

# SPEAKING AT A CITY COUNCIL MEETING



## SIGNING UP TO SPEAK

Anyone who chooses to speak before Council must sign up no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the regular council meeting. Speakers may sign up by:

- Dropping by the City Secretary's Office to fill out a speaker card before 5:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. The office is located on the third floor of the Municipal Center.
- Calling the City Secretary's Office at 972.941.7120 to verbally fill out a speaker card. Be sure to arrive before the start of the regular meeting to confirm your attendance with the City Secretary.
- Filling out a speaker card at the meeting prior to the deadline.
- In lieu of speaking, written comments may be submitted to the City Secretary's Office no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

## SPEAKING TO COUNCIL

- Be prepared to move quickly to the podium when your name is called to speak. Do not approach the dais.
- Begin by stating your name and your city of residence.
- You will be allowed up to five minutes to address the Council for Comments of Public Interest or up to three minutes to address the Council on Public Hearing Items. The Presiding Officer, at his or her discretion, may reduce the time as deemed necessary to ensure meeting efficiency.
- Comments shall be limited to the topic of the agenda item, or an item of general concern if made during the public comment section unrelated to a posted agenda item.

## HELPFUL TIPS

- Presentations that are less than 3 minutes long, but to the point, are more effective with Council than long and repetitive presentations.
- If your point has been made by previous speakers, feel free to inform the Mayor that you do not need to speak because your point had been made. You can make a simple statement from your seat such as the following: "I do not wish to speak. My point has been made."
- If you plan to present Council with information, have the materials organized and ready to present to the City Secretary who will distribute it to Council, and begin your presentation immediately. Any information you would like to provide to Council prior to the meeting may be emailed to [citycouncil@plano.gov](mailto:citycouncil@plano.gov).
- Address your remarks to the whole Council, rather than to a specific member.
- Do not ask Council if anyone has questions. Council will ask you to stay at the podium if there is a question.
- The podium has a count-down clock, which will indicate how much time is remaining to speak. When the time has ended, a tone will sound and your comments should be completed.

## RULES OF CONDUCT

Residents have the right to criticize policies, procedures, programs and services, but speakers must stick to the time limits and stay on topic. Be respectful and courteous to Council, staff, other speakers, and those in attendance at the meeting. Behavior that fails to yield the floor when the speaker's time is concluded; is not relevant to the agenda item or city business; repeatedly interrupts a councilmember; disturbs the order of the meeting; involves loud, threatening, hostile, abusive, vulgar or obscene language; and disrupts the council meeting is prohibited. **Any speaker or audience member that engages in disruptive behavior may be subject to removal from the meeting.** All councilmembers shall enforce these rules.