

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: JESSICA JONES, SUPERVISING PLANNER  
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
SUBJECT: WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

AGENDA ACTION: ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION

---

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the City Council, by resolution, revise the composition of the Waterways Advisory Committee to a seven-member committee comprising of one member each from the Planning Commission, Design Review Board and Board of Community Services, and four at-large citizen members.

---

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Waterways Advisory Committee (WAC) is tasked with reviewing and providing advisory comments on development projects, both public and private, that are located adjacent to creeks and waterways for consistency with the Santa Rosa General Plan, Zoning Code, Design Guidelines and Citywide Creek Master Plan. The WAC, which is a Council appointed committee and therefore subject to the Brown Act and quorum requirements, is currently comprised of nine members: two City Council members, four at-large citizen members, and one member each from the Planning Commission, Design Review Board and Board of Community Services. In recent years, obtaining a quorum of WAC members for meetings has proven difficult, and has resulted in meetings being continued, which adversely impacts project timelines. Revising the composition of the WAC from nine members to seven would reduce the quorum requirement to four, minimizing scheduling conflicts, while maintaining a seven-member Committee consisting of one member each from the Planning Commission, Design Review Board and Board of Community Services, and four at-large citizen members, all of whom are appointed either directly or indirectly by the Council.

BACKGROUND

1. The City Council established the Waterways Advisory Committee in 1995 to review all development projects adjacent to Santa Rosa Creek, oversee implementation of the Santa Rosa Creek Master Plan and the Prince Memorial Greenway, and suggest funding for related projects. The WAC included one member each from the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review

## WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

### PAGE 2 OF 3

Board, Board of Community Services and Redevelopment Agency, along with a member of the Committee for Restoring Santa Rosa Creek, which was a citizens' group.

2. In 2000, the City Council further defined the membership of the WAC by adding a second City Council member. At that time the Council also broadened the Committee's charge to review public and private development projects along all creeks and waterways within the City for consistency with the General Plan, the Santa Rosa Creek Master Plan and Waterways Plan.
3. In 2005, the Council again expanded membership of the WAC to include two at-large citizen representatives, in place of one member from the Committee for Restoring Santa Rosa Creek.
4. In 2007, the Council added a third at-large citizen representative and formalized procedures and terms of the WAC. Specifically, the Council confirmed the historic procedure for appointment of WAC members from each representative body (Planning Commission, Design Review Board, Board of Community Services and Redevelopment Agency) by the representative body itself, and appointment of the at-large citizen representatives by the Council.
5. In 2010, the Council again expanded the membership of the WAC to include one additional at-large citizen representative, bringing the total at-large membership to four and the total overall membership to 10.
6. In 2012, following a California Supreme Court decision to abolish redevelopment agencies, the City of Santa Rosa began winding down the affairs of the former Redevelopment Agency. With the dissolution of the Agency, the Redevelopment Agency member on the WAC was eliminated.

### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

See Background section above.

### ANALYSIS

The role of the Waterways Advisory Committee is to review development projects, both public and private, that are located adjacent to creeks and waterways for consistency with the goals, policies and regulations for creekside development identified in the Santa Rosa General Plan, Zoning Code, Design Guidelines and Citywide Creek Master Plan. While the Committee does not take formal action on projects, it does provide advisory comments to the decision-making body. All development projects located adjacent to a creek or waterway are required to be reviewed by the WAC prior to proceeding through the entitlement process.

The WAC is currently comprised of nine members: two City Council members, four "at large" citizen representatives, and one member each from the Planning Commission, Design Review Board and Board of Community Services. Because the WAC is a

## WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

PAGE 3 OF 3

Council appointed body it is subject to the Brown Act and quorum requirements (the minimum number of members necessary to conduct business). With a membership of nine, a quorum for the WAC is five members.

The Waterways Advisory Committee has traditionally met quarterly, with additional meetings added as needed. However, with the recent increase in development projects, coupled with the City's desire to improve its processing procedures and move projects through in a more expedited manner, the WAC schedule was changed to monthly meetings.

In recent years, obtaining a quorum of WAC members has proven difficult, and has resulted in meetings been continued, which impacts project timelines. The members of the City Council that are appointed to the Committee often have full schedules, making participation in WAC meetings challenging. Revising the composition of the WAC from nine members to seven would reduce the quorum requirement to four, minimizing scheduling conflicts, while maintaining a seven-member Committee consisting of one member each from the Planning Commission, Design Review Board and Board of Community Services, and four at-large citizen members, all of whom are appointed either directly or indirectly by the Council.

### FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

### BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

### NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

### ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution

### CONTACT

Jessica Jones, Supervising Planner  
[jjones@srcity.org](mailto:jjones@srcity.org)  
(707) 543-3410