



Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce

PUBLIC POLICY MANUAL & GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

Revised by the Board of Directors
August 26, 2015

MISSION STATEMENT AND TRANSFORMATIVE ADVOCACY STRATEGIC PILLAR

The mission of the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce (MPCC) is to promote member success and to grow the regional economy. One of the strategic pillars of the MPCC includes transformative advocacy for representing the interests of business to government and taking political action. Political action, for the purposes of this policy, is limited to adopting political positions, representing those positions to the government and endorsing business friendly candidates. MPCC does not provide financial support to candidates or issues nor instruct members to vote in a particular manner.

PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

Over the years the MPCC has taken on the role of educator in the political arena. In keeping with that role, MPCC provides forums, articles and mailings to its members to keep them aware of issues of importance to the business community.

Today, the role of government in business is increasing. In recent years, MPCC has found a greater need to become more involved politically to truly support the needs of the business community. In order for MPCC to respond in a timely manner, the MPCC Board of Directors maintains written policies, contained in this Public Policy Manual and Government Affairs Committee Guidelines, to lay a foundation for action on public issues. This document is intended to provide guiding principles for MPCC committees, in particular the Government Affairs Committee, allowing proactive leadership and advocacy in the political arena.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

MISSION

The mission of the Government Affairs Committee (GAC) is to assess and recommend action and advocacy for MPCC on local, state and federal government-related issues. In support of MPCC's strategic plan, the GAC fosters good working relationships with elected officials in order to create a favorable and profitable business climate.

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION AND VOTING

To promote balanced perspectives on the GAC, the Board encourages broad-based participation of the MPCC membership. GAC membership is open to all MPCC members in good standing. When possible, the GAC should include a strong representation from small businesses. The Board encourages the GAC to actively cultivate a balanced representation from small to large businesses and organizations.

All official actions of the GAC require a vote of the GAC membership, provided a quorum of six (6) MPCC members is present, including at least two (2) MPCC Board members. MPCC staff in attendance are non-voting and do not count towards quorum. This attendance

threshold shall be reviewed annually at the time all legislative policies are reviewed and approved (see below). The GAC Vice-Chair shall be appointed by the incoming Chair of the Board each year from the current Board members. A Director can serve in the GAC Vice-Chair role for multiple years, so long as he/she continues to be a member of the MPCC Board.

GAC STRATEGIC PLAN

Beginning in October of each year, the GAC shall develop a strategic plan that identifies all intended positions on local, state and federal issues for the following year consistent with MPCC's mission statement, core values and strategic plan. The GAC strategic plan, together with any proposed policy changes, shall be recommended to the Board no later than its February meeting for discussion and approval.

AUTHORITY TO ACT FOR THE BOARD

The GAC shall have the authority on behalf of the Board, to approve positions of "support," "oppose" or "no position" that align with the Board-approved GAC strategic plan and the policies contained in this Manual consistent with MPCC's mission statement and strategic plan. The Board shall be updated on actions made by the GAC at regular Board meetings. For issues not clearly falling within this Manual or the approved GAC strategic plan, the GAC shall forward its recommendations to the Board for approval.

Should MPCC be asked to endorse or take a position on a project or specific policy issue that has not been previously determined by the Board, the President/CEO or Chair would first send the details of such matter to the appropriate MPCC committee for review, whereupon such committee(s) would make a recommendation to the full Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The final decision to support or endorse a specific matter would rest with the Board. If the Board is not meeting within a reasonable time, the issue(s) will be communicated via e-mail to the entire Board for consideration and approval in a manner consistent with Bylaws Section 7.9 (Action By Written Consent).

The Executive Committee does not have authority to act on behalf of the Board with regards to approving recommendations from the GAC.

The Board of Directors has the authority to modify any position of the GAC.

ACCOMPLISHING THE GAC MISSION

The mission of the GAC is accomplished through several means:

- Issue candidate and issue endorsements exclusive of direct financial support
- Provide public testimony
- Represent MPCC at various public and private organizations
- Provide forums, articles, mailing and other materials in a variety of media, both print and electronic in order to educate the members and the public about issues important to the business community
- Engage Business Action Team for key issues

CANDIDATE AND ISSUE ENDORSEMENT

Candidate Endorsement Protocol

Eligible Offices. The GAC will interview candidates for offices with direct impact on MPCC members and public policy issues. In the interest of time, the GAC may elect to select a subset of the eligible offices, such as when the GAC determines any particular office may not have sufficient opposition. Eligible offices include:

- Mayors and City Councils of Monterey, Pacific Grove, Seaside, Del Rey Oaks, Sand City, Marina, Carmel
- County Board of Supervisors (all districts)
- County offices (Sheriff, Assessor-County Clerk/Recorder, Auditor, Treasurer, Superintendent of Schools, District Attorney, County Board of Education)
- Members of State Assembly (Districts 29 and 30)
- Members of State Senate (Districts 12 and 17)
- Member of U.S. Congress (District 20 California)
- Members of Peninsula area Special District Boards (Monterey Peninsula Airport District, Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, Marina Coast Water District, Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District, Monterey Peninsula College Board, Monterey Peninsula Unified School District Board, Pacific Grove Unified School District Board)

MPCC Member Attendance, Participation and Voting. GAC members who have demonstrated a commitment to government affairs issues and activities by attending 50% of the previous twelve months of meetings, and half of that in the previous six months, will be eligible to participate in candidate interviews and vote on endorsements; regular GAC members who secure attendance at GAC meetings of alternate representatives will be credited with attendance. An exception to the attendance requirements will be made for new GAC members who have attended at least three of out of six of the most recent GAC meetings. MPCC Board members and MPCC committee chairs are also eligible to participate in interviews and voting. Any participants who are involved in candidate campaigns must disclose that involvement to the candidate endorsement committee and will be excused from the interview and deliberations of their candidate's position. All other MPCC members will be welcome to attend interviews and endorsement discussions as non-voting observers.

Scheduling and Interview/Voting Process. Interviews will be scheduled as soon as possible after filing for offices has closed. When filing for offices has closed, **MPCC/GAC liaison** will send a letter to candidates with a questionnaire to be completed and returned by a firm deadline and the link to **this Manual**. The questionnaire will include three questions: 1) why are you running for X office?; 2) who/what organizations are your supporters?; and 3) given the MPCC's purpose is to promote business, tell us why you feel your positions will support our business community? Candidates will be asked to submit relevant collateral materials. Candidates not returning a completed questionnaire by the deadline will be ineligible for endorsement.

The GAC will be as flexible as possible in scheduling interviews. Only those candidates participating in the interviews will be eligible for endorsement (candidates who cannot attend the interview can send a representative).

Candidates will be interviewed in groups of candidates running for the same office (in the case of school districts, all candidates for all districts will be grouped together).

The GAC will develop a set of questions for each group of candidates tailored to the candidates' jurisdiction and reflective of MPCC interests and issues.

The GAC (and other qualified participants) will deliberate and make recommendations after each group interview session. The GAC reserves the right **not to** endorse any candidates for a given position, if it deems no candidate for a specific position would sufficiently represent and promote business interests on the Monterey Peninsula.

The GAC recommendations for endorsement will be submitted to the Board of Directors for action at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Business Action Team

To ensure that the business community is being heard, and to make an effective impact, MPCC has developed the Business Action Team (BAT). The purpose of the BAT is to establish a group of enthusiastic, influential and respected business members who will act as a unified body to speak/testify/represent local business interests within the region. BAT members attend local city council meetings and other related hearings to speak on behalf of MPCC members and local businesses, to demonstrate business support and commitment, to express MPCC's support for business friendly government and to help encourage an effective and collaborative relationship.

A tentative script and related talking points will be distributed to attending members prior to the meeting/hearing along with any developed information. Members will attend the meeting/hearing and, along with fellow BAT members and the President/CEO of the MPCC, state MPCC's position as provided in the script and related talking points.

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Arts, Culture and History

MPCC recognizes that visual and performing arts make important contributions to the community, and that cultural and historical activities create a unique sense of place and enrich the lives of both residents and visitors.

MPCC supports:

1. Maintenance and expansion of existing and new facilities and programs that support the arts and historical and cultural events throughout the community;
2. Cooperation between state and local governments, the business community and the historical and cultural arts communities for their mutual benefits and the benefit of the Monterey Peninsula area;
3. Public agencies (including state and local agencies) to provide necessary financial and administrative programs to assist private property owners to upgrade and preserve historical structures;
4. Public agencies (including state and local agencies) to provide support and assistance for artistic, cultural and historical programs; and
5. Public-private partnerships to sustainably fund, upgrade and preserve historical structures.

Economic Development

A thriving business community recognizes the importance of a healthy economy and the need to continually improve the business climate. MPCC generally supports broad economic development that not only maintains the area's quality of life, but creates a sustainable and long lasting business environment. MPCC supports policies and legislation that foster opportunities for existing business to prosper and attract new businesses to the Peninsula.

MPCC supports:

1. Local legislative programs and policies to encourage and foster new business and the retention and expansion of existing businesses;
2. Cooperative efforts by and with other organizations to support and encourage the creation of jobs as well as professional advancement for those currently employed;
3. Efforts to promote and enhance commerce, both international and domestic, including small businesses, education, tourism, and military installations;
4. Efforts to attract and develop new and emerging technologies to create and support new jobs;
5. Formation of economic clusters in the areas of agriculture, education, technology, fisheries, and tourism;
6. The reduction and elimination of unnecessary paperwork to streamline permitting and regulatory processes whenever possible;
7. Business programs such as grants, loans, workshops and similar services, specifically for small, disadvantaged or start-up companies;
8. Efforts to develop public-private partnerships that enhance and promote Peninsula businesses;
9. Efforts to provide adequate infrastructure needed for businesses to thrive.

Education

Public and private educational systems in Monterey County are fundamental to creating and preserving job skills and workforce readiness. The business community recognizes the need to expand and improve educational outcomes at all levels and to form cooperative and beneficial partnerships between business, nonprofits, and educational institutions.

MPCC supports exemplary:

1. Programs and events that will further enhance and improve K-12 education in Monterey County as well as encourage the active participation of parents, the business community, local and state government, and the public at large;
2. Programs that encourage and foster continued growth of post-secondary education that supports all communities in Monterey County;
3. Science/Technology/Engineering/Math (STEM) programs at all levels of education;
4. Programs encouraging or enabling business internships within Monterey County;
5. Programs that increase the quality and quantity of the workforce;
6. Programs that provide incentives for local businesses to hire students with Career Technical Education (CTE) experience.

Employee Occupational Health and Safety

MPCC recognizes the importance of providing a safe and healthy work environment and reasonable benefits for all employees. Requirements placed on employers should reflect contemporary industry standards and practices without placing undue financial burdens on employers. MPCC further believes that prior to any new legislation or regulation that mandates business owners to comply with new standards, businesses should be given adequate time to achieve compliance.

MPCC supports:

1. Illness prevention programs and safety plans that are up-to-date and pertinent to the work environment where risks are minimized and safe procedures emphasized;
2. Efforts to improve the worker's compensation program in California and to reduce costs to businesses caused by abuses of the system.

Environment and Sustainable Business Practices

MPCC recognizes that the incredible sea and landscapes inherent in the local geography are vital to the prosperity of the business community and are a critical component of our quality of life. The Monterey Peninsula's unique natural environment is an economic driver, bringing hundreds of millions of dollars in tourist spending annually and provides a significant revenue stream for local government to pay for local government services.

MPCC supports:

1. Reasonable efforts to balance interests of the marine economy and the protection of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary;
2. Reasonable measures, including incentives to ensure that economic development is managed so as not to denigrate Monterey County's scenic natural environment and air and water quality;
3. Reasonable, cost-effective methods of implementing sustainable business practices.

Health Care

MPCC recognizes the need for first rate health care and access to that care as vital components of a vibrant business community. Costs of health insurance and health care continue to rise at rates greater than the core rate of inflation and put incredible pressures on local businesses and individuals. MPCC recognizes the financial burden that providing health insurance for employees can cause business owners. MPCC is mindful of the costs that result when care is provided to uninsured and underinsured residents of Monterey County.

MPCC supports:

1. Reasonable efforts to make access to affordable health care broadly available (including, but not limited to, increased access to and use of wellness, preventative health, as well as disease and care management programs) while not placing undue financial burdens on the business community;
2. Sustainable reimbursement schedules to area health care providers with particular emphasis on government fee schedules, such as Medicare, Medi-Cal, Tri-Care, and Workers Compensation;
3. Initiatives that streamline government regulations to increase efficiency and reduce overall administrative burdens;
4. A moratorium on further attempts by the state to place financial burdens on local businesses that create undue hardship, including unfunded mandates on health care providers;
5. Federal and state reforms that allow small businesses to obtain group coverage through larger purchasing pools or other mechanisms that can mitigate insurance risks in order to purchase reasonable levels of insurance coverage;
6. Increased competition in local health insurance area, such as value-based purchasing models that attempt to achieve the Triple Aim of better services, outcomes, and lower cost;
7. Initiatives that increase the number of certain under-supplied care givers, e.g. select physician specialties, nurses, physician extenders (like nurse practitioners and physician assistants), and various other ancillary providers that are currently or projected to be in short supply;
8. Initiatives that will help avoid closing down the main county hospital, allowing it, or some version thereof, to continue functioning in a viable and sustainable manner, so it can continue providing critical safety-net medical services.

Housing

A balance between jobs and quality housing is paramount to a thriving business community. MPCC values a range of housing types, including affordable and workforce housing. Creative financing opportunities should be considered on a case-by-case basis to include traditional private sector investment as well as public-private partnerships and grant opportunities.

Proximity to transportation infrastructure has a direct impact on housing costs and rents. Studies and proposed policies relating to housing, development, and transportation infrastructure projects should be carefully evaluated and vetted.

Proposed housing regulations or policies that add cost to businesses or residents should be carefully examined to determine if the likely benefits are clearly superior to the likely costs.

MPCC supports:

1. The provision of sufficient regional housing of a variety of types to serve the needs of current and future residents;
2. Balanced development of new ownership and rental housing by streamlining government planning and building permit processes;
3. Elimination of artificial barriers that prohibit or delay the production or remodeling of new housing units that are called for in approved land use plans;
4. The preservation of Proposition 13 in its originally adopted language;
5. Policies that provide incentives to achieving a jobs-housing-transportation balance;
6. Reform of existing inclusionary housing policies and re-examination of existing projects;
7. Policies that take into consideration a reasonable jobs-housing balance, household formation rates within our communities, and the critical housing deficit in much of Monterey County;
8. Development of adequate water supply for lots of record and reasonable growth.

Land Use Planning

MPCC opposes land use planning via the initiative process, as well as State and Federal Agencies, special districts or other single purpose authorities using their regulatory powers to curtail population and economic development or to limit adequate planned infrastructure improvements.

MPCC supports:

1. Maintaining local land use planning and growth management decisions at City and County levels;
2. Cost effective efforts to plan regionally and cooperatively, without supplanting local land use authority;
3. Increased funding for infrastructure, including water projects and transportation, to accommodate future planned development by the Cities and County of Monterey;
4. State, County, and City Governments soliciting and implementing input from the business community on issues impacting businesses;
5. Efforts to reform and streamline the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);
6. Maintaining the planned balance between open space and economic development in the adopted Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) master plan.

Military and Federal Facilities

MPCC recognizes the economic, educational, social, and cultural contributions provided by the Federal/Military facilities throughout the region. MPCC has a key goal to lead and assist the region in ensuring that the Defense activities and missions in the Monterey region are more cost effective and mission capable because they are in the Monterey region.

MPCC supports:

1. Efforts to retain, further integrate and optimize the use of these Military and Federal facilities in the community;
2. Programs specifically designed to facilitate regular communication between the business community, military facility officials, and local government;
3. Increased involvement and/or sponsorship from Federal/military facilities in local business programs and events;
4. Continued efforts to encourage government officials and lawmakers (both at the federal and state levels) to work judiciously to make available the abandoned, underused, or unused Military and Federal property.
5. Work with the region to create a SWOT analysis of each military installation and each military mission in Monterey County.

Public Safety

Public safety is directly linked to a prosperous local economy and quality of life in the community. Community services and programs and infrastructure that ensure the wellbeing of both residents and visitors are important to maintaining a prosperous economy.

MPCC supports:

1. Policies and programs that provide adequate police protection, fire suppression, search and rescue capabilities, and emergency medical capabilities;
2. Improvement of public structures and infrastructures;
3. Assistance and incentives for local businesses to voluntarily upgrade private structures and facilities;
4. Pension and health care reform for public employees to reduce municipal structural budget deficits;
5. Consolidation of local municipal services to include public safety where service quality can be maintained or improved.

Solid Waste Management Recycling

MPCC and the business community recognize the importance of a proactive approach to effective solid waste management in Monterey County not only for the preservation of local natural resources and environments but also to ensure responsible and effective practices for future generations.

MPCC supports:

1. Development of on-site waste reduction plans through proactive in-house, cost-effective recycling programs in direct collaboration with customers, patrons, and employees;
2. Cooperation and collaboration with local government agencies, organizations and individuals to find workable and cost-effective means to remove, recycle, and reduce solid waste through innovative programs that complement the characteristics of individual businesses and promote long term benefits;
3. Efforts to maximize waste diversion and repurposing of organics and other reusable materials, including energy generation to support local utilities and infrastructure.

Taxation

MPCC understands the importance of maintaining the balance between a viable economic climate for local business and public agencies' reliance on tax revenue. All local taxes, fees, and other revenues should be retained at the local level, and state subventions to the County of Monterey and its cities should be maintained.

MPCC does not support:

1. New or increased taxes, assessments, or fees that negatively affect the business environment unless there is a reasonable long-term benefit to the business community;
2. Any increase in local Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT) unless a significant portion of the new tax revenue is dedicated to the promotion of the region or investment in infrastructure in collaboration with the tourism/hospitality industry;
3. A State TOT or Hotel tax.

Technology and Telecommunications

MPCC recognizes that innovation is the hallmark of American commerce. Telecommunications and technological innovations are rapidly increasing, but the various regulatory agencies governing the development, deployment, and availability of these technologies are outmoded. Competition among companies seeking to provide telecommunications services generally lead to better service, lower prices, greater access to global markets, and the creation of more jobs.

MPCC supports:

1. Policies and regulatory changes that will increase investment in competitive and innovative technology and telecommunications efforts while ensuring 1) access to these new technologies is available to all businesses and 2) protection of the existing communications interests of the community;
2. MPCC legislation or policy action consistent with MPCC's desire to see increased competition, increased investment and job creation, increased business and individual choice, and increased customer service in the technology and telecommunications arena;
3. Cooperation between local businesses and telecommunications agencies to improve services to tourists, businesses, residents, and public institutions;
4. Development of state-of-the-art infrastructure, including broadband and dark fiber networks, to attract technology-based companies, data centers, conference and group business, and research and educational institutions;
5. Net neutrality to preserve the free and open internet.

Transportation

MPCC recognizes that adequate transportation and infrastructure is a key component of economic vitality. Environmentally responsible transportation projects improve the ability of residents and visitors to travel to and within the region, enhancing the region's economy and quality of life.

MPCC supports:

1. Intra-regional highway and road improvements that relieve traffic congestion, improve safety and accessibility, assure product shipment and delivery, enhance air quality, and reduce noise;
2. Achieving a dedicated and sustainable revenue source for self-help funding of transportation projects and programs as a priority;
3. Increased airline service to and from the Monterey Regional Airport;
4. Reduction in vehicle congestion through development of cost-effective alternative transportation modes that include, but are not limited to bicycles, van/car pools, public transit, travel at non-peak times, taxi cabs, shuttle services, passenger and freight rail services, and other approaches (such as variable work schedules and telecommuting) that promote better and easier access to jobs, visitor destinations, and area attractions;
5. Diversification and ongoing licensing of taxicab companies and drivers to improve taxicab services for both visitors and residents;
6. Voluntary trip reduction plans by "large" employers;
7. Adequate, accessible and affordable parking within retail/commercial centers and regional areas for employees and commuters;
8. Way finding and other signage to support businesses and improve circulation;
9. Efforts to achieve a reasonable jobs/housing/transportation balance in local and regional land use plans to include lowering commute times to a maximum of 30 minutes;
10. Maintenance and enhancement of a system of scenic roads and highways through areas of scenic beauty;
11. Continued and expanded operation of harbor facilities to include planning and implementation of improved facilities for visits by cruise ships.

Water

Securing a safe, sufficient, reliable, and affordable water supply is essential to the economic well-being of the Monterey Peninsula and the public health and safety of both residents and visitors. The Peninsula requires an independent water supply, since our area is self-reliant and does not import water. Water facilities should be placed and sized to take advantage of the abundant seawater resource. Any and all proposed water regulations, initiatives, or policies that add cost to businesses and/or residents should be carefully vetted to determine if the likely benefits are clearly superior to the likely impacts.

MPCC supports:

1. A local governing water agency that will:
 - a. Include direct representation from all six Monterey Peninsula cities and Monterey County;
 - b. Provide leadership for augmenting the water supply and managing water resources;
 - c. Establish equitable water management policies and procedures for the benefit of the entire community and the environment focused on water supply, conservation programs and water quality.
2. Incentivized conservation through retrofits and other emerging or developed conservation technologies and strategies.
3. Continued promotion of water conservation through educational programs and equitable, unbiased water conservation measures for residential, commercial, and government agencies/facilities;
4. Promoting cost-effective water supply projects that provide for infill, lots of record, economic recovery, and reasonable growth that corresponds with adopted general plans;
5. Balanced rate structure and distribution policies between residential, commercial, and government agencies/facilities so that residential and commercial ratepayers are not subsidizing one another;
6. Reasonable water runoff and storm water recapturing policies and programs, including recycling and conservation, based on sound science, engineering, and fair cost distribution between residential, governmental, public agency and commercial property owners.
7. Diversification of water supply sources and collaboration between regional parties.