



Office of Community Involvement



Multnomah County Charter Review Committee

Considerations for Public Comment

Public Comment Method	Definition	Considerations
Written comment	Community members fill out an online form or send the program coordinator an email sharing their ideas and opinions. The program coordinator compiles the comments, distributes them to MCCRC members prior to each meeting, and a summary of the comments is given during the meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes up less time in meetings and gives committee members more time to discuss the comments made. • Gives committee members time to consider and process input ahead of meetings; also requires committee members to review comments outside of meeting times. • Allows flexibility and access to members of the community who are not available during meeting times or who do not feel comfortable speaking in public. • Can put a limit (word or character) on written comment so that submissions are given in digestible lengths. • The MCCRC can always follow up with commenters to invite them to share more information if interested.
Oral comment	Time is designated on the meeting agenda for people to speak in front of the committee about their ideas and opinions. Community members typically sign up in advance and everyone who signs up for a given meeting is allotted equal time to talk while committee members listen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows community members to communicate (virtual) face to (virtual) face with the committee, which can help some community members feel more connected and heard. • Provides access to those more comfortable giving oral testimony than written. • Limits are placed on how much time on the agenda is devoted to public comment, and how much time each speaker is allotted so that everyone has equal speaking time. The committee can vary from meeting to meeting how much time is devoted to oral public comment and can decide that some meetings will not have time for oral public comment at all. • Can take a considerable portion of meeting time, especially if there is high interest in speaking at a particular meeting. High levels of interest in commenting may reduce the amount of time individual community members actually get to speak. • Community members interested in commenting may not be available at meeting times or lack technology access to join virtual meetings.



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Potential Venues for Oral Public Comment	Definition	Considerations
Oral comment at general meetings	Time is designated on MCCRC general meeting agendas for community members to share their ideas and opinions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows the whole committee to hear from community members in a meeting space and provides commenters with a larger direct audience of committee members. • Reduces the amount of time the MCCRC is able to spend on deliberation and other committee business in their limited number of meetings.
Oral comment at individual subcommittee meeting	This is the same as oral comment at a general meeting, only it occurs at subcommittee meetings rather than in front of the whole MCCRC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment in subcommittees allow members to hear perspectives on the topics they are most focused on studying and they can incorporate what they hear into their recommendations. • Fewer members of the MCCRC get to hear the comments live (although all members will have access to recordings and can attend subcommittee meetings even if they aren't on the subcommittee). • Reduces the amount of time the subcommittee is able to spend on discussion and other business.
Listening sessions	Extra meetings held with the whole MCCRC specifically just to listen to oral public comment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a space totally focused on hearing from the community without the pressure of needing to move on to other MCCRC business. • Would require additional time commitment from MCCRC members and at least a quorum of the MCCRC would need to attend.
Subcommittee focused on community engagement	A subcommittee that focuses specifically on hearing input from the community. This could include having their meetings focus on oral public comment, reviewing written public comment, or other forms of engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows a group of MCCRC members to focus on outreach to the community and devote its time to hearing input. • Requires some MCCRC members to either spend less of their time directly researching charter topics or contribute extra time and service. • Requires the subcommittee to establish procedures for ensuring community input reaches other members of the MCCRC.