deliver draft agendas to the Town Clerk or relevant Town staff for distribution.

### **Role of the Vice Chair**

All Town Advisory Bodies shall elect Vice Chairs at the time elections for Chairs are held, with the exception of the Volunteerism Committee, which does not require a Vice Chair. The Vice Chairs act in the absence of the Chairs. For all bodies, if neither the Chair nor Vice Chair is present at a meeting, then the present members of the Advisory Body should immediately elect a Chair Pro Tem to preside during the current session.

### **Rotation of the Chair**

The Town Council has a longstanding policy of rotating its Chair (the Mayor) every year so that the Council can experience a variety of leadership styles and ideas and individuals can gain leadership experience and broaden their knowledge of Town operations and issues. The Town Council believes that the rotation of the Chairs of all Town Advisory Bodies is an equally positive

undertaking and has adopted a policy, through Resolution No. 2002-6352, for the rotation of the Chairs.

The policy applies primarily to the Town's Citizen Advisory Committees, for which the election of a Chair and a Vice Chair shall occur at the regular committee meeting held in April of each year. The ASRB, which elects a Chair and Vice Chair annually, has rotated Chairs periodically independent of Town Council direction, and the Planning Commission has adopted its own rules for selection of a Chair and Vice Chair. The appointments to these posts for ASRB and the Planning Commission are for two-year terms, running from April 1st to March 31st. The term of the Chair shall be two years, at the end of which the Vice Chair or other member shall be elected Chair and a new Vice Chair elected. In the event that the Vice Chair is unable to assume the role of the Chair and no other committee member is willing or able to do so, the incumbent Chair may be elected beyond his or her two-year term on a year-to-year basis until a successor can be elected.

Resolution 2002-6352 also stipulated that for the ASRB and the Planning Commission, the Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected for no more than two years within a four-year period.

### **Role of the Secretary**

Each Citizen Advisory Committee designates a Secretary from among its members, with the exception of the Volunteerism Committee. The Secretary's responsibility is to keep the minutes of each meeting. The Planning Commission and ASRB do not designate Secretaries, as this function is performed by Town staff.

Secretaries are not necessarily selected for any fixed term, and the responsibility may rotate from member to member at different meetings if the Citizen Advisory Committee so chooses. It is acceptable for the Chair and the Secretary to be the same person. However, a Secretary must be officially designated for every meeting and a record of his or her identity must be included in the minutes he or she keeps. The Secretary should also deliver draft minutes to the Town Clerk or relevant staff for distribution.

### **Agendas**

Draft agendas are prepared by the Chair of each committee and submitted to the Town Clerk or relevant staff member at least one week prior to the meeting to which the agenda applies. The contents of the agenda must adhere to the requirements of the Brown Act. Agendas must announce the scheduled time and place of the meeting and provide a brief, but specific, description of each item of business which is to be discussed. The description of each item of business need not exceed twenty words but must clearly convey what the item of business entails. For example, an item of business on an agenda that reads "motorcycle noise" is not sufficient to convey what will be discussed and/or acted upon during the meeting. Similarly, an agenda item that only reads "Items from the last meeting requiring further discussion" is inappropriate. Further, the potential action that the body will be considering needs to be identified. If action on an item is anticipated, that action should be identified (e.g., "Discussion and Formulation of a Recommendation Regarding Cat Licensing"). Draft agendas should be specific about what the committee will be doing concerning each item. The Town Manager or

relevant Town staff will review each agenda prior to its finalization. Staff will attempt to contact Chairs and/or Secretaries to secure information that will clarify or expand upon agenda item descriptions. When such contacts cannot be made in a timely manner, items in question will be removed from the agenda and placed on a subsequent agenda to allow for the needed clarification or expansion.

### **Jurisdiction**

When an Advisory Body is established by the Town Council, the duties of that body are set forth in the ordinance or resolution that creates it. The body is limited to the consideration of those matters which are specifically assigned to its jurisdiction. In considering the placement of an item on an Advisory Body agenda, the members must consider whether or not the proposed matter falls within its jurisdiction. If the body finds that the matter is not within its jurisdiction, then it must decline to discuss the matter and should refer the interested party to the appropriate Advisory Body or should request authorization from the Town Council to broaden its jurisdiction. The Town Manager's or relevant Town staff's review of all draft agendas shall include a consideration of whether the items included are within the jurisdiction of the body.

### **Minutes of Meetings**

Minutes need to be kept for all meetings. The Planning Commission and ASRB meetings (as well as those of the Town Council) are audio recorded. Staff produces the written minutes from these audio recordings. Audio recordings of the meetings are kept by the Town staff and must be available for public inspection for at least twenty years, pursuant to the Town's Records Retention Schedule. Advisory Bodies take simple minutes and, after final approval during a public meeting, staff distributes and files them for the public record at Town Hall. Secretaries, including of those committees that do not meet on a regular basis, should deliver their minutes to the Town Clerk or relevant Town staff member within two weeks after the meeting date for which the minutes were prepared.

Written minutes, upon approval of the relevant Advisory Body, constitute the official record of its activities. Minutes include a list of who is present, the times of convening and adjournment, a record of motions made and votes taken, and a description of items discussed. They need not contain a summary of what is said. Additions and corrections to the minutes may only be made in public meetings, with the approval of the body, and not by the private request of individual members.

In keeping with the foregoing, the Town Council adopted Resolution No. 2003-6420 on October 28, 2003, establishing formal "Standards for the Minutes of the Town's Advisory Committees" that provide the following direction:

1. Minutes shall be kept for all meetings;
2. Minutes shall be simple in form, recording only the most basic information about the proceedings;

3. Minutes shall include:

- a. Date and time of convening.
- b. List of committee members present.
- c. List of committee members absent.
- d. List of other Town officials present, including staff members and those appointed and elected officials who are appearing in their official capacities.
- e. As is applicable for the “Public Communications” section of each meeting agenda, the name (if provided) and subject of each speaker and the committee’s response, if any.
- f. A brief description of each item discussed, including the names of members of the public/audience (if provided) who address the committee on each item and a summary of each speaker’s comments.
- g. A record of each motion made, including names of members making and seconding motion.
- h. A record of the vote taken on each motion.
- i. As is applicable, a record of written communications received by the committee, to include the name of the correspondent and the date and subject of the communication.
- j. The time of adjournment of the meeting.

4. Verbatim recountings of the comments of any committee member or other attendee(s) should not be included.

**Agenda Packets**

For Advisory Bodies, agenda packets detailing the items of business to be discussed and any communications to be presented will be prepared by the Town Clerk or relevant Town staff member based upon the materials supplied by the Chairs and/or Secretaries. Agenda packets are delivered to the members of the body prior to each regular or special meeting. In order to be prepared for the meetings, members should read these packets and contact the Chair, Secretary, or the Town Clerk or relevant Town staff member if there are any questions regarding the information presented.

Pursuant to Town Council Resolution No. 2006 - 6577, agenda packets prepared in support of the meetings of the Planning Commission and the Architectural and Site Review Board shall be available for dissemination no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day that is seven calendar days prior to the subject meeting date.

**Subcommittees**

Subcommittees are formed by majority vote of an Advisory Body to address issues best considered by a smaller group. Subcommittee appointments are made by consensus and must be composed of less than a quorum. Usually subcommittees meet for no longer than six months, by which time their task is complete and they are disbanded.

Subcommittees may meet privately and informally and need not keep minutes, follow agendas, or announce their meetings publicly. Discussion or presentation of subcommittee work to the majority of the Advisory Body constitutes a meeting for the transaction of public business and must therefore be announced, agendaized, and open.

### **Annual Reports**

Each Advisory Body will prepare an annual report to the Town Council, highlighting the efforts and accomplishments of the body and delineating the body's objectives for the upcoming year. This report should be presented orally each year in order to coincide with the annual process of setting Town-wide objectives for the budget preparation cycle.

## **RELATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC, TOWN COUNCIL, AND TOWN STAFF**

### **Relations with the Public**

It is important for members of the Town's Advisory Bodies to remember that they are agents of the Town when acting in their official capacity. There is a clear distinction between their official role and their role as a private citizen. This holds true for all elected and appointed Town officials and is at the heart of the Town's Code of Ethics and Conduct. Each individual member of the Town's Advisory Bodies should act in a manner that underscores that member's fiduciary responsibilities to the Town. All members must make it clear to the public, no matter the forum, that no single member of any of the Town's Advisory Bodies has any authority independent of a majority of the body on which he or she serves and that the body is advisory in nature and has no final decision-making authority. This is in keeping with the longstanding Town policy that a primary role of Advisory Bodies is to determine the attitudes of citizens concerning Town programs and to serve as a link among the community, staff, and Council. Members are in a unique position of serving as liaisons between the public and its government officers, helping to reconcile contradictory viewpoints and build consensus around common goals. Members need to remember their duty to the whole Town, not just to particular groups or interests.

Providing the best possible service to the public involves more than maximizing the quality or wisdom of policy choices. It also involves the policy-making process. Members of the public who come before the Town's Advisory Bodies not only wish to have their specific concerns addressed and points of view heard, but they also have a reasonable expectation that the Advisory Body will listen to their comments and respect their input. Therefore, members should always clearly demonstrate their respect for members of the public, both in word and in deed. This means keeping meetings flowing smoothly and efficiently to avoid wasting people's time, giving members of the public feedback on their ideas, treating all sides fairly, not interrupting speakers unless they are out of order, not being afraid to admit that there is something to learn from the public, and always being as encouraging and constructive as possible. Public service is the first duty of all the members of the Town's volunteer Advisory Bodies, and the public is best served when it is treated well.

### **Relations with the Town Council**

The primary responsibility of the Advisory Bodies is to make recommendations to the Town Council. Even though these recommendations may not always be followed, the Council will always benefit from the advice, and a rejection in no way implies a lack of confidence or a disinterest in the Advisory Body's decisions.

Members of the Advisory Bodies should review Town policies related to programs under their jurisdiction and make recommendations through formal action for changes to the Council. However, all bodies must adhere to the policies approved by the Council, as expressed in the General Plan, the Municipal Code, and other official documents.

When an Advisory Body reaches conclusions which warrant report to the Council or wishes to ask questions or make requests of the Council or staff, the body should do so in writing. Such written communications should be sent to the Town Manager, who will review all requests and

recommendations and forward those matters within its jurisdiction, to staff or the Town Council. The Town Manager will provide a written report to the body that generated the communication, indicating disposition and status as appropriate. An official report of a body's activities, findings, or recommendations may only be made by a majority vote at a proper meeting and should include a description of relevant information which was obtained, how that information was gathered and interpreted, and what recommendations, if any, were agreed to.

When reports are made to the Town Council, one of the members of the reporting body (typically the Chair) should attend the Council meeting to present the report. When a member of an Advisory Body addresses the Council at a public meeting, it should be made clear whether he or she is speaking as a member of the Advisory Body or as an individual citizen.

To help coordinate the activities of the Advisory Bodies with those of the Town Council, the Council may appoint liaisons from among its members to facilitate communications between the Council and the bodies. One liaison will be assigned to each body, and will be encouraged to attend the body's meetings and help its members in any way possible.

Any letters from Advisory Bodies to be addressed to the public or other agencies and concerning official positions being taken must first be forwarded to the Town Council for approval before being issued. Although it is possible that Advisory Body members may disagree with the Town Council from time to time, once the Council has established its position, the actions of the Advisory Bodies shall not, in any way, be contrary to the policies and programs adopted by the Council.

### **Relations with Staff**

The Town staff, with the exception of the Town Attorney, works under the direction of the Town Manager. It is not appropriate for Advisory Body members to direct staff or to become involved in the administrative or operational concerns of the Town departments. Staff may answer questions and provide whatever assistance they can when authorized by the Town Manager.

The Town Council expects that a mutually respectful and professional relationship will be maintained between staff and the Advisory Bodies. If a conflict arises, the problem should be brought to the attention of the Advisory Body Chair, who will bring it to the attention of the Town Manager.

## **MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVISORY BODIES**

### **PLANNING COMMISSION**

The Planning Commission participates in the administration of the zoning laws and policies of the Town. The Commission makes recommendations to the Town Council regarding land use, reviews proposed development projects, and advises as to the overall development and maintenance of the General Plan of the Town. The Commission also conducts necessary public hearings to administer the planning laws and policies of the Town and acts on applications for zoning amendments, conditional use permits, variances, subdivisions, and other related functions as may be assigned by the Council. Unlike other Advisory Bodies, the Planning Commission is a decision-making body. The Commission's powers and duties are specifically enumerated in State planning law (Government Code Section 65100 et seq.) and in the Town's Municipal Code (Section 32.06).

The five members of the Planning Commission are appointed by the Town Council for staggered four-year terms. A Planning Commission member is appointed from each of the five Council Districts, although the Municipal Code provides exceptions to this process.

The regular public meetings of the Planning Commission are held the first and third Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. in Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road. The Planning Commission has adopted a three-hour meeting limit, unless extended by motion during the meeting.

### **ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE REVIEW BOARD**

The Architectural and Site Review Board (ASRB) reviews applications for community character, site planning, building design, and landscape elements; and makes recommendations to the Planning Director or Planning Commission regarding the approval or disapproval, and suggests modifications or imposes conditions in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth in the Woodside Municipal Code (Title 15, Chapter 153, beginning at Section 153.910). The Code charges the ASRB with protecting the rural character and natural beauty of the Town and ensures that projects are consistent with the General Plan and are in keeping with the Residential Design Guidelines.

The ASRB consists of five members appointed to staggered four-year terms by the Town Council. The regular meetings of the ASRB are held on the first and third Mondays of each month at 4:30 p.m. in Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road.

## **CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

### **Arts and Culture Committee**

The Arts and Culture Committee strengthens multigenerational community involvement within the Town of Woodside by initiating, sponsoring and celebrating locally relevant art, creativity and cultural activities including, but not limited to, the areas of art, photography, design, music, horticulture, culinary arts, literature, natural history, drama, and dance. The Committee creates opportunities to educate, inform and engage the community about cultural affairs and will organize and supervise events to encourage local creative talent.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

### **Audit Committee**

The Audit Committee, with the Town Manager, develops the scope of the annual Independent Audit, reviews proposals for auditing services, and recommends an auditing firm to the Town Council for engagement. The Committee reviews the annual Independent Audit report and General Purpose Financial Statements and issues its own independent report to the Town Council on the Town's financial status and on the Town's progress in implementing the Independent Auditor's prior fiscal year's recommendations for improvement to fiscal operations, if any. The Committee reviews and provides comments to the Town Council on the Town's annual self-assessment of performance against the Town Council's Financial Management Policies and recommends revisions to those policies.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for unlimited terms. Nominations for replacement members are offered by the existing Audit Committee.

### **Circulation Committee**

The Circulation Committee advocates for a safe community for all users of the public roadway system including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians in support of the General Plan. The Circulation Committee works with the Town Engineer, Sheriff's Department, and local and regional organizations to develop programs to encourage dialogue on circulation system needs, promotes "share the road" programs for all users, and creates educational programs to promote traffic safety. The Committee advises Town staff and the Town Council about ways to make the roadway system safer for all users, to encourage effective traffic enforcement, and to promote safe, convenient access to schools, Town businesses, public and private institutions and neighborhoods. The Committee reviews applications for special event permits for the Town's roadways, offers expert participation on the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and makes recommendations regarding grant applications that seek to improve the Town's bicycle and pedestrian system. The Committee also confers with the Trails Committee on programs and recommendations of mutual interest.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

### **Climate and Sustainability Committee**

The Climate and Sustainability Committee advises and assists the Town Council, Planning Commission and staff on implementing the goals and policies of the climate and sustainability elements of the Town's codes, guidelines and plans with special emphasis on updates for the Town's Climate Action Plan, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and environmental sustainability programs. The Committee develops and recommends educational programs that develop community awareness of climate and sustainability issues and concerns and recommends actionable programs and regulations which foster promotion of a sustainable Woodside.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

### **Emergency Preparedness Committee**

The Emergency Preparedness Committee supports the General Plan policies to institute or participate in education related to natural hazards and to support emergency preparedness education. The Emergency Preparedness Committee works with Town staff to develop and maintain appropriate plans and procedures for responding to disasters including wildfires, earthquakes, floods, and other emergencies. The Emergency Preparedness Committee works with staff to recruit, organize, train and maintain a team of volunteers who can assist staffing an Emergency Operations Center when Town staff is partially or wholly unavailable. The Emergency Preparedness Committee works with staff to develop emergency communication facilities and capabilities and to provide residents of the Town with information and training in emergency topics.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for two-year terms.

### **Environment and Open Space Committee**

The Environment and Open Space Committee advises and assists the Town Council, Planning Commission and staff on implementing the goals and policies of the wildlife conservation, environmental, and ecological elements of the Town's codes, guidelines and plans, with special emphasis on ecological concerns, preserving open space and restoration of wildlife corridors and habitat. The Committee develops and recommends educational programs that develop community awareness of environmental and wildlife conservation issues and concerns and recommends actionable programs and regulations which foster promotion of healthy wildlife and open space in Woodside.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

### **Livestock and Equine Heritage Committee**

The Livestock and Equine Heritage Committee (LEHC) serves as a resource supporting its charter, the Town's residents, the planning and building department, and Town Council. The

LEHC provides critical information and best practices for keeping diverse livestock and enriching the Town's exceptional rural lifestyle.

The LEHC develops helpful guidelines for construction and maintenance of barns and paddocks that protect the health and safety of horses and other commonly kept livestock. Public outreach from the LEHC includes emergency preparedness, liaison with county and volunteer organizations, and on-site problem solving support for owners or potential owners of livestock.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

### **Recreation Committee**

The Recreation Committee was established by the Town with the cooperation of the Woodside Elementary School District for the purpose of guiding the activities of the community recreation program. The Committee provides organized and supervised community recreation services and facilities in all areas of the Town and makes recreation budget recommendations to the Town Council.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered three-year terms.

### **Trails Committee**

The Trails Committee is dedicated to protecting, preserving and enhancing the unique system of public equestrian and pedestrian trails in the Town of Woodside. The Committee works to improve and expand the existing network of trails and seeks opportunities to develop new trails in appropriate locations as provided for in the General Plan. Working closely with Town staff, the Committee monitors the condition of public trails to ensure safe use on a year-round basis. The Committee oversees expenditures and makes recommendations for the maintenance, repair and new construction of trails, trail bridges and trail crossings. The Committee provides a forum for the public to communicate issues and ideas regarding trails and works to promote their safe use and enjoyment by all users.

The Committee advises Town staff and Town Council on all trail-related issues, reviews land divisions, subdivisions and conditional use permits pertaining to trails and makes recommendations to Town staff.

The Trails Committee confers with the Circulation Committee on issues relating to trails and trail user safety. The Committee confers with the Livestock and Equine Heritage Committee on matters relating to Woodside's equestrian heritage.

From time to time, the Trails Committee recognizes individuals and groups who make contributions to Woodside's trails by awarding the Trail Legacy and Trail Appreciation Awards. The committee also makes nominations to the Town Council for Memorial Trail dedications.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

### **Volunteerism Committee**

The Volunteerism Committee encourages citizen volunteer participation, including by direct recruitment; facilitates volunteer recognition; and develops ideas and recommendations inspired by the Ad Hoc Committee on Volunteerism, from which this Committee emerged. The Committee is a working group that will liaise with Town Staff, other volunteer committees, and the general public to implement ideas and projects.

Due to the size and nature of this committee, a Vice Chair and Secretary are not required.

Members of the Committee are appointed for staggered two-year terms.

### **Woodside History Committee**

The Woodside History Committee advises and develops recommendations for the Town Council and Advisory Bodies and staff regarding matters of Woodside history. The Committee supports and advocates preservation of the history of Woodside through educational programs and through the collection, maintenance, and display of archival materials at the Woodside History Museum.

Members are expected to attend monthly meetings, staff the Museum during open hours, and participate in ad hoc committees for various projects and events throughout the year.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

## **HANDBOOK REVISION HISTORY**

Adopted on October 18, 1995 by Town Council Resolution 1995-5024  
Revised on February 10, 2004 by Town Council Resolution 2004-6434  
Revised on February 26, 2008 by Town Council Resolution 2008-6672  
Revised on March 8, 2008 by Town Council Resolution 2008-6674  
Revised on February 25, 2014 by Town Council Resolution 2014-6972  
Updated November 30, 2018  
Updated December 10, 2024 by Town Council Resolution 2024-7720

Attachment A

TOWN OF WOODSIDE  
ORGANIZATION CHART

