

# Public Hearings

A public hearing is an opportunity for the public to speak to city officials about specific items or projects.

Planning Commission holds the public hearings for conditional use permits, rezonings, General Plan amendments, and planned developments.

The Board of Adjustment holds the public hearings for variances.

Public Hearing is NOT Required for Large Scale Development, Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, Lot Split, or Property Line Adjustment.

**Public Hearing Required**





- Conditional Use Permit
- Rezoning
- General Plan Amendment
- Planned Development Variance



Visit the [Pending Agenda Items](#) web page for a map of upcoming public hearings.

## How do I find out about public hearings?

The notification method depends on the type of request.

Notification Method	Conditional Use	Rezoning & Planned Development	Variance	General Plan Amendment
 City publishes notice in Democrat Gazette	15 days prior to meeting	15 days prior to meeting	7 days prior to meeting	15 days prior to meeting
 Applicant mails notification to properties within 200'	Not required	15 days prior to meeting	Not required	Not required
 City posts sign on property	7 days prior to meeting	7 days prior to meeting	7 days prior to meeting	15 days prior to meeting
 City publishes meeting agenda	Friday before Planning Commission meeting	Friday before Planning Commission meeting	Friday before Board of Adjustment meeting	Friday before Planning Commission meeting

## Where can I find meeting agendas?

Planning Commission Agendas  
[www.bentonvilliar.com/AgendaCenter/Planning-Commission-2](http://www.bentonvilliar.com/AgendaCenter/Planning-Commission-2)

Board of Adjustment Agendas  
[www.bentonvilliar.com/AgendaCenter/Board-of-Adjustment-8](http://www.bentonvilliar.com/AgendaCenter/Board-of-Adjustment-8)

Sign up to automatically receive an email or text notification when agendas are published.

[www.bentonvilliar.com/list.aspx#agendaCenter](http://www.bentonvilliar.com/list.aspx#agendaCenter)

# Public Hearings

## What happens at the public hearing?

Planning Commission will hold a separate public hearing for each item on the agenda requiring a public hearing.



- 1 Planning staff will read aloud the staff report for the item.
- 2 The Chairperson will open the public hearing.
- 3 Individuals wishing to speak can approach the podium, state their name and address, and present comments. City officials will listen to concerns and planning staff will make every effort to answer any questions.
- 4 After all public comments have been made for the item, the Chairperson will close the public hearing. Once the public hearing is closed, further public comment is not accepted, unless the city officials vote to reopen the public hearing.
- 5 The members may discuss the item and ask questions of the applicant.
- 6 After discussion, a member can make a motion to vote. Another member must second the motion to bring the item to a vote. A verbal vote of all members will be taken.

### Voting Options for Agenda Items

- Approve
- Approve with conditions / amendments
- Deny
- Table for further deliberation

## Tips for Speaking at Public Hearings

- Be Informed** Read the proposal and other material before the hearing. If you have questions, contact Planning by phone at (479) 271-3122 ext. 2 or email to [planning@bentonvillear.com](mailto:planning@bentonvillear.com).
- Be Prepared** Public comments are typically limited to three minutes per person. Make your comments brief, to the point, well organized, and directly address the issue.
- Coordinate** If others share your ideas or concerns, coordinate to have a spokesperson speak on behalf of the group. The group can raise hands to be acknowledged to convey the extent of a public concern. This eliminates repetitive comments.
- Be Respectful** Your goal is to persuade city officials to decide in favor of your side of an issue. Angering, alienating, or antagonizing is counterproductive.

### Alternative Participation

If you are unable to attend the meeting, you can provide testimony in writing to the Planning Department at [planning@bentonvillear.com](mailto:planning@bentonvillear.com). All written comments will be provided to the city officials.

For items that are forwarded to City Council, you can contact your alderman.