

# Planning Commission 101

“The Nuts and Bolts of Planning”

League of Cities  
Planning Commissioners Academy  
March 6, 2024

Presented by:  
Julia Malisos  
Principal Planner, WHA &  
Former Planning Commissioner

WHA.

ALL CORNERS MET

Orange County

Los Angeles

Sacramento

Bay Area

# Scenario 1

## **3 years to get to Planning Commission...and continued.**

A Planning Commissioner created a line of questioning that resulted in a continuance.

### **Considerations**

- Could questions have been asked in advance?
- What could be done to move the project forward at that meeting?

### **Best Practices**

- Understand the PC role and planning process.
- Read your staff report and ask questions prior to meeting.
- Be prepared and allow the applicant to also come prepared.

## Scenario 2

**May not be the most popular opinion, have good reasons.**

A run-down gas station, opportunity to be bought, get a visual upgrade, and expand mini-mart into vacant service bays.

### **Considerations**

- A liquor store in the same shopping center – “it will take away business.”
- Adjacent residents did not want it.

### **Best Practices**

- Weigh pros and cons.
- Think long term and the benefit.

# Scenario 3

## **Make recommendations that you can stand behind.**

Large retailer proposing a store adjacent to homes. Loading bays were on residential side, could have been on freeway side.

## **Considerations**

- Will it negatively impact existing residents and if so, how can we solve for that?

## **Best Practices**

- Be solution oriented.
- Be respectful.

# Take-Aways

- Understand PC Responsibilities.
- Be Prepared.
- Visit the Site.
- Follow the Brown Act Rules.
- If Chair, be Consistent.
- Weigh Options and be Logical.
- Be Solution Oriented.



# THANK YOU

Presented by:  
Julia Malisos  
Principal Planner, WHA  
[juliam@whainc.com](mailto:juliam@whainc.com)  
[www.whainc.com](http://www.whainc.com)  
949-250-0607

# WHA.

ALL CORNERS MET

Orange County

Los Angeles

Sacramento

Bay Area