



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: February 26, 2018
Contact: Rosemary Hagiwara
Contact No.: 604.873.7177
RTS No.: 12355
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: April 18, 2018

TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities
FROM: Chief Election Officer
SUBJECT: Proposed Amendments to Election By-law No. 9070

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve, in principle, the proposed amendments to Election By-law No. 9070 as set out in Appendix A of this Administrative Report.
- B. THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to bring forward for enactment an amending by-law substantially in the form of the by-law attached as Appendix A.

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval of proposed amendments to Election By-law No. 9070. The proposed amendments are intended to expand the Special Voting Opportunities program to provide voters facing barriers to voting with more access to voting. The proposed amendments also include housekeeping amendments intended to revise the language in the by-law to reflect technology and process changes.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

The legislative authority for conducting an election in the City of Vancouver is found in the Vancouver Charter and the Election By-law.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager supports the proposed by-law amendments as set out in Appendix A.

REPORT

Background/Context

As staff plan the October 20, 2018 election, they have identified several proposed amendments to Election By-law No. 9070 based on lessons learned from the 2014 municipal election and input from stakeholders and partners. Those amendments are reflected in the proposed By-law to amend the Election By-law No. 9070 attached as Appendix A.

Strategic Analysis

The success of the 2014 election resulted from many positive changes implemented to make voting more accessible. Building on this success and input from our partners and stakeholders, staff are proposing further changes to the Election By-law to improve accessibility to voting.

Special Voting Opportunities

Section 71 of the Vancouver Charter authorizes Council, by law, to give electors who may otherwise be unable to vote at other opportunities (i.e., general polling, advance polling, mail ballot) the opportunity to vote at a special voting opportunity (SVO). Section 71 also authorizes Council to enact restrictions on persons who may vote at a SVO, and to enact procedures for conducting such voting proceedings. Section 3.4 of the Election By-law authorizes the chief election officer to establish dates, voting hours and places for the conduct of special voting opportunities, and section 3.5 sets out the eligibility criteria for electors to vote at a SVO. This section has not been revised since 1993.

Under the existing Election By-law, electors may vote at a special voting opportunity only if they have a physical disability, illness, or injury and are patients in acute care hospitals or residents of care facilities regulated under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act of BC (CCALA). In addition, these care facilities are required to provide accommodation for 50 or more residents who qualify as electors in order to be eligible for SVO polling.

In a 2017 review of the City's SVO program (summarized in Appendix B), staff found that the current by-law eligibility provisions on SVO do not align with the needs of electors facing barriers to voting. First, the emphasis on physical immobility as an eligibility criterion may exclude electors who are unable to vote due to health challenges outside of physical conditions, including those who suffer from mental illness or substance abuse. Second, the restriction of SVO sites to facilities with 50 or more electors prevents a SVO at smaller facilities, many of which are facilities for persons with mental illness, substance dependence or developmental disabilities. Third, low-income and homelessness are a significant barrier to voting and political participation, and increased access to and assistance with voting may reduce the impact of these barriers.

As part of the City's objective to increase voter engagement and reduce barriers for voters, it is recommended that the Election By-law be amended to allow SVO to take

place in care facility types referenced in the Hospital Act and CCALA¹ and to expand SVO's to emergency (homeless) shelters and social service drop-in centres. Furthermore, it is also recommended that the By-law be amended to lower the criterion from a 50-bed minimum to a 30-bed minimum capacity to allow smaller facilities to participate as SVO sites. These proposed amendments will extend SVO's to additional sites thereby increasing accessibility to voting for electors who experience physical and mental health-related challenges. The provision of a SVO at social service centres will also enhance accessibility to voting stations for voters facing acute socioeconomic conditions, recognizing that they are frequent users of these social infrastructures. Facilities that do not meet the criterion will have an opportunity to work with the election office staff to arrange for voting by mail ballot.

Additionally, in providing for electors' residency criteria for SVO, the current By-law references outdated care facility terminology from the Community Care Facility Act (CCFA). This Act has been repealed in 2004 and replaced by the Community Care and Assisted Living Act (CCALA), which amended the provincial care facility regulatory system and terminology. Therefore, staff are proposing to remove the outdated facility terms under the CCFA from the Election By-law to reflect this legislative change.

The sections of the Election By-law impacted are as follows:

Existing Election By-law	Proposed Election By-law
<p data-bbox="298 936 626 999">Voting at special voting opportunities</p> <p data-bbox="298 1037 776 1136">Section 3.5 Electors may vote at a special voting opportunity only if they:</p> <p data-bbox="253 1167 800 1266">(a) have a physical disability, illness, or injury that affects their ability to vote at another voting opportunity; and</p> <p data-bbox="253 1304 810 1633">(b) are patients in an acute care hospital or residents of a personal care home, long term care facility, or special residential care facility registered under the Community Care Facility Act of British Columbia that is situated in the city and that provides accommodation for 50 or more persons who qualify as electors but who are otherwise unable to vote at another voting opportunity.</p>	<p data-bbox="932 936 1260 999">Voting at special voting opportunities</p> <p data-bbox="932 1037 1385 1136">Section 3.5 Electors may only vote at a special voting opportunity if they:</p> <p data-bbox="932 1167 1417 1266">(a) have a disability, illness or injury that affects their ability to vote at another voting opportunity; or</p> <p data-bbox="932 1304 1425 1402">(b) are users of an emergency shelter or social service centre; or</p> <p data-bbox="932 1440 1409 1633">(c) are residents or patients of a hospital, care facility or similar facility or institution located in the City that has beds for 30 or more persons who qualify as electors.</p>

¹ Including facilities licenced and registered facilities under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and the Hospital Act.

Mail Ballots

Section 72 of the Vancouver Charter allows Council to authorize the chief election officer to establish vote-by-mail opportunities. Mail ballot opportunities provide voters who are unable to attend a voting place in person due to illness or injury or because they are away during both the advance voting period and general voting day, the ability to vote by mail. Section 4.3 of the Election By-law specifies when a mail ballot can be made available and the deadline for acceptance of a mail ballot.

Eligibility

In recent elections, staff have seen a healthy increase in the demand for mail ballots due in part to a simplified process for requesting a mail ballot. This improvement is putting increasing pressure on staff to process the applications and to ensure that voters receive the mail ballot in a timely manner.

Processing

There are many steps involved in processing a mail ballot application. This includes validating whether the elector is registered or not, identifying the type of ballot to be provided and the mail ballot package the elector requires, and processing, tracking, mailing, and managing all returned mail ballot packages so that they can be properly counted in the unofficial results. All of these steps are required to ensure that every mail ballot package is accounted for appropriately.

Staff are proposing an amendment to the Election By-law that will mean that an application to receive a mail ballot may only be received by City staff up until noon on the day before general voting day. The current rule allows an application to be made until polls close on voting day, which is too late to process the application. Voters will continue to have the opportunity to vote at a voting place on general voting day where multiple accessible options are available, including curbside voting.

The proposed amendments to the Election By-law are as follows:

Existing Election By-law	Proposed Election By-law
<p data-bbox="298 1369 574 1402">Mail Ballot Package</p> <p data-bbox="298 1436 761 1667">Section 4.3 Upon receipt of an application for a mail ballot, the chief election officer, during the period that begins on the 18th day before general voting day and ends at 8:00 p.m. on general voting day, must:</p> <p data-bbox="298 1703 777 1766">(a) make available to the applicant, a mail ballot package;</p>	<p data-bbox="920 1331 1281 1402">Proposed Election By-law Mail Ballot Package</p> <p data-bbox="920 1436 1430 1667">Section 4.3 Upon receipt of an application for a mail ballot during the period that begins on the 18th day before general voting day <u>and ends at noon on the day before general voting day, the chief election officer</u> must:</p> <p data-bbox="920 1703 1403 1766">(a) make available to the applicant, a mail ballot package;</p>

Housekeeping Amendments

Other amendments proposed are intended to allow more flexibility when administrative processes are updated and improvements made to voting. These are considered minor amendments and are noted in the table:

Existing Election By-law	<i>Proposed Election By-law</i>
<p>Arranging for vote counting unit</p> <p>Section 6.2 The chief election officer must program a vote counting machine for each voting place, advance and special voting opportunity, and mail balloting.</p>	<p>Arranging for vote counting unit</p> <p>Section 6.2 The chief election officer must program <u>at least one</u> vote counting machine for each voting place, advance voting opportunity, mail balloting and special voting opportunities.</p>
<p>Existing Election By-law</p> <p>Collection and packaging of election materials</p> <p>Section 6.31 (c)(vi) (c) place in the portfolio: (vi) keys for the vote counting unit and ballot box;</p>	<p><i>Proposed Election By-law</i></p> <p>Collection and packaging of election materials</p> <p>Section 6.31 (c)(vi) (c) place in the portfolio: (vi) keys for the vote counting unit and ballot box <u>(if applicable)</u>;</p>
<p>Existing Election By-law</p> <p>Collection and packaging of election materials</p> <p>Section 6.31(d) Each presiding election official must:</p> <p>(d) place in the ballot box: (i) unused ballots, (ii) lists of electors, and (iii) all other forms, supplies, and other materials used in connection with the election;</p>	<p><i>Proposed Election By-law</i></p> <p>Collection and packaging of election materials</p> <p>Section 6.31 (d) Each presiding election official must:</p> <p>d) place in the ballot box <u>all other forms, supplies and other materials used in connection with the election;</u></p>
<p>Existing Election By-law</p> <p>Testing of automated vote accumulation equipment</p> <p>Section 6.35 Within seven days before general voting day, the chief election officer must test the automated vote accumulation equipment to ascertain that it can accurately accumulate the votes cast for all offices and other voting.</p>	<p><i>Proposed Election By-law</i></p> <p>Testing of automated vote accumulation equipment</p> <p>Section 6.35 <u>No later than the first day of advance voting</u>, the chief election officer must test the automated vote accumulation equipment to ascertain that it can accurately accumulate the votes cast for all offices and other voting.</p>

Ballot Account form attached to the Election By-law as Schedule “A” to be replaced with the form attached to this by-law as outlined in Appendix “A”.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)

Financial

There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

Since the current SVO program and criteria were introduced in 1993, the regulatory framework governing care facilities has been revised, creating a misalignment between the Election By-law and the relevant provincial legislation. This has resulted in confusion and the possible consequence that some facilities could be left out of SVO.

Furthermore, the barriers to voting are no longer considered to be primarily associated with physical mobility, so there is a need to improve access to voting for various segments of the population who suffer from other barriers to voting. Building on the success of the 2014 municipal election, the proposed Election By-law amendments will continue to support our goals of increasing voter engagement and making voting more accessible.

* * * * *

BY-LAW NO. _____

A By-law to amend Election By-law No. 9070

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in a public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. This By-law amends the indicated provisions of or adds provisions to the Election By-law.
2. Council strikes section 3.5 and replaces it with:

“3.5 Electors may only vote at a special voting opportunity if they:

 - (a) have a disability, illness or injury that affects their ability to vote at another voting opportunity; or
 - (b) are users of an emergency shelter or social service centre, or
 - (c) are residents or patients of a hospital, care facility or similar facility or institution located in the City that has beds for 30 or more persons who qualify as electors.”
3. Council strikes section 4.3 and replaces it with:

“4.3 Upon receipt of an application for a mail ballot during the period that begins on the 18th day before general voting day and ends at noon on the day before general voting day, the chief election officer must:

 - (a) make available to the applicant, a mail ballot package; and
 - (b) immediately record, and, upon request in person by an election official, candidate representative or elector, make available for inspection by any such person:
 - (i) the name and address of the person to whom the chief election officer issued the mail ballot package, and
 - (ii) the number of the voting division, if any, in which such person is registered as an elector or as a “new elector” if that person is not on the register of electors.”



Voting Place #: _____
Voting Place Name: _____

General Local Election

<<DATE>>

STATEMENT OF BALLOT ACCOUNT

Ballots Supplied to PEO

A	Original Ballots Issued	
B	Additional Ballots (if supplied)	
C	TOTAL BALLOTS (SUM OF A & B)	

Disposition of Ballots

D	Voted Ballots (tabulator count)	
E	Spoiled Ballots Returned to PEO	
F	Unused Ballots	
G	Unaccounted for Ballots	
H	TOTAL BALLOTS (SUM OF D,E,F & G)	

Total ballots "C" should equal total ballots "H"

We hereby certify that this is a correct statement of ballot account.

Signature of PEO

Signature of other official

<p>Copy 1 (white): Place in ballot transfer case with voted ballots Copy 2 (yellow): Place in PEO Portfolio</p>

A Review of City of Vancouver's Special Voting Opportunities

Reducing Barriers to Voting

Summary of Findings

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Executive Summary

In 2017, staff undertook a review of the City's Special Voting Opportunities (SVO) program, currently regulated by section 3 of the Election By-law. The objective of this review was to ensure that the SVO program aligns with the provincial regulatory framework, and meets the needs of those electors requiring special assistance to vote. The review of the program comprised several components of research, including a current state analysis of the City's existing program, literature review and qualitative research (section 4), cross-comparative analysis of other jurisdictions' SVO programs (section 6) and a review of policy options.

The review identified a number of challenges under the existing program, one of which is that the City's by-law section pertinent to the selection of SVO sites contains references to outdated terminology that is no longer compatible with provincial health care regulations. This has created confusion and inconsistency in the selection of SVO sites over the years. Second, the criteria for persons who may vote through SVO currently do not address the diverse barriers to voting, including mental illness, homelessness and poverty, among others.

In light of the challenges, this report proposes potential revisions to the SVO program and the Election By-law. The recommendations are informed by best practices identified in the jurisdiction scan. Given the objective of election staff to increase voter turnout, improve the delivery of election services and reduce barriers to voting, it is recommended that the City continue to provide SVO to:

- Patients or residents of hospitals and
- Patients or residents of licenced care facilities.

Moreover, staff recommend that Council broaden the eligibility criteria for SVO and extend this opportunity to:

- Patients or residents of un-licenced (but registered) care facilities;
- Users of emergency (homeless) shelters; and
- Users of social service centres.

This proposal is based on multiple considerations. The broadened criteria enable the City to address diverse barriers facing electors, including mobility challenges, mental illness and socioeconomic struggles. An analysis and evaluation of this recommendation is provided in section 7.

1. Introduction

The City of Vancouver has been providing special voting opportunities ('SVO') since 1972, when hospital voting was introduced. This service, as enabled by the Vancouver Charter and City by-law, aims to provide accessible voting to eligible voters who are otherwise unable to vote in other opportunities as a result of a physical disability or illness. Over the years, the City has significantly expanded this program to various health care facilities. In each municipal election, Election Services deploys mobile teams to attend to SVO voters who find it difficult to otherwise vote due to mobility challenges or health reasons.

Section 3.5 of the Election By-law sets out the eligibility criteria for SVO. The Chief Election Officer refers to the principles established in section 3.5 when selecting SVO sites. Due to changes in the way health care facilities are regulated and classified, the terminology used in section 3.5 no longer accurately reflects the variety of care facilities whose electors may benefit from SVO. Furthermore, barriers to voting are no longer considered to be primarily associated with physical mobility. This review aims to identify such gaps in the Election By-law by analyzing the current regulatory environment of care facilities and understanding the major challenges to electoral participation in the City. The review concludes with recommendations on amending the Election By-law to improve access to voting for various segments of the population in need.

2. Methods

This review combines various research methods and data sources. A background and environmental scan of the SVO program structure was conducted through examining relevant legislation including the *Vancouver Charter*, *Election By-law*, *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*, *Hospital Act*, as well as their predecessors. In addition, staff consulted experts from the Ministry of Health, Vancouver Coastal Health and the BC Law Library on the legal interpretation of the provincial health care regulations.

Research and analysis of records from previous elections helped inform staff about the delivery, operation and cost of the SVO program. Staff obtained statistics of health care facilities from the BC provincial registry and the Vancouver Coastal Health inventory, and lists of homeless shelters, supportive housings and social service centres were developed using data from Metro Vancouver and BC211. The City's Homeless Services staff provided additional input.

In order to better understand barriers to voting, staff undertook a literature review of academic and government studies. To acquire knowledge of the local context, staff analyzed responses from the 2017 Elections Outreach Partners Survey and attended engagement sessions with civic agencies including Seniors Advisory Committee, Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee, LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee and Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee. In addition, staff reviewed socioeconomic data on the Downtown Eastside provided by the Social Planning department.

Finally, a jurisdictional scan was carried out through an online survey with 15 respondents from federal, provincial and municipal election agencies. Additional follow-up interviews were conducted with selected jurisdictions.

In formulating programming recommendations, staff undertook a systematic evaluation of policy options using a set of criteria and measures. Key indicators used in this evaluation include: number of SVO sites to be included, programming expense, share of voter demographics (by barriers to voting and facility types) and the ease of program implementation.

3. Background and Context

3.1. Elections: Legislative and Institutional Framework

City of Vancouver elections, as in other local governments in BC, are now held every four years, on the third Saturday in October. This includes elections for Mayor, Councillors, School Trustees and Park Board Commissioners. The City is responsible for running its own local election. City Council appoints a Chief Election Officer to ensure the process is run in accordance with the pertinent provincial and municipal legislation, which consists of:

- a) **Vancouver Charter:** The City of Vancouver, including the Vancouver Park Board, is governed by the Vancouver Charter, which sets out how the City operates, provides for fundamental municipal powers and enables the City to pass by-laws in various areas including local election procedures.
- b) **School Act:** This provincial legislation contains sections that govern the process for general school election of trustees.
- c) **Local Elections Campaign Financing Act:** This provincial legislation seeks to enhance campaign financing rules and ensure greater accountability and transparency in local elections.
- d) **Election By-law:** As authorized by the Vancouver Charter, the Election By-law allows the City to shape its own election process by setting out the rules and procedures of a local election including the different voting opportunities.

3.2. Voting Opportunities

The primary opportunity to vote in a municipal election is through general voting day, when voting places are open from 8am to 8pm. Through the *Vancouver Charter*, the City has the authority to increase elector access to the voting process by holding additional voting opportunities:

- **Advance Voting** must be held prior to general voting day. This allows eligible electors who may not otherwise be able to vote on general voting day to cast their ballots.
- **Special Voting Opportunities** may be held in any location that meets City SVO by-law requirements and provides eligible electors, who may otherwise be unable to attend a regular voting place, an opportunity to cast their ballots. Currently, the City provides special voting opportunities (SVO) in hospitals and licenced care facilities. The SVO process will be summarized further in 3.3 Special Voting Opportunities.
- **Mail Ballot Voting** provides electors who are unable to attend a special, advance or general voting opportunity with the ability to vote by mail. This includes non-resident property electors, seasonal residents and electors in geographically remote locations or those whose mobility or health is compromised inhibiting their ability to vote in-person.

3.3. Special Voting Opportunities

The *Vancouver Charter* (Section 71) authorizes the City to provide special voting opportunities to electors who may otherwise be unable to vote at other opportunities (i.e., general polling stations, advance polling, mail ballot). A by-law under this provision may:

- Establish restrictions on persons who may vote at the special voting opportunity.
- Establish procedures for voting and for conducting the voting proceedings.

From the Vancouver Charter:

Special voting opportunities

71. (1) In order to give electors who may otherwise be unable to vote an opportunity to do so, the Council may, by by-law, establish one or more special voting opportunities under this section.

(2) A by-law under subsection (1) may do one or more of the following for each special voting opportunity:

- (a) for the purpose referred to in subsection (1), establish restrictions on persons who may vote at the special voting opportunity;
- (b) establish procedures for voting and for conducting the voting proceedings that differ from those established under other provisions of this Part;
- (c) limit, or authorize the chief election officer to limit, the number of candidate representatives who may be present at the special voting opportunity;
- (d) establish, or authorize the chief election officer to establish, the date and voting hours when and the place where the special voting opportunity is to be conducted.

The Election By-law enables the Chief Election Officer to establish dates, voting hours and polling places for special voting opportunities. Furthermore, section 3.5 prescribes the eligibility criteria for electors to vote at such opportunities:

From the Election By-law:

3.5 Electors may vote at a special voting opportunity only if they:

- (a) have a physical disability, illness, or injury that affects their ability to vote at another voting opportunity; and
- (b) are patients in an acute care hospital or residents of a personal care home, long term care facility, or special residential care facility registered under the Community Care Facility Act of British Columbia that is situated in the city and that provides accommodation for 50 or more persons who qualify as electors but who are otherwise unable to vote at another voting opportunity.

Under the current by-law, SVO is only available to electors with 1) a physical disability, illness, or injury and 2) who reside in:

- a. Acute care hospitals; or
- b. Care facilities registered² under the **Community Care and Assisted Living Act** of BC³ (CCALA) (formerly Community Care Facility Act) which provide accommodation for 50 or more persons who qualify as electors:
 - i. Personal care home;
 - ii. Long term care facility; and
 - iii. Special residential care facility.

The intent of the by-law section is to provide SVO to voters who are physically vulnerable, have complex health care needs and require a great level of assistance on a daily basis. While many of the terms used in the by-law section are no longer used by the provincial legislation, in practice the City’s Election Office staff have traditionally attended facilities licenced under the CCALA (see Table 1) and the *Hospital Act* (see Table 2) given that these facilities have a bed capacity of 50 or more. The different facility types are outlined in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1 Facility types licenced under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*⁴

Facility Type	Definition
Hospice	Residential care and short-term palliative services for persons in care at the end of their lives
Mental Health	Residential care for persons who are in care primarily due to a mental disorder.
Substance Use	Residential care for persons who are in care primarily due to substance dependence.
Long Term Care	Residential care for persons with chronic or progressive conditions, primarily due to the aging process.
Community Living	Residential care for persons with developmental disabilities.
Acquired Injury	Residential care for persons whose physical, intellectual and cognitive abilities are limited primarily due to an injury, including persons suffering from brain injuries or injuries sustained in accidents.

Table 2 Facility types licenced under the *Hospital Act*

Facility Type	Definition
Hospital	A non-profit institution that has been designated as a hospital by the Minister and is operated primarily for the reception and treatment of persons suffering from the acute phase of illness or disability, convalescing from or being rehabilitated after acute illness or injury, or requiring extended care at a higher level than that

² The City has interpreted this as facilities which are “licenced” under the provincial act.

³ Community Care Facility Act of BC has since been replaced by the Community Care and Assisted Living Act (CCALA). The new Act no longer uses the same terminology and definitions of facilities.

⁴ See [Residential Care Regulation](#)

	generally provided in a private hospital.
Extended Care Facility	Facility which provides residential care services under the <i>Hospital Act</i> .
Private Hospital	A house in which 2 or more patients, other than the spouse, parent or child of the owner or operator, are living at the same time, and includes a nursing home or convalescent home.

3.4. Overview of Current Special Voting Opportunities Program

Over the past years, the number of facilities visited has remained similar: 2005 (51), 2008 (53), 2011 (55) and 2014 (51). The number of ballots cast at these facilities also remained similar with the exception of 2014, which saw a decrease of 309 votes from 2011. This reduction is likely due to five facilities switching to mail ballot in 2014⁵. Of over 3,000 registered voters residing in these facilities, the average number of ballots collected in each of the past three elections is 895, representing a turnout rate of approximately 27.7%. These statistics also include visits to un-licenced establishments attached to the licenced facilities (e.g., Assisted Living residences attached to the respective Community Care facility).

Table 3 Summary of Special Voting Opportunity Teams and Operation

Election Year	2014	2011	2008
Facilities visited	51	55	53
Voters assisted	714	1,023	1,000
Estimated registered voters ⁶	3,122	3,267	3,267
Turnout	22.4%	30.7%	30.1%

⁵ With the exception of BC Women's Hospital, these facilities were part of the 2014 Pilot Mail Ballot project to explore effectiveness of mail ballot option at various types of facilities.

⁶ Approximated using registered voters list as of August 2017.

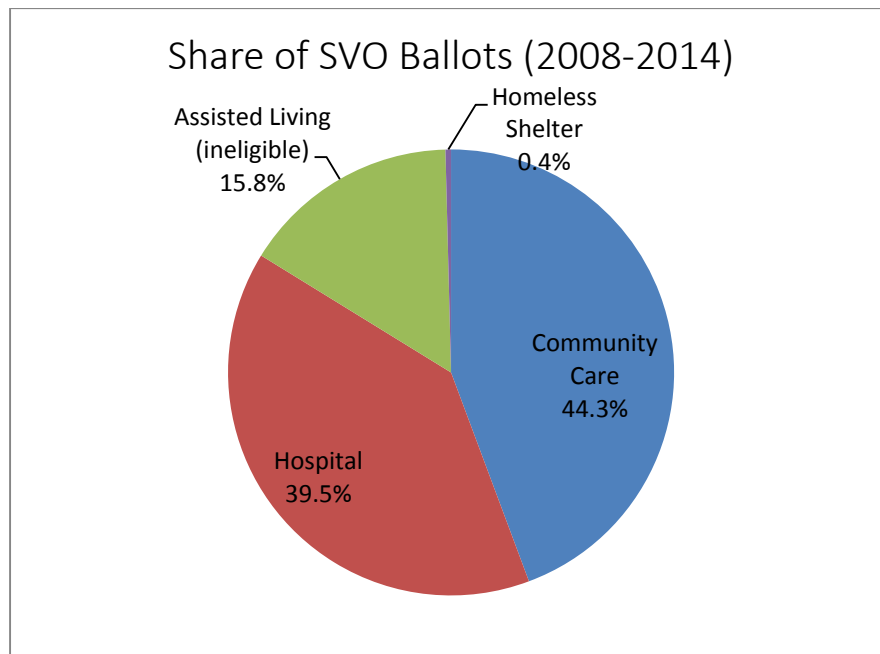


Figure 1 Share of SVO Ballots (2008-2014)

Overall, residents of Long Term Care facilities (many of which are senior adults) represent 44% of all SVO voters, while hospital patients (including private hospitals / extended care facilities) contribute to 40% of the ballots. A smaller portion of SVO ballots cast comes from residents of senior's Assisted Living facilities (16%), which are not licenced under the CCALA.

Table 4 Breakdown of Facilities and Voters Served

	2014		2011		2008	
	Votes	Facilities	Votes	Facilities	Votes	Facilities
Community Care (licenced)	387	27	412	27	414	26
Acquired Injury	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Living	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hospice ⁷	0	1	3	1	0	1
Long Term Care	368	24	387	24	402	24
Mental Health	14	1	15	1	12	1
Substance Abuse	5	1	7	1	0	0
% share	54%	52%	40%	49%	41%	49%

⁷ The facility (Marion Hospice) has since closed and is not included in 2018 projections.

Hospital⁸⁹	240	20	408	21	432	21
% share	34%	39%	40%	38%	43%	40%
Assisted Living Residence¹⁰ (un-licenced, but registered)	83	3	197	6	153	5
Mental Health / Substance Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seniors	83	3	197	6	153	5
% share	12%	6%	19%	11%	15%	9%
Other	4	1	6	1	1	1
Homeless Shelter	4	1	6	1	1	1
% share	0.5%	2%	0.6%	2%	0.1%	2%
Total	714	51	1,023	55	1,000	53

⁸ One of the facilities visited previously (Amherst Private Hospital) has since closed and is not included in 2018 projections.

⁹ Includes BC Cancer Agency, GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre and various pavilions attached to hospitals (UBC Detwiller, UBC Koerner, VGH Jim Pattison and VGH Centennial).

¹⁰ 3 Facilities visited in 2014 are registered facilities attached to licenced facilities.

4. Environmental Scan: Barriers to Voting

The Election By-law authorizes staff to attend to voters with physical illness or injury. To better understand the broad range of barriers to voting, staff conducted a literature review and conducted an online survey of 81 local community organizations (e.g., PHS Community Services Society, Disability Alliance BC, DTES Neighbourhood House) to collect feedback on their observation of challenges to voting experienced by the people they serve. In addition, staff met with the following City advisory committees¹¹ to learn about the barriers to voting experienced by various groups in the City:

- Seniors Advisory Committee,
- Urban Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Committee,
- Children, Youth, and Families Advisory Committee,
- Cultural Communities Advisory Committee,
- LGBTQ2S+ Advisory Committee and
- Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee

4.1. Physical and Health-Related Barriers

Challenges related to physical disabilities are one of the most widely reported and noticeable barriers. Physical conditions as a result of ageing, illness or frailty prevent electors from travelling to, or accessing, polling stations and are a commonly cited reason for not voting¹². In a study of the 2015 federal election results, 12% of non-voters did not vote due to reasons of illness or disability. Understandably, the proportion of those who did not vote as a result of physical disability was higher among older persons, ranging from 15% for those aged 55 to 64, to more than 50% for those aged 75 or older¹³.

Many programs and policies across election agencies, including those of the City, focus on assisting people with physical impairments or other mobility and sensory limitations. Architectural and environmental barriers at polling sites remain a topic of concern for governments and advocacy groups. More recently, policies increasingly are aimed at assisting those who suffer from other health-related conditions, including cognitive impairments, intellectual and developmental disabilities, all of which may interfere with one's ability to vote¹⁴.

4.2. Socioeconomic Barriers

Socioeconomic vulnerability stands out as one of the most complex challenges for voter participation. Studies have identified a multitude of social factors associated with low voter turnout among the less affluent and especially the homeless¹⁵¹⁶¹⁷¹⁸. Education, occupation and income, among others, often

¹¹ Conducted by Election Outreach Lead between May and July 2017.

¹² Prince (2002) Electoral Participation of Electors with Disabilities: Canadian Practices in a Comparative Context.

¹³ Reasons for not voting in the federal election, October 19, 2015

¹⁴ Prince (2002) Electoral Participation of Electors with Disabilities: Canadian Practices in a Comparative Context.

¹⁵ Kopec (2017) The Forgotten in Democracy: Homelessness and Voting in Toronto

¹⁶ Kennedy (2016) Accessing democracy: Barriers to voting for people experiencing homelessness

¹⁷ Nakhaie (2006) Electoral Participation in Municipal, Provincial and Federal Elections in Canada

¹⁸ Milan (2005) Willing to participate: Political engagement of young adults.

serve as standard predictors of voter turnout, because these factors are associated with reduced political engagement and poorer access to information.

Lower economic well-being directly relates to lower voter participation in Canada¹⁹²⁰. Although this correlation may be an indicator of education and political knowledge, the lack of time and resources due to inflexible and unstable work obligations directly impact the ability to vote.

Homeless individuals are more transient than the average elector. They are less able to predict whether they would be present at a polling station and are more likely to encounter issues relating to proper identification and proof of residency. While 23% of non-voters surveyed cited reasons for being “too busy” to vote, it is plausible that voting is a lower priority for those who are struggling to secure day-to-day needs of survival (e.g., food and shelter). Ultimately, financial and livelihood-related stress leaves little time and cognitive focus for political activity.

It is also important to recognize that social exclusion and low economic well-being are associated with other barriers which further discourage voting. Moreover, a large proportion of the lower-income and homeless population suffers from some form of physical and mental disability, substance abuse or other health issues, resulting in physical mobility challenges. Apathy and a sentiment of distrust are also prevalent among this demographic group. Some have little motivation to vote as a result of feelings of isolation from the political system and marginalization from public space. Many, in fact, are sensitive to the location of polling stations not only because of the cost of transportation, but also due to fear of leaving familiar spaces and going to political and government venues. This discomfort is widely reported among Indigenous people. Although these factors may help to explain the often low voter turnout in more disadvantaged neighbourhoods, various anecdotal accounts across Canada suggest that many individuals from this demographic are interested in voting²¹.

4.3. Feedback from Community Groups

The barriers noted above were evident in both discussions with members of City advisory committees, and results from a survey of community organizations. Figure 2 illustrates the top challenges to voting cited by community organizations, based on their observations. Factors associated with a lack of information stand out as top challenges. Identification, apathy and physical transportation are also frequently reported.

¹⁹ Turcotte (2015) Civic engagement and political participation in Canada

²⁰ Uppal and Cote (2012) Factors associated with voting

²¹ See Kopec (2017) and Kennedy (2016).

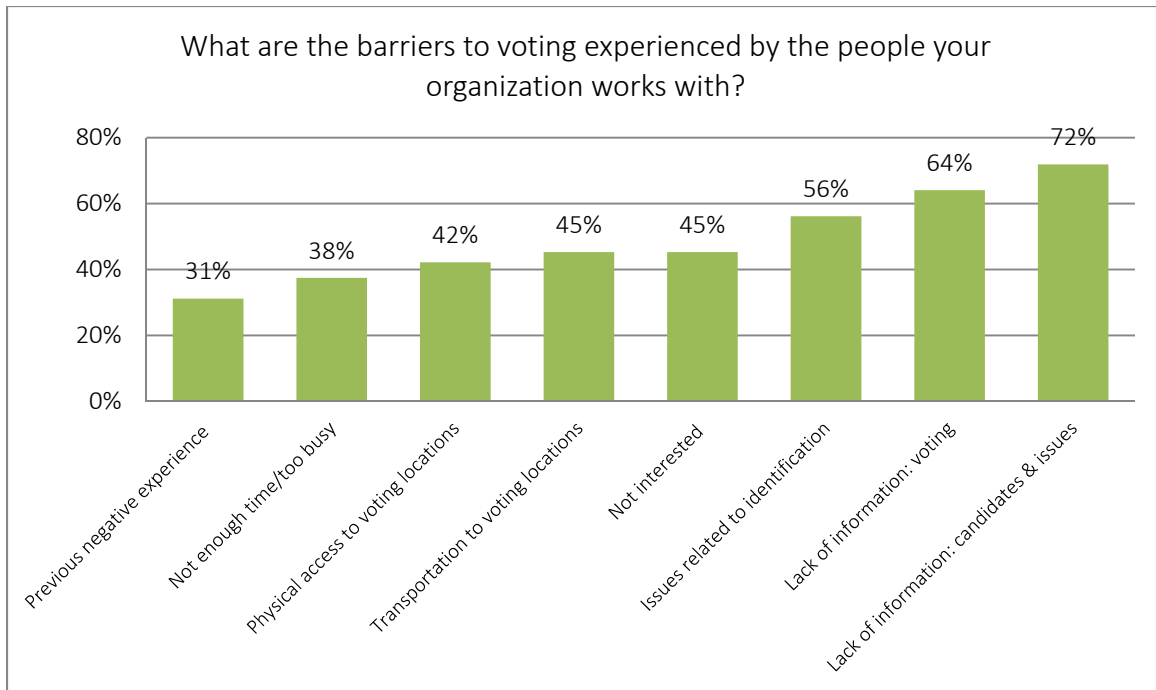


Figure 2 Feedback from Community Organizations (from 2018 City of Vancouver Election Partners Survey)

Additional written response and discussions with advisory committee members generated some recurring themes raised throughout this report:

- Many senior citizens face the logistical challenge of travelling to polling stations. Many have reaffirmed the benefits of mobile voting.
- Although providing assistance with registration and identification helps address the administrative challenges for the underprivileged, it does not overcome the distrust, apathy and lack of self-confidence that many experience.
- Vulnerable individuals are transient and preoccupied with daily survival needs and do not have the motivation to vote.

5. Addressing Barriers to Voting: Current Gaps

There are a number of challenges with the existing SVO program, including the outdated terminology used in the Election By-law and eligibility criteria focused on voters with physical disabilities.

5.1. Emphasis on Physical Immobility and Restrictive Requirements for Care Facilities and Hospitals

The first challenge relates to how the Election By-law is focused on delivering SVO to those who are physically immobile and reside in certain facility types. Section 3.5(a) restricts this opportunity to voters who “have a physical disability, illness, or injury that affects their ability to vote at another voting opportunity”. This emphasis on physical immobility as an eligibility criterion excludes electors who are unable to vote due to health conditions outside of physical disability, illness or injury, including those who suffer from mental illness or acute socioeconomic vulnerability.

3.5 Electors may vote at a special voting opportunity only if they:

- (a) have a physical disability, illness, or injury that affects their ability to vote at another voting opportunity; and
- (b) are patients in an acute care hospital or residents of a personal care home, long term care facility, or special residential care facility registered under the Community Care Facility Act of British Columbia that is situated in the city and that provides accommodation for 50 or more persons who qualify as electors but who are otherwise unable to vote at another voting opportunity.

In addition to the physical requirements in section 3.5 (a), the current By-law restricts SVO to select facility types and facilities with a minimum capacity of 50-beds. Under this premise, establishments not licenced by *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* that provide housing and live-in care services are considered ineligible. Some of the largest categories of such institutions include:

- **Assisted Living Residence:** Assisted Living Residences are registered under the provincial CCALA. Unlike Community Care facilities, these facilities provide fewer services for persons who can live independently but need help with day-to-day activities (e.g., medications, bathing or life skills). Many of these facilities previously operated as personal care homes licenced under the older *Community Care Facility Act* and were once eligible for mobile polling.
- **Extended Care Facility and Private Hospital²²:** Both facility types are residential care facilities licenced under Part II of the *Hospital Act* and are designated by the health authority to provide residential care services for those who are physically vulnerable and who cannot have their care needs met at home or in an assisted living residence. However, the eligibility status of these facilities is unclear and further complicated by the outdated terminology (see 5.2). As such, they are at risk of being omitted from SVO as they are neither licenced under the CCALA nor considered acute care hospitals.

²² The original intent may have been to include these facilities. However, due to the unclear use of unlegislated terminology, some facilities they may likely be omitted at times.

Some of these ineligible facilities have larger populations, with many individuals having mobility challenges and needs for mobile voting assistance. In practice, exceptions were made in previous years for assisted living facilities (un-licensed but registered) attached to the eligible licensed facilities²³. Residents and patients of Extended Care facilities and private hospitals have traditionally been attended by mobile teams.

The third challenge associated with this section is that some facilities are ineligible for SVO due to bed capacities. Of the 115 licensed facilities in the City, only 51 meet the 50-bed criteria. Many of the facilities with fewer than 50 beds are classified as hospice, mental health, substance use, community living and acquired injury. Some residents in these types of care may want to vote but are unable to do so due to physical and mental disability, illness, or injury.

Table 5 Licensed and Registered Residential Care Facilities in Vancouver City (as of April 2017)²⁴

License	Facility / Care Type	Total # of Facilities	Capacity ≥50	Visited 2014	Capacity <50	Visited 2014
Community Care	Acquired Injury	5	0	0	5	0
Community Care	Community Living	19	0	0	19	0
Community Care	Hospice	4	0	0	4	0
Community Care	Long Term Care	29	26	26	3	0
Community Care	Mental Health	29	2	1	27	0
Community Care	Substance Abuse	7	1	1	6	0
Hospital Act ²⁵	Acute Care	14	14	11	0	0
Hospital Act	Extended Care	8	8	8	0	0
Subtotal – Licensed by CCALA or Hospital Act		115	51	47	64	0
Assisted Living (Un-licensed but registered)	Mental Health Substance Abuse	4	0	0	4	0
Assisted Living (Un-licensed but registered) ²⁶	Seniors	17	6	2	11	0
Subtotal – Unlicensed		21	6	2	15	0
TOTAL – CARE FACILITIES		136	57	49	79	0

5.2. Outdated Terminology of Care Facilities

The second gap relates to the references to outdated and unclear use of care facility terminology. Section 3.5(b) allows the City to conduct SVO within select facility types including **acute care hospital**,

²³ Residents of which are independent for the most part. These facilities do not have the same obligations as Community Care and Assisted Living residences to provide prescribed services.

²⁴ List does not include facilities which have since closed and non-care facilities.

²⁵ Two facilities switched to mail ballot.

²⁶ Three facilities switched to mail ballot.

personal care home, long term care facility and special residential care facility that are registered under the provincial act. The use of these criteria poses several challenges. First, the by-law language was enacted in 1993 and refers to the older *Community Care Facility Act* and *Adult Care Regulations*. Since then, the legislation was repealed and replaced by the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* (CCALA) in 2004. The new Act substantially amended the regulatory framework and the terminology of care facilities. For example, new types of facilities have been introduced as licensees, while terms such as “personal care homes” are no longer used in the BC health care system.

In previous years, election office staff have attended at licenced facilities under the Hospital Act and CCALA. Although this approach likely captures the majority of the eligible facilities prescribed within the By-law, the use of antiquated terminology creates confusion when interpreting the eligibility criteria, especially since not all of the facility types correspond to current facilities.

5.3. Socioeconomic Barriers to Voting: Downtown Eastside

For many years, the City’s SVO program has targeted voters with physical barriers by attending to hospitals and care facilities. Through outreach and communication campaigns the City actively engages the public and promotes voter turnout. Despite these efforts, there is still a need to examine challenges associated with socioeconomic vulnerability, especially in light of the findings identified in 4.2 Socioeconomic Barriers and 4.3 Feedback from Community Groups.

Staff investigated key socioeconomic barriers facing some residents, especially those of the Downtown Eastside (DTES). This area of the City is isolated for closer examination due to its long-time struggle with complex socioeconomic issues. While it is difficult to measure the electoral participation of this area²⁷, findings from the literature review and results of the Elections Outreach Partners Survey reaffirm the prevalence of barriers to voting for these residents, particularly due to health and socioeconomic struggles. In comparison with other neighbourhoods within the City, the DTES stands out for challenges including:

- High poverty and low income rates: V6A-postal code areas²⁸ has chronically reported higher low-income rate, averaging at 44.6% between 2010 and 2014. (City average: 20.8%). Approximately 36% of the households in DTES receive income assistance (7% for City average)²⁹. Similarly, the unemployment rate in this area is higher than the City average (Figure 3).

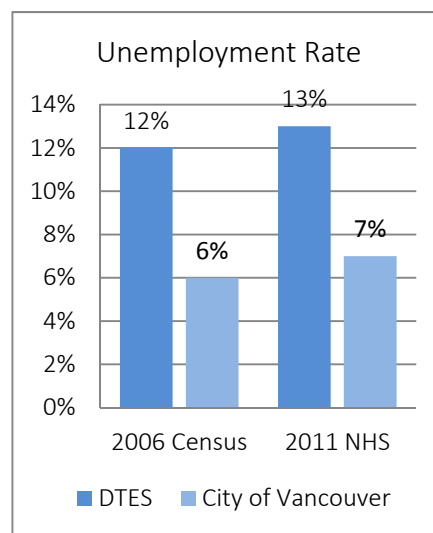


Figure 3 Unemployment Rate for Persons 15+ in Labour Force (Data Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population and National

²⁷ Voter turnout data is not disaggregated by neighbourhood areas.

²⁸ Best geographical match to DTES area

²⁹ DTES 3-Year Report back Council Presentation (April 11, 2017)

- Homelessness remains high: homeless people counted in DTES increased by 33% 2014 – 2016 (2% increase for City overall)³⁰.
- Acute and urgent health inequities persist³¹.

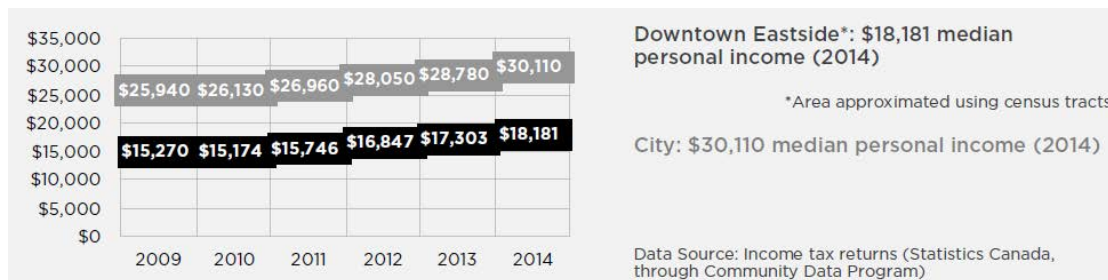


Figure 4 Median Income (Extracted from Healthy City Indicators in Downtown Eastside, p.9)

There are currently few program initiatives directed specifically at reducing barriers to voting in the DTES. While outreach campaigns may help to mitigate some informational and attitudinal barriers, the population in this area would benefit from additional voting opportunities catering to their challenges (i.e., considering central areas of activities, voting times, etc.). As such, changes to the SVO program may consider the following:

1. Additional Voting Opportunities

In 2014, the City received feedback regarding a perceived lack of advance voting opportunities in the DTES. This area overlaps the City’s Downtown and Strathcona local areas (neighbourhoods), both of which reported below-average turnout rates during the 2014 Election. As there were no advance voting places set up specifically in the DTES³², a shuttle from the Carnegie Centre to the Roundhouse Community Centre advance location was offered to DTES voters during advance voting in 2014. Many residents who were unable to vote at an advance voting location, by mail or outside of the DTES would have had to vote on general election day at the Carnegie Centre.

In comparison, Elections BC and Elections Canada have set up advance, special voting and general polling stations throughout the DTES and surrounding areas in their most recent general elections including Carnegie Centre (Elections BC and Elections Canada) and Union Gospel Mission (Elections Canada). In light of these findings, it is recommended that the City consider expanding the SVO eligibility criteria to allow for the use of social service centres for SVO.

2. Voting at Homeless Shelters

Homeless shelters may also serve as suitable voting places recognizing that a large number of marginalized residents use these facilities. There are approximately 20 shelters (excluding overnight facilities) across the City of Vancouver, many of which are concentrated in and around the DTES. While the City conducted SVO at the Yukon Shelter in 2014, there are many more shelter spaces operating across the City and the DTES, some of which were served by SVO teams from Elections BC and Elections Canada (Table 6).

³⁰ DTES 3-Year Report back Council Presentation (April 11, 2017)

³¹ DTES 3-Year Report back Council Presentation (April 11, 2017)

³² Nearest advance voting site would be the Roundhouse Community Centre in Yaletown.

Table 6 Mobile Polling Sites at Shelters

Shelter	Beds	Mobile Polling Site
Lookout Society – Yukon Shelter	80	City of Vancouver Elections BC
Vi Fineday Family Shelter	18	Elections BC
Bridge Housing for Women	36	Elections Canada
Springhouse Shelter	32	Elections Canada

6. Summary of Findings from Cross-Jurisdictional Scan

Staff conducted a cross-jurisdictional scan to explore how other governments within Canada (municipally, provincially, and federally) attend to electors who may otherwise be unable to vote at a general voting opportunity. A survey questionnaire was distributed to 15 jurisdictions³³, all of which provide some form of mobile polling services at care facilities and hospitals. Staff conducted additional follow-up conversation with some jurisdictions as required. A summary of findings and statistics from this research can be found in Appendix A: Cross-Jurisdictional Scan Summary.

On average, the jurisdictions surveyed visit approximately 9 institutions per 100,000 persons through mobile polling³⁴. At 23 institutions per 100,000 persons, the City of Regina visits the greatest number of institutions. The ballots cast at these opportunities form less than 1% of all ballots cast³⁵.

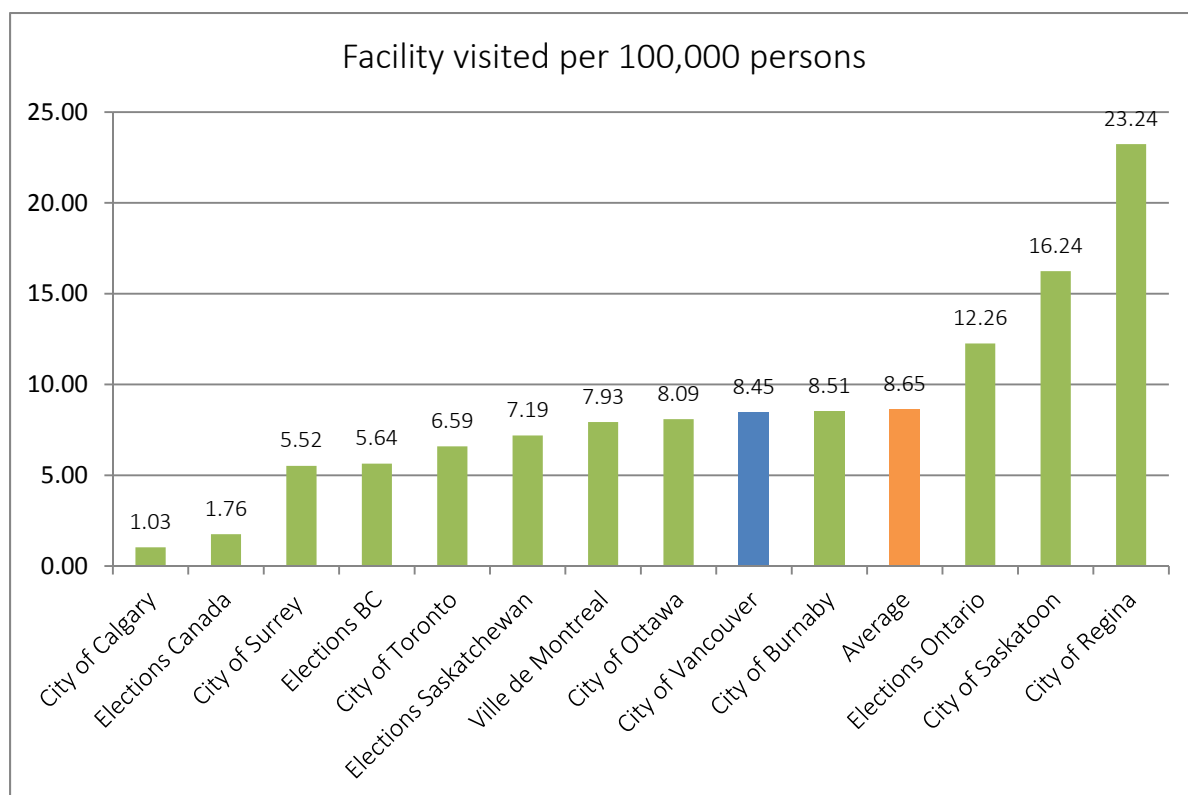


Figure 5 Facility per 100,000 persons

³³ Canada, BC, New Brunswick, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Burnaby, Calgary, Edmonton, Montreal, Ottawa, Regina, Saskatoon, Surrey, Toronto, Multnomah County (Oregon), Helsinki (Finland).

³⁴ Estimated using available 12 jurisdictions with available data.

³⁵ Estimated using available data from 8 jurisdictions.

6.1. Criteria for Mobile Polling³⁶

Many jurisdictions adopt a policy similar to that of the City by making mobile polling available to confined patients and / or residents of provincially licensed care facilities and hospitals. Furthermore, BC, Calgary and New Brunswick have also set up mobile polling at universities to facilitate voting for students. In numerous jurisdictions, SVO-equivalent programs and legislation are designed to maximize flexibility and broaden participation by voters at various types of facilities. Although some mobile polling programs target electors with limited physical mobility who reside in higher level care institutions, many election offices also respond to requests from other institutions. Most respondents remain firm on prioritizing higher level care institutions. This is consistent with the principle established in the City’s program.

Elections BC and Elections Canada do not use standardized requirements to screen eligibility, but instead exercise discretion based on broader criteria. Most often, election officers include sites visited in previous elections (grandfathered facilities) and additional facilities and service providers based on input from the City and other non-profit organizations. Many would also rely on local knowledge and word of mouth. This approach enabled the agencies to attend additional facilities the City did not attend, including shelters, independent and assisted living facilities and supportive housing residences.

Table 7 Voting Places in Vancouver City in recent Municipal, Provincial, Federal Elections³⁷

Election	SVO polling places
City of Vancouver 2014 General Election	51
Elections BC 2017 General Election	81
Elections Canada 2015 Federal Election	83

Most jurisdictions surveyed do not enforce a strict minimum bed capacity for mobile polling. Calgary, Saskatoon and New Brunswick have an established a minimum, but their election officers endeavour, upon request, to visit those who do not meet the threshold.

6.2. Homebound Voting

The majority of the jurisdictions surveyed offer home voting, which many election officers regard as the last resort for those who are homebound and for persons in facilities that were otherwise not attended. The homebound voting programs rely on an honours system. Those who are able to articulate their immobility or other reasonable circumstances may ask to vote in this manner. Despite limited uptake, such programs have been well received.

³⁶ This section opts to use the term “mobile polling” in reference to the City’s SVO program as “special voting opportunities” is used to describe different voting procedures in some jurisdictions.

³⁷ Among the additional 32 sites which Elections BC attended, 4 have previously requested mail ballots from COV while the remaining facilities do not meet the City’s current eligibility criteria due to few beds and their un-licensed status.

6.3. Reducing Barriers for the Homeless Population

The majority of the jurisdictions recognize that the homeless population faces unique challenges which interfere with their ability to vote. Many recognize letters of attestation and confirmation of residences as proof of identity and address. Some election offices (BC, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Calgary) have set up special voting places in more central and larger facilities that serve the homeless population. In particular, respondents highlight the importance of providing a familiar and safe space for this population, as many would feel uncomfortable to vote elsewhere.

As an example, the City of Toronto has traditionally used six drop-in centres and shelters as polling stations. The polling stations were overall beneficial to many disadvantaged residents as they minimize transportation to polls and the intimidation of visiting an unfamiliar venue. Table 8 summarizes the voter statistics.

Table 8 Toronto Municipal Election Voter Statistics of six Polling Stations in Drop-In Centres and Shelters
(as cited in Kopec, 2016)

Polling Station	Total Electors	Additions	Total Eligible Electors	Number Voted	Number of Clients Using Services (approximate number)	% Voted (approximate number)
1	1	35	36	34	104	33%
2	0	22	22	22	50	44%
3	4	35	39	39	94	41%
4	1	107	108	107	543	20%
5	128	18	146	26	150	17%
6	51	24	75	25	60*	42%

Source: City of Toronto (2014) and interview data.

7. Recommendations on Changes to the SVO Program

7.1. Objectives

The central objective of the SVO program is to reduce barriers to electoral participation. In the past, the City has prioritized making voting opportunities available to a segment of voters who are confined to certain hospitals and care facilities. This review finds, however, that there are voters experiencing other forms of barriers and who are not currently eligible to vote under the City's existing SVO program. It is proposed, therefore, that Council amend the City's Election By-law to extend SVO to additional sites in order to service more vulnerable voters.

7.2. Recommendations

As summarized in Table 9, staff considered various options for revising the eligibility criteria for SVO. Based on the evaluation, it is recommended that the City restructure the SVO program to allow for SVO at all facility types provided under the provincial Hospital Act and the Community Care and Assisted Living Act (including licenced community care facilities, extended care facilities, private hospitals and assisted living facilities), emergency (homeless) shelters and social service centres. The proposed changes enable the City to reach out to those who experience homelessness, low-income and other socioeconomic vulnerabilities, particularly in the Downtown Eastside. In addition, staff recommend that the requirement for 50 beds be lowered to 30 beds, thereby making SVO available to residents living in smaller facilities, many of which care for non-senior adults.

Table 9 Summary of potential options for SVO Eligibility Criteria

Facilities	Option 1 Status-Quo (50-bed minimum)	Option 2 (30-bed minimum)	Option 3 (30-bed minimum)	Option 4 (30- bed minimum)	Option 5 (30-bed minimum)
Acute care	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Licensed facilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Extended care facilities / private hospitals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Registered facilities		✓	✓	✓	✓
Drop-in social service centres			✓	✓	✓
Shelters				✓	✓
Supportive housings					✓
# facilities in the City	51	66	76	90	118
Estimated total cost	\$55,024	\$63,313	\$68,838	\$76,574	\$92,046

**Recommended
Option**

The projected impact of this recommendation is expressed as Option 4 in Table 9, Table 10, Figure 7 and Figure 8. For consistency, the projected number of emergency shelters (14) is based on the number of facilities which provide a minimum of 30 beds. The projected number of social service centres (10) is based on the estimated number of facilities with high daily foot traffic (approximately 500 visitors or more) and locations which allow for an even geographic distribution of SVO sites in the Downtown Eastside. Given these projections, this recommended change may potentially increase the number of SVO facilities by 39 locations (43%) and increase the diversity of SVO facility types.

To encourage uptake of SVO, staff will continue to enhance SVO programming operations. In previous elections, feedback from hospital administrators suggests that SVO activities have created some challenges for health care practitioners to carry out regular duties at facilities. For upcoming elections, staff will work closely with partner organizations to improve service delivery and ensure that SVO can be carried out smoothly and efficiently at all sites.

Table 10 SVO Facilities: 2014 Election and 2018 projections

	2018 Projections	2014 General Election
Community Care (licenced)	32	27
Acquired Injury	0	0
Community Living	0	0
Hospice ³⁸	0	1
Long Term Care	26	24
Mental Health	3	1
Substance Abuse	3	1
Acute care hospital³⁹⁴⁰	8	7
Extended Care / Private hospital	14	13
Assisted Living (registered)	12	3
Mental Health / Substance Abuse	0	0
Seniors	12	3
Homeless Shelter	14	1
Social Service Centre	10	0
Total # facilities	90	51
Estimated fixed (upfront) cost	\$26,843	\$26,843 (2017 rates)
ESTIMATED TOTAL COST	\$76,574	\$55,024 (2017 rates)

³⁸ The facility (Marion Hospice) has since closed and is not included in 2018 projections.

³⁹ The facility (Amherst Private Hospital) has since closed and is not included in 2018 projections.

⁴⁰ Includes BC Cancer Agency, GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre and various pavilions attached to hospitals (UBC Detwiller, UBC Koerner, VGH Jim Pattison and VGH Centennial).

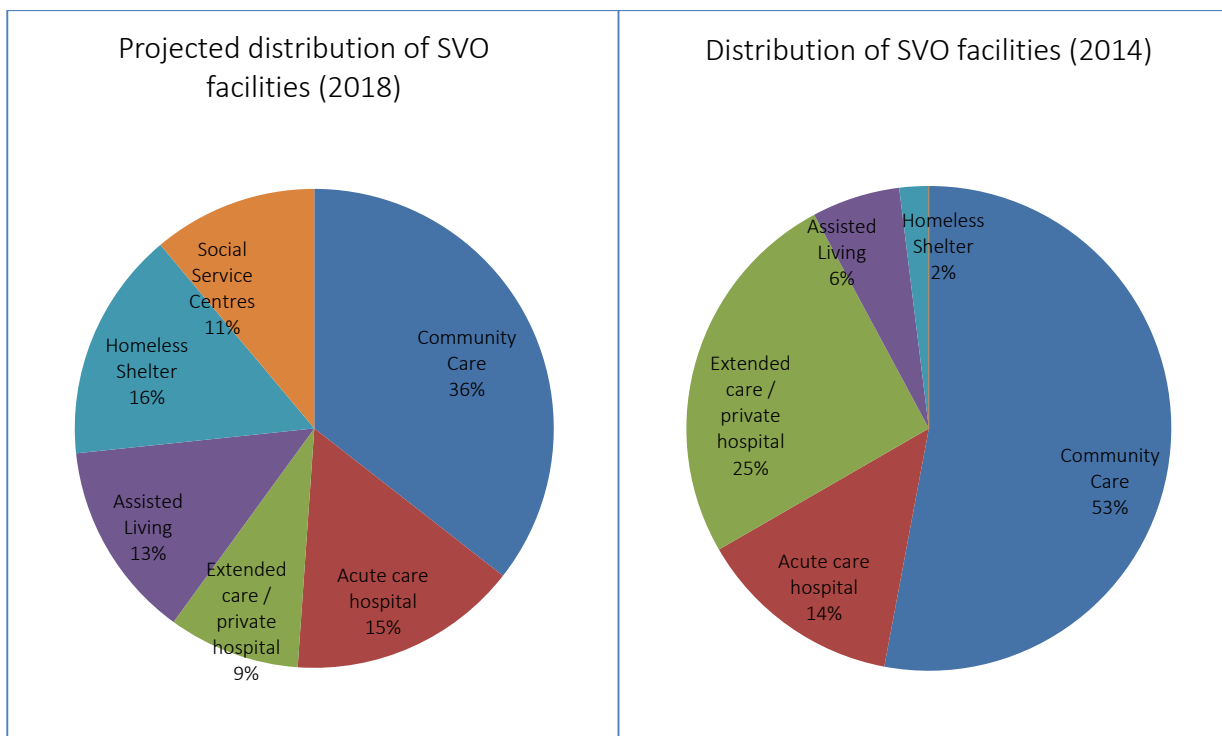


Figure 6 Projected distribution of SVO facilities by type (2018 projections)

Figure 7 Distribution of SVO facilities by type (2014)

7.3. Amendments to the Election By-law

The recommended amendment is set out as follows:

Table 11 Proposed By-law Amendments

Existing By-law	Proposed Election By-law
<p>3.5 Electors may vote at a special voting opportunity only if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) have <u>a physical disability, illness, or injury</u> that affects their ability to vote at another voting opportunity; and (b) are patients in an acute care hospital or residents of a personal care home, long term care facility, or special residential care facility registered under the Community Care Facility Act of British Columbia that is situate in the city and that provides accommodation for 50 or more persons who qualify as electors but who are otherwise unable to vote at another voting opportunity. 	<p>3.5 Electors may vote at a special voting opportunity only if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) have a disability, illness or injury that affects their ability to vote at another voting opportunity; or (b) are users of an emergency shelter or social service centre; or (c) are residents or patients of a hospital, care facility or similar facility or institution located in the City that has beds for 30 or more persons who qualify as electors.

8. Conclusion

The City of Vancouver has for many years provided SVO to citizens who are otherwise unable to vote due to mobility challenges. Since the current SVO program and criteria were introduced in 1993, the health care facility system has undergone regulatory changes which created misalignment between the Election By-law and the relevant provincial legislation, resulting in confusion and the possibility that some facilities could be left out of SVO.

Furthermore, the barriers to voting are no longer considered to be primarily associated with physical mobility. As part of the City's objective to increase voter turnout and reduce barriers for voters, it is recommended that the Election By-law be amended to broaden SVO so that those who experience health and / or socioeconomic challenges are eligible for this service. To enable participation in SVO, it is also recommended that the SVO mobile polling program be made provided in additional facility types, including registered Assisted Living facilities, community drop-in social service centres and homeless shelters.

Appendix A: Cross-Jurisdictional Scan Summary

Additional Voting Methods

Jurisdiction	Mail ballot	Visits to facilities and institutions	Homebound voting	Curbside voting	Proxy voting	Internet voting	Telephone voting
Elections Canada	✓	✓	✓				
Elections BC	✓	✓		✓			✓
Elections New Brunswick	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Elections Ontario	✓	✓	✓				
Elections Saskatchewan	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓ ⁴¹	
City of Burnaby		✓		✓			
City of Calgary	✓	✓	✓	✓			
City of Edmonton	✓	✓					
Ville de Montreal		✓	✓				
City of Ottawa		✓		✓	✓		
City of Regina	✓	✓	✓	✓			
City of Saskatoon	✓	✓	✓				
City of Surrey	✓	✓		✓			
City of Toronto		✓	✓	✓	✓		
City of Vancouver	✓	✓		✓			
Multnomah County, Oregon	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
City of Helsinki, Finland		✓	✓				

⁴¹ E-mail voting

Special Voting Opportunities Statistics

Jurisdiction	Population	Total ballots	Special ballots	Special Ballots %	If hospital / institution ballots not separated, special ballots include	Ballots: Home	Ballots: Mail / others	Minimum beds criteria	Facilities visited	Facility per 100,000
Elections Canada	36,622,997	17,711,983	171,049	0.97%	-	-	-	None	646	1.76
Elections BC	4,751,612	1,985,523	7,500	0.38%	-	-	6,365	None	268	5.64
Elections New Brunswick	756,800	373,337	44,906	12.03%	Mail; home; advanced; university	-	-	10 - but will attend upon request	-	-
Elections Ontario	13,983,000	4,885,493	71,976	1.47%	-	4,023	-	20 (institutions) 50 (retirement homes)	1,715	12.26
Elections Saskatchewan	1,098,352	434,244	1,093	0.25%	Homes; remand centres; mail	574	4,420	None	79	7.19
City of Burnaby	223,218	41,494	309	0.74%	-	-	-	None	19	8.51
City of Calgary	1,554,200	668,029	5,087	0.76%	Mail; home	-	1,200	5 - but will attend upon request	16	1.03
City of Edmonton	895,000	213,585	418	0.20%	-	-	-	None	-	-
Ville de Montreal	4,098,927	1,101,998	1,688	0.15%	-	518	-	-	325	7.93
City of Ottawa	1,236,325	252,464	-	-	-	-	-	20 (institutions) 50 (retirement homes)	100	8.09
City of Regina	215,106	36,656	1,512	4.12%	Home; mail	-	-	25	50	23.24
City of Saskatoon	246,376	80,262	2,831	3.53%	Home; mail	-	-	None	29	5.52
City of Surrey	525,200	50,782	339	0.67%	-	-	-	5 - but will attend upon request	40	16.24
City of Toronto	2,731,571	991,754	-	-	Facilities	-	-	20 (institutions) 50 (retirement homes)	180	6.59
City of Vancouver	603,502	181,707	714	0.39%	-	-	1,224	50	51	8.45
Multnomah County, Oregon	776,712	504,960	200	0.04%	-	-	-	None	-	-
City of Helsinki, Finland	629,512	326,351	4,895	1.50%	-	979	-	None	-	-