




CITY OF HAMILTON
OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

TO:	Deputy Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	December 4, 2024
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Elections Administration Audit – Management Responses (AUD23008(a)) (City Wide) - REVISED
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Brigitte Minard CPA, CA, CIA, CGAP, CFE (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3107
SUBMITTED BY:	Charles Brown, CPA, CA Auditor General Office of the Auditor General
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the Management Action Plans, as detailed in Appendix “A” of Report AUD23008(a) be approved; and,
- (b) That the City Clerk be requested to implement the Management Action Plans (attached as Appendix “A” to Report AUD23008(a)) and report back to the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee by December 2025 on the nature and status of actions taken in response to the audit report.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS (bulleted points from the report contents.)

- The review was conducted in 3 parts – a review of processes used to administer the election, of technologies used to conduct it, and surveys of electors and candidates
- Practices substantially complied with requirement of the Municipal Elections Act
- Some process issues related to voting hours, voter lists and notification
- Some observations were made regarding more efficient and effective processes to support candidates

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

**SUBJECT: Elections Administration Audit – Management Responses
(AUD23008(a)) (City Wide) - Page 2 of 4**

- Noted learning opportunities with technology disruptions to election day service, logistics in printing voter notification cards, privacy
- Need for standards as it related to technologies used in the election and better contingency planning
- Surveyed electors 92% satisfied
- Over half the candidates were at least somewhat satisfied. OAG concluded opportunities to improve the candidate experience

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An audit of Elections Administration was completed in May 2023. The purpose of the audit of elections administration was to review and assess the adequacy and effectiveness of systems, resources, agreements, policies and procedures used to administer the 2022 election cycle. Relevant to our audit were election processes not only on election day, but those prior and leading up to the election. Accordingly, we reviewed various processes related to logistics, communications, planning and preparations, in addition to those affecting compliance with procedural requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act*.

The review was conducted in three parallel streams: 1-Compliance Review, 2-Technology Assessment, 3-Survey of Voter and Candidate Satisfaction.

Overall, the audit made 50 recommendations to the Clerk for consideration in the next election. Given the breadth and depth of recommendations, balanced with the need to bring forward timely findings as directed by Council, the previous City Clerk agreed provide OAG with one overall Management Response, with a commitment to provide a detailed set of management action plans for each recommendation to the OAG by September 2023. Delays were encountered due to staff turnover in the Office of the City Clerk and the cybersecurity incident in February 2024. Ultimately the OAG was provided with a set of satisfactory management responses by the current City Clerk in November 2024.

This report presents these detailed management response Committee as Report AUD23008(a) so that direction to staff can be provided regarding implementation of the action plans.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

PREVIOUS REPORTS SUBMITTED: Report AUD23008 Elections Administration Audit, General Issues Committee May 31, 2023

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: None.

Staffing: None.

Legal: None.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Appendix “A” to Report AUD23008(a) includes the response from management responsible for overseeing municipal election administration in the Office of the City Clerk in the Corporate Services Department.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The audit objective was to review and assess the adequacy and effectiveness of systems, resources, agreements, policies and procedures used to administer the 2022 election cycle.

The Office of the Auditor General and team conducted surveys of eligible voters and candidates, and reviewed process documentation, compliance information, technology-related items, and other documents using the expertise of municipal experts, technology specialists and survey consultants.

The OAG made 50 recommendations which can be found in Appendix “A” to Report AUD23008(a). They comprise the following categories:

- Election Preparation and Readiness
- Technology
- Candidate Experience
- Voter/Resident Experience
- Advocacy to the Province of Ontario

Due to time constraints, one overall management response was received for all recommendations when the audit report was originally issue in May 2023. The previous City Clerk agreed to provide a detailed set of management action plans for each

**SUBJECT: Elections Administration Audit – Management Responses
(AUD23008(a)) (City Wide) - Page 4 of 4**

recommendation to the OAG by September 2023. Delays were encountered due to staff turnover in the Office of the City Clerk and the cybersecurity incident in February 2024. Ultimately the OAG was provided with a set of satisfactory management responses by the current City Clerk in November 2024.

Management agreed with all 50 recommendations. We reviewed the management responses and found that they adequately address the audit recommendations and are submitted to this Committee for approval and to direct Management to implement these action plans. The recommendations and management action plans can be found in Appendix “A” to Report AUD23008(a).

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report AUD23008(a) – Recommendations and Management Response