

Election Toolkit for Women

***The Candidate's Guide to
Municipal Elections***



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FCM
Federation of Canadian Municipalities

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Introduction

Municipal government, the order of government that is closest to the people, is well-positioned to influence grassroots change. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) believes that change should include increasing the number of women on municipal councils in Canada, where they have been historically under-represented. Women make up 50 per cent of Canada's population but only 23 per cent of municipal councils. The mandate of FCM's Standing Committee on Increasing Women's Participation in Municipal Government is to encourage and support more women's participation in municipal decision-making processes, including elected office.

This election toolkit is designed to give women considering running for municipal office an understanding of the job, as well as to provide tips and strategies for running a campaign. There is no one way to approach campaigns and no complete list of things to do or factors to consider. Consequently, this toolkit has been developed based on the experiences of municipal politicians across the country and includes a comprehensive listing of additional resources that you should consult as you consider running for office.

This document is by no means exhaustive. Rather than replicating already existing information, this toolkit seeks to consolidate all of the existing resources and combine them with advice from mayors and councillors across the country. Each section provides a brief introduction to the topic and links to other resources offering more detail. Because many of the specific requirements, rules and regulations vary by province and territory, Appendix A lists additional resources, while Appendix B lists relevant legislation. There is also a comprehensive listing of provincial contacts in Appendix C for candidates who have additional questions or who would like clarification of the rules that apply in their own municipalities.

Deciding to Run

Numerous factors must be considered when considering running for municipal office. They include personal experience, family, community, finances and existing commitments. Ultimately, the candidate must be comfortable with her decision, since she will have to live with the consequences.

Before deciding to run for municipal office, ask yourself why you are running: Is it to get your concerns on the municipal agenda? To push for specific issues in your ward or immediate community? Or are you in the race just to get elected?

Here are some comments from women mayors and councillors who made the decision to run for municipal office.

“You have to really want to serve the public because if you don't have that goal of serving I think it would become very frustrating. People who run for a one-issue cause get disillusioned early on and aren't happy. You want to help people and make a difference, that's why I ran.”

*Councillor Kathryn Barnes,
Moncton, N.B.*

“At the time, the municipal council was divided and non-productive, which was very harmful. My interest for Bromont's long-term development, career experiences and capacity to unite people to promote a cause, prompted me to run for municipal office.”

*Mayor Pauline Quinlan,
Bromont, Que.*

“I entered politics because I believed I could make a difference in my community. I had greater expectations for Brampton and I realized municipal politics was the opportunity to improve the quality of life for families (like my own) and the community.”

*Mayor Susan Fennell,
Brampton, Ont.*

Women in Politics

The United Nations defines 30 per cent female representation as the minimum required in a government body before policy begins to adequately reflect women’s concerns. Currently in Canada, 23 per cent of all municipal politicians are women. FCM’s goal is to see women make up 30 per cent of local government councils by 2026. It has developed recommendations, programs and tools to meet the target. This toolkit is one part of its strategy.

It is important that municipal political bodies reflect the demographics of the population as accurately as possible. Governments that reflect the demographics of the community are best equipped to meet the needs of the community. With women at the table, their issues are directly represented and included in all political discussions. Women also take a different approach to the process and the content of policy, which often results in more inclusive and well-rounded discussions around the council table. These are just some of the reasons why it is important for women to be involved in municipal government.

Additional Resources

Getting to 30% by 2026 † www.fcm.ca/women

La cible : 30 pour cent † www.fcm.ca/femmes

Getting to the Gate: Why Consider Politics? † www.gettingtothegate.com

Pourquoi pas vous? † http://www.mamr.gouv.qc.ca//publications/legislation/guide_pourquoi_pas_vous.pdf

Understanding the Job

Before making a decision to run, it is important to understand the job and what is required of a municipal politician. The job description varies from municipality to municipality; however, the basic components are the same across the country. They include:

- Responding to community concerns;
- Keeping aware of important issues in the community;
- Staying focused on issues that are important to you and bringing them forward to council;
- Participating in debates about by-laws, policies and proposed projects in council and committee meetings; and
- Realizing council members have a dual responsibility to look after voters’ concerns as well as the concerns of the municipality as a whole.

The time commitment varies, but the duties of a municipal politician extend beyond the time spent in regular council meetings. Municipal politicians are also required to attend standing committee meetings, as well as to represent council at meetings of boards and agencies, various professional development events, and local events promoting the municipality. Depending on the size of the municipality and the individual’s level of commitment, the position can become a full-time job. The best way to gauge the time required is by talking to those who are currently elected in your community. It is important to be prepared to commit the amount of time required in order to ensure that you are fulfilling the expectations of your community. It is also important to consider how this commitment will affect your other obligations and activities. Find out how long the council terms are in your community; terms vary by province and territory.

Some challenges and barriers are particularly relevant to women candidates. Being aware of these factors will ensure candidates are prepared to overcome them. The Canadian Labour Congress Guide for Candidates has a list of these considerations. Currently elected mayors and councillors have also identified the following barriers for female candidates to consider before running for municipal office:

- Juggling the traditional roles as primary caregiver for parents and children with a role in public life;
- The attitude that men are better suited to politics;
- Getting access to funding;
- Being comfortable in the aggressive world of politics; and
- Being scrutinized in the media, sometimes more harshly than male counterparts.

The best way to overcome these barriers is by taking advantage of the resources that do exist, such as mentoring and networking opportunities with other women in politics; using the Internet and local libraries to conduct research; relying on human resources among the candidate's supporters; and childcare allowances where provided.

“I belonged to volunteer non-government organizations (NGOs) concerned about the environment and social justice that were municipal issues...You can only make so many presentations to council before you decide you should try out the other side of the table.”

*Councillor Shelagh
Montgomery, Yellowknife,
N.W.T..*

Additional Resources

Running for Municipal Government † www.ma.gov.nl.ca/ma/municipal_training.html

Eligibility

In addition to feeling personally prepared, there are also eligibility criteria for all candidates. Again, these vary by province and territory. However, the criteria generally require candidates to hold Canadian citizenship; be at least 18 years old; meet a residency requirement as a property owner; be free of any conflicts of interest; be eligible to vote and not disqualified under any other legislation. Consult the provincial and territorial guides and legislation listed in Appendix A and B for details pertaining to your jurisdiction.

Useful Experiences

A variety of factors will contribute to success in municipal government. The following is a list of experiences that are particularly useful in preparing for municipal politics. It is by no means exhaustive. The list includes:

- Community involvement;
- Attendance at council meetings (in your area or elsewhere);
- Union involvement;
- Experience in federal, provincial/territorial or municipal politics;
- Attendance at candidate campaign schools;
- Professional employment and contacts;
- Academic preparation at university or college;
- Volunteering on other candidates' campaigns;
- Participation in municipal, provincial or federal committees;
- Experience as a school board or parks board trustee; and
- General knowledge and understanding of the skills needed to effectively participate in the community and local government.

Many of these experiences involve similar skill sets including organization, leadership, balancing various demands, providing service to the community, working with people and knowledge of basic political structures. Additionally, candidates who are already established in the community through some type of involvement have an advantage. However, all that is required is an awareness of the issues at municipal council, and a desire to do something about them.

“You have to be interested in people and you have to be interested in their issues. If you are, and are prepared to put the time in, you can succeed in municipal politics.”

*Councillor Suzanne Anton,
Vancouver, B.C.*

Making a Decision

Ultimately, the candidate must be personally comfortable with her decision. Elected mayors and councillors offered the following advice in making the final decision to run for municipal government:

- You must make the decision to run yourself, with the help of your immediate family and your closest friends.
- Do not doubt your abilities; you are capable.
- Remember that deciding to enter politics should not be about a career; it could be short lived.
- Know that participating in municipal government will have a major effect on your life.
- Understand the full commitment of the job.
- Have a genuine interest in serving your community.
- Don't run exclusively for one issue.
- Be prepared to lose.
- And be prepared to win!

Equal Voice, a non-partisan, non-profit organization working to promote the election of more women in all orders of government, has produced a comprehensive online tool for women considering politics in all orders of government. Called *Getting to the Gate*, it includes a self-assessment section with questions and surveys to help determine a candidate's personal strengths and weaknesses and readiness to pursue politics.

Additional Resources

Canadian Labour Congress Guide for Candidates, p.8-14 † www.canadianlabour.ca

Getting to the Gate: What Do You Need? † www.gettingtothegate.com

Nomination Process

In order to formalize a decision to run, candidates must complete the nomination process. Since this varies among jurisdictions, consult the information relevant to your jurisdiction. Most provinces and territories have published a guide for municipal candidates that outlines the steps involved in the process.

Potential candidates should note that some cities, such as Vancouver and Montreal, have municipal political parties. Candidates running in cities in which the party system operates should seek advice from elected persons in their individual areas on how to proceed with the nomination process.

Nomination papers, provided by the municipality, must be filed in person by a certain date. These papers usually require the candidate's name, the office to which she is being nominated, her address, and the names and addresses of her nominators. The required number of nominators varies by province or territory. As well, the candidate must provide a written statement of consent and a declaration that she is eligible for nomination. Some jurisdictions require financial disclosure statements at this time.

In order to file their nominations, candidates must pay a fee. The fee is refundable under certain conditions, such as if you are elected or if you receive a minimum percentage of the vote.

It is important to fill out all forms accurately and meet deadlines. Incomplete or late forms will not be accepted.

Additional Resources

Canadian Labour Congress Guide for Candidates, p.27-28 † www.canadianlabour.ca

Legal Considerations

Campaign Offences

In addition to running all aspects of a campaign, candidates are responsible for being informed in advance as to various campaign offences. Committing any one of these offences can lead to disqualification. Penalties vary among jurisdictions.

The most serious offences have to do with buying or coercing votes and includes intimidating electors. This is seen as undermining the democratic nature of the election and the fundamental concept of allowing citizens to choose their leaders.

To ensure fair and ethical conditions for the election, campaigning on election day is not permitted within a certain distance of polling stations. Additionally, the candidates themselves are not allowed within a certain distance of a polling station. Candidates should vote in advance polls or as early as possible on election day. Consult local legislation for rules in the appropriate jurisdiction.

Financial Disclosure

It is extremely important to be aware in advance of the rules governing financial disclosure of your election expenses and campaign contributions. There are severe penalties, ranging from fines to disqualification from office. These rules vary by province or territory, so be sure to consult the appropriate legislation and do not hesitate to contact your municipal officer for clarification.

The key is to keep accurate, detailed records. Financial disclosure usually requires a list of all expenditures throughout the campaign; a breakdown of financial contributions with names and addresses of donors who contributed above a specific amount; and information on what happened to any extra funding at the end of the campaign. These documents must be filed with the municipal officer by a certain date following the election and are usually made available to the public.

Keep in mind that some jurisdictions also require disclosure of expenses once elected to office.

The Campaign

Once the candidate has formalized her bid for office via the nomination process, it is time to begin the campaign. **If a candidate does not already have a high profile in the community, it will be important to start campaigning early.** Although the campaign is not long, the candidate will spend a significant amount of time developing material, canvassing, participating in election events, fundraising and meeting voters. It is a very busy time. Candidates are encouraged to consider attending a campaign school if there is one in the area. These are helpful networking events that bring together women with election experience and those who are running for the first time. Not only do these schools provide candidates with information on how to run a campaign, they are an excellent opportunity to hear a first-hand perspective on municipal politics.

** Candidates should confirm the campaign period in their municipality. There are often restrictions on campaign activity outside the specified period.*

As soon as you decide to run, start letting people know of your decision. People may want to help you with your campaign or will say that they'll support you. The important thing is to get your name out in the community and begin to cultivate potential voter support.

The more people who know you or your name, the better your chances of being elected!

The Campaign Team

The make-up of the campaign team that the candidate assembles to help get her elected is crucial. This team is responsible for organizing all aspects of the campaign, from fundraising to knocking on doors to communication. Each candidate will have her own preferred method of structuring and managing the team. However, it is important that all team members are able to work together toward the common goal of getting the candidate elected.

When choosing a campaign team, the candidate must consider her personal strengths and weaknesses, both in terms of campaign skills and contacts in the community. Ideally, she will be able to put together a campaign team that can complement her abilities. This will ensure a well-rounded campaign team. Some municipal politicians advise against involving close friends and family in the team, while others have benefitted from their help. The candidate must also consider how much decision-making power her campaign team has. Ultimately, the candidate must be comfortable with the team she chooses.

Generally, the campaign team will include a manager, responsible for overseeing the entire operation; a fundraiser; a communications coordinator; a canvassing organizer; and a treasurer to account for all expenditures and contributions. In larger campaigns, it may be useful to include a volunteer coordinator.

Additional Resources

Getting to the Gate: How to? Team Building † www.gettingtothegate.com

Municipal Elections: What You Need to Know † www.municipaltraining.nf.ca

Municipal Elections Toolkit, Page 8 – Canadian Union of Public Employees † www.cupe.ca

The Plan

The key to a successful campaign is good planning. This can be done before or after establishing a campaign team, although it is often helpful to have input from the campaign team during the planning stages. It helps to ensure that all members of the team are on the same page throughout the campaign. The more comprehensive the plan, the fewer decisions will have to be made in the heat of the moment and the team will have a greater capacity to adapt and respond throughout the campaign period.

One of the most valuable campaign and planning tools is an information database. This contains the names and numbers of potential supporters. Candidates should start developing an information database as soon as they decide to run for municipal office, which could be one year or more in advance of an actual election campaign. The main purpose of the information database is to store the names and numbers of people who say they will support you or work for you during the campaign. This database should be considered a living document, which can be updated throughout the campaign and beyond.

A timeline is also one of the best planning tools. It is a chronological list of tasks, events, interviews, deadlines, and other events of importance which details what must be done throughout the campaign period. This helps ensure that nothing is overlooked. The following additional resources have comprehensive lists of common components of a campaign.

Additional Resources

Getting to the Gate: How to? Team Building ? Your campaign calendar ? Sample planning list † www.gettingtothegate.com

Developing a Platform

It is important for candidates to develop a campaign platform. Certain candidates will choose to run on a specific issue that can form the basis of their platform even before they formally declare their candidacy. For candidates who are not motivated by a specific issue, their platform will likely be influenced by a number of factors and develop over time.

Candidates who want to stand out in the field can develop their own personal brand. You can do this by educating the voters about what your passions are and where you stand on certain issues.

During this process it is important to remember that council decisions require majority support. Therefore, candidates should not personally promise anything that is dependent on other council members. When it comes to making promises and taking a position during an election, municipal politicians advise that honesty and integrity must underpin all aspects of a platform.

Here are some platform tips:

- Make promises you believe in;
- Take a stand on issues, but do not promise that position will be implemented;
- Do not limit yourself to “women’s issues”;
- Promise to stand up for certain projects;
- Do as much research as possible into every issue and promise you are making;
- Emphasize a value-based platform rather than a specific promise regarding an issue;
- Talk to people who have lived in the community for a long time and listen to their perspectives on what works and what doesn’t work in terms of politics and governance.

Financing the Campaign

Budget

The budget in any campaign plan ensures that all materials can be paid for. It is important to be realistic about all costs to ensure that the campaign is well-financed throughout its duration and that expenses can be prioritized. The budget and overall campaign plan must be developed in tandem to ensure there will be sufficient funds to purchase the necessary materials.

The following sample budget on page 10, gives you an idea of the types of expenses that are incurred during an election campaign.

“If you’re too specific, you’re leading the public astray because you aren’t able to be a fortune-teller. What people require in terms of a platform are broad brush strokes that include principles you stand on and how you will engage the community in decision-making.”

*Councillor Pam McConnell,
Toronto, Ont.*

Record keeping is essential in regard to all expenditures and contributions. Be sure to consult ‘Financial Disclosure’ in the Legal Considerations section and adhere to local regulations.

Sample Budget

Sample Campaign Budget Limit =		
Item	Cost	Notes
Office and campaign operations		
Office rental		You may not need to purchase all of these items; however, candidates must be aware of rules for disclosure of materials acquired from other sources [i.e. personal equipment]
Office insurance		
Furniture rental		
Computer		
Phones		
Office supplies		Paper, folders, other office supplies
Main leaflet		Brochure for widespread distribution
Candidate Cards		
Special leaflets		Other languages, community specific literature
Vote at cards		
Photos, leaflets & card design		
Signs		
Campaign events		
		Coffee, rentals for community consultation, planning meeting
Advertising		
		Web registration, community newspaper ads, phone e-day broadcast, baseball cards, rack cards, buttons, t-shirts
Staffing		
E-Day		E-day refreshments, lists, sheets
Sub-Total	\$ -	
Administration and Appreciation Expenses		
E-day and appreciation events		Victory party, central staff appreciation lunch
Volunteer & donor thank you letters		
Audit		
Bank Charges		
Credit Card charges		If fundraising with credit cards
Sub-Total	\$ -	
Fundraising		
Events		Dinners, etc.
Mailings		Exp. \$1.00 per contact with return postage
Receipts		
Callers or fundraising agency		\$12/hour for fundraisers X 200 hours
Sub-Total	\$ -	
Contingency room limit	\$	Be careful to not accidentally go beyond limit - leave some room
Total Campaign expenses	\$ -	

The amount of money required to run a campaign depends on factors such as the size of the community; whether the municipality elects councillors at-large or in a ward system; the position the candidate is seeking (municipal councillor, regional councillor or mayor); and the professional expertise of the candidate's campaign team.

Election expenses can range from \$3,000 to \$10,000 for ward councillor candidates and from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and up for regional councillor candidates. Mayoral candidates can easily spend \$15,000 to \$45,000. In large cities, like Toronto, these numbers can be much greater. However, Toronto provides a rebate of 75 per cent of contributions made to municipal election candidates under \$300. In Vancouver, the costs can be considerably higher, costing up to \$70,000 to run a campaign for an at-large councillor. The higher costs can be attributed to the fact that at-large candidates in the Vancouver area must reach up to 600,000 voters during an election campaign.

There is no minimum amount of money that must be spent in order to run a successful campaign. These numbers are provided to give candidates a general idea of the actual cost of running. Campaigns do not have to be expensive. Use the expertise and skill sets of people who are supporting you and take the time to shop for good prices.

Fundraising

Asking people to support a candidate by making a direct financial contribution to her campaign is the most effective way to raise money. Although many people, especially women, are uncomfortable doing so, it is often the best way to approach fundraising. Some typical fundraising activities include a wine-and-cheese party, dinner-dance events, an open house, or an arts presentation.

If the candidate is not well known in the community, it may be helpful to use the names of some key supporters, especially if they have a profile within the community, to help establish the candidate's credibility. However, be sure to ask permission of those individuals before using their names.

In addition to raising money to finance the campaign, fundraising events can also give candidates the opportunity to meet supporters in an informal setting. These fundraisers can be used to connect with voters who haven't committed to a candidate yet or allow candidates to solicit volunteer help or specific expertise. It is important to be aware of the rules that apply to fundraising events.

Campaign Tools

Campaign Signs

A key tool in election campaigns, signs raise the candidate's profile within the community. Many candidates believe signs are the most visible and influential part of an election campaign and a good indicator of their support. Candidates should take note of where supporters live, so they can ensure that their signs are displayed in as many key intersections as possible. Also note that most jurisdictions have rules governing the size and content of signs, as well as dates that they can be displayed.

Brochures

Brochures are a very traditional means of communicating with the electorate. They can either be mailed or delivered during door-to-door canvassing. Most mayors and councillors recommend door-to-door canvassing as it gives candidates an opportunity to make personal contact with voters and listen to their individual issues. Brochures should be easy to read and provide contact information for the candidate's campaign office or other contact numbers. Candidates may also consider listing their campaign events as well as information about election day. Councillor Linda Rydholm of Thunder Bay, Ont., suggests "personalizing" brochures to neighbourhoods, especially if you have specific experience or goals in each. If so, make sure the appropriate brochures are distributed in each neighbourhood.

Canvassing

There are three types of canvassing: door-to-door, telephone and the street campaign. The latter can take the form of sticking cards into voters' hands and asking them to vote for their candidate. It could also take the form of a Burma-Shave sign campaign in which a series of signs are placed on the sides of roads, each containing one line that rhymes with the other, with the last sign displaying the candidate's name.

Many jurisdictions allow candidates access to the list of registered voters that contains names, addresses and phone numbers which are useful in carrying out canvassing. All types of canvassing can be done by volunteers, however, most women politicians recommend that the candidate herself meet as many voters as possible. It is important to ensure that both candidates and their volunteers are extremely polite, patient and respectful on the campaign trail.

Safety First!

When canvassing, take appropriate safety precautions. Councillor Jane Mitchell, Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Ont., has the following safety tips for candidates:

- *Canvass with another person;*
- *If you must canvass alone, take a cell phone, lock your car when you leave it, and use the general safety precautions that most women use when out and about;*
- *Do not go into people's homes if invited. It will slow down the canvass and could be dangerous;*
- *Canvassing after dark (and most municipal elections are in the late fall) is difficult as many people will not open their doors to men or women;*
- *Try to canvass between 4 to 7 p.m., an optimal time to catch voters at home;*
- *Have call display on your phone; and*
- *If you have a campaign office, do not leave a volunteer alone in the office.*

Additional Resources

Municipal Elections Toolkit, Pages 9-10 – Canadian Union of Public Employees + www.cupe.ca

A Note on Volunteers

Candidates often rely on volunteers to canvass, carry out administrative tasks, communicate with the media and complete other jobs required throughout a campaign. It is important to follow through with anyone who offers to contribute their time to the campaign. Not accepting offers of help can turn voters off or leave them with the wrong impression.

Public Events

There may be opportunities for public debates or roundtables. Candidates should participate in these events as much as possible because they are often well-attended and receive prominent coverage in the local media. By participating, candidates increase their profile and ensure their ideas are heard.

Coffee Hour

Candidates can host a “coffee hour” in their homes or the home of someone in the area. Invite a small group of neighbours and use it as an opportunity for an informal question and answer session. When scheduling such an event, consider the schedules of the people you are trying to reach. For instance, if you are trying to target women, schedule the event when their children are at school.

Rural Strategies

While many of the strategies discussed in this toolkit can be applied in a rural setting, running a campaign in a rural area can be particularly difficult as homes are spread out. It may not be possible to go to every door.

Being aware of this challenge will help candidates plan a strategy that works. If it is at all possible, make every effort to go door-to-door. In addition, provide opportunities for the community to come to you, through events such as coffee houses or other community events, such as dinners, dances or all-candidates’ debates.

Sign placement is also an important strategy in rural communities. While campaign signs on lawns will not have the same exposure in a rural community as in an urban setting, it is important to choose major intersections and gathering places such as churches, community centres or local shops to place your signs. Check local bylaws to ensure your signs are not displayed illegally.

Rural candidates may also differ from urban candidates in that they operate their campaign offices out of their homes. This drastically cuts down on overhead costs, but also makes it imperative for rural candidates to publicize their contact information. Voters need to know how they can get in touch with candidates to discuss the issues.

Take advantage of existing events and networks: go to places where people congregate, such as community events. This is particularly true in rural areas, where it is often difficult to cover the entire area because of the distance between homes.

General Campaign Advice

Here are some more campaign tips from currently-elected municipal politicians:

- Get to know your community, the voters and the issues personally;
- Develop a specific campaign strategy that tells you what, when and where things need to be done;
- Brand yourself with strong taglines, signs and brochures;
- Practice your public speaking skills: Speak simply and factually, do not move your head and arms to convey your point;
- Use the personal touch; for example, handwrite “Sorry, I missed you” notes on campaign literature;
- Ensure clear, succinct and consistent messaging is on all of your campaign literature;
- Seek professional help for graphics, signage and oral communication;
- Connect with and drum up support from “typically male” bases: hockey teams, coaching sports, business groups;

- Go door-to-door to talk to voters ;
- Form a core group of friends/supporters/cheerleaders who are not on your campaign team and who can keep your morale and energy high during the campaign;
- Build a network of supporters that cross many boundaries, not just in your own field, but throughout the whole community;
- Develop two or three “specialties”, but still be able to reach out into the community; and
- Do not take what the media or your opposition says about you personally.

Additional Resources

Municipal Elections Toolkit, Pages 9-10 – Canadian Union of Public Employees † www.cupe.ca

Yukon Election Workshop Presentation † www.ayc.yk.ca/municipal-elections.htm

À table, Mesdames! † http://bv.cdeacf.ca/CF_PDF/2005_04_0001.pdf

Je pose ma candidature † <http://www.mamr.gouv.qc.ca/electionsmunicipales/jepose/pose.asp>

Mobilizing Supporters

On the day of the election, it is useful to contact all of your identified supporters and ensure that they are able to get to the polling station. Additionally, campaign teams can help facilitate transportation or childcare for supporters if necessary.

Additional Resources

Municipal Elections Toolkit, Pages 9-10 – Canadian Union of Public Employees † www.cupe.ca

Media

There is usually significant media coverage during municipal elections. The amount and consistency of attention will depend on the size of the municipality and the position for which the candidate is running. As a general rule, however, reporters will want to interview every candidate at least once throughout the campaign.

Do not be intimidated by reporters. They need information from the candidate to produce their stories as much as the candidate needs media coverage to project her image and inform voters about her platform. It is a mutually beneficial relationship.

That said, you must be careful about what you say to reporters and, as much as possible, determine what you want to say in advance of an interview. Answering reporters' questions with short and concise answers is a useful strategy that helps you avoid having your words misconstrued or taken out of context. The candidate may want to rephrase the same short and concise answer several ways. This gives reporters a choice in the piece of information or sound bite they use in their story. Some candidates find it useful to prepare speaking notes and draft responses to questions (when possible) in advance.

Additional Resources

Municipal Elections Toolkit, Page 5 – Canadian Union of Public Employees † www.cupe.ca

Election Outcomes

Whether the candidate wins or loses, holding a “post mortem” after the election is a useful exercise. The candidate and her team should discuss how the campaign unfolded, noting strengths, weaknesses and where to improve. It is helpful to keep lists of supporters and contributors, timelines and any other resources developed during the campaign that may be used if the candidate decides to run again at a later date. For example, signs can be recycled from campaign to campaign.

“I felt it was important to be involved in my community. Civic politics are a great place to start.”

*Councillor Tiffany Paulsen,
Saskatoon, Sask.*

It is also important to acknowledge all those who donated time, money or expertise to the campaign. This can be done with individual thank-you cards or small gifts. The candidate may also want to consider a thank-you party on election night or as a separate event. Although the campaign is over, there are still financial-disclosure obligations to be fulfilled, so be sure to meet the deadlines.

Losing

Losing does not mean a candidate has failed. In a democracy, one candidate must lose so that another may win. Yet even in losing, the candidate has acquired more experience than she had before and raised her profile in the community. This can increase her chances of winning if she chooses to run in a subsequent election. It is very important to be gracious to your opponents, especially in defeat. Do not let your defeat discourage you from running again.

Winning

Congratulations! You are no longer a candidate but a municipal politician. In this new capacity, there is a great deal of information to learn and absorb, a new skill set to develop and other guides and supports to access. Enjoy the victory but be prepared for the adjustment to life as a mayor or councillor. Look for ways to include other women in the political process, such as appointments to municipal boards or committees, and encourage and support others who are considering election bids of their own.

Good luck!

Appendix A: Resources

Here is a list of many of the guides, handbooks and other materials available for candidates in municipal elections. There are some general resources, but most apply to a specific province. The general aspects of a municipal election campaign are consistent across the country. However, in order to understand the specific rules that apply in your jurisdiction, it is best to use a guide designed for your area. Contact your municipality to see if there is a local election guide. Consult as many resources as you can. Many of these references are referred to in this toolkit.

Resources followed by an asterisk (*) are particularly useful. Where there is no website indicated, contact the organization or government body referenced for information on how to obtain the document.

General Resources: Women in Politics

<i>Author</i>	<i>Resource</i>
Marguerite Ceschi-Smith with Equal Voice	Planning Campaign School Checklist for Equal Voice –Steps for hosting a campaign school www.equalvoice.ca/
Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women	Untapped Resources: Women and Municipal Government in Nova Scotia –Discussion of women’s participation in municipal government http://women.gov.ns.ca/pubs2005_06/UntappedFinal_Report.pdf
Groupe Femmes, Politique et Démocratie	–Mandate of educating women on political involvement www.femmes-politique-et-democratie.com/
Federation of Canadian Municipalities	–General resources on municipal issues –English and French www.fcm.ca Women in Government / Femmes dans le gouvernement –Current research and tools www.fcm.ca/women/ www.fcm.ca/femmes
Equal Voice	–Mandate to increase the political presence of women in elected and non-elected capacities in all orders of of government www.equalvoice.ca
YWCA	One Woman, One Voice* –Focus on encouraging all types of political involvement –Profiles of Edmonton women in politics http://www.onewomanonevote.org/
Prince Edward Island Coalition for Women in Government	Getting Women Elected: Innovative Practices from Around the World http://www.wnpei.org/womeningovernment/pdfs/innovative.pdf

General Campaign Resources

<i>Author</i>	<i>Resource</i>
Canadian Labour Congress	<p>Introduction to Campaign Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Overview of campaign management Candidate's Guide –Guide for candidates, focus on running a campaign Organizer Training Municipal Program Guide for organizing a municipal program
Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women	<p>Votes for Women: A Political Guidebook / Des votes pour les femmes*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Handbook for campaigning <p><i>English:</i> http://women.gov.ns.ca/pubs2004_05/Votes_for_Women.pdf</p> <p><i>Français:</i></p> <p>http://women.gov.ns.ca/pubs2004_05/Votes_for_Women%20Fr.pdf</p>
Centre de documentation sur l'éducation des adultes et la condition féminine	<p>Comment prendre sa place en politique: étapes...franchir pour se présenter en politique municipale, provinciale et fédérale et plan d'organisation d'une campagne électorale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Descriptive guide for involvement at all levels of politics –Must purchase this resource <p>http://catalogue.cdeacf.ca/Record.htm?idlist=2&record=276012409429</p>
Equal Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Getting to the Gate* <p>Online Campaign School for all orders of government</p> <p>www.gettingtothegate.com</p>
Ministry of Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Candidate's Guide: Local Elections in British Columbia 2008 <p>www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov_structure/library/local_elections_candidate_guide.pdf</p>

Alberta

Author

Municipal Affairs
and Housing

Resource

Running for Municipal Politics in Alberta
–Comprehensive guide, updated 2007
www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/documents/ms/running_for_municipal_office_in_alberta_2007.pdf
Local Authorities Election Act Guide
–Technical requirements

Alberta Leaders

Site for people interested in becoming a candidate
<http://www.albertaleaders.ca/index.htm>
–Technical Guide
<http://www.albertaleaders.ca/know/2007%20LAEA%20manual.pdf>

British Columbia

Author

Canadian Women
Voter's Congress

Resource

–Campaign school located in Vancouver
www.canadianwomenvoterscongress.org/history

Ministry of the Attorney
General

Financial Disclosure Act Fact Sheet
-Overview of financial disclosure legislative requirements
www.ag.gov.bc.ca/public/DisclosureFactsheetWEB-MLAs.pdf

Ministry of Community
Services

– Candidate's Guide: Local Elections in British Columbia 2008
www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov_structure/library/local_elections_candidate_guide.pdf

Manitoba

Author

Manitoba
Intergovernmental Affairs

Resource

Candidate's Guide to Municipal Elections
English only:
www.gov.mb.ca/ia/programs/local_gov/pdf/elections_candidate_guide.pdf

A Reference Guide for Elected Municipal Officials
English only:
www.gov.mb.ca/ia/programs/local_gov/documents/emo_ref_guide.doc

New Brunswick

Author

Government of
New Brunswick

Resource

Information for Prospective Candidates in Municipalities and Rural Communities / Information pour les candidats municipaux et de communauté rurales éventuels
–Overview of legal requirements and procedures for candidates
English: www.gnb.ca/elections/general/generalmuncandidateinfo-e.asp
Français: www.gnb.ca/elections/general/generalmuncandidateinfo-f.asp

Newfoundland and Labrador

Author

Municipal Training and
Development Corporation

Resource

<http://municipaltraining.nf.ca/home.html>

Northwest Territories

Author

City of Yellowknife

Resource

www.yellowknife.ca/Assets/City+Clerks/Guide+for+Prospective+Candidates.pdf

Municipal and
Community Affairs

Roles and Responsibilities of Council
www.maca.gov.nt.ca/toolkit/community_governance/index.html

Elections Northwest
Territories

A Guide for Prospective Candidates
–Detailed information about election procedures
http://www.electionsnwt.ca/english/candidates_information.html

Nova Scotia

Author

Service Nova Scotia and
Municipal Relations

Resource

Candidate's Guide to Municipal Elections
–Detailed information about election procedures
www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/muns/manuals/pdf/CandidateGuide.pdf

Nunavut

Author

Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing

Resource

Election Information
www.maca.gov.nt.ca/toolkit/community_governance/election.html

Ontario

Author

Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing

Resource

Municipal Elections 2006 Guide
www.mah.gov.on.ca/Asset1432.aspx

Canadian Union of
Public Employees

Municipal Elections Toolkit 2006*
–Contact CUPE Ontario to obtain

Prince Edward Island

Author

Prince Edward Island
Coalition for Women in
Government

Resource

It's About Time : An initiative to elect women in PEI
–Research and resources for candidates
<http://www.wnpei.org/womeningovernment/index.html>

Quebec

Author

Groupe Femmes,
Politique et Démocratie

Resource

L'École Femmes et Démocratie
–Five day campaign school for candidates in all orders of government
http://www.femmes-politique-et-democratie.com/ecole_ete.php
L'Opération Mentorat
–Mentoring program which pairs former politicians with women who
are just beginning to get involved politically
<http://www.femmes-politique-et-democratie.com/mentorat.php>

Affaires municipales et
Régions Québec

Je pose ma candidature*
–Comprehensive website detailing steps for nomination and campaign
requirements
<http://www.mamr.gouv.qc.ca/electionsmunicipales/jepose/pose.asp>
Pourquoi pas vous?*
-Introduction to municipal government and positions on council
http://www.mamrot.gouv.qc.ca/publications/legislation/guide_pourquoi_pas_vous.pdf

Gaspésie et des Îles

À table, Mesdames!* http://bv.cdeacf.ca/CF_PDF/2005_04_0001.pdf

Saskatchewan

Author

Municipal Relations
Division

Resource

Rural Municipal Elections

<http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/index.cfm?fuseaction=publications.details&p=11454>

Urban Municipal Elections

<http://www.municipal.gov.sk.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=670,94,88,Documents&MediaID=10827&Filename=election+urb+mun+-+tv+jan08.pdf>

Information for Candidates for Elected Municipal Office

<http://www.municipal.gov.sk.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=670,94,88,Documents&MediaID=10829&Filename=info+for+elected+candidates.pdf>

Yukon

Author

Association of Yukon
Communities

Resource

Election Workshop Presentation*

–Overview of election components

www.ayc.yk.ca/municipal-elections.htm

Elections Yukon

Campaign Financing Policies

http://electionsyukon.gov.yk.ca/docs/campaign_financing.pdf

Information for Candidates in Yukon Elections

www.electionsyukon.gov.yk.ca/docs/canmanual.pdf

Appendix B: Legislation

Most jurisdictions have guides available that present legislative requirements in a consolidated and user-friendly format. However, candidates may wish to refer directly to the appropriate legislation to clarify rules as secondary sources do not guarantee the most up-to-date legislative requirements. Municipal bylaw officers are a useful resource in determining local legislation that applies.

Please note that online versions of legislation are not guaranteed to be accurate or to reflect recent amendments. As well, not all legislation is available online: local libraries and government offices are likely to have a copy, or will be able to direct candidates to the document.

Alberta

<i>Local Authorities Election Act</i>	www.qp.gov.ab.ca/Documents/acts/L21.CFM
<i>Municipal Government Act</i>	www.qp.gov.ab.ca/Documents/acts/M26.CFM

British Columbia

<i>Local Government Act</i>	www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/L/96323_00.htm
<i>Financial Disclosure Act</i>	www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/F/96139_01.htm

Manitoba

<i>Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Act</i>	web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/m257e.php
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New Brunswick

<i>Municipal Elections Act</i>	www.gnb.ca/acts/acts/m-21-01.htm
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Newfoundland and Labrador

<i>Elections Act</i>	http://www.hoa.gov.nl.ca/hoa/statutes/e03-1.htm
Amendments	http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/annualstatutes/2005/0521.chp.htm

Northwest Territories

<i>Local Authorities Election Act</i>	http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/resources/election_information/Local%20Authorities%20Election%20Act.pdf
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Nova Scotia

<i>Municipal Elections Act</i>	www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/statutes/muncpel.htm
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Nunavut

<i>Local Authorities Elections Act</i>	http://www.canlii.org/nu/laws/sta/l-10/20070904/whole.html
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Appendix B: Legislation (continued)

Ontario

<i>Municipal Elections Act</i>	www.elaws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_96m32_e.htm
Listing of Legislation and Regulations	http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1507.aspx

Prince Edward Island

<i>Municipal Election Legislation</i>	http://www.electionspei.ca/municipal/legislation/index.php
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Quebec

<i>Loi sur les élections et les référendums dans les municipalités</i>	http://www2.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/dynamicSearch/telecharge.php?file=/E_2_2/E2_2.html&type=2
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Saskatchewan

<i>Municipalities Act</i>	www.publications.gov.sk.ca/details.cfm?p=27278&cl=5
<i>Local Government Election Act</i>	www.publications.gov.sk.ca/details.cfm?p=609%20

Yukon

<i>Elections Act</i>	http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/acts/elections.pdf
<i>Municipal Act</i>	http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/acts/municipal.pdf

Appendix C: Provincial Contacts

The following is a list of provincial and territorial bodies and government contacts that you may find useful. Most of the information provided by provincial associations is for elected councilors; however, they have very useful background information on municipal issues.

Municipal by-law officers are often your most useful contact as they will be able to speak specifically to the circumstances and requirements in your electoral district.

Alberta

Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties	www.aamdc.com/
Alberta Urban Municipalities Association	www.munilink.net/live/
Alberta Municipal Advisory Services Unit	(780) 427-2225

British Columbia

<i>Union of British Columbia Municipalities</i>	www.civicnet.bc.ca/
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Manitoba

Association of Manitoba Municipalities	www.amm.mb.ca/
Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs	(204) 945-2572

Appendix C: Provincial Contacts (continued)

New Brunswick

Cities of New Brunswick Association	(506) 357-4242
Association francophone des municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick	www.afmnb.org/
Union of Municipalities of New Brunswick	(506) 523-4522

Newfoundland and Labrador

Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador	www.municipalitiesnl.com/
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Northwest Territories

NWT Association of Communities	www.nwtac.com/
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Nova Scotia

Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities	www.unsm.ca/
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Nunavut

Nunavut Association of Municipalities	(867) 979-3111 , ext. 221
Elections Nunavut	1-800-267-4394

Ontario

Association of Municipalities of Ontario	www.amo.on.ca/
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Prince Edward Island

Federation of Prince Edward Island Municipalities	www.fpeim.ca/
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Quebec

Fédération Québécoise des Municipalités	www.fqm.ca/
Union des municipalités du Québec	www.umq.qc.ca/

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities	www.sarm.ca/
Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association	www.suma.org/

Yukon

Association of Yukon Communities	www.ayc.yk.ca/
Elections Yukon	1-867-667-8683
