



The Corporation of the Township of King Report to Council

From: Corporate Services Department – Clerks Division

Report Number: COR-CLK-2026-001

Date: Monday, February 9, 2026

Title: **2026 Municipal and School Board Election – Administrative Policy Review**

Recommendation

1. That Council receive Report COR-CLK-2026-001 for information.
2. That Council approve By-law 2026-009 – Use of Other Languages in an Election.

1. Report Highlights

- The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, requires municipalities to adopt certain election-related by-laws by May 1 in an election year.
- This report outlines administrative matters related to the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election and recommends the adoption of a by-law permitting the use of additional languages in election communications.
- Staff recommend maintaining the Township’s existing Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Period Policy and not adopting a separate recount policy.

2. Purpose

To provide Council with an overview of administrative requirements under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and to review updates in preparation for the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election.

3. Background

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (the “Act”) requires municipalities to consider and, where appropriate, adopt certain election-related policies by May 1 in an election year. This report addresses the following areas:

Language of Notices and Forms (Section 9 of the Act)

The Act requires that all prescribed election forms and notices be provided in English. However, municipalities may pass a by-law authorizing the use of French in prescribed forms and/or the use of French or other languages in non-prescribed materials. This authority allows municipalities to enhance accessibility and voter engagement through multilingual communications.

Recount Provisions (Sections 56-58 of the Act)

The Act mandates a recount in the event of a tie vote (Section 56). Additional recounts for candidates may be initiated by council or a local board through resolution (Section 57) or the Superior Court of Justice upon application by an eligible elector with reasonable grounds (Section 58). Section 56(3) permits municipalities to adopt a by-law to establish additional circumstances under which the Clerk must conduct a recount.

Use of Corporate Resources (Section 88.18 of the Act)

Before May 1 in an election year, municipalities are required to adopt a Use of Corporate Resources policy which governs the use of municipal resources during the election campaign period. This ensures that public assets are not used to support or oppose any candidate or campaign.

Election Accessibility Plan (Section 12.1 of the Act)

The Clerk is required to prepare a plan to identify, remove, and prevent barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities. This plan must be made available to the public before voting day. A post-election report on the implementation of the plan must be published within 90 days after voting day.

4. Analysis

4.1. Language of Notices and Forms

Staff reviewed opportunities to enhance election-related communications by improving language accessibility, as permitted under the Act. The goal of this review was to broaden outreach and support meaningful participation by electors who may benefit from receiving election information in languages other than English.

To assess community language needs, staff analyzed demographic data from the most recent Statistics Canada Census of Population. Specifically, the review focused on the “Knowledge of Language” dataset, which identifies the languages spoken and understood by residents of the Township of King. Based on this data, staff compiled a list of languages known by at least 2% of the Township’s total population, which may warrant consideration for inclusion in election communications.

Official Languages	Knowledge of Languages Rate (%)
Italian	14.7
French	6.7
Russian	3.1
Spanish	2.6
Mandarin	2.6
Iranian Persian	2.1

Staff recommend adopting a by-law that grants the Clerk discretion to provide election-

related information in additional languages, guided by this percentage-based threshold. This approach supports accessibility and voter engagement while allowing flexibility in determining which materials and languages are appropriate. It is important to note that prescribed forms under the Act may only be issued in English or French.

4.2. Recount Policy

Municipalities have the authority to adopt a by-law to establish a policy outlining specific circumstances under which the Clerk would be required to conduct a recount. This provision allows municipalities to define additional automatic recount triggers beyond those already mandated by the Act.

However, the Act already provides a comprehensive framework for recounts, including automatically in the event of a tie vote, or by resolution of council (or local board), for all or specified candidates, or if ordered by the Superior Court of Justice upon application by an eligible elector with reasonable grounds.

The existing provisions of the Act provide a comprehensive framework for addressing tied election results and responding to concerns raised by council or electors. King does not have a recount policy in place and given the breadth and clarity of the statutory mechanisms, staff are not recommending any further action.

4.3. Use of Corporate Resources

The Township's [Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Period Policy](#), adopted in 2018, has been applied during the 2018 and 2022 elections. Staff have reviewed the policy and recommend no changes for the 2026 election period.

4.4. Election Accessibility Plan

Staff assigned to work as a part of the election team are developing the 2026 Election Accessibility Plan and intend to consult with the Accessibility Advisory Committee. The plan will be made public in advance of the voting period in accordance with the Act. A post-election report will also be published within 90 days of voting as required by the Act.

5. Financial Considerations

There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

6. Alignment to Strategic Plan

The 2023-2026 Corporate Strategic Plan (CSP) was adopted by Council on June 12, 2023. The CSP reflects the priorities of upmost importance to the community and defines the obligations and commitments of the Township of King to its citizens and to the public. The CSP is aligned with the Townships long-term vision defined in the "Our King" Official Plan. The CSP also aims to ensure that staff initiatives focus on and work towards supporting King's Vision, Mission and Values.

This report is in alignment with the CSP's Priority Area(s), and/or associated Objective(s) and/or Key Results(s):

Priority Area: Service Excellence

Objective: Not Applicable.

Key Result: Not Applicable.

This report supports the Township's commitment to good governance, accessibility, and inclusive service delivery. While indirectly tied to the Service Excellence priority area, the proposed updates also align with the Township's broader goals of transparency and effective administration.

7. Conclusion

This report outlines the review undertaken by Clerks to support inclusive and transparent election administration for 2026. Staff's review has concluded the Township's administrative policies for elections are sufficient, effective, and compliant with the legislation and therefore require no updates. Staff are proposing a by-law which will enable multilingual communications in line with the demographics of the community and at the discretion of the Township Clerk.

8. Attachments

Not applicable.

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