

Staff Report 2025-0343

Meeting: General Committee Meeting

Meeting Date: September 9, 2025

Subject: 2026 Pre-Election Report

Submitted By: Kevin Klingenberg, Municipal Clerk, Corporate Services; and Matthew Stepien, Legislative Coordinator, Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the 2026 election workplan as outlined in Staff Report 2025-0343, containing upcoming election policy matters for Council consideration in the year leading up to the October 26, 2026 Municipal and School Board General Election, be approved.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- A work plan, inclusive of the timing for election-based Council decisions, is prepared to address prior Council direction, for Council awareness, and to seek Council's support in the year before the October 26, 2026, Municipal and School Board Election.

DISCUSSION

Background

Council directed the Municipal Clerk and designated Clerk's Staff to prepare a 2026 Pre-Election Report for Council approval at the September 9, 2025, General Committee meeting through the approval of Staff Report 2025-0084. The purpose of this report is to fulfil this direction by providing a workplan which will encompass by-law, policy and procedural matters prior to the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election to be held on October 26, 2026.

Legislative Requirements

The 2026 Municipal and School Board Election is to be held in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, Chapter 32, Schedule, as amended*, here after referred to as the *Act*. [Section 11](#) of the *Act* specifies that the clerk of a local municipality is responsible for conducting elections within that municipality. This responsibility extends to preparing for the election, maintaining peace and order in connection with the election, and ensuring accessibility for electors and candidates with disabilities as outlined in [Section 12.1](#) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. These legislative considerations factor into the items in subsequent sections of this report.

Key Dates

Council should be aware of the following critical dates concerning the election:

Item	Date
Last day to pass a by-law to establish, redivide or dissolve wards prior to the 2026 Municipal Election.	December 31, 2025
Last day to pass a by-law to submit a question to electors. A memo will be addressed to Council in January of 2026.	March 2, 2026
No by-election to be held after this date to fill an office that becomes vacant.	March 31, 2026
Last possible day of a 15-day period for the Clerk to forward any notices of appeal received to the Chief Electoral Officer during the 20-day period regarding question on the ballot by-law.	April 22, 2026
Last day in a regular election year for municipalities to establish rules and procedures regarding the use of municipal resources during the campaign period.	April 30, 2026
Last day for a Minister, upper-tier municipality, or local board to submit a by-law or question to electors.	May 1, 2026
First possible day of the candidate nomination period that ends on Nomination Day.	May 1, 2026
Last day to pass a by-law authorizing the use of voting and vote counting equipment and/or authorizing the use of an alternative voting method.	May 1, 2026
Last day to pass a by-law concerning the circumstances in which the clerk shall hold a recount.	May 1, 2026
Last day to establish procedures and forms for use of voting and vote counting equipment authorized by by-law.	June 1, 2026
Last day of the 60-day period for receiving any notices of appeal that the Chief Electoral Officer shall hold a hearing regarding the appeal of the by-law regarding question on the ballot by-law.	June 22, 2026
Elections Ontario to deliver the Preliminary List of Electors to municipalities.	August 2026
Nomination Day.	August 21, 2026
Last day to revoke by-law to submit a question to electors.	August 21, 2026

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Restricted Acts period begins if the new council will include less than seven members of the outgoing council, lasting until end of the current term of Council.	August 22, 2026
Clerk to certify nominations and/or declare candidates elected by acclamation.	August 24, 2026
First possible day for an elector to appoint a voting proxy.	August 24, 2026
Last day to determine based on the number of beds (20 or more) at which institutions and retirement homes will voting places be established on voting day. Last day to determine which retirement homes and applicable institutions, based on the number of beds (20 or more), qualify for voting places on voting day.	September 1, 2026
Last day for the clerk to determine where and at what time the applications for revisions to the Voters' List may be made.	September 1, 2026
Last day of the 31-day period before Voting Day to revoke a by-law to submit a question to the electors if the election does not include an election for an office.	September 25, 2026
First possible day to hold an advance vote in the 30-day period before Voting Day.	September 26, 2026
Last day to provide final certificates of applicable maximum allowable campaign spending amounts for each office.	September 30, 2026
Last day for Council to establish an Election Compliance Audit Committee.	October 1, 2026
Last day of the 14-day period before Voting Day to request voting place free of charge in a specified building.	October 13, 2026
Last day to make an Accessibility Plan regarding the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities available to the public.	October 25, 2026
Voting Day.	October 26, 2026
Period to revise the Voters' List ends at the close of voting on Voting Day.	October 26, 2026
Clerk to declare results.	As soon as possible after Voting Day

The 2022-2026 term of office ends.	November 14, 2026
The 2026-2030 term of office begins.	November 15, 2026

Election Related Council Direction

Council direction will be necessary to prepare for the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election. These decisions will involve the comprehensive review of various by-laws and policies associated with conducting an election and amending them as required. A template of election related projects that require the consideration of Council and estimated time frame are provided for Council’s consideration.

October to December (Q4) 2025:

1. A report recommending a repeal and replace of [By-law 2022-014](#), a by-law to allow the use of languages in addition to English on election notices, forms and for other election related information, is scheduled to be brought forward by end of 2025. This review is necessary as language within the by-law specify contains outdated 2022 Municipal and School Board Election references. While the *Act* does not specify a date that the by-law must be passed to be applicable for the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election, it is preferential to do so early in the process to ensure an accessible election by offering critical election materials in languages electors are most comfortable using.

2. A report recommending an update of the policy concerning the circumstances in which a municipality requires the Clerk to conduct a recount. At present, this policy is aligned with the minimum requirements of the *Act* as it only provides for recounts on the condition of tied votes, by resolution of Council, by order of the Minister, or by the order of the Superior Court of Justice. The policy does not provide for situations where there is a close result between candidates. The updated policy would remove the need for parties to seek a judicial recount as one would be automatic if the result fell within a predetermined threshold as authorized by [Section 56\(3\)](#) of the *Act*.

3. A report on updates to the Use of Corporate Resources for Election Campaign Purposes policy. The present policy is not as robust in detail as policies present in other municipalities. Research will be conducted and bring a report to Council to recommend updates to the policy to better align the Town of Caledon policy with comparable municipalities.

4. A report on the introduction of an Election Rebate Program for contributions to candidates for office on the municipal council as per [Section 88.11](#) of the *Act* will be brought before Council for consideration in the fourth quarter of 2025. Details about a possible program will be researched by staff and associated feasible options will be presented to Council for consideration. The program would be in established for the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election if desirable by Council.

January to March (Q1) 2026:

1. A memorandum will be provided to Council at the schedule January 2026 General Committee meeting. It will advise of the last day for Council to pass a by-law to submit a question to electors under [Section 8.1\(1\)\(a\)](#) of the *Act*. Such a by-law may be passed no

later than March 2, 2026, and may not be amended after that date. The memo will provide Council with grater detail on provisions surrounding the enactment of such a by-law.

2. A report reviewing the Sign By-law with a specific focus on aspects affiliated with Election signs. The feasibility of developing a standalone Election Sign By-law will be investigated by February 2026. The existing Sign By-law, By-law 2017-54 covers election signs, and it will be recommended to either create a new and separate by-law to specifically handle election signs or update the existing Sign By-law with a focus on election sign updates. This by-law will undergo a review to ensure it meets community needs and upholds constitutional freedom of expression rights.

3. It is required under [Section 88.37\(1\)](#) of the *Act* that Council establish an Election Compliance Audit Committee before October 1 of an election year. To provide enough time to update the Terms of Reference and to recruit qualified candidates for the Town of Caledon's Municipal Elections Compliance Audit Committee, this process will begin in Q1 of 2026. The possibility of establishing a joint Compliance Audit Committee is being explored with the City of Brampton, and potentially the City of Mississauga too. The details of establishing a joint Compliance Audit Committee, if feasible, along with an updated terms of reference for the committee will also be presented for Council's consideration. This timeframe is subject to change as it is interdependent with the City of Brampton and Mississauga.

4. A review and update of the Accessible Election Policy is required to reflect changes such as the May 2025 council decision to implement a limited home voting service for the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election. This updated policy will be presented to the Accessibility Advisory Committee in Q1 of 2026 for feedback. The updated policy inclusive of any feedback from the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be presented for Council's consideration.

April to July 2026:

1. In compliance with [Section 12.1\(2\)](#) of the *Act*, the clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and make that plan available to the public before Voting Day. The Election Accessibility Plan will be drafted following the adoption of the updated Accessible Election Policy to ensure that the principals of the updated policy are reflected in the Accessible Election Plan. The Accessible Election Plan for the 2026 Election will be brought to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for consultation. Preparing the Accessible Election Plan in advance of the legislative deadline will ensure that details concerning accessibility are made available to electors as earlier as possible.

2. A report and accompanying by-law for Council consideration will come forward in July 2026 on ensuring business continuity for the Corporation of the Town of Caledon while certain actions by Council may be restricted under [Section 275](#) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*. This by-law if passed delegates authority of the specified restricted acts to the Chief Administrative Officer where Council may in an effective period and subject to these restricted actions.

Opportunities for Community Participation

Opportunities for community participation in the electoral process will be available during the second quarter of 2026, located at various locations or events around the Town of Caledon. These opportunities will offer a chance for residents and electors to become informed about ongoing election initiatives, placement of voting locations and hours of operation for both voting day and advance voting and being added to the voters list.

Election Contact Information

Elections@caledon.ca for email inquiries and elections extension available at 905-584-2272 Ext. 3528 has been established in anticipation of questions from residents, electors, candidates and third-party advertisers seeking additional information. Both the elections email and the elections telephone extension are being monitored for inquiries.

An online presence for the election information to ensure residents and electors have access to important election information will be established in early 2026, prior to the nomination period to ensure that potential candidates, electors and residents are able to view important election related information.

Recommendation

Approval of this report indicates Council's support of the work plan inclusive of the timing for election-based Council decisions in the year prior to the October 26, 2026, Municipal and School Board Election.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

COUNCIL WORK PLAN

Strategic Plan 2023-2035

This report is directly related to the following priority in Caledon's 2023-2035 Strategic Plan:

Service Excellence and Accountability

Ensures transparency in decision-making related to elections.

Details about Caledon's 2023-2035 Strategic Plan can be found at caledon.ca/strategicplan.

ATTACHMENTS

None.