



HOW TO TESTIFY

The Getting There Together Coalition - Who We Are:

The Getting There Together Coalition was formed in 2017 in response to growing concerns that the Portland metropolitan region wasn't adequately planning to build a comprehensive infrastructure and transportation system. We believe in providing travel options to alleviate growing freeway congestion, empower working Oregonians to get to jobs, and ensure all the region's residents prosper from an equitable, sustainable, and climate-smart transit investments.

What is Testifying and Why Does it Matter?

Testifying is one of the many ways you can have a direct impact on decision-making as a citizen. Testifying is the opportunity to directly voice your opinions to elected officials and other decisionmakers in the T2020 process, either by coming in person and providing verbal testimony or by submitting written testimony. Verbal is always considered more persuasive than written testimony, as elected officials and decisionmakers, including Task Force members, are required to listen to verbal testimony in public meetings. While testifying might seem intimidating, in reality, elected officials are probably more intimidated by testimony than you are – they're the ones in the hot seat!

How to Testify:

You do not need to be a technical expert on an issue to testify, in fact, the only thing you're expected to be an expert in is your own lived experiences. Your own experiences can often most clearly communicate the issues currently being faced in the region's transportation system, and what sort of investments increase the safety and racial equity of Portland's transportation while decreasing climate pollution. While it is certainly helpful to prepare your testimony in advance, you do not need to write it out word for word.

Testifying in person as easy as three steps:

1. Find and attend a Metro T2020 Public Hearing (usually on a Wednesday evening at Metro Regional Center) or Metro Council Hearing (usually on a Thursday afternoon at Metro Regional Center). [They'll be on this calendar.](#)
2. Look for a story that highlights your daily frustrations with transit, street safety, access to destinations by walking or rolling, or think of a way transportation could improve your daily life.
3. Plan to speak for about two minutes about these issues. While this may seem like a lot of time, it isn't! Most folks actually struggle to stay under two minutes while testifying.

It's really that easy, and the Coalition can help you with all these things. If you read the Dos & Don'ts of Testifying and still have questions, please reach out to us at Info@GettingThereTogether.org.

Try to work in Getting There Together Coalition's Guiding Principles in your testimony!

- Making our streets safe and accessible for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds;
- Investing in new bus & MAX lines to help people get where they need to go;
- Ensuring that transportation investments are transparent and accountable to the community;
- Preventing mass displacement and restoring housing affordability; and
- Guaranteeing funding for programs and operations that increase access to transportation options.

The Dos & Don'ts of Testifying:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Do: Arrive early if you can to sign up to testify. If you're not sure how to sign up, ask, someone will point you in the right direction! <p>If you might get there late let the Coalition know and we can sign up for you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Do: Introduce yourself, say where in the region you are from, what kind of transit you utilize, and that you're testifying with the Getting There Together Coalition (don't use the acronym).● Do: Be brief and concise. Make sure you're getting to your point before time runs out.● Do: Be polite. It will always help.● Do: Be personal and share your own experiences. Does it take multiple transfers for you to get around on public transit? Are improvements needed at your bus stop? Talk about your frustration and or praises in our transportation system. What is working for you and what isn't?● Do: Also submit written testimony if you have time. Written testimony is often a better place to provide specific facts, figures, and feedback.● Do: Say thank you!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Don't: Read your testimony if you can avoid it, it is less impactful if read verbatim vs. told.● Don't: Be Rude. It never helps. Even if you experience rude behavior on the part of elected officials, remain polite and professional.● Don't: Think you have to go it alone, if you're not sure what to say or how to say something, talk to a member of the Coalition-- we are here to help!● Don't: Repeat the same points other folks have made unless you have something new to add, otherwise simply saying you agree with earlier points made is more productive and still communicates how important the issue is.● Don't: Be too intimidated. It's perfectly okay to be nervous. Focus on providing a real-world perspective on the transportation issues that you care about – the result will be effective!● Don't: Expect to have to answer questions! If an elected official does ask a question you don't have to have an answer. Simply say the Coalition will get back to them if we can't provide them an answer in the moment.
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