



Township of Laird Policy

Policy Title:	Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes Policy
Reference:	Municipal Elections Act, 1996
Approval Date:	April 16, 2026 – By-law #2080-26
Next Review Date:	Prior to May 1, 2030, or before each municipal election year as required by the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.
Approved By:	Council
Point of Contact:	Township Clerk

Purpose

This policy establishes rules governing the use of Township of Laird corporate resources during any election campaign period or campaign on a question on a ballot. Its purpose is to ensure that Township resources, staff, facilities, and communications are used in a neutral and non-partisan manner and are not used to support or oppose any candidate, registered third party advertiser, or campaign activity.

Legislative Authority

This policy is adopted in accordance with:

- **MEA s. 88.18**, which requires municipalities to establish rules and procedures regarding the use of municipal resources during an election campaign period
- **MEA s. 88.8(4)**, which prohibits municipalities and local boards from making contributions to candidates
- **MEA s. 88.12(4)**, which prohibits contributions to registered third party advertisers
- **MEA s. 88.15**, which defines contributions to include money, goods, and services

Any use of Township resources for an election campaign may be interpreted as a contribution, which is prohibited.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- **Candidate:** An individual who has filed a nomination under the MEA.
- **Registered Third Party:** An individual, corporation, or trade union registered under the MEA to conduct third party advertising.

- **Campaign Materials:** Any materials promoting, opposing, or referencing a candidate, political party, or position on a ballot question.
- **Campaign-Related Activities:** Any action, event, communication, or material intended to influence electors.
- **Corporate Resources:** All Township property, assets, infrastructure, equipment, supplies, technology, vehicles, facilities, staff time, and intellectual property.
- **Township Facilities:** All buildings, lands, and spaces owned, leased, or operated by the Township.

Principles

- Public funds and municipal resources must not be used to support or oppose a candidate, registered third party, or ballot question.
- The Township must remain neutral during all election periods.
- Members of Council continue to perform their official duties until the end of their term.
- All candidates and registered third parties must be treated consistently and fairly.

General Restrictions

The following restrictions apply to all candidates, registered third parties, members of Council (including acclaimed or retiring members), and their representatives.

Use of Township Facilities

- Campaign materials may not be displayed or distributed in Township facilities.
- Township facilities may be rented for private events; however, all advertising for the event must clearly state that it is **not affiliated with the Township of Laird**.
- Campaign events may not be held in Township workplaces during operating hours.

Township Events

- Campaigning, distributing materials, or soliciting support is prohibited at Township-hosted events, whether on or off municipal property.

Township Infrastructure and Technology

Corporate infrastructure may not be used for campaign purposes, including:

- Computer systems, networks, printers, photocopiers
- Email, voicemail, telephones
- Township-provided mobile devices
- Internet, intranet, or Wi-Fi
- Township vehicles, tools, or equipment

Township Staff

- Staff must remain politically neutral and should avoid providing advice or assistance related to election campaigns.

- Staff may not assist with campaign activities during paid hours or using municipal resources.
- Staff may not wear campaign materials while on duty.
- Staff may refer election-related questions to the Clerk if clarification or official information is required.

Supplies and Printing

- Township supplies, paper, postage, or printing services may not be used for campaign purposes.

Websites and Social Media

- Township websites, social media accounts, and domain names may not reference or profile candidates.
- No campaign materials, slogans, or symbols may appear on Township digital platforms.
- Township accounts may not tag, share, repost, or react to candidate content.

Communications Materials

The Township's communication materials, whether for internal or public distribution, cannot:

- Profile (name or photograph), make reference to and/or identify any individual as a candidate.
- Advocate for or against a particular candidate.

Communication materials include but are not limited to: news releases, media advisories, invitations for special events, flyers, posters, banners, brochures, newsletters, e-newsletters and social media accounts.

This restriction does not apply to statutory election notices issued by the Clerk, including the posting of candidate names, certified lists, nomination updates, third party registrant information, or election results as required under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

Photographs and Videos

- Township-owned photos, videos, or promotional materials may not be used in campaign materials.

Corporate Identifiers

- Township logos, branding, and identifiers may not be used in campaign materials.
- Candidates may link to the Township website only for general information.

Contact Information

- Township email addresses, phone numbers, and facility addresses may not be used as campaign contact information.

Exemptions

The following are exempt from this policy:

- Election information prepared and posted by the Clerk
- Council member names, photos, and contact information posted by the Clerk as part of normal municipal operations
- Agendas and minutes of Council and Committee meetings
- Fulfilling statutory duties under the MEA or other legislation

Enforcement

- The Clerk is responsible for administering and interpreting this policy.
- The Clerk may order the removal of campaign materials or activities that violate this policy.
- Violations may be referred to the Compliance Audit Committee or other authorities as appropriate.