

PDC

PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Guidelines for Public Testimony at PDC Board Meetings

The Portland Development Commission welcomes public testimony at regular Board meetings. These guidelines are offered to inform persons how to prepare and provide public testimony to the Board.

On June 22, 2005, the PDC Board of Commissioners adopted a Public Participation Policy that expresses the following philosophy about public participation.

- *As a public agency entrusted to administer and invest public resources to accomplish a variety of goals and objectives that benefit the City of Portland, meaningful, timely and effective public participation in various aspects of PDC activities is essential to the successful implementation of Commission policies, programs and projects.*
- *Meaningful public participation helps promote democracy and civic engagement, builds public trust in government and enhances the Commission's credibility within the community.*
- *Effective public participation can improve the quality and effectiveness of our plans and decisions.*

As provided for in the Portland City Charter, the Portland Development Commission has the "authority to make orders, rules and regulations in the form of resolutions." These resolutions can only be adopted by the PDC Board of Commissioners at a public meeting.

Resolutions being considered by the Board are open to public testimony during the meeting at the discretion of the Board Chair, but generally, testimony is always invited prior to a vote (an exception might be when a hearing was held at a prior meeting). Written testimony can be provided to the Board in advance of, or at a meeting.

Every regular Board meeting also contains an agenda item for testimony to the Board about matters not on the meeting agenda.

Your testimony will be most effective if you follow these guidelines.

1. **Verify that the item you are interested in is on the agenda.** Meeting agendas are posted at least three days in advance of a regular meeting on the [PDC website](http://WWW.PDC.US) (WWW.PDC.US). An agenda is subject to change prior to, and even during a meeting, so when you arrive at the meeting verify that the item you wish to testify about is on the agenda available in the lobby. If not, check with the Board Assistant to determine if the matter has been rescheduled to another time, or if you should testify during the open communications portion of the agenda.
2. **Become familiar with the proposed action.** The agenda posted on the [PDC website](http://WWW.PDC.US) will also have links to the draft resolutions to be considered by the Board and accompanying reports that explain the background of the matter and proposed action in more detail. These materials can also be inspected in the PDC office prior to the meeting, and a copy is available in the PDC lobby during the meeting.

3. **Presenting oral testimony to the Board.**

- When you arrive at the meeting, fill out a testimony card available outside the meeting room and turn it in to the Recording Secretary. You may only turn in one card per agenda item.
- The Board Chair will determine the order in which you are called upon to testify. Most public testimony is limited to three minutes. Practice beforehand to make sure that you have enough time to discuss the points most important to you.
- When you are called to testify, proceed to the front of the room and sit at in front of a microphone facing the Commissioners. Move the microphone close to your mouth, and speak directly into it. Begin your testimony by stating "For the record my name is _____ and my address is _____." Also, inform the Board if you are representing a group or organization.
- Address the Board as "Commissioners."
- If you are speaking on a specific agenda item, begin by saying you support or oppose the item, and briefly explain why. Support your personal opinions with as many facts as possible. Prepare an outline so you do not need to read your testimony word for word.
- If you require special accommodation in order to testify before the Board, please make your request to the Board Assistant at (503) 823-3209 at least 24 hours before the meeting.

4. **Providing written testimony to the Board**

- **In advance of the meeting**, address correspondence to:

PDC Board of Commissioners
222 SW 5th AVE.
Portland, OR. 97209

OR:

Submit by FAX: 503-823-3368

NOTE: written correspondence must be received at least 10 days in advance of a scheduled meeting to be included with agenda packets received by Commissioners in advance of the meeting.

- **At the meeting**, provide the Board Recording Secretary with 8 copies prior to the agenda item being discussed. If you are providing oral testimony, give the copies to the Secretary when you are called up to testify.
- **In your written testimony**, clearly indicate:
 - The item you are commenting on
 - Your name and address

If you have any additional questions about the Board meeting process, please contact the PDC Board Assistant at 503-823-3209.

If you would like more information about how to participate in PDC projects, programs and activities check the [PDC Website](http://WWW.PDC.US) (WWW.PDC.US) public participation section; or contact a PDC Public Participation Coordinator at 503-823-3352.