



## Staff Report

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**Report To:** Council Meeting  
**From:** Terri Towstiuc, Manager of Community Services/Clerk  
**Date:** 2026-04-09  
**Subject:** 2026 Municipal Election, Council Composition

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### **Recommendation:**

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from Terri Towstiuc, Manager of Community Services/Clerk Re: 2026 Municipal Election, Council Composition, for information purposes only.

### **Purpose:**

The purpose is to provide Council with an update on the Council composition ahead of the 2026 Municipal Election.

### **Background:**

On January 23, 2025, Council received a delegation and petition to remove the three-ward system in the municipality, ahead of the next Municipal Election. Council was receptive to the idea of dissolving the Ward System, requested staff provide a report at a future Council meeting detailing the procedure and costs to move forward, and passed the following motion:

#### ***Resolution No. 2025-18***

***Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier***

***Seconded: Councillor Denning***

*That West Elgin Council hereby receive the delegation from Dug Aldred, West Elgin Resident Re: Review of Council Ward System; And*

*That West Elgin Council request staff to prepare a report for Council, detailing procedures to eliminate the three-ward system within the municipality.*

***Carried***

On February 13, 2025, Council received a report from the Clerk, providing details to moved for ward with the removal of the Electoral Ward System, passing the following motion:

#### ***Electoral Ward System***

***Resolution No. 2025- 40***

***Moved: Councillor Dougherty***

***Seconded: Councillor Denning***

*That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from Terri Towstiuic, Clerk Re: Electoral Ward System; And*

*That Council approve the proposal to proceed with dissolving the electoral three-ward system, directing staff to begin necessary steps in accordance with legislation.*

**Carried**

On May 8, 2025, Council passed by-law 2025-22, "At-Large System of Electoral Representation' and to Repeal By-law 99-53". This by-law removed the three-ward system; however, the composition of West Elgin Council is still in line with the 1997 Amalgamation Order (Section 16 (1), effective January 1, 1998). For the 2026 Municipal Election, West Elgin Council Composition consists of the following:

- One (1) Mayor, elected at large;
- One (1) Deputy Mayor, elected at large;
- Three (3) Councillors, elected at large

During the January 23 delegation, it was suggested that the Council remove the election of Deputy Mayor, however, the position would be filled by the Councillor who has received the highest number of votes. In consultation with the legal department, the suggested route is prohibited, for the following reasons:

1. The office of Deputy Mayor is separate from the office of Councillor (and Mayor), as defined by the *Municipal Elections Act*. The Act only allows a person to be nominated for a single office (S. 29(2));
2. The *Municipal Elections Act* states that, where an office exists, an elector is "entitled to vote for as many candidates for an office as there are members to be elected to that office" (s. 51(2)(3)). This means that, so long as the office of Deputy Mayor remains a distinct position (elected or "appointed") to which a person is elected by voters, those voters are entitled to vote for a candidate for that office. In other words, electing a Deputy Mayor by counting ballots for the office of Councillor violates the right of voters to cast a ballot for the office of Deputy Mayor.

If Council wishes to receive further details and options to proceed with a Council composition review, including pros & cons of a Deputy Mayor positions, elected at large, and options to fulfill their duties, if there is no such position on Council, Council can direct staff to do so. However, it is important to note that due to the timing, such changes would not be in effect until the 2030-2034 term of Council.

**Financial Implications:**

None.

**Policies/Legislation:**

[The Municipal Act](#)

[The Municipal Elections Act](#)

By-Law 2025-22 (which repealed By-law 99-53)

**Alignment with Strategic Priorities:**

<b>Infrastructure Improvement</b>	<b>Recreation</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Community Engagement</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> To improve West Elgin’s infrastructure to support long-term growth.	<input type="checkbox"/> To provide recreation and leisure activities to attract and retain residents.	<input type="checkbox"/> To ensure a strong economy that supports growth and maintains a lower cost of living.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To enhance communication with residents.

Respectfully submitted by,  
 Terri Towstiuc, Manager of Community Services/Clerk