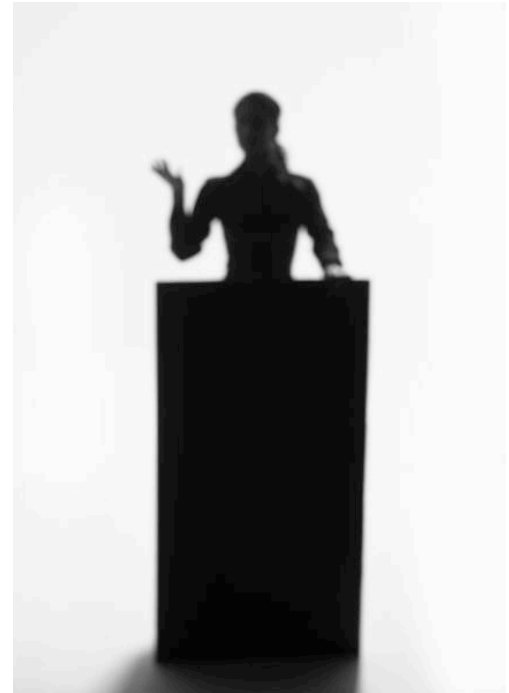


Making Public Comment

Once you have a position on an issue, whether as an individual or on behalf of the Chapter, you should make it known to your local decision-makers well before they vote. We recommend you send your position in a letter and/or e-mail, forward your letter to local media, and request a follow-up meeting with individual decision makers to discuss your recommendations.

Another key venue for advocating your position is the public comment period at meetings where your issue on the agenda. When you attend public meetings, introduce yourself to the developer, architect, and city staff person in charge of the project. Let them know the Sierra Club is interested in the project and would appreciate meeting with them to discuss features that we would like to see in the project. Work with the appropriate conservation committee (e.g. Sustainable Land Use Committee, Water Committee, etc.) to prepare for meeting with officials, and invite other committee members to attend with you.



Making comment at public meetings is a citizen's right. Elected officials have an obligation to hear their constituents on matters that affect them. There is usually a specific time during open meetings of the city council for comments from individuals from the community, as well as a time limit for speaking (Usually 1-3 minutes)

Tips on preparing your public comment

1. Make an outline beforehand to help you cover the points you want to make and ease the nervousness of speaking in public.
2. Ask others who share your views to attend the meeting when you speak.
3. Having a sympathetic group behind you will strengthen your position and give you confidence when speaking. There is strength in numbers.
4. Step up to the microphone when the council invites public comment. State your full name, city, affiliation, and address.
5. You are speaking on public record and identifying yourself is requirement for making public comment.
6. Speak clearly, confidently and respectfully.
7. Avoid personal attacks on council members.
8. Make eye contact with each of the council members as you speak.
9. Be succinct, realizing you will usually have a time limit, but cover all the points you want to make, using your outline.