

Next year's Municipal Election to use paper ballots

By Riley Murphy

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At Council's May 6 General Committee meeting, local lawmakers moved forward with recommendations that the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election be conducted using an in-person paper ballot process as a basis.

The alternative voting options on the table were: Option One ? Expanded traditional meaning in-person voting and limited home voting service; Option Two ? In-person paper ballot, Internet and/or Telephone Advance Vote; and Option Three ? In-person paper ballot and vote-by-mail.

Accessibility Advisory Committee recommended Option 2 for broader accessibility.

In the 2026 Municipal Election Voting Methods Survey, the response read that most voters would be comfortable using in-person ballots on election day and prior to election day in the 2026 Municipal Election.

Public concerns in the Alternative Voting Methods for the 2026 Municipal Election Staff Report related to alternative voting methods included voter fraud, privacy and security considerations, additional costs, and impacts to voter turnout.

Sherry Brioschi, a Caledon resident, spoke at the meeting regarding the alternative voting methods. Brioschi said she feared that, due to cybersecurity risks, Council should proceed with Option One.

?One can take all measures that they want and lock up offices, drawers, and clean desks. It does not protect against cyberattacks or data of personal information being collected,? said Brioschi. ?When Caledon decided to do this electronic counting back in the 2014 election, I personally did not support, and I stand here today and do not support it again.?

Other concerns from Council regarding in-person ballots with limited home voting service revolved around those in long-term care homes.

Matthew Stepien, Legislative Coordinator, stated that the limited home voting service would be in addition to the long-term care voting, as they are required under the Municipal Elections Act to provide voting services to care institutions.

Stepien explained that the limited home voting would be similar to the method in Brampton. It is a system where a member of the clerk's team, along with another member, would go to a resident's home to facilitate the voting process.

Councillor Nick de Boer expressed concerns that those homebound and residing in care outside of the community will not receive this option.

?I remain confident that with the robust security measures that could be put in place, we could protect the integrity of our elections while making voting more accessible and convenient for all.?

The service will only be provided to those currently residing within the geographical boundary of the community.

This service would be offered during advanced voting; on voting day, it would only be in-person ballots.

Councillor Sheen also had similar concerns, as he expressed that with option two, there was more accessibility for members of the public who struggle with in-person voting.

?I was hoping our Council would embrace internet and telephone voting options for Caledon's next municipal election because I feel strongly that every eligible resident should be able to participate in our democratic process without unnecessary barriers,? he said in a statement to the Citizen. ?In fact, the Town's Accessibility Advisory Committee cautiously recommended these alternative methods to better serve those who may face challenges voting in person.

Council carried the motion to move forward with Option One, meaning the 2026 Municipal and School Board election will be conducted using an in-person paper ballot process as a basis.

Option One will be utilized as the alternative voting method for use at advanced polls in addition to the in-person paper ballot process.