

ELECTION CAMPAIGN PROVISIONS

Date Issued: May 9, 2017 – R92-17

Mandated by: City Council

Current Revision: August 26, 2025 – R184-25

Cross Reference:

- Elections Bylaw C22-24
- Employee Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy HUM-009-A

Next Review: January 1, 2029

Responsibility: City Manager

1. PURPOSE

To establish clear guidelines for the proper use of City Resources during Election campaigns, ensuring the integrity of the municipal Election process. These guidelines are designed to guarantee equal access to City Resources and information for all Candidates and maintain the neutrality of the City throughout Election campaigns.

2. POLICY

Members of Council and City Employees shall conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the public trust in Elections within the City, and City Resources are not used to provide an unfair advantage to any Candidate or campaign.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 *Campaign Period* – means the definition included in the *LAEA*, being:

3.1.1 in the case of a general election, the period beginning on January 1 of the year immediately following a general election and ending December 31 immediately following the next general election; and

3.1.2 in the case of a by-election, the period beginning on the day after the resolution or bylaw is passed to set the Election Day for the by-election and ending 6 days after the by-election.

3.2 *Candidate* – means an individual who has been nominated to run for election in a local jurisdiction as a councillor pursuant to the *LAEA*, or for provincial or federal office.

3.3 *City* – means the municipal corporation of the City of Fort Saskatchewan or the lands within its corporate boundaries, as applicable to the context.

- 3.4 *City Employee* – means an individual employed to do work on a permanent, temporary, or casual basis either a part-time or full-time for the City and is included on the City's biweekly payroll.
- 3.5 *City Manager* – means the Chief Administrative Officer of the City, or their designate.
- 3.6 *City Resources* – means all assets and property owned by, or under the direct control of the City, including but not limited to, physical and human resources, financial assets and non-financial assets. Examples of such City Resources includes, but is not limited to:
- 3.6.1 buildings, land, vehicles, equipment, tools, computers, photocopiers, telephones;
 - 3.6.2 physical and electronic documents, promotional materials, website content and links, intellectual property (e.g. City logos, crests, slogans); and
 - 3.6.3 City services, accounts, or credentials.
- 3.7 *Council* – means the mayor and councillors of the City, both together and individually.
- 3.8 *Election* – means:
- 3.8.1 a general election, first election, by-election and a vote on a bylaw or question held in accordance with the LAEA or *Municipal Government Act* (MGA);
 - 3.8.2 an election held pursuant to the *Education Act* for the Province of Alberta, and
 - 3.8.3 any elections within the City as required for provincial or federal government offices.
- 3.9 *Election Day* – means the date of voting for the City's Elections.
- 3.10 *LAEA* – means the *Local Authorities Elections Act*, RSA 2000, CL-21, and any regulations, as amended.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 The City shall balance the need for freedom of expression and assembly of Candidates with its responsibility to ensure no unfair advantage exists for any Candidate or a supporter of a question on a ballot during an Election.
- 4.2 The City's Election processes are governed by the LAEA, MGA, as well as any other related City bylaws, policies and procedures.
- 4.3 While legislation regulates the conduct of Candidates and City Employees, the City can further promote fairness, accountability, and transparency in its election practices by establishing additional guidelines.

Communication to Candidates:

- 4.4 Following the submission of nomination papers, responses to Candidate inquiries related to Election operations, information collected for campaign purposes, or other requests which the City feels are relevant to all Candidates shall be distributed to all Candidates or made available to the public at-large; this ensures that all Candidates have equal access to information.

Council:

- 4.5 No Candidate shall use, alter, or reproduce any City digital or print content, graphics, logos, branding, or images for any campaign related material.
- 4.6 No Candidate shall use, reproduce, or modify any City Resources, materials, or information provided to them in their capacity as a member of Council for campaign purposes.
- 4.7 No Candidate shall use any City-issued or owned software accounts for campaign purposes, whether or not they are accessed or operated on a City-owned or personal device.
- 4.8 While holding the office of Mayor or Councillor for the City, no member of Council shall use City funds for any purpose relating to a campaign, Campaign Period, or campaign-related activities, including funding or resources required for any form of media advertising for the purpose of discussing or promoting the Election process.

Access to City Resources:

- 4.9 No City Resources shall be used for any Election campaign or campaign-related activities, except on the same basis that the City Resources would normally be made available to members of the public, and in accordance with a valid rental agreement, if applicable.
- 4.10 The posting or distribution of campaign material in or on a City Resource is prohibited for individual Candidates, except:
 - 4.10.1 when using City lands under a valid rental agreement or event permit in accordance with section 4.12; or
 - 4.10.2 in contexts specifically approved by the City Manager (e.g., an all-Candidate forum).
- 4.11 Notwithstanding Section 4.10, Candidates may campaign on City lands, including parks, open spaces, and other outdoor areas, on the same basis, conditions, and availability as any member of the public. All such uses must comply with applicable City bylaws, event permit requirements, and public safety regulations.
- 4.12 The City will not sell, donate, or provide any City owned or controlled marketing or advertising opportunities to a Candidate or other third-party for campaigning purposes.

City Employees:

- 4.13 City Employees shall not engage in or perform any work in support of a Candidate or campaign during their work hours for the City. Participation in campaign-related activities is permitted only outside of their official working hours.
- 4.14 City Employees involved in a campaign shall not at any time represent themselves as acting on behalf of the City, or in any way indicate that the City endorses a specific Candidate or campaign.
- 4.15 Notwithstanding the foregoing, select City Employees shall not at any time participate in a campaign, as their obligations to the City require they remain impartial to each Candidate, these City Employees shall include the City Manager, General Managers, Directors, Legislative Services Department staff, and any contracted municipal Election worker.

4.16 No City Employee shall use or attempt to use their position at the City to influence other City Employees to affect the outcome of an Election.

4.17 All City Employees shall treat all Candidates in an unbiased and impartial manner throughout the Election Campaign Period.

5. AUTHORITY / RESPONSIBILITY TO IMPLEMENT

The City Manager is responsible for administrative compliance with this Policy, and Council is responsible for compliance by its members, City bylaws, policies and procedures, LAEA, the *Municipal Government Act*, and other applicable legislation.