



Region of Waterloo

Speaking to Regional Council: What You Should Know as a Delegation

What is a delegation?

A delegation is a person or group who would like to speak at a Council or Committee meeting to share their opinions with Regional Councillors before a decision is made.

Delegations are encouraged to bring their concerns to a Committee meeting rather than a Council meeting. Committees generally include all Councillors, but this is when issues are discussed in detail before Councillors make a recommendation to Council. Then, once the recommendation is voted on at a Council meeting, the issue is decided.

The First Step

You are encouraged to first contact Regional staff to discuss your concerns. Some issues may not need a decision by Regional Council and if staff can resolve your issue it saves time for everyone. You can call 519-575-4400 or email regionalclerk@regionofwaterloo.ca and staff can help you contact the proper person, provide information about meeting dates and times, and answer other questions.

Registering

If you choose not to speak to staff, or if staff are unable to resolve your concern, you can request to be a delegation to speak before Councillors.

- To register as a delegation for any Committee or Council meeting, please visit <https://forms.regionofwaterloo.ca/Council-and-Administrative-Services/CAS/Delegation-Registration>.
- You can also register in person by visiting the Clerk's Office at Region of Waterloo (Administration Building) 150 Frederick Street, 2nd Floor, Kitchener.
- When you register you will be asked to give your full name, a daytime phone number, e-mail address if you have one, and the topic you want to speak to Regional Councillors about.
- Staff from the Clerk's Office will contact you to confirm your registration, arrange for any written materials or presentation slides, give you more information about the meeting you will attend, and answer any questions you have.

Deadlines and Other Rules:

- Delegations are given 5 minutes to speak, unless Council sets another time limit.
- If you register by noon one week before the meeting you will be listed on the agenda and be allowed to speak for 5 minutes. If you register at least 24 hours

before the meeting you will not be listed on the agenda but will still have 5 minutes to speak. If you register after the 24 hour deadline you will only have 3 minutes to speak.

- Delegations that have spoken on a subject will not be able to speak again on the same subject for at least 6 months. Written submissions on the same subject are acceptable and can be attached to the meeting agenda or minutes. More details about written submissions can be found under the "[What's Next?](#)" heading.

When and Where Do Regional Council and Committees Meet?

Meeting dates are listed on the Agendas and Minutes page on the Region's website:

https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regional-government/council-calendar_escribe.aspx.

Meetings usually take place in the Council Chamber at Region of Waterloo Headquarters, 150 Frederick Street, 2nd Floor, Kitchener. You may participate electronically if you are unable to come in person. All Standing Committees and Council meetings are webcast at <https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regional-government/live-webcast.aspx> if technologically available.

What's Next?

- Any materials (including slide decks and handouts) that you wish to share at the meeting must be received by the Clerk's Office at least 24 hours before the meeting. Any materials received after this deadline cannot be shared at the meeting but may be circulated to Council afterwards.
- All presentations or submissions provided are public information. They will be attached to the minutes and available on the Region's website. This includes any contact information that any of these items contain.
- Agendas include all the reports that will be discussed at the meeting and are available to the public by 4:30 p.m. one week before the meeting on the Region's website (https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regional-government/council-calendar_escribe.aspx). An addendum agenda is posted on the Region's website the day before Committee/Council meetings to include additional items that were not available on the original agenda. After the meetings have taken place, the minutes will also be published to the Region's website.

At the Meeting

Delegations are usually heard near the beginning of the meeting.

- Each delegation has **5 minutes** to speak.
- Delegations that register after the deadline may still be heard but will have 3 minutes to speak.

- ▶ When it is time for you to speak, the meeting Chair will call your name. At that time, you will come forward to the podium at the front of Council Chamber. For virtual delegations, you may turn on your camera and microphone at this time.
- ▶ Time limits are strictly followed. The Chair typically warns delegations when they are nearing the end of their time limit.
- ▶ Be clear about what you are asking Council to do, keep your comments focused on this point, and avoid wandering from the topic you came to speak about.
- ▶ Following your presentation you may be asked questions by the Councillors to clarify items in your presentation or for further information which may not have been provided.
- ▶ After you have spoken and there are no further questions, you will be asked to sit down, or turn your camera and microphone off. Councillors may then:
 - Listen to other delegations
 - Ask staff for more information
 - Discuss the item later in the agenda and make a decision
 - Decide on a recommendation
 - Refer the item to a future meeting if they feel they need more information before making a decision
 - Simply receive the item for information (which means no decision to change current policy is supported)

All Regional meetings follow the [Region's Procedural By-Law 22-051](#), which is available on the Region's website, or by contacting the Clerk's Office.

All Standing Committee and Council meetings are open to the public and media, and are webcast on the Region's website: <https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regional-government/live-webcast.aspx> and on the Region of Waterloo Council YouTube channel under the "Live" tab: <https://www.youtube.com/@regionofwaterloocouncil683/streams> if technologically available. Your comments are considered part of the public record and may be reported in the newspaper, on the radio or on television.

Violating the rules of decorum can result in you being asked to leave the room or being removed from the electronic meeting. These rules include:

- Interrupting Councillors, staff or other delegations;
- Making derogatory statements about Councillors, staff or others;
- Turning your camera on at inappropriate times;
- Using hate speech or defamatory comments;
- Using cameras or recording equipment that disrupts the meeting; and
- Having picket signs, banners, or placards.

Accessibility

Committee and Council agendas on the Region's website are made available in a format which can be read by accessibility screen readers. Printed agendas are produced according to "Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act" (AODA) standards.

Council Chamber has a system to enhance sound for the hearing impaired. You can access the system by talking with a Legislative Services Assistant at the back of the room during the meeting.

Parking for those with Accessible Parking Permits is available on Level P2 of the underground parking garage at 150 Frederick Street. An elevator is available to use from all parking levels as well as from the main floor to access Council Chamber on the 2nd floor. If you have any special needs or have questions or concerns regarding your own accessibility requirements, please contact the Clerk's Office.

Other Information

- Parking is available:
 - Metered parking under Regional Headquarters at 150 Frederick Street (enter from Frederick Street) on level P2 for \$2.40/hour. There is no charge for parking after 4:30 p.m.
 - Pay parking under the Kitchener Library (enter from Queen Street or Otto Street)
 - Pay-and-Display behind Regional Headquarters (enter from Ahrens Street)
 - Metered on-street parking is available on side streets off of Queen Street behind 150 Frederick Street
- A Cafeteria is located on the 1st floor and is open from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Vending machines are located on the 1st floor, to the right of the cafeteria entrance
- The Security Desk is located in the lobby on the 1st floor
- Public Washrooms are located on both the 1st and 2nd floors; there is a Family Washroom available on the 1st floor near the Security Desk
- Drinking fountains are available on both the 1st and 2nd floors

Tips for Effective Presentations

1. **Show up early**
2. **Identify your main point right** from the start and stay on topic.

3. **Speak clearly.** You will be using a microphone so you do not need to speak loudly, but make sure you speak clearly into (but not too closely to) the microphone.
4. **Stick to your time limit.** Keep your presentation relevant and to the point; you only have 5 minutes. Make sure you use your time well. It's always okay to stop speaking before your time is up if you've made your point.
5. **Keep it simple; use facts not generalities.** People often stop paying attention when presented with complicated drawings and tables. Use simple graphics and highlight the points that are important. Maps are always useful if you're referring to a particular location. Support your message with facts that are specific, provable and memorable. Avoid using acronyms and jargon as not everyone is aware of their meaning.
6. **Don't just read from slides.** If you're simply reading your slides as presented you may quickly lose the interest of everyone in the room. Try to add to the information on the slides, keeping your audience engaged in what you are saying rather than just having them read along with you.
7. **Don't skip around.** Skipping over slides, backtracking to previous information, or including things that don't really belong gives the impression that you are unorganized.
8. **Repeat your main point** (or summarize your point of view) at the end of your presentation. It is important and can help Councillors remember what is important to you.
9. **Submit materials at least 24 hours before the meeting** if you would like to display any visuals or would like to provide councillors with supplementary information. If there is further information you want Councillors to have, provide a separate document for distribution with your presentation.
10. **Practice before you present.** Never give a presentation without practicing at least once to be sure that it will fit into the time you are allowed and that you know how to move from one point to the next. Include your visual aids in your practice.