

Regular Polls

Historically Elections Regina has hosted 30 polling stations. When the 2020 Municipal/School Board Election Report went before Council it was decided that an additional poll be placed in ward 3 and in ward 5 to accommodate voters. These 32 polling locations saw over 22,000 voters on election day, which is approximately 5800 voters less (23% decrease) than the regular polls in 2016.

Advance Polls

The advance polls saw an overwhelming amount of voters over the course of the three days they were open. All of the advance poll locations saw a total of 13,374 voters in 2020 compared to the 8,808 voters that attended the advance polls in 2016 which is an 8% increase in voter turnout at the advance poll locations.

The drive thru poll saw 1806 voters compared to the 1083 that attended both the drive thru and the poll inside of City Hall in 2016. The staff at the poll opened the drive thru into 2 lanes to move voters through faster and had an approximately 18 minute wait time from when the voter pulled into the drive thru line to when they completed the voting process. Elections Regina will be looking into hosting additional polls in 2024 as the ease and speed of utilizing the drive thru option appears to be gaining popularity.

Ballot on Demand machines were used during the Advance Polls and at the Hospital polls on Election Day. This change allowed us to effectively reduce the number of workers at the Advance Polls issuing ballots as well as reduced the number of preprinted ballots that were required in advance of the election. Implementing this process worked very well at all of the polls and we received positive feedback from the election officials using the machines.

Special Polls

This Election year, Special Polls presented a unique challenge. A hybrid approach to Special Polls was developed, creating two options to allow for safe voter access:

1. On Site Polls with ample safety and sanitizations protocols shaped from SHA, Health Canada, and World Health Organization policy; or
2. Mail-in Ballots – Elections Regina trained internal facility staff at Special Poll locations. These trained Election Officials assisted residents with voter registration and provided necessary accommodations for physical assistance.

Of the 53 Special Poll locations, 10 chose the mail-in ballot option, while 43 opted for an on site poll. Elections Regina also worked directly with SHA facility staff at our 3 hospital polls to plan safe voting at poll stations and bed-to-bed voting.

Mobile Polls were another area of success, as the request for Mobile Polls substantially increased due to immunocompromised voters requiring safe voting access.

Between Hospital, Mobile, and Special Poll voting, there was a total of 1,711 ballots cast. The Special Poll voter turnout was approximately 24.5%, representing a 3.5% increase in voter turnout from 2016.

Mail-In Ballots

With the onset of COVID-19 Elections Regina, along with other Saskatchewan municipalities and the provincial government, proposed opening up the mail-in ballot option to all eligible voters to ensure voters had a safe way to cast their vote from their own homes in Report CR20-72 Election Report – COVID-19 Contingency Plan. In 2016 Elections Regina saw approximately 150 applications for a mail-in ballot; during the 2020 Municipal/School Board Election nearly 6000 mail-in ballot applications were approved and mailed out to voters.

The mail in ballot process was a large undertaking of many firsts for the Elections Regina office. City Administration staff put in additional hours to keep up to the additional workload leading up to the Election. Additional temporary staff were also brought in to assist with the process, including:

- Review and approval of applications;
- Following up for more information if required;
- Issuing and building ballot kits (by mail or delivery);
- Receiving completed ballots; and
- Tabulating the votes

Elections Regina had first envisioned delivering all of the ballot kits out to residents with delivery drivers, but the process soon became overloaded. To ensure all mail in ballot kits were delivered the remaining kits were sent via eXpress mail through Canada Post. In total, 4,970 mail in ballots were received by Elections Regina. This accounts for approximately 12% of the total votes.