

17 June 2020

The Honourable Steve Clark
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
17th Floor
777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

Dear Minister,

RE: Updates to the Candidate, Voter and Third Party Election Guides

We, the Clerks from the cities of Ottawa, Cambridge, Windsor and the Town of Pelham are writing to request information as it relates to your candidate, voter and third party guides that are produced with the purpose to provide information for the 2018 municipal council and school board elections. As such, these guides also apply to any by-elections that may be held during the 2018-2022 council and school board term.

By way of background, we can inform you that on Tuesday, March 17, 2020, the City Clerk for the City of Cambridge, announced the postponement of the by-election taking place in Ward 7 to a future date to be set by Council. Also, on March 17, 2020, the City Clerk in Windsor, confirmed that the Ward 7 by-election, set to take place on Monday, April 27, 2020, was being postponed due to circumstances caused by COVID-19. At the time of writing this letter, new dates for voting events in Cambridge and Windsor are yet to be determined.

As for by-elections in the City of Ottawa and Town of Pelham, both municipalities declared vacancies amid provincial and municipal declarations of emergency (Ottawa on March 25 and Pelham on May 4). The Town of Pelham will be holding a by-election to fill the vacancy, with Voting Day on September 15, 2020. The City of Ottawa is also looking at a fall Voting Day, likely in October pending a decision on how to fill the vacancy by their Council.

That said, the environment in which elections are delivered has been materially changed by the rapidly evolving COVID-19 global pandemic and the subsequent and ongoing emergency declarations of the provincial and municipal governments. While the 2018 Guides are not meant to replace provincial legislation, they do provide candidates, those wishing to register as third party advertisers, and voters with general information about the rules

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contained in the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 and other legislation and regulations. As each of our municipalities moves forward with our respective by-elections, we would like to know whether revised versions of the guides will be prepared to assist voters, candidates (more specifically as it relates to campaigning activities) and third parties given the new reality municipalities are facing when conducting by-elections in the 2018-2022 term.

We look forward to your response on this matter and would be pleased to discuss it further in the immediate future.

Regards,



M. Rick O'Connor, CMO, LL.B.
City Clerk, City of Ottawa



Danielle Manton
City Clerk, City of Cambridge



Valerie Critchley
City Clerk, Licence Commissioner
Corporate Leader for Human Services
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Nancy J. Bozzato, Dipl.M.M.
Town Clerk
Town of Pelham

cc: Johnathan Lebi, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Allan Scott, Regional Director, Municipal Services Office Eastern Region, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
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