

**Guidelines for CPG Ethical Standards**  
**Required for CPG Recognition by Operational Procedures, Exhibit A,**  
**of Council Policy 600-24**

This document describes recommended ethical standards the University Community Planning Group's (UCPG) Operational Procedures should address to be eligible for recognition by the San Diego City Council. These guidelines do not affect in any way the requirements of CP 600-24. The standards are outlined based on the City's Ethics Ordinance: Chapter 2, Article 7, Division 35 of the City's Municipal Code.

1) Conflicts of Interest

UCPG voting members with a potential or perceived conflict of interest should recuse themselves from a UCPG hearing on matter for which they have a direct economic interest. A direct economic interest includes, but is not limited to, investments in or positions with a business entity, interest in real property, source of income, source of gifts, and personal finances. However, a direct economic interest would not include holdings of de minimis investments in public companies.

Exceptions to conflicts of interest may be granted by the UCPG board to a voting member who can show that the decision will not have an effect, positive or negative, on their economic interest.

See Section 7 for additional information on Recusals and Abstentions.

2) Abstentions for Potential Conflicts of Interest

UCPG voting members should voluntarily choose to abstain from voting when that member has legitimate, non-economic, personal interests in the outcome that would, at minimum, give the appearance of impropriety, cast doubt on that member's ability to make a fair decision, or when that member lacks sufficient information upon which to cast a vote. The UCPG's record of the vote on the item will reflect an abstaining member in the vote, and they are still counted in a CPG quorum for that item, regardless of the point in time they declare their abstention.

Discomfort in publicly disclosing their position on a matter is not sufficient reason to abstain. At the time of the vote, a member shall disclose their reason for abstaining.

See Section 7 for additional information on Recusals and Abstentions.

3) Political Actions

Neither the UCPG nor voting members in their capacity as such should use their title from or position on the UCPG for political endorsements of individuals. The UCPG may, however, upon majority vote, take a position on pending legislation that is within the UCPG's scope.

4) Donations

Neither the UCPG nor its voting members should accept donations on behalf of any individual running for public office.

### 5) Equal Time for Candidates or Ballot Measures

The UCPG will endeavor to grant equal time for candidates or ballot measures if docketed on the agenda. Equal time does not apply to individuals speaking during non-agenda public comment periods.

### 6) Professional Conduct

The UCPG and its voting members will conduct themselves reasonably and professionally and refrain from disrupting the public process as set forth on the UCPG's agenda. At all times, UCPG voting members should treat each other, applicants, city staff, and the public with courtesy.

### 7) Additional Information on Abstentions and Recusals

[Council Policy 600-24 Admin Guidelines \(2015\)](#) maintains consistent direction regarding recusing and abstaining.

Recusals and abstentions are defined as follows by the Admin Guidelines:

- **Recusals** - Mandatory prohibition. Readily identifiable, distinguishable, direct economic interest in any project or matter being considered by the planning group.
- **Abstentions** - Optional situation. Where a member has a legitimate, non-economic, personal interest in the outcome that would, at minimum, give the appearance of impropriety, or cast doubt on their ability to make a fair decision, or a member lacks sufficient information upon which to cast a vote.

Both terms relate to “conflict of interest,” but the important distinction between the two is that one involves economic interest (recusals) and the other does not (abstention).