

**Meeting Date:** 10/31/2017

**Report #:** 17-040(CRP)

**To:** COUNCIL

**Report Date:** 10/02/2017

**Report Author:** Michael Di Lullo, City Clerk

**Department:** Corporate Services

**Division:** Clerk's

**Report Title:** Direction to Proceed with Question on the Election Ballot

**File No:** C0701-17

**Ward No:** All

## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

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THAT Report No. 17-040(CRP), re: Direction to Proceed with Question on the Election Ballot - be received as information;

AND THAT Council provide direction to the Clerk to proceed with placing a Question on the Ballot in the 2018 Election as per the options set out in Report No. 17-040(CRP).

## **SUMMARY**

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This report is a follow-up report to Council's intent to proceed with a Question on the Election Ballot in the upcoming Municipal Election in 2018 related to changing the voting system from First-Past-The-Post to a Ranked Ballot election in 2022.

Council direction is sought to confirm the intent previously given to place a question on the ballot, following public meetings that were held in September 2017. Public feedback is now complete and Council can now confirm its decision on whether to proceed so that a by-law can be passed in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act*.

## **BACKGROUND**

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In 2016, a report was brought forward to Council in regards to changes to the *Municipal Elections Act*. One of those changes introduced by the Province is the ability for municipalities to change the voting system from First-Past-The-Post to a Ranked Ballot Election. Of the 444 municipalities in Ontario, the City of London is the only municipality changing its voting system to a ranked ballot for the 2018 Election.

Cambridge is maintaining the First-Past-The-Post system in 2018 however it was approved in principle to look at placing a question on the ballot for next year's election to gauge the electorate on this important voting change for the following municipal election in 2022.

As such, the Clerk provided a follow-up information report earlier in the year outlining the process and an outline of the regulations for placing a question on the ballot. As part of the Council recommendation, public consultation was to be considered prior to finalization.

Two public meetings were arranged in September to provide information about ranked ballots and how a question on the ballot works. To help gauge public interest, social media was used including EngageCambridge which was deployed for approximately three weeks.

The public workshops were held in the Bowman Room at City Hall on September 6 and 12, 2017. Responses were received online, through telephone and in-person. Based on the feedback, 31 responses were received in the affirmative to support a question on the 2018 ballot and 16 responses were received that did not support a question on the 2018 ballot.

## ANALYSIS

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### Strategic Alignment:

PEOPLE To actively engage, inform and create opportunities for people to participate in community building – making Cambridge a better place to live, work, play and learn for all.

Goal #2 - Governance and Leadership

Objective 2.1 Provide a wide range of ways that people can become involved in city decision making.

The municipal election is an opportunity for the electors of Cambridge to become engaged in the democratic make-up of the local government structure and receiving input on the process by which Council is elected assists in the future administration of municipal elections.

### Existing Policy/By-Law:

The *Municipal Elections Act* provides the rules and guidelines for placing a question on the election ballot and administering a ranked ballot system election. Based on Council's decision, a by-law must be passed by March 1, 2018.

## Financial Impact:

Should Council approve the recommendation, costs to proceed with placing a question on the ballot will be collected and paid through the election administration account. Costs associated with a question on the ballot include: additional advertising costs to comply with notice provisions noted in the *Municipal Elections Act*.

## Public Input:

Two public meetings were held on September 6 and September 12, 2017 and public notice was provided along with the creation of a webpage to gauge the public's input on proceeding with a question on the ballot about using ranked ballots in 2022.

## Internal/External Consultation:

The Communications Division was consulted and provided assistance with respect to the usage of social media to promote and develop the EngageCambridge portal.

## Comments/Analysis:

In order to proceed with placing a question on the ballot for the 2022 Municipal Election, a by-law must be passed by no later than March 1, 2018.

Based on the intent of Council's recommendation earlier in the year coupled with the feedback received through the public consultation process, direction is now required. There are two options for Council:

Option 1 – Proceed with question on ballot and ask the general public about the usage of ranked ballots in the following election and direct the Clerk to pass the appropriate by-law.

Wording would be noted as follows:

“Are you in favour of the City of Cambridge using a ranked ballot voting system for the 2022 municipal election?”

YES

NO

Option 2 – Do not proceed with a question on the ballot but have the Clerk monitor and report back following the 2018 election based on the outcome from the City of London.

## SIGNATURE

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Prepared by:



**Departmental Approval:**



**City Manager Approval:**



**ATTACHMENTS**

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N/A