

Request for Decision

Method of Vote: 2022 Municipal and School Board Election

Presented To:	City Council
Presented:	Tuesday, Apr 09, 2019
Report Date	Monday, Mar 18, 2019
Type:	Referred & Deferred Matters

Resolution

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approves Option 1 as outlined in the report entitled "Method of Vote: 2022 Municipal and School Board Election" from the General Manager of Corporate Services, presented at the City Council Meeting on April 9, 2019.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan / Health Impact Assessment

This report refers to operational matters.

Report Summary

At the February 12, 2019 meeting of City Council, a report regarding the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election was brought forward for information only (see attached). Council deferred this report to the April 9, 2019 City Council Meeting and directed staff to return with an additional report outlining options for method of vote, and communication strategies for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election.

Financial Implications

Municipal Elections are funded from the Election Reserve. Based on the option selected, the contribution to the Election Reserve may need to be increased subject to Council's review and approval via annual budgets.

Signed By

Report Prepared By

Danielle Wicklander
Legislative Compliance Coordinator
Digitally Signed Mar 18, 19

Manager Review

Brigitte Sobush
Manager, Clerk's Services/Deputy City Clerk
Digitally Signed Mar 18, 19

Division Review

Eric Labelle
City Solicitor and Clerk
Digitally Signed Mar 18, 19

Financial Implications

Jim Lister
Manager of Financial Planning and Budgeting
Digitally Signed Mar 26, 19

Recommended by the Department

Kevin Fowke
General Manager of Corporate Services
Digitally Signed Mar 26, 19

Recommended by the C.A.O.

Ed Archer
Chief Administrative Officer
Digitally Signed Mar 26, 19

Background

At the February 12, 2019 meeting of City Council, an information report was presented regarding the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election (see attached). Council deferred the report to the April 9, 2019 City Council Meeting and directed staff to return with an additional report outlining options for method of vote, and communication strategies for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election. This report provides the information requested by Council and also provides information regarding ranked balloting in response to direction from Council in September of 2016.

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (the Act) governs the conduct of all Municipal and School Board Elections held within the province of Ontario. Pursuant to the Act, municipalities have until May 1 of the year before an election (i.e. before May 1, 2021) to pass a by-law authorizing the use of voting and vote-counting equipment, alternative voting methods and the implementation of ranked balloting.

Method of Vote

2018 Municipal and School Board Election Method of Vote

In September of 2016, a report was presented to Council by the previous City Clerk recommending the use of a combined voting solution. The option approved at that time would have seen the use of electronic voting running during the advance voting period up until the opening of voting locations on Election Day, in combination with paper ballot/tabulator count voting at Election Day Locations.

Following Council's approval of this option a public RFP for a combined voting solution was issued. The RFP closed on March 28, 2017 and two submissions were received: one Internet voting solution and one combined solution for both electronic voting and paper ballot/tabulator count voting. The proposals were reviewed by Clerks Services and Information Technology staff and scored by the evaluation committee. Neither of the submissions met the requirements of the RFP.

In May of 2017, a report was provided to City Council requesting approval of a staff recommendation for the use of an online voting platform as the exclusive method of vote for the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election.

The report outlined staff concerns regarding the receipt and evaluation of responses to the initial Request for Proposal (RFP) for a combined voting method (paper ballot/internet). Concerns included: the cost of the equipment required to run the paper ballot portion of the election, omission of important information, compliance with legislation and vendor experience.

As a result of the information provided in the report, Council approved the use of electronic voting as the sole method of vote for the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election.

The voting period commenced on October 15, 2018 and continued until the end of voting on October 22, 2018. This was extended by the Clerk until 8pm on October 23, 2018 as a result of province-wide issues with the electronic voting platform. During this period, electors could cast their electronic ballot from anywhere using a computer or mobile device. Electors also had the option of casting their electronic ballot at one of the City's voting locations.

Due to the vote anywhere model adopted by the Clerk, voters were able to vote at any electronic voting location, regardless of the Ward they reside in. Free transit was available on Election Day for anyone wishing to attend an Electronic Voting Location.

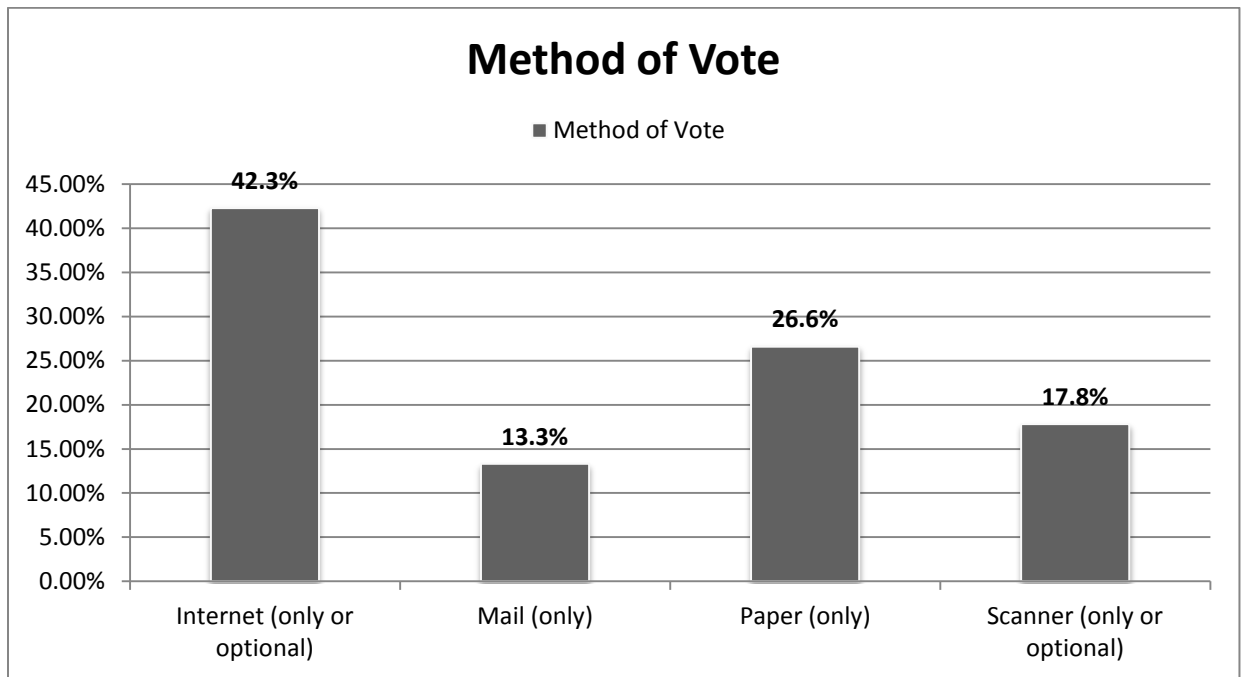
The breakdown of total ballots cast by location is as follows:

Ballots Cast by Location		
<u>Voting Location</u>	<u>Total Number of Ballots</u>	<u>Voter Turnout (%)</u>
Online (No Location)	42,602	81.79%
Voter Help Center	2,588	4.97%
Election Bus	133	0.25%
Long-Term Care/Nursing Home	714	1.37%
Election Day Electronic Voting Location	6,050	11.62%

As indicated by the number of ballots cast online with no attendance at a physical electronic voting location, online voting was well utilized and accepted by the majority of City of Greater Sudbury voters.

While the majority of voters were able to cast their ballot without assistance, some required support and as such attended an election period voting location. All election period voting locations were staffed with election officials comprised of City of Greater Sudbury employees to provide assistance and support to any voter who required it. Despite assistance and support offered, some voters remained steadfast in their dislike of the online voting platform and wished to see a return to the traditional paper ballot method. However, it should be noted that a number of those who attended an election period voting location who were initially opposed to the idea of voting online left satisfied with the method and of the opinion that the system was actually quite easy to use.

Post election data gathered by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario demonstrates that municipalities are continuing the move towards the use of technology based methods of vote. In the 2018 Municipal and School Board Elections 178 municipalities used an electronic method of vote, which is 84 more than the previous election. The chart below illustrates the predominant methods used.



Method of Vote Options for Council's Consideration

In looking forward to method of vote for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election, staff performed a review of previously used voting methods, which are itemized below for Council's consideration.

Option 1

The use of electronic voting throughout the entire voting period combined with paper ballots with electronic vote tabulators on Election Day.

Advantages:

- Familiarity with both methods by the electorate.
- Electronic voting provides greater accessibility for persons with disabilities particularly those who use adaptive and assistive technologies.
- Electronic voting allows for increased participation for voters who are away from the municipality during the voting period.
- Electronic voting offers voters the opportunity to cast their ballot when it is most convenient for them regardless of weather conditions, time restrictions, work schedules, etc.
- Availability of traditional paper ballot for those uncomfortable with electronic voting.
- Dual methods provide redundancy.

Disadvantages:

- Increased complexity and costs of using multiple voting methods. This option would cost approximately \$600,000 more than the 2018 election.
- Increased potential for voters to incorrectly mark their paper ballots.
- Reduced flexibility for voters using paper ballots with electronic vote tabulators, since they would need to attend a polling station to vote.
- Greater complexity and logistical requirements both before, during and after Election Day as a result of increased physical requirements for equipment storage and deployment, testing/setup/training requirements for technical staff
- Increased demand for election day staffing, which has traditionally been difficult to acquire

Option 2

The use of paper ballots with vote tabulators as the only method of vote.

Advantages:

- Familiarity of electorate with paper ballots.
- Less complexity compared to electronic voting.

Disadvantages:

- Higher costs. This option would cost approximately \$500,000 more than the 2018 election.
- Increased voting location staffing requirements, resources and time required to train them.
- Increased potential for voters to incorrectly mark their paper ballot.
- Higher volume of voting equipment and warehousing required.
- Less convenient for voters.
- Low degree of accessibility for persons with disabilities particularly those with mobility issues or those that require the use of adaptive or assistive technologies.
- Voters not in the municipality during the voting period will not be able to exercise their right to vote.
- Runs counter to municipal voting trends towards increased use of technology.

Option 3

The use of electronic voting as the only method of vote.

Advantages:

- Lowest cost.
- Most accessible method of vote for persons with disabilities particularly those who use adaptive and assistive technologies.
- Increased participation in the democratic process for voters who are away from the municipality during the voting period.
- Electronic voting offers voters the opportunity to cast their ballot when it is most convenient for them regardless of weather conditions, time restrictions, work schedules, etc.
- Lower election staff and training requirements.

Disadvantages:

- Although it is reasonable to anticipate there will be less discomfort as time progresses and the evolution of technology continues, there are voters who express discomfort because they are unfamiliar with technology, or simply prefer the tradition of casting their ballot in a traditional paper ballot method.
- While there is always the potential for process interruptions or breakdowns in any system, experience shows the impact of a disruption to the electronic voting platform can be relatively more significant.
- Less accessible for persons that do not have computers or mobile devices.

Method of Vote Recommendation

A citizen's right to vote is a hallmark to any democratic society. In determining the voting method it is important to ensure that the method chosen benefits the greatest number of voters and not just the few. Municipalities are increasingly looking to technology to improve election processes. The City has had positive experiences in past elections with both electronic voting and paper ballots with tabulators. The issues with the electronic voting platform on the evening of October 22, 2018 marred an otherwise mostly positive experience. A significant proportion of electors enjoyed the convenience and accessibility the method provides.

Staff recognize that a segment of the electorate prefers the traditional method of attending voting locations and using paper ballots. In 2014, the City successfully used the combined methods of electronic voting and paper ballots with tabulators.

Based on the above information and the experiences and feedback of voters and staff during the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election, staff recommend that Council approve Option 1, being the use of electronic voting throughout the entire voting period combined with paper ballots with electronic vote tabulators on Election Day.

Ranked Ballots

Background

In 2016 the Ontario government passed the Municipal Elections Modernization Act, 2016 which enacted numerous changes to the Act. One of the more significant changes involves the ability for municipalities to use ranked ballots to conduct their elections.

In September of 2016, Council directed staff to monitor the initial implementation of ranked ballot voting in other jurisdictions during the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election and bring a report to Council in the first half of the next term of office regarding ranked ballot voting for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election.

As the City of London was the only municipality to implement ranked balloting in the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election, much of the information in this report is based on their experience.

It is important to note that ranked ballot elections may only be conducted for City Council races. The election of School Board Trustees would continue to be conducted using the first past the post system as School Board Districts typically cross municipal boundaries and in some cases may include portions of adjacent municipalities and unorganized townships.

What is Ranked Balloting?

Voters rank the candidates in order of preference – 1st choice, 2nd choice, 3rd choice etc. – instead of voting for just one candidate. First choice votes are counted for all of the candidates. If a candidate receives at least 50% plus 1 votes (50% +1), they are elected. If no candidate receives the required majority of votes, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. The ballots that had the eliminated candidate as their first choice are then redistributed according to the next choice marked on each of those ballots. This process continues until one candidate has enough votes to be declared the winner.

If an elector gives the same candidate more than one ranking, only the highest will be considered and if an elector skips a ranking, the next highest ranking will be counted.

Example

The following information illustrates how a ranked ballot election would be conducted. Using a basic example of 1,000 voters with one candidate to be elected, the successful candidate would need 501 votes to win.

1st Ballot Count

Candidate	1	2	3	4	5
First-choice votes	75	120	405	125	275

Based on the first choice votes, none of the candidates received enough votes (501) to be elected. Therefore, Candidate 1 with the fewest number of first choice votes is eliminated and

their 75 votes are redistributed to the four remaining candidates based on the next choice candidate on each ballot.

2nd Ballot Count

Candidate	1	2	3	4	5
First-choice votes	75	120	405	125	275
Second-choice votes		25	30	5	15
Second count		145	435	130	290

Following redistribution of the Candidate 1 ballots based on the next choice on each of Candidate 1's ballots, none of the remaining candidates received enough votes (501) to be elected. Therefore, Candidate 4, with the fewest number of second count votes, is eliminated and their 130 second count votes are redistributed to the three remaining candidates based on the next choice on each of Candidate 4's ballots.

3rd Ballot Count

Candidate	1	2	3	4	5
First-choice votes	75	120	405	125	275
Second-choice votes		25	30	5	15
Second count		145	435	130	290
Third-choice votes		15	75		40
Third count		160	510		330

Following redistribution of the Candidate 4 ballots based on the next choice on each of the ballots, Candidate 3 is elected with 510 votes.

Requirements for Implementation of Ranked Balloting

Regulation 310/16, in addition to outlining the process for conducting a ranked ballot election, outlines a number of public education and consultation requirements that must be met prior to adopting a ranked ballot method of vote. As per the Regulation, the following information must be provided to describe:

- How the election will be conducted;
- How votes will be distributed to candidates based on rankings;
- The estimated cost of conducting the election;
- Any voting and vote counting equipment being considered; and,
- Any alternative voting method being considered.

Before passing the by-law to adopt ranked balloting, at least one (1) open house and one (1) public meeting must be held for the purpose of giving the public an opportunity to review and ask questions about the prescribed information and proposed by-law.

In addition, at least thirty (30) days before the open house and at least thirty (30) days before the public meeting are to be held, notice must be provided in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality and to every person or organization that has requested such notice. The public meeting must be held at least fifteen (15) days after the open house.

Regulation 310/16 further identifies the following considerations that must be addressed by Council before deciding to pass a ranked ballot by-law:

- The cost to the municipality of conducting the election;
- The availability of technology such as vote and vote counting equipment and software, for conducting the election;
- The impact the proposed by-law would have on election administration.

Cost to the Municipality

The City of London saw their election costs nearly double by using the ranked ballot method. It is reasonable to anticipate Greater Sudbury's, or any municipality's, election costs would increase when introducing ranked balloting.

Ranked balloting is a new concept that may be confusing to experienced and new voters alike. As such, extensive resources would need to be dedicated to support public engagement and education initiatives to ensure that voters are aware of the changes and comfortable with voting in a ranked ballot election. Additional communication resources would also be needed prior to the passage of the ranked balloting by-law to support the required open house, notices and public meeting that must be held to give the public the opportunity to review and ask questions about the proposed by-law.

Additionally, the City of Greater Sudbury currently has 60 different composite ballot types, all of which would need to be redesigned to accommodate a ranked ballot election. It is likely that

separate ballots would need to be issued to each elector, one for the Mayor and Council races and the other for School Board Trustees.

Costs related to voting equipment and vendor support would also rise substantially. Vendors have indicated that prices would rise an estimated 25% - 35% for ranked ballot versions of voting equipment products and systems including internet voting platforms as was experienced by the City of London.

In addition to the rise in equipment and communications costs, the City of London also saw project management costs (onsite support and testing) increase from \$11,200 in 2014 to \$102,010 in 2018.

Voting Technology

Set-up, testing and use of voting and vote counting equipment would be significantly more complex in a ranked ballot election. There are unique requirements to accommodate both ranked balloting for Mayor and Council and first past the post balloting for School Board Trustees and the reporting of election results. The tabulators must be able to read, tabulate and calculate multiple rounds of ballot counting while ensuring that votes are redistributed appropriately.

Given that municipalities were only permitted by legislation to use ranked ballots in the most recent municipal election and the only municipality that chose to proceed with ranked ballots was the City of London, it is reasonable to expect that voting equipment vendors have not dedicated resources towards this method. Equipment vendors have very little experience supplying systems that support ranked balloting and are hesitant to bid on RFPs that specify it as part of the requirements. The City of London confirmed that they received no responses to their procurement prior to the 2018 election and had to subsequently reach out to vendors on a single source basis in order to obtain a service provider.

Impact on Election Administration

Ranked ballots could only be used for the Mayor and Councillor races and not for School Board Trustees. This would therefore require the municipality to conduct two types of elections.

Additional staffing and training resources would be required to ensure that all staff in the election office and working in voting locations fully understand the ranked ballot vote casting and counting process so they are able to assist voters as needed.

The added complexity of the counting process with ranked ballots would require additional time for the release of election results. The City of London required nearly 17 hours after the close of voting to generate the results.

Conclusion

For the reasons above, staff do not recommend the implementation of ranked ballots in the City of Greater Sudbury at this time. Ranked balloting could be considered for future election cycles once it becomes more established throughout Canada. That may lead to a decrease in costs to conduct such an election once election vendors perceive a sizable market and become interested in providing services in this type of election.

Communication and Voter Engagement

2018 Communication Strategies and Outcomes

As this was the first time the City of Greater Sudbury conducted a fully electronic election, it was important to ensure that residents were aware that voting for the election was going to be conducted electronically, even at in-person voting locations. Another key focus was raising the awareness of voters regarding the importance of ensuring that they were on the voters' list and their information on the list was correct and up to date.

Building upon the successful communication strategies used in the 2014 election, an Election Communications Plan was developed by the Communications and Community Engagement Division for the 2018 Election. This plan contained various strategies for disseminating election information, and dedicated a greater portion of the election budget to communication efforts.

A greater focus was put on communicating where, when and how to vote electronically as well as how to add or update information on the voters' list. This messaging was communicated to voters, candidates and the media across a wide range of channels in both official languages:

- Election website (www.greatersudbury.ca/elections),
- Newspapers,
- Radio,
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter),
- Billboards,
- Election bus wrap,
- Silver City advertisements,
- Posters located at all City Library and Citizen Service Centres and Nursing and Long-Term Care Homes,
- Voter Information Pamphlets sent to all homes,
- Voter Information Letters /Voting Information sent to all eligible electors,
- Outreach and information sessions,
- Public Service Announcements (PSAs),
- Candidate's Portal,
- Email communications with candidates,
- 3-1-1 assistance and messaging.

During the lead up to the voting period, a greater focus was also placed on the outreach aspect of the communication plan with information and outreach sessions being held for various groups prior to voting day and during the revisions period. Community Action Network meetings, and Nursing and Long-Term Care homes were among some of the groups attended by Election Officials. Election outreach and registration days were also held at the City's university and colleges, various community events and a Sudbury Wolves' hockey game.

In addition, two election information sessions were held at Tom Davies Square for candidates, media and voters. Attendees were provided with an overview of the changes made to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, viewed a demonstration of the online voting platform and were given the opportunity to ask questions of Dominion Voting Systems Inc., Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Election Team staff. These sessions were also livestreamed and posted to the City's election website.

2022 Communication and Voter Engagement/Awareness

The communication strategies developed and implemented for a municipal election are unique and critical to its success. The need for accurate and timely information is paramount for ensuring understanding of the voting process and promoting voter confidence.

The 2018 election communications strategy was robust and used multiple paid and unpaid avenues including: television, radio, in-person engagement, social media, online, print, billboards, media, direct city-wide mail outs and many others. It included a strong educational component related to the change to the online-only method of vote. Notwithstanding the extensive communication efforts, polling conducted by the Mayor's Office subsequent to the election suggests that some residents were dissatisfied with some of the ways in which they were engaged on the municipal election. Moving forward, communication initiatives will be thoroughly evaluated to further improve strategies and education.

Trends in communications continuously evolve. As we get closer to the time when detailed plans for the 2022 election are under development, a communications plan that incorporates the successful approaches used in prior periods and introduces approaches that reflect the latest available examples of successful engagement will be produced.

For example, Voter Information list education is a critical preliminary step in the elections process. The Voter List is derived from information controlled by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). Staff anticipate developing a thorough, targeted educational campaign, including collaboration with MPAC, to ensure residents are well informed and prepared to vote.

Resources Cited

Municipal Elections Act, 1996 - <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/96m32#BK60>

Regulation 310/16 Ranked Ballot Elections - <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/160310>

September 13, 2016 Report, Election Modernization Act and the 2018 Municipal Election - <http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=feed&action=file&agenda=report&itemid=1&id=951>

May 30, 2017 Report, Method of Vote During the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election - <https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&lang=en&id=1128&itemid=13312>

Association of Municipalities of Ontario, 2018 Municipal Elections – Fast Facts - <https://elections.amo.on.ca/web/en/stats>

For Information Only

Post Election Report

Presented To:	City Council
Presented:	Tuesday, Feb 12, 2019
Report Date	Monday, Jan 21, 2019
Type:	Correspondence for Information Only

Resolution

For Information Only

Relationship to the Strategic Plan / Health Impact Assessment

This report refers to operational matters.

Report Summary

This report provides a high-level overview of the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with with report. All costs of the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election are funded from the Election Expenses Reserve Fund.

Signed By

Report Prepared By

Danielle Wicklander
Legislative Compliance Coordinator
Digitally Signed Jan 21, 19

Manager Review

Brigitte Sobush
Manager, Clerk's Services/Deputy City Clerk
Digitally Signed Jan 21, 19

Division Review

Eric Labelle
City Solicitor and Clerk
Digitally Signed Jan 21, 19

Financial Implications

Jim Lister
Manager of Financial Planning and Budgeting
Digitally Signed Jan 25, 19

Recommended by the Department

Kevin Fowke
General Manager of Corporate Services
Digitally Signed Jan 28, 19

Recommended by the C.A.O.

Ed Archer
Chief Administrative Officer
Digitally Signed Jan 30, 19

Background

The purpose of this report is to review the City of Greater Sudbury's experience with the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election and to describe next steps towards planning the 2022 Election.

The 2018 Municipal and School Board Election was the City's first fully electronic election building on the successful use of electronic voting during the advance vote for the 2014 election. The *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996 (the "Act") directs that municipal elections are the responsibility of municipal clerks.

Municipal elections require extensive resources and planning. While the preparations and choices about managing the election process are similar across the province, each community designs its own plan according to the Clerk's best judgment. Nevertheless, the level of collaboration between municipal clerks throughout the process of preparing for an election is quite high.

In Sudbury, the process is led by a small staff team from the Clerk's Section (the "Election Team"). The Election Team also included staff leads from other areas essential to the delivery of the municipal election such as Communications and Information Technology. Preparations for the next election are continually being made throughout the term of Council; however, they are much more involved in the year prior to the election.

The Election Team started meeting weekly early in the third quarter of 2017 to coordinate, plan and ensure completion of all aspects of the Election Workplan which included significant work with the vendor selected to provide the electronic voting technology. Dominion Voting Systems (Dominion), selected through a comprehensive procurement process, was a reputable and established vendor of voting systems with experience conducting elections throughout Canada and the United States.

On Election Day, the City and 51 other municipalities that also contracted with Dominion for electronic voting experienced a significant slowdown of Dominion's voting platform. This led to many electors being unable to cast their ballots between the hours of 5:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. in communities across Ontario.

As described in more detail in this report, staff responded to this unacceptable result with a decision to extend the voting period. This reflects the guidance provided by the Act and allowed electors impacted by the slowdown an opportunity to cast their ballots.

This failure was unfortunate for the electors of Greater Sudbury and the many other affected communities throughout Ontario, the election candidates and the City staff who worked so hard to plan, deliver and assist with the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election. In conducting a debrief of the election process, staff identified several issues that should inform decisions regarding future municipal and school board elections:

- Voters' List;
- Communication and Voter Engagement;
- Electronic Voting System/Service Provider;
- Voting Period and Locations; and
- Voter Experience.

Voters' List

Overview

Issues regarding omissions, duplicates or incorrect voter information are common and historic challenges that every election faces, whether that election be held at the municipal, provincial or federal level. While the ideal situation would be an error free voters' list, the fact that the list contains errors is not insurmountable and many processes are available, in accordance with the legislation, to voters both before and during the election to make corrections and add persons to the list. Staff recognize that it is important to encourage residents to verify their information in advance as that will result in less Voter Information Letters being mailed to incorrect addresses as well as less changes to information being required during the voting period.

MPAC

As per the provisions of the Act, voters' lists for all Ontario municipal elections are generated and provided to municipalities by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). MPAC's voters' list information is generated through a combination of: responses to enumeration forms that are sent to property owners, information from real estate transactions and property owners contacting MPAC directly or using the MPAC voter look-up tool to make changes to their information.

In the spring of 2018, the City of Greater Sudbury made the MPAC voter look-up tool available to voters on the City of Greater Sudbury's election website and conducted an extensive advertising campaign to encourage voters to use the tool to ensure that they were on the voters' list and that their information on the list was correct and up to date. Approximately 3,100 residents in the City of Greater Sudbury used the MPAC voter look-up tool to verify and correct their information.

Preliminary Voters' List

The preliminary list of electors is provided to the municipality in late July of an election year, at which time the Clerk is permitted to correct any obvious errors. With the use of software to manage the voters' list, staff review the information on the voters' list that has been flagged for attention such as: potential duplicates, invalid roll numbers, incorrect mailing addresses and name anomalies. Staff review all flagged items and make the appropriate corrections where possible. It should be noted that for the 2018 election the voters' list management software flagged significantly fewer issues than in past elections.

Revision Period for Electors

The official voters' list revision period commenced on September 1, 2018 and staff sought to make the process to confirm and revise information on the list as convenient as possible for electors. To that end, persons were able to use the City's "Am I on the Voters' List" tool to ensure that they were on the voters' list and that their information was correct. This tool was communicated to the public through various advertisements, press releases and social media and was accessed approximately 5,400 times by persons to verify information on the voters' list.

During the revision period, persons could correct their information or have their name added to the voters' list by attending Clerk's Services (Tom Davies Square, 2nd Floor) or a Citizen Service Centre/Library throughout the City during regular business hours from September 1 to

October 21, 2018 and until the close of voting on Election Day at any one of the City's Election Day voting locations. Voters who required changes to their voter information were required to complete an Application to Amend the Voters' List form. Once the application form was completed, the voter signed the form and presented an acceptable form of identification in order to verify their identity.

Voter Information Letters were sent to voters in mid-September to those voters found on the voters' list. These letters contained important information for the intended voter such as their online voting credentials, how to cast their online ballot, the different in-person voting location options available and voter eligibility. As indicated above, if an elector's name did not appear on the voters' list, he or she would not have received a Voter Information Letter. Numerous communications through different media channels and social media encouraged persons to attend a variety of City of Greater Sudbury locations as of September 1 to correct their information on the list where required. Approximately 3,700 changes to the voters' list were made by electors attending Tom Davies Square or Citizen Service Centres and Libraries during the period from September 1 to the commencement of the voting period.

In terms of revisions that were required to be made to voters' list information overall, in 2018 there were a total of 20,132 changes made compared to 34,859 changes made in 2014. This represents a 17.38% change of the list in 2018 compared with a change percentage of 29.61% in 2014.

Communication and Voter Engagement

Overview

A key focus during the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election was communication to and engagement of Greater Sudbury voters. Following the 2014 Election, the decision was made to direct more efforts towards both informing and engaging voters.

As this was the first time that City of Greater Sudbury conducted an electronic election, it was important to ensure that residents were aware that voting for the election was going to be conducted electronically, even at in-person voting locations. Staff also wanted to instill confidence and comfort amongst voters regarding the use of the online voting platform.

Communications Plan

An Election Communications Plan was developed for this election which contained various strategies for disseminating election information to the public. A greater focus was put on the type of information that was being communicated out to the public and ensuring that it was communicated across a wide range of channels. The bulk of election related information for both candidates and voters was housed on the City of Greater Sudbury's election website: www.greatersudbury.ca/election and was updated accordingly as new information became available.

Additional election information regarding where, when, and how to vote electronically was communicated through newspapers, radio, social media, billboards, Silver City advertisements and Public Service Announcements (PSAs). Posters with this information were sent to City Libraries and Citizen Service Centres and Nursing and Long-Term Care Homes. Pamphlets

were also sent to all eligible electors' homes, which contained additional information on how to make amendments to elector information on the voters' list.

3-1-1

The role and importance of 3-1-1 was also increased in this election as they became the first point of contact for all calls related to the election and were provided with FAQs and scripts so that often times they were able to resolve the caller's question or issue without having to transfer the call out. 3-1-1 extended service hours throughout the revisions and voting period so as to be on hand to field any election or voting related issues or calls. This proved to be an invaluable resource addition to the election. In addition to being able to call 3-1-1 for election related inquiries, residents and voters were also able to call Clerk's Services directly or send an email to the election inbox. All emails sent to the election inbox were responded to on the same day, including evenings and weekend and typically within hours of receipt.

Outreach Initiatives

During the lead up to the opening of the voting period, a greater focus was also placed on the outreach aspect of the communication plan with information and outreach sessions being held for various groups prior to voting day. Community Action Network meetings and Nursing and Long-Term Cares Homes were attended by Election Officials to present key information regarding the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election and showcase accessible voting technology. Election outreach and registration days were also held at all of the City's universities and colleges and a Sudbury Wolves' hockey game.

In addition to information being provided to voters during these outreach initiatives, attendees were given the opportunity to check with staff to see if they were on the voters' list and if their information on the list was correct. If it was found that they were not on the list or that their information was incorrect, staff would complete the Application to Amend the Voters' List Form and process and the voter's information would be updated.

While these sessions were advertised and communicated in advance to the various groups and organizations, the majority of the outreach activities and presentations were not well attended.

Communications with Candidates

In addition to a modernized strategy for communicating with electors, the Election Team implemented numerous new measures for communicating more efficiently with election candidates. From the moment persons registered to become candidates in the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election, access was provided to a great deal of relevant information regarding all aspects of the election process via a modernized election website. An election portal was further used to provide rapid email communications to all registered candidates. This was particularly useful on election night when the Election Team provided notification to all candidates of the decision to extend the voting period. Candidates were also provided with electronic access to forms and document as well as the voters' list, which list was being electronically updated in real time as changes were made by election officials and as electors cast their ballots.

Electronic Voting System / Provider

Voting Method

In May of 2017, a report was brought forward to City Council requesting approval of a staff recommendation for the use of an online voting platform for the entirety of the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election voting period. The report outlined the concerns of staff regarding the receipt and evaluation of responses to the initial Request for Proposal (RFP) for a combined voting method (paper ballot/internet). Concerns included: the cost of the equipment required to run the paper ballot portion of the election, omission of important information, compliance with legislation and experience.

The use of electronic voting as the sole method of vote was approved for use during the entire voting period of the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election by City Council.

Vendor Selection

In compliance with the City of Greater Sudbury's Purchasing By-law, a second RFP was issued and submissions were received from four vendors. Submissions were evaluated by the evaluation committee on a number of predetermined criteria including: functionality requirements, technical capabilities of solution, experience and references, vendor support and price.

Following the conclusion of the scoring, the proposal was awarded to Dominion being the vendor whose submission received the highest evaluation score. The submission from Dominion was comprehensive and demonstrated extensive experience in delivering electronic voting technology. Following the award of the contract to Dominion, the Election Team, including key staff from the Information Technology Section worked with the vendor's project lead to implement all required elements of the voting solution. The system was available to the Election Team in a test environment which was of great assistance in training the many election officials required.

Testing

The Election Team verified and checked the election data populated in the system numerous times to ensure that all candidates were properly reflected as running for the offices for which they registered. The Election Team then conducted a series of test votes to confirm that the platform was functioning as required and that votes would be recorded as cast.

Consistent with practices in prior elections, KPMG LLP was retained by the City to oversee testing of the electronic voting system prior to the election. In September of 2018, representatives from KPMG attended the City to perform a variety of tests (commonly called logic & accuracy testing) which involved casting a number of test ballots including one for each election candidate, attempting to cast overvotes and attempting to log in and vote the same credentials a second time. Testing was completed successfully and KPMG confirmed that the results of their testing reflected the test votes as cast by them. After completion of the testing, the electronic voting system was then zeroed to ensure that all candidates had zero votes cast prior to the commencement of the voting period.

Voting Process

The voting period opened on Monday, October 15, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. At this time, voters could begin casting their electronic ballot from their own devices or, if they required additional assistance, could attend one of the City's 14 Voter Help Centres, which were established at all Citizen Service Centres and Libraries during regular business hours.

The online voting platform functioned well during the majority of the voting period.

Voting Platform Slowdown

Between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Monday, October 22, 2018, Election Officials in electronic voting locations began to notice a slowing of the online voting platform and at the same time calls and emails began coming into the election inbox from the public attempting to vote from their own devices in locations other than those established by the Clerk alerting staff to the same slowdown issue.

As time progressed, the slowdown of the online voting platform continued to progress and worsen resulting in voters experiencing the following:

- Not being able to enter the platform;
- Once entered into the platform being unable to move through the platform to vote as the pages would not load and allow them to progress; and
- Eventual system time-outs.

Information Technology staff located in all of the voting locations immediately alerted their Voting Location Manager as well as their respective Zone Supervisor who in turn reported to Election Headquarter staff once the slowdown of the system began.

Staff stationed in Election Headquarters immediately brought the information regarding the slowdown to Dominion's attention. It became evident that all other municipalities using Dominion's online voting platform were also experiencing the same slowdown issues and system timeouts. As the situation was continuing and Dominion was working to assess and correct the situation, staff remained on a conference call with Dominion and numerous other municipalities with a view to obtaining information to communicate to election officials, electors, candidates and media.

Dominion eventually identified the problem to be a restrictive bandwidth limit placed on incoming traffic for Dominion's data centre by an external internet service provider. It was later determined that the slowdown and timeout issues were caused by a miscommunication between Dominion and the service provider regarding the port bandwidth and the limits placed upon it. The bandwidth requested by Dominion was 1Gbs; however, it was revealed that this was mistakenly taken by the service provider to be the upper potential bandwidth limit not the continuous bandwidth standard. During the slowdown of the system the bandwidth limit was set to only 100 Mbs, which Dominion indicated was approximately only half of the expected peak requirement.

Once the problem was identified, it took until just before 8:00 p.m. to have the bandwidth limit increased to the requirement of 1Gbs. Once the correction to the limit was made to the required level, voting was restored without any further issue.

Extension of Voting Period

At approximately 7:00 p.m., the determination was made by the Clerk to extend the voting period for a full 24 hours by exercising the powers provided for under s.53 (1) of the *Municipal Elections Act 1996*:

“The clerk may declare an emergency if he or she is of the opinion that circumstances have arisen that are likely to prevent the election being conducted in accordance with this Act.”

Notwithstanding that the issues with the electronic voting system had a duration of approximately 2.5 hours, the voting period was subsequently extended through to 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 23, 2018 to ensure that anyone wishing to cast their ballot was provided sufficient opportunity to do so. As soon as the determination to extend the voting period was made, candidates, election officials, media and the general public were advised. Using established communication protocols for election officials, staff at election headquarters were able to quickly schedule election officials and locations for an additional day.

On October 23, 2018, 22 of the 23 voting locations that were used on October 22, 2018 were re-opened and this involved the redeployment of 172 election officials. The additional voting day resulted in direct out-of-pocket costs for the municipality of approximately \$23,000. These are comprised of expenses for part-time and overtime staff wages paid, location rental costs and other minor expenses such as meals. These costs do not include indirect costs such as the cost of salaried staff working as election officials who would have otherwise been performing their regular work duties had the election not been extended or the costs of time in lieu or banked overtime provided to election officials instead of additional pay.

It is important to note that over 8,000 electors took advantage of the extension period to cast their ballot equating to over 15% of the total ballots cast. Upon the close of voting at 8:00 p.m. on October 23, the election results were successfully tabulated and the successful candidates officially declared as elected in the days that followed.

Municipalities were informed by Dominion that the problems which occurred did not affect the integrity of the voting system and that at no time during the slowdown were any security related issues detected or reported nor was the system itself at risk during the slowdown period.

Post-Election Discussions with Vendor

In total approximately 51 municipalities across Ontario were affected by the issues with Dominion’s online voting platform. Subsequently, staff from the affected municipalities discussed how to move forward with Dominion. It was proposed that a small group of municipalities lead the discussions with Dominion regarding an appropriate discount or credit resulting from the election night issues.

The City Solicitor and Clerk for the City of Greater Sudbury along with the Manager of Legal & Clerk Services for Innisfil and the City Clerk for Brockton agreed to lead discussions on behalf of the broader group of municipalities. These discussions commenced with an in-person meeting with the Chief Executive Officer for Dominion held at the offices of the Town of Innisfil during the month of November. It should be noted that Dominion demonstrated willingness to engage in discussions and through those discussions acknowledged its responsibility for the election night issues. Without attempting to minimize the election night issues, Dominion officials were

forthcoming and have attempted to work cooperatively and satisfy the concerns of their client municipalities. The small group used the meeting and discussions to convey the gravity and impact that the issues had on the respective municipalities.

Ultimately, the discussions resulted in a final proposal by Dominion to offer a contract price reduction on the services portion of the contracts in the order of 20% to the group of municipalities. For clarity, the reduction does not apply to contract costs for printing of Voter Information Letters or postage. This proposal was communicated to the broader group of municipalities and at the time of writing this report, staff are not aware of any municipalities that have not accepted this contract reduction. Municipalities were free to negotiate further with Dominion should they wish to do so based on costs incurred that may have been in excess of the proposed 20% reduction. This was the case for Greater Sudbury where we had numerous voting locations as a result of our geography.

The services portion of the City's contract with Dominion is for the amount of \$115,842.00 which would have resulted in a credit of approximately \$23,000 based on the 20% credit offered. Additional discussions occurred with Dominion regarding the City's costs incurred and indirect costs of having staff deployed at voting locations for an additional day which resulted in a total credit of \$35,000 (equivalent to 30%) for the City of Greater Sudbury. Moving forward, staff will consider whether any additional steps should be taken under the City's procurement policy regarding Dominion's ability to bid on future bid solicitations.

Voting Period and Locations

Advance Voting Period

Section 43 of the Act stipulates that

Before voting day, each local municipality shall hold an advance vote on one or more dates.

As per the provisions of the Act, a period of advance voting was conducted from Monday, October 15, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. until Election Day on October 22, 2018.

During this period, in addition to voters being able to cast their electronic ballot from devices anytime, anywhere, Voter Help Centres were also established at all 14 of the City's Citizen Services Centres and Libraries for voters who requested additional assistance in casting their electronic ballot. Each Voter Help Centre had dedicated voting booths as well as trained Election Officials to provide assistance to electors as needed. Voter Help Centre locations were open to the public during regular business hours from October 15 to 21, 2018.

Additionally, from Monday, October 15, 2018 to Saturday, October 20, 2018, the Election Bus was used as a Mobile Electronic Voting Location that attended key locations and events throughout the City, such as the New Sudbury Shopping Centre, Health Sciences North, and Keeping Seniors Warm event.

Approximately 57% of ballots cast were cast during the advance voting period prior to Election Day compared to 45% for the 2014 election.

Voting Locations

Subsection 45 (1) of the Act provides the following:

The clerk shall establish the number and location of voting places for an election as he or she considers most convenient for the electors.

The 2018 Municipal and School Board Election offered a variety of physical voting locations where voters could cast their electronic ballot and request assistance. This included Voter Help Centres, the Election Bus, regular Electronic Voting Locations, and Electronic Voting Locations set-up at nursing and long-term care homes.

All but three (3) of the 23 Electronic Election Day voting locations were the same locations as used in 2014. McLeod Public School, Adanac Ski Chalet and LaSalle Secondary School were replaced with the Holiday Inn, Microtel and Carl A. Nesbitt Public School, respectively. All 23 Nursing and Long-Term Care home voting locations were the same as those that have been used since 2006 in compliance with the Act.

In terms of site selection, Clerk's Services staff conducted site visits to each voting location and performed an accessibility audit of each location using an accessibility checklist prior to confirming their use in the election. This was critical in ensuring that each facility had a barrier-free path of travel from the parking lot and sidewalk, barrier-free path of travel inside the voting location, barrier-free parking, door operators or accessible doors, adequate lighting, and adequate slope and surface.

Due to the vote anywhere model adopted by the Clerk, voters were able to vote at any of these locations, regardless of the Ward they reside in. It should also be emphasized that free transit was available on Election Day for anyone wishing to attend an Electronic Voting Location.

The percentage breakdown of total ballots cast by location is as follows:

- 4.97% cast at Voter Help Centres;
- 0.25% cast on the Election Bus;
- 1.37% cast at Nursing and Long-Term Care Homes; and
- 11.62% cast at Election Day Electronic Voting Locations.

Voter Experience

Assistance for Electors

While there were many voters who enjoyed the convenience of electronic voting and had no issue using the online voting platform to cast their ballot, a number of electors did require additional assistance as they may not have been as comfortable using the online voting platform and electronic devices to cast their ballot.

For clarity, processes to assist electors are in place for every municipal election. To that end, every effort was made by the Election Team to ensure that anyone who wanted to cast a ballot was able to do so. A number of initiatives to help voters with the platform and technology were put into place such as: the establishment of Voter Help Centres, outreach presentations, registration days, the Election Bus, establishment of in-person voting locations on Election Day

at 23 Nursing and Long-Term Care facilities specifically for residents of those sites and the use of the 23 voting locations throughout the City as previously used in the 2014 Municipal and School Board Election.

Following the election an analysis of voting statistics was conducted and it was found that 81.79% of all ballots cast during the voting period were cast independently in a location other than at an established election period voting location.

While the majority of voters were able to cast their ballot without assistance, some required support and as such attended an election period voting location. Many voters who attended at those locations were those who were unfamiliar or uncomfortable with the technology and unsure of how to navigate the online voting platform. All election period voting locations were staffed with election officials comprised of City of Greater Sudbury employees to provide assistance and support to any voter who required it.

Despite assistance and support offered, some voters remained steadfast in their dislike of the online voting platform and wished to see a return to the traditional paper ballot method. However, it should be noted that a number of those who attended an election period voting location who were initially opposed to the idea of voting online left satisfied with the method and of the opinion that the system was actually quite easy to use.

Comments Received

As this was the first fully electronic election staff felt that it was important to allow the public a chance to provide feedback on their experiences using the method. Comment boxes were placed in all election period voting locations and voters were also encouraged to send any questions, comments or concerns to election@greatersudbury.ca.

Following the election, all comments received were reviewed by staff and logged into a spreadsheet. Upon review of the comments, it was found that a general theme emerged amongst the types of comments received in the comment boxes in voting locations, which was an overall dislike of having to vote online on a computer or tablet and a wish to return to a paper ballot method or a hybrid model. In contrast, many of the comments that were sent to the election email were of a more positive nature regarding the method and the process.

Positive feedback was received from a number of voters. Some voters who provided feedback indicated that were it not for the ability to cast a ballot online at any time of day from anywhere including from other provinces or countries, they would not have been able to vote in the election due to work or travel commitments that prevented them from being in Greater Sudbury during the voting period.

These comments will assist with the planning phases of the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election.

Staffing and Training

In order to staff all aspects of the revision and voting period of the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election, 410 City employees were required and recruited.

The decision to use city staff as the sole source of Election Officials was made for a number of reasons. City staff are required to take and have been provided with training in customer service, accessibility, WHMIS, health and safety etc, which cut down on additional training requirements as outside workers would have been required to receive this training in addition to election specific training.

Election Official training was provided over a period of four weeks in three hour sessions. Training consisted of a classroom style presentation, demonstrations of voters' list management software and the electronic voting system, and a hands-on voting location simulation. A voters' list management software training database was provided up until Election Day so that Election Officials could practice making changes to elector information in a test environment ahead of their working in a location and an election official manual containing all Election Day information was provided.

Next Steps

Planning for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election begins immediately. The information and statistics collected during and after the 2018 election as well as election trends and technologies used in other jurisdictions will be monitored and taken into consideration during the planning phases for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election. In 2020, staff will bring forward a report recommending the method(s) of vote for the next municipal election for Council's consideration and approval. Such method(s) should provide electors with confidence in the voting process and results and should be convenient and accessible for all electors in Greater Sudbury. Once the election method(s) has been selected for 2022, staff will conduct a procurement process in accordance with the City's procurement policy.

Resources Cited

- Municipal Elections Act, 1996 - <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/96m32>
- City Council Report, May 2017 - <http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=1128&itemid=13312&lang=en>
- 2018 Municipal and School Board Election Site - <https://www.greatersudbury.ca/city-hall/election-2018/>

Appendix A: City of Greater Sudbury 2018 Municipal and School Board Election Statistics

Total Number of Ballots Cast	52,087
Total Voter Turnout (%)	45.00%
Total Voter Turnout (% Provincial Average)	37.61%

Ballots Cast by Location		
<u>Voting Location</u>	<u>Total Number of Ballots</u>	<u>Voter Turnout (%)</u>
Online (No Location)	42,602	81.79%
Voter Help Center	2,588	4.97%
Election Bus	133	0.25%
Long-Term Care/Nursing Home	714	1.37%
Election Day Electronic Voting Location	6,050	11.62%

Ballots Cast by Voting Date		
<u>Voting Date</u>	<u>Total Number of Ballots</u>	<u>Voter Turnout (%)</u>
Ballots Cast at Advance Voting Location (VHC/Election Bus October 15-21)	2,721	5.22%
Ballots Cast at Election Day Electronic Voting Location October 22 & 23 (LTCN/Regular EVL)	6,764	13.00%
Total Number of Ballots Cast Online During Advance Voting Period (No Location Attendance)	27,127	52.08%
Total Number of Ballots Cast Online Election Day October 22&23 (No Location Attendance)	15,475	29.70%

Voter Turnout by Age			
Age Group	Number of Voters	Number of Ballots Cast	Voter Turnout %
18-24	8,332	2,204	26.45%
25 - 34	17,187	4,622	26.89%
35-44	16,890	6,461	38.25%
45-54	19,463	9,016	46.32%
55-64	22,387	12,531	55.97%
65-74	16,360	10,331	63.14%
75-84	9,047	5,432	60.04%
85-94	3,303	1,397	42.29%
95-104	375	94	25.06%
105-114	14	0	0.00%

Voter Turnout by Ward			
Ward	Number of Voters	Number of Ballots Cast	Voter Turnout %
1	9,350	4,384	46.89%
2	10,153	4,761	46.89%
3	9,106	3,467	38.07%
4	9,128	3,999	43.81%
5	9,062	3,673	40.53%
6	10,331	4,526	43.81%
7	9,775	4,565	46.70%
8	8,307	4,039	48.62%
9	10,321	5,206	50.44%
10	10,745	4,992	46.46%
11	10,214	4,841	47.40%
12	9,291	3,635	39.12%

Total Number of Changes to Voters' List (September to November)		
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2018</u>
Total Changes	34,859	20,132
Total Percentage of Changes made to Voters' List - Beginning of Revisions Period to Close of Voting Period (September 1 to October 23, 2018)		
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2018</u>
Voters on the list	117,701	115,784
Change Percentage	29.61%	17.38%
Beginning of Revisions Period until Election Day (September 1 – October 21, 2018)		
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2018</u>
Voters Added		1,662
Revisions to Existing Voter Information		7,876
Total Changes	14,405	9,538
Election Day		
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2018</u>
Voters Added		1,948
Revisions to Existing Voter Information		7,614
Total Changes	18,501	9,562
Post Election Submission of Revisions Report to MPAC (November)		
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2018</u>
Total Changes	1,853	1,032