

# How to do a housing issues briefing

## ISSUES BRIEFINGS BASICS

**1. MESSAGES:** Determine your messages. If it's a local election year, identify your top local legislative issues. If it's a state election year, contact Washington Association of REALTORS® for likely issues that will be the focus for the upcoming session.

**2. SPEAKERS:** Determine your speakers - use staff, lobbyists or knowledgeable members.

**3. TIME AND PLACE:** Select the date(s) and location(s). Do this at least two months prior to the date of your briefing(s) to allow for advance time in getting out invitations, creating agendas and preparing briefing materials. A briefing should not exceed two hours. Public libraries are a good location generally because they have large conference rooms, plenty of parking and do not charge a fee for the facility. The Board office is also an option.

**4. WHO TO INVITE:** Go regularly to the PDC website to see who has filed and record the information. Also, know who is up for re-election and record the information. Create email address books for candidates, incumbents (not up for re-election) and for incumbents running for re-election. Also create mailing labels and save them in Word for candidates, incumbents up for re-election and incumbents not up for re-election. Include incumbents not facing an election because it's a sure bet that they will have a seat on the council and will be voting on your issues.

**5. INVITATIONS:** send out invitations 8 weeks in advance of the briefing, usually starting with e-mail. Wait a week, then send out by direct mail. Wait a few weeks and resend invitations. Be persistent in sending out invitations. Sometimes it takes 2-4 invitations to get a reply. Invitations should be specific - include dates, times, issues that will be discussed (including the endorsement process) and who to contact to register for the event.

**6. ANNOUNCEMENT:** send out a press release with purpose, dates, times and locations along with reservation information about a month before the event(s).

**7. RSVP's:** Record an RSVP list. Use this to have an attendance sheet available at the briefing and make nametags for the briefing.

**8. MATERIALS:** Create a resource notebook from the issues that will be presented at the briefing. Include an agenda and evaluation form. Make sure you have sufficient copies of materials for attendees.

**9. Conduct your briefing(s)!**