

	CORPORATE POLICY
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SUBJECT:	ELECTION POLICY GUIDELINES
SPONSOR:	CITY CLERK
AUTHORIZED BY:	COUNCIL
EFFECTIVE DATE:	October 19, 2023

POLICY STATEMENT

The Election Policy Guidelines recognize that the City’s Chief Election Officer (CEO) is responsible for ensuring all elections are in accordance with legislation and the City’s Election Procedures Bylaw. The CEO has a statutory responsibility to impartially manage election planning and proceedings and to protect the integrity of the election.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Policy Guidelines is to outline key principles and considerations when conducting an election or an assent vote in Victoria. The Policy Guidelines will ensure there is equitable and convenient access to voting locations aligned with City values and policies.

APPLICATION

1. The Policy Guidelines apply to all City election and assent voting processes.

POLICY GUIDELINES

General

2. A minimum of one (1) month of planning before appointing a Chief Election Officer.
3. Appointment of at least two (2) Deputy Chief Election Officers.
4. Acquisition of at least one (1) additional administrative staff member or contractor to help coordinate all election preparations.
5. A minimum of eight (8) general voting day locations.
6. At least two (2) advance voting locations and at least four (4) advance voting days.
7. Special voting opportunities at participating care facilities as per the Election Procedures Bylaw.
8. Mail ballot voting with prepaid postage for all eligible voters.
9. Curbside voting available upon request at all voting places and all advance voting opportunities.

Voting Locations and Facilities

10. Considerations in selecting suitable voting locations include:
- (a) Geographic proximity to electors and areas of population density.
 - (b) Multiple transportation options for accessing the location, such as arterial roads and public transportation routes.
 - (c) Locations that are familiar locations of public services such as schools, recreation, community, or convention centres.
 - (d) A minimum interior space of the average dimensions of a school gymnasium (33 metres long by 18 metres wide).
 - (e) Capacity to accommodate voters inside to reduce lineups outside.
 - (f) Available accessible parking.
 - (g) Sufficient utility services (electrical outlets, internet connectivity).
 - (h) Washrooms and accessible washrooms.

Engagement

- 11. An engagement plan, informed by the engagement plans from previous elections, developed by Engagement staff that goes beyond the requirements of the *Local Government Act*.
- 12. A minimum of two (2) election newsletters and/or election information mailed to each household for general local elections.
- 13. A minimum of one (1) election newsletters and/or election information mailed to each household for by-elections and assent votes.

Accessibility, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- 14. A minimum of one (1) accessible voting machine available during advance and general voting in a central location.
- 15. Election planning informed by the City's Accessibility and Inclusion Policy, Accessibility Framework, and Equity Framework to increase equitable access to voting, subject to the requirements of the *Local Government Act*.
- 16. Accessibility of voting locations and services evaluated using Elections Canada and Elections BC guidelines and best practices, subject to the requirements of the *Local Government Act*.
- 17. Information mailed to electors, and all other information provided in a plain, accessible language and format containing available accessibility services.