

# Attending a City of Calgary Committee meeting: What to expect

First of all, you're about to do something very exciting and you should be very proud of yourself. It can feel a little bit nerve-racking to speak at Committee or Council Meetings but just remember that what you have to say is important and the City Councilors want to hear from you.

If you are participating for a meeting online, then City Clerks department will provide you information as to how to take part online. Meetings that are open to the public are located in Council Chambers. Council Chambers are located in the middle of City Hall at the base of the escalator. Bathrooms are located around the corner of Council Chambers near the side of the building with the elevators.

Try to arrive a little bit earlier than 9:30am so that you can get through security and find a seat before the meeting begins.

**Going through security:** When you attend a Committee meeting, safety is really important so you have to walk through security on your way into Council Chambers. You will pass through metal detectors and all bags, backpacks, and purses will be inspected.

Items that you can't bring in with you:

- Food and beverages (this includes a cup of coffee); there is water available inside Council Chambers
- Weapons, including mace or pepper spray
- Illegal drugs or substances
- Firearms and ammunition of any type
- Explosives and flammable substances
- Noisemakers

When you are inside Council Chambers, you may sit wherever you like in the audience. **Please turn off the volume, ringer, and alerts on all cell phones when you're inside.**

**Additional rules:**

- Do not address Members of Council without permission (i.e. don't call out to Councilors from your seat in the audience. If you have something to say, wait until the public is invited to speak).

- Try to keep any conversations to a minimum and stay as quiet as you are able while in the audience.

### **Process of the meeting:**

1. The Chair will call for a vote to approve the agenda
2. The Chair will call a vote to approve the minutes of the last meeting
3. The first agenda item
  - a) The City of Calgary employee tasked with presenting will come forward and sit at the chairs in front of the horseshoe
  - b) The City staff member will share their presentation
  - c) The chair will ask if anyone from the public would like to speak

If you'd to speak, this is when you can approach the podium on the right side of the horseshoe.

### **How can you speak:**

Anyone is welcome to speak to Agenda Items at Standing Policy Committee (SPC) Meetings and at City Council Public Hearings. If you would like to speak at a Regular Council Meeting, City Council must vote to allow you to speak.

You can speak for a maximum of 5 minutes. This doesn't include questions that the City Councilors may have for you after you finish what you would like to say. If you are starting to go over your 5 minutes, the Chair will let you know.

### **When you speak to committee:**

After the report is presented, public members will be invited to come speak. There is no order, so just wait for an opening and walk over to the podium on the right side of the room. The podium will lower or raise depending on your height.

Speak directly into the micro-phone (it is voice activated so you don't have to turn it on):

- Introduce yourself to the Committee and spell your name for the record.
- Mention your pronouns if you'd like.
- Address the Chair, as Mr. Chair or Madam Chair.

For example, "Good morning/afternoon Mr. Chair and committee members, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ (and then spell your name and mention your pronouns if you'd like)."

- If you have any written documents (i.e. a collection of stories, a letter or petition), let Mr. Chair know that you would like to submit these as part of your

presentation. An assistant will come over to you to collect these and distribute them to the City Councilors.

If you are submitting any written documents, you are asked to bring 35 copies of the document.

- Share your story, opinion, or whatever you would like to share with the committee. Remember that what you have to say is important. Try your best to speak clearly and slowly.
- Once you have finished, don't walk away! The Chair will ask the committee members if they have any questions for you.

When you're done you can return to your seat.

- Once there is no one else from the public to speak, the councilors will proceed with any questions they have for the City employee.
- A motion is made to either accept or oppose the recommendations of the report.

You can decide to leave whenever you'd like. You don't have to wait for an agenda item to be finished. To exit, leave through the doors on the right side (they are opposite from the doors you came in).