



Guidelines for Public Comments at TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT) Meetings

TriMet welcomes community involvement in its planning and operating processes and as such, seeks to provide a fair and open forum for public input on all matters of Agency business. Allowing the public to speak at board meetings is not required, but considered best practice. The following rules and guidelines were established to ensure public comments at CAT meetings is received in an efficient, orderly, and civil manner. These guidelines may be used but are not binding on the public hearing process. The presiding officer holds the ultimate decision making authority to modify the procedures.

1. **Agenda for Public Comments.** If public comment is taken, the floor shall be open to public input on all items of the agenda. In addition, a time may be set aside at each regularly scheduled meeting of the CAT for public input on non-agenda items which are relevant to the business of the Agency. The Board shall hear speakers in the order prescribed by the presiding officer.
2. **Requests to Speak.** If public comment is taken, a person wishing to address the Board during its meeting shall make their request known by registering their name, address, email, telephone number, and the subject of their proposed remarks on the sign-up cards provided at the meeting or online for virtual meetings. The speaker will receive the guidelines for public comments. The speaker's remarks must be relevant to TriMet's services, programs, projects, or activities.
3. **Time Limits and Procedures.** If public comment is taken, a member of the public wishing to speak, as provided herein, must first be recognized by the presiding officer. The speaker should then state their name and address. Public input shall be limited to three minutes per person, and no person shall speak on the same item more than once per meeting. The speaker must be civil and must address the Board, not staff or the

audience, from the podium microphone if in-person, or through their desired audio input if online or over the phone.

In instances where a number of speakers wish to address the same subject, the total time for speaker presentations shall not exceed thirty minutes. If those persons wishing to address the CAT on a subject cannot agree on the allocation of time among themselves, the presiding officer shall allocate the time among the speakers, giving due consideration to the different positions or viewpoints to be presented.

4. **Distribution of Written Materials.** Speakers who wish to distribute written statements or other materials to the Board members may do so by delivering a copy to the Committee Administrator.
5. **Comments Which Are Out of Order.** The presiding officer may rule any public speaker out of order if comments are inappropriate, lack civility or are unreasonably repetitious of previous comments by other speakers.
6. **Exceptions.** At the discretion of the presiding officer, exceptions to the rules above may be permitted under the following circumstances:
 - When a party or group is represented by a spokesperson or professional consultant.
 - When any member of the Board requests an exception be granted.
 - When an interested party requests, prior to 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.
7. **Committee Comments and Questions.** The purpose of public comment is for the CAT to receive comments. With consent from the presiding officer, committee members may ask questions of the speaker or comment on the speaker's presentation. Out of respect for the time constraints and schedules of other speakers, it is recommended that questions or

comments by committee members be reserved until all speakers conclude their remarks.

8. **Procedure Authority.** The presiding officer holds the ultimate decision making authority to determine and modify the public comments procedures. The presiding officer may choose to introduce public comments as follows:

- Approach the podium (if in person), or unmute your audio device is attending the meeting online or over-the-phone;
- Use microphone (in person meetings only) so all can hear and comments can be recorded
- State your name and address
- Limit comments to three minutes
- Board members may ask clarifying questions with the consent of the presiding officer