




West Nipissing Ovest

 Corporate Services Department Legislative Services Division	
Date & Time Received:	October 18, 2024 8:28 am
Original To:	CIP
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Take Appropriate Action	<input type="checkbox"/> File <input type="checkbox"/>
Notes/Comments:	

Joie de vivre

The Corporation of the Municipality of West Nipissing
La Corporation de la Municipalité de Nipissing Ovest
101-225, rue Holditch Street, Sturgeon Falls, ON P2B 1T1

P/T (705) 753-2250 (1-800-263-5359)
F/TC (705) 753-3950

October 17, 2024

Honourable Premier Doug Ford
Legislative Building
Queen's Park, Room 281
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

SENT VIA E MAIL
premier@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Ford :

RE: AMCTO RECOMMENDATIONS TO UPDATE THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ACT (MEA)

At its regular meeting held on October 15 2024, Council for the Municipality of West Nipissing passed the following resolution.

<< Resolution: **2024/285** Moved By: Councillor R. Larabie
Seconded By: Councillor G. Pharand

WHEREAS at the meeting of October 15, 2024, Council for the Municipality of West Nipissing received and supports resolution no. 2024-152 from the Town of Parry Sound;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council for the Municipality of West Nipissing calls on the Province of Ontario to update the *Municipal Elections Act* (MEA) with the priority amendments as outlined by AMCTO and commence work to review and re-write the MEA with long-term recommendations ahead of the upcoming elections;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to all municipalities in Ontario for support and that each endorsement be then forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (minister.mah@ontario.ca), the Minister of Education (minister.edu@ontario.ca), the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery (todd.mccarthy@ontario.ca), the Minister of Finance (minister.fin@ontario.ca), the Premier of Ontario (premier@ontario.ca), John Vanthof (MPP) and AMCTO (advocacy@amcto.com)

CARRIED >>

In accordance with Council's direction, the resolution is being forwarded for your reference.

Respectfully,

Janice Dupuis
Deputy Clerk
Municipality of West Nipissing



Council - Committee of the Whole

Resolution # 2024/285
Title: Authorize support of Parry Sound resolution re: AMCTO recommendations to update Municipal Elections Act
Date: October 15, 2024

Moved by: Councillor Roland Larabie
Seconded by: Councillor Georges Pharand

WHEREAS at the meeting of October 15, 2024, Council for the Municipality of West Nipissing received and supports resolution no. 2024-152 from the Town of Parry Sound;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council for the Municipality of West Nipissing calls on the Province of Ontario to update the *Municipal Elections Act* (MEA) with the priority amendments as outlined by AMCTO and commence work to review and re-write the MEA with long-term recommendations ahead of the upcoming elections;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to all municipalities in Ontario for support and that each endorsement be then forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (minister.mah@ontario.ca), the Minister of Education (minister.edu@ontario.ca), the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery (todd.mccarthy@ontario.ca), the Minister of Finance (minister.fin@ontario.ca), the Premier of Ontario (premier@ontari.ca), John Vanthof (MPP) and AMCTO (advocacy@amcto.com)

CARRIED



West Nipissing Ouest

CORPORATION DE LA MUNICIPALITÉ DE NIPISSING OUEST

Council - Committee of the Whole

Résolution # 2024/285
Titre: Autoriser le soutien de la résolution de Parry Sound concernant les recommandations de l'AMCTO pour la mise à jour de la loi sur les élections municipales
Date: le 15 octobre 2024

Proposé par: Councillor Roland Larabie
Appuyé par: Councillor Georges Pharand

ATTENDU QUE lors de la réunion du 15 octobre 2024, le conseil de la municipalité de Nipissing Ouest a reçu et appuie la résolution no 2024-152 de la ville de Parry Sound ;
IL EST RÉSOLU QUE le conseil de la municipalité de Nipissing Ouest demande à la province de l'Ontario de mettre à jour la Loi sur les élections municipales (LEM) avec les amendements prioritaires tels que décrits par l'AMCTO et de commencer le travail de révision et de réécriture de la LEM avec des recommandations à long terme avant les prochaines élections ;
IL EST EN OUTRE RÉSOLU QU'une copie de cette résolution soit transmise à toutes les municipalités de l'Ontario pour obtenir leur soutien et que chaque appui soit ensuite transmis au ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement (minister.mah@ontario.ca), au ministre de l'Éducation (minister.edu@ontario.ca), au ministre de la Prestation des services publics et commerciaux (todd.mccarthy@ontario.ca), au ministre des Finances (minister.fin@ontario.ca), au premier ministre de l'Ontario (premier@ontari.ca), à John Vanthof (député provincial) et à l'AMCTO (advocacy@amcto.com).

ADOPTÉ



52 Seguin Street, Parry Sound, Ontario P2A 1B4
Tel: (705) 746-2101 • Fax: (705) 746-7461 • www.parrysound.ca

October 2, 2024

Minister Paul Calandra
Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street
College Park 17th Floor,
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3
Via e-mail: minister.mah@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Calandra,

I am writing to you as the Municipal Clerk at the Town of Parry Sound and as the municipal officer responsible for the administration of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* in support of [AMCTO's recommendations](#) calling for the comprehensive changes to *MEA*.

AMCTO members, as municipal leaders, support the interests and well-being of 235,000 municipal employees across all municipalities in this Province.

Local election administrators care about running fair and accessible elections. We care about ensuring that candidates, voters, and third-party advertisers understand their responsibilities. We care that those that may knowingly break the rules are held to account. We care that the *MEA* and the accompanying *Education Act* and *Assessment Act* are complicated pieces of legislation on their own, and more so read together.

That is why AMCTO reviews the *Act* after every local election and why the Province should be making the necessary changes to make election administration easier and the *Act* clearer to follow for candidates and voters within the timelines AMCTO has set out.

Never has there been a more important moment to ensure the *Act* is working well, closes gaps and provides the right enforcement tools and mechanisms to safeguard our local electoral processes from threats of foreign interference, misinformation and bad actors. Local clerks need support and guidance on how to manage these threats and deal with potential events especially considering the federal government's recent legislation on foreign interference (Bill C-70).

AMCTO convened a group of municipal staff with experience and expertise in administering local elections to present you with several recommendations for making improvements to *MEA* and calling for an overhaul of the *Act* in the long-term.

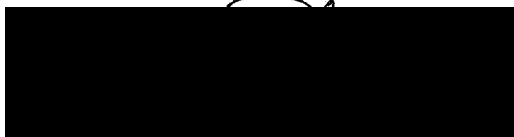
I support AMCTO's recommendations and call on you to update the *MEA* with priority and secondary recommendations by mid 2025 ahead of the 2026 election so that I can make the necessary adjustments for planning and implementation well ahead of statutory timelines imposed upon me to administer an election.

There is a provincial interest in ensuring the health of local democracy and the time to act is now – proactively instead of reactively. Election administrators face several uncertainties as we look ahead to 2026. We observe that in other jurisdictions with elections there is an increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) and other technology to spread misinformation. There are increased levels of electoral interference. Even in Canada, we are seeing reports of more candidates and elected officials stepping back from public life because of concerns for their safety and reputations.

There also is a provincial interest for reducing administrative and operational burdens to help free up staff time to focus on other critical statutory and operational tasks such as those related to planning and development processes, municipal governance, as well as service innovation, in support of provincial priorities.

I look forward to seeing legislation introduced to update the *MEA* in the coming months to address current challenges, streamline processes, and make legislation easier to understand and administer.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Johnson
Clerk

/rj
Encl.

cc: Paul Shipway, President, AMCTO president@amcto.com
Martha Greenberg, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and
Housing martha.greenberg@ontario.ca
Jill Dunlop, Minister of Education minister.edu@ontario.ca
Todd McCarthy, Minister of Public & Business Service Delivery &
Procurement todd.mccarthy@ontario.ca
Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance Minister.fin@ontario.ca
Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario premier@ontario.ca
Graydon Smith, MPP Parry Sound-Muskoka Graydon.Smith@pc.ola.org
Ontario Municipal Clerks



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF PARRY SOUND
RESOLUTION IN COUNCIL

NO. 2024 – 152

DIVISION LIST

YES NO

DATE: October 1, 2024

Councillor	G. ASHFORD	_____	_____
Councillor	J. BELESKEY	_____	_____
Councillor	P. BORNEMAN	_____	_____
Councillor	B. KEITH	_____	_____
Councillor	D. McCANN	_____	_____
Councillor	C. McDONALD	_____	_____
Mayor	J. McGARVEY	_____	_____

MOVED BY:

SECONDED

CARRIED: DEFEATED: _____ Postponed to: _____

WHEREAS election rules need to be clear, supporting candidates and voters in their electoral participation and election administrators in running elections.

WHEREAS legislation needs to strike the right balance between providing clear rules and frameworks to ensure the integrity of the electoral process,

WHEREAS the legislation must also reduce administrative and operational burden for municipal staff ensuring that local election administrators can run elections in a way that responds to the unique circumstances of their local communities.

WHEREAS the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (MEA) will be 30 years old by the next municipal and school board elections in 2026.

WHEREAS the MEA sets out the rules for local elections, the Assessment Act, 1990 and the Education Act, 1990 also contain provisions impacting local elections adding more places for voters, candidates, and administrators to look for the rules that bind the local democratic process in Ontario.

WHEREAS with rules across three pieces of legislation, and the MEA containing a patchwork of clauses, there are interpretation challenges, inconsistencies, and gaps to fill.

WHEREAS the Act can pose difficulties for voters, candidates, contributors and thirdparty advertisers to read, to interpret, to comply with and for election administrators to enforce.

WHEREAS while local elections are run as efficiently and effectively as can be within the current legislative framework, modernization and continuous improvement is needed to ensure the Act is responsive to today’s needs and tomorrow’s challenges.


WHEREAS to keep public trust and improve safeguards the Act should be reviewed considering the ever-changing landscape which impacts elections administration including privacy, the threats of foreign interference, increased spread of mis/disinformation and the increased use of technologies like artificial intelligence and use of digital identities.

WHEREAS the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks, and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) reviewed the Act and has provided several recommendations including modernizing the legislation, harmonizing rules, and streamlining and simplifying administration.

AND WHEREAS AMCTO put forward recommendations for amendments ahead of the 2026 elections and longer-term recommendations for amendments ahead of the 2030 elections.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Town of Parry Sound calls for the Province to update the MEA with priority amendments as outlined by AMCTO before Summer 2025 and commence work to review and re-write the MEA with longer-term recommendations ahead of the 2030 elections.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution will be forwarded to all municipalities in Ontario for support and that each endorsement be then forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (minister.mah@ontario.ca), the Minister of Education (minister.edu@ontario.ca), the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery (todd.mccarthy@ontario.ca), Minister of Finance (Minister.fin@ontario.ca) the Premier of Ontario (premier@ontario.ca), Parry Sound Muskoka MPP Graydon Smith and AMCTO (advocacy@amcto.com).

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the Deputy Mayor.

Deputy Mayor Chris McDonald