

Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of October 12, 2023

To: Committee of the Whole

Date: October 6, 2023

From: Councillor Dave Thompson

Subject: Municipal election reform request to Government of BC

Background

A number of problems related to municipal elections, and potential reforms to address those problems, were discussed among candidates and voters, in the media, and on social media before, during, and after the most recent municipal elections.

It was noted that:

- municipal election canvassers have less access to multifamily buildings than federal and provincial canvasser enjoy, which is a significant problem given that over 60% of Victoria residents are renters and over 80% of Victoria residents live in multifamily homes;
- election signs are wasteful, attract vandalism and theft, and give an inequitable advantage to candidates that have raised large campaign budgets; and,
- young adults and renters tend to be underrepresented among voters.

The provincial government has the legal authority and resources to address these problems.

Recommendation

That Council hereby calls on the Government of British Columbia to:

- Provide municipal election canvassers with the same access to multifamily buildings enjoyed by provincial and federal election canvassers;
- Eliminate, or restrict the number and location of, election signs in municipal elections, and enhance other modes of informing citizens of municipal elections or provide municipal governments with funding to do so; and,
- Do more to achieve a higher voter participation rate in municipal elections by young adults and renters, who have been underrepresented at the polls.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Thompson