
Public Participation at Town of Gravenhurst Meetings

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the Corporation of the Town of Gravenhurst to permit electronic participation from members of the public during Council, Boards and SubCommittee meetings.

PURPOSE

To provide processes and a framework for electronic participation at meetings.

APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all members of the public who chose to participate in a meeting electronically.

PROCEDURE & GUIDELINES

A. General

The Town of Gravenhurst uses the MVI EasyConf Connect Conference system to facilitate electronic audio-visual participation in Council and Committee meetings. Members of the public who have access to a reliable internet connection, a camera and microphone may participate in a meeting electronically versus exclusively in-person.

Members of the public wishing to participate electronically are encouraged to download the EasyConf Connect [application](#) on their computers or smart devices. Web browsers can be used; however, functionality may differ.

Electronic participants will receive an email before the meeting with a private link to access the meeting. Depending on the meeting type, the participant may remain within a waiting room until their item is on the agenda. All are encouraged to follow along through the livestream on the [Town's YouTube channel](#). Note that the livestream may be 15 to 30 seconds delayed depending on the connection.

B. Connectivity

Members of the public participating in a meeting electronically are responsible for ensuring the reliability of their connection for the duration of their allotted time at the meeting. If a participant loses connectivity during the meeting for more than 2 consecutive minutes, they will be deemed to have left the meeting.

Technical support is not available during a live meeting.

While electronic participation is available for the public, the meeting's primary location is in-person inside the Council Chambers. The meeting will continue regardless of the participant's ability to connect or maintain a connection electronically.

C. Deputations

Deputations are presentations of up to 10 minutes made at Committee of the Whole, Planning Council or Subcommittee meetings from an individual or group of persons. Additional information regarding deputations is included within the Procedural By-law.

Deputation requests are required to be submitted in writing through the online deputation request form. Deputations may be permitted in-person in the Council Chambers or electronically.

Those requesting an electronic deputation may do so by selecting electronic participation on their form. Multiple accounts are permitted for deputations and must be clearly identified including complete email addresses.

Visual presentations (PowerPoint, pdf, video etc.) are permitted during deputations. Those presenting in-person shall submit the materials by noon the day prior to the meeting allowing the materials to be pre-loaded into the audio-visual system. Electronic participants will be able to share their screens directly within the audio-visual system. Please note, however, that screen sharing is not supported on mobile devices. If your deputation includes a visual presentation, you will need to connect via a computer.

Presentations not provided in advance may be displayed if the participant brings their own laptop with a HDMI port.

Phones and tablets are not compatible with the audio-visual equipment.

D. Public Meetings

Public Meetings are public hearings hosted in accordance with the *Planning Act* to obtain public input on Development Services matters. They generally occur during Planning Council and Committee of Adjustment meetings.

Public participants may include the applicant, agent for the applicant, associations and general members of the public.

Those requesting to provide verbal comments regarding an application are encouraged to attend the meeting in-person to ensure their comments are delivered during the public meeting.

Members of the public may provide verbal comments through electronic participation. Registration, using an Electronic Public Meeting registration form, is required by noon the day prior to the meeting.

During public meetings, members of the public wishing to make comments will be called forward by the Chair in the following order:

1. Registered electronic participants, in order of receipt of written requests
2. Members of the public in-person

E. Additional Presenters

Additional presenters may be asked to attend a meeting – consultants, vendors, legal counsel etc. These individuals will be able to attend electronically.

Presenters will be able to share their screens directly within the audio-visual system.

REFERENCE (*List all References to Legislation or Existing By-laws/Policies*)

- Procedural By-law
- Committee of Adjustment Procedural By-law
- Municipal Act
- Planning Act
- SubCommittee Procedures