

**CITY OF MAPLE RIDGE
BYLAW NO. 8096-2026**

A Bylaw to regulate the conduct of City elections and other voting, including the use of automated voting machines, mail ballots and election signage.

The Council of the City of Maple Ridge enact as follows:

1. Citation

This Bylaw will be cited as "Maple Ridge Election Procedures Bylaw No. 8096-2026".

2. Definitions

In this Bylaw:

- (1) "*Acceptable mark*" means a completed mark as defined in s. 139 of the *Local Government Act* and which the *vote counting unit* is able to identify, which has been made by an elector in the space provided on the *ballot* opposite the name of any candidate or opposite either 'yes' or 'no' on any other voting question.
- (2) "*Applicant*" means an elector who want to vote by mail and make a request for a mail *ballot*.
- (3) "*Authorized person*" means a person that the *applicant* has authorized, on the *applicant's* behalf, to:
 - (a) pick up a mail *ballot* package; or
 - (b) drop off a completed mail *ballot* package.
- (4) "*Automated vote counting system*" means a system that counts and records votes and processes and stores election or any voting results which comprises:
 - (a) a number of *ballot scan vote counting units*, each of which rests on a two-compartment *ballot* box:
 - (i) one compartment of which is for voted *ballots* and *returned ballots* which have been reinserted using the *ballot* override procedure;
 - (ii) the other compartment is for the temporary storage of voted *ballots* during such time as the *vote counting unit* is not functioning.
 - (b) a number of *storage ballot compartments* into which voted *ballots* are deposited where a *vote counting unit* is not functioning or being used which will be counted at a specified date and time, or after the close of voting on general voting day.
- (5) "*Ballot*" means a single *ballot* card designed for use in an *automated vote counting system* which shows:
 - (a) the names of all of the candidates for each of the offices to be filled; and
 - (b) all of the choices on all of the bylaws or other matters on which the opinion or assent of the electors is sought.
- (6) "*Ballot return override procedure*" means the use, by an election official, of a device on a *vote counting unit*, which causes the unit to accept a *returned ballot*.
- (7) "*Bylaw Compliance Officer*" means the person(s) appointed as the *bylaw compliance officer* for the City of Maple Ridge
- (8) "*Chief Election Officer*" means the person who has overall responsibility for the administration of the election and their deputies.
- (9) "*Election headquarters*" means the Council Chamber of the Maple Ridge City Hall, located at 11995 Haney Place, Maple Ridge, BC.

- (10) "*Election sign*" means a temporary sign promoting a political candidate, party, or cause in relation to a federal, provincial, municipal or school trustee election or public referendum.
- (11) "*Grade*" means the elevations of the finished ground surface directly below the sign.
- (12) "*Maximum Height*" means the vertical distance measured from *grade* to the highest part of such sign.
- (13) "*Memory pack*" means a computer software cartridge which is inserted into the *vote counting unit* and into which is pre-programmed the names of all the candidates for each of the offices to be filled, and the alternatives of 'yes' or 'no' for each question on the *ballot*, and which records and retains information on the number of *acceptable marks* made for each.
- (14) "*Minimum Clearance*" means the vertical distance measured from grade to the lower limit of such sign, sign structure or architectural element.
- (15) "*Portable ballot box*" means a *ballot box*, for use in the election, where a *vote counting unit* is not being used at the time of voting.
- (16) "*Presiding Election Official*" means the election official appointed by the *chief election officer* to conduct election proceedings where the *chief election officer* is not acting as the *presiding election official*.
- (17) "*Register of Mail Ballots*" means the records that the *chief election officer* must keep in order to address any challenges to an elector's right to vote.
- (18) "*Results tape*" means the printed record generated from a *vote counting unit* at the close of voting on general voting day, which shows the number of votes for each candidate for each of the offices to be filled, and the number of votes for and against each bylaw or other matters on which the opinion or assent of the electors is sought.
- (19) "*Returned ballot*" means a voted *ballot* which was inserted into the *vote counting unit*, but which was not accepted, and which was returned to the elector with an explanation of the *ballot* marking error which caused the *ballot* not to be accepted.
- (20) "*Secrecy enclosure*" means an open-ended folder, sleeve, envelope or item which is used to cover *ballots* to conceal the choices made by each elector.
- (21) "*Storage ballot compartment*" means a *ballot box* under each *vote counting unit* into which voted *ballots* are temporarily deposited in the event that the unit ceases to function.
- (22) "*Vote counting unit*" means the device into which voted *ballots* are inserted and which scans each *ballot* and records the number of votes for each candidate and for and against each question on which the opinion or assent of the electors is sought.

CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS & OTHER VOTING

3. Number of Nominators

The minimum number of qualified nominators required to make a nomination for office as a member of council shall be 2.

4. Access to Nomination Documents

The *chief election officer* must give public access to nomination documents during its regular office hours and via the Internet or other electronic means from the time of delivery until 30 days after the declaration of the official election results.

5. Electoral Registration - Provincial List of Voters

The most current available Provincial list of voters prepared under the *Election Act* shall form the register of resident electors and shall become the register of electors on the 52nd day prior to general voting day.

6. Additional General Voting Opportunities

The *chief election officer* may designate the voting places and set the voting hours within the limits set out in the *Local Government Act* for additional general voting opportunities.

7. Advance Voting Opportunities

- (1) In addition to the required advance voting opportunity on the 10th day before general voting day, the second advance voting opportunity will be the 3rd day before general voting day.
- (2) The *chief election officer* may establish additional advance voting opportunities to be held in advance of general voting day and to designate the date, voting hours and locations for these opportunities.

8. Special Voting Opportunities

- (1) The *chief election officer* may establish the dates, locations, and voting hours within the limits set out in the *Local Government Act*, for the special voting opportunities.
- (2) The only electors who may vote at a special voting opportunity are electors who, on the date on which the special voting opportunity is held, are residents at a care facility for which a special voting opportunity is being conducted.
- (3) The *chief election officer* may limit the number of candidates' representatives who may be present at a special voting opportunity, subject to section 109(3) of the *Local Government Act*.

AUTOMATED VOTING

9. Use of Voting Machines

The *chief election officer* may use an *automated vote counting system* for the conduct of elections and voting on bylaws or other matters on which the opinion or assent of the electors is sought.

10. Automated Voting Procedures

- (1) The *presiding election official* for each voting place shall offer, and if requested, ensure that a demonstration of how to vote using a *vote counting unit* is provided to an elector as soon as such elector enters the voting place and before a *ballot* is issued.

- (2) Upon completion of the voting demonstration, if any, the elector shall proceed as instructed, to the election official responsible for issuing *ballots*, who, upon fulfillment of the requirements of the *Local Government Act*, shall then provide a *ballot* to the elector, a *secrecy enclosure* if requested by the elector, the *ballot* marking instrument, and any further instructions.
- (3) Upon receiving a *ballot* the elector shall immediately proceed to a voting compartment to vote.
- (4) The elector may vote only by making an *acceptable mark* on the *ballot*.
 - (1) beside the name of each candidate of choice, up to the maximum number of candidates to be elected for each of the offices to be filled; and
 - (2) beside either 'yes' or 'no' in the case of each bylaw or other matter on which the assent or opinion of the electors is sought.
- (5) Once the elector has finished marking the *ballot*, the elector shall either place the *ballot* into the *secrecy enclosure*, if one has been requested, or turn the *ballot* upside down and proceed to the *vote counting unit*, and under the supervision of the election official in attendance, insert the *ballot* directly from the *secrecy enclosure*, if applicable, into the *vote counting unit* without the *acceptable marks* on the *ballot* being exposed.
- (6) If, before inserting the *ballot* into the *vote counting unit*, an elector determines that a mistake has been made when marking the *ballot*, or if the *ballot* is returned by the *vote counting unit*, the elector may return to the voting compartment to correct the *ballot* or request a replacement *ballot* by informing the election official in attendance.
- (7) Upon being informed of the replacement *ballot* request, the *presiding election official* shall:
 - (1) issue a replacement *ballot* to the elector and mark the *returned ballot* "spoiled";
 - (2) and shall retain all such spoiled *ballots* separately from all other *ballots*; and
 - (3) not count the spoiled *ballots*.
- (8) If the elector declines the opportunity to obtain a replacement *ballot* and has not damaged the *ballot* to the extent that it cannot be reinserted into the *vote counting unit*, the election official shall, using the *ballot return override procedure*, reinsert the *returned ballot* into the *vote counting unit* to count any *acceptable marks* which have been made correctly.
- (9) Any *ballot* counted by the *vote counting unit* is valid and any *acceptable marks* contained on such *ballots* will be counted, subject to any determination made under a judicial recount.
- (10) Once the *ballot* has been inserted into the *vote counting unit* and the *vote counting unit* indicates that the *ballot* has been accepted, the elector shall immediately leave the voting place.
- (11) During any period that a *vote counting unit* is not functioning, the election official supervising the unit shall insert all *ballots* delivered by the electors during this time, into the *storage ballot compartment*, on the understanding that if the *vote counting unit*:
 - (1) becomes operational, or
 - (2) Is replaced with another *vote counting unit*,the *ballots* in the *storage ballot compartment* shall, as soon as reasonably possible, be removed by an election official and, under the supervision of the *presiding election official*, shall be inserted into the *vote counting unit* to be counted.

- (12) Any *ballots* which were temporarily stored in the *storage ballot compartment* during a period when the *vote counting unit* was not functioning, which are returned by the *vote counting unit* when being counted shall, through the use of the *ballot return override procedure* and under the supervision of the *presiding election official*, be reinserted into the *vote counting unit* to ensure that any *acceptable marks* are counted.

11. Advance Voting Operating Procedures

- (1) *Vote counting units* shall be used at all advance voting opportunities and voting procedures at the advance voting opportunities shall follow, as closely as possible, those described in section 10 of this bylaw.
- (2) At the close of voting at each advance voting opportunity, the *presiding election official* in each case shall ensure that:
- (a) no additional *ballots* are inserted in the *vote counting unit*;
 - (b) the *storage ballot compartment* is being secured to prevent insertion of any *ballots*;
 - (c) the *results tapes* in the *vote counting unit* are not generated; and
 - (d) the *memory pack* of the *vote counting unit* is secured.
- (3) At the close of voting at the final advance voting opportunity, the *presiding election official* shall:
- (a) ensure that any remaining *ballots* in the *storage ballot compartment* are inserted into the *vote counting unit*;
 - (b) secure the *vote counting unit* so that no more *ballots* can be inserted; and
 - (c) deliver the *vote counting unit* together with the *memory pack* and all other materials used in the election to the *chief election officer* at *election headquarters*.

12. Special Voting Opportunity Procedures

- (1) Unless the *chief election officer* determines it is practical to use a *vote counting unit*, a *portable ballot box*, shall be used for all special voting opportunities. The *presiding election official* appointed to attend at each special voting opportunity shall proceed in accordance with section 10 of this bylaw as far as applicable, except that the voted *ballots* shall be deposited into the *portable ballot box* supplied by the *presiding election official*.
- (2) The *presiding election official* at a special voting opportunity shall ensure that the *portable ballot box* is secured when not in use and at the close of voting at the final special voting opportunity, the *presiding election official* shall seal the *portable ballot box* and return it together with all other election materials to the *chief election officer* at election headquarters.
- (3) If a *vote counting unit* is in use at a special voting opportunity, the *presiding election official* appointed to attend the special voting opportunity shall follow the procedures outlined in section 11 of this bylaw as if it were an advance voting opportunity.

13. Procedures After Close of Voting on General Voting Day

- (1) After the close of voting on general voting day, each of the following election officials, except those responsible for advance and special voting opportunities, shall undertake all of the following, generally in the order stipulated:

- (a) each presiding election shall:
 - (i) ensure that any remaining *ballots* in the *storage ballot compartment* are inserted into the *vote counting unit*;
 - (ii) secure the *vote counting unit* so that no more *ballots* can be inserted;
 - (iii) generate three copies of the *results tape* from the *vote counting unit* with the 3rd copy remaining attached to the *vote counting unit*;
 - (iv) deliver one copy of the *register tape* along with the *vote tabulating unit* to the *chief election officer* at *election headquarters*; and
- (b) each alternate *presiding election official* shall:
 - (i) account for the unused, spoiled and voted *ballots* and place them, packaged, and sealed separately, together with the *memory pack* from the *vote counting unit* and one copy of the *results tape*, into the election materials transfer box;
 - (ii) complete the *ballot* account and place the duplicate copy in the election materials transfer box;
 - (iii) seal the election materials transfer box;
 - (iv) place the voting books, list of electors, the original copy of the *ballot* account, one copy of the *results tape*, completed registration cards (if applicable), keys and all completed forms into the *chief election officer* portfolio; and
 - (v) transport all equipment and materials to *election headquarters*.
- (2) At the close of voting on general voting day, the chief election officer shall direct an election official to process the advance voting opportunity and any special voting opportunities in accordance with section 13(1) of this bylaw.
- (3) At the close of voting on general voting day, any remaining *portable ballot boxes* used in the election will be opened under the direction of the *chief election officer*, and all *ballots* shall be removed and inserted into a *vote counting unit* to be counted, after which the provision of sections 13(1)(a) to (h), as far as applicable, shall apply.
- (4) Upon the fulfilment of the provisions of section 13(1) to (3) inclusive, the *chief election officer* shall, to obtain the election results, direct an election official to place the results in a spreadsheet, which may be used for display in the headquarters, indicating the total preliminary results.

14. Recount Procedure

- (1) As part of the official determination of election results, any recounts after the preliminary election results are announced shall be conducted under the direction of the *chief election officer* using the *automated vote counting system* and generally in accordance with the following procedure:
 - (a) the *memory packs* of the applicable *vote counting units* will be cleared.
 - (b) all voted *ballots* for the applicable *vote counting units* will be removed from the sealed *ballots* and results boxes, except spoiled *ballots*, and reinserted in the *vote counting unit* under the supervision of the *chief election officer*.
 - (c) any *ballots* returned by the *vote counting unit* during the recount process shall, through the use of the *ballot return override procedure*, be reinserted in the *vote counting unit* to ensure that any *acceptable marks* are counted.
 - (d) at the conclusion of the recount proceedings, the *chief election officer* shall proceed to ensure all *ballot* boxes and *vote counting units* are closed, sealed, and secured in accordance with section 13 of this bylaw.

- (e) the *chief election officer* shall ensure that the recount results are tallied and recorded in a spreadsheet indicating the total results.

15. Tie Vote after Judicial Recount

- (1) In the event of a tie vote after a judicial recount, the tie vote will be resolved by conducting a lot in accordance with section 151 of the *Local Government Act*.

MAIL BALLOTS

16. Mail Ballot Voting and Registration Authorized

- (1) As authorized by section 110 of the *Local Government Act*, voting by mail *ballot* and elector registration by mail, in conjunction with mail *ballot* voting are authorized.
- (2) The *chief election officer* may specify authorized drop-off locations for completed mail ballot packages, provided that the *chief election officer* indicates the location and the office hours for a person to drop off the completed mail ballot package in the notice of election by voting.
- (3) All electors may apply to vote by mail *ballot* in accordance with section 17.
- (4) Once a mail *ballot* package has been accepted by the *chief election officer*, or delegate, that elector may only vote by mail *ballot*.

17. Application Procedure for Mail Ballot

- (1) An *applicant* must apply to vote by mail *ballot* by providing their name and address in the manner and form required by the *chief election officer*, during the period:
 - (a) commencing 30 days before general voting day; and
 - (b) ending at 4:00 pm on general voting day.
- (2) Upon receipt of a request for a mail *ballot*, the *chief election officer* or designated election official must, between the first day of advanced voting and 4:00 p.m. on general voting day:
 - (a) make available to the *applicant*, a mail *ballot* package which contains:
 - (i) content set out in section 110(7) of the *Local Government Act*, together with an elector registration application where required;
 - (ii) additional instructions; and
 - (iii) a statement advising the elector that
 - 1. the elector must meet the eligibility to vote criteria, and
 - 2. the elector must attest to such fact; and
 - (b) immediately record in the *Register of Mail Ballots* and, upon request, make available for inspection:
 - (i) the name and address of the person to whom the mail *ballot* package was issued; and
 - (ii) the number of the elector, or "new elector" if that person is not registered as an elector; and
 - (iii) the name and address of an *authorized person*; and
 - (iv) any other information that the *chief election officer* deems helpful to maintain the register of mail ballots.

- (3) As per the *applicant's* direction, the *chief election officer* may distribute the mail *ballot* package in any of the following ways:
 - (a) sending the mail ballot package by Canada Post;
 - (b) having the mail *ballot* package picked up by the *applicant* at a designated time and location; or
 - (c) having the mail *ballot* package picked up by an *authorized person* at a designated time and location.
- (4) The *chief election officer* may request that the *authorized person* show identification and sign a form before providing the *authorized person* with the mail *ballot* package.

18. Voting Procedure for Mail Ballot

- (1) In order to vote using a mail *ballot*, the elector must mark the *ballot* in accordance with the instructions contained in the mail *ballot* package provided by the *chief election officer*.
- (2) After marking the mail *ballot*, it is the elector's responsibility to:
 - (a) place the mail *ballot* in the *secrecy enclosure*, and seal the *secrecy enclosure*, if applicable;
 - (b) place the *secrecy enclosure* in the certification envelope, and complete and sign the certification on such envelope, and then seal the certification envelope;
 - (c) place the certification envelope, together with a completed elector registration application, if required, in the outer envelope, and then seal the outer envelope; and
 - (d) mail, or have delivered, the outer envelope and its contents to the address specified on the return envelope or an authorized drop-off location, and ensure it is returned no later than the close of voting on general voting day.

19. Mail Ballot Acceptance or Rejection

- (1) The *chief election officer* or designated election official must:
 - (a) record the date a mail *ballot* package is received in the *Register of Mail Ballots*;
 - (b) examine the certification envelope and elector registration application, if applicable, and make a mark on the certification envelope as "accepted" if satisfied or "rejected" if not satisfied as to:
 - (i) the identity and entitlement to vote of the elector;
 - (ii) the completeness of the certification envelope;
 - (iii) the completeness of the elector registration application, if applicable;
 - (iv) whether the mail *ballot* has been received before the close of general voting day;and
 - (c) retain certification envelopes to deal with a challenge of an elector under section 21.
- (2) If a certification envelope is marked as rejected under subsection (1)(b), the *chief election officer* or designated election official must note the reasons for the rejection and the mail *ballot* must not be counted in the election.
- (3) The *chief election officer* shall retain in their custody all opened and unopened certification envelopes duly secured.

20. Counting of Mail Ballots through Vote Tabulating Unit

- (1) The following procedures must be followed in the counting mail *ballots* accepted under section 19(1):
 - (a) at a specified date and time, and/or after the close of voting on general voting day, in the presence of at least 1 other person, including any candidate representatives, the *chief election officer* or designated election official must open all certification envelopes;
 - (b) the *chief election officer* or designated election official must place all secrecy envelopes into a designated *ballot box*;
 - (c) under the direction of the *chief election officer*, after the *secrecy enclosures* have been placed in the designated *ballot box*, then:
 - (i) the *ballot box* containing the *secrecy enclosures* must be opened;
 - (ii) the secrecy envelopes must be removed and opened; and
 - (iii) the *ballots* contained in the *secrecy enclosures* must be inserted into a vote tabulating unit.
- (2) The *chief election officer* must initiate the process in subsection (1) at least one day before the general voting day but, in order to process a high volume of mail *ballots*, may carry out the process every day during regular working hours, beginning on the Monday five days prior to general voting day until the close of general voting day.
- (3) The *chief election officer* or a designated election official must notify candidates of the scheduled dates and times for counting mail *ballots* by vote tabulating units at least 24 hours prior to the count.

21. Challenge of Elector: Mail Ballots

- (1) The right of a person to vote by mail *ballot* can be challenged on the grounds set out in section 126 of the *Local Government Act*.

22. Elector's Name Already Used

- (1) If, upon receiving a request for a mail *ballot*, the *chief election officer* determines that another person has voted or has already been issued a mail *ballot* in the elector's name, the *chief election officer* shall comply with section 127 of the *Local Government Act*.

23. Replacement of Spoiled Ballot

- (1) If an elector unintentionally spoils a mail *ballot* before returning it to the *chief election officer*, the elector may request a replacement *ballot* by:
 - (a) advising the *chief election officer* of the *ballot* spoilage; and
 - (b) mailing or otherwise delivering by any appropriate means, the spoiled *ballot* package in its entirety to the *chief election officer*.
- (2) Upon receipt of the spoiled *ballot* package, the *chief election officer* shall, record such fact, and proceed in accordance with section 17 of this bylaw.

ELECTION SIGNAGE

24. Election Signs

- (1) *Election signs* for federal, provincial, municipal and school trustee elections are permitted provided that:
 - (a) in the case of provincial and federal elections and referendums, the *election signs* are not erected more than thirty (30) days prior to the election day and are removed within four (4) days after the election day;
 - (b) in the case of municipal and school trustee elections and referendums, the *election signs* are not erected more than twenty (20) days prior to the general local election or event and are removed within four (4) days after the election day;
 - (c) on private property, *election signs* size do not exceed 1.48 sq. m. (16 sq. ft.). This is for any single sign or combination of signs that when viewed together form a single message but when viewed independently provide no single cohesive message;
 - (d) *election signs* may be placed on municipal boulevards that are no larger than 18" x 24" and not exceeding a height greater than 30" from grade;
 - (e) *election signs* are not illuminated;
 - (f) the placement of the *election sign* does not interfere with traffic sightlines at street intersections or with the safety of pedestrians;
 - (g) the placement of *election signs* are permitted on private property with the consent of the owner or occupant of the property;
 - (h) *election signs* are not permitted on any vehicles or trailers attached to vehicles or any roof top or any existing sign, with the exception of magnetic vehicle signs;
 - (i) *election signs* are prohibited on any municipal park land including land dedicated as conservation land or buildings owned or leased by the City of Maple Ridge;
 - (j) regulations regarding the placement and permitted dates for posting *election signs* apply to those posted on private property as well as public property;
 - (k) the *bylaw compliance officer*, or their designate, may remove any *election sign* they believe has reasonable grounds has been erected, placed or installed in contravention of municipal bylaws;
 - (l) *election signs* that have been removed in accordance with section 23 (m) will be stored for a period of four (4) days and the candidate or their agent may claim the sign(s) during that period, following which the material may be destroyed or otherwise disposed of by the City of Maple Ridge. The candidate or their agent will be notified of the compliance issue with the sign and where the sign can be claimed;
 - (m) *election signs* are prohibited within 100 metres from a general voting place, while voting is taking place; and
 - (n) other than as authorized in writing by the City of Maple Ridge, no person shall display an *election sign* or other election advertising, any logo, trademark or official mark, in whole or in part, owned or licensed by the City of Maple Ridge.

25. Severance

If any section, subsection, clause or other part of this bylaw is for any reason held to be invalid by the decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this bylaw.

26. Repealed

The following Bylaws are hereby repealed in their entirety upon adoption of this Bylaw:

(a) Maple Ridge General Local Government Election Bylaw No. 6586-2008; and

(b) Maple Ridge Automated Voting Machines Authorization Bylaw No. 6046-2002.

READ a first time the day of , 2026

READ a second time the day of , 2026

READ a third time the day of , 2026

ADOPTED the day of , 2026

PRESIDING MEMBER

CORPORATE OFFICER