

# Guidelines for Providing Public Comment in TriMet Public Advisory Committees

TriMet welcomes and values community involvement in its planning and operating processes. These guidelines are established to ensure public comments at TriMet Public Advisory Committee meetings are received in an efficient, orderly, and civil manner, providing a fair and open forum for public input on matters of TriMet business.

## Purpose of Public Comment

Public comment sessions provide an opportunity for the public to offer input on agenda items, as well as non-agenda items relevant to the business of the Agency. These communications allow committees to hear testimony on specific topics, TriMet operations and policies, and general transit issues that interest riders and customers.

## Request to Speak

- **Sign-Up:** Individuals wishing to address a committee should make their request known by registering their name, address, email, telephone number, and the subject of their proposed remarks.
  - **In-person meetings:** Sign-up cards may be provided at the meeting. Sign-up is typically on a first-come, first-served basis and closes promptly at a specified time (e.g., 30 minutes before the scheduled public meeting begins, or at the start of the meeting).
  - **Virtual online meetings:** Sign-up is required in advance, the day prior. Instructions for virtual sign-up are located here: <https://trimet.org/meetings/signup.htm>  
Platform links (e.g., Zoom) will be provided on the meeting agenda.
  - **“Raise Hand” Feature (Virtual Meetings):** If you did not sign up in advance but wish to make additional comments during a virtual meeting, use the "Raise Hand" feature (typically found in the Participants tab or under Reactions) during the public comment portion of the meeting.
- **Relevance:** Remarks must be relevant to TriMet's services, programs, projects, or activities.

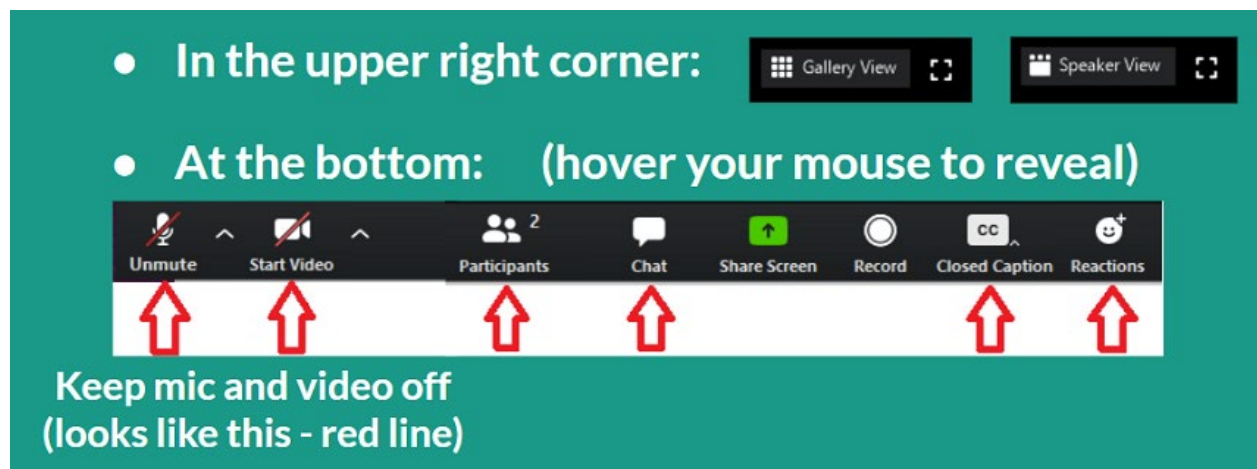
## 3. Time Limits and Procedures

- **Recognition:** A speaker must first be recognized by the presiding Committee Chair or Facilitator.
- **Identification:** Upon being called, please state your first and last name, and address for the record.

- **Time Limit:** Public input is generally limited to **three (3) minutes per person**.
  - A timer may be used. The microphone may be turned off if the time limit is exceeded to ensure equal opportunity for all speakers.
- **Speaking Order:** Comments will be taken in the order of sign-up or as prescribed by the presiding Committee Chair or Facilitator.
- **Addressing the Committee:** Speakers should address their comments to the committee, not to staff or the audience.
- **Repetitious Testimony:** Those addressing the Committee are encouraged to effectively utilize their time and limit repetitious testimony to provide the greatest opportunity for others to testify.
- **Frequency:** No person shall speak on the same item more than once per meeting.

#### 4. Virtual Meeting Specifics (Zoom/Online Platforms)

- **Automatic Mute/Camera Off:** Upon entering a virtual meeting, you will typically be automatically muted.
- **Unmuting:** When the presiding Committee Chair or Facilitator calls your name, you will need to unmute your microphone to begin speaking.
- **Muting After Comment:** After you have made your comments, please "Mute" your microphone again.
- **Chat Feature:** In some committee meetings the chat feature may be available for typing comments, and chats are recorded.



#### 5. Conduct and Decorum

- **Respectful Speech:** Verbal comments need to be conducted in respectful speech with no personal attacks.
- **Civility:** Comments deemed inappropriate, lacking civility, or unreasonably repetitious of previous comments by other speakers may result in the speaker being ruled out of order by the presiding Committee Chair or Facilitator.

## 6. Distribution of Written Materials

- **Submission:** Speakers who wish to distribute written statements or other materials to the Committee members may do so by submitting to the Committee Liaison here <https://trimet.org/meetings/signup.htm>
- **Copies:** If bringing written testimony to the meeting, please provide enough copies for all committee members and the Committee Liaison.
- **Public Comment Cards:** Public comment cards may be available at the meeting for those who prefer to write their comments. These cards will be distributed to the Committee and the Committee Liaison and will become part of the official record.

## 7. Committee Comments and Questions

- The purpose of public comment is for the Committee to receive comments from the public.
- With consent from the presiding Committee Chair or Facilitator, Committee members may ask questions of the speaker or comment on the speaker's presentation.
- Out of respect for time constraints and schedules of other speakers, it is recommended that questions or comments by Committee members be reserved until all speakers and presenters conclude their remarks.

## 8. Exceptions and Presiding Officer Authority

- The presiding Committee Chair or Facilitator holds the ultimate decision-making authority to determine and modify the public comments procedures.
- Exceptions to these guidelines may be permitted at the discretion of the presiding Committee Chair or Facilitator under circumstances such as:
  - When a party or group is represented by a spokesperson or professional consultant.
  - When any member of the Committee requests that an exception be granted.
  - When an interested party requests, before the commencement of the meeting, that an exception be granted.
  - At any time, an exception would be in the interest of fairness and would not unduly disrupt the efficient conduct of business.