

Public Testimony Template

For City Council / Commissioners Court Meetings

Time Limit: 2-3 minutes (*practice beforehand!*)

Testimony Structure

Introduction (15 seconds)

Good evening. My name is [YOUR NAME] and I live at [YOUR ADDRESS] in [CITY/AREA].

State Your Position (15 seconds)

I am here tonight to [SUPPORT / OPPOSE] the proposed [DATA CENTER DEVELOPMENT / ZONING VARIANCE / SPECIFIC ISSUE].

Key Points (90 seconds)

Pick 2-3 strong points

Point 1: Personal Impact

This development will directly affect [MY FAMILY / MY PROPERTY / MY BUSINESS / OUR COMMUNITY] because...

Example:

"This facility will use 4.5 million gallons of water daily while my neighbors and I are under Stage 3 water restrictions, limited to watering once per week."

Point 2: Factual Concern

According to [SOURCE - e.g., Houston Advanced Research Center study], data centers in Texas...

Example:

"According to the Houston Advanced Research Center, data centers will consume 399 billion gallons annually by 2030 - that's 6.6% of Texas' total water supply."

Point 3: Community Impact

Our community deserves...

Example:

"While we welcome economic development, this 520-acre project will create only 30-50 permanent jobs - fewer jobs than the farms currently operating on this land."

Specific Request (30 seconds)

I urge you to **[SPECIFIC ACTION]**:

- [] Vote NO on the zoning variance until a water impact study is completed
- [] Require the developer to conduct an environmental impact assessment
- [] Hold a public hearing with 30-day notice to allow community input
- [] Table this decision until **[SPECIFIC CONDITIONS MET]**

Closing (10 seconds)

Thank you for your time and for considering the concerns of your constituents.

Tips for Effective Testimony

DO:

Best Practice	Why It Matters
Practice with a timer	2 minutes goes FAST
Bring 10 copies	Hand written testimony to council members
Speak slowly and clearly	They're taking notes
Make eye contact	Engage with council members
Stay calm and professional	Even if others get emotional
Add new information	Don't repeat previous speakers
Lead with data	Emotion is okay, but facts first
Address the council	Not other audience members
Finish if interrupted	Complete your sentence and stop

DON'T:

Avoid	Consequence
Personal attacks	Undermines your credibility
Unsupported claims	Must back up with sources
Going over time	You'll be cut off and lose credibility
Speaking from anger	Weakens your message

Sign-Up Process

Step	Action
1	Arrive 30 minutes early
2	Look for sign-up sheet at entrance or with City Secretary
3	Fill out: Name, Address, Topic
4	You'll be called in order - listen for your name
5	Approach the podium when called
6	State your name and address clearly for the record
7	Begin your testimony

Important Notes

Before You Speak

- Meetings are recorded and become public record
- Be truthful - false statements can undermine your credibility
- Council may ask questions - answer briefly and honestly
- They may not respond to your testimony - don't take it personally
- Follow up with a written copy of your testimony via email

Meeting Logistics

Detail	Information
Waco City Council	1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 6:00 PM

Location	Waco Convention Center - Bosque Theater
Address	100 Washington Ave
Lacy Lakeview	2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 6:00 PM
Location	Lacy Lakeview City Hall
Address	501 E. Craven Ave.

Sample 2-Minute Testimony

Good evening. My name is Sarah Johnson and I live at 123 Oak Street in Waco, District 3.

I am here tonight to oppose the proposed zoning variance for the InfraKey data center.

This development will directly impact my family because we rely on well water. The developer's own estimates show 4.5 million gallons of daily water usage. According to the Houston Advanced Research Center, Texas data centers will consume 399 billion gallons annually by 2030 - that's 6.6% of our state's water supply.

My neighbors and I are currently under Stage 3 water restrictions, limited to watering our lawns once per week. How can we justify giving millions of gallons to a single facility while asking families to conserve?

This 520-acre project will create only 30-50 permanent jobs according to industry standards - fewer jobs than the farms and businesses currently operating on this land.

I urge you to vote NO on this zoning variance until an independent water impact study is completed and the developer presents a concrete mitigation plan.

Thank you for considering the long-term impacts on our community.

Time: Approximately 1 minute 50 seconds

Practice Checklist

Before the meeting, make sure you:

- Timed your testimony (under 2 minutes)
- Printed 10 copies to distribute
- Highlighted your key points
- Practiced speaking slowly and clearly
- Prepared answers to potential questions
- Located the sign-up sheet location
- Arrived 30 minutes early

- [] Brought written notes (in case you get nervous)

For More Information

Resource	Contact
Email	plcmMercenary@tuta.io
Website	www.wacodatacenter.com
Testimony Workshops	Check our events calendar
Templates	www.wacodatacenter.com/resources/

We offer testimony prep workshops - contact us for dates!!

Template provided by Waco Data Center Community Action