REMEMBER...

- Voicing your opinion to your local elected officials is an important part of ensuring that climate action planning is occurring in your community

- There are over a million residents in Contra Costa County. If just 1% of us chose to attend just one city council meeting, 10,000 voices would be heard!

“Just because you don’t take an interest in politics doesn’t mean that politics won’t take an interest in you.” – Pericles

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

- Margaret Mead

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY CLIMATE LEADERS

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HOW TO ATTEND A CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Before the meeting

- Check www.cccclimateleaders.org for a calendar of City Council Meeting agendas, dates, times and locations.
- Go to the city’s website to confirm the date, time, and location. Review the agenda to see whether your topic is already on the agenda for that evening.
- If it is, you should make your presentation during that topic’s discussion time.
- Otherwise, present during the Public Comment section.
- Before drafting a 3 minute presentation, refer to that city’s local actions page at www.cccclimateleaders.org/localactions. It is always good to start with a brief acknowledgement and appreciation for what the city has already accomplished!
- Limit your presentation to 4 or 5 key points to support your argument, ask for only 2 or 3 action items, and end on a positive note.

During and after the meeting

- Arrive 10 minutes early.
- Check with the City Clerk to see whether they use speaker cards (to record your name, address, etc).
- If speaking on a matter that IS on the meeting agenda, speak only during its appointed time.
- If speaking on a matter that is NOT on the evening’s agenda, utilize the Public Comment period near the beginning of the meeting.
- Speakers are called up to the podium, usually in the order in which speaker cards were received.
- If no card was required, raise your hand and approach the podium when there is a call for public comments.
- Since time is limited to three minutes, it is good to attend in a pair, so that you can each speak on separate aspects of the topic, complementing each others’ comments.
- Present a brief summary about your organization and then focus on a specific topic or request.
- See www.cccclimateleaders.org for info on current climate action issues.
- It is important to attend, even if you aren’t comfortable speaking. Just showing up, shows you are interested.
- When called to the podium after receiving recognition from the mayor:
  ✓ Step to the microphone.
  ✓ State your full name and address for the record.
  ✓ All remarks should be directed to the Mayor and the Council as a body—not to any particular councilmember.
  ✓ Do not address the staff or members of the audience.
- Applauding and other displays of approval or disapproval are inappropriate during City Council meetings.
- End with a specific request and a positive note.
- Council members may ask you clarifying questions after your speaking time is finished.
- If you are not familiar with program details, refer them to info@cccclimateleaders.org.
- In many jurisdictions, standard practice is for the council to listen without comment, as all items presented in Public Comment time are by definition not on the Agenda; therefore discussion of them by councilmembers violate the Brown Act.
- Follow-up with an email to your City Council members, restating your comments, thanking them for their consideration.