**A Guide to Participating in Virtual Public Meetings**

**DISCLAIMER: The City of Rogers makes no claims, promises, or guarantees regarding the participants ability to attend any public meeting virtually. Technology resources, virtual meeting platforms, and the Internet may occasionally be interrupted or made unavailable by causes beyond the City’s reasonable control. The City cannot guarantee that participants will have the opportunity to participate virtually at all times. Public Forums, Public Hearings, and scheduled items of business will not be tabled or postponed due to technological issues. If you are representing a published item of business or wish to speak at a public hearing, in person attendance is required.**

Please refer to this document for the most comprehensive information on how to use Zoom for the City of Rogers public meeting option. Read the information below in its entirety.

**ZOOM MEETING OPERATIONS OVERVIEW**
The City of Rogers will be using Zoom’s Webinar feature for a virtual online public meetings option. Learn more about Zoom [HERE](https://zoom.us/). The webinar feature divides participants into **attendees** and **panelists**.

Elected Officials (City Council Members, Mayor, City Attorney, City Clerk-Treasurer) are **panelists**. Members of the public who join a Zoom meeting are **attendees**. In the webinar format everyone is allowed to speak at designated times during the meeting. For security purposes, only panelists can be seen on video.

The City will provide a web link to access meetings on the meeting agenda prior to the meeting. You may also use a phone to access meetings (see details below).

**HOW TO INSTALL ZOOM**
To access all the features of Zoom, you will need to install Zoom on your device. For those using tablets to view the remote meetings, you can download the Zoom application from the Apple App Store [here](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/zoom-cloud-meetings/id546505307), or from Google Play [here](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=us.zoom.videomeetings), depending on your device. You can download the Zoom application for laptop/desktop [here](https://zoom.us/download). Make certain you always are using the most up-to-date version of Zoom.

If you call in by phone, there is no need to install Zoom.

**TRAINING**
Zoom offers several trainings to help users navigate the platform. Visit Zoom support for more information. <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Zoom-meeting>

**TIPS AND BEST PRACTICES**
Here are a few recommendations to optimize your digital meeting experience.

* **Arrive early**. Join the meeting at least ten minutes before the start time. By joining early, you will have time to troubleshoot any technical challenges.
* **Rename yourself with First & Last Name** (this allows us to prevent "Zoombombing" by hackers from occurring).
* **Silence your phone**and all notifications that could interrupt a meeting. Do the same for your computer.
* Make sure you Zoom **software is updated**.
* Your internet connection has the most significant impact on your video/audio quality. **If you are able, it is best to use a wired Internet connection.**
* To hear and be heard best, we recommend using**a headset or headphones with a microphone**. If you don’t have one, don’t worry. You can achieve similar results if you are in a **quiet room**for the duration of the meeting. Wear headphones even if you don’t have a microphone so that you can hear as well as possible.

The City of Rogers offers multiple ways to watch and participate in public meetings:

1. **Attend in-person** at the designated location.
2. Watch and/or **participate in the meeting directly in Zoom**by joining the meeting as an attendee. To join a Zoom meeting, follow the link on the meeting agenda.
3. **Dial in to the meeting with your phone**. This method will also allow you to participate in public comment opportunities. The toll-free dial-in numbers for each meeting will be posted prior to each meeting on the meeting agenda.

**PUBLIC FORUM**
Zoom allows you, an attendee, the opportunity to speak during the public forum periods. During public forum you will be asked to use the “raise your hand” function to speak. Click on the “raise your hand” option located at the center of your control bar at the bottom of the screen. Dial \*9 to "raise your hand" if connecting by phone. The Chair of the meeting will acknowledge each attendee raising their hand in turn. When you are acknowledged, the Chair will unmute your microphone. You will be required to “accept” this action on your device. At that point, as in regular public meetings, state your name and address prior to asking a question or making a comment. When you are finished speaking, the Chair will again mute your microphone and you will be unable to speak further unless you utilize the “raise your hand” function again. **Note:  If you are not using the latest update of Zoom, the host may not be able to "invite you to speak" due to security issues. If this occurs, you will need to call in by phone to make a public comment. To avoid this, always check for the latest Zoom update prior to each meeting.**