

Public Meeting Participation Guide

City Council Meeting Schedule

- Regular Business Meetings: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays; 7:30 p.m.
- Study Sessions: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays; 7:30 p.m.
- Council Committee of the Whole (Beginning at 4:30 p.m.):
 - Parks and Human Services - 1st Tuesday
 - Planning and Public Works - 2nd Tuesday
 - Public Safety - 3rd Tuesday
 - Finance, Administration, and Communications - 4th Tuesday
- Special Meetings – Scheduled and Advertised as Needed

All meetings are held in the Redmond City Hall Council Chambers, unless otherwise noticed. 15670 NE 85th Street

Welcome and Meeting Process Overview

The Redmond City Council welcomes your attendance and participation at its meetings ([Meeting Information Center](#)).

The Council meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month to conduct its Regular Business Meetings. (The Council meets Wednesday if Tuesday is a holiday, unless otherwise scheduled). Comments from the public are welcome during the "Items from the Audience" section of these Regular Business Meeting agendas and during advertised public hearings. Unless otherwise noted, each member of the public shall have four (4) minutes to address the Council.

The Redmond City Council also meets in Study Session the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. No formal action is taken during these sessions, and there is no opportunity for public comment, as these are working sessions for the Council.

Council Committee of the Whole meetings are held Tuesdays of each week, not including fifth Tuesdays. No formal action is taken during these sessions and there is no opportunity for public comment, as these are working sessions for the Council.

Special meetings are called as needed. Formal action may or may not be taken at these meetings. The purpose of special meetings shall be advertised per the meeting agenda. Opportunity for public comment, if any, would be specifically noted on these meeting agendas.

All meetings are held in the Council Chambers at Redmond City Hall; 15670 NE 85th Street, Redmond, Washington, unless otherwise noticed.

Council meetings are broadcast live on [RCTV](#) (Comcast channel 21 and Frontier channel 34). Video of the meetings can be viewed any time online from the RCTV OnDemand [link](#). Videos of meetings are also available in connection with the associated meeting located through in the Meeting Information Center ([schedule of meetings](#)).

Regular Business Meetings

During its regular sessions, the City Council can take action in several ways. The Council may adopt an ordinance or city law. Ordinances usually take effect five days after their publication in the City's official newspaper, the *Seattle Times*. Most ordinances become part of the City's Municipal Code. The Council may amend or repeal an ordinance by adopting another ordinance.

The Council may also pass a resolution to express policy direction or make a public statement, or to enact the passage of items that specifically are required to be passed by resolution.

Action may also be taken by Council passage of a motion to approve or deny a proposed action, such as the award of a contract. Many motions take the form of "Agenda Memos."

Agendas for Regular Business Meetings contain a Consent Agenda, which includes routine business items that have previously been studied in open public meetings by the Council and are ready for action without continued discussion. Council Members may remove items from the Consent Agenda for discussion if they choose.

At Regular Business Meetings, you may speak to the Council during the "Items from the Audience" section at the beginning of the agenda. You may also address the Council during scheduled public hearings.

Written comments to the Council are accepted at any time, provided comments are not applicable to a matter under "quasi-judicial" review, which precludes the Council from ex-parte contact and undue influence prior to action. Quasi-judicial matters are generally identified as such.

Study Sessions

In study sessions, city staff presents the Council with detailed briefings on a variety of issues. Council Members discuss various topics, ask questions, and give staff direction on how to proceed. On the second and fourth Tuesdays, the Council meets in study session format. There is no period of public comment during these sessions.

Committee of the Whole

The Redmond City Council has five Standing Committees. These are: 1) Parks and Human Services; 2) Planning and Public Works; 3) Public Safety; 4) Finance, Administration, and Communications; and 5) Regional Affairs. The Regional Affairs Committee of the Whole currently does not meet. Committee of the Whole meetings held each Tuesday of the month in the order they are called out above. Committee of the Whole is called such, as it is attended by the full Council. The forum is used for Council study of items in the respective subject areas.

Executive Sessions

The Council does occasionally meet in executive session, which is not open to the public. By law, the Council may only discuss certain items of business during executive sessions. These topics include, but are not limited to, personnel matters, property acquisition and disposition, and legal advice on matters of litigation or potential litigation.

Quasi-judicial Matters

Quasi-judicial matters are most often land-use matters. The Council is legally required to decide the issue based solely upon information contained in the public record and obtained at special public hearings before the Council.

The public record for quasi-judicial matters is developed from testimony at earlier public hearings held before a **Hearing Examiner** or a city board or commission, as well as from written correspondence submitted within certain legal time frames throughout these processes. There are special guidelines for these public hearings and written submittals.

Addressing the Council

The City of Redmond is a government run by the identified priorities of the Community. When you feel strongly about a public issue or a local concern, the Council encourages you to share your information and thoughts. You can submit comments in writing, speak directly to the Council during “Items from the Audience” at Regular Business Meetings, or provide testimony at a public hearing on a specific topic. “Items from the Audience” is open to any topic, while testimony at public hearings are held to the topic of the specific hearing.

Items from the Audience

To speak during “Items from the Audience”, you do not need to sign up in advance. A sign-in sheet is available at the time of the meeting. Speakers will be called in the order in which they have signed up. Members of the Audience are given four minutes each to address the Council. If you have handouts to distribute to the Council, please provide 10 copies. This will ensure that a copy of your materials is provided to appropriate staff and maintained in the City Clerk's official record of the meeting. Proxy commentary (a person speaking for another person without that person being in attendance) is generally not allowed.

“Items from the Audience” is not a “question/answer” forum between the Public and the Council. It is a time for Members of the Public to be heard. As such, Council Members will most likely not respond directly at the meeting, but they may ask staff to research and report back on the issue.

Additional information regarding public participation during Council meetings can be found in the [Council's Rules of Procedure](#).

Public Hearings

If you want to speak on the specific subject being heard during a public hearing, you must make your comment during the public hearing portion of the agenda. A sign-up sheet is made available shortly before the meeting begins. You will be called to speak in the order in which you sign in. If previous speakers have already made the comments you wish to make, feel free to simply identify yourself and indicate your agreement with what has already been said.

You are also encouraged to submit your written comments on the subject to the City Clerk before the meeting so they can be included in the record and distributed to the Council.

A public hearing offers a formal opportunity to provide your views to the Council on the subject of the hearing. The Council may then discuss the issue and will sometimes make a decision at that time. In other cases, discussion and decision-making may be deferred to a future meeting.

Tips for Public Testimony

- Sign in on the appropriate meeting sign-in sheet at the start of any Regular Business Meeting to address the Mayor and Council.
- Approach the testimonial podium and speak clearly into the microphone.
- State your name for the record. You may choose to spell your last name for correct placement in the meeting minutes.
- Members are addressed as “Mr./Mrs. Mayor,” and “Members of the Council,” or “Councilmember _____.”
- Although not necessary, it may be helpful to create an outline of what you wish to say and bring notes with you to support your testimony.
- The “Items from the Audience” section of Regular Business Meeting agendas is for testimony on any topic.
- The “Public Hearings” section of Regular Business Meeting agendas is for testimony specific to the public hearing topic.

Chambers Audio/Video

Members of the public receive four minutes each to address the Mayor and Members of the Council during Regular Business Meetings. Although not necessary when speaking, members of the public may want to present pictures, audio, maps, or other information to the Mayor and Council. Use of a Council laptop for presentations is permitted, provided that storage devices such as thumb drives are scanned by the City for viruses prior to the presentation. Other city equipment such as printers are not available for public use. Please contact the City's Communications Division staff if you have any questions related to presentations at Council meetings.

Accessibility

- Assisted hearing devices are available in the Council Chambers. Arrangements for testing of this equipment for public use prior to Council meetings can be arranged by contacting the City Clerk's Office or Communications Division in advance of the meeting.
- The City Hall Building is wheelchair accessible, as is the Council Chambers.
- City Council meeting videos and audio recordings are available through the City Council's [Meeting Information Center](#).
- Please contact the City Clerk's Office with any other accessibility needs related to meeting participation.

Prohibited Activity During Meetings

The Council has the duty of addressing the business put forth to it on any meeting agenda. As such, certain activities are prohibited which may cause distractions and interrupt a meeting.

Members of the public are prohibited from approaching the Council dais or study session table unless specifically invited to approach. All public testimony must occur from the public testimony podium.

Shouting and/or the use of profanity in such a manner as to disrupt the Council's ability to continue its meeting is prohibited.

Any activity conducted in such a manner as to disrupt the Council's ability to continue its meeting is prohibited.

Contacting the Council Outside of an Open Public Meeting

Members of the Council may be individually contacted in their official city capacity through their City of Redmond-issued email addresses. The Council also has assigned a monthly Ombuds to receive resident inquiries regarding legislative policy issues and community concerns. The Ombuds responds as a voice of the full Council. Individual Council Member opinions and discussion may be obtained by reaching out to members directly. By law, a majority number of Council Members are not permitted to dialogue on a discussion thread to the point where a consensus opinion of that majority is reached. Reaching a majority consensus of action is only permitted in advertised open meetings, unless otherwise stated by law.

Written correspondence may also be sent to the Council at the City of Redmond and will be distributed to the Members upon receipt of the communication.

Additional Information regarding the Redmond City Council is found at:

<https://www.redmond.gov/council>

Agenda Terminology Reference

Items from the Audience provides an opportunity for residents to address the Council regarding any issue. Speakers must sign their intention to speak on a sheet located at the entrance of the Council Chamber and limit comments to four (4) minutes.

The Consent Agenda consists of routine items for which a staff recommendation has been prepared, and which do not require further Council discussion. A Council Member may ask questions about an item before the vote is taken, or request that an item be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the regular agenda for more detailed discussion. A single vote is taken to approve all items remaining on the Consent Agenda.

Public Hearings are held to receive public comment on important issues and/or issues requiring a public hearing by State statute. Residents wishing to comment will follow the same procedure as for “Items from the Audience,” and may speak after being recognized by the Mayor. After all persons have spoken, the hearing is closed to public comment. The Council then proceeds with its deliberation and decision making.

Staff Reports are made to the Council by the department directors on issues of interest to the Council which do not require Council action.

The Ombuds Report is made by the Council Member who is serving as the Council’s representative in response to resident inquiries on Council policy and community matters. The Ombuds designation rotates among Council Members on a monthly basis.

The Council Committees of the Whole are created to advise the Council as a whole on items coming before them in the areas of parks and human services; planning and public works; public safety; and finance, administration, and communications. Committees review policy matters in their work programs areas, as well as issues referred to them for additional study.

Unfinished Business consists of business or subjects returning to the Council for additional discussion or resolution.

New Business consists of subjects which have not previously been considered by the Council and which may require discussion and action.

Ordinances are legislative acts or local laws. They are the most permanent and binding form of Council action and may be changed or repealed only by a subsequent ordinance. Ordinances normally become effective five days after they are published in the City's official newspaper.

Resolutions are adopted to express Council policy or to direct certain types of administrative action. A resolution may be changed by adoption of a subsequent resolution.

Quasi-Judicial Proceedings are either closed record hearings (each side receiving ten [10] minutes maximum to speak) or public hearings (each speaker allotted four [4] minutes each to speak). Proceedings are those in which the City Council determines the rights or privileges of specific parties (see, Council Rules of Procedure, Section IV., J).

Executive Sessions - All regular and special meetings of the City Council are open to the public except for executive sessions at which subjects such as property acquisition, contract bid negotiations, personnel issues, and litigation are discussed.