

How to exercise your opportunity to speak at meetings of St. Louis County Council:

At meetings of the St Louis County Council, members of the public are given the opportunity to speak to express their opinions on issues concerning St. Louis County, unless the meeting is conducted as a lawfully closed meeting pursuant to the Missouri "Sunshine Law" (Chapter 610, Revised Statutes of Missouri). Detailed below are the steps you should take to ensure your voice is heard.

Who can speak at meetings?

Anyone who wishes to comment on issues which are under consideration by the County Council, or to bring topics to the attention of the Council Members.

How do I state my point of view?

Prior to the meeting, you must give **written** notice (cards or sign-up sheets are provided) to the Council receptionist that you intend to speak. The receptionist is located at the County Council Chamber entrance at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start of regular Council meetings and committee meetings held in the Chamber, and in the Council Conference Room for committee meetings held in the Conference Room.

The County Government Center and the Council Chamber are accessible for disabled persons. If you need accommodation to provide written notice of your intent to speak and/or in order to speak, and/or need this material in an alternative format, please call 314-615-5432 (voice) or call 314-615-5889 (TTY).

How long can I speak - and when will I be called?

The *Public Forum* portion of the regular Council meetings is scheduled on the agenda for each County Council meeting. During the *Public Forum* portion of the meeting, the Council Chair will recognize members of the public who have previously signed up to address the County Council.

The Chair will invite you to come to the front of the chamber to the podium (which has a microphone), to state your name and address for the record and to address the Council Members on the dais.

A total of thirty minutes of public speaking is provided for during the meeting, but in exceptional circumstances this may be amended at the discretion of the Chairman of the Committee.

In general, a maximum of five minutes will be allowed for each speaker. Therefore, if you are one of a group of objectors or supporters, it would be extremely helpful if you could nominate one person to speak on your behalf.

The *Comments from Other Interested Parties* portion of Council committee meetings is scheduled on the agenda for each meeting. The Committee Chair will determine the

amount of time which will be allowed to speak. Generally, speakers will be allowed no more than five minutes.

Will a decision be made at the meeting?

Unless the issue was already on that evening's agenda for a final vote, it is not likely a decision on the issue will be made at that meeting. In that case, or if the Council is unable to otherwise provide you an immediate response, the Chairman or another Council Member may choose to take some action. Such action may include referring you to the Council Member who represents your District, referring you to the appropriate St. Louis County Department, referring you to another appropriate governmental or public entity, asking you to submit your question or request for information in writing, referring the issue to a Council Standing Committee, or other such action as the Chair or the Council Members deem appropriate.

Will my comments become part of the public record?

All meetings of the St. Louis County Council are tape recorded. The tapes are maintained by the St. Louis County Clerk's Office. Also, the County Clerk produces, publishes and maintains minutes (called the Journal for regular Council meetings) of each County Council meeting. Your comments, or a summary of your comments, as well as your name and address will be included in the meeting minutes. The tape recordings and the meeting minutes are subject to Missouri's "Sunshine Law".

Who do I contact for more information?

Administrative Director, Gen Frank at (314) 615-5440 or gfrank@stlouisco.com will answer your questions concerning the *Public Forum* part of the agenda and/or Committee meetings.