

Session Title: Running for Municipal Office - Everything You Need to Know as an Underrepresented Candidate

Municipal Campaign Cheat Sheet

Your Campaign: The One-Page Guide for New Candidates

Your "Why" & Your Platform

- Define your core **reason for running** to guide all your decisions.
 - Identify **3-5 key issues** that matter most to you and your community.
 - Your "why" should be the **foundation of your platform** and your messaging.
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Building Your Team & Timeline

- Recruit a **small, dedicated team** (Campaign Manager, Financial Agent, volunteers).
 - Create a **realistic campaign timeline** with key milestones (e.g., nomination day, fundraising deadlines, election day).
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Effective Fundraising

- Start with a **clear budget** that outlines all estimated expenses.
 - Identify and approach potential donors by starting with your **personal network**.
 - Know the **municipal election financing rules** inside and out.
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Voter Engagement

- Develop a **concise door-knocking script** that introduces you and your platform.
 - Make a plan for **social media engagement**, focusing on consistent, authentic content.
 - Use your "why" to connect with voters on a **personal level**.
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Debate & Media Prep

- **Anticipate tough questions** and prepare your answers beforehand.
- Always stay on message and **be authentic** to who you are.
- Your goal is not to "win," but to **clearly communicate your vision**.

Understanding Roles in Office

- **Council (You):** Sets policies and direction for the municipality.
- **Staff:** Implements council's decisions and manages day-to-day operations.
- **CAO:** Serves as the primary link between council and staff.
- **Strong Mayor Powers:** Be aware of how new legislation may affect the traditional roles and dynamics of council.

Helpful Links:

- [AMO's Healthy Democracy Project](#)
- [AMO's Lead Where You Live Candidate Resource](#)
- [AMO's Healthy Democracy Project Candidate Research](#)
- [Candidate Support Catalogue in AMO's Local Democracy Solutions Bank](#)
- [Madoc 2022 Candidates' Guide](#)
- [Province of Ontario 2022 Candidates' Guide – Ontario municipal council and school board elections](#)