
WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEARING?

A Public Hearing is a vital part of Council's review when applications are made to change the City's Official Community Plan or Zoning Bylaw. A Public Hearing is the primary means for the public to present their views to Council on the item(s) contained in that evening's Public Hearing agenda. The Public Hearing is Council's opportunity to listen to members of the public. The purpose is not for Council to discuss and debate the topic. Simply put, the public speaks and Council listens.

WHEN ARE PUBLIC MEETINGS HELD?

Public Hearings are held on an as needed basis typically just prior to a Regular Council Meeting held on the third Monday of every month, unless otherwise scheduled as required.

HOW ARE PUBLIC HEARINGS ADVERTISED?

Staff and Council want to ensure that residents have adequate notice and access to information on bylaw amendments. For example, if there is a rezoning proposal that you are interested in, there are a number of ways to find out more about the proposal and when the Public Hearing will be held:

- **On-Site Signage:** When applicable, on-site signage is placed on a property, which gives general information about the application, and provides contact information.
- **Mail Out & Delivery:** When applicable, the Public Hearing notice is mailed and/or delivered to property owners and tenants subject to the proposal and other owners within a 60 metre (200 ft.) radius of the subject property. The notices are sent at least 10 days prior to the Public Hearing date.
- **City Hall:** The Public Hearing notice and background materials are available for viewing at City Hall, 200 Craig Street, between 8:30 am and 4:00 pm, for at least ten days prior to the scheduled Public Hearing. The agenda for the meeting will also be available for viewing before the Public Hearing.
- **Newspaper Advertisements.** Public Hearings are advertised in local newspaper(s) for two consecutive weeks before the Public Hearing.
- **City Website:** Public Hearing notices are posted on the City's website at www.duncan.ca. Agendas are also be posted on the website.
- **Public Notice Posting Places:** Public Hearing notices are posted on the notice boards at City Hall at 200 Craig Street.

PLEASE NOTE: The purpose of the notification is to provide notice only. If you would like to know more about the proposal(s), please to contact the Manager of Planning directly or view the available information on the website. Should you wish to attend the Public Hearing you are strongly advised to seek further information and be sure to have all your questions answered prior to the Public Hearing meeting as the Public Hearing is not a question and answer period – it is an opportunity for your views to be heard.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I WANT TO SPEAK AT A PUBLIC HEARING?

Anyone wishing to speak to a particular Public Hearing item can do so by raising their hand. Once the Chairperson has identified you as the next speaker:

1. Please state your name, street, municipality and whether you are 'in favour' or 'opposed.'
2. Address any comments you may have to the Chairperson. Please keep your comments directed to the item you are speaking to, be succinct (five minutes maximum), and be respectful of Council, City staff and other members of the public in attendance. Council may wish to ask questions of you to clarify your statements.

CAN I SUBMIT COMMENTS IN WRITING?

If you are unable to attend a Public Hearing, you may provide your comments in a written submission, which must be received by 4:00 pm on the day of the Public Hearing. Written submissions received before noon three days prior to the Public Hearing will be included in the agenda and will be forwarded to Council members prior to the Public Hearing. You may also submit a written submission at the Public Hearing, and ask that Staff read it for you if you are not comfortable speaking in public.

Written submissions can be provided by any of the following methods:

- Dropped off at the reception desk City Hall, 200 Craig Street.
- Mailed to City of Duncan, 200 Craig Street, V9L 1W3
- Emailed to the Director of Corporate Services, c/o paige@duncan.ca

WHAT HAPPENS AT A PUBLIC HEARING?

1. The Chairperson calls the meeting to order, describes the procedure for the meeting and proceeds with the first agenda item. The Chairperson will ask members of the audience to refrain from applause or other expressions of emotion whether in favour of, or opposition to, any particular application or argument as well as inappropriate language, outbursts or criticisms aimed at individuals or groups.
2. When applicable, the Manager of Planning or designate will introduce the proposed amendment.
3. Any correspondence received after the public hearing agenda has been circulated will be read out at the Public Hearing by the Director of Corporate Services or copies will be circulated to all members of the public in the gallery.
4. The owner/applicant will have the opportunity to address Council for a maximum of ten minutes to outline their proposal and answer any questions Council may have.
5. The general public will then be given the opportunity to speak to the item. There are no requirements to register for speaking in advance of the meeting; however, a speakers list will be implemented if there are large numbers in attendance to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard.
6. Everyone who wishes to speak will be given an opportunity to be heard for up to five minutes. Once everyone has had a chance to speak, those who wish to speak again to present “new points” will be given the opportunity to do so. A speaker will not debate a point of view with another speaker but will seek clarification through the Chair.
7. The Chairperson calls three (3) times, to ask if anyone else would like to speak. After the third time, should no one raise their hand to speak, the meeting is then closed.
8. If there is more than one Public Hearing scheduled, the Chairperson will introduce the next matter and the above steps are repeated.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING?

Once a Public Hearing is closed, no new information on the matter can be received by Council, including letters, emails or phone calls. This is to allow a fair process as established by provincial case law. Following the close of the Public Hearing, the Regular Council Meeting will commence (that same evening) and bylaws may be considered for Third Reading.
