



## Providing Testimony on Land Use Decisions

The City of Eugene Planning Division values community input in its decision making process. Providing testimony is an opportunity for people to communicate with decision makers about issues that are important to them. Below are a few suggestions that may be useful in preparing testimony on behalf of a neighborhood organization or in providing guidance to people that may want to submit testimony individually.

### How to Prepare:

- **Consult with staff.** City of Eugene Planning staff are available to help answer questions about the land use decision making process, including the criteria used for decision making and how to access information about a specific project. You can reach staff by contacting the Planner assigned to the project, or by calling the Planning-On-Duty line at 541-682-5377.
- **Review application materials.** Application materials for specific projects are available on the City's website at (<http://pdd.eugene-or.gov/LandUse/ApplicationSearch>) or you may visit our offices at 99. W. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Eugene to view the file in person. These materials may help answer questions and will provide information on the project and the approval criteria that will be used to make the decision.
- **Consider meeting with the applicant/developer.** Some land use applications require an applicant to hold a neighborhood meeting before submitting the project to the City. It may be beneficial to invite the applicant/developer to a neighborhood association meeting even when they are not required to organize one of their own. This could be an opportunity for the applicant/developer to hear and address neighborhood concerns. In some cases, they may be able to address concerns or issues that are not related directly to the approval criteria but are nonetheless important to the neighborhood. To learn more about your neighborhood association and how to get involved, contact the Neighborhood Services Department (<https://www.eugene-or.gov/1128/Neighborhood-Services>)
- **Prepare testimony that addresses the approval criteria for a decision.** Decisions regarding land use applications are based on the required approval criteria (standards or rules) from the Eugene Code (Chapter 9 Land Use). There are several ways to find out about the relevant approval criteria for each application type, such as through informational handouts, web resources, public notices, and staff reports. If you have questions about which criteria are applicable, or how to interpret specific criteria, feel free to contact the Planner assigned to the application.
- **Consider including ways to improve the project.** Instead of stating the project should be refused or denied, consider providing ideas on how the project could be shaped in a positive way that works well for the neighborhood. Keep in mind that while an alternative design may be favorable to the neighborhood, an application that meets all of the criteria will be approved. For this reason, meeting with the applicant/developer can be a key step in shaping an agreeable outcome.
- **Organize public testimony when possible.** The most effective public testimony tends to be organized according to the approval criteria and relevant policy direction, whether on an individual level or among several speakers. Written testimony will receive the same consideration by the decision-maker, whether read into the record at the hearing or submitted in writing.

### How to Provide Testimony:

- **Providing written testimony.** Written testimony may be submitted directly to the City or, for applications that require a public hearing, at the public hearing. Testimony can be emailed, mailed, or hand delivered to the Planner assigned to the project.
- **Provide testimony at a public hearing.** Certain land use application types require a public hearing, which gives you a chance to present your testimony in-person to the decision maker. Often there is a time limit for individual testimony, so check with the Planner assigned to the application. If you agree with the speaker before you, you can state your agreement rather than repeating the same testimony. If you are testifying alongside others who share your stance on a project, it can be effective to organize ahead of the hearing so that each person has a different topic or issue to speak on (rather than repeating the same testimony). If possible, bring written copies of your testimony to give to the decision makers.

### Links:

Land Use Code: <http://www.eugene-or.gov/2128/Land-Use-Code-Links>

Land Use Application Types/Process: <http://www.eugene-or.gov/3208/Land-Use-Application-Information>