



Community Outreach on Planning & Development Resource: Tools for Citizen Involvement

Tips for presenting to Council about land use applications.

The final decision on all land use redesignation applications is made by City Council at a Public Hearing. Members of the public are welcome to attend the public hearing and are invited to speak.

Council's agenda is available 3 – 4 days before the Monday public hearing and is posted at calgary.ca/council. The order of the agenda may be changed at the beginning of the Council meeting so if there is an item you wish to speak to it is wise to let your Councillor know in advance. You may also want to watch the webcast online or have a representative in Council Chambers at the beginning of the meeting (9:30 am) to see if the order of the agenda is changed. Items are not heard at specific times, but in the order Council approves. You may have to wait through many items before the time comes for the item you are interested in speaking to. If there are a number of items to be heard, your item could get pushed to a following day.

What happens during a public hearing?

1. The Mayor introduces the items on the agenda, in the order established by Council
2. The Administration describes the proposal and the reasons for the recommendation
3. Those persons in favor of the proposal are called upon to speak first
4. Those persons opposed are called upon to speak after those in favour
5. Speakers are allowed five minutes to present excluding any time required to answer questions Council members may ask
6. There is no opportunity for rebuttal
7. The Administration may then be called upon to provide clarification.
8. Council debates and votes on the item

When asked to come forward to address Council you should:

- Come forward and speak directly into to the microphone
- Introduce yourself and explain how you are an affected party
- Address the Mayor as "Your Worship" and members of Council as "Councillor... (last name)"
- Remember that each speaker is allowed a maximum of five minutes to present, excluding any time required to answer questions from Council.
- Consider your audio visual needs. The following equipment is available for use when making a presentation: Document viewer (hard copy material is encouraged), a PC or Mac laptop that can be connected to a memory stick
- if you intend to use a computer, you can contact City Clerk's Office and make arrangements to test their equipment in advance of the meeting or bring your own laptop to connect.
- Always bring hard copies in case of equipment or programming failure.
- City Clerks can be reached at cityclerk@calgary.ca or (403) 268-586



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How many people can speak at a public hearing?

Every citizen has the right to address Council. If there are a number of people planning to present on the same item, it can be helpful to connect prior to the public hearing to organize how you will each present and ensure you are all not making the same points over again. Council is aware that it is hard for people to address them and they appreciate your effort.

How to prepare for a public hearing presentation?

- Review the relevant policies and planning documents
- Review the Calgary Planning Commission report and recommendations
- Speak with your Ward Councillor, Community Association or fellow community members
- Seek out clarification from the File manager.
- Familiarize yourself with Public Hearing procedure.

Here are some presentation tips to keep in mind

- At a high-level, stick to the facts, be prepared and be fair and respectful.
- Start with an introduction of yourself and who you represent and your involvement in the application (only speak for others when they have agreed to you doing so)
- Share the reasons why you support or oppose the proposed redesignation
- Ensure you focus on the use, not the users – characteristics of the users of the proposed development do not carry weight in the decision process. This is also true for issues of economic benefits/losses and property values, as Council cannot take these into account and has to rule such information out of order.
- This guide: How to respond to a Development Application, can provide you with some guidance on what is considered at the land use stage
- Avoid repetition – 20 people saying the same thing is ineffective.
- Use visual aids:
 - Prepare in advance and check for accuracy
 - Make reference to visuals during your presentation – they are only useful if they have relevance to what you are talking about.
- Practice and time your presentation including your visual aids – remember each speaker has a maximum of five minutes.