



## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

The Honourable Scott Moe  
Premier of Saskatchewan  
Room 226 - 2405 Legislative Drive  
Regina SK S4S 0B3

**via email: [premier@gov.sk.ca](mailto:premier@gov.sk.ca)**

Dear Premier Moe,

On behalf of Saskatoon City Council, I am writing you today to request that your government direct officials to consult on the legislated municipal election dates as part of the next review of The Local Government Elections Act (LGEA). We are interested in having an open dialogue with government, the municipal sector, and other relevant stakeholders about future municipal election dates in Saskatchewan. The 2020 election experience certainly demonstrated the risks of holding elections later in the year.

Although we are not proposing a specific election date at this time, City Council is in unanimous agreement that municipal elections should be held earlier than November and in a different season than a provincial election. As you know, the last amendments to LGEA moved municipal elections from late October to early to mid-November and within two weeks after a provincial general election. While the sample size is small, the 2020 municipal election exposed several challenges with the existing date. Of course, in Saskatoon's case a near-record snowfall over the two days prior to election day made it nearly impossible for voters, workers, and candidates to access polling places. As a result, the City's Returning Officer made the call to postpone the the November 9 election to November 13, thanks to a Ministerial Order granting the authority to do so.

Notwithstanding the unpredictable weather, the proximity of provincial and local elections created its own challenges, such as:

- The provincial election office in Saskatoon received mail-in ballot applications for the municipal election and the municipal election office received mail-in ballot applications for the provincial election.
- Significant volume of voters called and emailed the municipal election office to ask questions about the provincial election and vice-versa.
- Both election bodies had to secure hundreds of workers for their respective elections in an already limited pool of workers and in a pandemic where many were not comfortable leaving their homes. Elections Saskatchewan asked Saskatoon's returning officer to delay the municipal election recruitment plan by two weeks to avoid overlapping advertising.
- Overlapping election periods resulted in both provincial and municipal election signs being erected at the same time across the city and perhaps leading to voter confusion of which candidate was running in which election.

For these reasons, we are requesting a review of the existing election dates, with hopes of finding a consensus that create better conditions to foster local democracy. Low voter turnout for municipal elections is an issue at the best of times, so anything governments can do to create the conditions to make it easier for citizens to exercise their franchise is welcome.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charlie Clark', with a stylized, cursive script.

**Charlie Clark**  
Mayor

cc: Honourable Don McMorris, Minister of Government Relations  
(minister.gr@gov.sk.ca)  
Rodger Hayward, President of Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association  
(naicam.mayor@sasktel.net)  
His Worship, Gerald Aalbers, Chair of the Saskatchewan City Mayors' Caucus  
(mayor@lloydminster.ca)