



City of Whitehorse Municipal Election



Information for Prospective Candidates



whitehorse.ca/election

2024 Municipal Election Key Dates

September 10, 2024: Nominations Open

Interested in serving on Council? Come to City Hall to get your nomination papers or download them from whitehorse.ca/election. City Hall is located at 2121 Second Ave.

September 20, 2024: Special Ballot Applications Open

Special Ballots are a type of ballot used in elections to provide voting flexibility for individuals who may not be able to vote in person on Election Day or at an advance polling station.

Applications can be submitted online or in person, and will be available at City Hall or at whitehorse.ca/election.

Upon review, applicants will be contacted with further instructions on how to ensure they are able to vote.

September 26, 2024: Nomination Day

Nominations to close at noon. The noon deadline is firm – late nominations will not be accepted under any circumstance.

October 2, 2024: Special Ballot Poll opens at City Hall

Individuals who have applied and been approved for a Special Ballot can bring their Ballot to City Hall at any time between Oct 2, 2024, and 2 p.m. on October 17, 2024.

October 10, 2024: Advance Polls open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Advance polls, or early voting, opens before Election Day, allows voters to cast their ballots ahead of time. They increase accessibility, reduce Election Day congestion, improve voter turnout, and provide a safeguard against unforeseen circumstances.

Locations: Sternwheeler Hotel Conference Room 1 (201 Wood St) and Canada Games Centre, second floor concourse (200 Hamilton Blvd)

October 17, 2024: Election Day

October 18, 2024: Recount (if necessary)

The information included in this package is subject to change in the lead up to the 2024 Municipal Election. The most up-to-date info can be found at whitehorse.ca/election.

Introduction

Local governance is about a Council making impactful policy decisions and taking actions to deliver services that ensure the health, safety, and quality of life for all community residents, within a responsible budget and timeline.

A Council's effectiveness hinges on the dedication of its members. Councils excel with members who are committed to making a positive difference, listening to and understanding public concerns, and bringing energy and enthusiasm to community engagement.

If you are reading this, you might be one of those individuals.

Recognizing the significant time, effort, and dedication required to run for and serve on Council is crucial. To assist you in deciding if a Council role is right for you, we have prepared this Information Package. It is designed to equip potential candidates with the basic knowledge needed to make an informed and responsible choice.

This package details the key duties and responsibilities of City Council Members and provides a comprehensive guide on eligibility requirements, the nomination process, and election procedures.

While no guide can cover everything, this package will help you better understand and prepare for the election and the role of a local elected official. It offers general guidance and may not answer every question you have.

For more detailed information or any questions about the election, please visit the City's website at whitehorse.ca/election or reach out to elections@whitehorse.ca.

Thank you for your interest in local governance.

Part 1: Thinking about running for Whitehorse City Council?

Municipal Council Basics

Municipal governments exist to provide local authority over local matters, allowing residents to implement the most suitable solutions for their community.

City governments have two main groups:

- Administration, which provides recommendations to Council and carries out policies through program and service delivery.
- Council, which approves policies, budgets, and gives overall direction to City Administration.

Whitehorse Council is comprised of an elected Mayor who works full-time and provides leadership to the Council, directs the City Manager, presides at all council meetings, and maintains order and decorum, as well as six elected Councillors that work part-time.

All positions serve a 4-year term.

Council makes decisions on local matters formally and publicly through Bylaws (local rules everyone must follow, made by the municipal government for things like zoning and noise control) and Resolutions (official decisions or statements by the council, used to address specific issues, guide administrative actions, or express the council's views).

Council comes to these decisions through sitting at Standing Committee Meetings and Regular Council Meetings. These meetings are paired - items are introduced and discussed at a Standing Committee meeting one week, and decisions made at a Regular Council meeting the following week.

Conduct at these meetings is specific and follows the *Council Procedures Bylaw* to ensure meeting activities are orderly, transparent, fair and accountable. This can be found at whitehorse.ca/bylaws.

Duties of Members on Council

Councillors spend at least 15 hours per week on Council duties, including, but not limited to:

- Standing Committee Meetings on the first and third Monday of each month. City Council currently includes six Standing Committees.
- Regular Council Meetings on the second and fourth Monday of each month which typically take between one and three hours but may exceed the three-hour duration.
- Thursday Council/Administration Roundtable (CAR) lunch meetings.
- Periodic Strategic Planning Sessions, including all-day meetings that last a minimum of two days.
- Workshops for budget or complex policy formulation such as an Official Community Plan.
- Town Halls and other various committee participation as required.

Council members also take part in events such as the Volunteer of the Year ceremonies, the Seniors' Tea in honour of Seniors and Elders Week, events to acknowledge Sister City exchanges, and the Long Service Awards.

Council is also frequently invited to attend receptions, open houses, conferences, celebrations, concerts, annual general meetings, and other official events happening in Whitehorse. While the Mayor usually receives invitations to such events, the Mayor may choose to assign them to other Council Members.

Council Members are also chosen to serve as Deputy Mayor and Reserve Deputy Mayor. The Deputy Mayor serves for two months at a time, while the Reserve Deputy Mayor serves for six months. If needed, these roles involve assuming the duties of the Mayor.

Other duties include but are not limited to:

- Travel related to participation with the Association of Yukon Communities.
- Attendance at orientation and training sessions to better understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Ongoing training and learning events as required.

In sum, being on Council is a significant time commitment, and candidates are strongly encouraged to consider this ahead of running.

Remuneration (Compensation) for Council Members

The pay and benefits for Mayor and Councillors are set by the *Council Remuneration Bylaw* which can be found at whitehorse.ca/bylaws.

The basic annual remuneration for the Mayor for the 2024 to 2028 Term of Office is \$115,569.69 (effective from November 1, 2024, to December 31, 2028, inclusive).

The basic annual remuneration for each Councillor during the 2024 to 2028 Term of Office is \$41,605.42 (effective from November 1, 2024, to December 31, 2028, inclusive).

The annual remuneration is paid bi-weekly and, where a member of Council fails for any reason to serve in the respective office for a full twelve months, the remuneration is pro-rated for the period served.

Both Mayor and Councillors are entitled to benefits as well:

- The Mayor is entitled to benefits including Extended Health Care, Dental Care, Short-term Disability, Long-term Disability, Group Life Insurance, Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance, and the Employee Assistance Program.
- Councillors are entitled to benefits including Extended Health Care, Dental Care, Weekly Accident Indemnity, Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance, a Childcare Allowance, and the Employee Assistance Program

While the Mayor and Councillors receive remuneration for their roles, their primary focus is on governing well and serving the community effectively.

The compensation reflects the time and effort required to fulfil their responsibilities, but the true reward comes from making a positive impact on the City of Whitehorse and its residents!

Part 2: Choosing to Run for City Council

Qualifications

The first step in choosing to run for City Council is seeing if you qualify.

Age, Citizenship, and Residency (*Municipal Act* Section 48).

As per section 48 of the *Municipal Act*, to be considered for Council you must:

- Be a Canadian citizen.
- Be a registered voter when you are nominated.
- Be at least 18 years old on Election Day.
- Have lived within the City of Whitehorse municipal boundaries for at least one year before October 17, 2024.
- Have the endorsement of at least ten qualified voters in the City of Whitehorse.

As specified in section 50 of the *Municipal Act*, the following individuals are ineligible to run for municipal office:

- Any individual who is an employee or salaried officer of the municipality who has not obtained a leave of absence without pay to run for office.
- Any individual convicted of an election offence in the previous four years.
- Any individual who is a judge of a court, other than a Justice of the Peace, Youth Court Judge, or Deputy Judge of the Small Claims Court.
- Any individual indebted to the municipality for an overdue debt exceeding \$500, other than a debt for current taxes.
- Any individual currently under sentence for an indictable offence.
- Any individual that ceases, before Election Day, to be qualified as an elector in the City of Whitehorse.
- Any individual that is a member of the Yukon Legislative Assembly, a Member of Parliament, or a Chief or Councillor of a Yukon First Nation.

Submitting Nomination Papers

If you qualify to run for City Council, you will need to submit Nomination Papers.

Nomination Papers can be downloaded at whitehorse.ca/election, or picked up at City Hall starting on September 10, 2024.

Once you have a Nomination Paper, it needs to be filled out.

- Decide if you want to run for Mayor or Councillor.
 - The primary role of a Councillor is to represent the community as a whole through the effective translation of the community's needs and aspirations into a future direction for the municipality.
 - The Mayor shares this role, with additional responsibilities and performance that are crucial for the council's image, effective functioning, and fostering cooperative relationships. The mayor must be recognized as the first citizen at civic functions, act as the official spokesperson alongside the city manager, and preside over council proceedings with consistency and impartiality.
- Fill out the "Consent of Nominee and Declaration of Qualification" section.
- Collect the names, addresses, and signatures of a minimum of ten eligible voters on your nomination form.
- Provide the necessary information about any serious criminal convictions in the last ten years under the Criminal Code that have not been pardoned.
- Ensure that you sign in the presence of a Returning Officer, Notary Public, or Designated Municipal Officer. (For simplicity, please wait to sign your Nomination Paper until you submit it.)

Submit your Nomination Paper to the Legislative Services Department between 8 a.m. and 12 p.m. **noon** on September 26, 2024.

Any papers received after the noon deadline on the 26th will **not** be accepted.

Next Steps

Once the Legislative Services Department has received all completed Nomination Papers, and the September 26, 2024, deadline has passed, the City of Whitehorse will share candidate name and contact information with the media.

If you have a campaign website or online platform, please inform us at the time of your submission so we can include it with this release.

Additionally, independent organizations have published candidate biographies in the past to inform voters.

Candidates are therefore encouraged to prepare their own biographical information and a photo for potential publication during the election which the City can also share with the media.

Once nominated, you also have the option to designate an Official Agent.

Official Agents are responsible for managing a candidate's campaign finances and ensuring compliance with election laws.

The appointment of an Official Agent must be properly documented in writing.

Should you wish to appoint an Official Agent, please contact elections@whitehorse.ca to obtain the proper documentation and for further information regarding the Official Agent role, responsibilities, and restrictions.

Part 3: General Election Details

Polling stations will be set up downtown, Copper Ridge, the Canada Games Centre, Porter Creek, and Riverdale.

Mobile polling stations will cater to institutions like care homes, as well as residents who are unable to physically attend a polling station due to being housebound, mobility challenges, or for other reasons.

Additional mobile polling stations may also be set up to better serve the community. All mobile polling stations will have pre-scheduled hours of operation at each location.

The City of Whitehorse will be creating a brochure in September containing essential details regarding the election process. This brochure will cover information on polling place locations, voting times, various voting options, and additional relevant information.

Nominated candidates can request an electronic copy of the brochure if they want to share general election information during their campaign. For those interested in obtaining copies, please reach out to elections@whitehorse.ca.

The Yukon *Municipal Act* governs the conduct of the election, and the *Act* does **not** include any requirements for financial reporting by candidates.

It is recommended that any candidates that accept funds from others in support of their campaign follow the rules and regulations of the Yukon *Elections Act*, available on the Government of Yukon website at laws.yukon.ca/cms/.

Part 4: Advertising and Interactions with Voters

Opportunities for Candidates to Speak to Voters

The City does not organize opportunities for candidates to speak to voters.

During the election period, some organizations may offer opportunities for debates or question-and-answer sessions for candidates. Please check with the local media to find out about opportunities that may be arranged.

Advertising

Candidates may rent a limited number of spaces in City facilities for their election campaign, as outlined in the Fees and Charges Bylaw. Availability is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Campaign ads can be shown during an election for a fee if they meet certain criteria.

Ads must:

- Conform to the Canadian Code of Advertising Standards.
- Comply with the laws, statutes, regulations, and bylaws in force in the Yukon.
- Clearly state “This advertisement was paid for by (name of candidate or sponsor)”.
- Include the statement that, “The opinions expressed in this advertisement or by the sponsor of this advertisement do not in any way represent the opinions of, and are not endorsed by, the City of Whitehorse”.
- Contact elections@whitehorse.ca to find out what advertising spaces are available and relevant requirements.

Rules for Municipal Election Signs

For a complete listing of all restrictions pertaining to signage, please see the City of Whitehorse’s *Zoning Bylaw 2012-20* at whitehorse.ca/bylaws.

All political signs erected within the city shall comply with the following provisions:

- Signs shall not exceed 1.0 m² in a residential zone or 3.0 m² in a non-residential zone.
- Signs shall not be illuminated.
- Signs shall not be erected prior to 12:01 p.m. on September 26, and they shall be removed within seven days (October 24, 2024) after the election.

Political signs on private property are allowed without a permit in all zones, provided property owner/tenant has given permission.

Political signs on public road rights-of-way are allowed without a permit, provided that the signs are placed in compliance with section 8.1.3 and section 8.1.8 of the *City of Whitehorse Zoning Bylaw 2012-20*.

Political signs may be placed on the right-of-way of Robert Service Way, Lewes Boulevard, and Mountain View Drive, but shall not be placed in the Community Signage Areas indicated in the Zoning Bylaw's attached maps.

For the 2024 Municipal Election, political signs shall not be placed on the right-of-way of Two Mile Hill Road. This includes the Community Signage Area indicated in the *Zoning Bylaw's* attached maps.

All signs must be erected in such a manner as to:

- Ensure traffic and pedestrian safety.
- Encourage a consistent street appearance.
- Promote a particular area development theme as set out in an area development scheme, design guideline document, or any other plan, bylaw or policy adopted by city council.
- Be reasonably visible and legible and not unduly contribute to a cluttered street appearance.
- Not unreasonably hinder the visibility of adjacent signs.

No sign shall obscure the line of sight from a street, lane, or sidewalk to oncoming traffic for pedestrians or motorists.

Specifically, signs shall not be placed:

- Within six metres of an intersection or pedestrian crosswalk.
- On any median.
- Within 1.5 metres of the edge of the travelled portion of a street, curb, or sidewalk.
- Within 250 metres of an intersection on the Alaska Highway or within the sign-free zones shown in appendix "B" of the Zoning Bylaw.
- Within 10 metres from the road shoulder of the Alaska Highway right-of-way.
- On road right-of-ways designated as school or playground zones.
- In any manner that causes signs to block, interfere with, or be affixed to any authorized traffic sign, traffic signal or traffic control device, power pole, or lamppost.

No sign shall be permitted which is attached to a fence, utility pole, tree, garbage receptacle, or any object in a public street or place except a kiosk or bulletin board erected by the City for that purpose.

Candidates may not put leaflets, cards, handbills or other “vote for me” advertising materials on or in a vehicle without the permission of the owner or the person in charge of the vehicle, whether the vehicle is on a highway or on any public or privately owned property (Section 209 of the *Yukon Motor Vehicle Act* found here: laws.yukon.ca/cms/)

Political signs must be constructed and erected in such a way that they will not be blown over by the wind.

Signs that do not comply with these guidelines may be removed.

Signs that are removed due to non-compliance may be picked up at the City’s Animal Control Shelter on Quartz Road.

The City appreciates the cooperation of candidates in following the rules for election signs to ensure the safety of all residents.

Part 5: If You Are Elected

Future Steps after the Election

Prior to assuming a position on Council, each elected individual is required to recite the oath of office and the oath of allegiance.

The term of office is four years, starting from the swearing-in ceremony on Nov. 1 and ending when the successor is sworn in after the subsequent election (2028).

Newly elected Council Members must attend several onboarding workshops. The format for the workshops will vary.

You will be given a City of Whitehorse cell phone, laptop, and Outlook email account.

A digital platform will be made available to Council Members for easy and efficient access to documents like agenda packages, bylaws, minutes, and reports.

After the election, during the first Council Meeting, one Councillor is chosen as the Chair and another as the Vice-Chair for each Committee for a period of 12 months. These appointments are made annually.

Additionally, a Deputy Mayor and a Reserve Mayor are selected – as stated, the Deputy Mayor serves for two months at a time, while the Reserve Deputy Mayor serves for six months. If needed, these roles involve taking over the duties of the Mayor.