

North Carolina Early Voting Site Public Comment Volunteer Packet

Thank you for being willing to submit public comment in favor of early voting in your county! Whether you've done this before or are doing this for the first time, we are grateful for your participation. Decisions about early voting directly impact how easy or hard it is for us, our friends, and our neighbors to exercise our right to vote. Your unique perspective on why certain locations or voting hours are important makes it harder to remove those opportunities.

1. Your assignment

You are being asked to do one thing: submit a public comment in favor of early voting either in person or by email.

- **If you're speaking, it will be for about 90 seconds.** Aim for one personal or community point plus one or two researched facts.
- **Make a precise ask.** Use the language below to make a clear, precise ask of the County Board of Elections.
- **Stay factual and respectful.** You can be firm and impassioned without sounding accusatory.
- **Speak from what you know.** Personal experience, neighborhood knowledge, and community observations are useful.
- **Report back.** After you speak, let the organizer know that you gave public comment and share anything notable from the meeting (if you were there in person).

You don't need to:

- Explain election law or cite statutes, cases, or federal requirements.
- Argue with board members or respond to technical questions you are not prepared to answer.
- Choose replacement sites, negotiate fallback demands, or change the ask from the podium.
- Submit public-records requests, formal exhibits, or institutional letters.
- Speak on behalf of an organization unless that organization has authorized you to do so.

If a board member asks a question you cannot answer

It's fine to say: "I do not have that information with me, I'm here to talk about ... But it sounds like something you and your staff could further research." You don't need to guess.

2. The ask and precise facts

Ask for:

Please [add / retain / select] [Site] as an early-voting site for this fall's election.

Please include [Saturday / Sunday] voting options.

Relevant fact bank

These are examples of the types of facts that are relevant for boards when choosing sites. Based on your knowledge (or some quick research, if you want), choose 2-3 facts from this table that are relevant for the location you're focused on.

Topic	Examples of relevant facts and how to talk about them
Location / community served	[Site] is located at [address] and serves voters in [area / neighborhood / region].
Travel burden	Without [Site], voters in [area] would have to travel [distance / time] to [alternative site].
Transit / walkability / roads	[Site] is reachable by [bus route / sidewalks / major road] and is easier to reach for [community]. Or [Site] is not reachable by [bus route / sidewalks / major road], which is why [preferred site] is easier to reach for [community].
Parking / curbside / accessibility	[Site] has [parking / curbside area / step-free entrance / accessible route] that makes voting there more practical for [voters].
Public or familiar location	[Site] is a [library / school / community college / municipal building / community center] that voters already know and use.
Community reliance	[Site] is close to [church / senior housing / student housing / community center / neighborhood hub / workplace cluster].
Prior use or community demand	[Site] has [prior voting-site use / community-use history / documented community support].
Plan balance	Including [Site] would help the plan better serve [part of county / type of voters / community] rather than concentrating access in [area].

Your personal experiences also matter! Have you voted at this location in the past? Do you know people who have? What makes this location or weekend voting hours important to you?

3. Script builder

You can use this structure to build your public comment. At the meeting, you can read it word-for-word or make it sound like you, whatever makes you more comfortable.

Public comment script

Good evening. My name is [Name], and I [live / work / study / worship / have family] in [community].

I am asking the Board to [add / retain / select] [Site] as an early-voting site for the [Election].

This site matters because [relevant fact #1]. It also matters because [relevant fact #2 or personal/community connection].

For voters in [area/community], [Site] is a practical and familiar place to vote early. Without it, many voters would have to [staff-approved burden or comparison].

Please [add / retain / select] [Site] as an early-voting site. [Use only if staff has supplied exact language: staff-approved fallback sentence.] Thank you.

Personal connection sentence examples

- I know this site matters because [personal observation about the community, transportation, disability access, work schedules, school schedules, or local geography].
- My neighbors and I know [Site] and can get there more easily than [alternative site].
- When I have voted at [Site] in the past, I've [observed, experienced, etc.].
- This is not an abstract issue for [community]; it affects whether early voting is practical for people who [work long hours / rely on transit / live far from the current sites / need a familiar accessible location].

A 90-second comment is usually about 150 to 200 spoken words. If you are over time, cut detail rather than rushing. The most important pieces are your community connection, one or two approved facts, and the exact ask.

4. Optional plug-ins

Use one plug-in only if it is true for you and consistent with the relevant fact bank. These are designed to replace the middle paragraph of the script, not to be stacked together.

Theme	Plug-in language
Travel, rural, or transit burden	For voters in [area], the current option is [distance/time] away or harder to reach because [approved fact]. [Site] would give this part of the county a realistic early-voting option.
Community access / historically burdened community	[Site] is important to voters in [community] because it is close to [neighborhood / church / community center / transit route / senior housing]. Without it, many voters would have to use [alternative], which is harder to reach because [approved fact].

Theme	Plug-in language
Student or campus access	Students and nearby residents need a practical early-voting option they can reach by [walking / transit / short drive]. [Site] is close to [housing / campus / bus route / surrounding neighborhoods] and would reduce avoidable travel burdens.
Public or familiar location	[Site] is a practical public location that voters already know and use. It has [parking / accessibility / interior space / central location], so it is a common-sense place for early voting.
Whole-county fairness	I am concerned that the current plan does not serve all parts of the county equally. Adding [Site] would make the plan more balanced because [approved fact].
Accessibility fact sentence	Use only if staff has supplied the fact: [Site] has [parking / curbside space / step-free entrance / accessible route], which makes it easier for older voters and voters with disabilities to use.

5. Say / Don't Say

How we advocate can make it harder for us to be ignored, so focus on making fact-driven, credible claims to keep public comments persuasive, accurate, and disciplined.

Instead of saying	Say
"The Board is violating the law."	"I am asking the Board to choose the option that gives voters in [area] better access."
"Our side needs this site."	"This site helps the early-voting plan serve the whole county more fairly."
"Students are entitled to a campus site."	"Students and nearby residents need a practical early-voting option they can reach by walking or transit."
"The Board is intentionally discriminating."	"The current plan would make voting harder for [community] because [approved fact]."
"I heard the site had huge turnout."	"Staff has provided this approved fact: [fact]." If the fact is not in the packet, leave it out.
"If you do not add this site, use [my fallback idea]."	"Please add [Site]." Use fallback language only if staff has provided the exact sentence.

Do

- Use your own connection to the community.
- Use one or two approved facts.
- Make the exact ask clearly.

- Stay under the time limit.
- Thank the Board and step away from the podium when finished.

Don't

- Accuse board members of bad faith.
- Say the plan is illegal unless staff gave you that exact sentence.
- Make partisan arguments.
- Invent or estimate statistics.
- Debate from the podium or try to answer technical questions you do not know.

6. Meeting-day checklist

Before the meeting

- Confirm the meeting time, location, and sign-up process.
- Pick your two approved facts.
- Write your comment on paper or in your phone.
- Practice once out loud and cut anything that puts you over 90 seconds.

At the meeting

- Sign up for public comment as instructed.
- When called, state your name and community connection.
- Read or paraphrase your comment calmly.
- Make the ask once at the beginning and once at the end.
- If asked for details you do not have, say staff can follow up.

After the meeting

- Tell the organizer that you spoke.
- Share any notable board comments, timing changes, or next steps you heard.
- Do not send independent follow-up, records requests, or revised asks unless staff asks you to do so.