
Staff Report To Council

From: Vicki McDonald, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk
Date: February 17, 2026
Report: CL-02-26
Subject **Use of Municipal Resources for Election Campaign Purposes Policy**

Recommendation

That Report CL-02-26 Use of Municipal Resources for Election Campaign Purposes Policy be received; and

That council approve the amended Use of Municipal Resources for Election Campaign Purposes Policy No. ADM-015 as presented.

Background

Section 88.18 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (MEA)* requires municipalities and local boards to establish rules and procedures governing the use of municipal and board resources during the election campaign period. These rules and procedures must be in place by May 1 in the year of a regular election.

Discussion

The Use of Municipal Resources for Election Campaign Purposes Policy (Policy No. ADM-015) was originally developed in response to the *Municipal Elections Modernization Act, 2016*, which required municipalities and local boards to adopt policies governing the use of municipal resources during an election period.

Revisions to the policy are proposed to enhance the integrity of the election process and to provide clear, consistent guidance to candidates, staff, registered third party advertisers, and other affected individuals or groups. The policy has also been updated to incorporate modernized and inclusive language. The policy is attached and the revisions are noted in strikethrough and red font.

The MEA, as amended, establishes requirements related to campaign financing for candidates in municipal elections. Section 88.8(4) of the MEA prohibits municipalities from making contributions to municipal candidates. Section 88.18 requires municipalities and local boards to establish rules and procedures respecting the use of municipal or board resources during the election campaign period.

Provincial and federal campaign finance regulations are governed by the *Election Finances Act, 1990* and the *Canada Elections Act, 2000*. Section 29(1) of the *Election Finances Act* and Section 363(1) of the *Canada Elections Act* prohibit municipal corporations from contributing to any candidate, political party, or constituency association in provincial or federal elections. As campaign contributions may include money, goods,

or services, the use of municipal resources for any election-related purpose by candidates, registered third party advertisers, or municipal employees is strictly prohibited.

All provisions of this policy are intended to protect freedom of expression while ensuring the following:

- **Municipal resources are not used to promote or provide an unfair advantage** to any candidate, political party, constituency association, registered third party, or any person or group supporting or opposing a question on a ballot during an election period;
- **Members of council remain able to fulfill their duties** as elected officials and to represent the interests of their constituents without undue restriction; and
- **Election-related information and communications remain accessible to the public**, with all such material prepared and approved by the Clerk's Office.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Link to Strategic Plan

This report supports the indicated Strategic Goals and Action Plans of the Town of Hanover.

Goal 1: Safe and Reliable Infrastructure

Build, maintain and continuously improve our municipally owned properties, buildings, and equipment.

Goal 2: Healthy and Welcoming Community

Care for our natural environment and provide an enviable quality of life for everyone who calls Hanover "home".

Goal 3: Strong and Vibrant Economy

Refresh downtown Hanover and retain and attract local economic investment and jobs.

Goal 4: Balanced Growth

Work together to create a community we can all be proud of.

Goal 5: Open and Responsible Government

Deliver services in a friendly, efficient and effective manner while providing an exceptional working environment for our employees.

Respectfully submitted,

Concurrence,

Vicki McDonald
Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk

Sherri Walden
CAO