



City of Prince George Council Policy

Public Hearing Procedures and Guidelines

Administrative Services – Legislative Services Division

Approved by Council: August 29, 2016

Purpose:

The *Local Government Act* requires Council to hold formal public hearings in order to provide a reasonable opportunity for those members of the public who may be affected by a proposed land use bylaw (e.g. official community plan bylaw or zoning bylaw) to be heard or to present written submissions to Council.

Council also holds informal public hearings to provide a reasonable opportunity for members of the public to be heard or to present written submissions regarding other land use applications, such as a development variance permit or a temporary use permit.

In order for these processes to be conducted in a consistent, fair and equitable manner, Council has adopted by policy the following guidelines for the conduct of formal statutory public hearings and informal hearings. The Chair may make minor adjustments to the following guidelines in order to accommodate a smooth flow of the proceedings, provided that there is adherence to the underlying principles of the policy and all legislative requirements.

Public Hearing Procedures and Guidelines:

Council adopts the following procedures and guidelines for its formal and informal public hearings:

- Chairperson will call the hearing to order by announcing the subject bylaw or application and general purpose of the hearing.
- Corporate Officer will advise of handout correspondence that has been received and circulated to Council following publication and distribution of the council meeting agenda.
- Any written materials and submissions considered by Council at the hearing will be available for review by the public during the hearing, and anyone wishing to comment on the content of those materials or submissions may do so.
- Chairperson may request that Administration provide an overview of the subject application and/or proposed bylaw(s).
- Chairperson will ask if the applicant is present and if so, if the applicant wishes to make a presentation and/or be available to answer questions.
- Following the applicant's presentation (if any) the Chairperson will call for representations from the public.

- Members of the public will be asked to provide their name and address for the record of the hearing. If an individual is speaking on behalf of another person or organization, the individual will be asked to identify the name of that person or organization and confirm that they have appropriate authorization to speak on their behalf.
- If the Chairperson anticipates that there may be a large number of speakers, the Chair may determine that a Speakers' List will be implemented, as follows:
 - Speakers will be called in the order that their name appears on the Speakers' List. The Speakers' List will be available when Council Chambers opens to the public prior to the commencement of the regular council meeting and public hearing. Pre-registration for the Speakers' List will not be permitted.
 - A person wishing to speak for a second time must re-register their name at the end of the Speakers' List, and will be called in the order that their name appears on the list.
- The time limit for speakers, including the applicant, to make initial submissions to Council is fifteen (15) minutes. After all speakers have been heard for the first time, Council may hear from any persons wishing to speak for a second time with new information. The time limit for speakers to make second submissions to Council is ten (10) minutes.
- If a speaker wishes to use a PowerPoint or other electronic media during their submission, the speaker must submit it to City staff prior to the hearing for staff to test the City's computer compatibility and software security. Electronic presentations requiring the use of the City's computer will not be accommodated without prior notice. However, a printed copy of the speaker's presentation may instead be submitted for Council's review and consideration.
- When it appears that there are no further speakers, the Chairperson will call three (3) times for any final representations from the public.
- If no further speakers come forward, then:
 - for an informal hearing the Chairperson may declare the public hearing closed; and
 - for a formal hearing the Chairperson will ask for a motion from Council to close the hearing.
- After a public hearing has been closed, Council should not receive further submissions from the applicant or the public regarding the application and/or bylaw that was the subject of the hearing.