

Remote Participation for Planning and Zoning Commission Meetings

April 15, 2025

Billy Matthews

History and Purpose

- Providing a response to a Two-Minute Pitch majority requesting a Work Session to discuss remote commissioner participation at Planning and Zoning Commission meetings.
- Benefits, Challenges, and Considerations

Denton Television (DTV)

- Division of Marketing & Communications
- Responsible for management, development, production, and distribution of multi-media programming to meet the goals and objectives of the City
- Successfully produced **135** videos last year
 - Dedication to storytelling and impactful visual content
 - Capturing the essence of Denton
- Award-winning DTV team
 - Manager
 - Sr. Video Producer
 - Video Producer
 - Visual Content Creator
 - Multimedia Journalist

Board and Commission Meetings

- **11** boards and commissions are televised
 - (Council direction – April 2019)
- **4** meetings produced by DTV
 - City Council
 - Planning and Zoning Commission
 - Public Utilities Board
 - Mobility Committee
- **7** meetings produced by third-party contractor (remote participation **NOT** supported)
 - Economic Development Partnership Board
 - Committee on Persons w/Disabilities
 - Board of Ethics
 - Zoning Board of Adjustment
 - Historic Landmark Commission
 - Sustainability Framework Advisory Committee
 - Special Citizens Bond Advisory Committee

Benefits

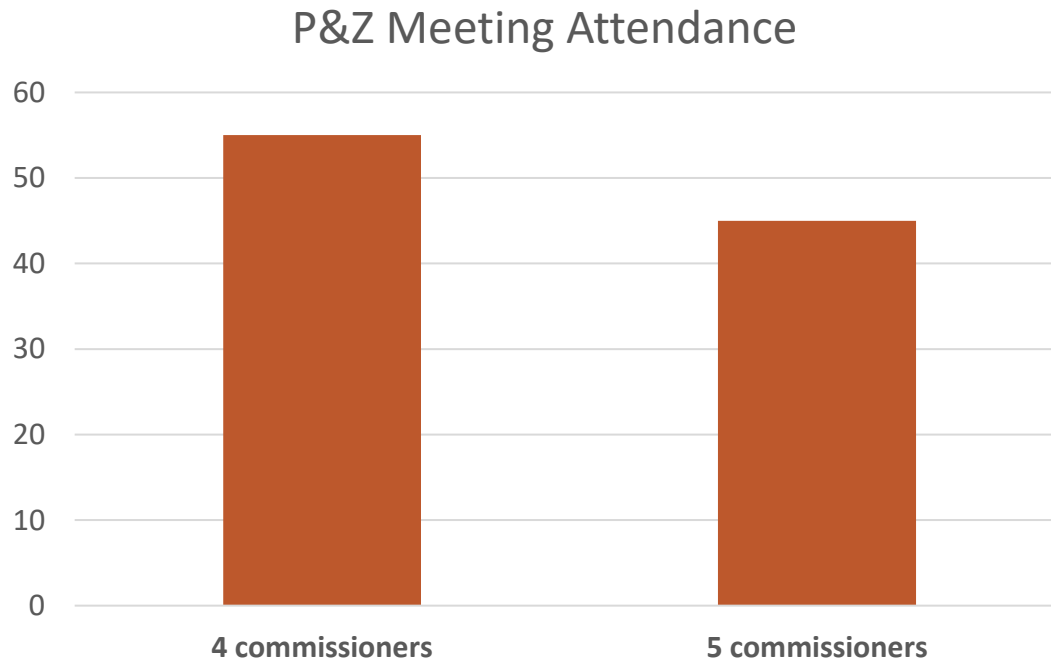
- Flexibility for Commissioners

Challenges

- Staff time
- Complex integration for hybrid meetings
 - The audio and video signals... must meet or exceed minimum standards established by Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) rules. TEXAS GOV'T CODE § 551.127 (i).
- Managing presentations
 - Presenters sharing and stop sharing screen
- No vote system and no request to speak
- The unexpected

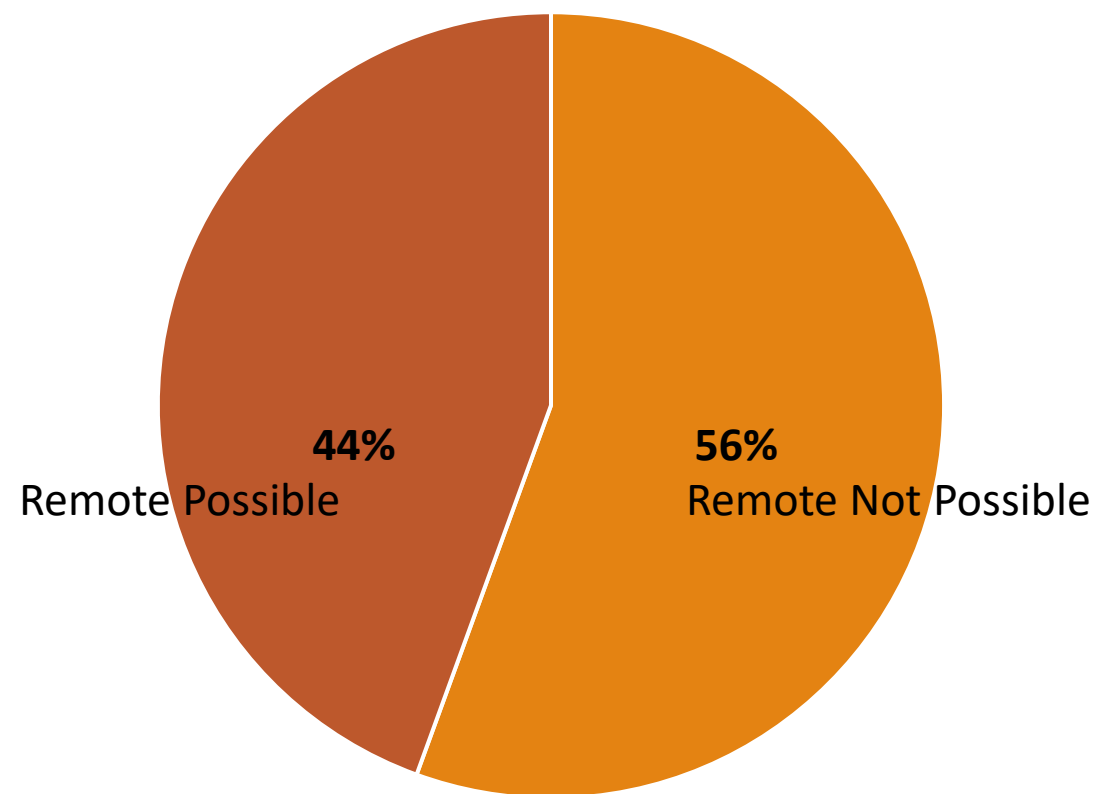
Quorum

- Remote members do **not** count toward quorum
- Planning and Zoning Commission requires an **in-person** quorum of four



- **56%** of the P&Z meetings this fiscal year had 4 commissioners in attendance
- **44%** of the meetings this fiscal year had 5 commissioners attending

P&Z Commission Attendance



DATE	COMMISSIONERS
■ Oct. 9, 2024	4
■ Oct, 23, 2024	4
■ Nov. 13, 2024	5
■ Dec. 11, 2024	5
■ Jan. 15, 2025	5
■ Jan. 29, 2025	3/4
■ Work Session cancelled	
■ Feb. 12, 2025	5
■ Feb. 26, 2025	4
■ March 19, 2025	4

Legal and Policy Considerations

- Texas Open Meetings Act permits remote participation
 - Government Code Section 551.127 authorizes a member or employee of a governmental body to participate remotely in a meeting of the governmental body by means of a videoconference. TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.127(a-1).
- Amendments to Rules of Procedure to be adopted by Council
- An equitable policy be developed to outline:
 - The Process & Approval Guidelines
 - Justification of remote attendance.
 - Consecutive meetings for single member.
 - Who is managing the policy?

Impact on Operations

- Increased workload for DTV staff
- Less video production and social media content
- Budget implications due to increased staff time (overtime and/or staffing additions)
- Additional committee requests for remote participation

Options

1. (Staff Recommendation) Reevaluate at a Later Date
 - Allows time to fill vacancies, assess attendance trends, and feasibility.
2. Implement Remote Participation for Planning and Zoning Commission
 - Requires amendments to the Rules of Procedure
 - A formal policy
 - Staffing/budget/service delivery consideration
3. Maintain Current Practice
 - No precedent for remote participation