

## **SECTION 2D-13 CONDUCTING THE PUBLIC HEARING**

### **THE PRE-HEARING MEETING**

Prior to the scheduled hearing, it may be desirable to hold an open forum meeting. This meeting will permit the public to review and discuss with Department and Municipal (or other) engineers and officials, particular points of concern to them and to become generally familiar with the project to be presented. Mosaics, typical sections and other displays to be presented at the public hearing should be available at this meeting, along with unapproved detailed plans. A properly conducted pre-hearing meeting may eliminate a great number of questions which would otherwise be asked at the formal hearing and will convey a sense of mutual concern between the Department and the public.

As many public hearings are held at night, a period of approximately two hours prior to the formal hearing should normally be provided for this discussion prior to the formal hearing.

If sufficient interest is anticipated, consideration should be given to holding the pre-hearing meeting on the night preceding the hearing; or, if the projects are controversial or of great magnitude, consideration should be given to holding one or more meetings approximately a week in advance of the formal hearing.

### **PROCEDURES FOR A FORMAL PUBLIC HEARING**

See Section 3.06 Public Involvement Manual\*

The District Engineer/Administrator, or a designated representative, moderates all formal public hearings except in rare circumstances when the Chief Engineer determines otherwise.

At the appropriate time, the engineering commentary (as described in Section 2D-7- PREPARATION OF ENGINEERING COMMENTARY) is presented. This presentation is made by a representative of the Location and Design Division, District Engineer/Administrator's office or the Local Assistance Division (on applicable projects). It is desirable to have the project designer, project manager, or a representative, assist in this presentation.

At the conclusion of the presentation, those present are afforded an opportunity to provide comments. Department representatives with expertise in the fields of right of way, environmental quality, etc. should be present and may be called upon by the moderator to answer general questions which may arise. Department representatives should remain as long as necessary at the conclusion of the hearing to discuss individual problems and questions relative to the project.

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\* Rev. 7/15