



Grimsby Downtown BIA Rules for the Use of Municipal Resources During an
Election Period
Elections Policy 001

1. Purpose & Background

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended, ("the Act") requires municipalities and local boards to establish rules and procedures for the use of municipal and board resources during the election campaign period. The Act also states that the GDBIA, as a local board, cannot make a contribution (including money, goods, and services) to any candidate or registered third-party advertiser during an election.

Any use of GDBIA resources by or on behalf of candidates, registered third-party advertisers, their representatives, or staff for election campaign purposes would be considered a contribution by the GDBIA. Since campaign contributions can take the form of money, goods, or services, any use of GDBIA resources for election campaign purposes is not permitted.

This policy does not prevent a Member of the Board from seeking election; however, any Board Member running for public office may choose to take formal leave of absence from the GDBIA Board for the duration of the election campaign period. Council members appointed to the Board are excluded and serve as a Member of the Board until the end of their Council term. The leave of absence must be submitted in writing to the Board Chair and Executive Director and formally acknowledged at the next scheduled BIA Board meeting. During the absence, the member shall not attend meetings, vote, or represent the GDBIA in any capacity. As noted in EP002, any individual elected to public office while serving on the GDBIA Board or a committee must immediately resign from their GDBIA position upon assuming their public role. If not elected to public office, the Board Member may resume their position for the remainder of the current four-year term, provided their seat has not been filled through the regular BIA election process, which coincides with the term of municipal council under Section 204(10) of the Municipal Act, 2001.

As a local board, the GDBIA is required to establish its own rules and procedures for the use of board resources during the election campaign period. Candidates, registered third-party advertisers, and political parties must adhere to these policies when using resources, assets, facilities, or attending events.

The GDBIA Board and its working groups and subcommittees are subject to this policy.

The Town Clerk has the authority to interpret and make amendments to this policy as required for implementation. The Clerk's decisions on these matters shall be final.

Further details on election regulations are found in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and from the Town of Grimsby's "Use of Corporate Resources During An Election Campaign" Policy.

Definitions

'Campaign material' includes materials in any media (print, displays, vehicle stickers, electronic, radio, television, websites, and social media) used to promote, support, or oppose a candidate or a question on the ballot.

'Campaigning' refers to any activity promoting or opposing a candidate, registered third-party advertiser, or ballot question during an election period.

'Election period' means the official campaign period of an election as defined by the *Municipal Act, 1996*

'Employee' means any individual working for or receiving compensation from the GDBIA, including part-time, seasonal, or contract workers.

2. Administration

GDBIA resources, including its office, promotional platforms, assets, website and events, may not be used for campaigning.

4. Access to GDBIA Property During an Election Period

- GDBIA-managed facilities, spaces, and sponsored events may not be used for any campaigning.
- Campaign material may not be displayed on or adjacent to GDBIA-managed property.
- Campaigning and campaign material are not permitted in or near voting locations on Voting Day or public property.

5. Use of GDBIA Technology and Digital Resources

- GDBIA resources, such as office equipment, email accounts, and social media platforms, may not be used for campaigning.
- The GDBIA's website and social media accounts shall not include campaign material.
- The GDBIA's logo and branding may not be used in campaign materials.

6. Attending GDBIA Events During an Election Period

- Candidates and political parties may attend GDBIA events as private citizens but may not campaign while attending.

- Elected Officials may participate in official capacities but must not use GBDIA events for campaigning.

7. GDBIA Employees

Employees and volunteers must not engage in campaign activities during work/volunteer hours, campaign in their capacity as an employee/volunteer, or use GBIDA resources.

8. GDBIA Board Members and Committees

- GDBIA Board and Committee resources may not be used for campaigning.
- Board members may engage in campaigning as private citizens, provided they do so separately from their official roles.

9. Enforcement & Amendments

The GDBIA Board has the authority to interpret and enforce this policy. The Town Clerk may update it as needed to ensure compliance with municipal, provincial, or federal election laws.

10. Statutory Provisions / Other Relevant Policies

This policy operates along with and as a supplement to existing legislation and Town policies governing the use of municipal resources during an election campaign period:

- the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended
- the Finance Election Act, 1990, as amended
- the Canada Elections Act, 2000, as amended
- the Town of Grimsby Procedural By-law
- the Town of Grimsby Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Campaign Policy
- EP002 - Political Endorsements & Participation in the Electoral Process

This policy is intended to be read in conjunction with its counterpart (EP002 - Political Endorsements & Participation in the Electoral Process), which addresses complementary elements of election-related conduct.

Revision #	Description of Date Changes Created	Date Revised	Reviewed By:	Approved By:
001	Creation of Document	N/A	Executive Team	Pending
002	Approval of Board	N/A	Board of Management	Pending