

## Giving Verbal Public Testimony

Here are a few quick reminders for effective testimony.

- Speakers should address the commission or board, not the public.
- The more carefully you prepare, the more effective your testimony will be.
- Purely emotional arguments won't carry much weight. However, tempered emotion with concrete examples of what your concerns are and how the decision will affect you personally is often persuasive.
- Speak slowly and clearly and stay focused on 2 or 3 well thought-out arguments.
- You don't have to be an expert to speak, the fact that you care is enough.
- 6 rules of verbal testimony
  1. Be courteous
  2. Be brief
  3. Focus on primary issues
  4. Supply meaningful facts
  5. Respect others
  6. Avoid repeating prior testimony

### Example of Public Testimony

The chairman of the governing body (the Planning & Zoning Commission or the Board of County Commissioners) will open the public hearing phase of the meeting. He or she will ask for opinions in support of the application or proposal, opinions that are neutral to the application and opinions that are opposed to the application.

(Supportive)

**Member of the Public:** Thank you Mister Chairman and members of the Planning and Zoning Commission. My name is\_\_\_\_\_. I would like to express my support for the revised PUD ordinance. As someone who has seen how growth and development is changing my neighborhood, I know that we need more clear guidelines for developers who wish to do projects here. We have amazing encounters with wildlife in Teton Valley, and are blessed with clean air and water. Our Teton views are world famous. These are the very things that make development here so profitable but as a community we must ensure that development does not destroy these very valuable assets. I support the adoption of the revised PUD ordinance with stronger and clearer requirements for protecting natural resources. I support the more objective and detailed requirements for open space.

Our comp plan's vision is for residential density is in and around our cities. We need densities in the county that preserve our rural character. Therefore I support the more reasonable PUD density bonuses. In this area this revised PUD is a great improvement.

As we grow we need to make sure that county services and infrastructure keep pace with development. Therefore I also support requiring fiscal impact studies and other studies that show the impacts of a development to county resources and services and that requires that the public will not bear the burden for those additional costs. Thank you for your hard work on this ordinance over the last several months.