



**Town of Arnprior**  
**Regular Meeting of Council: September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024**  
**Correspondence Package Number A-24-SEP-11**

**Recommendation:**

**That** the Correspondence Package Number. A-24-SEP-11 be received, and that the recommendation(s) outlined be brought forward for Council's consideration.

**Action Items:**

1. **Resolution for Support – Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario – Updates to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996***

**That** Council of the Corporation of the Town of Arnprior receive the correspondence from the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) as information; and

**Whereas** elections rules need to be clear, supporting candidates and voters in their electoral participation and election administrators in running elections; and

**Whereas** legislation needs to strike the right balance between providing clear rules and frameworks to ensure the integrity of the electoral process; and

**Whereas** the legislation must also reduce administrative and operational burden for municipal staff ensuring that local election administrators can run elections in a way that responds to the unique circumstances of their local communities; and

**Whereas** the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (MEA) will be 30 years old by the next municipal and school board elections in 2026; and

**Whereas** the MEA sets out the rules for local elections, the *Assessment Act, 1990* and the *Education Act, 1990* also contain provisions impacting local elections adding more places for voters, candidates, and administrators to look for the rules that bind the local democratic process in Ontario; and

**Whereas** with rules across three pieces of legislation, and the *MEA* containing a patchwork of clauses, there are interpretation challenges, inconsistencies, and gaps to fill; and

**Whereas** the Act can pose difficulties for voters, candidates, contributors and third-party advertisers to read, to interpret, to comply with and for election administrators to enforce; and

**Whereas** while local elections are run as efficiently and effectively as can be within the current legislative framework, modernization and continuous improvement is needed to ensure the Act is responsive to today's needs and tomorrow's challenges; and

**Whereas** to keep public trust and improve safeguards the Act should be reviewed considering the ever-changing landscape which impacts elections administration including privacy, the threats of foreign interference, increased spread of mis/disinformation and the increased use of technologies like artificial intelligence and use of digital identities; and

**Whereas** the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks, and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) reviewed the Act and has provided several recommendations including modernizing the legislation, harmonizing rules, and streamlining and simplifying administration; and

**Whereas** AMCTO put forward recommendations for amendments ahead of the 2026 elections and longer-term recommendations for amendments ahead of the 2030 elections;

**Therefore Be It Resolved That** Council calls on the Province of Ontario to update the MEA with priority amendments as outlined by AMCTO before Summer 2025 and commence work to review and re-write the MEA with longer-term recommendations ahead of the 2030 elections; and

**Further That** this resolution will be forwarded to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario; the Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; the Honourable Jill Dunlop, Minister of Education; the Honourable Todd McCarthy, Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery; the Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance; Cheryl Gallant, MP for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke; John Yakabuski, MPP for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke; the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO).

2. **Municipal Grant Application – Arnprior Regional Health – The Grove Home Family and Friends Council Fundraising Event**

**That** Council of the Corporation of the Town of Arnprior receive the correspondence from Arnprior Regional Health as information; and

**Whereas** Arnprior Regional Health (ARH) is an eligible organization under the Municipal Grants Policy and provides health and community services to the local community at three (3) sites including the Arnprior and District Memorial Hospital, the Grove Home and the Community Programs; and

**Whereas** as an ARH body, the Grove Home's Family and Friends Council will be hosting their "Fiddles and Friends" fundraiser at the Nick Smith Centre Community Hall on Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 between 2:00 PM and 4:30 PM; and

**Therefore Be It Resolved That** Council approve the request for in-kind support through the waiving of rental fees for the Nick Smith Centre Community Hall (\$460.00) for the Fiddles and Friends fundraiser taking place on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024;

**Further That** Arnprior Regional Health be advised that it is mandatory to carry sufficient liability insurance and have the Town of Arnprior added as an additional insured for the event.

# Issue at a Glance



## Modernizing the *Municipal Elections Act* for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

April 2024

### Key Takeaways

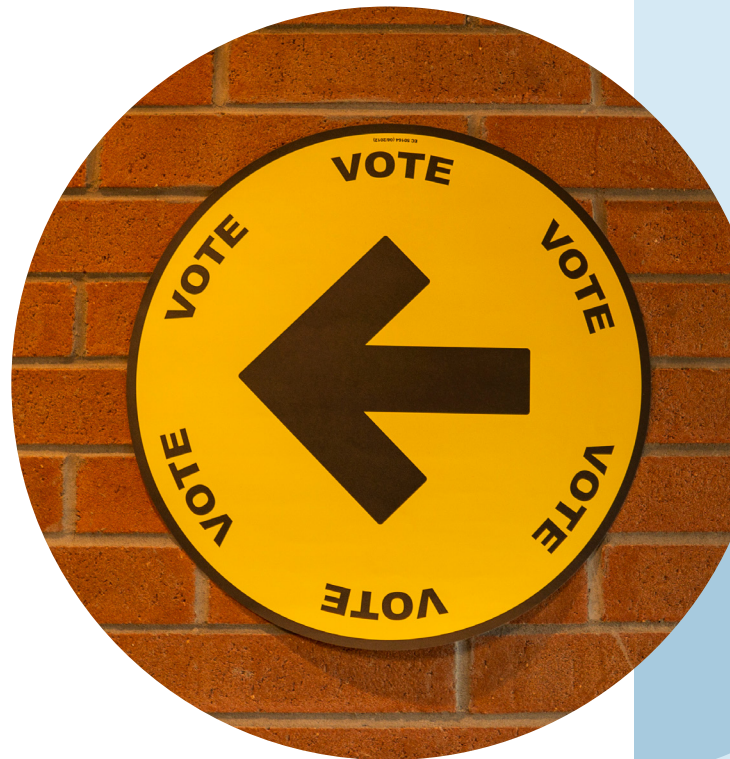
- To continuously improve public trust, a comprehensive review of the *MEA* is needed in consultation with the sector.
- Legislative rules and guidelines for elections must address increased public expectations, reflect promising practices, and address current technology and trends.
- There are opportunities to modernize, harmonize, streamline, and simplify the legislation to better support election administrators, candidates, and voters.

### Issue

Ontario's framework for local elections is set out in the *Municipal Elections Act (MEA)* which will be 30 years old by the next election cycle in 2026. For local elections to be run more efficiently and to ensure improved compliance, the *Act* should be streamlined, modernized, and re-designed to assist voters, candidates, contributors, and advertisers with understanding their responsibilities while reducing operational and administrative burden for election administrators.

### The Need for Reform

Elections are much more than counting ballots and declaring a winner. In the case of municipal and school board elections, where 2,842 municipal offices and 676 representatives are elected, it is often a 2.5-plus year planning and implementation journey that continues up to a year or more past election day making election administration a complex endeavour that municipal staff lead and oversee.



## What is the MEA?

While the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (MEA)* sets out the rules for local elections, the *Assessment Act, 1990* and the *Education Act, 1990* also contain provisions impacting local elections adding more places for voters, candidates, and administrators to look for the rules that bind the local democratic process in Ontario. With rules across three pieces of legislation, and the MEA containing a patchwork of clauses in its current form, there are interpretation challenges and inconsistencies that need to be addressed and clarified to ensure accountability, transparency and to address technological changes.

There are benefits to making continuous improvements to the rules and framework that support local democracy ensuring the MEA is modernized and future-proof. The Act should be reviewed and updated regularly (every four years) to keep pace with changing voter expectations, technology, and trends.

## Harmonized Rules

Another significant issue is the lack of harmonization of local election rules across three Acts. School board trustee candidates and voters must interpret three pieces of legislation to understand their qualifications. Moreover, because school support has two purposes under legislation – election and assessment – outdated business rules make it difficult to match school support to voters which can mean delays at the polling station<sup>1</sup>.

Rules on campaign finance and third-party advertising are complex and difficult to oversee and enforce<sup>2</sup>. There needs to be a thorough review of both frameworks to streamline mechanisms to make enforcement more efficient. This must include reviewing enforcement mechanisms such as the compliance audit process, offences, and penalties.

## Modern Legislation

While there have been updates and amendments made to the Act, the current mix of political, environmental, social, technological, and legal factors means this is an opportune moment to modernize the Act ahead of the 2026 municipal and school board elections.

There should be a complete overhaul and re-write of the Act to bring it into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It should consider impacts of digital transformation and digital government including standards for online voting, updating language to reflect the move from paper and manual processes to more electronic methods and changes to technology which may impact the democratic process.





## Streamline and Simplify Administration

Election administration will always be complex, but there are ways to streamline and simplify processes by providing more clarity, aligning timelines, and permitting clerks to do what is needed to administer an election in a timely way.

For instance, updating language and definitions will help to provide clarity to administrators, voters, and candidates<sup>3</sup>. Providing better definitions of "tenancy", "non-residency", and other similar terms especially for secondary residents in cottage communities, will provide clearer rules on who is qualified to vote.

The length of the nomination period should also be shortened. By moving nomination day back to July to align campaign periods with provincial and federal elections, municipalities and local election administrators have more time to prepare ahead of voting days.

Further, mandating that school boards schedule one of the provincially-required Professional Activity (PA) Days on municipal and school board election day would simplify polling location selection and give voters consistent, centrally-accessible facilities to cast their ballots.

## Conclusion

These are some of the more pressing recommendations for election administrators. For our full list of recommendations, please see our submission, *Modernizing the Municipal Elections Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, which provides further details that should be considered both in the long- and short-term, as well as a line-by-line review of proposed amendments to modernize the Act.

AMCTO supports legislative provisions that require Acts to be reviewed regularly, at least at four-year intervals. This allows legislation to be updated to ensure that the rules and guidelines are working and are continuously improved to address increased public expectations, best and promising practices, current technologies and trends.



## Ideal Solution

AMCTO has proposed several recommendations within our submission, *Modernizing the Municipal Elections Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, for the short, medium, and long-term to address some of the challenges and opportunities in local elections. Our recommendations focus on outcomes-based solutions<sup>5</sup> that seek to strengthen public trust and electoral integrity; enhance accountability and transparency while making compliance and enforcement easier; and providing permissive legislation that reduces administrative complexity.

Our members would like to see the Province:

1. Implement priority and secondary recommendations well ahead of the next election.
2. Amend the *Act* to include a legislative mandate to review the *Act* every four years.
3. Strike a working group with AMCTO and other stakeholders to look at:
  - a. Developing a regulation that defines "tenancy", "spouse of a non-resident" and "occupancy" for electoral purposes;
  - b. Reviewing and updating the campaign finance framework; and
  - c. Reviewing and updating the third-party advertising framework.
4. Commit to a comprehensive review and re-write of the *MEA* in consultation with AMCTO and other municipal stakeholders ahead of the 2030 elections.



<sup>1</sup> Ontario Ombudsman. 2022, *Annual Report 2021-2022*, <https://www.ombudsman.on.ca/resources/reports,-cases-and-submissions/annual-reports/2021-2022-annual-report> p 43

<sup>2</sup> AMCTO. 2024, *Modernizing the Municipal Elections Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, p 13-19

<sup>3</sup> AMCTO. p 12

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.amcto.com/network-community/blog/advocacy-update-bill-218>

<sup>5</sup> AMCTO. p 5





Town of Arnprior  
 105 Elgin Street West  
 Arnprior, ON.  
 K7S 0A8  
 613-623-4231

## Municipal Grants Application

<b>General Information</b>	<b>Submission Date:</b> <u>July 19/24</u>		
Name of Organization:	Grove LTC Home		
Street Address:	274 Ida Street		
City/Town:	Arnprior	Postal Code:	K7S 0J2
Contact Person:	Marilyn Colton	Position/Title:	CFO
Telephone:	613-839-5735	Fax Number:	none
E-mail:	mcolton@xplornet.com		
What is your organization's status?	Charitable	Not-for-profit	Other
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Authorization:	I declare that I am authorized to sign this grant request on behalf of  The Grove Home <hr style="width: 60%; margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"/> [insert name of organization]		Name (print): Jeff Letourneau
	<hr style="width: 60%; margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"/> [signature]		Position/Title: CFO
	Aug 23, 2024 <hr style="width: 60%; margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"/> [date]		Phone: 613-623-3166
Please provide project/event date(s) or any relevant timelines related to this request.			
The space is booked Sunday Oct 20/24, 1-5 pm. The event will be functioning 2-4:30 but I am allowing time to setup and exit.			

NOTICE WITH RESPECT TO COLLECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION: Personal information collected on this application form is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, 2001 and will be used for the purpose of processing the application and for administrative purposes. Questions about the collection and use of this information in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act may be made to the Town Clerk, 105 Elgin Street West, Arnprior, ON K7S 0A8 or by phone: (613) 623-4231 ext. 1817.





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Grant Request	Please check applicable request	Brief description of request (i.e. dollar amount and/or type of in-kind support, staffing requirements)
Support Funding (complete Parts A and B)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
In-Kind Support (Partnership) (complete Parts A and B)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
In-Kind Support (Single) (complete Part A)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	We ask that all rental fees for use of the NSC social room be waived, including rental of space at \$105/hr with cash bar and secure damage deposit. We understand that your staff will setup the tables and chairs and the sound system as well as man the cash bar.
Festivals and Events Support Funding (complete Parts A and B)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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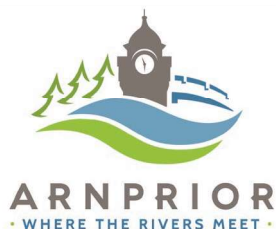


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**Part A** (to be completed for all municipal grant requests)

<b>Organization/Grant Information</b>	
What is the function of your organization (mandate/key objections)?	
The Grove is the only Long Term Care home in Arnprior with 96 residents accommodated there. The mandate is to provide quality care and quality of life for all residents in line with the laws and regulations of the Ontario LTC Home Act, 2007.	
Please provide an overview of the service, program or event being supported with this funding.	
As the Family and Friends Council, we are organizing a fundraiser to support a "Dreams and Wishes" program for residents whereby they might be able to experience a long held dream or wish in this their final journey through life. To make a wish or dream come true, requires funds; eg. a resident who was never in a limousine had asked to visit her grandsons and have lunch with them...a stretch limo was provided, a PSW to accompany her and money provided for their lunch.	
Please explain how this service, program or event benefits the Town of Arnprior and its residents.	
The residents in the Grove...75% are from Arnprior and surrounding areas. The residents would prefer to live in their own homes but due to many circumstances beyond their control, they must reside in the Grove. So it is incumbent upon families and friends of these residents to make their stay in this, their home away from home, as pleasant and fulfilling as possible. The residents are very excited about this new program, the Dreams and Wishes program, and look forward to this experience. However, there are costs involved in implementing this program so we are fundraising to support our efforts in this regard and on behalf of all residents and their families. As a result, residents and, therefore, their families, will be happier and more content in their home at the Grove.	
<p>Does your organization use volunteers?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>If yes, how many volunteers are involved and in what capacity? (e.g. administration, service level, etc.)</p> <p>The Family and Friends Council (FFC) represent all the families and friends of the residents and so all of us (96 families) are volunteers. We meet as a FFC bimonthly and have an Annual General Meeting in Dec each year. We identify annual objectives and metrics to measure our success. Our key roles as a FFC are informing, educating and supporting families and advocating for quality care and quality of life. As a FFC, we are permitted to fundraise for</p>

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<p>Please select target population that will benefit from this request.</p>	<p><b>Age Range:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Children (Ages 0-12)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Youth (Ages 13-18)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adults (Ages 19-59)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seniors (Ages 60+)</p>	<p><b>Number of participants benefitting from this request:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1-50</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 51-100</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 101-499</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 500-1000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> &gt;1000</p>
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Does this request align with the Town of Arnprior's [Strategic Plan](#), as determined by Council? Please explain.

<p><b><u>Key Priorities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Development – Attraction, retention and marketing initiatives and economic impact</li> </ul>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Well Being – Community support, arts and culture, recreational and leisure, health and well being support initiatives</li> </ul>	<p>This request aligns with health and well-being initiatives...our residents needing to live in a LTC Home deserve the extras to make their lives more enjoyable, fulfilling and meaningful. All families and friends of the residents feel a responsibility to support these persons who can no longer live in their private homes and whose time is finite.</p>	
<p>Has your organization received support from the Town of Arnprior in previous years?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>If yes, please provide additional details below.</p>	
	<p><b>Dollar (\$) value received:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Service/ Program/ Festival/ Event grant support was received for:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Type of grant support received:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Support Funding</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind Support</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind Partnership</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Festival and Event Support Funding</p>
<p><b>Was Town staff support provided?</b></p> <p><b>If yes, in what capacity?</b></p>		

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**If this submission/request differs from previous year(s), please describe the difference?**

This is the first request we have submitted as a Family and Friends Council of the Grove LTC Home.