

Election 2021 Candidate's Guide

Being a Town Councillor

What does it mean to be a Councillor?

A Town Council sets the vision and direction for their municipality. They do so by adopting policies and bylaws that encompass these goals, as well as by approving the municipal budget. It is then the responsibility of the municipal staff to administer and carry-out the policies set by Council. Council may then work through their one employee, the CAO, to ensure the organizational objectives are being met.

As a Councillor you will have the occasion to put forward ideas and opportunities for the betterment of your community. However, decisions or monetary commitments may not be made individually and must be made by a majority of Council through a Resolution. If a decision made by a majority of Council does not align with your opinion, you must be able to respect the difference of opinion and demonstrate a unified front.

As a Councillor, you are a leader and a representative of the Town of Edson. As such, when you are in public, you should conduct yourself in a manner that appropriately aligns with these responsibilities.

Duties of Council

Under section 153 of the *Municipal Government Act*, all Councillors have the following duties:

- to consider the welfare and interests of the municipality as a whole and to bring to council's attention anything that would promote the welfare or interests of the municipality;
- to promote an integrated and strategic approach to intermunicipal land use planning and service delivery with neighbouring municipalities;
- to participate generally in developing and evaluating the policies and programs of the municipality;
- to participate in council meetings and council committee meetings and meetings of other bodies to which they are appointed by the council;
- to obtain information about the operation or administration of the municipality from the chief administrative officer or a person designated by the chief administrative officer;
- to keep in confidence matters discussed in private at a council or council committee meeting until discussed at a meeting held in public;
- to adhere to the code of conduct established by the council under section 146.1(1);
- to perform any other duty or function imposed on councillors by this or any other enactment or by the council.



What are the individual powers of the mayor?

The mayor has the same powers, duties and responsibilities as any member of council.

The mayor has no veto power over a decision of council.

Additional responsibilities of the mayor include:

- providing council with guidance interpreting Town policies and procedures,
- representing the Town and council to outside agencies and communities, and
- providing council with overall leadership and direction.

What is the time commitment?

During your four-year term as a Councillor, you will be required to attend many meetings and events which can be demanding on your time. These include:

- Regular Town Council meetings, which are held on the first and third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m.
- Regular Committee of the Whole meetings, which are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m.
- meetings of other boards and agencies to which you are appointed as a council representative;
- various other conferences (e.g. AUMA and FCM), conventions, seminars and workshops for training and discussion

A Councillor must also spend time reading the agenda and preparing for the respective meetings, as well as, speaking with members of the public, the Chief Administrative Officer and other parties related to the municipality. There may also be events promoting Edson where Councillors receive invitations to attend.

Important Dates

- Nomination papers may be filed between January 1, 2021 and 12 noon on nomination day (being September 20, 2021)
- Election Day: October 18, 2021
- Organizational Meeting, Swearing in Ceremony & Council Meeting: October 26, 2021
- AUMA Conference: November 17-19, 2021 (Edmonton, AB)

More dates will be announced in summer 2021 (e.g. orientation, budget workshop, advanced vote, etc.)



Compensation...\$

Councillors are compensated for their time dedicated as a municipal Councillor. Per the current Council Remuneration Policy, Council's annual compensation is set as follows:

Elected Official	2020	2021	2022-2025
Mayor	\$42,770	\$45,340	\$47,900
Councillor	\$25,600	\$26,600	\$27,600

Individuals will also be reimbursed for any expenses incurred while traveling on Town business.



Running in the Municipal Election

Are you eligible to become a candidate?

To become a candidate you must

- be at least 18 years of age on nomination day,
- be a Canadian citizen,
- and have been a resident of the Town of Edson for six consecutive months immediately preceding Nomination Day (September 20, 2021).

You are not eligible to run if you:

- are an employee of the Town of Edson (unless you are granted a leave of absence prior to nomination day),
- are an auditor of the Town of Edson,
- are more than \$50 in arrears on your property taxes, or you are more than 90 days in default of any debt to the Town of Edson in excess of \$500 (if you are unsure, please call 780-723-4401 to find out if you have any amounts owing), or
- have been convicted of an offence under the Local Authorities Election Act, the Elections Act, or the Canada Elections Act within the last 10 years.

Candidate Nominations

The nomination period for the 2021 general election begins on January 1, 2021 and runs until 12:00 p.m. on September 20, 2021 (nomination day). To account for the January 1 statutory holiday and the weekend following, filing of nominations will begin on Monday, January 4, 2021.

Nominations may be submitted at the Edson Civic Centre at any time during the nomination period. Papers may be delivered in person by the candidate or by another person on behalf of the candidate, including by courier or through the mail.*

Faxed or emailed nomination papers cannot be accepted.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure nomination requirements are complete.

***Due to COVID-19**, our offices are closed to walk-in traffic at the moment but completed papers can be submitted in the drop box at the Civic Centre or by mail or courier. The returning officer will notify the candidate when the papers have been accepted. Incomplete papers will be returned.

Anyone who wishes to submit nomination papers to the returning officer in person can schedule an appointment by emailing mikep@edson.ca or calling 780-723-4401 ext. 104.

Official Agent

On the nomination form, you may choose to appoint an elector to act as your official agent. This appointment gives this individual the signing authority for the campaign bank account and the ability to manage your campaign under your direction. A candidate may NOT act as an official agent for another candidate.



If you have appointed an official agent, you must include their information on the nomination form. If at any time the information changes about your official agent, you must notify the returning officer immediately.

Where is the prescribed form for nomination papers?

Candidates must complete 2 forms:

- Form 4 Nomination Paper and Candidate's Acceptance, and
- Form 5 Candidate Information

These forms are available at:

- www.edson.ca/runforcouncil
- email mikep@edson.ca
- call 780-723-4401 ext. 104 to arrange to pick up a physical copy of the forms

Who can witness my signature on the nomination form?

You must sign the nomination paper in the presence of a Commissioner for Oaths or a returning officer.

You can make an appointment with the returning officer or Commissioner for Oaths to have your signature witnessed by emailing mikep@edson.ca.

Commissioner for Oaths services are also available through any law office.

May I withdraw my nomination papers?

A candidate may withdraw their nomination papers at any time during the nomination

period and up to 24-hours after close of the nomination period. However, after close of the nomination period, the returning officer cannot accept a withdrawal if the number of nomination papers received is equal to the number of vacant offices.

What happens if I am late filing my nomination papers (Form 4)?

The returning officer CANNOT accept late nomination papers.

How will my name appear on the ballot?

Please print your name in the Candidate's Acceptance portion of the nomination paper in the same manner as you would like it to appear on the ballot. Nicknames are acceptable, but titles such as Dr., Mr., and Mrs. are not.

Campaign Expenses & Contributions

The Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA) sets out all requirements respecting campaign expenses and contributions. A brief summary is provided below; however, all candidates are *strongly encouraged to read and understand the provisions of the LAEA.*

Contributions to Candidates

No contributions may be accepted until the nomination period commences (January 1, 2021) AND a candidate files their nomination paper.



During the Campaign period, following the filing of nomination papers, a candidate may contribute up to and including \$10,000 to their campaign and may accept contributions of up to \$5,000 from any person who is ordinarily a resident in Alberta.**

**Legislation does provide some exceptions to accepting contributions prior to the campaign period. A person may accept up to \$5,000 annually in contributions outside of the campaign period, as well as contribute up to \$10,000 of their own funds outside of the campaign period.

Candidates, or those acting on their behalf, should not directly or indirectly solicit contributions if the candidate knows or ought to know that the potential contributor

- does not ordinarily reside in Alberta,
- is a prohibited organization, including a corporation or unincorporated organization, or
- will exceed the contribution limits.

Candidates must not accept contributions from anonymous parties.

Bank Accounts & Tracking

A candidate must open a bank account in their name or the name of the campaign as soon as the amount of contributions (including any self-funded contributions) exceed \$1,000 in the aggregate. Money in this account must only be used to pay for campaign expenses.

Contributions of real property, personal property, goods and services must be assigned a value.

Throughout the campaign, receipts must be issued for every contribution received, and be obtained for every expense incurred. Further, the name and address of a contributor must be obtained, should their contributions during the campaign period exceed \$50 in the aggregate.

All campaign records of contributions and expenses must be kept for a minimum of three (3) years following the date disclosure statements were required to be filed (March 1, 2022).

What are allowable campaign expenses?

At a basic level, a “campaign expense” is an expense a candidate makes in the course of a campaign to help get elected. Technically, this includes any expense incurred, or nonmonetary contribution received, by a candidate to the extent that it is used to directly promote or oppose a candidate during a campaign period. “Campaign expense” includes an expense incurred for, or a non-monetary contribution, in relation to:

- advertising or promotional material,
- The distribution, broadcast or publication of advertising or promotional material in any media or by any other means during a campaign period, including by the use of a capital asset,



- The payment of remuneration and expenses to or on behalf of a person for the person's services on the campaign,
- Securing a meeting place, or
- The conduct of opinion polls, surveys or research during a campaign period.

Do I need to file a Disclosure Statement?

New this election, every candidate must now file a campaign disclosure statement. This includes a candidate who has withdrawn their nomination.

The Disclosure Statement Form will be provided on the Town of Edson Website in due course.

Campaign Signage

Please do not place your election campaign signs on any Town owned properties, including (but not limited to) the:

- Town Office—Civic Centre and Public Works Building
- Fire Department
- Museum
- RCMP Centennial Park (excluding the outer highway boulevard)
- Repsol Place
- Library
- Griffiths Park Building
- Airport
- Trail systems

It is important that Town owned facilities remain neutral in an election.

Additionally, signs may not be attached to utility poles. Any signs found in these areas shall be removed and may be discarded.

You may place your signs on any private land, providing you receive permission from the legal landowner. Signs may also be placed along the highway boulevards, but you must ensure they do not block site lines and that they adhere to Alberta Transportation's Guidelines.

Following the election, please ensure all signage is removed within 72-hours.

Can a Third Party Advertise on my Behalf?

Yes, a third party can advertise on behalf of one or more candidates. When the third party has incurred expenses (or intends to) or has accepted contributions (or intends to) of at least \$1,000, they must register with the Town of Edson.

More Campaign Expenses & Contributions

Again, candidates are strongly encouraged to become familiar with the *Local Authorities Elections Act* (LAEA). Part 5.1 of the LAEA gives more detailed information regarding the above, and includes information on items not covered in this document such as Fundraising Functions, Campaign Surpluses/Deficits, penalties for breaching campaign expense and disclosure requirements, etc.



Additional Information

Local Authorities Election Act

The *Local Authorities Election Act* and relating regulations can be viewed on the Alberta Queen's Printer website at: https://www.qp.alberta.ca/570.cfm?frm_isbn=9780779820221&search_by=link

Recently, the Government of Alberta made changes to the *Local Authorities Elections Act*. Candidates are encouraged to visit our website at <https://www.edson.ca/town/town-council/election-act-changes> or the Alberta Government website at <https://www.alberta.ca/local-election-rule-changes.aspx> to learn more about these changes.

More about the Town of Edson

Candidates are also encouraged to visit the following website to familiarize themselves with Town of Edson Bylaws, Policies, and previous Council/Committee of the Whole Meeting Agendas and Minutes: <https://edson.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Specifically related to Council, candidates should also review the

- Council Code of Conduct Bylaw: <https://edson.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/28629>; and
- Council Procedural Bylaw: <https://edson.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/19924?preview=31719>

Additional Resources

The Government of Alberta has a webpage dedicated to municipal elections:

<https://www.alberta.ca/municipal-elections-overview.aspx>

They have also produced '[A Candidate's Guide: Running for Municipal Office in Alberta](#)' which provides some additional information with respect to running for office in Alberta.