

Candidate Q&A - 2022

The following questions have been submitted by candidates that have filed with the City of Stratford for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election. For the awareness of all candidates, responses to these questions are shared below:

Voters' List and MPAC

Concern was received with respect to the accuracy of the voters' list, specifically as it relates to eligible electors who are renters. A request was made to declare an emergency due to the disenfranchisement of renters in the City.

Answer - [Voterlookup.ca](https://voterlookup.ca) is one of the ways the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) collects Ontario residents' information to inform the preliminary list of electors. This helps ensure that each municipality has the most accurate information possible for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Elections. This is available until the end of August, 2022. Both MPAC and Ontario municipalities help to educate eligible electors on the availability of [VoterLookup.ca](https://voterlookup.ca) and to check to make sure they are on the list. The City will continue to advertise this information until MPAC begins redirecting eligible electors from [VoterLookup.ca](https://voterlookup.ca) to local municipalities. Candidates can also help play a role by communicating the availability of this tool when speaking with eligible electors. Each candidate binder contains a VoterLookUp buckslip that can be shared or shown to those wondering if they are on the voters' list.

In accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, beginning September 1st and ending at the close of voting on voting day (Monday, October 24, 2022, at 8:00pm), the Clerk may accept an Application to Amend the Voters' List (Form EL15) from an eligible elector.

As the Assessment Act provides that it is the responsibility of MPAC to conduct enumerations used to create the voters' list during a municipal election the City is following the process outlined in this piece of legislation and in the Municipal Elections Act. At this time, it is not felt that the issue constitutes an emergency given the options that remain available to eligible electors to add or update their information on the list.

After years of advocating for reform by election administrations and municipal associations, legislative amendments are being made starting in 2024 to create one list of electors for municipal and provincial elections. This list will be overseen by Elections Ontario and apply to the 2026 municipal and school board election.

MFOI Release Forms

A question was received with respect to how new MFOI Release Forms are to be submitted and if an appointment is required.

Answer - Appointments are not required at our office to submit a new MFOI Release Form. We do however require that the original form be provided so it will need to be submitted in person. Please be reminded as well that any new MFOI Release Form submitted will replace any previously submitted form and only the information contained on the new form will appear on the City's website.

Candidate Financial Statements - 2010 and 2014

A question was received with respect to reviewing Candidate financial statements from the 2010 and 2014 Stratford Municipal and School Board election.

Answer – The Municipal Elections Act requires municipal clerks to retain candidate financial statements until the members of the council or local board elected at the next regular election have taken office. Staff are reviewing whether the candidate financial statements from the 2010 and 2014 municipal election are available and will provide further information on a process to review those records, if located.

Voting Proxy Appointment

A question was received with respect to whether there will be voting by proxy permitted in the 2022 Stratford Municipal Election, and if so, that the details be provided.

Answer – As outlined in Section 9 of the Election Procedures, available in Tab 5 of your Candidate Package, the municipality has chosen to use an alternative voting method and proxy voting will not be utilized. The City's By-law 86-2021, to authorize the use of internet and telephone voting as an alternative voting method for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election, does not provide a provision for proxies, and it is therefore not applicable in accordance with the Act.

Campaign Finances

Questions were received with respect to:

- Can a candidate use a personal credit card for campaign expenses?
- Can e-transfers or interact transfers be used to pay for goods and services?
- Can donations be received through those same e-payment methods?

Answer – The 2022 Candidates Guide developed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing provides the following information in relation to the questions posed about campaign finances:

- On Page 21: “Expenses must be paid from your campaign bank account. If you use a credit card to pay for purchases you should make sure that you keep clear records showing that the expense on the credit card was reimbursed from the campaign account.”
- On Page 17: “Campaign contributions are any money, goods or services that are given to you for use in your campaign, including money and goods that you contribute to yourself.”
- On Page 20: “Only a contribution that is \$25 or less can be made in cash. All contributions above \$25 must be made by cheque, money order or by a method that clearly shows where the funds came from (such as certain debit, credit or electronic transfer transactions).”

A copy of the 2022 Candidates Guide was placed in the Candidates Package and is available on the City’s website at the following link:

<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2022-03/mmah-2022-candidates-guide-en-2022-03-31.pdf>

Candidate Financial Statements - 2010 and 2014

A question was previously received with respect to reviewing Candidate financial statements from the 2010 and 2014 Stratford Municipal and School Board election.

Answer – A search has been completed and a copy of the Candidate Financial Statements from 2010 and 2014 were located. These statements can be reviewed in the Clerk’s Office by appointment. Please email elections@stratford.ca to schedule an appointment. Please note copies of these documents cannot be made and will not be provided.

Bank Account Identification

A question was received with respect to whether a candidate’s bank account has to be identified as “Candidate”.

Answer - Page 17 of the 2022 Candidates Guide, prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and which is available on the City’s website, provides the following regarding setting up a candidate bank account:

“Bank account

You must open a bank account exclusively for your campaign if you accept any contributions of money (including contributions from yourself or your spouse) or incur any expenses. You do not have to open a campaign bank account if you do not spend any money and do not receive any contributions of money. If you receive contributions of goods or services, but no contributions of money, you do not have to open a campaign bank account. You cannot use your personal bank account for campaign finances, even if you are planning a very small campaign. All contributions – including contributions you make to yourself – must be deposited into the campaign bank account. All expenses must be paid for from the campaign account. The nomination fee is considered to be a personal expense, not a campaign expense. You do not need to have a campaign bank account in order to pay the nomination fee.”

The bank account must be separate from a candidates personal account but we do not believe there is a requirement to identify it as “Candidates Name – Candidate,” for example. Once a person has filed their nomination with the Clerk, they can then proceed to set up a bank account for their campaign and the financial institution setting up the account may provide additional direction on how that account appears.

Donations and Information to be Collected

A question was received with respect to whether an individual can make a donation but request their business mailing address to be noted in the record.

Answer – The 2022 Candidates Guide prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing provides the following information in relation to the question posed about contributions and information to be collected:

- Page 18: “You can accept contributions only from individuals who are residents of Ontario. Corporations and trade unions are not permitted to make contributions to candidates.”
- Page 20: “You are required to list the names and addresses of every contributor who gives more than \$100 total to your campaign in your financial statement. You should keep a record of the names and addresses of every contributor, regardless of the value of their contribution, because the same contributor may make multiple contributions that end up totalling more than \$100.”

As Corporations and trade unions are not permitted to make a contribution to a candidate, the information provided by the contributor should be their personal information and not their business information.

Voting Proxies and Appointment of Scrutineers

Questions were received in relation to voting proxies and the appointment of scrutineers as follows:

1. Why are voting proxies not applicable in the 2022 Stratford Municipal and School Board Election?
2. How are scrutineers appointed when internet and telephone voting is being used?

Answer – With respect to the first question about voting proxies, the Municipal Elections Act provides:

“Effect of by-law on advance votes and voting proxies

(5) When a by-law authorizing the use of an alternative voting method is in effect, sections 43 (advance votes) and 44 (voting proxies) apply only if the by-law so specifies; if the by-law specifies that section 44 applies, it may also establish additional criteria that a person must meet to be entitled to vote by proxy. 1996, c. 32, Sched., s. 42 (5).”

The City’s By-law 86-2021, to authorize the use of internet and telephone voting as an alternative voting method for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election, does not provide a provision for proxies, and it is therefore not applicable in accordance with the Act. This was the same in the previous election as proxies were also not provided for in 2018.

With respect to the second question related to appointment of scrutineers, Section 12 of the Elections Procedures, available in Tab 5 of the Candidates Package, provides information on the appointment of scrutineers in the 2022 Stratford Municipal and School Board Election.

Municipal Conflict of Interest Act

A question has been received with respect to a member of Council’s obligations under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act (MCIA).

Answer - The MCIA requires Members of Council to declare any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in relation to a matter under consideration. Staff do not provide legal advice on the interpretation or application of this piece of legislation to members of Council, local boards or advisory committees as applicable. As the City's Integrity Commissioner investigates complaints related to possible contraventions of the MCIA, members of Council, local boards and advisory committees can seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner or through their own independent legal counsel.

Changing your mind – running for a different office

A question was received as to the process involved with choosing to run for a different office if you've already filed a nomination for another office.

Answer – Starting on page 7 of the 2022 Candidates' Guide, prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and which is available on the City's website, information is available which outlines changing your mind and running for a different office. The following has been copied here from this section of the Guide:

"You can only run for one office at a time. If you decide to run for a different office, your first nomination is deemed to be withdrawn when you file your second nomination.

If you decide to run for a different office on the same council or school board, and both offices are elected at large (for example, an office such as the mayor, which everyone in the municipality may vote for), everything (contributions, expenses, etc.) from your first campaign is simply transferred to your second campaign.

Several case examples of changing your mind and running for a different office are available in the 2022 Candidates' Guide should you wish to review this further.

Election Signs

Several questions were submitted with respect to election signs under the Sign By-law as it relates to signs at Campaign Headquarters, sign size, and sign content.

Answer - While section 21.1(h) iii of the by-law does currently read "Notwithstanding section (h) iii...", the intent of the section is to be notwithstanding of the previous section, being (h) ii. This is to be interpreted to provide that, regardless of (h) ii, Campaign Headquarters Election Signs may be placed once a Candidate has filed their nomination papers with the City Clerk and paid the required filing fee. Section (h) ii remains as follows: "No person shall affix, erect or otherwise display an Election Sign for a municipal election earlier than the day that the Candidate has been nominated or appointed or the third party advertiser has registered with the City Clerk and no earlier than:

1. 45 days prior to Election Day in the year of a regular election; or
2. Nomination Day for a by-election."

For further clarification regarding signage for campaign headquarters, the by-law defines campaign headquarters as "a building or structure, or part of a building or structure thereof, where a registered candidate or third party advertiser has set up an office to conduct an election campaign, in a zone permitted in accordance with the City's Zoning By-law, as amended, one per candidate'.

The by-law also notes that an election which is a fascia sign may be affixed to the face of the building or building unit which is used as a candidate's campaign headquarters provided such fascia sign complies with the provisions of the By-law for a fascia sign.

With respect to the physical characteristics of election signs, please be reminded that section 21 (f) provides the following:

- i. No person shall affix, erect or otherwise display an Election Sign that:
 1. Is illuminated;
 2. Exceeds a maximum sign area of 3.7 m² (40 ft.²), with the exception of those placed on billboard signs.
- ii. No Election Sign shall be in a state of disrepair and every person shall ensure that the Election Signs remains in a state of repair.

Lastly, when it comes to sign content, page 10 of the 2022 Candidates' Guide, prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and which is available on the City's website, provides the following regarding Campaigning – Signs: "All of your campaign signs and other advertising must identify that you are responsible for the sign. This is so that people seeing the sign or advertisement can tell that it is from your campaign, rather than from a third party advertiser."

Map of the City

It was questioned if maps of the City are available.

Answer - Maps of Stratford and Perth County, printed by Destination Stratford, are available for pickup at the Clerk's Office for anyone who is interested.

Third Party Advertisers

A question was received with respect to what a third party advertiser is and who must register.

Answer - Pages 1-2 of the 2022 Third Party Advertisers' Guide prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing provides the following information on third party advertising.

"Third party advertising

Third party advertising refers to advertisements or other materials that support, promote or oppose a candidate, or support, promote or oppose a "yes" or "no" answer to a question on the ballot. The meaning of "third party" in this context means a person or entity who is not a candidate.

Third party advertising is separate from any candidate's campaign, and must be done independently from a candidate. Any advertisements or materials that are made and distributed by a candidate, or under a candidate's direction, are part of the candidate's campaign.

Third party advertising is a way for those outside of the candidate's campaign to express support of or opposition to candidates (or a "yes" or "no" answer to a question on the ballot) and to try to persuade voters to vote a certain way.

A third party advertisement is an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic or other medium that promotes, supports or opposes a candidate, or a "yes" or "no" answer to a question on the ballot. Advertisement includes traditional ads as well as materials such as brochures or signs.

Third Party Advertisement

Activities that do not involve spending money, such as discussions or expressing an opinion about a candidate (or an answer to a question on the ballot) are not considered to be third party advertising. Examples include:

- speaking to friends and neighbours
- posting on social media, such as Twitter, Facebook or Instagram
- sending an email to a group or mailing list

Internal communications from an employer to their employees, a corporation to its shareholders, directors, members or employees or by a trade union to its members or employees are not considered to be third party advertising.

Advertising about an issue, rather than a candidate or a “yes” or “no” answer to a question on the ballot is not considered third party advertising. For example, signs saying “Support local businesses” or “Keep the waterfront green” would not be third party advertising, even if a candidate has made those issues part of their campaign.

Who can be a third party advertiser

Only those who have registered can spend money on third party advertising. The following are eligible to register as a third party advertiser:

- any person who is a resident in Ontario
- a corporation carrying on business in Ontario
- a trade union that holds bargaining rights for employees in Ontario

If two or more corporations are owned or controlled by the same person or people, or if one corporation controls another, they are considered to be a single corporation. If the same person or people own or control multiple corporations, only one of those corporations may register to be a third party advertiser in a municipality.

There is no restriction against family members or campaign staff of candidates registering to be third party advertisers. However, third party advertising must be done independently of the candidate. If a person with close ties to a candidate wants to register they should consider how these activities may

look to the public and how they would be able to demonstrate that they were not working in coordination with the candidate.

Who cannot be a third party advertiser

- A candidate running for any municipal council or school board office cannot register to be a third party advertiser in any municipality.
- Groups, associations or businesses that are not corporations are not eligible to register and may not spend money on third party advertising in municipal elections. For example, neighbourhood associations, clubs or professional associations cannot register and cannot make contributions to third party advertisers. Members may register as individual third party advertisers and may contribute individually.
- Candidates in the provincial election cannot register. They may register after the provincial election, when they are no longer candidates.
- Federal and provincial political parties cannot register to be third party advertisers. Political parties are not permitted to be financially involved in municipal elections.”

As outlined in the Guide, groups that are ineligible from registering as a third party advertiser **cannot spend money** on third party advertising. Any advertisements or materials that are made and distributed by a candidate, **or under a candidate’s direction**, are part of the candidate’s campaign. Activities that **do not involve spending money**, such as discussions or expressing an opinion about a candidate, or an answer to a question on the ballot, or are considered advertising about an issue, are not considered third party advertising.

City Council Structure, Procedural By-law, Lobbyist Registry, Contracted Positions

Questions were received with respect to:

1. When was the last time the structure of City Council was reviewed?
2. When was the Procedural By-law last reviewed and amended?
3. Does the City have a Lobbyist Registry?
4. When are contracted positions, such as the Integrity Commissioner, the City’s Solicitor, the Chief Administrative Officer, reviewed?

Answer – Responses to the questions are outlined in order below.

1. Prior to each municipal election, reports are prepared for Council's consideration on election related matters such as, but not limited to, whether to change the size and composition of Council and whether to consider a ward boundary review. In 2021, Stratford City Council chose to maintain the size and composition of Council and no requests for a ward boundary review were made to the Clerk.
2. The Procedural By-law was first adopted in 2007 and has been amended. The last amendment was approved on October 13, 2020.
3. Section 223.9 (1) and (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, authorizes a municipality to establish and maintain a registry to provide for a system of registration of persons who lobby public office holders. Municipal Lobbying Registry programs are often established by By-law. The City of Stratford has not adopted a Municipal Lobbying Registration By-law.
4. The Municipal Act, 2001 (the Act), requires municipalities to appoint certain positions such as, but not limited to, the Integrity Commissioner, the Chief Building Official, and the Clerk. The Act also sets out the statutory roles and responsibilities of these positions. Some of the statutory positions are employees of the City and others, such as the Integrity Commissioner, are contracted and therefore not an employee of the City.

Contracts for services are approved by City Council and establish the terms of the contracted service. For example, these contracts will set out the term of the contract, the terms related to extensions, if provided, and the process to be followed for extending the term of the contract.

For Integrity Commissioner and City Solicitor services, requests for proposals (RFPs) are issued in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy and are subject to award by Council.

All employee positions, including senior positions, are hired by the municipal corporation and subject to City policies for recruitment and hiring, along with the Employment Standards Act in Ontario. The exception is the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) position which reports to Council and is the only employee of Council.

For continuity of municipal services, most contracts do not expire at the end of a Council term.

Campaign Bank Account

A question was received with respect to how a campaign bank account must be set up.

Answer - Page 17 of the 2022 Candidates Guide, prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and which is available on the City's website, provides the following regarding setting up a candidate bank account:

"Bank account

You must open a bank account exclusively for your campaign if you accept any contributions of money (including contributions from yourself or your spouse) or incur any expenses. You do not have to open a campaign bank account if you do not spend any money and do not receive any contributions of money. If you receive contributions of goods or services, but no contributions of money, you do not have to open a campaign bank account. You cannot use your personal bank account for campaign finances, even if you are planning a very small campaign. All contributions – including contributions you make to yourself – must be deposited into the campaign bank account. All expenses must be paid for from the campaign account. The nomination fee is considered to be a personal expense, not a campaign expense. You do not need to have a campaign bank account in order to pay the nomination fee."

Once a person has filed their nomination with the Clerk, they can then proceed to set up a bank account for their campaign and the financial institution setting up the account may provide additional direction on how that account is set-up.

Endorsement Signatures

A question was received with respect to whether a candidate can submit additional endorsement signatures prior to the filing deadline (Nomination Day, August 19 at 2pm).

Answer – Additional endorsement signatures can be submitted to the Clerk's Office during office hours and before the deadline of 2pm on August 19th.

Third Party Advertisers

Questions were received with respect to:

1. how individuals, corporations and trade unions register as third party advertisers; and
2. whether a group of registered third party advertisers can work together on advertisements.

Answer - An individual, corporation, or trade union may file with the City Clerk a notice of registration to be a registered third party for the 2022 Municipal Election between May 2, 2022 and October 21, 2022 at the City Clerk's Office during regular business hours (Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.). The notice must be filed on the prescribed form and must include a declaration of qualification signed by the individual or by a representative of the corporation or trade union, as the case may be.

If a registration is submitted by an agent who is acting on behalf of an individual who wishes to register as a Third Party Advertiser, a letter must be provided at the time of registration which authorizes the agent to register on their behalf. The letter must be signed by the third party advertiser and commissioned or notarized by a person authorized under the Commissioners for Taking Affidavits Act or Notaries Act.

Following submission of a notice of registration, the prescribed Form 7 will be reviewed and certified by the City Clerk, or their designate, by end of the next business day. Once certified the individual or representative will be notified by email.

Groups, associations or businesses that are not corporations are not eligible to register and may not spend money on third party advertising in municipal elections. For example, neighbourhood associations, clubs or professional associations cannot register and cannot make contributions to third party advertisers. Members of these groups/associations/businesses may register as individual third party advertisers and may contribute individually. A registered individual cannot act on behalf of a group or organization that is not eligible to register as a third party advertiser. For example, if Chris Smith is the president of a business improvement association (BIA), the signs and materials must identify Chris Smith as the person responsible for the advertising, not the BIA.

The Municipal Elections Act does not address "group" or "team" Third Party Advertising campaigns. It is up to each individual third party advertiser to comply with their obligations under the Act. If Third Party Advertisers wish to undertake activities that involve sharing expenses, it is recommended by the Ministry that they seek accounting and legal advice on how to report those expenses and comply with the provisions of the Act.

As a reminder, third party advertising is separate from any candidate's campaign, and must be done independently from a candidate. Any advertisements or materials that are made and distributed by a candidate, or under a candidate's direction, are part of the candidate's campaign. If a person with close ties to a candidate wants to register as a third party advertiser they should consider how these activities may look to the public and how they would be able to demonstrate that they were not working in co-ordination with the candidate. If a third party advertiser accepts contributions from a candidate, they should consider how this may look to the public and how they would be able to demonstrate that they were not working in co-ordination with the candidate. Again, it is up to each individual third party advertiser to comply with their obligations under the Act.

If candidates are being approached by individuals or groups interested in learning more about third party advertising or who have questions about how to register as a third party advertiser, please direct them to email elections@stratford.ca.

Hyperlink Addition – Municipal Website

A question was received with respect to whether the City will be creating hyperlinks to candidate's websites on the Municipal Elections webpage.

Answer – If a candidate has included a link to their campaign website on their completed Municipal Freedom of Information (MFOI) Consent to Release Form CS02, the website address will be added to the information on the website under their name. In order to ensure all candidates are being treated in a fair and equal manner a hyperlink will not be added as the City cannot guarantee that the link will work or not be broken from the period of filing to Election Day, October 24, 2022.

Installation of Election Signs

A question was received with respect to when election signs can be installed.

Answer – The City's Sign By-law 159-2004 prohibits and regulates signs and other advertising devices and the posting of notices on buildings or vacant lots within the City of Stratford. With respect to when election signs can be installed, section h. ii. and iii. provide:

- ii. No person shall affix, erect or otherwise display an Election Sign for a municipal election earlier than the day that the Candidate has been nominated or appointed or the third party advertiser has registered with the City Clerk and no earlier than:

1. 45 days prior to Election Day in the year of a regular election; or
 2. Nomination Day for a by-election.
- iii. Notwithstanding section (h) ii of this By-law, Campaign Headquarters Election Signs may be placed once a Candidate has filed their nomination papers with the City Clerk and paid the required filing fee or a Registered Third Party has registered with the City Clerk.

This means that election signs, excluding Campaign Headquarter signs, can begin to be displayed on Friday, September 9, 2022 up until Monday, October 24, 2022. Campaign Headquarter Election signs can be placed once a candidate has filed their nomination papers with the Clerk and paid the required fee. A Campaign Headquarter sign is a fascia sign which may be affixed to the face of the building or building unit which is used as a candidate's campaign headquarters provided such fascia sign complies with the provisions of the Sign By-law for a fascia sign.

The Sign By-law is available for review on the City's website at the following link and a copy was placed in the Candidate's Package:

<https://www.stratford.ca/en/inside-city-hall/resources/Election-2022/Sign-By-law---159-2004---AODA.pdf>

Enumerating Electors in Municipal Elections

A question was received with respect to how eligible electors are enumerated in municipal elections in Ontario.

Answer - The Assessment Act provides that the assessment corporation, being the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), is statutorily responsible for conducting enumerations during a municipal election. The City of Stratford does not have the authority to conduct an enumeration.

Understanding that MPAC is responsible for collecting the information of residents in Ontario to create a Preliminary List of Electors for municipal and school board elections, the City plays an important role by educating eligible electors on the availability of a tool called voterlookup.ca. The voter lookup tool is administered by MPAC and the information is used by Ontario municipalities to generate the voters' list. By visiting this website up until August 30th, any eligible elector, whether they own property or rent, or are the spouse of an owner or tenant, can confirm, update, or add to their electoral information. Eligible electors who can't find their name on voterlookup.ca can search by

property address to register. If you can't find the address (new construction for example), you can reach out for assistance directly to the MPAC Customer Contact Centre toll free at 1-866-296-6722. If an eligible elector is checking their information through voterlookup and is unable to locate their address then a message should appear asking the person to contact MPAC at their toll free line and the number should be provided. This information is also available on the City's website.

The City has actively promoted MPAC's voterlookup tool and encouraged all eligible electors to check that their information is correct and up to date through the following:

1. Information posted to the City's website on the "Municipal Elections" webpage:
<https://www.stratford.ca/en/inside-city-hall/municipalelection.aspx#Are-you-on-the-List>;
2. Information circulated through the City's social media channels;
3. Ads placed in the local paper;
4. Ads placed on the radio;
5. An insert placed in the property tax bills and available for pick-up at the Clerk's Office;
6. Information included in the candidate's package, specifically in the 2022 Elections Procedure and inclusion of a voterlookup bucksip;
7. Information circulated to candidate's through the Information Bulletin to assist with answering questions from eligible electors about MPAC's role and responsibilities related to municipal and school board elections;
8. Information circulated on the screens in the transit buses.

Beginning September 1st, and until the close of voting on voting day, the Municipal Elections Act provides authority to the Clerk to begin accepting applications to add individuals to the voters' list, or to change or correct information on the voters' list relating to that individual. Applications can be submitted to the City Clerk's Office located on the Ground Floor of Stratford City Hall, at 1 Wellington Street, Stratford ON N5A 6W1 during regular office hours (Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m., to 4:30 p.m., excluding Holidays). Applications will also be accepted at the Voter Help Center to be held at the Rotary Complex, at 353 McCarthy Road West, during specified days and times during the voting period. Information about the Voter Help Center's hours of operation will be communicated to candidates, posted to the City's website and included in the Voter Information Letter. The voting period will be from Friday, October 14th at 10:00 a.m., to Monday, October 24, 2022, at 8:00 p.m.

Information about accepting applications to amend the voters' list is being communicated to all eligible electors through, but not limited to, the following:

1. on the City's website;
2. through the City's social media sites;
3. in the local newspaper;
4. on the radio; and
5. on the transit screens.

Candidates can also fulfil an important role by communicating information about the upcoming municipal election to electors, directing electors to the City's website for the most up to date information or by directing questions to the Clerk's Office by email to elections@stratford.ca or by phone to 519-271-0250 extension 5237.

To ensure that the voters' list has the most accurate information as possible for the 2022 Municipal Election, it is important that everyone check to see whether they are on the list and that their information is correct. There is also an opportunity for eligible electors to be added to the list or to update their information on the voters' list all the way up to the close of voting (8:00 p.m., on Monday, October 24th).

For more information on enumeration and the voters' list, candidates can review the Municipal Elections Act 1996, the Assessment Act, and the various guides prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Building Permit Applications and Developments

Questions were received with respect to the following:

1. Whether there is a report that summarizes the number and type of building permits that have been issued annually by the City of Stratford from 2018 to the present?
2. How many building permit applications are currently being considered and what are their type?
3. Whether there are proposals before the City for new subdivisions or developments, excluding single-detached dwellings?

Answer – Staff have reached out to Building Services to inquire about information in response to the first two questions. Information will be provided once available.

With respect to the third question, updates on department activities and ongoing projects are given at Planning and Heritage Sub-committee meetings. These updates include recent applications for Plan of Subdivisions, Condominiums, Zone Changes and Site Plans. All of these applications, excluding Site Plans, are approved through Council. Site Plans are approved by staff in accordance with Provincial legislation. The updates are included with the agenda and agendas can be reviewed on the City's website at the following link:

<https://calendar.stratford.ca/meetings>

Staff only become aware of specific plans of private development once the developer submits an application. What can be developed is dependent on how the land is zoned in the City of Stratford Zoning By-law. The links below provide information on zoning for the City and the zoning by-law that outlines permitted development.

- <https://maps.stratford.ca/public/>
- <https://www.stratford.ca/en/inside-city-hall/planning.aspx#Comprehensive-Zoning-By-law-Zoning-By-law-Amendment-Process>

The City is looking to develop a new Industrial Subdivision on City owned lands south of Lorne Avenue and a Request For Proposal for consulting services is currently out for tender.

There are concepts for how the City may address attainable housing, which is identified in the investStratford report:

<https://www.stratford.ca/en/inside-city-hall/resources/ReportsAndPublications/Stratford-Housing-Project-A-Road-Map-for-Attainable-Market-Housing-Development.pdf>

Also ongoing, is the development of the Grant Trunk Community Hub. A concept plan is available in the attached link:

https://www.stratford.ca/en/inside-city-hall/resources/Cooper-Block/R_20171108Grand-Trunk-Community-Hub-Master-Plan.pdf

Voters' List Delivery to Candidates

A question was received with respect to how candidates will be given access to the Voters' List on September 1, 2022.

Answer – Section 23(4) and (5) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, provides:

"Copies for candidates

(4) On the written request of a certified candidate for an office, the clerk shall provide him or her with the part of the voters' list that contains the names of the electors who are entitled to vote for that office. 1996, c. 32, Sched., s. 23 (4); 2016, c. 15, s. 17 (2).

Same

(5) The clerk shall not provide a copy of the voters' list under subsection (3) or a part of the voters' list under subsection (4) until September 1. 2016, c. 15, s. 17 (3)."

As outlined on the Voters' List Request Form EL14, candidates will be given access to an on-line portal on September 1, 2022, to view the Voters' List. Registered candidates will be provided with their individual credentials to access the on-line portal via the email address supplied by the candidate at the time of filing their nomination. A "Guide to the Candidates Access Portal" will also be provided to assist registered candidates with using the portal.

Update on the Attainable Housing – Special Project

A question was received with respect to the status of the Summary of Actions & Next Steps outlined in the Stratford Housing Project and if the City has retained a project manager?

Answer - Implementation of the Key Action Items from the "A Road Map for Attainable Market Housing Development", as received and approved by Council in June, 2021, is ongoing. A Project Manager and Planning Consultant have been retained.

Property Tax Ratio Targets and Actuals from 2019, 2020, 2021

Questions were received with respect to:

1. What is the target ratio for property tax collected from Residential, Commercial, and Industrial sources?
2. What was the actual ratios for 2019, 2020, and 2021?

Answer – The Province establishes the ranges of fairness for ratios that municipalities follow. The following are the provincially legislated ranges of fairness and Provincial threshold ratios which can be compared to the City’s actuals, outlined By-laws 76-2019, 39-2020, 60-2021:

Property Class/Subclass	Provincial Range of Fairness	Provincial Threshold Ratio
Residential/farm (RT)	1.0 to 1.0	
Multi-residential (MT)	1.0 to 1.1	2.0000
New multi-residential (NT)	1.0 to 1.1	1.1000
Farmland (FT)	0.01 to 0.25	
Commercial (CT)	0.6 to 1.1	1.9800
Industrial (IT)	0.6 to 1.1	2.6300
Large Industrial (LT)	0.6 to 1.1	2.6300
Landfill (HF) PILT	0.6 to 1.1	
Pipeline (PT)	0.6 to 0.7	
Shopping Centre (ST)	0.6 to 1.1	1.9800
Managed Forests (TT)	0.25 to 0.25	
Parking Lot (GT)	0.6 to 1.1	1.9800
New construction industrial (JT)	0.6 to 1.1	2.6300
New construction large industrial (KT)	0.6 to 1.1	2.6300
New construction commercial (XT)	0.6 to 1.1	1.9800
New construction office building (YT)	0.6 to 1.1	1.9800
New construction shopping centre (ZT)	0.6 to 1.1	1.9800

How to review a Candidate’s Postal Code in their Qualifying Address

A question was received with respect to whether a list of the Candidate’s postal codes from their qualifying addresses can be provided.

Answer – A Candidate’s Nomination Paper Form 1 is available for review in the Clerk’s Office during regular office hours, upon request.

Candidate Access Portal

The purpose of the candidate’s access portal and how to make changes to the Voters’ List were questioned.

Answer - The purpose of the Candidate Access Portal is for candidates to view real-time data of eligible electors. Candidates are not able to make changes to the information as it appears on this list for other electors and the Clerk’s Office is unable to make changes to the list without a completed Application to Amend the Voters’ List Form EL15, submitted by the elector with acceptable identification showing their name and qualifying address. Details on when Applications to Amend the Voters’ List Form EL15 can be submitted and where have been outlined in a previous Candidate Q&A.

Methods for Contributions Over \$25.00

A question was received with respect to the methods that can be accepted for contributions over \$25.00.

Answer – Page 20 of the Candidates Guide, prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, provides the following information in response to the question:

“Only a contribution that is \$25 or less can be made in cash. All contributions above \$25 must be made by cheque, money order or by a method that clearly shows where the funds came from (such as certain debit, credit or electronic transfer transactions).”

Voters’ List

Questions were received with respect to providing information on the terms and acronyms used in the Voters’ List.

Answer – The following fields are included in the Extract and Revision Reports that can be downloaded from the Candidate Access Portal:

- Name

- School Support
- Occupancy Status
- Residency Status
- Property Address
- Mailing Address
- Voted (whether an eligible elector has voted or not)

The following are some acronyms and additional information on what terms mean or refer to:

1. SS – School Support
 - Options Include:
 - i. EP - English Public
 - ii. ES - English Separate
 - iii. FP - French Public
 - iv. FS - French Separate
 - v. No School Support
2. OS – Occupancy Status
 - Can be an:
 - i. Owner – an owner of property
 - ii. Tenant – a tenant of property
 - iii. Spouse – a spouse of an owner or tenant of property
 - iv. Boarder – an eligible elector who lives in shared accommodation where they do not pay rent or live in the municipality but do not have a fixed address.
3. RS – Residency Status
 - Can be a:
 - i. Resident Elector – you are a resident elector if you live in the municipality. You may own, rent, live in shared accommodation where you do not pay rent or live in the municipality but do not have a fixed address. Being a resident elector is the most common type of eligibility.
 - ii. Non-resident Elector in the municipality – you are a non-resident elector if you own or rent property in a municipality, but it's not the one where you live. You can be a resident elector in only one municipality. However, you can be a non-resident elector in any other municipality (or municipalities) where you own or rent property.

Voters' List

This is provided in follow-up to the questions received with respect to providing information on the terms and acronyms used in the Voters' List.

Answer – The Extract and Revision Reports that can be downloaded from the Candidate's Access Portal also contain the standard MPAC Residency codes which are as follows:

- U = I live here
- M = I live elsewhere in this municipality
- N = I live in another municipality
- A = I live elsewhere on this property.

Property Tax Ratio Targets and Actuals from 2019, 2020, 2021

In follow-up to the questions regarding property tax ratio targets and actuals from 2019, 2020 and 2021, the following additional questions were submitted:

1. What were the percentages of the total property taxes collected that was Residential (all types), Commercial (all types), and Industrial (all types).
2. What were the actual amounts collected for 2021, 2020, 2019?
3. How does this compare with other cities in Ontario that are comparable to Stratford?
4. How is the Festival taxed by the City? What were those amounts for the three years pre-pandemic?

Answer – Answers to the above noted questions are as follows:

1. Based on 2022, Stratford's residential assessment of all types comprised 84% of all assessment, and these classes were billed 73% of the taxes levied (\$49.9 million). Commercial represented 12% of assessment and had 19% of taxes attributed (\$13.2 million), and Industrial 3% and 7% (\$4.8 million). The balances are classes not specifically requested such as pipelines, farmlands, landfill etc.
2. The amounts are not easily split by classification, but approximately, excluding supplementary taxes for each year were:

- a. 2019 Res: \$43,194,092 Com/Ind \$16,026,115
- b. 2020 Res: \$45,168,326 Com/Ind \$17,032,189
- c. 2021 Res: \$ 46,411,519 Com/Ind \$17,042,413

- 3. The City does not have quantitative analysis comparing historical data to other municipalities.
- 4. The City does not tax businesses. Taxes on properties are calculated for every property the same way regardless of the owner. Assessment information is available for every property from the returned tax roll book at City Hall, if the property roll number is known.

Expenses for Website Registration and Hosting

A question was received with respect to whether the costs/expenses for a new URL registration and a new website are to be pro-rated for the campaign period or if the entire cost is to be reported?

Answer – Pages 21 to 23 of the Candidates Guide, prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, provides the following information in response to the question:

“Campaign expenses are the costs that you incur (or that a person such as your campaign manager incurs under your direction) during your campaign.”

“Your spending limit covers expenses that you incur between the beginning of your campaign and voting day. Expenses that you incur between the day after voting day and the end of your campaign are not subject to the spending limit. Note: if you incur an expense before voting day, but don’t get around to paying for it until after voting day, it would still be subject to the spending limit.”

We would also note the following information, which can be found on page 18 of the Guide, which may be relevant for this question:

“If you have inventory such as signs left over from a previous campaign and you use them again, the current market value of the signs (what it would cost you to buy those signs today) is considered to be a contribution that you make to your campaign.”

As a reminder, it is each candidate’s responsibility to file a complete and accurate financial statement and that accounting or financial and legal advice can be sought to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended.

Donations

A question was received with respect to whether the following would be considered a donation:

- If a business allows a candidate to do a meet and greet in the front of their business or on their property - a back patio for example - is this considered an in-kind donation? There is no monetary value per se to the offer and no drinks or goods are being offered to anyone who stops to chat. The candidate would be buying their own drinks and food.

Answer – Page 17 of the Candidates Guide, prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, provides the following information in response to the question:

“Campaign contributions are any money, goods or services that are given to you for use in your campaign, including money and goods that you contribute yourself. If you are given a special discount on a good or service that you are purchasing for your campaign, the difference between what you were charged and what the market value would be is considered to be a contribution. Corporations and other businesses are not permitted to make contributions to candidates. If you are being offered a discount, you should make sure that whoever is offering the discount is entitled to make a personal contribution to your campaign.”

Depending on the specifics of any given scenario, please also see reference to information below from page 21 of the Candidates Guide:

“Fundraising functions are events or activities held by you or on your behalf for the primary purpose of raising money for your campaign. If you hold an event to promote your campaign and you happen to receive some contributions or ask people to consider contributing to your campaign, this would not qualify as a fundraising event.”

Car Magnets

It was questioned whether a car magnet for a campaign (4” x 6”) would be considered a sign under the City’s Sign By-law?

Answer – A magnet placed on a car is not considered a sign under the City’s Sign By-law 159-2004. However, should the magnet be considered campaign material, consideration must be given to the following clause from the City’s Policy on Use of Municipal Resources During an Election Period:

“A vehicle or trailer displaying Campaign material, whether the Campaign material is displayed on the outside or inside of the vehicle or trailer, shall be prohibited from parking:

- during the Election period in a City owned or operated parking lot; and,
- on City property or roadway within 150 meters of a polling location for the dates such locations are open for voting, from two hours before the location opens until two hours after the location is closed for voting.”

A copy of this policy is available in the candidate package and on the City’s election webpage under Additional Resources.

Municipal Debt, Capital Budgets, and Bonds

Questions were received with respect to:

1. What is the amount of municipal debt that Stratford currently has? How is that being retired, terms, time frame? What amount of debt is allowed for Stratford? Is there a limit (provincially mandated or locally decided) to the amount of interest paid per year as a percentage of the budget?
2. What is the status of the capital budget shortfall mentioned during the 2022 budget deliberations?
3. Has Stratford issued municipal bonds in the past? If yes, are there any in use currently? If not, is this being considered?

Answer – Answers to the above noted questions are as follows:

1. Information about the amount of Stratford’s municipal debt was outlined in the 2022 budget documents (see pages 11-12 at the following link): https://www.stratford.ca/en/inside-city-hall/resources/2022_Budget/Supporting-Documents---2022-budget-binder.pdf

The overall debt level, nor interest specifically, is not restricted directly but the Province, through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, limits the amount of annual principal and interest repayments to roughly 25% of what they determine as ‘own source revenues’ for every municipality in the province. This is calculated in the Financial Information Return (FIR) each year for the upcoming year (Schedule 81). As the City does not have the 2020/2021 audited financial statements and FIRs submitted, before authorizing debt, the treasurer

performs an estimate of this calculation based on unaudited figures to ensure compliance is maintained. The 2019 FIR indicated that the maximum annual repayment limit for the City in 2020 was \$15,554,266. In November 2021, a report presented to Council estimated the annual repayment limit at \$12 million and citing some examples as guidelines.

2. The capital budget shortfall noted in the 2022 budget deliberations was provided in the context of the 2022 budget with no significant changes as a result of the budget being approved with the corresponding projects and funding at that time. This will continue to be highlighted in future budget years for Council's consideration.
3. Municipal bonds have not been issued in the past. The City has adopted a Long-term Debt Policy which does provide for this option, should it be pursued in the future.

Campaigning and Campaign Material

Questions were received with respect to the following:

- Is campaigning and campaign material permitted at City facilities?
- Are campaign videos showing the outside of City Facilities permitted?

Answer – The Election Procedures provides:

- "Election campaigning or the distribution/posting of election campaign advertising at municipally-owned or leased facilities is not permitted."

The intent is to restrict campaigning and campaign materials at municipal facilities to ensure the City remains neutral, unbiased and is treating all candidates in a fair and consistent manner.

The City's Policy C.3.14, Use of Corporate Resources, provides:

- "Campaigning and the distribution or display of campaign material is not permitted on municipal land, including the interior of City Hall, other Municipal facilities, and Municipally-provided facilities, or any such locations which have been designated for or are being used for voting purposes by the City."

Candidates and Registered Third Party Advertisers may capture their own photos of municipal property for use in Campaign Material, provided the photo is taken from a publicly accessible area, and **does not contain a City sign, logo, crest, coat of arms or slogan** in the background.

Candidates and Registered Third Party Advertisers shall not campaign, distribute campaign literature, or engage in Election related purposes or activities or Campaign related activities at any function or meeting hosted by the City, regardless of whether the activity or function is on City property, from the day the Candidate or Registered Third Party Advertiser files a nomination or registers with the City to the end of Voting Day.

Notwithstanding the above, campaigning on public sidewalks and highways is permitted, provided that such Campaigning is in compliance with City by-laws.”

The intent of these provisions is to ensure that a municipal facility and Municipally-provided facilities, or any such locations which have been designated for or are being used for voting purposes by the City are neutral and that there is no interference with electors who are proceeding to vote.

Campaigning and distributing of campaign materials would be permitted during certain periods in areas such as the Market Square and at the Farmer’s Market held in the parking lot of the Rotary Complex, for example. Candidates should seek approval from the organizers of any special event, including the Farmers Market, prior to campaigning and distributing campaign materials. We would also note that these activities will be prohibited once the Voter Help Desk (Clerk’s Office at City Hall) and the Voter Help Center (Rotary Complex) are in operation.

With respect to taking videos of municipal property, this would be treated similar to the provision in the Policy related to photos:

“Candidates and Registered Third Party Advertisers may capture their own photos of municipal property for use in Campaign Material, provided the photo is taken from a publicly accessible area, and **does not contain a City sign, logo, crest, coat of arms or slogan in the background.**”

We would also note candidates would not be permitted to block pedestrian or vehicle access or limit public access to municipal property for the purpose of taking a video or picture.

If you have specific questions about campaign materials and campaigning at locations and events in the City, please feel free to contact elections@stratford.ca for further information and guidance.

Third Party Advertising

A question was received with respect to what a third party advertisement is.

Answer - Information about Third Party Advertising, including what a third party advertisement is, has been included in a previous Candidate Q&A and is available on the City's website. A link has also been placed on the City's website to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's 2022 Third Party Advertiser Guide.

Financial Statements, Grand Trunk Community Hub, and City-owned Vacant Land

Questions were received with respect to:

1. What is the status of the audited financial statements for 2020 and 2021?
2. How much has been spent on the Grand Trunk Community Hub and Cooper Site to date?
3. Has a Fundraiser for the Grand Trunk Community Hub been retained and if so, what is the proposed plan for fundraising?
4. Who are the key stakeholders for the Grand Trunk Community Hub?
5. Is a list of City-owned vacant property with descriptions available for review?

Answer – Information in response to the questions is as follows:

1. The 2020 draft audited financial statements will be presented at the September 20, 2022 Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting. Work has begun on the 2021 draft audited financial statements and the draft statements will be provided to Sub-committee once available.
 2. Staff are reviewing and will provide further information in a follow-up Candidate Q&A.
 3. A Request for Proposal has been issued for a Fundraising Project Manager: Grand Trunk Community Hub - Phase I: Campaign Feasibility and the Proposal closed on September 14, 2022. A report will be presented to Council at an upcoming meeting to select a fundraising company following evaluation of the proposals.
 4. Please refer to the 2018 Grand Trunk Master Plan adopted by Stratford City Council for information on stakeholders.
 5. The City is working on developing a comprehensive listing of City-owned property which will include current and previously identified purposes/reasons for holding.
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Candidate Signs and Required Information

A question was received with respect to whether candidate signs must indicate how the sign was paid for?

Answer – Page 10 of the Candidates Guide prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing provides information in response to this question as follows:

“All of your campaign signs and other advertising must identify that you are responsible for the sign. This is so that people seeing the sign or advertisement can tell that it is from your campaign, rather than from a third party advertiser.”

Third Party Advertising

Additional questions have been received with respect to what third party advertising is.

Answer – As outlined in previous Candidate Q&As and in the Third Party Advertising Guide prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, a third party advertisement is an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic or other medium that promotes, supports or opposes a candidate, or a “yes” or “no” answer to a question on the ballot. Advertisement includes traditional ads as well as materials such as brochures or signs.

Advertising about an issue, rather than a candidate or a “yes” or “no” answer to a question on the ballot is not considered third party advertising. For example, signs saying “Support local businesses” or “Keep the waterfront green” would not be third party advertising, even if a candidate has made those issues part of their campaign.

Definition of Meeting

Questions were received with respect to what the definition of a meeting is and whether current members of Council can participate in candidate-related events.

Answer - The Municipal Act, 2001, s.238(1) defines “meeting” as any regular, special or other meeting of a council, of a local board or of a committee of either of them, where:

- a) A quorum of members is present, and
- b) Members discuss or otherwise deal with any matter in a way that materially advances the business or decision-making of the council, local board, or committee.

Informal gatherings for social purposes are not considered to be “meetings.” This would be the case even if a quorum of members is present as the section above requires both (a) and (b) conditions to be met.

With respect to current members of Council participating in candidate-related events, this would not be prohibited and the event would not be considered a meeting as long as it did not meet the definition of a meeting in the Act.

To determine whether a discussion “materially advances” council business or decision-making, one should consider the extent to which the discussions moved forward the business of the municipality. Discussions, debates or decisions that are intended to lead to specific outcomes are likely to materially advance business or decision-making, whereas mere receipt or exchange of information is unlikely to do so.

Telephone Voting

Questions were received with respect to:

1. How does the telephone voting option work?
2. Are candidates listed alphabetically on the ballot?

Answer – Information in response to the questions is as follows:

1. Eligible electors may access the telephone voting system via the designated telephone number found in their Voter Information Letter. Once dialed using a touchtone telephone, an audio set of instructions will describe all choices available to the elector and instructions to mark their selection by depressing the numbered touchtone keypad.
2. Candidates will be listed alphabetically on the ballot, whether voting by internet or telephone, as per the list of certified candidates, certified by the City Clerk on August 22, 2022. A listing of registered candidates is available on the City’s [election website](#).