

CITY OF RICHLAND
OFFICE OF THE HEARING EXAMINER

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Issued by the Examiner on August 12, 2016

INTRODUCTION

These Rules of Procedure are established pursuant to the authority granted to the Hearing Examiner by the Richland Municipal Code, including RMC 19.25.080, which expressly provides:

The hearing examiner shall prescribe rules for the scheduling and conduct of hearings and other procedural matters related to the duties of [the] office.”

Purpose of Rules of Procedure – An independent Hearing Examiner conducts hearings to apply general policies and regulations adopted by the City Council to specific proposals or situations. These Rules are to help secure the fair and efficient conduct of matters subject to the City's administrative hearing and appeal system. The underlying concern is to ensure that the essentials of due process: notice and opportunity to be heard, are an integral part of every hearing conducted.

Procedure – The intent is to insure that every hearing provides participants a fair opportunity to be heard. In all hearings, the oral testimony is taken under oath or affirmation. The proceedings are voice recorded so that a written transcript can be prepared, if necessary.

Basis for Decisions – The Examiner is concerned not with the popularity of a matter presented but whether it meets the requirements of the applicable code, policy or regulation. The examiner's decision or recommendation must be based on the record of the proceedings before the examiner.

Jurisdiction – The Hearing Examiner has jurisdiction over specific matters identified in City codes and ordinances, including without limitation RMC 19.20.030 and RMC 23.46.025, as currently written or as may subsequently be amended by the Richland City Council.

PROTOCOL FOR HEARINGS

1. Be punctual in attendance at hearing.
2. Be certain to have enough witnesses on hand for each day's proceedings.
3. Witnesses, counsel and parties should be referred to and addressed by their surnames unless permission to do otherwise is granted (e.g. "Ms. Anderson," "Mr. Jensen"). The Hearing Examiner and City staff should be referred to and addressed by their surnames or titles (Mr. Baker, Ms. City Attorney). The Hearing Examiner should be addressed as Mr. or Ms. Hearing Examiner or Examiner (surname).
4. Except by permission of the Hearing Examiner, all communications to the Hearing Examiner should be made from a position at or beside counsel table or from the podium.
5. Counsel (or other party representative) should not approach opposing counsel (or other party representative), witnesses, the Hearing Examiner, or the Recording Secretary without permission of the Hearing Examiner. If it becomes necessary for counsel (or other party representative) to confer with the Hearing Examiner, permission should be obtained.
6. Counsel (or other party representative) should refrain from making disparaging remarks or displaying ill will toward other counsel or toward a party representative and from causing or encouraging any ill feeling among the parties.
7. Counsel and parties are to refrain from making gestures, facial expressions, or audible comments as manifestations of approval or disapproval of testimony or argument.
8. Arrangements with the City for the use of visual aids should be made sufficiently in advance of the need so that they may be set up prior to the hearing.
9. Only one attorney (or other party representative) may examine or cross-examine a witness.
10. Only one attorney (or other party representative) for each party may object to the testimony of a witness being questioned by an opposing party. The objection must be made by the attorney (or other party representative) who has conducted or is to conduct the examination of the witness.
11. Examination of a witness should be limited to questions addressed to the witness. Counsel (or other party representative) is to refrain from making extraneous statements, comments, or remarks during examination.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1 – Generally Applicable Rules

1.01	Applicability of the Rules	Page 7
1.02	Definitions	Page 7
1.03	Jurisdiction of the Hearing Examiner	Page 9
1.04	Powers of Hearing Examiner	Page 9
1.05	Ex Parte Communications	Page 10
1.06	Disqualification of Hearing Examiner	Page 10
1.07	Computation of Time	Page 11
1.08	Filing and Service of Documents	Page 11
1.09	Official File	Page 11
1.10	Consolidation	Page 11
1.11	Parties of Record	Page 12
1.12	Motions	Page 12
1.13	Hearing Date; Continuance	Page 12
1.14	Evidence	Page 12
1.15	Exhibits	Page 13
1.16	Testimony	Page 13
1.17	Continuation or Reopening of Hearing; Leaving Record Open	Page 13
1.18	Site Visits	Page 14
1.19	Criteria for Decision	Page 14

1.20 Termination of Jurisdiction	Page 14
1.21 Recording of Proceedings	Page 14

Section 2 – Rules for Appeal Hearings

2.01 Matters Subject to Appeal Hearings	Page 14
2.02 Notice of Appeal	Page 15
2.03 Filing Fee	Page 15
2.04 Who May Appeal (Standing)	Page 16
2.05 Notice of Appearance for Attorneys	Page 16
2.06 Clarification or Amendment of Notice of Appeal	Page 16
2.07 Parties to the Appeal	Page 16
2.08 Intervention	Page 16
2.09 Representative of Party	Page 17
2.10 Dismissal Prior to Hearing	Page 17
2.11 Default/Withdrawal of Appeal/Withdrawal of Decision	Page 17
2.12 Prehearing Conference	Page 18
2.13 Filing and Service of Documents and Motions	Page 18
2.14 Subpoenas	Page 19
2.15 Informal Settlement	Page 20
2.16 Limited Public Participation	Page 20
2.17 Format of Hearing	Page 20
2.18 Burden of Proof	Page 21

2.19 Expert Testimony	Page 21
2.20 Hearing on Written Submissions	Page 21
2.21 Hearing Examiner's Decision	Page 21
2.22 Reconsideration	Page 21
2.23 Further Review (Appeal)	Page 22
2.24 Content of Record	Page 22

Section 3 -- Rules for Pre-Decision Hearings

3.01 Matters Subject to Pre-Decision Hearings	Page 23
3.02 Public Participation	Page 23
3.03 Parties of Record	Page 23
3.04 Interested Persons	Page 23
3.05 Staff Report	Page 23
3.06 Format of Hearing	Page 24
3.06.5 Default	Page 24
3.07 Testimony for Organizations	Page 24
3.08 Burden of Proof	Page 24
3.09 Hearing Examiner's Decision	Page 25
3.10 Reconsideration	Page 25
3.11 Appeal of Examiner's Decision	Page 25
3.12 Content of the Record	Page 26

GENERALLY APPLICABLE RULES

1.01 Applicability of the Rules

The procedures established in these rules shall apply to open record public hearings on land use permit applications and appeals. Specific rules pertaining to appeals are found in Section 2 of these Rules.

1.02 Definitions

The following definitions shall apply unless the context or subject matter requires otherwise:

- (a) "Affidavit" - a written or printed statement declared or certified to be true and correct under penalty of perjury under the laws of the state of Washington.
- (b) "Appeal" - a challenge to a decision or other action where the Code or other authority authorizes the City's Hearing Examiner to review and decide.
- (c) "Appeal hearing" - a hearing held by the Hearing Examiner to consider an appeal of a decision or other action where the Hearing Examiner has been granted jurisdiction to hear and decide such an appeal.
- (d) "Appellant" - the person(s), organization, association, corporation, or other entity who files a complete and timely appeal of a decision or other appealable action.
- (e) "Applicant" - the person(s), organization, association, corporation or other entity who files an application or otherwise formally requests a permit or other type of City action, interpretation, or authorization which is the subject of an appeal or other review by the Hearing Examiner.
- (f) "Closed record appeals" are appeals of an administrative decision which are heard by the City Council.
- (g) "Code" – Richland Municipal Code (RMC).
- (h) "Department" - the department, agency, board, commission or other City entity responsible for the decision or action that is subject to appeal or other review by the Hearing Examiner.
- (i) "Director" - the head of the department, agency, board or commission, or other unit of City government responsible for the decision or other action that is subject to appeal or other review by the Hearing Examiner.
- (j) "Examiner" - the Hearing Examiner, or a Hearing Examiner Pro Tempore who has been delegated responsibility to conduct the hearing or otherwise preside over a particular matter.
- (k) "Ex parte communication" - a communication between one party and the Examiner in the absence of the other party(s).

(l) "Hearing Examiner" - the official appointed by the City Council pursuant to RMC Chapter 19.25, to serve as the City's Hearing Examiner; also used when referring to any Hearing Examiner Pro Tempore appointed to preside over a particular matter. See also, "Examiner," herein.

(m) "Interested person" - any individual, or public or private organization, significantly affected by, or interested in proceedings before the Hearing Examiner, including any party.

(n) "Motion" - a request made to the Hearing Examiner, whether written or oral, for an order or other ruling.

(o) "Offer of proof" - a chance to state for the record what the evidence would have shown if it had been admitted.

(p) "Open record hearing" or "open record public hearing" means a hearing, conducted by a single hearing body or officer authorized by the City to conduct such hearings, that creates the City's record through testimony and submission of evidence and information, under procedures prescribed by the hearing body or officer. An open record hearing may be held prior to a City's decision on a project permit to be known as an "open record predecision hearing." An open record hearing may be held on an appeal, to be known as an "open record appeal hearing," if no open record predecision hearing has been held on the project permit.

(q) "Order" - a ruling, instruction, or other directive issued by the Hearing Examiner in response to a request or motion by a party, or on the Hearing Examiner's own initiative. Where the underlying ordinance establishing the Hearing Examiner's jurisdiction so provides, an order can direct how the Hearing Examiner's decision is to be implemented and may be issued as part of that decision or separately from it.

(r) "Parties of record" means:

1. The applicant;
2. The Community Development Department or other City Department, as applicable;
3. Any person who testified at an open record public hearing on the application; and/or
4. Any person who submitted written comments during administrative review or at an open record public hearing.

(s) "Project permit" or "project permit application" means any land use or environmental permit or license required from the City for a project action, including but not limited to building permits, subdivisions, binding site plans, planned unit developments, conditional uses, shoreline substantial development permits, site plan review, permits or approvals required by critical area ordinances, site-specific rezones authorized by the comprehensive plan or a subarea plan, but excluding the adoption or amendment of a comprehensive plan, subarea plan, area wide rezone or development regulations.

(t) "Public hearing" - a hearing held by the Hearing Examiner for the purpose of preparing a decision or recommendation pursuant to code.

(u) "Representative" - that individual designated by a party to be the official contact person and to speak for the party. Unless the applicable underlying substantive law or regulation establishing the Hearing Examiner's jurisdiction specifies otherwise, a representative is not required to be an attorney.

(v) "Rules" - the Hearing Examiner Rules of Practice and Procedure, as currently written or hereafter amended.

(w) "Timely" - within the time prescribed by applicable ordinance or, in the absence of ordinance provision, the time prescribed by Hearing Examiner rule, or within the time determined by the Hearing Examiner.

1.03 Jurisdiction of Hearing Examiner

The jurisdiction of the Hearing Examiner is set forth in relevant provisions of the Richland Municipal Code and city ordinances or resolutions adopted from time to time by the Richland City Council, including without limitation RMC 19.20.030 and RMC 23.46.025, as currently written or as may subsequently be amended. The Hearing Examiner has all jurisdiction necessarily implied from the powers granted to him or her in Chapter 19.25 RMC or other applicable city ordinances.

On his or her own motion or on the motion of any party, the Hearing Examiner shall dismiss or remand to the appropriate decision-making body any matter that is outside the scope of the Examiner's jurisdiction as defined in the relevant ordinances. The Hearing Examiner may raise jurisdictional questions at any time during the course of the proceeding.

1.04 Powers of Hearing Examiner

In addition to the powers of the Hearing Examiner set forth in relevant provisions of the City's municipal code or other applicable city ordinance, the Hearing Examiner shall have all powers necessary to conduct orderly, efficient and fair hearings. The Hearing Examiner's powers shall include, but not necessarily be limited to the authority:

- (a) to administer oaths and affirmations;
- (b) to issue subpoenas compelling the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents; and to issue protective orders;
- (c) to rule on all procedural matters, objections and motions;
- (d) to admit and exclude evidence;
- (e) to limit testimony, by time, number of witnesses, subject, or other aspect;
- (f) to question witnesses and request additional information;
- (g) to hold prehearing conferences;

(h) to regulate the course of hearings and the conduct of participants;

(i) to make recommendations and decisions, including the imposition of reasonable conditions, and to issue orders, in the Hearing Examiner's discretion, deemed necessary to implement the Examiner's decision.

1.05 Ex Parte Communications

Any communication between any participant in a hearing and the Examiner that occurs outside of the hearing and in the absence of the other participants is an ex parte communication.

(a) No interested person or representative shall communicate ex parte directly or indirectly with the Examiner, nor shall the Examiner communicate ex parte directly or indirectly with any interested person or representative, concerning the merits or facts of any matter being heard before the Examiner.

(b) This rule does not prohibit ex parte communications about procedural topics, nor does it apply to written submissions made for the record and available to all participants. Consistent with RMC 19.60.040, the Examiner may receive advice from legal counsel and may communicate with staff members on procedural and administrative matters, including without limitation communications to obtain, verify, or complete exhibits, records, updated codes and regulations, or other file materials needed to prepare any recommendation or decision.

(c) If prohibited ex parte communication is made directly or indirectly to the Examiner, such communication shall be disclosed as soon as practicable thereafter on the public record. Consistent with the requirements of the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine requirements set forth in 18.36 RCW, any interested party desiring to rebut the communication shall be allowed to place a written rebuttal in the record or to orally rebut the communication.

1.06 Disqualification of Hearing Examiner

Any person serving as Hearing Examiner is subject to disqualification for bias, prejudice, conflict of interest, or any other cause for which a judge can be disqualified.

(a) Whenever the Examiner believes that his relationship to participants or financial interest in the subject of a hearing create the appearance that the proceedings will not be fair, the Examiner shall either: (1) voluntarily step down from the case, or (2) disclose, the relationship or interest on the record, stating a bona fide conviction that the interest or relationship will not interfere with the rendering of an impartial decision.

(b) Any party or interested person may petition for the disqualification of an Examiner promptly after receipt of notice that the individual will preside or, if later, promptly upon discovering grounds for disqualification. The Examiner for whom the disqualification is requested shall determine whether to grant the petition, stating facts and reasons for the determination.

1.07 Computation of Time

In computing any time period set forth in this chapter, the day of the act or event from which the designated period of time begins to run shall not be included. The last day of the period so computed shall be included, unless it is a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday, in which event the period runs until the end of the next day which is neither Saturday or Sunday, nor a legal holiday officially observed by the City of Richland. Lack of observance of time periods for filing and service of documents as set forth in these rules will operate strictly against the party that failed to observe the same.

1.08 Filing and Service of Documents

(a) All written public comments made in advance of an open record hearing shall be in writing and must be received no later than twenty four (24) hours prior to the scheduled date and time of the hearing. Written comments must contain the name and address of the person providing the comment. Comments may be provided by mail, email, or by personal delivery. Filing of comments shall be complete only upon receipt by the City. Email is strongly preferred, with any attachments or exhibits provided in .pdf format, consistent with any applicable City policies regarding file size and server limitations.

(b) All filings and documents required to be exchanged, provided, shared, or served shall be emailed from each party to all other parties. Materials that must be filed with the Hearing Examiner shall be transmitted by email to the Examiner's designated City Staff contact. Service and filing may be accomplished by email or personal delivery, though before any hearing, email of documents in .pdf format is strongly preferred. The date of service and the date of filing is the date of receipt. The service and filing deadline shall be 5:00 p.m. unless otherwise stated in any order issued by the Examiner for the matter, though items should be served no later than 4:00 p.m. on any due date, to allow parties to confirm receipt or complete transmittals/receipt of materials by close of business.

1.09 Official File

All written submissions shall be maintained in the official file, by the Community Development Department. The official file shall be available for public inspection and copying during normal business hours, subject to the Public Records Act requirements as set forth in state law and applicable city regulations.

1.10 Consolidation

(a) As provided in RMC 19.70.020(A), all appeals of project permit application decisions, other than an appeal of determination of significance (DS), shall be considered together in a consolidated appeal.

(b) The Examiner shall have discretion, consistent with state law and City code, to consolidate

related matters for hearing on any topic whenever the interests of justice and efficient procedure will be served by such action.

(c) When the consolidated matters involve both an open record hearing and an appeal, the open record hearing portion of the proceeding shall normally be held first. This will allow members of the public to testify without a protracted wait. In such a case, the Examiner may determine that evidence given in either portion of the proceeding may apply to the decision in the other portion.

1.11 Parties of Record

In open record hearings, the initial parties of record shall be the applicant(s) and the City. Subsequently, any individual or organization that participates in the hearing by oral testimony or written submission shall become a party of record who has standing to appeal.

1.12 Motions

Any application to the Examiner for an order shall be by motion. Unless agreed to by all known participants or unless made during a hearing, a motion shall be in writing. Known participants include all parties of record at the time the motion is made.

(a) Written motions shall be filed at least seven business days in advance of the hearing, and copies thereof shall be served on other known participants according to Rule 2.13. Such motions shall state the reason(s) for the request and specify the relief sought.

(b) Parties of record shall have an opportunity to file written response motions no later than three calendar days prior to the scheduled hearing.

1.13 Hearing Date; Continuance

Hearings shall normally be held at the time and place specified in the notice thereof. A scheduled hearing may be continued by the Examiner on his or her own motion or for good cause on motion of a party of record.

1.14 Evidence

(a) Evidence, including hearsay evidence, is admissible if in the judgment of the Examiner it is the kind of evidence upon which reasonably prudent persons are accustomed to rely in the conduct of their affairs.

(b) The Examiner may exclude evidence that is irrelevant, cumulative, or unduly repetitious.

(c) The Examiner shall exclude evidence that is privileged or excludable on constitutional or statutory grounds.

(d) The Examiner may take official notice of the published regulations, rules and duly adopted

policies of any public agency, of matters within his or her specialized expertise and of notorious or commonly understood facts.

1.15 Exhibits

(a) Documents, photographs, drawings and physical evidence may be offered as exhibits and each will be assigned an exhibit number. Exhibits admitted into the record will be retained until after a decision is rendered and all appeal proceedings, if any have been concluded.

(b) The Staff Report, if any, and all documents offered from the official file shall be admitted.

(c) Documentary evidence may be offered in the form of copies or excerpts.

1.16 Testimony

(a) All oral testimony shall be taken under oath or affirmation.

(b) The Examiner may impose reasonable limitations on the nature and length of testimony. In so doing the Examiner shall give consideration to: (1) the expeditious completion of the hearing; (2) the need to provide parties of record a fair opportunity to present their cases; (3) accommodating the desires of all members of the public to be heard when public testimony is taken.

(c) Where the rights of the participants will not be prejudiced, testimony of a witness may be taken by deposition or by electronic means, such as telephone or television, as long as the Superior Court Civil Rules for the taking of depositions has been fully complied with. Prior approval is required from the Examiner before any witness testimony is permitted by deposition or by electronic means. Requests should be made in the form of a motion, prior to the hearing, or during any prehearing conference for the matter.

1.17 Continuation or Reopening Hearing; Leaving Record Open

(a) Every effort shall be made to complete the hearing on the scheduled date(s). If, however, testimony cannot be presented in the time available, the hearing may be continued for completion on another date. When in open hearing, the Examiner specifies the date, time and place of the continuation of the hearing, no further notice is required.

(b) The Examiner may hold the record open for the receipt of additional requested information, for legal briefing, or in order to allow participants to respond to matters raised.

(c) After closing the record, the Examiner may reopen the hearing for good cause at any time prior to the issuance of the subject decision(s) or recommendation(s).

1.18 Site Visits

Where it would assist the Examiner in clarifying or understanding the evidence adduced at a hearing, the Examiner may view a site that is the subject of an application or an appeal prior to the close of the record. Unless otherwise provided by the Examiner, site visits include only the Examiner. Interested parties may not accompany or approach the Examiner during a site visit.

1.19 Criteria for Decision

The applicable legal standards shall be the basis for every decision or recommendation by the Examiner.

1.20 Termination of Jurisdiction

The jurisdiction of the Examiner terminates upon the end of the period for appealing or seeking review of the Examiner's decision or recommendation. Notwithstanding the foregoing, clerical mistakes in decisions, orders, or recommendations and errors therein arising from oversight or omission may be corrected by the Examiner at any time on his or her own motion or on the motion of a party of record or if such decision, order, or recommendation is appealed, such mistakes may be so corrected before review is accepted by the reviewing authority.

1.21 Recording of Proceedings

All proceedings before the Examiner shall be electronically recorded and the recordings shall be made a part of the record. Copies of the recordings shall be made available on request and upon payment of the costs of reproduction. The preparation of a written transcript shall be the responsibility of the person desiring the transcript.

Section 2

RULES FOR APPEAL HEARINGS

2.01 Matters Subject to Appeal Hearings

Appeal hearings shall be held on all matters within the jurisdiction of the Hearing Examiner as set forth in Chapter 19.20 RMC or other applicable ordinances.

2.02 Notice of Appeal

Appeals of Type II project permit decisions made by the Hearing Examiner application are governed by RMC 19.70.040.

Appeals of Type I project permit decisions made by city staff are heard by the Hearing Examiner, as provided in RMC 19.20.030. Unless specifically addressed in applicable city codes, appeals to the Hearing Examiner of any Type I decision shall be governed by the following procedural requirements:

A. Time to File. An appeal of the Type I permit decision must be filed within 10 business days following issuance of the written decision. Appeals may be delivered to the City Clerk by mail, personal delivery, or e-mail before 5:00 p.m. on the last business day of the appeal period.

B. Computation of Time. For the purposes of computing the time for filing an appeal, the day the notice of decision is mailed shall not be included. The last day of the appeal period shall be included unless it is a Saturday, Sunday, or a day designated by RCW 1.16.050 or by the city's ordinances as a legal holiday; then it also is excluded and the filing must be completed on the next business day.

C. Content of Appeal. Consistent with RMC 19.70.040, appeals shall be in writing, be accompanied by an appeal fee, and contain the following information:

1. Appellant's name, address and phone number;
2. Appellant's statement describing his or her standing to appeal;
3. Identification of the application which is the subject of the appeal;
4. Appellant's statement of grounds for appeal and the facts upon which the appeal is based;
5. The relief sought, including the specific nature and extent;
6. A statement that the appellant has read the appeal and believes the contents to be true, followed by the appellant's signature.

2.03 Filing Fee

The Notice of Appeal shall be accompanied by any filing fee required by City code or resolution. Filing of the appeal shall not be complete until both the Notice of Appeal and any required filing fee have been received. This means that for an appeal to be timely, filing of the necessary written appeal information and payment of any applicable filing fees must be complete before the appeal period has run.

2.04 Who May Appeal (Standing)

As explained in RMC 19.70.030, appeals of Type I decisions may be filed by any party aggrieved by the permit decision, but only parties of record have standing to initiate an appeal on a Type II project permit matter.

2.05 Notice of Appearance for Attorneys

An attorney wishing to represent a party of record in an administrative appeal must file and serve a Notice of Appearance on all parties of record, with a courtesy copy submitted by email to the city's designated contact-point for the Hearing Examiner.

2.06 Clarification or Amendment of Notice of Appeal

(a) If the Notice of Appeal is unclear or does not sufficiently explain the basis for the appeal as set forth in Rule 2.02, the Examiner may require that the appellant clarify the appeal to correct the deficiency, or, any party of record may, by motion, request the Examiner to order clarification. This procedure does not negate the authority of the Hearing Examiner to dismiss an appeal on jurisdictional grounds, for failing to comply with the requirements of these Rules or applicable provisions of city codes and regulations.

(b) After the initial filing, a Notice of Appeal may only be amended upon motion to add new grounds, so long as the opportunity of other parties to object is provided. Amendments to appeals will only be permitted where the hearing process will remain fair to all parties and no one is prejudiced by the amendment. The Examiner may deny, grant, or impose conditions or limitations on any requested amendment, to ensure the hearing process is fair to all parties.

2.07 Parties to an Appeal

The parties to an appeal are the appellant(s), the City, the applicant(s) if different from the appellant(s), and any intervenor(s) granted intervenor status. The City and all parties resisting the appeal shall be designated as Respondents. All parties, including the City, may be represented by legal counsel.

2.08 Intervention

(a) Intervention is not a substitute means of appealing a decision for those who could have appealed but failed to do so.

(b) A person, organization or other entity who has not filed a timely appeal may submit a motion in a matter seeking permission from the Hearing Examiner to participate in the appeal. The motion must conform to Superior Court Civil Rule 24 and must set forth the basis under CR24 for intervention. A motion to intervene must be filed with the Hearing Examiner and served on the parties to the appeal no later than 10 business days prior to the scheduled hearing date. All parties shall be allowed to file response motions pursuant to Rule 2.13.

(c) In determining the merits of a request for intervention, the Hearing Examiner shall consider whether intervention will unduly delay the hearing process, expand the issues beyond those stated in the appeal, or prejudice the rights of the parties. If intervention is granted, the Hearing Examiner may limit its nature and scope.

2.09 Representative of Party

(a) An individual may represent him or herself, or may be represented by legal counsel. This rule shall not prevent an individual from using a non-lawyer as a translator, so long as the only service performed is translation.

(b) Where the party is other than an individual (e.g. an organization or legal entity such as a corporation or legal partnership), a representative shall be designated in writing in the form of a notice to all parties. This person shall be the only person authorized to speak on behalf of the party. The representative shall speak for and otherwise exercise the rights of the party. Any authorized person may serve as a representative for an association, corporation or other entity.

2.10 Dismissal Prior to Hearing

An appeal may be dismissed prior to the appeal hearing if the Examiner determines that:

(a) The appeal was not timely filed.

(b) The appeal is based on grounds or seeks relief outside the authority of the Examiner.

(c) The appellant lacks standing to bring the appeal. (See Rule 2.04)

(d) The appeal is without merit on its face, patently frivolous, or brought merely for purposes of delay.

(e) The Notice of Appeal fails to comply with the requirements of these rules or otherwise applicable requirements found in city codes or regulations.

2.11 Default/ Withdrawal of Appeal; Withdrawal of Decision

(a) If an appellant fails to appear at a scheduled and properly noticed hearing, an order shall be entered dismissing the appeal for default. A default order shall be final unless, within seven calendar days of service, good cause to vacate the order is shown by the party against whom it was entered.

(b) An appellant may request withdrawal of the appeal. Such a request shall be granted if made before the appellant has completed presentation of his or her case. Thereafter, the granting of the request is discretionary.

(c) When the decision or action being appealed is withdrawn by the City, the appeal shall be

dismissed as moot and the appellant(s) shall be entitled to return of any filing fee paid.

2.12 Prehearing Conference

(a) When it will assist the orderly and efficient disposition of the appeal, the Examiner may schedule and hold a prehearing conference. Alternatively, any party may request a prehearing conference. A prehearing conference may, among other things, consider:

1. Settlement of the appeal;
2. Simplification, definition or limitation of issues;
3. The possibility of obtaining stipulations relating to undisputed facts, the admission of documents or other matters which will avoid unnecessary proof;
4. Identification of witnesses and documentary or other evidence to be presented at hearing;
5. The conduct of reasonable discovery prior to hearing according to a discovery schedule;
6. Procedural matters.

(b) Prehearing conferences may be held by telephone conference call.

(c) Based on the discussion and agreements at the prehearing conference, the Examiner shall issue a Prehearing Order which shall govern subsequent proceedings. If the case is settled at such a conference, the Examiner shall enter an Order reciting the terms of the settlement and dismissing the appeal.

2.13 Filing and Service of Documents and Motions

(a) Rule 1.07 of these Rules applies to the filing and service of documents and motions.

(b) Documents required to be served on other participants may be delivered personally, sent by mail, or email. Service by U.S. mail shall be deemed complete three business days after deposit in the U.S. mail; service by overnight courier or email shall be complete on the date received. Documents required to be served on other participants may be delivered via email transmission upon Order of the Hearing Examiner. All documents served must be accompanied by a Declaration of Service, indicating: the name of the person who served the documents, the date served, emailed, or placed in the mail, the type of mail service used for service, the documents served, and be signed by the person named in the Declaration of Service.

(c) Service on the representative of a party shall constitute service upon the party, except for decisions or recommendations of the Examiner, or petitions for review to the superior court. Such decisions, recommendations or appeals shall be served on the parties as well as on their designated representative.

(d) Except as provided herein, motions shall be served no later than seven business days prior to a scheduled hearing. Subject to Rule 1.07, Responses to motions shall be served no later than

three calendar days prior to the scheduled hearings and Replies to motions shall be served no later than one day prior to the scheduled hearing. Exceptions to these filing dates are allowed for a motion to quash a subpoena, or for a protective order relating to discovery. All documents subject to this filing schedule must be served by 5:00 PM unless an Order of the Hearing Examiner establishes a different filing time.

2.14 Subpoenas

(a) Subpoenas may be issued by the Examiner compelling the appearance of witnesses and the production of documents and may be served by any person 18 years of age or over, competent to be a witness, and who is not a party to the matter for which the subpoena is issued. Provided, that upon a motion granted by the Hearing Examiner, a subpoena may be issued with like effect by the attorney of record of the party to the matter in whose behalf the witness is required to appear and the form of such subpoena in each case may be the same as one issued by the Examiner except that it shall only be subscribed by the signature of such attorney.

(b) A motion shall be made in writing for a subpoena to require a person to appear and testify at a hearing, or for a person to produce specified documents or other physical exhibits at a prehearing conference or at a hearing. A motion for a subpoena to depose a witness should only be made in extraordinary circumstances, and the Examiner shall have discretion to deny a motion for a subpoena to conduct a deposition.

(c) A motion for a subpoena for a person shall: include the person's name and address; show the relevance of that persons' testimony; and, demonstrate the reasonableness of the scope of subpoena sought. A motion for a subpoena for documents or other physical exhibits shall: include the name and address of the person who is to produce the documents or other physical exhibit; specify the materials to be produced; indicate the relevance of the materials subpoenaed to the issues on appeal; and, demonstrate the reasonableness of the scope of the production.

(d) The party requesting the subpoena shall be responsible for serving the subpoena. An affidavit or declaration of personal service or of mailing shall be submitted to the Hearing Examiner as proof of that service.

(e) Except as otherwise allowed by the Hearing Examiner, subpoenas shall be served no less than ten (10) calendar days prior to the appearance or production ordered.

(f) Any motion to limit or quash (i.e., vacate or void) a subpoena shall be filed with the Hearing Examiner within seven (7) days of receipt of the subpoena or no later than two days prior to the scheduled hearing, or at such other time as specified by Order of the Hearing Examiner.

(g) Requests for subpoenas and the rulings upon such requests may be made ex parte unless otherwise ordered by the Hearing Examiner. Each witness subpoenaed shall be allowed to request the same fees and mileage as provided by law to be paid witnesses in the courts of record in the state, and if the request is granted, shall be paid by the party that requested the subpoena.

(h) Subpoenas issued in the matter before the Examiner may be enforced in the Richland Municipal Court.

2.15 Informal Settlement

Nothing in these rules shall be construed to limit the right of any party to attempt informal settlement of an appeal at any time.

2.16 Limited Public Participation

Unless specifically required by law to be closed, appeal hearings are open to the public. However, testimony or other evidence is not allowed from individuals or entities that are not parties of record, unless they are called as witnesses by a party or by the Examiner. Subject to these rules, Appellants have the right to present their case on appeal as they see fit, including the selection of the witnesses they wish to present.

2.17 Format of Hearing

The appeal hearing will be organized so that testimony and other evidence can be presented efficiently. An appeal hearing shall include at least the following:

- (a) An introductory outline by the Examiner of the procedure to be followed;
- (b) Any preliminary matters;
- (c) Opportunity for opening statements;
- (d) Presentation of the appeal by the appellant(s), including any witnesses;
- (e) Opportunity for cross-examination of appellant(s) and witnesses;
- (f) Presentation of the City's case, including any witnesses;
- (g) Opportunity for cross-examination of City staff and witnesses;
- (h) Presentation by the other respondent(s), including any witnesses.
- (i) Opportunity for cross-examination of respondent(s) and witnesses;
- (k) Rebuttal testimony or evidence, if any;
- (l) Closing arguments.

The Examiner may change the order of presentation at his or her discretion.

2.18 Burden of Proof

Unless otherwise provided by law, the appellant(s) have the burden to establish by a preponderance of the evidence, that the matter fails to conform with applicable legal standards and the administrative decision should be reversed. For open-record hearings, RMC 19.60.060 provides that, except for Type IV actions, the burden of proof is on the proponent. The project permit application must be supported by proof that it conforms to the applicable elements of the city's development regulations, comprehensive plan and that any significant adverse environmental impacts have been adequately addressed.

2.19 Expert Testimony

In general, expert opinion testimony shall be received only from witnesses appearing in person, where a foundation for their expertise has been established, the expert has been qualified as an expert by the Hearing Examiner, and where the expert is available for cross examination. Unless upon Order of the Hearing Examiner, affidavits, declarations or letters containing expert opinion shall be excluded.

2.20 Hearing on Written Submissions

When the parties so agree, an appeal may be submitted entirely on written submissions. If this option is selected, the Examiner shall establish by Order a schedule for initial and responsive submissions. The record shall close when this schedule is completed.

2.21 Hearing Examiner's Decision

(a) The Examiner shall issue a written decision and provide a copy thereof to the Community Development Director for distribution to parties of record and their designated representative or legal counsel.

(b) The Examiner's decision may affirm, modify, remand or reverse the administrative decision(s) being reviewed. When an administrative decision is modified, the Examiner may attach reasonable conditions found necessary to make the action consistent with applicable approval criteria.

2.22 Reconsideration

(a) The Hearing Examiner may reconsider a decision or recommendation on an application, if it is filed in writing within 7 calendar days of the date of issuance. Only parties of record have standing to seek reconsideration. Any request for reconsideration shall be served on all parties of record and to any party's designated representative or legal counsel on the same day as the request is delivered to the Hearing Examiner. The Examiner will seek to accept or reject any request for reconsideration within 3 business days of receipt. If the Examiner decides to reconsider a decision, the appeal period will be tolled (placed on hold) until the reconsideration

process is complete and a new decision is issued. If the Examiner decides to reconsider a recommendation made to the City Council, the transmittal to the City Council shall be withheld until the reconsideration process is complete and a new recommendation is issued. If the Examiner decides to reconsider a decision or recommendation, all parties of record shall be notified. The Examiner shall set a schedule for other parties to respond in writing to the reconsideration request and shall issue a decision no later than 10 business days following the submittal of written responses. A new appeal period shall run from the date of the Hearing Examiner's Order on Reconsideration.

(b) In the Order on Reconsideration the Hearing Examiner may take such action as he or she deems appropriate, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Denying the request;
- (2) Approving the request by modifying or amending the initial decision.

There shall be no reconsideration of a revised/amended decision issued in response to a request for reconsideration.

2.23 Further Review (Appeal)

The Examiner's decision on an appeal hearing regarding a Type I permit action is the final decision of the City and may be appealed to Benton County Superior Court pursuant to RMC 19.70.060, which currently reads as follows:

The city's final decision on an application may be appealed by a party of record with standing to file a land use petition in Benton County superior court. Such petition must be filed within 21 days of issuance of the decision, as provided in Chapter 36.70C RCW.

2.24 Content of Record

The record of an appeal hearing conducted by the Examiner shall include at least the following:

- (a) All Notices of Appeal, Notices of Appearance and any amendments to the Notices of Appeal;
- (b) The staff report and all accompanying documents;
- (c) All pleadings, briefs and memoranda of the parties;
- (d) All documentary or physical evidence admitted;
- (e) The electronic recording of the proceedings;
- (f) The Hearing Examiner's findings, conclusion and Decision(s), together with any Orders issued or other rulings made in the matter.

Any person who desires a copy of the electronic recordings of the proceedings must pay the cost of reproducing the tapes.

Section 3

RULES FOR PRE-DECISION HEARINGS

3.01 Matters Subject to Pre-Decision Hearings

Pre-decision open-record public hearings will be held on those matters identified in Chapters 19.20 and 19.60 RMC.

3.02 Public Participation

At pre-decision hearings, members of the public are invited to express their views and to offer factual testimony and exhibits. Public testimony may be presented orally, in writing, or both. Written public testimony may be submitted either in advance, pursuant to Rule 1.08 or at the hearing. The Examiner shall have the discretion to provide an opportunity for written responses post-hearing, by ordering that the hearing record be left open to a date certain.

3.03 Parties of Record

The initial parties of record are the applicant(s) and the City. Anyone who participates in the hearing by oral testimony or written submission shall by such action become a party of record.

3.04 Interested Persons

For purposes of pre-decision hearings only, interested persons are those individuals or organizations indicating a desire to be informed of the result of the hearing by signing an attendance sheet at the hearing or otherwise requesting notice, but who do not give testimony. Persons who sign an attendance sheet but do not give testimony or submit written comments into the record will not become parties of record with right to appeal the Examiner's decision.

3.05 Staff Report

At least seven calendar days prior to the hearing the Community Development Department or other appropriate department of the City shall make its staff report to the Examiner. The Report shall coordinate and assemble the comments and recommendations of other City departments, other governmental agencies and utility providers having an interest in the matter and shall summarize the project and the applicable laws and regulations and make a recommendation for approval, approval with conditions, or denial.

3.06 Format of Hearing

The pre-decision hearing shall be informal in nature, but organized so that testimony and evidence can be presented efficiently. The hearing shall include at least the following elements:

- (a) An introductory outline of the procedure by the Examiner.
- (b) Presentation by the City summarizing the staff report and providing any additional exhibits or testimony the staff believes should be brought to the Examiner's attention, including any written comments received by City staff pursuant to Rule 1.08.
- (c) Testimony by the applicant(s) or petitioner(s) and their witnesses.
- (d) Testimony from the public. Any public participant may make all or part of his or her presentation through witnesses.
- (e) Questions by the Examiner.
- (f) Rebuttal testimony (if any) by the City, the applicant(s) or petitione(s).
- (g) Closing statements by the City, the applicant(s) or the petitioner(s).

3.06.5 Default

If an applicant or his or her representative fails to appear at a scheduled and properly noticed hearing, the Examiner may take such action as he or she deems appropriate, including dismissing the matter, continuing the matter, or holding the hearing in the applicant's absence.

3.07 Testimony for Organizations

Whenever the view of any organization or legal entity is to be presented, the organization shall designate a representative with authority to speak for the group. Any written communication with the organization by the Examiner or any party of record shall be through the designated representative. Repetitious testimony by multiple members of an organization or legal entity will not be allowed; and written submissions by multiple members of an organization or legal entity are discouraged.

3.08 Burden of Proof

The burden of proof shall be on the applicant or petitioner to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that the project permit is consistent with state law, city codes and standards.

3.09 Hearing Examiner's Decision

- (a) The Examiner's decision shall be in writing and shall contain findings of fact and conclusions

of law supporting the result reached. A copy thereof shall be provided to each party of record and to that party's legal counsel or designated representative.

(b) The Examiner's decision may approve the application or petition with or without conditions, remand the matter to the City for further investigation, or deny the proposal.

3.10 Reconsideration

(a) The Hearing Examiner may reconsider a decision or recommendation on an application, if it is filed in writing within 7 calendar days of the date of issuance. Only parties of record have standing to seek reconsideration. Any request for reconsideration shall be served on all parties of record and to any party's designated representative or legal counsel on the same day as the request is delivered to the Hearing Examiner. The Examiner will seek to accept or reject any request for reconsideration within 3 business days of receipt. If the Examiner decides to reconsider a decision, the appeal period will be tolled (placed on hold) until the reconsideration process is complete and a new decision is issued. If the Examiner decides to reconsider a recommendation made to the City Council, the transmittal to the City Council shall be withheld until the reconsideration process is complete and a new recommendation is issued. If the Examiner decides to reconsider a decision or recommendation, all parties of record shall be notified. The Examiner shall set a schedule for other parties to respond in writing to the reconsideration request and shall issue a decision no later than 10 business days following the submittal of written responses. A new appeal period shall run from the date of the Hearing Examiner's Order on Reconsideration.

(b) In the Order on Reconsideration the Hearing Examiner may take such action as he or she deems appropriate, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Denying the request;
- (2) Approving the request by modifying or amending the initial decision or recommendation.

There shall be no reconsideration of a revised/amended decision or recommendation issued in response to a request for reconsideration.

3.11 Appeal of Examiner's Decision

Parties of record may appeal the Examiner's decision on a Type I project permit appeal to Benton County Superior Court, consistent with RMC 19.20.030 and RMC 19.70.060. Parties of record may appeal the Examiner's decision on a Type II project permit decision to the Richland City Council, as provided in RMC 19.20.030 and RMC 19.70.040.

3.12 Content of the Record

The record of a pre-decision hearing shall include at least the following:

- (a) The application or petition;
- (b) The staff report and any attachments;
- (c) All documentary and physical evidence received and admitted;
- (d) All pleadings, briefs, or memoranda submitted by a party of record;
- (e) The electronic recording of the proceedings;
- (f) The Examiner's findings and conclusions and the decision made, together with any Orders or other rulings made in the matter.

Any person who desires a copy of the electronic recording must pay the cost of reproducing the tapes.