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## Listen to Civic Meetings from Home

*By Cathy Tyson*

For Lafayette residents who want to be engaged in municipal issues, but prefer the comforts of home, audio broadcasts of all city council, planning commission, design review and circulation commission meetings are available live, and are recorded to listen at your convenience. With fast forward, rewind and pause, it's never been easier to be a fly on the wall when lounging with your laptop.

"We decided to go with a new vendor called Granicus to archive all of our public meeting agendas and documents after the old vendor discontinued their service. As a bonus, Granicus also offers us the ability to record and broadcast meetings live," said Tracy Robinson, administrative services director for the city of Lafayette. "The other great thing about this new technology is that after the meeting is over, the audio for each meeting is then 'tagged' to specific agenda items. So if someone wants to listen to a previous meeting, they can go into the archive, choose the audio for that meeting, and skip directly to a particular item in the agenda."

Because these meetings tend to run long, it's possible to double dip, attending in person for the first half, and checking in at home for the conclusion. While public participation and civic engagement are noble goals, folks with young families who log long hours at work are among the demographic that rarely attends civic meetings. Perhaps streaming audio will encourage this demographic to tune in.

"We think that this is going to be really helpful to promote the city's goal to be as transparent as possible for our public meetings and documents," said Robinson.

The cloud-based technology can manage and store unlimited public meeting data. It's easy to use; just go to the city website, [www.lovelafayette.org](http://www.lovelafayette.org), click on agenda, staff reports and minutes under headings for various entities - city council, planning commission and so on. Archived meetings are organized by date with newest first-just click on audio for the meeting you are interested in. The meeting's agenda also shares the audio webpage with helpful links to staff reports detailing specific items. It's almost like being there.

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