

## **CITY COUNCIL RULES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Findings.* The City Council finds that reasonable rules regarding the public’s right to address the City Council at open meetings are necessary to promote an efficient, organized process and to allow all members of the public who intend to speak an opportunity to address the City Council. Accordingly, the City Council adopts the following reasonable rules pursuant to Texas Government Code § 551.007, as amended.

**A. Public Comment at Open Meetings.**

1. At an open meeting of the City Council, members of the public may address the City Council regarding items on the agenda for which the City Council will make a decision or take action before or during consideration of the item.
2. The City Council may designate a “Citizen Participation” portion of an open meeting during which members of the public may address the City Council regarding topics that are not on the posted agenda. During the “Citizen Participation” portion of an open meeting, the City Council is not permitted by law to respond to or address the public’s concerns but may ask clarifying questions or direct staff to take appropriate action.
3. In order to preserve the order and decorum of meetings of the City Council, any person who makes personal, profane, slanderous or threatening remarks or who becomes disruptive during the meeting may be removed from the Council Chambers.

**B. Speaker Registration.** Persons who intend to speak shall register with City staff outside the Council Chambers by completing a registration card containing:

1. the speaker’s name and address;
2. the name of the person that the speaker is representing, if any;
3. the agenda item or topic on which the speaker plans to speak;
4. an indication whether the speaker will be speaking through a translator; and
5. any other information requested by City staff.

**C. Speaking Procedures and Time Limits.**

1. When a speaker’s name is called, the speaker shall come to the microphone at the podium and state their name and address for the record. Speakers shall address their comments to the City Council.

2. Except as provided below in Subsection (C)(3) regarding public hearings on zoning cases, persons may speak and provide public testimony for up to three minutes.
3. A person who intends to speak on a zoning case that is set for a public hearing is allowed to speak at the time that the public hearing is called. At the public hearing, the applicant is allowed to speak first and has five minutes to make a presentation. All other speakers at the public hearing have three minutes each to make their statements. After all other speakers have concluded making their statements, the applicant has three minutes for any rebuttal.
4. Notwithstanding the speaker time limits in Subsections (C)(2) and (3) above, when a large number of speakers are present for a meeting and it is consistent with the City Council's findings above, the presiding officer may impose reasonable time limits that are more restrictive. If multiple speakers plan to provide the same or similar public testimony, those speakers may, if they so desire, designate one or more individuals to provide public testimony on behalf of the group.
5. A person addressing the City Council through a translator has twice the amount of speaking time provided by these rules to accommodate the translation services if simultaneous translation equipment is not being used in a manner that allows the City Council to hear the translated public testimony simultaneously.
6. A bell will signal the end of each speaker's time. In consideration of other persons who are registered to speak, speakers shall conclude their comments promptly upon the bell sounding.
7. When the City Council votes on or considers an ordinance or any other item at more than one open meeting, members of the public may speak on the ordinance or item at each meeting in which the City Council votes on or considers the ordinance or item.