



## Town of Pelham *Have Your Say* Online Forum FAQ

### **Q: What is the Town of Pelham *Have Your Say* Online Forum?**

A: The Town of Pelham is dedicated to providing all residents, businesses, community groups and visitors with a platform to brainstorm ideas and solutions to a number of topics directly relating to them.

In fact, one of the top [strategic priorities](#) for Pelham Council is to “engage residents in decision making”, and staff are continuously working on finding and implementing new ways to communicate with the public.

That is why we are introducing Pelham’s *Have Your Say* online forum!

Pelham’s new online forum for public engagement transforms the way you interact with local decision-makers by allowing you to directly provide input, ideas and feedback on various matters based on where you live, work and play.

### **Q: Why should I participate?**

A: The Town of Pelham appreciates that people don’t always have time to attend public meetings to give their views. That is why we are launching our *Have Your Say* online forum to allow you to speak your mind from the comfort of your own home, desk or anywhere else you can get online. We invite open participation and the sharing of diverse viewpoints 24/7 so that no participant feels left out or inconvenienced.

### **Q: How can I participate?**

A: Signing up to be part of Pelham’s *Have Your Say* online forum for community engagement is very simple. The Town of Pelham uses PlaceSpeak – a location-based community consultation platform that helps you claim your place, speak your mind and influence the outcome– to facilitate our public consultations.

The first time you visit PlaceSpeak you are asked to sign up using your name, e-mail and home address in order to authenticate you as a local participant. This confidential information is kept in accordance with PlaceSpeak’s strict [privacy policy](#) that ensures your information is never shared, sold or used in any unlawful way. Even the Town of Pelham doesn’t see your private information or profile.

### **Q: Why do I need to register?**

A: Users interested in viewing topics available through Pelham’s *Have Your Say* online forum (facilitated through PlaceSpeak) can browse most topics, but only registered members can participate in active public consultations.

The benefit of registering is that you know decision-makers and fellow local participants are reading your comments and taking them into consideration. Using PlaceSpeak further eliminates the need to separately call or e-mail Town Hall with your feedback.

**Q: What happens with my comments?**

A: Town Council and Staff consider the input and ideas generated by the *Have Your Say* forum (along with all other channels for participation) when compiling public staff reports for Council or other documentation presented at public meetings.

*To the extent that the foregoing information constitutes personal information as defined in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter M.56 as amended, the information is subject to provisions of that Act and will be used to collect community feedback on the topics posted on this forum. Questions about the collection of personal information should be directed to the Town Clerk, Town of Pelham, 20 Pelham Town Square, P.O. Box 400, Fonthill, Ontario, L0S 1E0.*

**Q: Are comments and forums monitored?**

A: The main goal of the Town of Pelham *Have Your Say* online forum (facilitated through PlaceSpeak) is to inform topic proponents. The platform therefore operates under a moderation policy to ensure that comments are appropriate and not harmful to others.

While posts from registered and connected participants are added directly to the discussion thread at any time, 7 days a week, all posts are reviewed by PlaceSpeak or assigned moderators within 48 hours. Any post that violates this policy may be taken down without notice.

Moderation is intended to ensure that the platform is fair and inclusive. It will **not** be used to suppress legitimate, reasoned debate about the issues raised. We value your time and input, and our desire is to remove as few posts as possible while ensuring that a focused, constructive discussion takes place.

**Q: Are there guidelines for posting comments?**

A: Yes, participants of Pelham's *Have Your Say* online forum (via PlaceSpeak) must comply with the following [terms of use](#) for posting their responses:

- **Be Nice:** No abusive, obscene, indecent or offensive language. Contributions should be constructive and polite, not mean-spirited or contributed with the intention of causing trouble;
- **Respect the Law:** Avoid making statements that might break the law. This includes statements that contain libel, condone illegal activity, reveal classified information, or infringing on a copyright or trademark;
- **Be Factual:** Don't post unproven or unsupported accusations against individuals or organizations;
- **Show Respect:** Do not post comments or material that may be defamatory, abusive, harassing or include hateful remarks on the basis of race, religion, gender, nationality, sexuality or other personal characteristics;

- **Be Relevant:** Don't re-submit the same contribution many times, or contribute off-topic material, including Spam, advertising, or the promotion of irrelevant websites or services;
- **Be Authentic:** Do not impersonate or falsely claim to represent people or organisations. If you are making comments on behalf of a group or organisation, please tell us who you are and who you represent.
- **Be Concise:** Keep your contributions on topic and to the point;
- **Don't Post Personal Details:** Including such as private addresses, phone numbers or email addresses (yours or someone else's); and,
- **No Threats:** Do not post material that contain threats or incitements to violence;

Moderators will not edit comments to remove objectionable content, so please ensure that your comment doesn't violate any of the above principles. Forum moderators and PlaceSpeak reserve the right to suspend comments at any time.

You are fully responsible for everything that you submit in your comments, and all posted comments are in the public domain. To protect your own privacy and the privacy of others, please do not include phone numbers or e-mail addresses in the body of your comment. If you are aged 16 or under, you may want to talk to your parent/guardian about the ideas on this website and the opinions that you want to express.

If you have a complaint about an item of user-generated content on this site, feel that your own content was removed in error, or have any other questions about this moderation policy or how we apply it, please contact at [questions@placespeak.com](mailto:questions@placespeak.com).

#### **Q: What if I don't want to register?**

As with any public consultation process, participation in Pelham's *Have Your Say* online forum (via PlaceSpeak) is entirely voluntary.

You may still share your input with the Town of Pelham in whatever format makes you most comfortable (e.g. e-mail, mail, fax, Public Service Request, attending a public meeting, visiting Town Hall, and so on).

However you choose to participate, thank you for helping us create a better Pelham.