



Planning Commission

Hearing Procedures

1. Chair opens the public hearing and announces the purpose of the hearing, permit or application number, or item on the agenda to be discussed.
2. Planning Department staff member presents the application or proposal including background facts, reviews the key elements of the staff report and proposal, issues for consideration, and provides staff's recommendation. *(10 – 15 minutes)*
3. The Planning Commission has an opportunity to ask follow-up questions of the Staff. Staff responds to questions.
4. The Applicant/Proponent makes a presentation to the Commission, explains the proposals and why the application meets adopted Land Development Regulations, or why the application/proposal should be approved. *(10 – 15 minutes)*
5. The Planning Commission has an opportunity to ask questions to the Applicant. The Applicant responds to questions.
6. Chair opens the public comment period. Members of the public may attend the hearing and provide testimony supporting approval or denial of the application or request.
 - Members of the public that wish to speak or present evidence must first be recognized by the Chair and must speak from the podium to ensure all comments are picked up by the microphone.
 - Speakers must state their name and any organization or group they are representing.
 - The Chair may limit the duration of public comments as necessary to ensure sufficient time for the hearing (maximum 3 minutes per speaker).
 - Comments from the public and applicants shall be directed to the Planning Commission and shall not be directed to staff, the Applicant, or the audience.
 - Members of the public should focus on the facts of the application and should avoid making personal attacks on staff, the Applicant, or the Commission.
7. Chair closes the public comment period. No additional public comment will be allowed after the public comment period is closed unless the Chair re-opens the comment period. At the option of the Chair, the staff or the Applicant/Proponent may be allowed to respond to public comments to answer questions or clarify facts.
8. Planning Commission publicly deliberates the application/proposal.
9. Planning Commission may make a motion and vote (i.e., make a decision or recommendation) or the Commission may postpone the hearing for additional information.

For more information, please refer to the [Planning Commission Rules of Procedure](#).

Hearing Tips, Protocols and Etiquette:

Please speak clearly into the microphone at the podium. State your name for the record, including any groups or organizations that you are representing; after speaking, please add your name to the sign-in sheet to ensure your name is properly recorded in the minutes.

Speak only when recognized by the Chair.

Focus your testimony on the matter at hand, state only the relevant facts and opinions; comments should be focused on why or how an application meets/ fails to meet adopted Land Development Regulations or other adopted polices and goals.

Avoid repetitive testimony. If another witness has made similar points, please make note of it in the record and state that you concur with the previous speaker.

Please be prepared to limit your comments to three (3) minutes per speaker per item.

Speaking time may not be deferred to another witness.

Do not speak to the Commission unless you step forward to the middle of the room at the podium; for remote/virtual meetings, the Chair will recognize members of the public that request to speak (for Zoom meetings, please use the "Raise Hand" feature to request speaking. Comments in the Zoom "Chat" feature will not be considered official testimony and should be avoided.

Exhibits (photographs, letters, maps) provided during public comment become part of the permanent record and cannot be returned.

The Commission's hearings are conducted in a courtroom-like environment and audience conduct shall be in accordance with courtroom etiquette. Clapping, cheering, speaking out of order or disorderly conduct are not appropriate and are grounds for removal from the hearing room by order of the Chair. Pagers and cellular phones should be turned off or placed on vibrate as to not disturb the hearing.

Please contact the Planning and Building Services Department at (307) 733-3959 if you have questions.