



**CITY COUNCIL
CODE OF CONDUCT**

October 15, 2019

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CHAPTER 1

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

1.1 Preamble

The legal responsibilities of the Tracy City Council are set forth by applicable state and federal laws. In addition, the City Council has adopted regulations, including this Code of Conduct Policy, that hold Council Members to standards of conduct above and beyond what is required by law. This Policy is written with the assumption that Council Members, through training, are aware of their legal and ethical responsibilities as elected officials.

1.2 Form of Government

The City of Tracy operates under a Council-Manager form of government as prescribed by the Tracy Municipal Code ("TMC"). Accordingly, the Mayor and members of the Council are elected at-large, provide legislative direction, set City policy, and ultimately answer to the public.

1.3 City Manager Appointment, Power and Duties

The City Manager is appointed by a majority vote of the Council and serves as the City's chief administrative officer and is responsible for directing the day-to-day operations of the City and implementing policy direction per Section 2.08.060 of the TMC (attached). Specifically, Section 2.08.070 of the TMC prohibits interference by either the City Council or any of its members with the City Manager's execution of their powers or duties:

- The Council nor a member shall interfere with the appointment by the City Manager of any of the department heads or any person to any office or employment.
- Additionally, the Council nor any of its members shall interfere with the City Manager's power to remove any of those persons.
- Neither the Council nor any of its members shall give orders to any subordinate of the City Manager, either publicly or privately.
- The City Council nor any of its members shall interfere with the administration of the City Attorney or give orders to the subordinates of the City Attorney.
- The City Manager and his/her senior staff shall conduct themselves in accordance with the International City Management Association (ICMA) Code of Ethics.

The Council and its members shall deal only with the City Manager with respect to the administrative services or operational matters of the City.

1.4 City Attorney Appointment and Responsibilities

The City Attorney is appointed by a majority vote of the Council. Per Section 12.08.40, the City Attorney is responsible for approving as to form all subdivision improvement agreements and security, deferred improvement agreements, liability agreements and insurance, and all governing documents for a community apartment project, condominium, stock cooperative, or conversion.

- The City Attorney and his/her senior staff shall at all times conduct themselves in accordance with the California Rules of Professional Conduct, established by the California State Bar, and the Ethical Principle for City Attorneys, adopted by the League of California Cities' City Attorneys Department.

CHAPTER 2 COUNCIL POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 City Council Generally

- 2.1.1 The City Council has the power, in the name of the City, to do and perform all acts and things appropriate to a municipal [corporation entity](#) and the general welfare of its inhabitants, which are not specifically prohibited by the constitution, and/or State or Federal laws.
- 2.1.2 The Council acts as a body. Council policy and directives are established by majority vote, unless otherwise required by state law. A decision of the majority binds the Council to a course of action.
- 2.1.3 No Council Member has extraordinary powers beyond those of other members (except as may otherwise be provided in State law). All members, including the Mayor, have equal powers.
- 2.1.4 No member of the Council is permitted to hold any other City office or City employment.
- 2.1.5 Council Members are appointed by the Council body to serve on various committees, including Council standing and ad hoc committees, and third agency member committees.

2.2 Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem - Appointment, Power, and Duties

- 2.2.1 The Mayor is directly elected by the voters to serve a two-year term. The selection of the Mayor Pro Tem occurs every two years in December after the City receives the certified results from the County Registrar of Voters electing a [new](#) Mayor.
- 2.2.2 A Mayor Pro Tem is appointed by the Council and can be replaced at any time by a majority vote of the Council.

- 2.2.3 The Mayor is the presiding officer of the City Council. In the Mayor's absence, the Mayor Pro Tem shall perform the duties of the Mayor.
- 2.2.4 The Mayor is the official head of the City for all ceremonial purposes.
- 2.2.5 Per Government Code, the Mayor, with the approval of the City Council, shall (a) execute official documents (Section 40602b) and (b) make appointments to city boards, commissions, and committees unless otherwise specifically provided by statute (Section 40605).
- 2.2.6 The Mayor is authorized to send letters stating the City's official position to appropriate legislators as long as it is consistent with the Council's Legislative Policy.
- 2.2.7 The Mayor may perform other duties consistent with the mayoral office as prescribed by the Tracy Municipal Code, California Government Code, or as determined by the Council.
- 2.2.8 The Mayor does not possess any power of veto.
- 2.2.9 The Mayor coordinates with the City Manager in the development of agendas for meetings of the City Council. Once the agenda is published, the City Manager may withdraw an item. Additionally, the Mayor may rearrange the order of business on the agenda.

2.3 Council Actions

- 2.3.1 Legislative actions by the City Council can be taken by means of ordinance, resolution, or minute action (motion) duly made and passed by the majority (unless otherwise required).
- 2.3.2 Under Council protocols and procedures, an item may be placed on the agenda if requested by two Council Members. The request can be made during open session or outside of a Council meeting.

2.3.3 Public actions of the Council are recorded in the minutes of the City Council meeting. The City Clerk is required to make a record only of business actually passed upon by a vote of the Council and is not required to record any remarks of Council Members, except at the special request of a Council Member and with the consent of the Council.

2.3.4 Actions of the Council concerning confidential property, personnel, and/or legal matters of the City are to be reported consistent with State law.

2.4 Council Member Committees

2.4.1 The City Council may organize itself into standing and/or special/ ad hoc subcommittees to facilitate Council review of policy matters and action.

2.4.2 The Council may create or dissolve standing and/or special/ad hoc sub committees at any time by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Council.

2.4.3 The Council appoints and removes members to standing and ad hoc committees.

2.4.4 The Council also appoints and removes Council Members to third member agencies.

2.4.5 It is a best practice for non-appointed Council Members not to attend Council standing Committees to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

CHAPTER 3

LEGAL AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

3.1 Preamble

The residents and businesses of Tracy are entitled to have fair, ethical, and accountable local government. Such a government requires that public officials:

- Comply with both the letter and the spirit of the laws and policies affecting operations of the government;
- Be independent, impartial, and fair in their judgment and actions;
- Use their public office for the public good, not for personal gain; and
- Conduct public deliberations and processes openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

To this end, the Tracy City Council has adopted this Code of Conduct and the Norms and Values Statement (Attachment) to encourage public confidence in the integrity of local government and its fair and effective operation.

3.2 Public Interest

3.2.1 Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, Council Members shall work for the common good of the people of Tracy and not for any private or personal interest. Council Members must endeavor to treat all members of the public and issues before them in a fair and equitable manner.

3.2.2 Council Members shall comply with the laws of the nation, the State of California, and the City in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and California constitutions; the Tracy Municipal Code; laws pertaining to conflicts of interest, election campaigns, financial disclosures, employer responsibilities, and open processes of government; and City ordinances and policies.

3.3 Conduct

- 3.3.1 Council Members shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the City Council, boards, commissions, committees, staff, or the public.
- 3.3.2 Council Member duties shall be performed in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the City Council.
- 3.3.3 Council Members shall inform themselves on public issues, listen attentively to public discussions before the body, and focus on the business at hand.
- 3.3.4 Council decisions shall be based upon the merits and substance of the matter at hand.
- 3.3.5 It is the responsibility of Council Members to publicly share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration that they have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process with all other Council Members and the public prior to taking action on the matter.
- 3.3.6 Council Members shall not attend internal staff meetings or meetings between City staff and third parties unless authorized by the City Manager.
- 3.3.7 Policy Role
 - 3.3.7.1 Council Members shall respect and adhere to the Council-Manager structure of the Tracy City government as provided in State law and Tracy Municipal Code.

3.3.7.2 Council Members shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive environment for residents, businesses, and City employees.

3.3.8 Implementation

3.3.8.1 This Code of Conduct shall be included in the regular orientations for City Council candidates. Current Council Members, including those entering office upon election shall sign a City Council Norms and Values Statement (**Attachment 1**) affirming they have read and understand this Tracy City Council Code of Conduct.

3.4 Conflict of Interest

3.4.1 In order to assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the public good, Council Members are prohibited from using their official positions to influence government decisions in which they have a financial interest or where they have an organizational responsibility or a personal relationship that would present a conflict of interest under applicable State law.

3.4.2 In accordance with State law, Council Members must file an annual written disclosure (Form 700) of their economic interests.

3.4.3 Council Members shall not take advantage of services or opportunities for personal gain by virtue of their public office that are not available to the public in general.

3.4.4 Council Members shall respect and preserve the confidentiality of information provided to them concerning the confidential matters of the City. They must neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization nor use such information to advance the personal, financial, or private interests of themselves or others.

3.4.5 City Council Members should avoid any action that could be construed as, or create the appearance of, using public office for

personal gain, including use of City stationery or other City resources to obtain or promote personal business or political campaigns.

- 3.4.6 Public resources not available to the general public (e.g., City staff time, equipment, supplies, or facilities) shall not be used by Council Members for private gain and, personal and political purposes.
- 3.4.7 In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, Council Members shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of a third party before the City Council or any board, commission, or committee or proceeding of the City, except as permitted by law.
- 3.4.8 To the best of their ability, Council Members shall represent the official policies and positions of the City Council. When presenting their personal opinions or positions publicly, members shall explicitly state they do not represent the Council or the City.
- 3.4.9 Tracy City Municipal Code Provisions

- 3.4.9.1 Financial Interests in City Contracts Prohibited.

Section 2.04.050 of the Municipal Code prohibits members of the Council, appointed employees, the City Treasurer and members of City boards and commissions during their term of office, to contract or subcontract with the City.

Section 2.04.050 also requires a City Council Member to recuse (as defined by the Fair Political Practices Commission) themselves from any vote regarding any Memorandum of Understanding between the City and any lawfully recognized bargaining unit in which a City Council member has an immediate family member. [“Immediate family member” is defined as “any and/or all spouses, partners or adult children, whether they live in a single household or not” under this section of the TMC.](#)

- 3.4.9.2 Nepotism.

The City of Tracy's Nepotism Policy prohibits the initial appointment of an individual [to a position within the City of Tracy](#) who has a marital or familial relationship, [as defined in Section 4 of the Policy](#), with any member the City Council, City Manager, or City Attorney.

3.4.9.3 Use of City Property for Private Purposes by City Official/ Employee.

The use for private gain or advantage of City time, facilities, equipment and supplies, prestige, influence, or information obtained through one's City office or employment. No City-owned facilities, equipment or supplies, including autos, trucks, instruments, tools, supplies, machines, badges, identification cards, or other items which are the property of the City shall be used by an employee for personal or non-City business reasons except upon prior written approval of the City Manager. (City Personnel Rule 9.2 (d))

3.4.9.4 Political Activities Prohibited; Discrimination.

For informational purposes, the following provisions apply to City and contract employees and consultants:

1. No employee shall, while in uniform or during the employee's working hours, take an active part in any municipal or other political campaign.
2. No employee shall, while in uniform or during the employee's work hours, seek or accept contributions for or against a candidate or issue.
3. An employee may not seek or accept signatures to any petition for or against any such candidate or issue during their work hours.

4. No person in the classified service shall be employed, promoted, demoted, or discharged or in any way favored or discriminated against because of political opinions or affiliations or on any other basis protected by state and/or federal law~~because of race or religious belief~~.

3.4.10 California State Law Regarding Conflicts

While not enforceable by the City, there are four key areas of California State law that regulate the ethics of public officials.

3.4.10.1 Constitutional prohibitions

State law strictly forbids elected and appointed public officials from accepting free or discounted travel from transportation companies. The penalty for a violation includes the forfeiture of office.

3.4.10.2 Contractual conflicts of interest

This prohibition, found in Government Code Section 1090, applies to elected and appointed officials as well as other City staff members. It prohibits the City from entering into a contract if one of its members (i.e., a Council Member) is financially interested in the contract. If the bar (or prohibition) applies, the agency is prohibited from entering into the contract whether or not the official with the conflict participates or not. In some limited circumstances, officials are allowed to disqualify themselves from participation and the agency may enter into the contract.

Financial interest has been defined to include employment, stock/ ownership interests, and certain membership on the board of directors of a for-profit or nonprofit corporation,

among others. Violations can be charged as a felony. A person convicted of violating Section 1090 is prohibited from ever holding public office in the State.

3.4.10.3 Political Reform Act - Conflicts of Interest

The Political Reform Act (PRA) was adopted by the voters in 1974 and is the primary expression of the law relative to conflicts of interest (and campaign finance) in California. The Act created the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC), a five-member State board which administers the Act.

The Act and the regulations are complex and are continuously subjected to official interpretation. The following synopsis of key parts of the Act will be helpful in spotting issues; however, the FPPC and/or City Attorney should be consulted for further advice and clarification.

With respect to conflicts of interest, the FPPC has promulgated a regulation which establishes an analysis which assists in determining whether a public official is participating in a government decision in which they have a qualifying financial interest and whether it is reasonably foreseeable that the decision will have a material financial effect on the public official's financial interest, which is distinguishable from the effect the decision will have on the public generally.

3.4.10.3.1 Political Reform Act-Enforcement

The FPPC can assess administrative fines and penalties for violation of the Act. The District Attorney and the State Attorney General may prosecute violators as civil or criminal matters. Violators may also be removed from office pursuant to Government Code Section 3060.

3.4.10.4 Common Law Conflicts of Interest

This is the judicial expression of the public policy against public officials using their official position for private benefit. An elected official bears a fiduciary duty to exercise the powers of office for the benefit of the public and is not permitted to use those powers or their office for the benefit of any private interest. This common law doctrine continues to survive the adoption of various statutory expressions of conflict law.

3.4.10.5 Appearance of Impropriety

When participation in action or decision-making as a public official does not implicate the specific statutory criteria for conflicts of interest; however, participation still does not “look” or “feel” right, that public official has probably encountered the appearance of impropriety.

For the public to have faith and confidence that government authority will be implemented in an even-handed and ethical manner, public officials may need to step aside even though no technical conflict exists. An example is where a long-term nonfinancial affiliation exists between the public official and an applicant or the applicant is related by blood or marriage to the official. For the good of the community, members who encounter the appearance of impropriety should step aside.

3.5 AB 1234-Required Ethics Training

AB 1234 requires elected or appointed officials who are compensated for their service or reimbursed for their expenses to take two hours of training in ethics principles and laws every two years. Those who enter office after January 1, 2006 must receive the training within a year of starting their service. They must then receive the training every two years after that.

The training must cover general ethics principles relating to public service and ethics laws including:

- Laws relating to personal financial gain by public officials (including bribery and conflict of interest laws);
- Laws relating to office-holder perks, including gifts and travel restrictions, personal and political use of public resources, and prohibitions against gifts of public funds;
- Governmental transparency laws, including financial disclosure requirements and open government laws (the Brown Act and Public Records Act); Laws relating to fair processes, including fair contracting requirements, common law bias requirements, and due process

NOTE: State laws governing conflicts of interest are written to ensure that actions are taken in the public interest. These laws are very complex. Council Members should consult with the City Attorney, their own attorney, or the Fair Political Practices Commission for guidance in advance.

3.6 Code of Conduct Compliance and Enforcement

Consistent with this oath is the requirement of this Council policy to comply with the laws as well as report violations of the laws and policy of which they become aware.

3.6.1 A request for censure of a member of the Council may be submitted to the City [Clerk-Manager](#) by any member of the Council ([“Initiating Member”](#)), [with the support of another Council member \(“Seconding Member”\)](#). Censure is a formal statement or resolution by the Council officially reprimanding a Council Member [for conduct that may include sanctions. It is the intent of the Council that a request for censure be used only for significant and/or repeated violations of this Code of Conduct and not a means to address politically or personally motivated disagreements amongst Council.](#)

The request shall contain the specific charges on which the proposed censure is based. [The City Manager shall deliver a copy of the request for censure and the charges to each member of the Council at least 72 hours after receipt](#)

of the request. The request for censure shall first be considered by an ad hoc Committee of the Council established by the Mayor which shall consist of the Mayor and another Council Member. A neutral mediator selected by the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California of the County of San Joaquin, shall advise the ad hoc Committee by preparing a written analysis of the allegation and their preliminary findings. If the Mayor is the subject of the censure, then the Mayor Pro Tempore shall establish the ad hoc Committee and serve on the ad hoc Committee. The ad hoc Committee shall not include the member making the request or the member who is the subject of the request. The City Clerk shall deliver a copy of the request for censure and the charges to each member of the Council at least 72 hours prior to the first meeting of the ad hoc Committee at which the request will be first considered. The neutral mediator shall conduct an investigation and prepare a written analysis of the allegation and their preliminary findings and recommendation. Said investigation shall, at a minimum, include interviews with the Initiating Member and the member who is the subject of the request. The neutral mediator's recommendation shall be to: (a) set the matter for a censure hearing and whether censure is warranted or (b) no further action should be taken with respect to the request. The neutral mediator shall present its recommendation to the Council for its consideration and action within thirty (30) days of completing their investigation.

3.6.1.1 The Committee shall permit testimony from both the member making the request and the member subject to the request and shall determine whether: (a) further investigation of the charges is required in order to determine if a censure hearing is warranted; or (b) the matter is to be set for censure hearing; or (c) no further action should be taken with respect to the request. The Committee shall present its recommendations to the Council for its consideration and action as provided below. The censure request shall be agendized at the next regular Council meeting following receipt of the neutral mediator's written findings and recommendation. Council shall determine whether or not to accept the neutral mediator's recommendation. If the Council decides to set the matter for a censure hearing, it shall schedule it no sooner than two weeks after its determination to hear the matter. It may not schedule the matter during any previously scheduled excused absence of the subject Council Member. Written notice of the hearing shall be delivered in person to the member of the Council subject to the censure hearing at least ten (10) days in advance of the scheduled hearing. If the Council decides that no further action is required, Council may also request the Initiating Member either reimburse the City the cost of the neutral mediator's services from personal funds (not campaign funds), not to exceed \$2,500, or forgo a month's salary as Council Member. A report regarding the Initiating

Member's compliance with that request shall be presented to Council within sixty (60) days of that request.

~~3.6.1.1~~

~~3.6.1.2 If the ad hoc Committee determines no further action should be taken with respect to the request, the Committee shall report that to the Council at its earliest opportunity. If the Committee determines that further investigation is required, the Committee shall conduct an investigation, arrive at its recommendation, and report its conclusions, findings and a summary of its proceedings to the Council at its earliest opportunity. If the ad hoc Committee does not report its recommendations and findings to the Council within 30 days of the formation of the Committee and receipt of the request for censure, the matter shall automatically be sent to the Council for its consideration. At the censure hearing, the member of the Council who is the subject of the request for censure shall be given the opportunity to make an opening and a closing statement, to call witnesses on their behalf and to question their accusers. The member subject to the charges may be represented by a person or persons of their choice whether or not an attorney at law and may have that representative speak or question witnesses on their behalf. The questioning or cross-questioning of witness may be reasonably limited by the person chairing the hearing.~~

~~3.6.1.3 Upon receipt of the report of the ad hoc Committee, or at the expiration of the time for the ad hoc Committee to report, Council shall place the matter on its agenda to determine whether or not a censure hearing is warranted. If the Council decides to set the matter for a censure hearing, it shall schedule it no sooner than two weeks after its determination to hear the matter. It may not schedule the matter during any previously scheduled excused absence of the subject Council Member. Written notice of the hearing shall be delivered in person to the member of the Council subject to the censure hearing or to the member's City office as least ten (10) days in advance of the scheduled hearing. Testimony shall be taken only from witnesses having direct knowledge of facts or circumstances relevant to the specific charges under consideration. However, the rules of evidence and judicial procedure applicable in courts of law shall not be applied to this hearing, and the procedures shall be generally informal.~~

~~At the censure hearing, the member of the Council who is the subject of the request for censure shall be given the opportunity to make an opening and a closing statement, to call witnesses on their behalf and to question their accusers. The member subject to the charges may be represented by a person or persons of their choice whether or not an attorney at law and may have that representative speak or question witnesses on their behalf. The questioning or cross-~~

~~questioning of witness may be reasonably limited by the person chairing the hearing.~~

~~3.6.1.5 Testimony shall be taken only from witnesses having direct knowledge of facts or circumstances relevant to the specific charges under consideration. However, the rules of evidence and judicial procedure applicable in courts of law shall not be applied to this hearing, and the procedures shall be generally informal.~~

~~3.6.2 These same protocols may be utilized for any suspected violations or alleged violations by a Council advisory body member. In addition to these protocols, the Mayor may also refer the matter to the City Council if further action is needed.~~

~~3.6.3~~ 3.6.2 At the discretion of the Council, ~~additional~~ sanctions may be imposed as a result of a censure. These sanctions may be applied individually or in combination. ~~for violating the Code of Conduct or engaging in other misconduct. These actions may be applied individually or in combination.~~ They include, but are not limited to:

~~3.6.3.13~~ 3.6.2.1 Public Admonishment - —A reproof or verbal warning directed to a Council Member about a particular type of behavior that violates City policy.

3.6.2.2 Revocation of Special Privileges —A revocation of a Council Member's Council Committee assignments, such as standing and ad hoc committees, regional boards and commissions, and other board/committee appointments. Other revocations may include temporary suspension of official travel, conference participation, and ceremonial titles.

3.6.3 Nothing in this Section shall limit Council's ability to informally address conduct considered to be not significant or a minor violation of this Code, which may include informal counseling from one Council member to another, and a Council member to a Council advisory body member.

CHAPTER 4 COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 Relationship/Communications with Staff

Staff serves the City Council as a whole, therefore:

- 4.1.1 A Council Member shall not direct staff in person or in writing to initiate any action, change a course of action, or prepare any report. A Council Member shall not initiate any project or study without the approval of the majority of the Council.
- 4.1.2 Requests for information and corresponding responses made by Council Members will be shared with the full Council.
- 4.1.3 Council Members shall not attempt to pressure or influence discussions, recommendations, workloads, schedules, or department priorities without first consulting with the City Manager and obtaining the approval of a majority of the Council.
- 4.1.4 When preparing for Council meetings, Council Members should direct questions ahead of time to the City Manager so that staff can provide the desired information at the Council meeting.
- 4.1.5 Any concerns by a member of the City Council regarding the behavior or work of a City employee should be directed to the City Manager privately to ensure the concern is resolved. Council Members shall not reprimand employees directly nor should they communicate their concerns to anyone other than the City Manager.
- 4.1.6 Council Members may direct routine inquiries to either the City Manager or appropriate department head.
- 4.1.7 Council Members serving on Council committees or as the City's representative to an outside agency may interact directly with City staff assigned to that effort as the City Manager's designee. The City

staff member so designated and assigned will keep the City Manager appropriately informed.

4.2 Council Relationship/Communication with Council Advisory Bodies

4.2.1 Council Members shall not attempt to pressure or influence board, commission, or committee decisions, recommendations, or priorities absent the approval of the majority of the Council.

4.2.2 It is a best practice that Council Members refrain from attending Board, Commission, and/or Committee meetings to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

4.3 Handling of Litigation and Other Confidential Information

4.3.1 All written materials and verbal information provided to Council Members on matters that are confidential and/or privileged under State law shall be kept in complete confidence to ensure that the City's position is not compromised. No disclosure or mention of any information in these materials may be made to anyone other than Council Members, the City Attorney, or City Manager.

4.3.1.1 Confidential materials provided in preparation for and during Closed Sessions shall not be retained and documents must be returned to staff at the conclusion of the Closed Session.

4.3.1.2 Council Members may not request confidential written information from staff that has not been provided to all Council Members.

4.4 Representing an Official City Position

4.4.1 City Council Members may use their title only when conducting official City business, for information purposes, or as an indication of background and expertise, carefully considering whether they are exceeding or appearing to exceed their authority.

- 4.4.2 Once the City Council has taken a position on an issue, all official City correspondence regarding that issue will reflect the Council's adopted position.
- 4.4.3 The Mayor is authorized to send letters on City letterhead stating the City's official position to appropriate legislators as long as it is consistent with the Council's Legislative Policy.
- 4.4.4 City letterhead may be used by Council Members only for official City business and/or to represent a policy action taken by the Council body.
- 4.4.5 If a member of the City Council appears before another governmental agency organization to give a statement on an issue affecting the City, the Council Member should indicate the majority position and opinion of the Council.
- 4.4.6 Personal opinions and comments may be expressed only if the Council Member clarifies that these statements do not reflect the official position of the City Council.

4.5 Quasi-Judicial Role/*Ex Parte* Contacts

The City Council has a number of roles. It legislates and makes administrative and executive decisions. The Council also acts in a quasi-judicial capacity or "like a judge" when it rules on various permits, licenses, and land use entitlements.

In this last capacity, quasi-judicial, the Council holds a hearing, takes evidence, determines what the evidence shows, and exercises its discretion in applying the facts to the law shown by the evidence. It is to these proceedings that the rule relative to *ex parte* contacts applies.

- 4.5.1 *Ex Parte* Contacts/Fair Hearings. The Council shall refrain from receiving information and evidence on any quasi-judicial matter while such matter is pending before the City Council or any agency, board, or commission thereof, except at the public hearing.

As an elected official, it is often impossible to avoid such contacts and exposure to information. Therefore, if any member is exposed to information or evidence about a pending matter outside of the public hearing, through contacts by constituents, the applicant or through site visits, the member shall disclose all such information and/or evidence acquired from such contacts, which is not otherwise included in the written or oral staff report, during the public hearing, and before the public comments period is opened.

Matters are "pending" when an application has been filed. Information and evidence gained by members via their attendance at noticed public hearings before subordinate boards and commissions are not subject to this rule.

4.6 No Attorney-Client Relationship

Council Members who consult the City Attorney, their staff, and/or attorney(s) contracted to work on behalf of the City cannot enjoy or establish an attorney-client relationship with said attorney(s) by consulting with or speaking to same. Any attorney-client relationship established belongs to the City, acting through the City Council, and as may be allowed in State law for purposes of defending the City and/or the City Council in the course of litigation and/or administrative procedures, etc.

CHAPTER 5 COUNCIL ADVISORY BODIES

5.1 Boards, Commissions, and Committees Generally

- 5.1.1 The Tracy Municipal Code establishes a Planning Commission to advise the Council on land use matters (Chapter 10.04) and a Parks and Community Services Commission (Chapter 7.16)
- 5.1.2 The rules of procedure and code of conduct that govern the City Council apply with equal force to all Council advisory boards and commissions.
- 5.1.3 The City Council may also establish by ordinance or resolution, boards, commissions, and committees to assist the Council in making its policy decisions. The City Council has the inherent power to create advisory bodies.
- 5.1.4 City boards, commissions, and committees (collectively "Council advisory bodies") provide policy recommendation to Council; they do not set or establish City policy or provide administrative direction to City staff.
- 5.1.5 City boards, commissions, and committees are advisory in nature and therefore do not represent City's official position on city matters.
- 5.1.6 Appointments to boards, commissions, and committees are made by a majority vote of the Council. Appointees to Council advisory bodies serve at the pleasure of the City Council.
- 5.1.7 The terms "board" and "commission" can be used interchangeably. Boards and commissions typically have broader policy and advisory responsibilities than committees which typically have much more focused advisory roles to the Council.

5.2 Board, Commission, and Committee Organization and Conduct

- 5.2.1 Annually, each board, commission, and committee elects one of their members to serve as the chair (presiding officer) and vice-chair.
- 5.2.2 Boards, commissions, and committees hold regular and special meetings as required. The conduct of board, commission, and committee meetings are governed by the same rules of policy and procedure as the City Council.
- 5.2.3 Boards, commissions, and committees should comply with all applicable open meeting and conflict-of-interest laws of the State.
- 5.2.4 Upon appointment or reappointment, Council advisory body members shall sign a Council Advisory Body Norms and Values statement (**Attachment 2**) affirming they have read and understand this City of Tracy City Council Code of Conduct.

5.3 Board, Commission, and Committee Appointments

- 5.3.1 Resolution No. 2004-152 establishes the board, commission, and committee appointment/selection process and requirements for residency.
- 5.3.2 The term of office for each board, commission, or committee member is 4 years, with the exception of the Measure V Residents' Oversight Committee which is 3 years.
- 5.3.3 The City Clerk provides application forms, maintains a listing of all applications received, and solicits applications when vacancies occur.

5.4 Boards, Commissions, and Committees- Vacancy and Selection/Appointment Processes

- 5.4.1 Resolution No. 2004-152 outlines procedures for filling a board, commission or committee vacancy and selection and appointment process. The Council appoints all City boards, commissions, and committee members.

5.4.2 Resignations may be submitted at any time to the City Council either directly or through the board, commission, or committee chair. Resignations are effective upon submittal.

5.5 Boards, Commissions, and Committees - Removal

A board member, commissioner, or committee member serves at the pleasure of the Council and may be removed at any time. The removal of a planning commission member must comply with TMC Section in accordance with the applicable procedure.

CHAPTER 6 COUNCIL FINANCIAL MATTERS

6.1 Compensation

- 6.1.1 Pursuant to Ordinance No. 1094, the Tracy Mayor and City Council receive a monthly salary. The amount is the salary limit established by the State Legislature for members of the City Council of general law cities having a population range within which the City of Tracy falls, as specified in California Government Code Section 36516(a).

- 6.1.2 The salary of the Mayor and City Council should be reviewed every two years.

6.2 Benefits

- 6.2.1 The California Government Code provides that Council Members may receive [City-funded](#) health, retirement, and other benefits. City-funded medical, dental, and life insurance plan benefits are provided. [The Council Policy Providing City Paid Health Insurance for City Treasurer, City Clerk, and City Council, adopted by Resolution No. 2003-391, states that an elected official is not eligible for City-funded health benefits if the official or the official's spouse has employer-paid health insurance.](#)

6.3 City Council Budget and Expenses

- 6.3.1 City Council Resolution No. 2007-075 provides policy guidance regarding Council expenditures for equipment, supplies and communications; travel; local expenses; and eligible reimbursements.

CITY OF TRACY CITY COUNCIL
NORMS AND VALUES STATEMENT

PREAMBLE

The residents and businesses of Tracy are entitled to have fair, ethical, and accountable local government. Such a government requires that public officials:

- Comply with both the letter and the spirit of the laws and policies affecting operations of the government.
- Be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions.
- Use their public office for the public good, not for personal gain.
- Conduct public deliberations and processes openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

To this end, the Tracy City Council has adopted a Code of Conduct to encourage public confidence in the integrity of local government and its fair and effective operation.

City Council Members shall sign this Norms and Values statement upon assuming office and upon reelection to office as a symbol of each Council Member's continuing commitment to abide by the principles of this code.

1. Act in the Public Interest

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, Council Members shall work for the common good of the people of Tracy and not for any private or personal interest, and they will endeavor to treat all persons, claims, and transactions in a fair and equitable manner.

2. Comply with the Law

Council Members shall comply with the laws of the nation, the State of California, and the City in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and California constitutions;

the Tracy City Municipal Code; laws pertaining to Council-Manager form of government, conflicts of interest, election campaigns, financial disclosures, employer responsibilities, and open processes of government; and City ordinances and policies.

3. Conduct of Members

Council Members shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the City Council, boards, commissions, committees, staff, or the public.

4 Respect for Process

Council Member duties shall be performed in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the City Council.

5. Conduct of Public Meetings

Council Members shall inform themselves of public issues, listen attentively to public discussions before the body, and focus on the business at hand.

6. Decisions Based on Merit

Council decisions shall be based upon the merits and substance of the matter at hand.

7. Communication

It is the responsibility of Council Members to ~~publicly~~ share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration that they have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process with all other Council Members.

8. Coordination with City Staff

Appropriate City staff should be involved when Council Members meet with officials from other agencies and jurisdictions to ensure proper staff support as needed and to keep staff informed.

9. Disclosure of Corruption

All City officials shall take an oath upon assuming office, pledging to uphold the constitution and laws of the City, the State, and the Federal government. As part of this oath, officials commit to disclosing to the appropriate authorities and/or to the City Council any behavior or activity that may qualify as corruption, abuse, fraud, bribery, or other violation of the law.

10. Conflict of Interest

In order to assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the public good, Council Members shall not use their official positions to influence government decisions in which they have a financial interest or where they have an organizational responsibility or a personal relationship that would present a conflict of interest under applicable State law.

In accordance with the law, members shall file written disclosures of their economic interests and if they have a conflict of interest regarding a particular decision, refrain from participating in that decision unless otherwise permitted by law.

11. Gifts and Favors

Council Members shall not take advantage of services or opportunities for personal gain by virtue of their public office that are not available to the public in general. They shall refrain from accepting gifts, favors, or promises of future benefits that might compromise their independence of judgment or action or give the appearance of being compromised.

12. Confidential Information

Council Members shall respect and preserve the confidentiality of information provided to them concerning the confidential matters of the City. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization nor use such information to advance their personal, financial, or private interests.

13. Use of Public Resources

Public resources not available to the general public (e.g., City staff time, equipment, supplies, or facilities) shall not be used by Council Members for private gain or personal and/or campaign purposes.

14. Representation of Private Interests

In keeping with their role as stewards of the public trust, Council Members shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of a third-party before the City Council or any board, commission, or committee or proceeding of the City.

15. Advocacy

To the best of their ability, Council Members shall represent the official policies and positions of the City Council. When presenting their personal opinions or positions, members shall explicitly state that they do not represent the Council or the City.

16. Improper Influence

Council Members shall refrain from using their position to improperly influence the deliberations or decisions of City staff, boards, commissions, or committees.

17. Policy Role of Members

Council Members shall respect and adhere to the Council-Manager structure of Tracy City government as provided in State law and the City Municipal Code.

18. Positive Work Environment

Council Members shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive environment for residents, businesses, and City employees.

19. Implementation

Ethics standards shall be included in the regular orientations for City Council candidates. Council Members entering office shall sign a statement affirming they read and understood the City of Tracy's City Council Code of Conduct.

20. Compliance and Enforcement

Council Members themselves 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 City government.

This City Council Norms and Values statement shall be considered to be a summary of the longer City Council Code of Conduct document. The City Council Code of Conduct document shall be considered to be the definitive document relating to ethical conduct by Tracy City Council Members.

I affirm that I have read and understand the City of Tracy City Council Norms and Values statement.

Signature

Date

CITY OF TRACY
COUNCIL ADVISORY BODY
NORMS AND VALUES STATEMENT

PREAMBLE

The residents and businesses of Tracy are entitled to have fair, ethical, and accountable local government. Such a government requires that public officials, including Council advisory body members:

- Comply with both the letter and the spirit of the laws and policies affecting operations of the government.
- Be independent, impartial, and fair in their judgment and actions.
- Use their public office for the public good, not for personal gain.
- Conduct public deliberations and processes openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

To this end, Council advisory body members are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct adopted by the Tracy City Council to encourage public confidence in the integrity of local government and its fair and effective operation.

Council advisory body members shall sign this Norms and Values statement at the first meeting of the board, commission, or committee upon assuming office and, if applicable, upon reappointment to the board, commission, or committee as a symbol of each Council advisory body member's commitment to abide by the principles of this code during their term.

1. Act in the Public Interest

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, Council advisory body members shall work for the common good of the people of Tracy and not for any private or personal interest, and they will endeavor to treat all persons, claims, and transactions in a fair and equitable manner.

2. Comply with the Law

Council advisory body members shall comply with the laws of the nation, the State of California, and the City in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and California Constitutions; the Tracy City Municipal Code; laws pertaining to the Council-

Manager form of government, conflicts of interest, election campaigns, financial disclosures, employer responsibilities, and open processes of government; and City ordinances and policies.

3. Conduct of Council Advisory Body Members

Council advisory body members shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of Council Members; other members of the Council advisory body; other boards, commissions, or committees; staff; or the public.

4. Respect for Process

Council advisory body member duties shall be performed in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the City Council.

5. Conduct of Public Meetings

Council advisory body members shall inform themselves of public issues, listen attentively to public discussions before the body, and focus on the business at hand.

6. Decisions Based on Merit

Council advisory body members shall base their decisions upon the merits and substance of the matter at hand.

7. Communication

It is the responsibility of Council advisory body members to ~~publicly~~ share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration that they have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process with all other Council advisory body members.

8. Coordination with City Staff

Appropriate City staff should be involved when Council advisory body members meet with officials from other agencies and jurisdictions to ensure proper staff support, as needed, and to keep staff informed.

9. Disclosure of Corruption

All City officials shall take an oath upon assuming office, pledging to uphold the Constitution and laws of the City, the State, and the Federal government. As part of this oath, officials commit to disclosing to the appropriate authorities and/or to the City Council any behavior or activity that may qualify as corruption, abuse, fraud, bribery, or other violation of the law.

10. Conflict of Interest

In order to assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the public good, Council advisory body members shall not use their official positions to influence government decisions in which they have a financial interest or where they have an organizational responsibility or a personal relationship that would present a conflict of interest under applicable State law.

In accordance with the law, members shall file written disclosures of their economic interests and if they have a conflict of interest regarding a particular decision, refrain from participating in that decision unless otherwise permitted by law.

11. Gifts and Favors

Council advisory body members shall not take advantage of services or opportunities for personal gain by virtue of their public office that are not available to the public in general. They shall refrain from accepting gifts, favors, or promises of future benefits that might compromise their independence of judgment or action or give the appearance of being compromised.

12. Confidential Information

Council advisory body members shall respect and preserve the confidentiality of information provided to them concerning the confidential matters of the City. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization nor use such information to advance their personal, financial, or private interests.

13. Use of Public Resources

Public resources not available to the general public (e.g., City staff time, equipment, supplies, or facilities) shall not be used by Council advisory body members for private gain or personal and/or campaign purposes.

14. Representation of Private Interests

In keeping with their role as stewards of the public trust, Council advisory body members shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of a third party before the City Council or any board, commission, or committee, or proceeding of the City.

15. Advocacy

To the best of their ability, Council advisory body members shall represent the official policies and positions of the City of Tracy. When presenting their personal opinions or positions, members shall explicitly state that they represent neither the Council advisory body nor the City.

16. Improper Influence

Council advisory body members shall refrain from using their position to improperly influence the deliberations or decisions of City staff, boards, commissions, or committees.

17. Policy Role of Members

Council advisory body members shall respect and adhere to the Council-Manager structure of Tracy City government as provided in State law and the City Municipal Code.

18. Positive Work Environment

Council advisory body members shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive environment for residents, businesses, and City employees.
Attachment 2 to City Council Code of Conduct

19. Implementation

Ethics standards shall be included in the regular orientations for Council advisory body members. Upon entering office and upon reappointment, Council advisory body members shall sign a statement affirming they read and understood the City of Tracy's City Council Code of Conduct.

20. Compliance and Enforcement

Council advisory body members themselves have the responsibility to assure that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of City government.

Attachment 2 to City Council
Code of Conduct

The Council Advisory Body Norms and Values statement shall be considered to be a summary of the longer City Council Code of Conduct document. The City Council Code of Conduct document shall be considered to be the definitive document relating to ethical conduct by Tracy City Council advisory body members.

I affirm that I have read and understand the City of Tracy City Council Code of Conduct.

Signature

Date

RESOLUTION 2019-_____

ADOPTING CITY OF TRACY CITY COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

WHEREAS, It is a best practice for City Councils to develop governance policies around roles and responsibilities, and norms and behaviors to ensure a shared understanding of the City Manager's role and Council's expectations to optimize working relationships, and

WHEREAS, Over the past year, the Council has had several norms and values discussions with the goal of developing an ethics/conduct policy, and

WHEREAS, In June 2019, the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury issued a report on its investigation of the Tracy City Council and recommended the Council adopt an ethics policy to guide its conduct. The Grand Jury suggested having a Code of Conduct policy in place on or by October 31, 2019, and

WHEREAS, On July 16, 2019, Council unanimously agreed to develop and adopt an ethics/code of conduct policy, and

WHEREAS, On September 17, 2019, the Council discussed and provided policy direction to staff regarding a proposed Code of Conduct;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City Council of the City of Tracy hereby adopts the attached Tracy City Council Code of Conduct.

The foregoing Resolution 2019-_____ was adopted by Tracy City Council on the 15th day of October, 2019, by the following vote:

- AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS:
- NOES: COUNCIL MEMBERS:
- ABSENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS:
- ABSTAIN: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK