

March 15, 2025

Mayor and Council,
East Ferris

At a recent council meeting, the subject of voting methods was presented in a Report to Council and during the discussion surrounding the report and its recommendations, the issue of voter turnout and the decline of voter participation over the past three municipal elections from 33.3% (ON Avg 43.12%), to 30.45% (ON Avg – 38.29%) and most recently 23.45% (ON Avg – 32.9%) came up. One opinion voiced was that voter participation decline is a good thing and indicates resident satisfaction with council performance, and although in certain isolated circumstances that may be true, I believe overall, existing research indicates there are a multitude of reasons why people do not vote and satisfaction with performance is not one of them.

From what I can determine, the reasons for not voting are varied and may require efforts in a number of areas to increase participation, thereby increasing the legitimization of the election.

There are a few factors that may come into play before the 2026 election such as increased access to internet, increased accuracy of voters list now that Elections Ontario has taken it over from MPAC and a greater understanding of the consequences of not voting.

I would hope Council would endorse a pro-active effort similar to that of Innisfil, where they have formed a Committee with the following mandate

The Electoral Engagement Advisory Committee is a Committee of Council whose purpose is to review how the Town of Innisfil engages with its residents concerning municipal elections and to bring forward recommendations to Council on more effective ways to educate, encourage and enable voter and candidate participation in municipal elections.

<https://www.getinvolvedinnisfil.ca/elections>

Thanks for your consideration.

Phil Koning
Corbeil, ON