Overview of Proposed Election Model & Key Dates

General Committee

March 8, 2010

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Purpose

- Seek further feedback on proposed election model to help inform future decisions

- Outline key dates relative to proposed election model

- Outline next steps, including future reports

Statutory Framework

- Municipal elections administered in accordance with <u>Municipal Elections Act, 1996</u> (Act)

- Clerk charged with responsibility for conducting elections; may provide for any procedure not already provided for in Act & in Clerk's opinion is necessary for conducting the election

- Council required to approve aspects of the proposed election model, where not delegated:

    —Early & special voting hours

    —Alternative voting method

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Background

- January 22, 2010 General Committee requested a presentation outlining election model & associated key dates

- Staff developed a recommended election model following review of Ward 3 By-election & 2006 Election (including post-online voting survey)

- Included relevant candidate, voter & election official feedback

- Peer review/discussion of election models – AMCTO & area municipal clerks

Background, Cont'd

- Development and issuance of RFP – online voting platform/vote tabulators

- Online voting literature review (Dr. Henry Kim, York University), will help to inform evaluation of RFP submissions & model

- Consultation with Diversity & Accessibility Coordinator. Further consultation planned with Race Relations & Accessibility committees

- Attendance at Carleton University & Elections Canada Workshop on Online Voting, January 26, 2010

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Proposed Election Model

<u>Guiding Principles: Municipal Elections Act, 1996</u>

- Secrecy & confidentiality

- Fair, non-biased & accessible

- Protecting the integrity of the process

- Certainty of the results

- Fair & equal treatment of voters

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Proposed Election Model (Cont'd)

Key Considerations: Proposed Model

- Continued interest & public desire for multi-channel voting approach (online and in-person voting options)

- Changes in election technology, election vendors & service providers

- Population changes & development growth

- Availability of voting places

- Ensure election model can be supported by adequate & appropriately trained election officials

- Capacity for accessibility & ability to support services to Markham's diverse language & cultural groups

- Communications planning – introduction of Web 2.0

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Proposed Election Model (Cont'd)

<u>Proposed Model</u>

- Online voting offered during Early Voting Period only

- In-line voting offered during Early Voting Period & on Voting Day

- Use of optical scan vote tabulators & complimentary (e.g., accessible) technology for in-line voting

- Online voting platform to be accessible

- No other voting modes proposed (e.g., vote by mail, telephone voting)

Proposed Election Model (Cont'd)

Rationale for Proposed Model

- **Established model (used in 2003, 2006)**

- **Multi-channel model engages broad spectrum of voters**

- **Supports accessibility & diversity considerations**

- **Supportive from a variety of perspectives:**

  — **Technology infrastructure**

    o **Security**

    o **Availability**

    o **Auditable**

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Proposed Election Model (Cont'd)

Rationale for Proposed Model, Cont'd

— **Process**

- o **Legal compliance**

- o **Staff training & support**

- o **Communications**

- o **Resources**

— **Voter experience**

- o **Usability, access, ability to better accommodate support to voters whose mother tongue is not English**

- **Further considerations to be fleshed out through RFP process**

Key Dates

Nominations/withdraw: January 4 – Sept 10, 2010 (2 pm)

Voters' List revisions: September 7 – October 25, 2010

Certification of Nominations: September 13, 2010

Proxy certificates issued: September 14 – October 25, 2010

Online voting registration: September 24 – October 21, 2010

Online voting: October 16 (10 am) – October 21 (8 pm)

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Key Dates (Cont'd)

Proposed Early Voting Period:

- October 16 & 17, 10 am – 6 pm (6 locations throughout Markham)

- October 18 – 21, 12 noon – 8 pm (Civic Centre, Armadale Community Centre)

Voting Day: Oct 25, 10 am – 8 pm

Results certified: October 28, 2010

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Key Dates (Cont'd)

Additional Key Dates TBC:

- Voters' List revision/information days

- Election Sign By-law provisions

- Candidate Information session(s)

- Revised key dates to be provided to Council & registered candidates, posted on Markham's website

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Next Steps

- Compliance Audit Committee (March 29, 2010) – Presentation & Report

- By-law to authorize use of alternative voting procedures (April 12, 2010) – Report

- Council award report – RFP for online voting platform, vote tabulators (April 12, 2010) – Report (if required)