



**City of Rochester Hills
AGENDA SUMMARY
NON-FINANCIAL ITEMS**

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Legislative File No: 2023-0451

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Leanne Scott, City Clerk

DATE: September 25, 2023

SUBJECT: Agreement for Election Services (Early Voting)

REQUEST:

Request for Approval of the County Early Voting Site Agreement between Oakland County, the Charter Township of Oakland, and the City of Rochester Hills.

BACKGROUND:

The electors of the State of Michigan, at the November 8, 2022 General Election, passed Proposal 2 of 2022 amending the Michigan Constitution. Contained in Proposal 2 were many changes that affected Michigan Election Law, such as permanent mail ballots, requirements for drop boxes, and early voting. At the City Council Special meeting held on June 26, 2023, Deputy Clerk Brown and I gave a presentation to Council on the legislation introduced and passed by the Michigan legislature to implement Proposal 2. We also informed Council that Oakland County had offered to partner with local jurisdictions to establish Early Voting Sites throughout the County. Shortly after that presentation, on July 28, 2023, Governor Whitmer signed PA 81 of 2023. PA 81 of 2023 was not given immediate effect by the Michigan Legislature; therefore, any early voting conducted during the November 7, 2023 General Election is considered to be a pilot program in anticipation of early voting being required for all Federal and State elections beginning in 2024. It is my intent, as your City Clerk, to hold early voting for all future elections including local, State and Federal to avoid voter confusion.

In order to establish interest, the County conducted a survey to identify those communities willing to partner with them to establish an Early Voting Site. At this time, we are set to partner with Oakland Township and Oakland County.

On July 17th, Deputy Clerk Brown and I attended the Library Board meeting to request their authorization to utilize their multi-media room as our Early Voting Site through 2024, which they granted. We also attended a meeting with the Oakland County Elections Division on September 11th to review and discuss their Early Voting agreement with Rochester Hills and Oakland Township.

The proposed agreement for Election Services between Oakland County, the Charter Township of Oakland, and the City of Rochester Hills establishes an Early Voting Site to be located in the multi-media room at the Rochester Hills Public Library, 500 Olde Towne Rd., Rochester. This agreement has been reviewed by City Attorney John Staran to which he had no suggested changes or objections.

Registered voters of Oakland Township and Rochester Hills will be able to exercise their right to early vote for nine (9) consecutive days before each election. Early Voting for the November 7, 2023 General Election will begin on Saturday, October 28th and will conclude on Sunday, November 5th. The hours of operation have been set for 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day, with the exception of Thursday being 12:00 p.m. to 8:00

p.m. These hours were established by Oakland County and will be consistent across all Early Voting Sites that are part of an agreement with Oakland County.

Partnering with the County means that Oakland County would be responsible for purchasing and testing Early Voting Site election equipment, hiring and training Early Voting Site Election Inspectors, and appointing the Oakland County Elections Director as the Early Voting Site Coordinator. In this partnership, the Clerks of each partnering community will serve as the Site Supervisor, overseeing the daily operations at the Early Voting Site during all early voting hours. We have compiled a list of interested election inspectors and will provide that list to Oakland County for training and scheduling to work at the Rochester Hills/Oakland Township Early Voting Site.

The State of Michigan will provide grant funding to Counties for the purchase of election equipment, election software, \$15.00 per hour pay for each Election Inspector, and election supplies. Each municipality in the agreement with Oakland County will be responsible for 50% of the costs associated with Election Inspector pay over \$15.00. Oakland County has set the Early Voting Election Inspector pay at \$18.00 per hour. For the November 2023 General Election Rochester Hills will be responsible for the difference of \$3.00 per hour as we are the only community holding an election. Next year, in 2024, Rochester Hills and Oakland Township will split the \$3.00 pay difference, as well as any facility rental costs and any notices that need to be mailed or published by the County.

Most municipalities in Oakland County have expressed interest in partnering with the County for Early Voting. Pursuant to PA 81 of 2023, the decision to enter into the agreement ultimately lies with the governing bodies of the municipalities. The proposed Oakland County Agreement has no expiration date, however, PA81 establishes that county-local agreements cannot be terminated within 150 days of any Election, and a 30-day notice is required to terminate. Every two years, in December of an even-year, the City of Rochester Hills would have an opt-out window, providing we give a 30-day notice. Once that window closes, the City would remain in the agreement until the next even-year December when the opt-out window opens again. Should the City of Rochester Hills choose to terminate the agreement, the City Clerk would need to immediately create an Early Voting Plan specific to the City of Rochester Hills and provide it to the Michigan Secretary of State. At that time, the City of Rochester Hills would also need to procure the necessary election equipment, software and supplies, as well as secure a location within the City to operate a stand-alone Early Voting Center for the electors of the City of Rochester Hills.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the Agreement for Election Services (Early Voting) between Oakland County, the Charter Township of Oakland, and the City of Rochester Hills.

APPROVALS:	SIGNATURE	DATE
Department Review		
Department Director		
Mayor		
City Clerk		

Contract Reviewed by City Attorney Yes N/A