

## Alberta Municipal Elections Guide for Returning Officers

Every four years, on the third Monday in October, Alberta residents have the opportunity to elect their municipal representatives.

Many aspects of the election process now benefit from using modern technology to improve the efficiency and accountability of the process. But elections still depend on people to input candidate information and report results. This guide is meant to help you do that in the simplest way possible, using the elections database through MAConnect.

### **In this guide, you will find:**

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## What you will need

The first step in your role is accessing the elections database. The steps below will show you how.

The database is where all municipal election information is stored. It is accessed through a data portal called MAConnect, an online doorway to Municipal Affairs applications.

To be able to add or remove information to or from the database, you need to have the following:

- ✓ A connection to the internet with at least Windows 7
- ✓ A basic understanding of how to use an internet browser such as Google Chrome, Firefox, or Internet Explorer (the database will not work on any other browsers)
- ✓ An updated version of Adobe Reader, which can be downloaded for free [here](#)
- ✓ A working email address
- ✓ An MAConnect ID and password

## Setting up your MAConnect login information

Before you are able to access the Elections Database, you must have an MAConnect ID and password. In order to obtain your MAConnect ID and password, a request has to be sent from your municipality's MAConnect Stakeholder Administrator. If you do not know who this is, please send an email to [lgs.update@gov.ab.ca](mailto:lgs.update@gov.ab.ca) asking who the Stakeholder Administrator for your municipality is or call 780-427-2225 and ask for a Municipal Information Advisor for assistance.

When the MAConnect Stakeholder Administrator submits the request, a temporary password and access link will be sent to you by email. Click on the link provided in the email and follow the instructions to set up your permanent system ID and password.

Once you have your ID and password, you can type [www.maconnect.alberta.ca](http://www.maconnect.alberta.ca) into the address bar of your internet browser. (See **page 4** for a visual guide to the online database)


## Launching your database

Upon signing in to MAConnect (this may take a few moments to load), click on the button in the




Elections Database box that says “Launch” – the screen should look like the one on *page 4* of this guide, including the following parts:

**Quick Search Bar** – Your municipality should be listed. If more than one municipality is listed, a pull-down menu will be available. Click on the menu to select the municipality of your choice.

**Municipal Information** – Click on the  arrow icon to show information for the municipality (it will appear in the orange, shaded area).

**Upcoming Elections Tab** – Provides a list of any current active elections.

Upcoming Elections

**Election History Tab** – Provides a list of past elections. Click on the  magnifying glass icon to view information (Note: This information cannot be edited).

**Current Elected Officials** – As the name suggests, this area provides a list of all current elected officials.

## An example of what your database should look like

The screenshot shows the 'Elections Database Alberta' web application interface. The page title is 'Elections Database Alberta Municipal Affairs'. The user is logged in as 'dave.lazzarino'. The page displays the following sections:

- Quick Search Bar:** A search input field with a magnifying glass icon.
- Municipal Information:** A section titled 'Municipality Name: City of Edmonton (0098)' with a sub-section for 'Municipality Information'.
- Elections:** A section with a 'Help' link and instructions: 'Click the Pencil icon next to an election to edit the details.' It includes tabs for 'Upcoming Elections' and 'Election History'. Below this is a table with one entry:
 

Election Type	ElectionDate	Nominations Close	Official Results	Organizational Meeting	Options
General Election	Oct 16, 2017	Sep 18, 2017	Oct 20, 2017		
- Current Elected Officials:** A section titled 'Current Elected Officials' showing a list of 13 officials. A callout box labeled 'Click here to edit' points to the pencil icon in the 'Options' column of the table above.

Callouts from the image:

- 'For further assistance, click here, email, or call us' points to the top navigation bar.
- 'Quick Search Bar' points to the search input field.
- 'Municipal Information' points to the 'Municipality Name' section.
- 'Upcoming Elections' points to the 'Upcoming Elections' tab.
- 'Election History Tab' points to the 'Election History' tab.
- 'Click here to edit' points to the pencil icon in the 'Options' column of the 'Elections' table.
- 'Current Elected' points to the 'Current Elected Officials' section.

When you click on the edit button, you will be taken to the page to add information to your election




The screenshot displays the 'Election Information' page for the City of Edmonton (0098). The page is divided into several sections:

- Election Information:** Displays details such as Election Type (General Election), Election Date (Oct 16, 2017), Nominations Closed Date (Sep 18, 2017), Nominations Extension Date, Organizational Meeting Date, and Official Results Deadline (Oct 20, 2017).
- Municipality Information:** A section header for the City of Edmonton.
- Returning Officer:** A form section with fields for Title (Mr./Ms.), First Name (Alayne), Last Name (Sinclair), Email (Alayne.Sinclair@edmonton.ca), Phone ((780) 496-8151), and Fax ((780) 496-8175).
- Election Details:** Includes a dropdown for 'How many council positions are up for election?' (set to 1) and checkboxes for 'Position(s) Up For Election' (CEO and Councilor).
- Important Dates:** Fields for Nominations Closed (Sep-18-2017), Nominations Extension, Election Date (Oct-16-2017), Official Results Deadline (Oct-20-2017), and Organizational Meeting.
- Questions:** A series of yes/no questions regarding the user's role and municipality status.
- Notes:** A text area for additional information.

A callout box labeled 'Mandatory Items' with a warning icon points to the 'Title' field in the 'Returning Officer' section.

## Adding information relating to a general election

For general elections, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs will create the database for the election but municipalities have to add the election details before entering candidate information.

- ✓ After signing in to MAConnect, you will be taken to your municipal dashboard. If you ever need to return to this page, click on  **Dashboard** Dashboard just below the Quick Search bar at the top left of the screen.
- ✓ On the “Upcoming Elections” tab, find the election you will be adding information to.
- ✓ At the far right of that line, click on the  pencil which will allow you to edit the election information.
- ✓ On the Election Details tab, fill out the information for the returning officer including a valid email, phone, and fax number.
- ✓ Fill in the information in the spaces provided. All spaces marked with a  are mandatory.
- ✓ Dates will already be filled in if the election is already created for you. Otherwise, fill in the proper dates in the form Month-Date-Year (e.g. Oct-02-17).
- ✓ Be sure to tick the boxes that identify the positions up for election and the questions below about how the voting will take place.

Note: Total council positions include all councillors and mayor. For some municipalities, voters will be choosing a number of councillors (C) and one mayor (for a total of C+1) and you must tick both “COE” and “Councillor” under election details, as well as “Yes” next to the question “Is your Chief Elected Official elected at large?” For others, voters choose councillors but not the mayor as the mayor is chosen at a later date. In that case, only tick “Councillor” under election details and tick “No” to the first of the questions below.

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## Adding candidate information

You are now ready to enter candidate information.

The screenshot shows the 'Election Information' page for the City of Edmonton (0098). The 'Candidates' tab is active, displaying a table of council members. The table has columns for Ward, Nominated Position, Gender, Title, First Name, Last Name, Mailing Address, Incumbent, and Acclaimed. Each row includes a pencil icon for editing and a red 'X' icon for deleting the candidate.

Ward	Nominated Position	Gender	Title	First Name	Last Name	Mailing Address	Incumbent	Acclaimed	Actions
Mayor		Mr.	Don	Don	Iveson	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Bryan	Bryan	Anderson	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Moe	Moe	Banga	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Tony	Tony	Caterina	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Ms.	Bev	Bev	Esslinger	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Ed	Ed	Gibbons	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Ben	Ben	Henderson	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Andrew	Andrew	Knack	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Dave	Dave	Lohan	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Scott	Scott	McKaen	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Mike	Mike	Nickel	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Michael	Michael	Oshy	..	✓	✓	
Councillor		Mr.	Michael	Michael	Walters	..	✓	✓	

- ✓ Click on the tab next to Election Details marked “Candidates”. You will see that your current council is already displayed in the screen.
- ✓ Remove each member of your council that will NOT be running in the election by clicking . You will see a message to confirm that the candidate has been deleted.
- ✓ For each sitting council member that is running in the election, hit the pencil and enter the nominated position, title, gender, mailing address, and postal code. Then hit the “save” button. You will either see a “Saved Successfully” message or, if there are any errors, the system will highlight the fields that require attention.
- ✓ For each new candidate, fill in the information immediately below the Candidates tab. Be sure to include all applicable information, including nominated position, title, gender, mailing address, city, postal code, and first and last names as the candidate has requested they appear on the ballot.
- ✓ Click the “Save” button, located to the right of the page.
- ✓ Continue with the remaining nominations.
- ✓ If you make a mistake, click on the pencil to the right of the candidate to edit the entry or the to erase the entry and start again.





## Submitting Candidate Nomination to Municipal Affairs

Once you have entered Candidates for your Municipality and the Nomination Close date has passed, you are required to submit your results to Alberta Municipal Affairs.

- ✓ To generate the Candidate Nomination Form, click the “Print Candidate list” button. A PDF version of the Candidates List will open in a new window. You are required to print the form, sign it and send it to the Municipal Affairs Elections Database staff.
- ✓ Completed forms can either be sent by email to [lgs.update@gov.ab.ca](mailto:lgs.update@gov.ab.ca) or fax to 780-420-1016. Originals can be mailed to: Alberta Municipal Affairs, 17th floor, Commerce Place, 10155 – 102 Street, Edmonton, AB, T6J 2N7.

## Reporting unofficial results

The voting is done, the totals have been counted, and the only thing left to do now is send a copy of the election results to Alberta’s Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

The screenshot shows the 'Elections Database Alberta Municipal Affairs' interface. The 'Election Information' section displays details for the 'City of Camrose (0048)'. The 'Municipality Information' section is active, showing the 'Election Results' tab. The table below lists candidates for various council positions, including Mayor, Councilor, and Councillor. The 'Votes' column is empty, and the 'Elected' column has checkboxes. A 'Print Results' button is located above the table. At the bottom right, there are buttons for 'Save Unofficial', 'Finalize Official Results', and 'Cancel'.

To do so:

- ✓ Click on election results tab – all the information will be filled in with information from the candidate information form except the votes column and the one that says “elected”.
- ✓ Fill in votes and tick the box to indicate the person who was elected.
- ✓ To avoid losing work, click “save unofficial” to partially save your work as you go.
- ✓ **DO NOT** click finalize official results until four days following the election date (Oct. 20) – the Elections Act says we must give four days for candidates to challenge the results of an election.
- ✓ Over the next few days, some changes can be made, including recounts for ties and verifications of results.
- ✓ If you do click to save official results and want to make changes later, contact Municipal Affairs and we can make the changes for you
- ✓ Once all the information has been filled in, click the “print results” button, located above the elected column on the far right of the screen.
- ✓ Click to download the report on the pop-up window.
- ✓ When asked if you want to open or save the document, click open – your computer must have an updated Adobe Reader to do this. It can be downloaded and installed for free [here](#).
- ✓ A results page will open. Verify all the information is correct. If you spot any errors, go back to the database and correct them before following the steps again.
- ✓ Once the form is correct, print it, sign it and date it.

- ✓ Scan this form and send it to [lgs.update@gov.ab.ca](mailto:lgs.update@gov.ab.ca)
- ✓ If you'd prefer to mail it, please send it to: 17<sup>th</sup> Floor Commerce Place, 10155 102 St., Edmonton, Alta., T5J 4L4


## Reporting official results

Four days after the election closes, official results can be sent to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. If you have already printed, signed, dated and sent the form from the previous page, all that's left to do is click on the option to save the official results.

If you haven't mailed your results in yet, follow the steps on the previous page to do so.

## Contact

For further assistance, or to ask questions about municipal elections not covered in this guide, please contact a Municipal Information Advisor at [lgs.update@gov.ab.ca](mailto:lgs.update@gov.ab.ca) or call 780-427-2225.

You may also click on the  **Contact Us** link on the elections database homepage and send us a message. Someone from Municipal Affairs will get back to you shortly.