



CITY *of* CALABASAS

**A GUIDE TO THE  
CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING PROCESS**



Mary Sue Maurer, Mayor  
Fred Gaines, Mayor pro Tem  
James R. Bozajian, Councilmember  
David J. Shapiro, Councilmember  
Alicia Weintraub, Councilmember



Prepared by the City Clerk's Office  
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100 Civic Center Way ☆ Calabasas, CA 91302  
(818) 224-1600  
[www.cityofcalabasas.com](http://www.cityofcalabasas.com)

## **THE CITY COUNCIL**

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The City Council is composed of five members elected at-large on a non-partisan basis to serve four year overlapping terms. Municipal elections are held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March of odd numbered years, with three Council members selected at one election and two at the next. The Council is the legislative policy-making branch of City government. It is the Council's responsibility to enact ordinances, resolutions and orders necessary for governing the affairs of the City, to approve or amend the annual budget, to authorize contracts on behalf of the City, to act as the final appeal body on rulings of commissions, and to appoint the City Manager and City Attorney and members of City commissions and committees.

The Mayor is selected by the City Council, from one of its members, for a term of one year and serves as the official representative of the City for all legislative and ceremonial purposes. The Mayor is the presiding officer at City Council meetings and executes legal instruments and documents; however, the Mayor is not vested with administrative authority.

## **TYPES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**

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All Council meetings are conducted in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code Section 54950, et. seq.), which requires legislative bodies to hold their meetings in public except under specific circumstances where closed sessions are authorized. Calabasas Municipal Code Section 2.04.050 outlines the rules of conduct for City Council meetings.

### **Regular Meetings**

The regular meeting of the City Council is a vital part of the democratic process in the conduct of the City's affairs. The Council generally meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

### **Special Meetings**

Occasionally, the Mayor or City Council will call a Special Meeting to consider specific items. The City Clerk's Office will post a notice of these meetings at least 24 hours in advance.

### **Closed Sessions**

The City Council may meet in closed session before, during or after a meeting to discuss matters such as pending or threatened litigation, conference with real property negotiators, or consideration of appointment, performance evaluation, discipline, dismissal or release of a public employee.

### **Workshops/Study Sessions**

The City Council may conduct workshops or study sessions for a specific purpose, such as the preliminary annual City budget. These sessions are usually informal, though public, and may be held at a place other than the Council Chambers.

## **THE AGENDA**

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Agendas for City Council meetings are posted at City Hall, Juan de Anza Park, the Calabasas Tennis & Swim Center, Gelson's and on the City website at least 72 hours before every regular meeting. The entire agenda packet is available online at [www.cityofcalabasas.com](http://www.cityofcalabasas.com) and copies are available for review at the Calabasas Library and in the City Clerk's Office. An agenda packet and copies of the agenda are available on the back counter of the Council Chambers during the meeting.

## **ADDRESSING THE COUNCIL DURING THE MEETING**

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The City Council encourages public participation in the decision-making process and appreciates when residents bring issues of community concern to their attention. Individuals wishing to address the Council on any agenda item may do so at the time the item is considered. Comments are limited to no more than 3 minutes per speaker, but that time limit may be reduced at the Mayor's discretion if there are numerous speakers on a particular item. To ensure efficient proceedings, those desiring to speak are requested to complete a speaker card, which can be found on the back counter, and submit it to the City Clerk prior to, or if necessary, prior to the time the item is heard.

### **Public Hearings**

In general, a Public Hearing is an item of open consideration heard within a Regular Meeting, for which special notice has been given. Public Hearings are required on specific items, such as zoning changes, appeals, proposed budget and fee changes. After the Mayor opens the Public Hearing, the staff report is presented. The applicant and appellant (if applicable) speak following the staff report and then any concerned individual is able to offer support or present protests on the matter under consideration. The City Council will close the Public Hearing, discuss the matter and render its decision. Occasionally, the Public Hearing may be continued to another meeting.

### **General Public Comment**

The public is welcome to address the Council on Consent Calendar items and any item within the jurisdiction of the City Council and not listed on the agenda during the Oral Communications/Public Comment section of the Agenda, which occurs directly before the Consent Calendar is approved.

### **Consent Calendar**

The Consent Calendar consists of matters that are routine in nature, such as minutes, budgeted agreements and resolutions. They are approved under one blanket motion, with the exception of items that are pulled off by Councilmembers for discussion. Those items are considered separately after the Consent Calendar is approved.

### **New Business/Unfinished Business/Special Items**

These are items of a significant nature requiring an oral staff report and City Council discussion. The City Council will accept public comment at the time the item is considered.

### **Tips for Public Speakers and Audience Members**

- ★When the Mayor calls your name, step up to the podium and state your name and City of residence;
- ★Speak directly into the microphone and address the Council, not the audience;
- ★Use the timer on the Clerk's desk as your guide to adhering to time limit;
- ★Unless speaking during Oral Communications/Public Comment, remember to speak only on the topic under consideration.
- ★Applauding or other displays of approval/disapproval are discouraged.
- ★All speakers are expected to be truthful in their comments to the best of their knowledge and ability.

## **TYPES OF COUNCIL ACTION**

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### **Motion**

- ★A motion indicates Council approval for a procedural action. Generally, a motion is made by one Councilmember and seconded by another, and then the Council votes on the action. A roll call vote may be necessary to determine how all Councilmembers have voted if it is unclear.

### **Proclamations**

- ★A proclamation is an item of the Council's support on various state and local activities or recognition of individuals or organizations for their work. Proclamations are usually presented during the Announcements and Introductions portion of the Agenda.

### **Resolutions**

- ★A resolution constitutes an official written action or decision of the Council and becomes effective upon adoption.

### **Ordinances**

Ordinances are the laws of the City and are the most binding form of action taken by the City Council. An ordinance (except an Urgency Ordinance) is introduced at one meeting and adopted at a second meeting. Generally, the ordinance becomes effective 30 days later.

## **Audio/Visual Presentations by the Public**

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1. Members of the public may present audio/visual (AV) materials relating to agenda items at City Council and Commission meetings by utilizing the City's audio/visual equipment, provided that presentation materials are submitted to the Media Operations Department by 12:00 p.m. one (1) business day prior to the meeting. Advance submittal of a presentation will allow the Media Operations Department to plan for the use of the appropriate audio/visual equipment.
2. AV materials may be submitted online through the City's website at [www.cityofcalabasas.com/AVpresentations](http://www.cityofcalabasas.com/AVpresentations) or in person at the front desk of City Hall clearly marked ATTENTION MEDIA OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT. All audio/visual materials submitted must have a label noting the name or group, contact person, daytime telephone number, email address, description/title of the presentation and agenda item title and number. Acceptable formats for electronic submission are .pdf, .ppt, .pptx, .pps, .ppsx, .wmv, .avi and .mov.. (Note that .pdf is the preferred format for Power Point presentations.) DVDs may also be submitted. AV Presentations will be kept private and not shown to anyone prior to the meeting.
3. Members of the public who have submitted presentations will have the opportunity to show up the hour prior to the start of a meeting to double check their presentation. Members of the public will meet with a member of the Media Operations Department in the Council Chambers.
4. All audio/visual presentations must comply with established time limits for oral presentations. No serial presentations will be allowed. Presenters should assume they will have a maximum of three minutes for their presentation and possibly less if the Mayor or Chair of the meeting determines that time restraints are necessary. The time limit includes the time necessary for verbal remarks as well as presentation of any prescreened visual materials. If there are technical issues, the presenter should be prepared to give their comments verbally. There is no guarantee the presentation will be shown. Any technical troubleshooting will be counted against the speaker's time. The Speaker must be physically present at the meeting to have the presentation shown.
5. A speaker card must be filled out for the item on which the presentation will be made. During the meeting when the speaker is called during public comment, they should announce their name, city of residency and say "I have a presentation".
6. Media staff will bring the projector and dais monitor feeds up and the presenter will then run the presentation from a wireless USB remote control from the public podium. Members of the public will not be permitted to sit at the staff or City Clerk's table.
7. In the event that the electronic format of the presentation is submitted on a timely basis, but does not run upon receipt, Media Operations Department staff will email or telephone the speaker/presenter to inform them that they will need to resend or re-deliver the presentation by 12:00 p.m. one (1) business day prior to the scheduled meeting. Otherwise, the material will not be presented at the meeting.
8. Once the materials have been submitted, they cannot be changed prior to the meeting.
9. Speakers are only allowed to make presentations on agenda items – not on general public comment.
10. Presenters will be required to provide hard copies of presentations to members of the Council and/or Commissions.