

MEMORANDUM



TO: MAYOR GATT AND COUNCIL MEMBERS
FROM: CORTNEY HANSON, CITY CLERK
SUBJECT: EARLY VOTING PARTNERSHIP WITH OAKLAND COUNTY
DATE: AUGUST 31, 2023

In November 2022, voters approved Proposal 2022-2 to add additional provisions to the state constitution related to voting. The Bureau of Election (BOE) is working with counties and municipalities across the state to implement the many changes necessary to meet the new requirements.

One of the biggest changes we are starting to implement is early voting. The Michigan Constitution requires each municipality to have at least one early voting site for statewide and federal elections. The Oakland County Elections Division reached out to all municipalities within Oakland County to inquire about hosting and/or participating in early voting for the upcoming November 7, 2023 Election to pilot the early voting process.

The early voting period begins the second Saturday prior to Election Day and ends the Sunday before an election. To achieve that, the following three options are available to municipalities:

1. Entering into an agreement with the county (and potentially other municipalities) and partnering with the county to conduct early voting.
2. Entering into a municipal agreement and jointly conducting early voting with one or more other municipalities in the same county.
3. Offering early voting as a single municipality.

Our office expressed interest in option #1 to enter into an agreement with Oakland County to be an Early Voting Site for City of Novi voters, Novi Township voters, and City of Northville voters who reside in Oakland County. We have met with Oakland County staff to hear their initial plans on operating as an Early Voting Site. The benefits of partnering with Oakland County are considerable. They will provide the resources necessary to conduct early voting, including brand new Verity Print, On-Demand Ballot Printing, devices, voting booths, and supplies. They will also manage the appointment and scheduling of election workers for all 9 early voting days. The State of Michigan will reimburse Oakland County for the cost of 3 election workers per day. In partnering with Oakland County, the cost responsibility to the City of Novi will be minimal in comparison to independently operating an Early Voting Site. Our cost responsibility will include paying for any election workers necessary beyond the 3 that will be covered by the State of Michigan as well as miscellaneous supplies.

A site supervisor, likely the City Clerk, will remain accessible during all early voting hours to assist as needed. The site supervisor will also be responsible for ensuring the polls open and close following BOE procedures and the equipment, ballots, and supplies are kept in a secure location until the polls open again.

Many local municipalities in Oakland County are choosing to partner with Oakland County due to the required amount of time, space, staffing, and resources necessary for each municipality to conduct early voting. Staff will meet with the Oakland County Elections Division on September 11th to review a draft contract to partner with Oakland County for early voting. Once our legal team has reviewed the contract, the Election Commission must approve it before we bring the contract to City Council for consideration at the September 25th Council meeting. If approved, the contract would be effective October 2023 through November 2024. At that time, possible contract renewal will be discussed.