



RICHARDSON

T E X A S

**CITY COUNCIL
RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE**

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1. AUTHORITY

1.1 CHARTER

The City of Richardson Charter Section 3.12 provides that the City Council shall determine its own rules of procedure. These shall be in effect upon adoption by the City Council and until such time as amended, suspended, or new rules are adopted in the manner provided.

1.2 MAYOR TO ACT AS COUNCIL CEREMONIAL REPRESENTATIVE

Pursuant to Charter Section 3.02, the Mayor shall represent the City on all ceremonial occasions and shall be known as the official head of government. In the Mayor's absence, the Mayor Pro Tem assumes this responsibility. In the absence of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem, the Mayor will select another Council member to assume the responsibility.

1.3 COUNCIL MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

From time to time, Council members may choose to participate in community activities, committees, events, and task forces. When a Council member participates in these types of activities, the Council member is representing themselves as a Council member rather than acting on behalf of the City Council. Acting or participating on behalf of the City Council is limited to those instances when the Mayor has formally designated the Council member as the City Council representative for the matter.

1.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEES, COUNCIL MEMBER APPOINTMENTS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

At the beginning of each two-year City Council term, after all Council members are elected and the Mayor Pro Tem is selected, the Mayor shall appoint Council members to the following Council Committees, advisory board and commission liaison assignments, and regional assignments.

a. Council Committees

The Council has established three Council Committees as listed below. Each Committee has adopted a governing document from which to operate.

- **Audit Committee** – The Audit Committee primarily exists to execute oversight on the independent audit that is mandated by City Charter. The Committee will provide a recommendation in coordination with City staff on the public accountant or firm designated to conduct the audit. The Committee serves as a contact for auditors when needed and meets with auditors to review and accept the audit results.
- **Education Committee** – The Education Committee primarily exists to be informed on the general education of Richardson's population, explore issues related to human capital and the education pipeline of Richardson's workforce, and engage with local education partners.
- **Business Committee** – The Business Committee primarily exists to be informed on topics related to the local business climate and economic development, explore challenges and opportunities related to business growth and development, and engage with local business partners.

b. Advisory Board and Commission Liaisons

Council members are appointed to the following advisory boards and commissions as liaisons with no authority to vote, veto, or deliberate. The liaison's role is to provide guidance on the board or commission's goals based on the full City Council's adopted goals for the term. Liaisons should report to the full Council as appropriate. Liaisons should attend all board or commission meetings for their assigned board.

- Animal Services Advisory Commission
- Community Inclusion and Engagement Commission (*eff. with 2025 Council term*)
- Cultural Arts Commission
- Library Board
- Parks and Recreation Commission

c. Regional Assignments

- **Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition (DRMC)** - DRMC is a transportation advocacy group made up of cities, counties, and transportation agencies in a five-county region of North Texas. DRMC is focused on working with state and federal officials to advance regional priority projects and working with North Texas transportation agencies to ensure all priority projects receive proper funding. Elected officials represent local governments and appointed officials represent transportation agency members (TxDOT, DART, NCTCOG, DCTA, etc.).
- **Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Member or Alternate** – RTC is the forum for cooperative decision-making by primarily elected officials of general-purpose local governments in the Metropolitan Area to evaluate transportation alternatives and determine the most desirable transportation system. The City of Richardson shares representation with the Town of Addison, alternating with a primary member and alternate member voted on by both entities.
- **North Central Texas Council of Governments Board (NCTCOG)** – NCTCOG is a voluntary association of, by, and for local governments within the 16-county North Central Texas Region. The association assists local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit, and coordinating for sound regional development. An elected or appointed public official from each member government makes up the General Assembly which annually elects NCTCOG's Executive Board. The Executive Board is the policy-making body for all activities undertaken by NCTCOG.

d. Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees are formed on an as-needed basis with a clearly defined purpose and term and reporting requirements. Ad hoc committees are formed at the discretion of the City Council.

1.5 REQUESTS FOR RESEARCH OR INFORMATION

Council members may request information or research from staff on a given topic through the City Manager. Requests for policy direction will be brought to the full City Council at a regular meeting for consideration. All written products will be copied to the full City Council. The City Manager will determine if extensive staff time and resources are required to accomplish the request. If so, the City Manager may present that request to the full City Council prior to proceeding. Council members may similarly request information from the City Attorney, City Secretary, and Municipal Judge. If significant resources are required, the City Attorney, City Secretary or Municipal Judge will ask the City Manager to place the request on a City Council agenda for approval prior to any action.

2. COUNCIL MEETINGS

2.1 MAYOR IS PRESIDING OFFICER

Consistent with Charter Section 3.02, the Mayor shall be the presiding officer. The Mayor shall vote on all matters coming before the Council unless there is a Conflict of Interest pursuant to Chapter 171 of the Local Government Code requiring recusal. The Mayor shall have no power of veto.

The Mayor shall have the authority to preserve order at all City Council meetings, enforce the rules of the City Council, and determine the order of business under the rules of the Council.

a. Mayor Pro Tem

Pursuant to Charter Section 3.03, the Council shall elect one of its members as Mayor Pro Tem, who shall temporarily perform the duties of Mayor in case of the absence or inability of the Mayor to perform the duties of office, and who shall for such time be vested with all powers belonging to the Mayor. In such event, the Mayor Pro Tem does not assume the office of Mayor, and no vacancy is created in the office of the Mayor or the Mayor Pro Tem. The Mayor Pro Tem shall be selected after each election and shall serve for a period of two years, subject to the removal as Mayor Pro Tem at any time by a vote of two-thirds of the total membership of the Council.

b. Absence of Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem

Pursuant to Charter Section 3.03, in case of the absence of both the Mayor and the Mayor Pro Tem, the remaining Council members shall select one of their members to act in place of the Mayor.

2.2 ESTABLISHING THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

The City Manager shall establish City Council meeting agendas based on the policy direction of the Mayor and City Council and specific items of business that require action by the City Council. If a Council member requests the City Manager to place an item on the City Council meeting agenda that does not fall within the scope of the current City Council goals or policy direction, the Council member may submit a written agenda request to the Mayor accompanied by written support of at least two other Council members for the placement of that item on an agenda.

When such request is received by the Mayor, the Mayor shall inform the City Manager and the City Manager shall acknowledge the request at the next scheduled City Council meeting prior to scheduling the item for an agenda.

2.3 REGULAR MEETINGS

Consistent with Charter Section 3.08, all meetings of the City Council shall be held in the City Hall or at any other location designated by the City Council and at such times to be prescribed by the City Council. The City Council shall have at least two meetings each month unless canceled by the City Council. All meetings of the City Council shall be held in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

The City Council shall adopt a meeting schedule for the year. The adopted schedule may be changed in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

2.4 SPECIAL MEETINGS

Consistent with Charter Section 3.09, special meetings of the City Council shall be called by the City Secretary or City Manager upon the written request of the Mayor, the City Manager, or three Council members. The written notice shall state the subject to be considered at the special meeting.

2.5 EMERGENCY MEETINGS

In case of emergency or urgent public necessity which shall be expressed in the notice of the meeting, an emergency meeting may be called in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

2.6 EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

The City Council may meet in a closed Executive Session in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, at any time during any meeting, workshop or anytime otherwise authorized by State law, to consider or discuss any matter that is authorized by State law to be discussed or considered in closed Executive Session.

- a. Council members may not disclose the nature of discussion from a closed Executive Session unless required by State law. Disclosure of the discussion from a closed Executive Session is a violation of the City's Code of Ethics.

2.7 VIDEOCONFERENCE CALL MEETINGS

Council members may participate and attend Council meetings remotely in accordance with the Videoconference Call Policy for City Council Meetings adopted by [Resolution 23-32](#), as amended.

2.8 INTERNET AND TELEVISION/CABLE BROADCAST OF MEETINGS

At the minimum, City Council meetings will be broadcast on the City's website and television and/or other authorized medium in accordance with the Texas Government Code Section 551.128, as amended.

3. RULES OF CONDUCT

3.1 GENERAL PROCEDURE/CITY CHARTER

These rules, consistent with the City Charter and any applicable City ordinance, statute, or other legal requirement, shall govern the proceedings of the City Council.

3.2 AUTHORITY OF THE PRESIDING OFFICER

Subject to appeal to the full City Council, the Mayor shall have the authority to prevent the misuse of motions, the abuse of any privilege, or the obstruction of the business of the City Council by ruling any such matter out of order. In so ruling, the Mayor shall be courteous and fair and should presume that the moving party is acting in good faith.

Any member of the City Council may move to require enforcement of the rules, and the affirmative vote of a majority of the City Council shall require the presiding officer to act.

3.3 MAYOR TO FACILITATE COUNCIL MEETINGS

In the role of presiding officer, the Mayor will assist the City Council in maintaining focus on agenda discussions and deliberations and ensuring the efficiency of the meeting.

3.4 OBTAINING THE FLOOR, ORDER OF SPEAKERS, AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

The Mayor has been delegated the responsibility to control the debate, the order of speakers, and to ensure each Council member has an opportunity to speak.

- a. Any member of the City Council wishing to speak must first obtain the floor by being recognized by the Mayor. The Mayor must recognize any Council member who seeks the floor when appropriately entitled to do so.
- b. Speakers will generally be called upon in the order of the request to speak as indicated by activating the designated microphone or by raising the hand.
- c. With the concurrence of the Mayor, a Council member holding the floor may address a question to another Council member, and that Council member may respond while the floor is still held by the Council member asking the question. A Council member may opt not to answer a question while another Council member has the floor.
- d. No Council member is entitled to be called on to speak a second time on the same subject until all Council members have had the opportunity to speak.
- e. Council members will govern themselves as to the length of their comments or presentation and shall be mindful of other Council members' right to speak. Council members should avoid repetitive comments and be concise.
- f. Council members will limit their comments to the subject matter, time, or motion being currently considered by the City Council.

3.5 MOTIONS

Motions may be made by any member of the City Council, including the Mayor or the then presiding officer, provided that before the Mayor or the then presiding officer offers a motion, the opportunity for making a motion should be offered to other members of the City Council. Any member of the City Council, other than the person offering the motion, may second a motion.

a. Procedures for Motions

The following is the general procedure for making motions:

- i. A Council member who wishes to make a motion should request to speak as indicated by activating the designated microphone or by raising the hand and being called on by the Mayor or presiding officer.
- ii. A Council member who wishes to second a motion should request to speak as indicated by activating the designated microphone or by raising the hand and being called on by the Mayor or presiding officer.
- iii. Once the motion has been properly made and seconded, the Mayor shall open the matter for any further discussion offering the first opportunity to the moving party and, thereafter, to any Council member properly recognized by the Mayor.
- iv. Once the matter has been fully discussed and the Mayor calls for a vote, no further discussion will be allowed.
- v. When a motion is on the floor and an amendment is offered, the amendment should be acted upon prior to acting on the main motion. No motion of a subject different from that under consideration shall be admitted as an amendment. A motion to amend an amendment shall be in order, but one to amend an amendment to an amendment shall not be in order. Action shall be taken on the amended amendment prior to any other action to further amend the original motion.

b. Examples of Motions

The following motions are examples of possible motions. Council members may word motions in any common manner provided such motions and intended action are clear. The Mayor or the presiding officer will confirm that each of the Council members understands the motion prior to calling for a vote on the motion.

Motion to Approve or Deny

A motion to approve or deny is a proposal to take a specific action. The maker of the motion may state “I move to approve/deny Agenda Item # as presented” or may state the recommended motion (under State law, certain motions require specific language in which case staff will provide the specific motion in the packet that the specific language must be used), or such person may state the agenda caption although it is not necessary.

Motion to Approve with Amendments

A motion to approve a specific action may include amendments recommended by a board, City Attorney, another Council member, or staff. The maker of the motion may state “I move to approve

Agenda Item # with the following amendment(s)..." or state the recommended motion or the agenda caption with the amendment included.

Withdrawal of Motion

A withdrawal of motion indicates a motion may be withdrawn or modified by the Council member who originally made the motion at any time prior to its passage. If a motion is withdrawn, the Council member who originally made the motion, or another Council member may then make a motion to be seconded by another Council member.

Motion to Continue a Public Hearing

The City Council may continue a Public Hearing to a date time certain unless State law provides otherwise. The maker of the motion may state "I move to continue the Public Hearing to xxx date at xxx time".

Motion to Refer or Postpone

The City Council may not be able to complete its discussion of an agenda item, may require the City staff to provide further information, or require the matter to be reconsidered by another applicable board. In such event, the City Council may postpone consideration of the agenda item to a date time certain or subsequent Council meeting (or for example until such time as City staff can provide the requested information) or refer the matter back to the applicable board to reconsider the agenda item.

3.6 VOTING

a. Abstention

- i.** In accordance with Charter Section 3.12, no member of the City Council shall be excused from voting except on matters involving the consideration of such member's own official conduct, or where the member's financial interests are involved, unless otherwise required by law.
- ii.** If a Council member abstains because of a legal conflict of interest, such Council member is not counted as present for quorum purposes and is not deemed to be "voting" for purposes of determining whether there has been a "majority vote of those voting and present."
- iii.** When the Mayor or a Council member abstains because of a legal conflict of interest, the Mayor or such Council member must file an affidavit with the City Secretary stating the nature and extent of the conflict prior to the discussion of the applicable agenda item. The Mayor, City Manager, or City Secretary shall briefly state, on the record, the nature of the conflict of the Council member. State law requires the inclusion of this information in the public record. A Council member with a legal conflict of interest shall excuse themselves from the dais and meeting room for that portion of the Council meeting and may return once the Council has completed its discussion and any action upon the applicable agenda item.

b. Tie Votes

A tie vote results in no action. In such an instance, any member of the City Council may offer another motion for further consideration and action. If there is not an affirmative vote, or the required vote for passage of such motion, the result is no action. If the matter involves an appeal and an affirmative vote

does not occur, the decision appealed stands as decided by the decision-making person or body from which the appeal was taken, unless otherwise provided by State law.

c. Charter or Statute Voting Requirements

Some actions taken by the City Council require more than a simple majority vote of the Council members present for approval as may be required by either City ordinances, the Charter, or State law. City staff will inform City Council when such vote is required.

3.7 NON-OBSERVANCE OF RULES

These rules are intended to expedite and facilitate the transaction of the business of the City Council in an orderly fashion and shall be deemed to be procedural only, and the failure to strictly observe any such rules shall not affect the validity of any action taken by, the City Council.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

4.1 GENERAL PROCEDURE

The City Council procedure for the conduct of Public Hearings is generally as follows:

- a.** Staff presents its report.
- b.** Council members may ask questions of staff.
- c.** The applicant or appellant (or representative) then has the opportunity to make a presentation, provide comments, testimony, and/or arguments. In the case of an appeal when the appellant is different from the applicant, the appellant should be called upon first to provide comments or testimony. The Mayor or presiding officer has the authority to limit the time allowed for the applicant or appellant's comments when deemed necessary for the efficiency of the meeting.
- d.** Council members may ask questions of the applicant and/or appellant.
- e.** The Mayor opens the Public Hearing.
- f.** Public input is received by City Council.
- g.** The Mayor closes the Public Hearing by motion of the City Council.
- h.** The City Council deliberates on the issue.
- i.** If the City Council raises new issues through deliberation and seeks to take additional public comments/testimony, the Public Hearing must be reopened. At the conclusion of the public testimony, the Public Hearing is again closed.
- j.** The City Council deliberates and takes action.
- k.** The Mayor announces the final decision of the City Council.

4.2 PUBLIC INPUT AT HEARINGS

When a matter for Public Hearing comes before the City Council, the Mayor will open the Public Hearing after the staff and applicant presentations. Upon opening the Public Hearing and before any motion is adopted related to the merits of the issue to be heard, the Mayor shall inquire if there is anyone present who desires to speak on the matter which is to be heard or to present evidence regarding the matter. A Public Hearing, no matter what the subject matter, is not a question-and-answer period. Speakers must address their comments to the City Council. Council members should not address members of the public individually or answer or ask questions (other than the applicant or the applicant's representative) during a Public Hearing. After all members of the public who requested to speak have spoken, the City staff, Mayor, or Council members may respond to any questions or issues raised by members of the public. The Mayor may also ask the applicant to respond specifically to new issues or questions raised during the Public Hearing.

a. Public Member Request to Speak

Any person wishing to speak at a Public Hearing scheduled on the agenda shall complete a Public Comment Card prior to the matter being reached and present it to the City Secretary. Upon being recognized by the Mayor, the person may speak or present evidence relevant to the matter being heard. Such person shall come to the podium and announce their name and address for the record. No person may speak without first being recognized by the Mayor.

b. Time Limits

All persons wishing to speak on the matter shall be limited to five minutes each. The applicant or appellant (or representatives) are not limited to five minutes.

The Mayor has the authority to extend or limit any of the enumerated time allocations based on the complexity of the item and the number of persons wishing to speak on the item with consideration to equal time for all sides of the matter and efficiency of the meeting.

c. Materials for Public Record

- i. Speakers are prohibited from displaying materials or information. Written materials may be provided to the City Council at the meeting. Nine copies shall be provided to the City Secretary as the speaker approaches to speak. Copies will be distributed to the City Council and City Manager after the meeting unless distribution is requested by the Mayor during the speaker's comments. All such materials presented will be retained by the City Secretary's Office as part of the record in accordance with the requirements of State law.
- ii. Petitions will only be acknowledged in accordance with the City Charter or State law. Otherwise, petitions will be accepted with a Public Comment Card and noted for the record.

d. Germane Comments

During the Public Hearing, no person will be permitted to speak about matters or present evidence which is not germane to the matter being considered. A determination of relevance shall be made by the Mayor but may be appealed to the City Council.

4.3 CONTINUANCE OF HEARINGS

Any Public Hearing being held by the City Council may by motion, be continued to a subsequent meeting date and time certain.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS, VISITORS FORUM, AND RIGHT TO SPEAK

Pursuant to Charter Section 3.10, all meetings of the City Council shall be open to the public except as otherwise permitted by State law. Citizens of the City shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at meetings of the City Council other than emergency or closed meetings, in regard to any matter there considered.

5.1 RIGHT TO SPEAK

Texas Government Code Section 551.007 requires the City Council to allow the public to address the City Council prior to the City Council taking action on an item listed on the meeting agenda for action. The right of the public to speak does not include items on the agenda for a workshop or discussion items listed on the meeting agenda.

5.2 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

The public comment portion of the City Council meeting is scheduled at the beginning of the meeting to allow the public to address the City Council regarding an item listed on the agenda that is not already scheduled for a Public Hearing. Persons who will address the City Council regarding an agenda item listed for action other than an item scheduled for a Public Hearing, shall be required to address the City Council during the public comment portion of the City Council meeting. Sections 5.4 – 5.9 below apply to such speakers with the exception that Council members will deliberate on items listed on the agenda when the item is discussed by City Council.

5.3 VISITORS FORUM

This portion of the City Council meeting is set aside for members of the public to address the City Council on any topic in which the subject matter is within the jurisdiction of the City. The Visitors Forum will follow the Public Comments on Agenda Items section. Sections 5.4 – 5.9 below shall apply to such speakers.

5.4 PUBLIC COMMENT CARDS

- a.** All speakers shall complete a Public Comment Card and submit it to the City Secretary prior to speaking. Public Comment Cards may be submitted online by 5:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting, or in person before the meeting begins.
- b.** A Public Comment Card is required for comments made during a Public Hearing, Public Comments on the Agenda, and the Visitors Forum. All comments will be heard in the order

they are received for each section. Public Comments on agenda items will be heard prior to any other comments.

- c. Public Comment Cards may also be submitted by those who do not wish to speak but desire their comments to be a part of the record. A person may indicate such person's comments and support or opposition for an agenda item on a Public Comment Card. A Public Comment Card submitted online will be provided for City Council and acknowledged at the appropriate portion of the meeting. Public comments will be referenced for the record, including the speaker's name and address.

5.5 TIME LIMITS

- a. All speakers are limited to a maximum of five minutes each. This applies to speakers during the Public Comments on Agenda Items portion of the meeting, and the Visitors Forum portion of the meeting.
- b. All speakers on agenda items will be heard first, in the order they were received, and prior to City Council discussion/action of agenda items.
- c. Speakers under the Visitors Forum will be heard after Public Comments on Agenda Items and in the order they were received.
- d. A maximum time of 30 minutes at the beginning of the meeting will apply for all public speakers, whether during Public Comments on the Agenda or the Visitors Forum. If there are registered speakers for the Visitors Forum remaining at the 30-minute time limit, those speakers may be heard at the conclusion of the posted agenda.
- e. The Mayor has the authority to extend or limit any of the time allocations based on the complexity of the item/topic and the number of persons wishing to speak on the item/topic with consideration to equal time for all sides of the matter and efficiency of the meeting. All public comments on agenda items will be heard prior to deliberation of the item as designated under the Public Comments on Agenda Items section.

5.6 REPETITIOUS COMMENTS/DESIGNATION OF SPOKESPERSON

- a. A speaker shall not present the same or substantially the same items or arguments to the Council repeatedly or be repetitious in presenting their oral comments.
- b. In order to expedite matters and avoid repetitious presentations, the designation of a spokesperson is encouraged. Whenever any group of individuals wishes to address the Council on the same subject matter, those individuals are encouraged to designate a spokesperson to address the City Council. The Mayor has the authority to extend the time allocation for a designated spokesperson.

5.7 DISPLAY AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS AT CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a. Speakers are prohibited from displaying materials or information. Written materials may be provided for City Council at the meeting. Nine copies shall be provided to the City Secretary as the speaker approaches to speak. Copies will be distributed to the City Council and City Manager after the meeting unless distribution is requested by the Mayor during the speaker's

comments. All such materials presented will be retained by the City Secretary's Office as part of the record in accordance with the requirements of State law.

- b. Petitions will only be acknowledged in accordance with the City Charter or State law. Otherwise, petitions will be accepted with a Public Comment Card and noted for the record.

5.8 NO CITY COUNCIL DELIBERATION

Comments should be directed to the Mayor and City Council. The Texas Open Meetings Act prohibits the City Council from discussing or taking action on items that are not posted on the agenda. The Mayor or City Manager may provide specific factual information, recite an existing policy, refer the matter or speaker to a City staff person, or schedule the item for discussion on a future agenda in response to the public comments.

5.9 WAIVER OF RULES

Any of the foregoing rules may be waived or suspended by a majority vote of the Council present when it is deemed that there is good cause to do so, based upon the particular facts and circumstances involved.

5.10 NON-EXCLUSIVE RULES

These rules are not exclusive and do not limit the inherent power and legal authority of the City Council, or of its presiding officer, to govern the conduct of City Council meetings as may be considered appropriate from time to time, or in particular circumstances, for purposes of orderly and effective conduct of the affairs of the City.

i. Decorum

All City Council meeting attendees shall maintain appropriate decorum and may be subject to removal from the meeting for disruptions or any security concerns.

ii. Maximum Occupancy

Maximum occupancy as designated by the Fire Marshal will be observed for all City Council meetings. Alternative viewing of the meeting will be accommodated when possible.

6.0 PROCEDURES ADMINISTRATION

6.1 BIENNIAL REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE

The City Council will review and revise the City Council Rules of Order and Procedure as needed, with the review of the Code of Ethics biennially.

6.2 ADHERENCE TO PROCEDURES

During City Council discussions, deliberations, and proceedings, the Mayor has been delegated the primary responsibility to ensure that the City Council, staff, and members of the public adhere to the Council's adopted procedures.

6.3 CITY ATTORNEY AS PROCEDURE ADVISOR

The City Attorney assists the Mayor and City Council as a resource and as an advisor for interpreting the City Council's adopted rules and procedures.