

Municipal Indicators Factsheet – June 2024

Interest in Municipal Office 2017 - 2021

Alberta Municipal Affairs produces 13 measures related to specific aspects of a municipality's governance, finances, and community. This month, we take a close look at the 'Interest in Municipal Office' outcome measure.

About the 'Interest in Municipal Office' outcome measure

The 'Interest in Municipal Office' outcome indicates the willingness of residents to run for municipal council. The indicator is based on the number of candidates running for municipal office relative to the number of council positions up for election. A positive outcome is when there is more than one individual running for each position on council.

Data for this analysis is based on active municipalities between 2017 and 2021.

Why is this measure important?

The 'Interest in Municipal Office' indicator monitors community engagement in the election process. Like many other municipal elections in Canada, the challenge faced by Alberta municipalities is not only about getting residents to the polls, but it is also about getting them on the ballot. Municipalities that experience a shortage of candidates for council positions are not able to hold competitive elections, or even fill all positions on council.

Notable findings from the 'Interest in Municipal Office' outcome measure

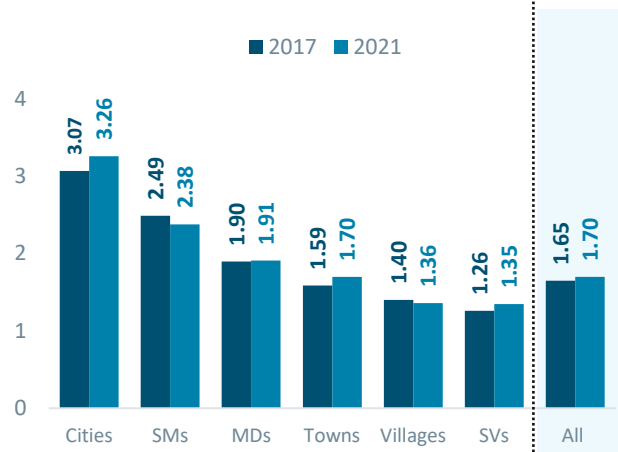
1. More candidates chose to run in municipal elections in 2021.

Cities had the highest number of candidates run, relative to the number of positions available on municipal council (3.07 and 3.26 in 2017 and 2021 respectively). Summer villages (SVs) had the lowest number of candidates run for each position of all municipality types (1.26 and 1.35 in 2017 and 2021 respectively).

When comparing data from municipal general elections and SV elections, the average number of individuals running for office in Alberta grew from 1.65 in 2017 to 1.70 in 2021. This finding indicates that in 2021, there was a greater 'Interest in Municipal Office' than in 2017.

Increases in the number of candidates relative to the number of council positions from 2017 to 2021 were seen in cities, towns, and SVs. Fewer candidates ran in specialized municipalities (SMs), and villages. 'Interest in Municipal Office' remained stable in municipal districts (MDs).

Chart 1: Interest in Municipal Office: 2017 and 2021 General and SV Elections



2. In 2021, fewer municipalities had all their candidates acclaimed.

The 'Interest in Municipal Office' measure is flagged if the value is equal to or less than one (1), indicating that either a candidate has been acclaimed, or that there is one candidate or less per available council position.

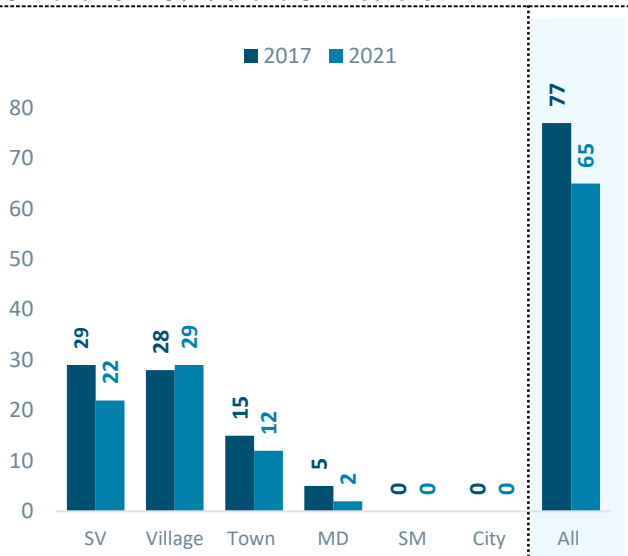
Acclamation occurs when the number of candidates is equal to the number of council positions up for election.

Chart 2 shows the number of candidates who were acclaimed by each municipal type in 2017 and 2021. Overall, villages and SVs had the highest number of candidates acclaimed. Cities and SMs had the lowest number of acclamations.

When compared to 2017, there were 12 fewer municipalities who had all candidates acclaimed.

- SVs (-7)
- MDs (-3)
- Towns (-3)
- Villages (+1)

Chart 2: Acclaimed Candidates, by Municipal Type:
2017 and 2021 General and SV Elections



3. What do the results mean?

The 'Interest in Municipal Office' indicator suggests that Albertans were more engaged in municipal politics in 2021 than in 2017. As more candidates continue to put their name forward and run for municipal offices across Alberta, residents can expect to have more options as they choose their future municipal leaders.

Want to know more?

For more information on Alberta's municipal indicators and what they tell us, visit [Municipal Indicators.](#)

To view municipal indicator results, by year, visit our [Municipal Indicator Dashboard.](#)

Other questions?

If you have questions about the municipal indicators, please contact us at ma.updates@gov.ab.ca.

