

Strategic Plan

Elections Manitoba

For the 41st General Election 2012–2015

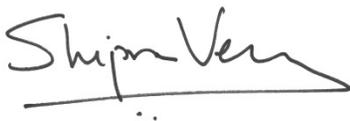
Message from the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer

I am pleased to present the Strategic Plan for the office of Elections Manitoba, outlining the goals, key activities and performance measures for the four-year period from 2012 to 2015. This document reflects the collaborative effort of Elections Manitoba's core staff. The process began with post-election evaluation reports from each department, in which all the activities for the 40th general election were reviewed against projected outcomes. The lessons learned from that election served as the foundation for the strategic planning exercise and for the document itself.

The strategic plan outlines the environment in which Elections Manitoba operates, refines strategic focus areas and refreshes the organization's vision, mission, corporate goals and core values. Within this framework, a roadmap for the four-year period leading up to the next election was created and department-specific strategic plans were developed. The plan sets out our strategy and direction for the next four years, while guiding us in the allocation of resources to achieve our goals effectively.

Activities in the four-year plan are categorized as either annual, election-specific, or as external events that impact on the activities of the office. Projects focus on the enhancement of service to Manitoba voters as well as the implementation of new election financing legislation that is pending proclamation at the time of writing. Although Manitoba now has a set date election, Elections Manitoba also remains prepared to administer by-elections or respond to other events as they arise.

This plan affirms our commitment to our stakeholders. In carrying out the plan, Elections Manitoba will be guided by the principles of fairness, integrity and impartiality, and strive to inspire confidence in the democratic process.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shipra Verma". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Shipra Verma, CA
Deputy Chief Electoral Officer of Manitoba

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1. Introduction

Elections Manitoba plays a critical role as a non-partisan organization that is mandated to ensure the democratic rights of Manitobans through the free and fair conduct of elections. The organization operates in a complex environment that necessitates flexibility and readiness to respond to changes in legislation and the potential for an election to be called at any point in time. This document describes the strategic plan leading up to the next provincial general election.

Manitoba's last general election was held October 4, 2011. Amendments to the Elections Act in 2008 established a set election date on the first Tuesday of October every four calendar years. Therefore, the planning horizon for this document is June 2015.

Elections Manitoba's strategic plan represents the vision for maintaining excellence in service delivery, continuing to achieve success in administering provincial elections and campaign finance laws. Elections Manitoba begins its strategic planning process in the year following a provincial election, assessing past election performance and identifying strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement. This includes defining activities, setting priorities for implementation, and developing strategies to achieve desired results. These priorities become the focus as Elections Manitoba approaches the next provincial election.

2. Environmental Overview

2.1 Elections Manitoba Overview

Central to the legitimacy of representative government is the integrity of the electoral system. Public confidence in the institutions of government rests directly on the capacity of the electoral system to perform efficiently, reliably, impartially and in a timely fashion. In 1980, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (Elections Manitoba) was established and made directly accountable to the Legislative Assembly.

The mandate of Elections Manitoba is set out in *The Elections Act and The Elections Finances Act*. Essentially, Elections Manitoba is mandated by legislation to conduct free and fair elections, to make the electoral process accessible to voters, to promote public awareness through education and advertising, and to ensure compliance with electoral process rules. The environment within which Elections Manitoba is accountable to achieve this mandate is made complex by several unique factors, including:

- Uncertainty of the timing of the general election:
 - Set general election date, is subject to change based on the discretion of the Lieutenant Governor
 - Must be ready to conduct an election at any time
- Uncertainty of the timing of the by-elections
- Annual reporting requirements
- Statutory deadlines within an election period
- Frequent and significant changes to electoral legislation
- Conducting referendums under various statutes

The authoritative reach of the Elections Manitoba is that of impartiality and fairness in administering the electoral process. Decisions of Elections Manitoba have a direct and significant impact on all Manitoban voters, candidates and political parties. The main stakeholders of Elections Manitoba include every eligible voter in Manitoba, the voting public of the future, political organizations and other participants.

2.2 Role of the Chief Electoral Officer

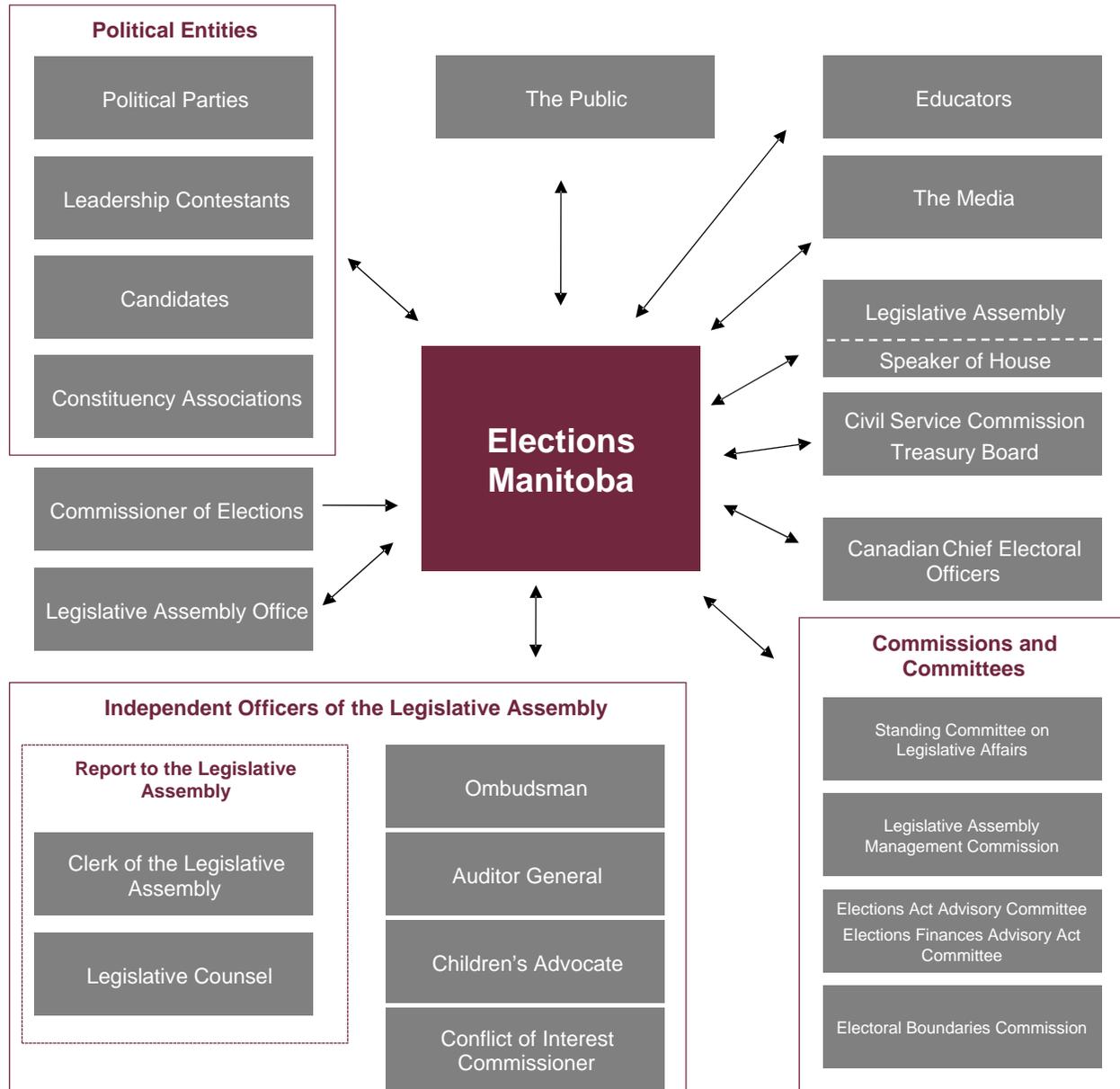
Manitoba's Chief Electoral Officer and Elections Manitoba administer provincial elections to ensure fairness and impartiality. The legislative basis for Manitoba provincial elections is prescribed in *The Elections Act and The Elections Finances Act*.

The Office of The Chief Electoral Officer must be prepared at all times to conduct elections, by-elections and referendums. Elections Manitoba facilitates participation in all aspects of provincial elections by:

- Ensuring that the voting process is straightforward, responsive and well-known to all voters.
- Ensuring fairness, impartiality and compliance by political participants and voters.
- Ensuring promotion of democratic participation through province-wide public education and information programs.

2.3 Stakeholders

As indicated in the diagram below, Elections Manitoba has a broad range of stakeholders. Stakeholders include all Manitoban citizens, registered voters, candidates, political organizations, bodies and special interest groups, as well as the media, the Legislative Assembly, service delivery partners and other electoral agencies.



2.4 Background and Current Electoral State

In order to achieve Elections Manitoba's mandate and goals, a high degree of agility is required for Elections Manitoba's internal operations. There have been significant legislative changes to both *The Elections Act* and *The Elections Finances Act* over the last few years, which have expanded the mandate of Elections Manitoba, and further changes to legislation are likely to occur as the electoral process in Manitoba continues to evolve.

In 2006, the *Elections Act* was re-written in plain language, which required extensive Elections Manitoba resources. Other significant legislative changes included expanding the mandate of Elections Manitoba to include public education and promotion, and the creation of the Commissioner of Elections position. Appointed by the CEO, the Commissioner of Elections is solely responsible for investigations and prosecutions related to *The Elections Act* and *The Elections Finances Act*, including public comment.

Amendments made to *The Elections Act* in 2008 established set election dates for the first Tuesday of October, every four calendar years. Other significant legislative changes in 2008 included the requirement to build and maintain an address database to assist with enumeration, and the expansion of voting hours and voting locations.

2.4.1 Current Consensus

Elections Manitoba operates within a partisan and political environment. As an independent office of the Legislative Assembly, stakeholder expectations are high and impartiality and independence from government are integral to the way Elections Manitoba does business and deals with political participants.

Elections Manitoba strives to deliver a fair process and encourage participation for all stakeholders, and in doing so is seen by voters as a credible source of election information. While Manitobans may not necessarily know Elections Manitoba by name, they know their voting rights and are overwhelmingly satisfied with the voting process.

Declining participation

A decline in voter participation, particularly among youth, is growing steadily in Canada and in other advanced democracies. Voter turnout decreased marginally from 56.76% to 55.77% in the last Manitoba election. Additionally, results in recent Canadian federal elections represent the lowest voter turnout in over 40 years.

Disengaged youth

The decline in youth turnout is significant because individuals who do not participate in the voting system early on are less likely to be involved in the process later in life. Statistically, this means that the current decline in youth participation may have a long-lasting impact — likely over many decades.

Taking action

While no single reason has been identified as to why voter participation is declining, apathy and/or indifference towards politics and politicians are most often cited. Key stakeholders are addressing the issue at many levels across Canada:

- Some provinces are conducting independent reviews of their electoral systems — considering different methods such as proportional representation
- Electoral offices, political scientists and public interest groups around the world continue to collect data and conduct research on the subject of voter turnout
- Legislation is continually being strengthened to ensure the franchise is accessible to all
- There has been a gradual shift in thinking regarding the role of communications and several jurisdictions including ours have been given a broader “public information” mandate to promote participation

The majority of eligible voters believe voting is important and value the right to participate in free and fair elections. While they intend to vote, a significant number are not motivated enough to act on these intentions. Elections Manitoba is poised better than ever to address these challenges and opportunities.

Elections Manitoba is committed to developing the necessary materials and programs to clearly communicate all aspects of the electoral process, including legislative changes, to all stakeholders.

2.5 Amendments

Prior to the 2011 election, two significant changes to legislation (Bill 22 and Bill 37) were passed by government. As a result, Elections Manitoba's role has expanded to promote education and information programs, to create an address database for enumeration, and to prepare for a set election date. In addition, these legislative changes have resulted in Elections Manitoba assuming responsibility for implementing various campaign finance changes.

In June 2012, legislation was passed regarding *The Elections Finances Act* and *The Elections Amendment Act*. Bill 33 includes four main components which will significantly impact Elections Manitoba and will call for considerable resources to implement the required changes.

The first piece is a plain language rewrite of *The Elections Finances Act*, which will be written and organized to make the Act clearer and easier to understand. Upon passing of the bill, Elections Manitoba will have approximately six months to implement the changes which will include a rewrite of approximately 50 forms and 10-12 guides.

The second piece of the bill pertains to third party spending provisions in *The Elections Finances Act*. This piece of the bill places limits on spending by third parties (i.e. any person or group, other than a candidate, constituency association or registered political party) on election communication to the public during an election period.

The third piece of the bill calls for the Chief Electoral Officer to examine whether a permanent voters list should be established for the purposes of *The Elections Act* and, if so, how the list should be created and what methods should be used to keep it as complete and up-to-date as possible. This piece requires consultation with the advisory committee and making a report to the Speaker about the matter, which may include recommendations for amendments to the Act. Upon passing of the bill, the timeline for completion will be one year.

The fourth piece relates to postponing the fixed date elections where the Provincial election would conflict with a federal fixed date election. If there is an overlap with the election period for a general election, the general election must be held instead on the third Tuesday of April in the following calendar year.

2.6 Challenges Facing Elections Manitoba

With each election, Elections Manitoba faces a new set of challenges due to the constantly changing environment in which it operates. In 2011, the primary challenges were as follows:

1. Expanded 75 day calendar for enumeration
2. Displaced flood residents
3. Centralized payroll processing for field staff
4. New boundaries for electoral districts

While these factors significantly impacted Elections Manitoba employees, operations and field staff, the foundation is now in place to support the General Election in 2015. Looking to the 2015 election, Elections Manitoba anticipates that the fundamental challenges will relate to the following:

1. New legislation
2. Staffing key positions in key areas
3. Upgrading technology

As a result of the strong foundation built from prior elections, the focus approaching the 2015 election will be for many departments to build or sustain their existing strategies and plans, while other departments will be looking to develop new strategies to support future elections and address the new challenges noted above.

3. Strategic Planning Overview

Due to factors such as uncertainties in timing and Elections Manitoba's position in the public eye, effective strategic planning in preparation for each election is essential. The objective of strategic planning is to determine the strategic focus areas, vision and mission, as well as the departmental activities required in order to advance the electoral process and deliver free and fair elections.

The strategic plan evaluates lessons learned from previous elections to determine which activities may or will be needed to execute on the next election. The debriefing session provides Elections Manitoba the opportunity to collaboratively establish the overall strategic focus, as well as department-specific resources and plans. The strategic planning process gives staff the opportunity to collaboratively set a timeline for projects and activities, culminating in a calendar for the four-year horizon until the next election. This calendar takes the areas of strategic focus into consideration, as well as each department's resources and needs.

The Mission and Vision are at the core of any strategic planning exercise as they serve as beacons, or rally cries, able to justify all management and employee actions. They serve to define the organization's future and align management and employees to a common set of agreed upon goals and objectives. The company's strategy and actions must therefore be entirely aligned with the organization's Mission and Vision to ensure buy-in, effective communication and a higher degree of success.

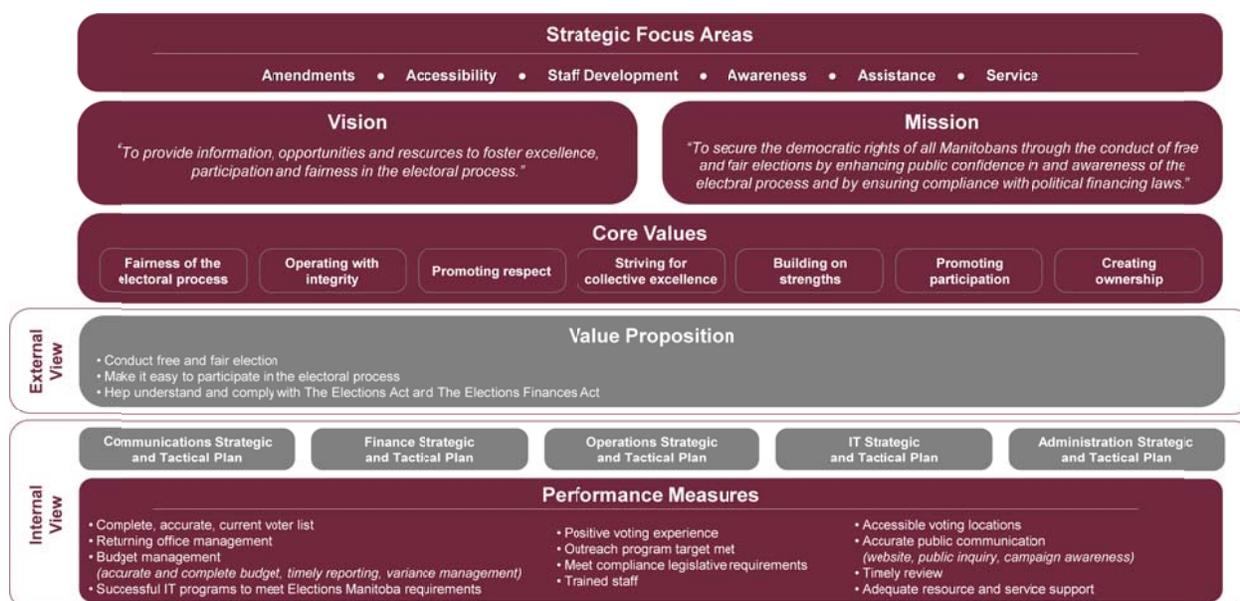
The strategic focus areas set the course and direct all organizational efforts towards Elections Manitoba's preferred future, and are used as a tool for staff to make operational decisions and produce results-oriented plans. These operational plans are designed to guide the daily activities of staff, outlining the detailed activities, initiatives and projects necessary to achieve the strategic goals. Operational plans are developed for each section of the organization – Elections Operations, Elections Finances, Communications, Information Technology, Administrative Support and Corporate Management.

Individual projects within these plans are initiated with a business case that outlines the objectives, benefits, risks, contingencies, costs, timelines, and expected results. Finally, project results are tracked against performance measures, which are set for each project with critical success factors, benchmarks and specific targets in mind. Performance measures are also set and tracked for the achievement of overall strategic goals.

The evaluation of projects and programs at their conclusion allows Elections Manitoba to determine where success has been achieved and where there is room for improvement. It allows Elections Manitoba to adjust performance targets and assess the strategies chosen to achieve goals on a continuous basis. The actual results of a project are measured against the target for performance, with thought given to what outcome was achieved and how these outcomes impacted stakeholders. In conjunction with staff appraisal and the implementation of professional development plans, the management planning process becomes a continuous and evolving effort of improvement toward the realization of Elections Manitoba's shared vision.

3.1 Elections Manitoba Strategy Map

The following strategy map is a diagram illustrating the strategic focus being pursued by Elections Manitoba:



3.1.1 Strategic Focus Areas

The strategic focus areas highlight the major areas which need to be emphasized, enhanced or improved. These strategic focus areas are used to guide the activities and projects through to the 41st General Election, to ensure effectively delivery and results stakeholders are looking for.

The following six strategic focus areas guide the 41st General Election. In the past the focus has been on growth and new initiatives, whereas the strategic focus areas for the 41st General Election reflect the need for Elections Manitoba’s past successes to be maintained as the democratic environment continues to evolve. Therefore, the strategic focus areas from the 40th and 39th General Election have been used as a foundation, with minor adjustments.

- | Strategic Focus Areas | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. | Amendments – Implement legislative requirements |
| 2. | Accessibility – Maintain strong accessibility of the electoral process to all eligible voters |
| 3. | Staff Development – Continue to develop staff to provide optimal service |
| 4. | Awareness – Reinforce existing educational opportunities and programs |
| 5. | Assistance – Provide assistance to political participants and other stakeholders |
| 6. | Service – Enhance service through effective use of technology and internal capabilities |

3.1.2 Vision

An organization's vision describes the ambition and destination of the organization, and is a key component of any strategic planning exercise. It reflects where an organization wants to be in the short term, and should orient the group's energies and serve as a guide to action. The vision facilitates organizational change by formalizing the need for change and guiding change in the desired direction. It aids in decision-making, by providing direction and focus thereby empowering employees to make decisions. A vision should challenge and inspire the group to achieve its mission, aligning and motivating individuals by linking every day work to the overall goal of the company.

The following is the Vision for Elections Manitoba as developed by the employees.

Corporate Vision

“To provide information, opportunities and resources to foster excellence, participation and fairness in the electoral process.”

3.1.3 Mission

The Mission defines the business of an organization, its purpose beyond profit, and worth. The Mission asks “who we are” and “why do we exist”, and should be timeless. The Mission is a communication tool, and to be used effectively employees and managers within the organization must be able to understand and connect to it.

The following is the Mission statement for Elections Manitoba, reflecting the legislative mandate of Elections Manitoba.

Corporate Mission

“To secure the democratic rights of all Manitobans through the conduct of free and fair elections by enhancing public confidence in and awareness of the electoral process and by ensuring compliance with political financing laws.”

3.1.4 Value Proposition

A value proposition is a clear and succinct statement that outlines what an organization provides to their stakeholders. It is a promise of value to be delivered and a belief from the voter or constituent of value that will be experienced. A value proposition can apply to an entire organization, to specific departments, to specific stakeholders or specific services rendered.

The following are value propositions for the various stakeholders of Elections Manitoba.

Value Proposition

- **Conduct free and fair election**
- **Make it easy to participate in the electoral process**
- **Help understand and comply with *The Elections Act and The Elections Finances Act***

3.2 Impact of the Strategic Plan

3.2.1 What this means to Elections Manitoba's staff

A culture that inspires excellence:

- Employees are treated with respect and integrity.
- Work performed is meaningful and valued, supported by continuous improvements and professional development.
- The work environment is healthy and dynamic, creating and sustaining growth through individual ownership and collective excellence.

3.2.2 What this means to Elections Manitoba's stakeholders

Leadership and culture that promote fairness:

- Information is clear and services are thorough, delivered with high standards for accuracy and promptness.
- Voters and political participants are treated with respect and integrity, guided by principles of fairness and equality.
- The electoral process inspires confidence and participation through fairness, guided by thoughtful innovation and valued leadership.

3.2.3 What this means to Elections Manitoba's work

Promoting excellence, participation and fairness:

- Elections Manitoba is honoured to guide the process that lies at the heart of Manitoba's democratic society, driven by commitment to provide free and fair access to voting and other opportunities for participation.
- Elections Manitoba's work reflects impartiality, high standards, stakeholder focus, respect for the electoral process, and thoughtful leadership.

4. Goals and Core Values

To deliver against its vision and mission, Elections Manitoba has defined corporate goals and core values that serve as guiding principles for all actions and activities undertaken.

4.1 Corporate Goals

- To maintain a position independent from government and free of political influence.
- To provide professional and non-partisan public service.
- To maintain a state of readiness to serve the public consistently and with integrity and excellence.
- To provide a voting environment that is impartial, accessible and user friendly and an organizational environment that develops employee competence, commitment and satisfaction.
- To ensure timely and accurate reporting and disclosure of campaign finance information.
- To assist candidates, political parties and their representatives to comply in the performance of their responsibilities.
- To keep the public well informed.
- To promote improvements to the electoral process.
- To be financially responsible and adhere to the best management practices.
- To enforce compliance on behalf of all participants.

4.2 Core Values

At Elections Manitoba, fairness and integrity are values core to the organization's commitment and responsibility to Manitobans. Elections Manitoba is driven by excellence, high service standards, and respect for the process of electoral democracy. The core values of Elections Manitoba are summarized below.

Core Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fairness of the electoral process• Operating with integrity• Promoting respect• Striving for collective excellence• Building on strengths• Promoting participation• Creating ownership

5. Actions and Key Activities

In general, Elections Manitoba's keys to success in conducting free and fair elections require clear operational processes and procedures, cross department collaboration, strong project management, financial transparency and enabling technologies. In order to carry out Elections Manitoba's vision and mission in the most effective manner, key actions and activities within each of the six strategic focus areas are presented below in order to prepare for and execute on the 41st General Election. Strategic Focus – Amendments

Implementing legislative requirements

Elections Manitoba administers election legislation – specifically *The Elections Act* and *The Elections Finances Act*. When amendments to such legislation occur, Elections Manitoba must ensure that all changes are implemented accurately, are clearly communicated to all stakeholders, and that all affected processes and procedures reflect the most current legislation in a timely manner.

Action: Execution of Bill 33

Moving forward, legislative requirements will continue to change as the electoral process evolves in Manitoba, beginning with the enactment of Bill 33. These changes include the key activities listed below.

Key Activities

- **Review best practices**
- **Develop tools to implement programs and other changes**
- **Communicate to all stakeholders, internal and external**

5.1 Strategic Focus – Accessibility

Maintaining the accessibility of the electoral process to all eligible voters

The right to participate in Manitoba's electoral system is an equal opportunity extended to all eligible Manitoban voters. When there are barriers that impede access to participation, it is Elections Manitoba's job to make every effort to remove these barriers in order to provide every Manitoban with an opportunity to exercise the right to vote within the scope of our legislation. The General Election in 2011 saw an increase in the popularity of advance voting. Additionally, Elections Manitoba had to face the challenge of determining how to best approach providing opportunities for the many displaced flood residents. Further voting options such as voting for the homeless, voting while in care or as a caregiver, absentee voting, student voting, voting for Armed forces, voting for disabled individuals and voting for those in distress continue to be part of Elections Manitoba mandate.

Action: Increasing convenience for voters

During the 2011 election, Elections Manitoba leveraged opportunities to make exercising the right to vote easier and more convenient. This included implementing changes to advance voting, extended polling station hours, and increased opportunities for disabled voters and voters with other special needs.

Changes to advance voting in the last election resulted in an increase from 42,800 advance voters in 2007 to 78,600 in 2011 (up significantly from 19,000 advance voters in 2003). 2007 marked the first time that qualified voters with proper identification could vote in advance at any advance location throughout Manitoba, and further improvements made for the 2011 election built on the previous success. Advance voting locations are now available in population centres of more than 50 voters within a 30 km area, minimizing the distance any voter needs to travel to exercise their voting right, with an advance voting period of eight days (up from seven days in 2007).

Action: Improve the quality of voters list

In 2011 a comprehensive address database was developed to assist with door-to-door enumeration. This database can be further improved by leveraging technology and front line data entry to ensure increased accuracy and usability. Additionally, the voters list was impacted by the extended 75 day calendar which provided a longer enumeration period. While the longer enumeration period resulted in 13,000 more voters on the voters list, the timing of enumeration fell in the middle of July when some voters were unavailable due to summer holidays. Findings from the 2011 General Election suggest that the enumeration period should be shortened to keep enumerators motivated and engaged in the process, allowing for greater efficiencies.

Key Activities

- **Review and revise address database**

5.2 Strategic Focus – Staff Development

Continuing to develop staff to provide optimal service

Staff development at every level is critical to Elections Manitoba's growth as an organization and the ability to deliver a consistently high level of customer service. This applies to internal Elections Manitoba employees, as well as the field staff. Although elections are coordinated centrally by the core staff at Elections Manitoba, much of the delivery is decentralized throughout Manitoba's 57 electoral divisions.

Action: Continue to invest in Elections Manitoba employees

Many of Elections Manitoba employees participated in their first General Election in 2011 either as new employees or in newly appointed roles. This resulted in significantly more cross-department collaboration than in years past and employees were better able to assist in other departments as needed to support delivery of the election. Continued comprehensive training and professional development plans for all staff will ensure a more consistent and effective election process. As well, a commitment to continuous improvement and ongoing learning for up and coming employees will ensure management of employee transitions and succession planning. Streamline and improve where possible, election process to support participation.

Action: Build capability and capacity within each Returning Office

Prior to the 2011 General Election, Elections Manitoba revised the job mandate for Returning Officers in hopes to recruit more entrepreneurial candidates for these roles. In most cases the calibre of candidates improved, especially as it relates to technology skills. Further refinement of recruitment strategies should provide opportunities to recognize Returning Officer expertise and how capabilities and capacity may vary in each office. Elections Manitoba needs to balance empowering the Returning Officers while still ensuring service delivery is aligned with Elections Manitoba's expectations and requirements.

Action: Enhance existing resources

Further refinement is needed with regard to existing information and resources available, including training materials, training delivery, and communication.

Key Activities

- **Provide professional development opportunities for each employee**
- **Continued cross department collaboration and communication**
- **Establish Returning Office Advisory Council**
- **Explore effective communication strategies with Returning Offices**
- **Review and revise the job mandate and description for Returning Officer**
- **Review and revise training manuals**
- **Investigate alternative training delivery methods (i.e. web training)**

5.3 Strategic Focus – Awareness

Reinforcing existing educational opportunities and programs

In recent years, the communications requirements for Elections Manitoba have broadened dramatically, due to an expanded mandate which includes providing educational opportunities. Additionally, challenges related to public engagement in the electoral process continue to exist. While advising the public of election dates and processes is essential, it only represents part of the equation. As more research has been gathered surrounding voter motivation, the demands on communications have increased substantially to develop long-term education programs and grassroots community outreach activities to promote voter participation.

Action: Reaching voters, new voters, soon-to-be voters & future voters

Voters must be aware when an election is called. They must know the election date, eligibility requirements, where to vote, how to vote, and even alternative voting opportunities. They must also recognize the importance of voting and the benefits of participating. Existing programs are in place to support this mandate.

Action: Engaging all segments of the population

Elections Manitoba continues to leverage and evolve existing programs and services to reach all segments of the population using a variety of delivery methods. For the 2011 General Election, Elections Manitoba's website posted election night results online were a huge success with over 50,000 visitors to the site regularly for up to date information.

Action: Building community relations

The number of different groups Elections Manitoba targets and reaches out to has expanded dramatically in recent years, with more focus than ever on groups of the population who were traditionally overlooked such as new citizens, homeless people and persons with disabilities. This community relations strategy involves looking at groups of voters who may have barriers to voting to determine the most effective way to get information to these target groups. Elections Manitoba engages community leaders and works collaboratively to develop grassroots-level information, tailored to address specific groups and designed to be delivered within their own communities.

Action: Enhancing communication with core and field staff

Elections are coordinated centrally by core staff at Elections Manitoba but delivered decentrally in Manitoba's 57 electoral divisions. Accurate and timely communications between head office coordinating staff and the returning officers in the field are crucial to well-run, consistent elections. Procedures and systems are being developed to better facilitate the two-way flow of critical information during elections.

Action: Ensuring credibility

The voting public has rated Elections Manitoba as a very credible source of information in relation to other sources, such as media, political parties and candidates. Maintaining this credibility is essential for Elections Manitoba to fulfill the responsibility to provide a free and fair election.

Key Activities

- **Comprehensive communication strategy**
- **Community relations strategy**
- **Refine existing programs as needed**

5.4 Strategic Focus – Assistance

Providing assistance to political participants and other stakeholders

There are many rules and regulations to follow in the election process as a political participant and election volunteer, including amendments to legislation that continue to unfold. As the administrators of elections legislation, Elections Manitoba is the best source of accurate and impartial information to make the process as easy as possible. Elections Manitoba is dedicated to assisting all political participants and volunteers with comprehensive information to help them comply with all elections and financial reporting rules.

Action: Effective and efficient communication with political participants

Elections Manitoba has regular contact with political parties and candidates on all election issues. Elections Manitoba will continue to develop guides to explain the law and the rights of candidates to seek political office, an approach which reduces confusion and helps to address the many questions of political participants proactively. This, in turn, increases the level of understanding and compliance with the rules surrounding the process of nomination, campaigning, accepting contributions, spending, and reporting of political activities. The end result is more accurate and timely disclosure of these activities to the public.

Action: Timely compliance review of election returns

Election financial statements and returns of candidates are disclosed to the public when they are filed with Elections Manitoba. A compliance review of all statements and returns is required by law. Within two weeks of reporting election financial activities, Elections Manitoba completes its preliminary review of candidate returns. Recommended enhancements to the information filed and the development of efficient internal review systems will assist in timely review and disclosure.

Key Activities

- **Update guides**
- **Customized training sessions for new and returning staff**
- **Explore tools to enhance assistance**
- **Update internal review system**

5.5 Strategic Focus – Service

Enhancing service through effective use of technology and internal capabilities

At the heart of the election process lies the main driver of effective democratic participation – quality service. Elections Manitoba recognizes that technology is an enabler to deliver quality services and improve internal capabilities.

Serving a province as vast and diverse as Manitoba depends significantly on technology. Elections Manitoba is dedicated to developing new systems to leverage the thoughtful, secure and effective use of cutting edge technology – bringing the speed of transfer and accuracy of information to new levels.

Action: Define supporting and emerging technologies to support service delivery

Clearly articulated business strategies are critical to define the future path of technology. Developing a technology strategy for Elections Manitoba will ensure that technology investments align with the short and long term needs of the elections and that the systems in place support efficient service delivery.

Key Activities

- **Define Technology Strategy**
- **Prioritize enhancements**
- **Follow through on project management principles and business case protocol**
- **Stakeholder support**

6. Performance Measures

The following are the performance measures used by Elections Manitoba and which strategic focus area they are aligned with.

Performance Measures	Strategic Focus	Critical Success Factors
Elections Operations		
Complete, accurate, current voter list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments • Accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on enumeration efforts • Information verification techniques leveraged during enumeration and when data is entered
Positive voting experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Staff Development • Assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on the total of the effort and output of election field officials
Accessible voting locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Amendments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RO awareness of the importance of accessibility when selecting voting stations • Voting locations opening on time is dependent on the selection and training of election officials, and development of contingency plans by RO
Returning office management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Development • Assistance • Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on RO training on how to manage resources • Changes in processes or expectations within the RO office imposed by Elections Manitoba must be communicated to staff and executed effectively • Comprehensive, realistic project planning and adherence to deadlines
Elections Communication		
Outreach program target met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments • Accessibility • Awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on content and tailoring content to audience needs • Clear strategy and well-defined plans
Accurate public communication (website, public inquiry, campaign awareness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments • Accessibility • Awareness • Assistance • Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused, consistent message and a strategic approach to media buying • Focus on content and tailoring content to audience needs • Clear strategy and well-defined plans • Sufficient resources in place • Willingness and training of educators
Financial Administration		
Budget management (accurate and complete budget, timely reporting, variance management)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containment of administrative costs in conducting elections through efficiencies • Careful budgeting and close monitoring of election expenses • Consistent and effective communication • Sufficient in-depth training of staff

Performance Measures	Strategic Focus	Critical Success Factors
Campaign Finance		
Meet compliance legislative requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring EM staffing is adequate to review the number of election returns filed and respond to requests for information • Training of a sufficient number of compliance review staff • Effective advance preparation
Timely review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments • Assistance • Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring EM staffing is adequate to review the number of election returns filed and respond to requests for information • Training of a sufficient number of compliance review staff • Effective advance preparation
Information Technology		
Successful IT programs to meet Elections Manitoba requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service • Staff Development • Accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defined requirements and project priorities • Proper use of project change requirements and rigorous testing
Administration and Corporate		
Trained staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service • Staff Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and consistent internal communication regarding policies and requirements • Focus on sufficient in-depth training
Adequate resource and service support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service • Staff Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defined requirements documented by each department • Reconfigure space through needs analysis and availability • Proper support from vendors • Accurate tracking system of equipment for use during an election and the return of all equipment

7. Conclusion

7.1 A Vote of Confidence

Elections Manitoba is committed to conducting free, fair and accessible elections for all participants in Manitoba's electoral process. The culture reflects Manitoba's rich legacy of democratic values.

The strategic planning process employed is designed to keep the shared vision for the organization at the forefront while balancing what is realistic in terms of planning.

With this comprehensive strategic plan as a foundation, Elections Manitoba can prepare for the next provincial election with a clear vision and tactical plan – looking forward to putting into action the values of democracy through excellence in execution and fuelling a positive environment for all.

8. Contact Information

For more information regarding Elections Manitoba, please direct communications to:

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