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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS

A public hearing is designed to provide public input prior to elected officials making a decision on planning applications. This is outlined in *The Planning Act*.

### **1. What is a public hearing?**

This is an opportunity for the approving body to hear your feedback on the proposal being considered. In most instances public hearings are heard by municipal Councils, but could also be heard by the Red River Planning District Board or a Planning Commission. For simplicity, this document will refer to Council. Council will hear first from RRPD on what the application is and their office's professional input based on the community's land use policies. The applicant will then be able to present to Council, followed by the public's opportunity to present comments and/or concerns to Council. Please note that Council is to receive information and ask questions for clarification only, not enter into a dialogue or debate with any member of the public.

### **2. Where can I get additional, information on the hearing before it occurs?**

A copy of the planning report as well as additional information is available in PDF format on the RRPD website ([www.rrpd.ca](http://www.rrpd.ca)). Please click the "view all" link on the public hearings section of the website home page. If you still have question you can contact RRPD office during normal business hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.), by phone, email, fax or in person (see letterhead above). Council is not permitted under *The Planning Act* to discuss applications with the public prior to the public hearing.

### **3. Who is the applicant?**

Unless specifically stated, the application is not an initiative of the Municipality or Red River Planning District. Any property owner is entitled to make an application for planning matters. Council must consider the application based on the information it is provided at the hearing by the proponent, all representations at the hearing and from their planning advisors at RRPD.

### **4. When and where is the public hearing?**

The date and time of the hearing is on the left side of the notice you received, as well as posted on RRPD website.

### **5. Who will get notices in the mail regarding the public hearing?**

As per *The Planning Act*, a copy of the notice for the public hearing will be sent to all property owners within 100 meters of the affected property. In addition, the RRPD will post notices and a copy of the planning report on their website (<http://www.redriverplanning.com/hearings.php>); and when required, will place an advertisement in the local papers. A poster should be also on the subject property for two weeks prior to the hearing.

### **6. What if I want to speak at the public hearing?**

Attend the public hearing and sign in when you arrive. Please note that you must arrive before the public hearing begins and speak before the public hearing closes for your input to be considered. The chair of the meeting may place a time limit on presentations from the public based on the attendance of

the public hearing. If you have written material or submissions as part of your presentation, please consider sending it in prior to the meeting or bring enough copies for each member of the Council/Board. Please note that you may only bring up comments or concerns in relation to the application being considered.

**7. Can anyone attend the public hearing?**

Yes, the meeting is public and anyone can attend, whether they are a resident of the community or not. You do not need an appointment to speak at the hearing; however, to speak at the public hearing you must sign in and provide your address to Council. You do not have to be a resident to speak at the hearing.

**8. What if I want to provide input but cannot attend in person?**

You may send your comments in writing to the Red River Planning District or your municipality by e-mail, fax, mail or in person prior to the Public Hearing during normal business hours. Comments received after the public hearing has adjourned will not be considered. You may also send someone on your behalf to the hearing but they must provide their name and address.

**9. If I previously submitted my objections for this property before this public hearing notice, will they be heard now?**

As the application is now notified and going to a public hearing, it is advised that any past emails, letters or correspondences sent to the RM or the RRPD should now be resubmitted to the RRPD and dated after public notification was made. If you are unable to attend the public hearing, please include your name and address if you are sending information through writing.

**10. What are the roles and responsibilities of RRPD?**

The RRPD is responsible for processing applications as received and providing professional advice to the applicant, Council, and the public. The RRPD will research the application as it applies to local by-laws and provincial policy, and then prepare a recommendation to Council. We will be present at the hearing to provide a verbal report to Council on the application with our recommendation.

**11. What are the roles and responsibilities of the developer/applicant?**

The applicant is encouraged to attend the hearing to supply any additional information to Council they feel is required in order for Council to make an informed decision. Council may ask for additional information or clarification from the applicant.

**12. How will I find out the result of the Public Hearing?**

After the public hearing is closed, Council will make a decision or table their decision for a future meeting. Their decision will be sent to all those that made representation at the public hearing. Their decision will be posted in their meeting minutes on their website. If the public hearing is adjourned, Council will set a date for the public hearing to resume. That will be the only notice given for the continuance of the public hearing. Typically an adjournment occurs when the Council is unable to hear from all attendees at the hearing, or when additional information is required from administration or the applicant in order for a decision to be made.