



GRAND VALLEY

<b>SECTION</b>	Administration	By-Law 2024-XX
<b>Sub-Section</b>	Council	Effective Date: Revision Date:
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Live Streaming and Recording of Public Council Meetings Policy	
<b>Approval</b>	Town of Grand Valley Council Resolution #	

**PURPOSE**

1. To improve accessibility and community participation in relation to decision making processes. It is anticipated that live streaming Council meetings on the Town’s website will provide more flexible and convenient access to debates and decisions. Live streaming meetings also eliminates geographic and time barriers which may prevent the public from attending meetings in-person, thereby resulting in greater community confidence in the integrity and accountability of the decision-making process.
2. To provide policy direction and guidelines for the transparent management of recordings of Public Council Meetings and Public Meetings held in Council Chambers at the Grand Valley Town Hall.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Public Meetings:** Includes Regular Public Council Meetings, Special Council Meetings, and other Public Meetings conducted in accordance with Council’s adopted rules of procedure held in the Council Chambers at the Town of Grand Valley Town Hall. It does not include meetings that are closed to the public under the Section 239(2)(3) and (3.1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, as amended.

**Closed Meeting:** A meeting of Council from which the public and media have been excluded in accordance with the provision set out under Sections 239(2)(3) and (3.1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, as amended. Any decisions, motions and resolutions at a closed meeting must be ratified at a Public Meeting.

**Defamatory Statement or Inappropriate Comment:** Spoken Words or phrases which intend to injure another’s reputation. A comment that is not appropriate or suitable for some purpose or situation. A statement/comment that could induce people to shun or avoid a person for any reason. A statement can also be made by signs or gestures, writing or images in person or by broadcast.

**Live Streaming:** Broadcasting of video or audio over the internet in real time or near real time and includes the recording of the live-streamed (broadcast) audio or video.

**I. APPLICATION**

1. This policy applies to the live streaming, recording, storage and distribution of recorded Public Meetings held in the Council Chambers at the Town of Grand Valley Town Hall.
2. This policy covers all elected Members of Council, all personnel employed by the Town of Grand Valley, any person or organization acting on behalf of Council and the Town of Grand Valley, any person making presentation at a Public Meeting, and any person presenting under Deputations/Presentations at a Public Council Meeting.
3. This policy applies to all persons attending Public Meetings including Councillors, staff, invited speakers, observers, presenters and members of the public, both as visitors in the public gallery and as contributors to the Public Meeting.
4. This policy applies until such time as concluded by way of resolution of Council.

**II. PROTOCOL**

**1. General**

- 1.1 All persons attending Public Meetings are required to act in a professional and ethical manner, and in accordance with the Town’s Council-Staff Relations Policy and other relevant policies of the Town of Grand Valley.
- 1.2 Public Council Meetings are held in the Council Chambers located at Town of Grand Valley Town Hall. Public Council Meetings will be live streamed, recorded and can be viewed on the Town’s website in accordance with this Policy. Any meetings or portions of a meeting that are closed to the public shall not be broadcast or recorded.
- 1.3 It is the intent that the camera position will only provide vision of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors, designated staff and presenters/speakers who are present at the Public Meeting. It is not intended that there be either live or recorded footage of the gallery or public; however, there may be incidental capture.
- 1.4 Presenters and Members of the Public who address Council shall be live streamed and recorded.

**2. Public Notification**

- 2.1 Presenters and Members of the Public who address Council shall be live streamed and recorded.
- 2.2 To ensure those both in-person and virtual presenters and members of the public who address Council are aware Public Council Meetings will be live streamed, recorded and made available on the Town’s website, messaging will appear on the Request to Delegate to Council Form, signage will be posted and clearly displayed in Council Chambers and attendees requesting to appear

before Council will be notified in writing upon confirm of their request to address Council.

- 2.3 A link to the website live stream will appear on Meeting Agendas with live streaming to begin 10 minutes prior to the meeting time identified on the Meeting Agenda and cease when the meeting ends.
- 2.4 During any part of a meeting that convenes to an in-camera/closed session, live stream audio will be muted, and on-screen display will appear indicating a Closed Session in progress, with the on-screen display to remain until the meeting reconvenes into an open session.

### **3. Disclaimer**

- 3.1 Opinions and statements expressed during a Public Council Meeting are those of the individuals making them.
- 3.2 Council does not accept any responsibility for any verbal statements made by delegates and the public during Public Council Meetings which may be inaccurate, incorrect, or defamatory.
- 3.3 No protection will be afforded to the public by Town Council or Town of Grand Valley for comments and statements made during the live streaming of Council Meetings which may be or are subsequently challenged in a Court of Law and determined to be potentially defamatory or inappropriate.
- 3.4 Council Officials may be afforded protection for comments and statements made during the live streaming of Council meetings which may be or are subsequently challenged in a Court of Law and determined to be potentially defamatory or inappropriate, subject to the terms of the Town's insurance policy in effect at the time of the comments and claims made.

### **4. Exceptions**

- 4.1 This policy does not extend to meetings which are closed to the public. Closed meetings shall not be live streamed or recorded. Should a Public Council Meeting be adjourned for a Closed Meeting, a motion of Council is required under the provision of the Municipal Act, 2001. Once the Motion has been passed by Council to convene a closed session, live streaming and recording will be stopped. The Mayor, or Chairperson/Presiding Officer, shall provide direction to the designated staff member as to when to resume live streaming.
- 4.2 This policy does not extend to Public Council Meetings held in a location other than the Council Chambers at the Town of Grand Valley Town Hall.

### **5. Technical Difficulties**

- 5.1 The Town of Grand Valley will make every reasonable effort to ensure that a live stream and recording is available. Situations may arise where, due to technical difficulties, the live streaming and recording will not be available. If such circumstances occur during a meeting, the Mayor or Chairperson/Presiding Officer shall be advised and will advise those present that live streaming is not available. In the event the technical difficulties are identified prior to a meeting,

the information will be shared on the Town of Grand Valley’s website and/or the Town’s social media venues for notification. Should technical difficulties result in a meeting recording not being available, notification will be posted on the Town’s website.

**6. Public Access and Use of Recordings**

6.1 Within 72 hours following a Public Council Meeting, the Deputy Clerk or designate shall post the recording of the meeting on the Town’s website for a period consistent with the Town’s records retention by-law. Posting delays beyond 72 hours of a meeting shall be communicated on the Town’s website and include details of when the recording will be available.

6.2 Live Streaming of Public Council meetings is offered as a convenience to the public only and are for information purposes. The official record of all meetings shall be the adopted minutes in accordance with Section 228(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001. The live streaming and recordings are to promote broader access to meetings only and for information purposes only.

6.3 Live streams and recordings of Meetings are the property of the Town of Grand Valley and cannot be reused or reproduced without the approval from the Town of Grand Valley. If requested, permission may be granted to produce or reproduce the recordings posted on the Town’s Website, provided that the copied material is not modified or altered, and ownership of the material is attributed to the Town of Grand Valley. No person may use the recordings for political party advertising, election campaigns, or any other politically partisan activity. Unless expressly authorized herein, no part of the recorded materials posted on the Town of Grand Valley’s Website may be reproduced without the written permission of the Town of Grand Valley. Copyright remains with the Town of Grand Valley.

**7. Removal of Live Stream Recordings from website**

7.1 The Town Clerk may direct staff, in writing, to remove recordings or portion of recordings from the Town’s website where it considers it prudent or advisable to do so.

**III. RESPONSIBILITIES**

**1. CAO/Clerk/Deputy**

1.1 A designated staff member, being the Deputy Clerk or designate, shall be responsible for the operation of the live streaming and recording equipment.

1.2 A designated staff member, being the Deputy Clerk or designate shall post the recording of the meeting on the Town’s website, within a reasonable time following completion of the meeting and for a period consistent with the Town’s Records Retention By-Law.

## **2. Mayor/Chairperson/Presiding Officer**

2.1 The Mayor or Chairperson/Presiding Officer has the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of the live streaming and recording of the meeting if they consider it prudent or advisable to do so.

2.2 Direction to resume live streaming shall be provided by the Mayor or Chairperson/Presiding Officer, to the designated staff member.

## **3. Members of Council and Municipal Staff**

3.1 Members of Council and the officers and employees of the Town are required to adhere to this policy and its governing provisions, including the Code of Conduct for Members of Council, the Violence in the Workplace Policy, the Harassment in the Workplace Policy, and the Procedural By-law.

## **4. Participants**

4.1 Participants who are not members of Council, Town officers or employees, shall conduct themselves in a civilized manner. The Mayor or Chairperson/Presiding Officer has the right to firmly manage unruly behaviour by a participant, up to removing the participant from the meeting.

## **IV. EVALUATION**

1. The Policy will be reviewed from time to time, as deemed necessary.

## **V. REFERENCES**

- Code of Conduct for Members of Council
- Policy – Prevention of Violence in the Workplace
- Town of Grand Valley Procedural By-law