Running in Place:
Overcoming Barriers for Women in
Canadian Municipal Politics

by

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Abstract

This paper explores ways that Canadian municipal governments can increase the number of women who run for Mayor and City Councilor positions. I first provide an overview of barriers for women's political representation in Canada and an analysis of the current gender gap at the municipal level. I then outline my research, which consists of interviews both with women elected as Mayors and City Councilors in Canada as well as with subject matter experts. Based on these interviews the major barrier identified for women is a negative political environment, namely through gendered comments and assumptions. My research leads to five policy options which are analyzed using standardized criteria and measures. I conclude that gender-equity mandates for municipal boards and advisory committees is the best option for increasing the number of women who run for municipal office; this would happen via skill-building and making the political culture more welcoming to women.

Keywords: gender; municipal government; politics; gender-equity

This paper is dedicated to the next generation of young women who will one day become leaders in all levels of government. As more research is done – and its findings implemented – into ways to make politics a more accessible and welcoming space for women, I hope to see more and more bright women taking on this role.

This paper is also dedicated to my classmates in the MPP class of 2016. All of your support, thoughtfulness, analysis, humour, and most of all mutual respect have made the past two years such a positive and encouraging learning environment.

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

Policy Problem and Research Objectives

Though women in Canada have been legally able to run for political office for almost one hundred years, women still remain severely underrepresented at all levels. As of 2015, women comprised 26 percent of legislators at the federal level, 25.7 percent of legislators at the provincial level, and 23 percent of legislators at the municipal level.

Municipal politics is often considered more accessible for women than the provincial or federal levels. However, the statistics show that in Canada women are not achieving higher representation at the municipal level. Previous research has identified that the issue is not voter behaviour: the public tends to vote for women as much as, if not more than, for men. My policy problem is therefore that there are too few women running for municipal offices in Canada. I focus on the offices of Mayor and City Councilor.

The objective of this Capstone is to explore what barriers and challenges exist for women at the municipal level, and to analyze various ways municipal governments could encourage more women to run for municipal offices.

Methodology

My research involves three parts. First, an extensive literature review describes the common barriers identified for women at all levels of politics and explores whether these barriers disappear or remain at the municipal level. The literature review also includes data on the number of women elected at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels in Canada from the years 2000 to 2015 to gain an understanding of current trends.

Second, I conducted interviews both with women elected to Mayor or City Councilor positions in Canada as well as with experts in this field. I interviewed six women elected as City Councilors and one woman elected as Mayor; these women were elected in Victoria, Vancouver, Surrey, Calgary, Saskatoon, and Regina. In these interviews, I explored the barriers and motivations these women experienced in their political journeys,

how they conceive of political accessibility for women, and ways to encourage more women to run for office at the municipal level.

I also interviewed three experts in this field. Interviews were conducted with representatives of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Canadian Women Voters Congress, and Equal Voice. These interviewees were asked their opinions of political accessibility for women, and also asked to provide feedback on a number of specific policy options municipal governments could implement to encourage more women to run for office.

Research Findings

Most of my interviewees agreed that the municipal level is not currently more accessible for women than the provincial or federal levels. However, most felt that action can and should be taken to address the gender gap. The biggest barrier identified by elected women was negative gendered assumptions and sexist comments that these women faced both on the campaign trail and once in office. Negative attitudes and behaviours toward women's abilities, ages, appearances, and communication styles were all prevalent. These experiences show that municipal politics may still not be a welcoming space for women. The expert interviewees also agreed that this political culture aspect is a major barrier for women.

Policy Options and Recommendation

I analyzed five policy options available to municipal governments. These options were derived from the literature review or from my own research. The five options are: mentorship programs for young women; campaign finance reform to level the playing field in campaigns; municipal gender-equity mandates for advisory committees and boards; greater education at the elementary level about municipal governance; and direct provision of campaign funds to women. Two other options discussed, but not included in my final analysis, deal with political parties and at-large versus ward-based electoral systems.

The five options are analyzed using standardized criteria and measures. Criteria used are effectiveness, equity, cost, administrative complexity, and public acceptance. Measuring each option in multiple ways enables a comprehensive assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each option as well as their trade-offs when compared to each other.

I recommend that municipal gender-equity mandates are the best option for municipal governments looking to encourage more women to run for office. This option would entail governments mandating that their existing advisory committees and boards work to attain equal numbers of women and men. This option addresses the biggest barrier identified in my research, that of the unwelcoming political culture, in two ways. First, it will ensure more women are present in municipal decision-making spaces, which will begin to shift the political culture as it becomes more normal to have more women involved in these spaces. Second, it will build the skills and capacities of the women involved in these committees and boards, such that these women will better understand how municipal policy-making works and what issues they can take action on. This option will therefore likely lead to more women feeling safe, confident, and supported in running for elected positions.

Chapter 1.   Introduction

1.1. Policy problem

In Canada today, men and women account for almost exactly half the population each (Statistics Canada, 2015a). Many Canadians like to consider ourselves proponents of gender equity and feel we are an equal society. In fact, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has openly declared himself to be a feminist (King, 2015).

However, women remain severely underrepresented in Canadian politics. As of 2015's federal election women make up 26 percent of Members of Parliament, which is just a one percent increase from 2011 (Anderssen, 2015). Canada is ranked 60th in the world for percentage of national women legislators (IPU, 2016). As of 2015, women legislators comprised 25.7 percent of provincial legislators in Canada and 23 percent of municipal governments (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2015a).

While these numbers have been increasing over time, they still remain sadly short of gender parity. This gap has prompted many researchers to investigate the reasons why women's participation in formal politics remains so low, especially in a country which often touts its commitments to inclusion and equality.

Much research has subsequently found that the issue is not gender bias; people do vote for women. In fact, Canadians may vote for women even more willingly than for men. Siegel, Kushner, and Stanwick (2001) found that women running for mayor or city councilor in large Canadian municipalities enjoyed a slight preference from voters; Bourgeois and Strain (2009) came to the same conclusion when studying municipal elections in New Brunswick. More recently, Lore, Beauvais, and James-Lomax (2014) found that women candidates in British Columbian municipalities were more likely to win than their male counterparts. As well, a 2004 poll found that 90 percent of Canadians said

they wanted more women in politics (Wicks and Lang-Dion, 2007).The issue, then, is not convincing the electorate to vote for women, as when women run they are likely to fare well. The issue is getting more women to run in the first place.

Given this predominant finding, research has begun to unpack the barriers and incentives to women running for politics in Canada. However, much of this research has focused on the federal and provincial levels, while the municipal level has received relatively less attention. Municipal politics differs in some significant ways from the other levels of government, as will be explored below. More research therefore needs to be focused municipally to better understand the specific dynamics happening at this level for women (Gidengil and Vengroff, 1997; Tremblay and Mévellec, 2013).

With this in mind, my policy problem is that there are too few women running for municipal offices in Canada.

1.2. Objective of my Capstone

The objective of my Capstone is to help fill the research gap on the lack of women in municipal politics in Canada. I investigate the barriers that exist for women who want to enter municipal politics; some of these are the same barriers as for provincial and federal politics, but some are unique to the municipal level. I ultimately explore options to make municipal politics more accessible and attractive for women. I focus on the positions of Mayor and City Councilor.

1.3. Overview of my paper

Chapter 2 provides a background to studying women in politics, including an overview of what is meant by the category of 'women' for the purposes of my paper, why gender parity is important, and an analysis of the gap remaining for women at the municipal level. Chapter 3 provides an extensive literature review on the barriers for women at all levels of politics and the theories proposed for why the municipal level should remove many of those barriers. Chapter 4 explains the methodology used for this

research. Chapters 5 and 6 provide the results of my qualitative data collection. Based on my results, Chapters 7 to 11 lay out my analysis of policy options for increasing women's representation in municipal politics as well as my recommendation and conclusion.

Chapter 2.   Background

2.1. The category of 'women'

Before I delve into my research, it is important to lay out the assumptions I am making about 'women' in my analysis. A broad investigation of gender construction as well as how intersectional identities affect political participation is not possible within this paper. However, these topics are extremely important as they underpin my analysis.

Much work has been done analyzing and critiquing the construction of gender in modern Canadian and North American culture (see for example Butler 1990, 2004). Though this paper does not explore these themes, their analyses of sex and gender are relevant. Sex refers to the biological characteristics one is born with, while gender refers to cultural and social roles and identities that one takes on (Newman and White, 2006). The process of gendering is social, and over time women have been gendered in a separate and subordinate position to men (Newman and White, 2006). As Newman and White point out: "That men are defined as normal and women as peculiar is significant because it denotes that men are the 'universal norm' or the 'subject'. Women are by definition not men…they are the 'other' and therefore outside the norm." (2006, 11).

This raises important points about women's participation in politics. First, these ideas of gender were the reason that women could not initially vote or run for office in Canada, and indeed still continue to be cut out of the political process in many countries today. Women were not considered 'persons' under the law in Canada until 1929 (Newman and White, 2006). This societal underpinning of women as 'less than' or 'different from' men may still be playing out in the political gender gap.

Second, the construction of gender has implications for how women are documented as part of the Canadian political process. If we are counting the number of women running for or attaining political office, how are we defining what a woman is? My analysis here does not include special recognition of transgender women or those who identify outside of the gender binary. Future research should include these identities in order to break down the strict definition of 'woman' and better understand how people of

all genders are represented in politics. However, for the purposes of this study I refer only to the general category of 'woman', and I rely on my research participants' self-identification as women.

Finally, it is also important to note that my research does not take into account identities beyond gender. Class, ethnicity, religion, ability, immigration status, and sexual orientation, to name a few, often intersect to pose more barriers, especially to entering an elite position such as elected representative (Andrew et al., 2008). There still exists "an archetype of the Canadian elected official – male, White, middle-class, middle-aged, Christian, Canadian-born, and majority-language speaking" (Andrew et al., 2008, 255). My analysis risks replicating this same idea of an elected official, with only the first marker switched out for 'female'. My research therefore does not use an intersectional lens; however, the experiences of women documented in my research are still important.

2.2. Descriptive and substantive representation

Another important facet of my analysis that needs to be clarified is the difference between descriptive and substantive representation of women in politics. Studying descriptive representation means focusing on the numbers of women elected, while studying substantive representation means assessing to what extent women's issues – a complex topic in itself – are represented. My project here focuses on descriptive representation, but there are important reasons to consider substantive representation as well.

Pitkin (1967) first explored these classifications in her book The Concept of Representation. She explains these primarily as the difference between "standing for" and "acting for" (11). She defines descriptive representation as "the making present of something absent by resemblance or reflection", and she defines substantive representation (which she first called "symbolic representation") as that "in which no resemblance or reflection is required and the connection to what is represented is of a different kind" (1967, 11). In terms of women in politics, descriptive representation refers to women being elected, and substantive representation refers to people of any gender who 'act for' women's causes and interests while in office.

Achieving descriptive representation for women in politics is important as it brings attention to the worthiness and capabilities of women. As Trimble and Arscott (2003) explain: "Women count in electoral politics, as in life in general, when their presence creates general public expectations about what they merit. *To count is to matter*. It means being important, worthy of being taken into account" (33-34, emphasis added).

Substantive representation, on the other hand, goes beyond women themselves and focuses instead on policy issues. Anyone can "act for" women without needing to be a woman themselves– without needing the "resemblance" Pitkin describes (1967, 11). However, this requires a definition of 'women's issues' on which representatives could be said to be acting. Research shows that women in politics may put more of an emphasis on family matters, the environment, gender equality, child policies, and sexual issues (Dahlerup, 1988). However, different issues will matter to different women. Though there is a possibility for women to share similar political goals and agendas based on similar socialization and experiences, there is no guarantee that women will all think the same way or necessarily all be feminists (Mackay, 2008). And in fact, a study of Canadian women in federal politics found that women across partisan lines considered themselves to be feminists while simultaneously holding different definitions of what that meant (Tremblay and Pelletier, 2003). It is therefore difficult to know how exactly someone could 'act for' women, since there is not a specific set of issues that comprise 'women's issues'.

Nevertheless, substantive representation is important as it recognizes that not only women will be interested in and take action on issues of gender equity and other so-called 'women's issues'. It recognizes that people of other genders can also make important contributions in these policy areas. As well, some have argued that descriptive representation is needed before substantive representation can begin to occur (Tolley, 2011).

2.3. Why gender parity is needed

This project focuses on descriptive representation by counting the numbers of women in municipal politics in Canada and proposing ways to increase these numbers. There are a number of reasons gender parity is necessary.

First, a lack of women in elected bodies affects the democratic legitimacy of these bodies. John Stuart Mill championed this theory when he argued that a political system must reflect the society and its electors in order to be considered truly democratic (cited in Godwin, 2010). Since women comprise about half of the Canadian population, a truly democratic government would require something much closer to gender parity. Trimble and Arscott (2003, 3) have described this problem as a "democratic deficit" in Canada; they argue that the continued inequality of women in many social, economic, and political arenas creates a gap in the democratic system which diminishes its effectiveness and legitimacy.

Additionally, the United Nations argues that a threshold of 30 percent of women legislators is needed in order to ensure that public policy reflects the needs of women (Wicks and Lang-Dion, 2007). While in practice the specific percentage may vary, this speaks to needing a critical mass of women in politics. This research suggests that when only one or a few women are present in political arenas very little can change, but when women reach a significant threshold of the elected members they can enact substantial change (Trimble and Arscott, 2003).

Furthermore, research shows that having women in politics does produce different process and policy outcomes. Women can bring a more collaborative and cooperative approach to politics, which could lead to improved functioning of governments (Sawer, 2000; Godwin, 2010). Organizations as diverse as UNICEF and the World Bank have also called for more women legislators: UNICEF says women produce better policies to fight child poverty, while the World Bank argues governments with more women are more productive (cited in Equal Voice, 2007). There are also larger social benefits to women's increased political participation; these include the reduction in stereotyping of women's abilities and the creation of new public role models (Dahlerup, 1988).

Finally, gender equity is a legally-enshrined value in Canada. Canada has signed on to both the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* and the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);* both of these conventions enshrine women's right to equal representation (Sawer, 2000). Canada also

created the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* which ensures all citizens have the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law (Government of Canada, 2013).

2.4. Women in municipal politics in Canada

This section provides an overview of how women are faring in municipal politics in Canada, as compared with the federal and provincial levels.

Figure 1 below shows the percentage of women elected officials over the years 2000-2015[1]. As Figure 1 shows, the percentage of women elected to federal, provincial, and municipal seats has been relatively similar over the past 15 years.

Figure 1:   Percent of women legislators in Canada, 2000-2015
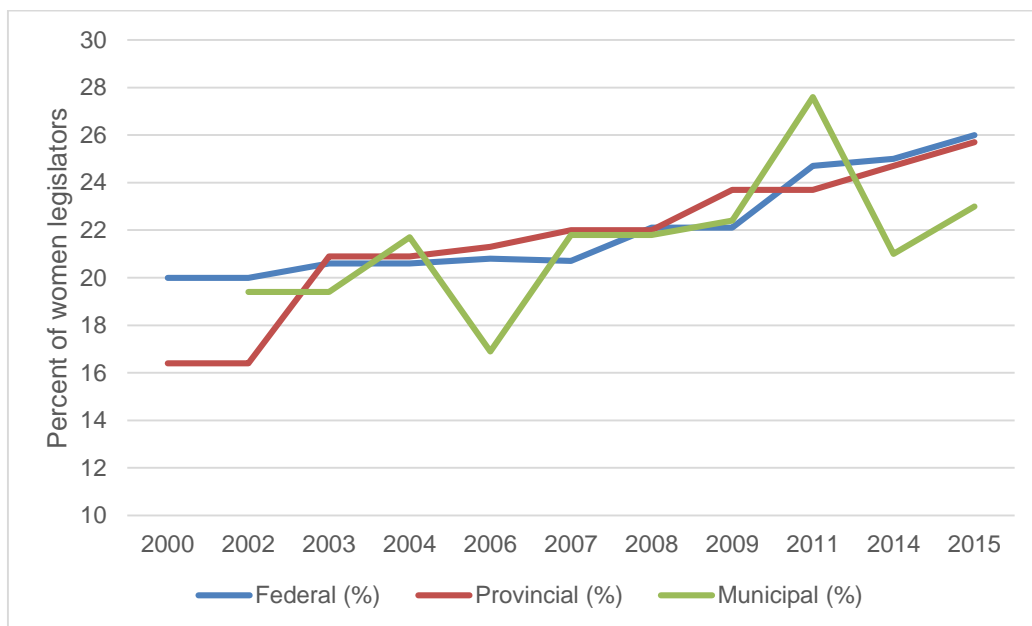
Adapted from Tolley (2011); other sources: CBC (2006, 2015), Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2006, 2015), Cool (2011), Equal Voice (2014).

While the municipal level has historically reached a higher point that the other two levels (27.6 percent in 2011), overall the trends indicate that the municipal level has been

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[1] To view this data in table form, see Appendix A.

very similar to the provincial and federal levels in terms of women's representation. As of 2015, women were actually less represented municipally than at the other two levels.

This shows that the assumption that the municipal level is inherently more accessible to women is false. Some aspects of municipal governance may be more accessible for women, such as elected school and park boards[2]. However, when considering the positions of Mayor and City Councilor the municipal level is not more accessible for women. More research is needed to understand what is happening here since some of the most common electoral barriers should be missing at the municipal level (Tolley, 2011).

It is for this reason that I chose to title this Capstone "Running in Place". This phrase has two connotations which, taken together, encapsulate the problem for women in Canadian municipal politics. The first is that the municipal level is the place these women already live; within their municipalities are their communities, their neighbours, their lives. Running for office at this level would seem to be a more welcoming and accessible space. However, the second connotation of this phrase is that there is not significant forward motion on this issue. As shown above, in 2002 the percent of women elected at the local level was 19.4 percent and in 2015 it was 23 percent. Though fluctuations have occurred, overall the upward trend is extremely slow. My research will attempt to elucidate what barriers remain for women at the municipal level and recommend ways municipalities can work to overcome them.

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[2] A focus on school and park boards is beyond the scope of this paper, as this paper focuses only on Mayor and City Councilor positions.

Chapter 3.   Literature Review

In this chapter, I first explain the most prominent barriers that are deemed to restrict women's participation in all levels of government. I then explore the common reasons cited for why the municipal political level is thought to be more accessible for women, and show how these theories often do not accurately explain the gender gap in Canadian municipal politics.

3.1. Barriers for women entering politics

3.1.1.   Childcare and domestic labour

Women are still more likely than men to be seen as principally responsible for caregiving and domestic labour (Cool, 2011; Equal Voice, 2007). Women in Canada "perform double the number of hours of unpaid childcare work as do men, they are three times as likely to take time off work for family reasons, and they are more than ten times as likely to cite childcare as a reason for not working full time" (McInturff, 2014a).

Being a political representative often involves long and unpredictable days as well as extensive travel if the representative is at the provincial or federal level; these tasks would be difficult for a women if she is also expected to be caring for children and the household. These factors can often dissuade women from seeking political office (Sawer, 2000; Godwin, 2010). The lack of accommodation for caregiving can also limit women's opportunities for career advancement within politics (Trimble and Arscott, 2003).

3.1.2.   Education and work

Education and work can also be barriers for women given the concept of the "professionalization of politics" (Sawer, 2000, 374). This term reflects the trend that prestigious professions such as law, business, and paid party work are the most common professions for political candidates. Though in general more women in the workforce leads to more women in politics (Sawer, 2000; Godwin, 2010), less women in Canada are represented in these prestigious professions that are seen as the "eligibility pool" for

potential candidates (Clark, 1991, 72). As of February 2016, men make up 58 percent of the professional services industry in Canada, which includes law and management (Statistics Canada, 2016).

More women today are attending and graduating from prestigious professional programs such as law, medicine, and business; therefore, the argument goes, in time more women will naturally take over leadership positions. However, acceptance and graduation rates do not tell the whole story of women's professional experiences. For example, a recent report from the Law Society of British Columbia (2009) found that of all women called to the bar in BC in 2003, only 66 percent retained practicing status in 2008 compared with 80 percent of men called the same year. Women are also less likely to be partners at law firms across Canada (Law Society of British Columbia, 2009). Similar research has also found that women in other prestigious professions are less likely to be promoted to senior management positions (McInturff, 2014b). Combined, these trends often mean women are less likely to be seen as competent candidates, either by themselves or their peers.

3.1.3. Political culture

Political culture is another barrier identified in previous literature. This problem may stem from archaic social expectations in which women are still expected to be passive and non-confrontational while men are active and goal-oriented, which therefore leads to politics not being seen as an appropriate arena for women (Clark, 1991). A woman may be called bossy or aggressive simply for stating her opinion in a straightforward manner, while her male colleagues are heralded as assertive leaders for displaying the same behavior (McInturff, 2014a). 'Old boys clubs' may also make women feel unwelcome, as women are still largely seen as outsiders intruding into a men's world (Trimble and Arscott, 2003).

This problem plays out in the media as well. The media is more likely to refer to women by their first names, rather than their official title or their last names, which downplays their contributions and capabilities as serious politicians (Godwin, 2010). Women are also more likely to be asked questions about their clothing or hair instead of

their policies (McInturff, 2014a). These gendered and sexist assumptions can have real impacts for women's career advancement in politics. In a 1997 Angus Reid poll of 102 Canadian women politicians, most said patriarchal attitudes constrained their political careers (cited in Trimble and Arscott, 2003).

Furthermore, the current political culture in Canada may not be attractive to some women. Canadian politics can be very oppositional and divisive, with opponents focusing more on attacking each other rather than on cooperation among all interested groups. Some women may instead desire a space more conducive to cooperation, and may therefore feel the political arena is not for them (Sawer, 2000).

Finally, the perpetuation of this political culture may cause women to be unprepared for political activity. Girls are often socialized not to be interested in politics (Newman and White, 2006). Combined with these other elements of an unwelcoming culture, women may rule out not only politics but also politics-related careers, as explored above, such as law (Newman and White, 2006). Women may therefore be unprepared and unknowledgeable about running for office, even if they do become interested later in life (Newman and White, 2006).

3.1.4. Campaign resources

Financing a campaign in Canada can be very expensive, depending on the jurisdiction. In particular, having "early money" can be vital to a campaign such that candidates can gain name recognition and build a campaign team (Ballington and Kahane, 2014, 305). Having such funding can often pose more of a barrier for women than for men (Equal Voice, 2007; Cool, 2011; Ballington and Kahane, 2014). Canadian women still earn less income than do men: women working full time and full year in Canada earn 72 percent of what men make (Lambert and McInturff, 2016). Further, women in Canada outspend men by up to 10 percent on campaigns; this is due to extra costs incurred for women's greater childcare and household responsibilities as well as to overcome male incumbency or negative perceptions about women (United Nations Development Programme, 2007).

Political campaigns also require other types of resources such as time and social capital. In order to foster social capital in the community, candidates need to have time to

attend community events, volunteer with local initiatives, and become well-known to voters. Since women are still expected to do much of the domestic work, as discussed above, women are less likely to have the time and ability to make such investments in the community. This makes it more difficult for women to gain broad name recognition and support among potential voters.

3.1.5. Political parties

Political parties have also been identified as a barrier for women. Political parties add one more step before women can attain office: not only do women need to convince the voters to choose them, but they also need to convince the political party elites that they are the right candidate to successfully represent the party (Gavan-Koop and Smith, 2008). In Canada, some cities as well as all provinces and the federal system use political parties. Constituency party associations are often the gatekeepers for determining which candidates would make the best nominee (Tremblay and Pelletier, 2001). The "professionalization of politics", mentioned above, may mean that local party associations and members may not vote for women who come from less-prestigious backgrounds (Tremblay and Pelletier, 2001).

3.1.6. Incumbency

Incumbents often have higher levels of fundraising, name recognition, and past experience with which they can appeal to voters (Clark, 1991). The fact that many more men than women are currently in elected positions means men will benefit more from incumbency, making it harder for women to break in to these positions.

This problem has been documented at the municipal level as well. Research by Gidengil and Vengroff (1997) of municipalities in Quebec revealed that a high level of male incumbency significantly reduced the odds that there would be even one woman on city council. In their words, "the more men seek a second (or third) term, the fewer opportunities there are for women to gain even token representation" (1997, 533). In addition, Siegel, Kushner, and Stanwick (2001) found that incumbency had a major effect on mayoral races in Canada: they concluded that incumbent mayors had a success rate

of 83.9 percent compared with challenger mayors at 10.4 percent success rate. Since they also found that most mayors have been men, this poses an extra barrier for women seeking mayoral seats.

3.1.7.   Electoral system

Related to incumbency is the issue of the electoral system. First-past-the-post systems, in which the winner is simply the person who gains the most votes, favour incumbents over challengers (Godwin, 2010). In Canada, the federal, provincial, and most municipal systems use first-past-the-post (Tremblay and Mévellec, 2013). On the other hand, systems such as proportional representation are often better for women for two reasons. First, competiveness is lower when voters can choose more than one candidate as they can in most forms of proportional representation. Second, in systems with political parties, lists are often used to indicate all of the party's candidates. By listing all candidates, voters can easily tell how gender-balanced each party's list is. According to the theory of contagion, parties will be pressured to adopt a policy if other parties adopt it first; therefore, once a few major parties begin to run gender-equal lists, all other parties will likely follow suit (Godwin, 2010). This creates more opportunities for women to run. Therefore, first-past-the-post systems are less likely to have as many women representatives (Godwin, 2010).

3.2. Advantages of municipal politics for women

It has been theorized that barriers for women may be less significant at the municipal level (Tolley, 2011). While there are some ways in which the municipal level is more accessible for women, other theories do not hold up against Canadian evidence. I outline each of these theories briefly.

3.2.1.   Less travel and distance required

At the municipal political level there is less travel or distance required to get to one's elected office. Many theorists argue that this should make the municipal level better for women (Brodie, 1985; Gidengil and Vengroff, 1997; Tremblay and Mévellec, 2013).

Provincial and federal politics require the elected representative to not only travel but also potentially live part-time in a different city; if someone is a primary caregiver or housekeeper, that sort of commitment becomes difficult. As such, it would seem that municipal politics is more conducive to women's multiple responsibilities. Though this argument does rely on assuming that all or most women have children or provide the majority of the domestic labour in their households, based on the literature it remains a viable explanation for why the municipal level in Canada may be more appealing to women.

3.2.2.   Lack of political parties

Most Canadian municipalities do not have political parties. Political parties are thought to pose a barrier for women, as discussed above; therefore, the absence of political parties is seen to be positive for women's representation. Without political parties, women are able to run without having to first get endorsement from a party, and they can also run their campaigns with more freedom.

On the other hand, the lack of political parties may also be a barrier for women. By not having political parties, women need to instead rely only on themselves for name-recognition and campaign finances (Gidengil and Vengroff, 1997). Furthermore, political parties often, through having a large membership and more salience with the general public, may be under pressure to actively encourage more women to run as candidates. By not having political parties, there may be no one to call attention to a need for more women candidates (Gidengil and Vengroff, 1997).

In two Canadian studies, the presence of political parties was found to have no effect on the number of women elected (Gidengil and Vengroff, 1997; Bourgeois and Strain, 2009). A third study concluded that in the Metro Vancouver area fewer women were elected in municipalities with political parties (Gavan-Koop and Smith, 2008). The evidence is inconclusive as to the effect of municipal political parties on women's representation.

3.2.3. Electoral system not an issue

While the electoral system is a barrier for women provincially and federally, it is not seen as a problem for women at the local level. However, the local electoral system can still pose a barrier for women in a number of ways.

Most Canadian cities use first-past-the-post voting systems, regardless of if councilors are elected at-large or by ward (Tremblay and Mévellec, 2013). The problems that this system creates for the provincial and federal levels, mentioned above, will therefore likely remain at the municipal level.

However, there is little research to date on the exact effect first-past-the-post has at the municipal level (Tremblay and Mévellec, 2013). Gidengil and Vengroff (1997) find no compelling evidence that women's representation at the municipal level is significantly affected by the type of electoral system. Meanwhile, Bashevkin (2006) finds that a higher proportion of women municipal legislators in London, UK as compared with Toronto was due in part to London's partial proportionality voting system. Similarly, Sampert (2008) concludes that Edmonton's past system of electing two councilors per ward – therefore, approximating a more proportional system, and providing more opportunities for women candidates to be successful – may explain why Edmonton had more women councilors than did Calgary at that time. However, in 2009 Edmonton changed to a traditional ward system with one Councilor per ward (CBC, 2009); the implications of this change for women's representation are not yet clear.[3] The existing research is therefore inconclusive as to how municipal electoral systems affect women's representation.

3.2.4. Lower cost for campaigns

Municipal campaigns are often assumed to be less expensive than provincial or federal campaigns. Women would therefore seem more likely to be on an equal playing field to men at this level, even if women are making less income on average. However, it

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[3]. In the two election cycles before changing from two to one Councilors per ward, Edmonton had five and then three women City Councilors out of twelve seats (City of Edmonton, 2013). In the two election cycles since making the change, Edmonton had five and then one woman Councilor elected (City of Edmonton, 2013). It is likely still too soon to tell the exact effect this change has had on women's representation.

is not certain that municipal campaigns are less expensive, especially when candidates must finance their own campaigns without the assistance of political parties (Tremblay and Mévellec, 2013).

Gavan-Koop and Smith (2008) point out that in British Columbia there are no limits on candidate spending. They argue that costs of campaigns increase over time in the absence of spending limits, meaning campaigns could still be prohibitively expensive for women. Furthermore, they find that in British Columbia a campaign for a city council seat could cost $5000 to $8000, while a campaign for Mayor could cost closer to $50,000 (Gavan-Koop and Smith, 2008). In the City of Vancouver's 2014 election, the party Vision Vancouver spent more than $3.3 million on their campaign for all their 24 candidates (Canadian Press, 2015). Similarly, MacDermid (2009) finds that in Toronto the average expenditure for councilors was $48,500, and two candidates spent over $100,000 each. In the 2010 Calgary election, the average winning councilor spent over $94,000 (Bratt, 2013). These expenses may prove too much for women to take on.[4]

Furthermore, incumbents often have an advantage when it comes to fundraising due to their greater name recognition and experience. Young and Austin (2008) found that incumbents in Calgary outspent their challengers by a margin of six to one, while incumbents in Toronto outspent their challengers by over three to one.

3.2.5.   "Professionalization of politics" not a problem

As described above, the 'professionalization of politics' can be a barrier to women as women are less likely to come from an academic or business background. The

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[4] For reference, these expenses do not vary greatly from expenses in provincial or federal elections. For example, in British Columbia the limit for candidates during the campaign period of the 2013 election was $73,218 (Elections BC, 2013). In Ontario, candidates can spend $1.28 per elector, which would roughly translate to total spending of $162,691 per candidate (Elections Ontario, 2015). In Saskatchewan, candidates can spend $58,043 in most constituencies, and $77,388 in Northern constituencies (Elections SK, 2016). Alberta does not have limits on campaign spending. Federally, before 2015's Fair Elections Act candidates could spend approximately $100,000; now, they can spend approximately $200,000 (Maloney and Raj, 2015).

municipal level is often considered to be less elitist and more open to candidates of all backgrounds.

However, this may not be the case. In a study looking at Canadian mayors from 1982 to 1997, Siegal, Kushner, and Stanwick (2001) found that over 80 percent of mayors had post-secondary education. They also found that half of the mayors were in business-related employment before entering politics; the number jumps to almost two-thirds when law is included.

3.2.6. Less competition at the municipal level

Finally, municipal politics is considered less competitive than provincial or federal politics, and therefore easier for women to obtain entry into (Tremblay and Mévellec, 2013). Gidengil and Vengroff (1997) further explain that the limited geographic scope and low prestige of municipal politics combine to keep competition lower than other levels. A city council seat, relative to a Member of Parliament seat, typically lacks power, status, and financial benefits and therefore will be less appealing to men and so less competitive (Gidengil and Vengroff, 1997). Based on the existing literature, this remains a viable theory for municipal politics being more accessible for women.

Chapter 4.   Methodology

My primary research seeks to illuminate more about the above-identified barriers for women, as well as investigate ways to overcome them.

This study uses qualitative research methods. Interviews were conducted with elected women as well as with experts in this field.

4.1. Interviews with women in municipal politics

Interviews were conducted with women elected as Mayors and City Councilors in Canada. The purpose of these interviews was to better understand what women's experiences are while running for and holding office in Canadian municipalities. Given the challenges unique to municipal politics, it is important to include the experiences of women who have served at this specific level.

 I sought interviews with women who a) are currently City Councilors or Mayors in Canada, or b) have been City Councilors or Mayors in Canada within the last 15 years. Due to the relatively slow turnover of this job since elections are generally every 3-5 years, a scope of 15 years allows me to understand the most recent issues and trends for women in these positions. I also chose to focus on women in urban centres of major economic and/or geographic importance, such as capital cities or economic hubs.

Additionally, I attempted to obtain a diverse pool of candidates. I sought interviews with women from various ethnic backgrounds and ages; women both with and without caregiving responsibilities; women from various cities and with varying levels of political experience; and women who were part of political parties as well as those who were not. A full list of the criteria I considered for interviewees can be found in Appendix B.

Potential interviewees were contacted via email. Consent was obtained prior to each interview. Interviews were done either in person or over the phone, depending on the location of the interviewee. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. I used a semi-structured interview format for these interviews in order to encourage open

discussion from interviewees, while also allowing me to guide the conversation. My list of interview questions is provided in Appendix C.

In total, seven interviews were completed with women Mayors and City Councilors. One interview was completed per person. These women held office in Victoria, Vancouver, Surrey, Calgary, Regina, and Saskatoon.

4.2. Interviews with experts

Interviews were also conducted with experts in this field. Both academics and representatives of non-governmental advocacy organizations were contacted. These experts were contacted via email.

The goal of these interviews was to collect the best practices these organizations and academics recommend. When I conducted these interviews I had completed my other data collection and begun to consider policy options, so these experts provided feedback as to the feasibility and effectiveness of various options.

Interviews were conducted with representatives of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Canadian Women Voters Congress, and Equal Voice. The FCM is a national organization focusing on local government issues, while the latter two are advocacy organizations promoting more women in elected office. The Equal Voice representative is also a Ph.D. candidate conducting research on women in politics internationally, so an academic perspective was also included.

Two interviews were conducted in person, and one was conducted over the phone. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Interviews followed a structured format. These interview questions are provided in Appendix D.

The consent form that was used for interviews with both elected women and experts is provided in Appendix E.

4.3. Limitations of my research

Though this research was undertaken diligently, a number of limitations constrain my conclusions. These limitations have to do with my data collection, general limitations for qualitative research, and assumptions I make in my policy evaluation.

First, self-selection for my interviews with elected women is a major limitation. While I contacted a number of elected women and tried to seek out a diverse pool of women, it is likely that the women who replied to my request were those who already agree that gender equity in politics is an important issue. There may be elected women who don't think this issue is pertinent, and if so they likely did not view my interview request as a priority.

Another limitation is that many of my interviews are with elected women in British Columbia. British Columbia has a somewhat unique political landscape as traditionally more women have been elected in municipalities in this province. As of 2015, 36 percent of councilors and 28 percent of mayors in the province were women; this represented the second highest percent of women councilors and the highest percent of women mayors in the country (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2015a). Therefore, the conditions in which women in this province run for office may be different from those in other provinces, and the experiences these women shared with me may also be different.

Furthermore, the timing of my interview requests may be a limitation. I began contacting these women to secure interviews in late October 2015, leaving only approximately one month before the hectic holiday season begins. If I had contacted elected women at a less busy time of year, it is possible more women may have been available for interviews.

Second, this research faces limitations that other qualitative research also faces. Since qualitative research inherently does not rely on exact numbers or data points, interpreting the results is left up to the researcher's own assumptions and processes. As Kvale explains, "[t]he analyst's theoretical conceptions of the subject matter influence how he or she analyzes the interviews" (1996, 206). However, by laying out their steps of research and interpretation a researcher can mitigate this ambiguity (Kvale, 1996), and I

do this both in the above section of this chapter and throughout my policy analysis and evaluation.

Additionally, my data collection is entirely based on interviews which were transcribed. By converting spoken words into written text and thereby stripping the speaker of their intonation, hand gestures, and other non-verbal information, transcription may lose some of the original meaning of the interview. Kvale argues that "[i]f one accepts as a main premise of interpretation that meaning depends on context, then transcripts in isolation make an impoverished basis for interpretation" (1996, 167). While I have taken care to transcribe all interviews with as much accuracy as possible, non-verbal and contextual clues are missing from the transcripts.

Finally, I make some assumptions in my policy evaluation which limit the reliability of my findings. Since I am not conducting a true experiment where I implement a number of policy options and see how each one performs over time, I rely on informed hypotheses as to the effects of these policies. While I rely on data when available, such as examples of these policies operating in other jurisdictions and public opinion polls, this data is not always available for every option. This limitation is especially prevalent in my evaluation of the effectiveness of the options I consider.

Both due to the limitations of my own research and because the municipal political level remains under-researched, Appendix F outlines directions for future research into this area.

Though these limitations constrain my results, my research does provide a strong and insightful look into current issues for women in Canadian municipal politics. The following two chapters explore the results of these interviews.

Chapter 5.   Interviews: Women in Municipal Politics

The first stage of my data collection consisted of interviewing women elected as Mayors or City Councilors. Analysis of the results of these interviews is provided in two stages. First, I give a brief overview of the interviewees' responses to my questions. This analysis follows Kvale's (1996) framework of drawing meaning from interviewees through narratives, whereby "the analysis may…be a condensation or a reconstruction of the many tales told by the different subjects into a richer, more condensed and coherent story than the scattered stories of the separate interviewees" (1996, 199). Of note is that this analysis does not include the interviewees' responses to all of my questions; I have only included their responses to the questions most relevant to considering policy options.

The second layer of analysis uncovers themes in the interviews that were not direct answers to my questions. To draw out these themes, I use Guest, MacQueen, and Namey's (2012) framework of thematic analysis. Thematic analysis "move[s] beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focus[es] on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, that is, themes" (2012, 10). From identifying common phrases and connotations within the interviews, three main themes emerged which will be explored below.

Finally in this chapter, I will give brief consideration to the policy and political implications of these results. Further discussion of the implications is included in my later chapters on my policy options and evaluation of these options.

5.1. Narrative results

My first area of questions asked about demographic information. These factors are important to understand in regards to my findings from the literature review that factors such as education, employment, and childrearing responsibilities affect women's likelihood of running for office. While I briefly discuss these demographic features below, a full table of this information is provided in Appendix G.

The women I interviewed represent diverse experiences in municipal politics. Length of time in their elected positions ranges from one to fourteen years. The work experience of these women lies mainly in academia and the non-profit sector, and most women have some sort of advanced education. Most women did not run as part of a political party, with the exception of the two Councilors from Vancouver; this is an expected anomaly since Vancouver uses a party system for municipal elections. Five of the seven women did not have caregiving responsibilities (for children, parents, or others) at the time they ran for these positions, though some of these women had caregiving responsibilities during previous political experiences.

Most women had been politically active in their community before running for office. Three women were previously elected to their city's School Board before running for Councilor positions, and two women had extensive experience in other levels of government (provincial and federal). The one Mayor interviewed, Lisa Helps, had been a City Councilor before running for Mayor. In addition, three women spoke about active volunteer involvement in their communities as political experience.

These results reflect some findings from the existing literature. First, research suggests that women with caregiving responsibilities may be less likely to run for office, and these women may confirm this trend since only two of these women had caregiving responsibilities while running. However, since my research does not include women who explicitly chose not to run for local government because they had caregiving responsibilities, I cannot make this conclusion concretely. Nevertheless, three women specifically expressed feeling that caregiving was a barrier either for them or for other women.

Second, these women show that the "professionalization of politics" (Sawer, 2000, 374) likely still exists at the municipal level with regards to educational backgrounds, but not with regards to work experience. The women I interviewed predominantly have advanced educational credentials, which aligns with Siegal, Kushner, and Stanwick's (2001) results. This suggests that advanced formal education may be highly valued in a candidate even at the local level. However, these women do come from diverse work backgrounds, and non-profit work was the predominant background of my interviewees

(four out of seven women). This suggests that at the local level, professions that are community-focused may be of higher value in a candidate than just having the traditional law or business backgrounds.

Moving past demographic information, I also asked my interviewees about the barriers or challenges they personally faced. The most frequent response (four out of seven women) was gendered comments directed at the women during the campaign period. Calgary City Councilor Druh Farrell explained how sometimes these gendered comments can be very subtle, but biting: "I remember during a debate one candidate said [to me] 'Don't you worry your pretty little head.'" Vancouver City Councilor Adriane Carr shared a similar moment at an all-candidates meeting early in her political career: "I remember the fellow who headed up [the meeting] at that time just saying to me 'Oh my dear, don't you feel like you're a little bit like a lamb amongst wolves?' It was…diminishing me in terms of my significance or importance." A Councilor in Saskatoon also experienced gendered assumptions, and interestingly they came from other women: "I had one incident where a woman told me she didn't ever think women should be in government….And there was another incident where a woman thought I was the wife of my opponent, door-knocking on his behalf, which was awkward." Similarly, Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps remembers being told she didn't "look like" a Mayor because of her gender:

> When I was running for Mayor one of the things we heard a lot…is 'you don't look like a Mayor.' And you know [we were] trying to figure [it] out; what does this mean? But then one day I had this revelation. If you go upstairs at City Hall you see [photos of] every single Mayor of Victoria that's ever been since 1852 when the city was founded, and there's row upon row upon row upon row of men. There's only one woman. So of course I don't look like a Mayor.

Gendered comments and responses can also be more insidious. Councilor Carr shared that during one of her campaigns negative phone calls were made to voters in her riding spreading inherently gendered rumours about her: "One rumour: I was a lesbian. Another rumour: I was pregnant, I was an older pregnant women and, you know, how

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could I possibly be running for office. …I mean what would it matter anyway if I was a lesbian or pregnant."

Relatedly, two women pointed to gendered responses from the media during their campaigns. Councilor Farrell describes an example: "They would mention my appearance, what I'm wearing, and that would invariably come up in the description of me, and [for] my male counterparts not at all." Vancouver City Councilor and Deputy Mayor Andrea Reimer also remembers how reporters continued to write articles focusing on her appearance during her 2008 campaign: "His first article on me is about my hair. And his second article about me is about my hair….I do not wake up in the morning worrying about how my hair's going to look like by noon." These findings correspond with the existing literature which argues that political culture and negative media representations are a major barrier for women entering politics. Women may be less likely to want to place themselves in positions where they will be judged for their worthiness or qualifications based on how they look, rather than on the work they do.

A few other barriers were mentioned less frequently. Two women pointed to fundraising as a challenge for them, and both running against a strong incumbent opponent and putting together a campaign were each mentioned once. As well, interestingly three women said they did not feel they experienced barriers or difficulties explicitly due to their gender, which may indicate positive change.

I next asked the women whether they think the municipal level is more accessible to women than the provincial or federal levels. Three women said they believed the municipal level was more accessible due to factors such as being closer to home and having lower campaign expenses. Two women said the municipal level is not more accessible, and three women said they believed it could be more accessible after making some changes.

Finally, I asked women if they thought municipal governments could take any specific actions to encourage more women to run for local government. The most popular response, with four women mentioning it, was campaign finance reform. Former Surrey City Councilor Penny Priddy noted that many municipalities do not have limits on campaign spending. This means that candidates with less access to funds, which tend to

be more marginalized populations such as women and minorities, are less able to spend as much as their opponents and therefore their campaign becomes more difficult. Forming tighter rules about donating to municipal campaigns and capping the total expenses allowed per candidate were key ideas these women brought up.

Three women also talked about implementing a gender perspective into general city-wide policy, with the intention of encouraging more women to become comfortable with and feel they are represented by their municipal government. Regina City Councilor Barbara Young pointed out that Regina has actively tried to encourage more women on their boards: "We actually asked some boards to re-do their recruitment… we've asked them to be more active in recruiting or encouraging not just women but minorities as well to apply for positions." Councilor Reimer explained a similar approach that the City of Vancouver took regarding their advisory committees: "Structurally we mandate…equal numbers of men and women. And now we have…thirty-three advisory committees with over five hundred people on them. So, I mean, that means there's two hundred-some-odd women there who are that much closer to running for public office."[5] Finally, former Councilor Priddy discussed the importance of inclusive language in welcoming more women to government: "The language we use at a council table, say in Surrey or anywhere else, has to be inclusive language …so that women see themselves and hear themselves as being an essential part and consideration of what a municipal council does."

Several other ideas were mentioned less frequently. Three women pointed to reforming the municipal voting system, though in different ways: two women advocated for using an at-large system as opposed to a ward-based system, and one woman said a ward-based system is better for women. As well, two women discussed municipalities potentially covering expenses for childcare incurred during a campaign. This idea recognizes that women are still expected to provide the bulk of caregiving responsibilities, and covering expenses would ensure that women with children would be more able to spend time and effort on their campaigns. One woman pointed to the importance of mentorship for young women, and one woman also mentioned that better pension plans for municipal elected representatives may provide a greater incentive for women to run.

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[5] On April 6th 2016 Vancouver passed a motion to officially mandate a goal of at least fifty percent women on advisory committees (City of Vancouver, 2016).

Additionally, two women said they don't think municipal governments should take explicit action on this issue.

5.2. Thematic results

As mentioned, I also analyzed these interviews using Guest, MacQueen, and Namey's (2012) framework of applied thematic analysis. My intention was an exploratory analysis, which does not use pre-determined themes or codes and instead focuses on the themes that emerge between researcher and respondent (Guest, MacQueen, and Namey, 2012). Three themes emerged from my interviews and will be discussed below.

The first theme deals with intersections between gender and age. Four of the women I spoke with explicitly mentioned that their age was seen as an issue; interestingly, these women's ages vary. A Saskatoon City Councilor said people were surprised by her youth: "I got a lot of comments about my age- at the time I was 26- and so that was more noteworthy for most people I met on the doorstep, or at least they felt more comfortable commenting on that than on my gender." Similarly, Councilor Carr's experience, shared above, about being told she was a "lamb amongst wolves" is also inherently tied to age as it implies youth and innocence compared to the older, knowledgeable men. Also mentioned earlier was Mayor Helps' story about people thinking she didn't "look like" a Mayor. She further shared that this was impacted by gendered ideas around age: "We found out there was a former mayor, Alan Lowe, and he ran for office when he was 38… I was 38 as well, but because I was a woman it seemed like I was even younger, or something….I don't really know how to explain it, but it was like, no one said Alan Lowe was too young to run, because he was a man." On the opposite end of the spectrum, Councilor Young explained her concern over being seen as too old: "I'm a senior, so if anything going forward now I have to confront ageism."

These experiences reveal that there are still deeply-held assumptions made about gender relative to age. In reflecting upon this topic, Mayor Helps summed up the conclusion: "Maybe the insinuation is that as a woman [in politics] you're never really the right age."

The second major theme that came from my interviews was that women are inherently different from men as elected representatives. My interviewees identified this distinction both in the reasons women run for office, and in women's behavior once elected.

Two of my interviewees felt that women often choose to run for politics because of a personal experience or local issue they become involved with, rather than actively deciding to be a politician as a career choice. Men, on the other hand, may be more likely to run as a career move. This phenomenon is also reflected in my interviewees themselves, three of whom stated their passion for local issues is what led them to run for municipal office.

Once in office, five of my interviewees felt women bring different skills and lenses to the table than do men. Mayor Helps identified that women often prioritize more horizontal work relationships when in office: "The collaborative, generous, ability to listen, lack of ego, kind of collaboration over competition- all those things…are kind of women-oriented leadership traits." Councilor Carr agrees: "It's quite true that women in politics do have a different way of conducting politics, and one of those ways is to be more compassionate, listening to the other people, [and] working towards consensus." Women can also bring different perspectives to various policy areas given their differing life experiences and socialization. Councilor Farrell illustrated this through the example of public safety: "Women view public safety completely differently than men do, but that's not discussed….That's not saying that men around the table don't care, certainly our Mayor cares about those issues and brings them up, but it's not a natural part of the conversation anymore [without women at the table]."

These opinions align with the literature that argues women behave differently in the political environment than do men. Particularly, these interviews show that women may be more focused on collaboration, compromise, and engagement across sectors in order to create policies that include the perspectives of more people.

The third theme to emerge from my interviews is that simply getting women elected isn't enough: what happens when they are in office is also crucial. Once elected, women

often still face challenges like poor treatment, lack of respect, or assumptions made about them, due to their gender. Four of the women I interviewed discussion this issue.

One challenge lies in assumptions made about what and how women should contribute while in office. Councilor Carr describes being treated poorly because she was too willing to collaborate: "[People would make] comments that had to do with the fact that, you know, I had too much sympathy for people, [they'd say] 'don't ask so many questions'….I think it is because I'm a woman that is conducting my politics in a way that I think is consistent with the way a lot of women conduct themselves in the world at large." On the other hand, assuming women will always be collaborative can create problems, as Councilor Farrell shares: "Women who present an issue are expected to share ideas, whereas men can claim an idea. You're not seen as a team player if you take credit for something rather than share credit. That doesn't happen with my male colleagues." These experiences suggest that women may face backlash regardless of the communication and work styles they employ.

Relatedly, the way women's contributions are spoken about can differ from that of men's contributions. Councilor Reimer shared a trend she has noticed: "You'd not believe how often I hear about how I was 'given' Deputy Mayor…I work ninety to a hundred hours a week; there's not a lot of giving going on around here….Obviously, the psyches [of the people who say these things] believe that women get things whereas men earn things." Taken together, these stories show that some people have strict expectations about how women are 'supposed' to contribute to politics, while simultaneously diminishing the contributions that women do make.

Other women shared stories where small actions can speak loudly in terms of gender assumptions. Councilor Farrell shared that a lot of "mansplaining" happens, whereby a man will assume a woman doesn't know something and will explain that concept to her (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Councilor Farrell also described being talked down to, even as a multiple-term Councilor: "One member of Council wouldn't call me by my name. He called me Darling. He refused to call me anything but Darling. And that wasn't affection; that was to diminish my stature." Similarly, Councilor Reimer shared that despite her success she still finds she is interrupted while speaking far more frequently

than her male colleagues: "Every single person at the roundtable speaks: none of them are interrupted even once. My turn: I'm interrupted before I'm even done the first sentence. I kind of look at him, start going again, [and then] another guy jumps in…It's just so persistent." Councilor Reimer also pointed out that these behaviours often have to do with assumptions about power: "You know when you sit in groups in a consultation, and somebody has to record [the notes]. Who records? The youngest woman at the table always records….What they're really saying is the person with the least inherent power at the table is going to be the recorder….But that happens in a hundred different ways. The recording is one manifestation of it."

5.3. Implications

Overall, these interviews reveal a few important implications for policy. The experiences with negative gendered comments show that municipal politics may not be a welcoming space for women. More broadly, these trends point to troubling gendered assumptions still made in society at large. Finally, these women themselves suggested a few policy ideas for encouraging more women to run.

Though municipal politics in theory should be a more accessible space for women, my interviewees generally agreed with the literature review that many barriers remain at the municipal level. The most prominent issue raised by these women is the persistent negative gendered comments they experienced, both while campaigning and once in office. Moreover, some women pointed out that this issue is not getting better with time. Druh Farrell, who has been a Councilor for 14 years, explained that "[i]t's getting worse, not better, sadly….Certainly with certain members of Council who I've had a long experience with, it's easier. You don't have to continually prove yourself. But for new members of Council who [you] don't have a relationship with it's [harder]." Councilor Reimer agrees: "I thought things like interrupting, and telling me what I think, and taking my idea and suddenly loving it when they're doing it, would suddenly go away as I got older. But it doesn't at all."

Unfortunately, this trend appears consistent over time. In a 1997 Angus Reid poll of 102 Canadian women legislators, 60 percent said they had endured inappropriate

gender-based remarks and 31 percent had fended off unwanted sexual advances (Trimble and Arscott, 2003). Numerous other anecdotal incidents over the past few decades show that women legislators often deal with verbal insults, intimidation, and sexual harassment (Trimble and Arscott, 2003).

Councilor Reimer also brought up the important point that often it's hard for women themselves to address these issues, lest they be seen as angry or aggressive: "When I was bringing up this interrupting thing, [someone was] like 'Why don't you tell us?' I'm like, 'Because every meeting all meeting long that's all I would be doing, and it makes me look like a jerk, not you.' …So yeah it's a challenging thing when every time we speak up we just draw attention to our own lower status."

Relatedly, the issue of women's ages and expectations for their behavior are also crucial here. As discussed above, women of various ages were told they were not the right age to run; additionally, women who acted in both collaborative and individualistic ways were ridiculed for that behavior. These stories reveal that many people, both within politics and in the broader society, may still hold deep-seated assumptions around what is appropriate for women to be doing, and when.

Therefore, it is clear that policy options to address the gender deficit in municipal politics should not only focus on getting more women elected in a superficial sense. The political culture itself also needs to be considered; the political environment needs to be a place more welcoming for women, and societal ideas around gender roles also need to be challenged. Though municipal policies likely can't fix all of these issues, policies that aim to more broadly change how we do politics are likely to be more successful in attracting more women to the job.

In addition, my interviewees themselves pointed out some key ideas for encouraging more women to run. The most frequent suggestions from these women were reforming campaign finances, integrating gender equity into the administration and policies of the local government, and considering changes to the electoral system.

Chapter 6. Interviews: Experts

In order to gain a fuller picture of this issue and the policy options available, I also conducted interviews with experts in this field. I interviewed the following three experts:

- Mai Ngo, Program Officer for the Women in Local Government programs at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). The FCM is "the national voice of municipal government" and advocates for the needs of municipalities to be reflected in federal programs and policies (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2015b).

- Dr. Susan Lockhart, Co-Chair for the Canadian Women's Voters Congress (CWVC). The CWVC is a non-partisan organization focused on educating and empowering more women to be involved in political and community leadership (Canadian Women's Voters Congress, n.d.).

- Grace Lore, National Director At-Large with Equal Voice. Equal Voice is a multi-partisan advocacy organization dedicated to electing more women at all levels of political office in Canada (Equal Voice, n.d.). Ms. Lore is also a Ph.D. candidate in Political Science researching women in politics at the federal level across North America and Europe.

Analysis for these interviews also takes direction from Kvale (1996) in condensing the stories into one cohesive narrative. At the end of this chapter I consider the implications of these findings, taking into account my findings from elected women as well.

6.1. Narrative results

I first asked these experts whether they find the municipal political level more accessible for women than other levels of politics. These experts were mainly in agreement that the municipal level is not currently more accessible for women for a number of reasons. Ms. Lore and Ms. Ngo both discussed the municipal political structure itself being male-centric. Ms. Ngo explained that "processes and consultation…are conducted and created by male systems and so even in that it doesn't allow for, not just women, but for different kinds of people other than one mainstream type of person to really interact and know how to participate." Similarly, Ms. Lore pointed to the existence of "old boys clubs" and to the gender difference in political resources as a result of them,

explaining that women have less networks to draw upon while running for elections. Dr. Lockhart also surmised that the municipal level could in some ways be even less accessible for women, since in small, tight-knit communities it may be hard to break into the existing leadership: "It can be a little more closed-shop, because it's small so it can in a way sometimes be a deterrent…and if it's kind of a male-dominated community, it's going to be much harder." However, these experts agreed that with policy changes the municipal level could be more accessible for women.

I also asked the experts to comment on four specific policy options which I took from the literature review or my interviews with elected women. These four options were mentorship programs, campaign finance reform, electoral reform, and municipal gender-equity mandates. The expert feedback on these options is provided throughout Chapter 7 in my discussion of all policy options.

6.2. Implications

Overall, these expert interviews confirm some of the results from my interviews with elected women, and also provide some original insight.

These experts agreed with the elected women that the municipal level is not currently more accessible for women than the provincial or federal levels. They also agreed that the current political culture is not welcoming to women. This ties in to the problem the elected women mentioned of broader societal assumptions about women's roles in the world.

In terms of policy options, these experts were most positive about campaign finance reform, gender-equity mandates, and mentorship programs. This aligns somewhat with the top suggestions from elected women, which were campaign finance reform, gender-equity mandates, and electoral reform. In general, these experts were very concerned with making the political structure more welcoming and accessible for women, as well as with ensuring girls and younger women see politics as a possible and desirable avenue for them.

Chapter 7.   Policy Options

In this chapter, seven options are described in-depth. These include the above-mentioned options that I asked my expert interviewees about as well as additional options based on my literature review and further research. Some options will not be included in my final analysis, so this chapter will also indicate which options those are and my reasons for excluding them. Chapter 8 outlines criteria which will be used to evaluate my final options, and Chapter 9 provides my evaluation of each option.

7.1. Mentorship programs

Municipal mentorship programs for young women was an option discussed by both elected women and experts that I interviewed. This option would aim to overcome the issue of women not being prepared to be elected representatives. Young women would be able to get to know current elected representatives, see what the job entails, and become more comfortable in a municipal policy-making setting. As Ms. Ngo stated: "The mentorship program is good…because I think young women have to kind of see themselves more in politics." Similarly, Dr. Lockhart described how women often need to be actively encouraged to run for office in order to consider doing so: "[I asked] 'What initiated that leap into running for office?' And for women as opposed to men, women said 'well people said [I] should do it, they supported me'…whereas [for] men it was more like 'well I just thought it would be a good idea to do it.' So I think that's where mentorship is…probably the strongest avenue for success."

Ms. Lore also argued that mentorship programs can provide a counterbalance against the traditional "old boys clubs" of politics:

> There's a ton of reasons why women don't have the same networks as men. When I was doing my interviews with legislators, something they brought up all the time was "I want to go home to my kid at 6:00, and my male colleagues are going for a beer. And they're talking about politics. And I'm not part of that conversation." Right so…some sort of

counterweight to the network that sort of naturally happens for men is important.

Mentorship programs already exist in some Canadian municipalities. Toronto introduced their Regional Champions Protégée Program in 2008. This program was supported by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and was championed by Toronto City Councilor Pam McConnell (City of Toronto, 2014). The stated goal of this program is "to make women feel inspired and familiar with the job of a municipal councilor so they may consider running for elected office and help increase women's participation in municipal government" (City of Toronto, 2014, 5).

The program has changed in minor ways over the years, but the basic structure has remained the same. Young women aged 19-26 can apply for the program and, once accepted, are matched with City of Toronto women City Councilors (City of Toronto, 2014). The exact number of mentees per year fluctuates, partly because the number of women City Councilors fluctuates with each election cycle and partly depending on how much time the Councilors can commit each year. Some years there are two mentees matched with each City Councilor, and other years there is one mentee per Councilor (City of Toronto employee, personal communication, November 9 2015). Depending on other time commitments and needs of Council, the program has varied from 6 months to 9 months in length (City of Toronto employee, personal communication, November 9 2015). The mentee is expected to attend City Council, committee, and community meetings with their matched Councilor, have personal meetings with the Councilor, and attend evening seminars on topics dealing with municipal campaigning and governance (City of Toronto employee, personal communication, November 9 2015).

In 2014, past mentees evaluated the program. Most respondents agreed that the personal interactions with their Councilors were their favourite parts of the program, though their experiences varied due to different levels of commitment from the Councilors themselves (Morgan, 2014). However, 70 percent of respondents said they would recommend this program to other young women, 80 percent said they will participate in political campaigns and community involvement as a result of being in this program, and

90 percent said they better understand elections and campaigns (Morgan, 2014). Moreover, 60 percent said they plan to run for elected office one day (Morgan, 2014).

Four other Canadian municipalities are now piloting similar programs (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, n.d.). One of these cities, Edmonton, started its Opening the Potential Mentoring program in 2011. This program is for women aged 18-35 and pairs mentees with City Councilors of any gender (City of Edmonton, 2012). The program aims to provide "opportunities for women with diverse backgrounds to forge relationships with leaders, to create necessary networks important in career development, and to obtain skills and knowledge through job-shadowing experience that will help prepare them for work in municipal government" (City of Edmonton, 2012, 6). The design of this program is very similar to that of Toronto: it is a seven-month program during which women have personal meetings with their Councilor, shadow the Councilor on meetings and community events, and attend group learning sessions about civic governance and campaigning (City of Edmonton, 2012). All Edmonton City Councilors can opt in as mentors in this program (Mouallem, 2014).

A major difference between Toronto's and Edmonton's programs is that Toronto's program only pairs mentees with women City Councilors while Edmonton's program pairs mentees with Councilors of any gender. Both these options have benefits and drawbacks. Pairing young women only with other women may create a safer space for young women to learn about sexism and other barriers the elected women may have faced. However, if very few women are elected as City Councilors then only very few women will be able to be mentored. In this way Edmonton's program ensures consistent mentorship opportunities for young women, regardless of election outcomes.

An important drawback of mentorship programs is that they are limited to who applies for them. If women aren't already confident or don't already see themselves as politicians, they might not self-select to be mentored. Because of this, as Ms. Lore stated, mentorship programs "might totally capture and bring forward women who are like 'you know what, I think politics might be for me.' But you're not going to get anybody who hasn't [already] thought 'I could do that.'"

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In my analysis, this option will entail cities implementing their own mentorship programs of a similar design to either Toronto's or Edmonton's program, but without specifying exactly which model should be followed.

7.2. Campaign finance reform

Campaign finance reform was mentioned by most of the women I interviewed, both elected women and experts, as an important initiative to make campaigns more accessible for women. This option addresses the issue that women tend to have less access to sufficient funds than do men, so leveling the playing field in terms of tightening campaign finance rules would enable more women to run for office. The two issues within this topic that I will analyze are limits on campaign spending and limits on donations to campaigns.

Campaign spending limits vary across Canada. For example, in both British Columbia and Alberta there is no limit on the amount a candidate can spend on a municipal campaign (Province of British Columbia, 2016; Alberta Municipal Affairs, 2016). In Ontario, the spending limit is based on the number of eligible electors; the limit for head of council is $7500 plus $0.85 per eligible elector, and the limit for council members is $5000 plus $0.85 per eligible elector (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2014).

Some provinces are already attempting to tackle this issue. In October 2015, British Columbia proposed legislation to implement campaign spending limits as of 2018 for elections for mayor, councilors, electoral area directors, and park board positions (Canadian Press, 2015). The proposed limit would follow a per-capita funding formula; for candidates in areas with a population of 250,000 people or more, mayoral candidates could spend 15 cents per elector and all other candidates could spend 8 cents per elector (Canadian Press, 2015). This legislation has not yet passed. However, even under this proposed new formula campaigns would remain expensive. As mentioned earlier, in the 2014 City of Vancouver municipal election Vision Vancouver spent over $3.3 million on their campaign; under the new rules, they would have been constrained to just under $2.5 million, which is still a considerable expense (Canadian Press, 2015).

The second issue within this topic is limiting individual and group donations. Many elected women I interviewed argued that women may have less access to networks and people who can contribute large sums of money to campaigns. This means that if donation amounts are not capped, men may be more likely to receive larger donations and therefore have an advantage over women candidates.

Policies on this issue also vary across Canada. In Alberta, campaign contributions from any individual, corporation, trade union, or employee organization to a candidate cannot exceed $5000 per year (Alberta Municipal Affairs, 2016). In Ontario, this limit is $750 from each individual or organization per candidate, with an exceptional limit of $2500 per Mayoral candidate in the City of Toronto (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2014). In British Columbia, there is no limit on the amount an individual or organization can donate (Province of British Columbia, 2016).

Reform to the campaign financing system of municipal elections therefore appears to be needed. In many jurisdictions there are no limits on spending or on maximum donations, and even where there are limits they are sometimes still extremely high. Reforms to lower both allowable campaign expenses and allowable donations would likely level the playing field for women and other minority groups due to the extra financial barriers these groups face.

However, in our interview Dr. Lockhart also argued that women need to become better at asking for donations: "Women generally have a harder time asking for money than men do. So it's more around that; it's more around…educating women, like how do you ask? Do you have the confidence to ask? [What are] the ways to raise money?" While she agreed that a cap on overall campaign expenses would help, equipping women with more campaign skills in this area is also important.

In my analysis, this policy option will entail municipalities passing regulations to significantly lower the limit on campaign spending, as well as limiting campaign donations in a proportional manner.

7.3. Municipal gender-equity mandates

The third option brought forward in my research is for municipalities to mandate that their advisory committees and boards maintain gender balance. This option was not identified in my literature review, but rather was an idea raised through interviews with elected women. This option could lead to more women running for office for two reasons. First, more women would be included in municipal decision-making, meaning these women would become more knowledgeable about municipal governance and therefore feel more comfortable being involved in municipal affairs. Second, the civic culture itself would likely become more woman-friendly since women would be more involved in municipal decision-making.

The experts I spoke with were in favour of this option. Ms. Lore especially liked the skill- and confidence-building aspects of this option, and thought it could also void the self-selection problem of mentorship programs: "People involved with this [option] may not have or have needed to self-select themselves as potential politicians first; their involvement could be based on more general, or more specific, work with the city. But the implications might be the same…it might still create the skillsets etcetera and the networks [that mentorship would]." She also identified that there might be a "ripple out" effect from these women: "It might not be that those women run, but it might be the women they know. There's a little bit of a potential I think for a ripple out…into their networks." Arguably, though, this same "ripple out" could happen with mentorship programs as well.

Ms. Ngo also discussed how the political culture of municipal councils needs to become less male-centric: "I'm kind of reluctant to say things are gendered in the way decisions are made, but if you have a room full of men the conversation is different than if you have a room full of women: the way things are talked about, the issues that come up. So [what is important is] changing the way that decisions are carried out and talked about." By ensuring equal numbers of men and women on city boards and committees, this vision could be realized. Ms. Ngo's earlier comment about young girls not seeing themselves in politics could also be influenced by this option, as the sight of women being involved in political decision-making would become more normalized.

As mentioned previously the cities of Regina and Vancouver have both already taken steps to this end. Regina is in a process of encouraging more women on city boards, and Vancouver mandates at least fifty percent women on advisory committees. A similar idea is also championed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities: they recommend that cities undertake "efforts to make equal the number of women and men in decision-making bodies at all levels and in all policy areas" (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2004, 17). Moreover, a recent report from the Canadian City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) includes "council-adopted policies or mandates on equity and inclusion" as an item on their checklist by which municipalities can assess how well they are doing at advancing women's equality (City for All Women Initiative, 2015, 33). This option is therefore supported by a broad range of actors concerned with gender equality.

Overall, this option would address the identified barriers of women not understanding the municipal governance level, women not having the resources and skills to run for office, and the political culture being male-dominated. In my analysis, this option will entail City Councils passing a resolution to mandate this position and implement it over the next few years as vacancies become available on these decision-making bodies.

7.4. Education

Two of my expert interviewees emphasized that the education system is an important aspects of encouraging more women to run for office. Research also supports this idea, as some argue that girls are not socialized from a young age to be interested in politics (Newman and White, 2006). Dr. Lockhart argued that "you have to really go more upstream in terms of schools…[for] the exposure to politics, [and] getting girls engaged. Because if girls are engaged, they're going to want to be in one of those [positions]." If young kids – of all genders – are not taught a lot about the municipal system, they will be less likely to see this as an important or desirable space for them. For young girls especially, instilling an understanding of and passion for civic governance early in life could help to protect against negative gendered messages that might dissuade some women from running. This option could therefore address the issues of women not understanding the municipal political process and of the political arena being seen as more appropriate for men than for women.

This option faces a challenge in that education is under the jurisdiction of provincial governments, not municipal governments. However, within the existing curriculum municipalities could encourage more promotion of municipal governance, especially geared toward girls and young women. For example, municipalities could encourage women elected officials to speak to schools about their jobs. In my analysis, this option will entail voluntary guest speaking roles from women Mayors and Councilors in elementary schools.

7.5. Direct campaign financing

This option would involve municipal governments setting aside funds that only women candidates could access to pay for election campaigns. Since the literature review and my own research revealed that women tend to have less access to funds than do men, and that women may have more trouble with fundraising, this option would aim to very explicitly overcome this barrier by providing campaign funding directly to women.

Federal Minister for the Status of Women Patty Hajdu recently said that "[p]olitics continues to be a rich man's game. There is no doubt that we need to look at how we support women financially to become politically active" (Taber, 2016b). The issue of financing campaigns is clearly a salient one in Canadian politics. This option would provide the most direct way to get more funding to women for their campaigns.

This option was not mentioned in either the literature review or my interviews. However, the Province of Quebec administers a similar program which inspired this option. Created in 1999, the Equal Access to Decision-Making Fund provides $1 million per year for initiatives that will increase the number of women in local and regional governing bodies (Secrétariat à la condition feminine, 2011; Secrétariat à la condition feminine, 2016). Non-profit organizations and Aboriginal communities can apply to this funding pool for projects that serve this objective (Secrétariat à la condition feminine, 2011).

This program only provides funding to organizational bodies and not directly to women, but it is easy to conceive of a program that does provide funding directly to women. In my analysis, this option would entail municipal governments setting aside a

certain amount of funding, proportionate to the size of their municipality and typical campaign budgets in their area, from which women candidates could draw to finance their campaigns.

7.6. At-large voting system

As identified from three of my interviews with elected women, reforms to the voting system may also encourage more women to run for office. My results lead to two different conclusions about which reform should be made.

First is the argument that at-large, as compared with ward-based, voting systems would be better for women. Under this system, voters would be presented with a list of all possible City Councilor candidates, and they could vote for as many candidates as they like up to the total number of councilor positions available. It is argued that this system is better for women because competition would be lowered. As Gidengil and Vengroff (1997) explain, less competitiveness and prestige of a position means less men and more women will be likely to run for the position. In a ward-based system, voters can only vote for the Councilor in their own ward, whereas in at-large systems voters can cast numerous votes for all the Councilors they want. This would decrease the competitiveness of any one Councilor position, making more women more likely to be elected.

Two of the elected women I interviewed felt the at-large system is responsible for British Columbia's higher-than-average representation of women in municipal politics. (Of note, though, is that these were both City of Vancouver City Councilors, and Vancouver uses an at-large system.) As Councilor Carr described: "The at-large system in a city like Vancouver, where we don't have wards but we have 10 votes you can cast for Council, is more proportional than a first-past-the-post system. So the chance of more women getting in is a bit higher for that reason." Councilor Reimer also discussed the competitiveness of positions as the issue: "When you get to Mayor, when only one person can win, women do exactly the same in BC as they do across the country…and that's because there's one spot." As of 2015, women in municipal government in British Columbia was 32 percent,

compared to the national average of 23 percent[6] (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2015a). Since Surrey and Vancouver are the only two major municipalities using at-large systems (Dhindsa, 2012), this system itself likely does not account for the higher representation of women. However, research does support the assertion that systems which are more proportional can be better for women (Matland and Studlar, 1996).

Ms. Lore described further benefits to such a reform: "When you have more councilors, people can go to somebody with whom they think they have shared some sort of experience, and part of that can be women going to women in elected office to talk about things that they might not speak with men [about]." Ms. Lore also thought cities may be well-placed to try out such a reform, since their smaller size makes it easier for them to experiment: "Cities, being smaller and more local, are a little more nimble to try things out. The stakes are seen to be a bit lower…So I think that we could have more of a bit of an experiment [with] local levels."

Alternatively, there is an argument that a ward-based system could be better than at-large for women candidates. Former Councilor Priddy explains that ward-based systems may make campaigning easier: "Name recognition [may be easier] in a ward, which is smaller [and] where you might be better known because of the community involvement and work that you've done." Similarly, financing a ward-based campaign can be less onerous than financing a campaign which needs to encompass the entire city (Dhindsa, 2012).

Furthermore, having a very long list of candidates requires voters to be more informed and to do more work when filling out their ballot, which may not always happen. Dr. Lockhart pointed out that "most municipal ballots are so long…[people] get tired of looking at names so they'll just give up." To this end, Dr. Lockhart described that often the candidates whose names appear at the top of the list have a better chance of winning, simply because voters do not take the time to look through the whole list. In order to mitigate this concern some municipalities have political parties, which become what Ms.

[6] These numbers come from averaging the percent of women Mayors and the percent of women City Councilors in each jurisdiction. In British Columbia, the proportion of women Mayors was 28% and of women City Councilors was 36%; therefore the average is 32%. The same methodology was followed for the Canadian average.

Lore describes as a "shortcut" for voters to quickly identify their preferred candidates from a long list.

Another possible reform in this area would be to implement larger wards with two councilors per ward. This would follow the model Edmonton used prior to its 2010 change to one councilor per ward. Arguably, a system like this would decrease the competitiveness and narrowness of having only one councilor per ward while also maintaining local representation. However, Sampert (2008) is currently the only Canadian study on this topic, so without further research it is difficult to know what the real implications of this model would be.

Moreover, Ms. Ngo thought that any reform needs to be considered at a deeper level than just voting: "I think that's where we go down to kind of the roots of the system: what kind of system supports the person in power? Usually it's probably someone who can have the privilege of not being as responsible or as a primary caregiver." Ms. Ngo discussed providing childcare and being allowed to take time off without penalty to do caregiving as potential reforms focused on this deeper level.[7]

For the purposes of my analysis, I will not consider this option. I reach this conclusion for two reasons. First, there is inconclusive evidence as to which system is better for women at the municipal level. Second, this option is often tied to whether or not the municipality has political parties since parties often assist voters in identifying aligned candidates from the longer list that an at-large system produces. Therefore it is difficult to separate recommendations on this option and on political parties.

7.7. Political parties

Finally, the issue of political parties at the municipal level is another contentious one. As outlined in my literature review, some research found that political parties can be

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[7] Interestingly, this type of deeper reform is currently being considered by the federal government, as Prime Minister Trudeau is looking to make Parliament more family-friendly this year (Taber, 2016a).

helpful for women running for office while other research sees them as another barrier. My own research also adds to both sides of this debate.

Two of the elected women I spoke with argued that political parties can be helpful for women; again, though, these two are from Vancouver and were elected as members of political parties. Political parties can help women secure both a supportive team to rely on during the campaign and larger networks to appeal to voters. Councilor Reimer felt that "the team nature…really makes a difference, and it's why you see fifty percent women elected in Vancouver Council." Councilor Carr pointed out that "parties are also useful certainly in terms of signaling a set of jointly-held goals for the city." Councilor Carr also argued that parties can give women greater access to campaign funds: "if you have campaigns that are running in the $2-3 million mark, which Vancouver does, you know having a party is extremely helpful…without parties it'd be very hard for individuals to really run sufficiently well-funded campaigns."

However, Councilor Reimer also identified that securing the party's nomination can be an added barrier for women running for office: "Nominations, though, [are] brutal for women… There's nothing more isolating than the nomination campaign, because you're totally on your own. You're with your team, but not with the party." Furthermore, the existence of municipal parties can also dissuade candidates who want to run but don't want to tie themselves to a particular party. As former Councilor Priddy describes: "there are good people out there who'd like to run in Surrey [and] who aren't comfortable running with a slate, for a variety of reasons. Like…would people tell them how to vote, or what would they be obligated to do, and would they be obligated to hold positions they didn't support, etcetera, so they don't run."

The evidence therefore remains inconclusive as to whether having political parties at the municipal level helps or hinders women running for office. As with the above option on electoral systems, my analysis will not include political parties. Municipal political parties in Canada tend to exist in municipalities that use the at-large electoral system, like Vancouver and Surrey. Indeed, both Councilor Reimer and Council Carr spoke about parties and the electoral system in conjunction during my interviews with them. It is therefore difficult to make recommendations on political parties that do not take into

account the electoral system. It may very well be the case that in cities that use an at-large system, political parties are helpful, but in cities that use wards, political parties do not bring added benefits. As well, as former Councilor Priddy argued: "Maybe if we did politics differently we wouldn't be in the position of having to [have parties]…I think there should be other answers as well."

Therefore, my analysis will consider the options of: mentorship programs, campaign finance reform, gender-equity mandates, education, and direct campaign financing. Chapter 8 explains how I will assess these options, and Chapter 9 provides my analysis.

Chapter 8. Policy Criteria

In evaluating policy options for increasing the number of women who run for municipal political office, five criteria will be considered: effectiveness, equity, cost, administrative complexity, and public acceptance. Table 1 below outlines each criteria.

Table 1:   Summary of evaluation criteria

Societal Objectives	
Objective	**Evaluation Criteria**
Effectiveness	Does it directly aim to increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?
	How quickly will it increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?
Equity	Does it give benefits to women that those of other genders don't receive?
Government Management Objectives	
Objective	**Evaluation Criteria**
Cost	What is the cost to the municipal government?
Administrative complexity	How simple is it to administer?
Public acceptance	Does it have support from the public?

I first explain each criteria in depth, and then I explain how each criteria will be measured.

8.1. Effectiveness

This criterion aims at evaluating how well each policy option increases the number of women who run for municipal elected office. This Capstone's policy problem is that not enough women are running for municipal offices, so the primary concern of any proposed solution should be how effective it is at solving this problem.

Since I cannot conduct a true experiment with each option, I make educated predictions about the likely effectiveness of each strategy. These predictions are based on the effectiveness of existing case studies or similar policies.

Effectiveness will be measured in two ways: how direct the intention of the option is to cause more women to run for municipal elected office, and how long it will take before more women run. Though these two measures are similar, they also deal with slightly different nuances and therefore provide two complementary ways to approximate effectiveness. The directness of each option's intention is measured through the extent to which the option has the explicit goal of encouraging more women to run for office. The length of time between the option being implemented and seeing more women run for office is measured in election cycles.

Measuring effectiveness in two ways results in this criterion being weighted twice as heavily as the other criteria. This has implications for my results as it changes the total scores of each option. However I believe it is important to weight effectiveness twice as heavily. Effectiveness deals with the key purpose of this Capstone and therefore having an effective option is important. The options I analyze have differing levels of effectiveness, and it would not make sense for a government to implement an option that scored well on the other criteria but scored poorly on effectiveness as that option would not solve the policy problem. To ensure that effectiveness does not entirely dominate my results, the remaining four criteria serve as counterweights to the effectiveness criterion.

8.2. Equity

While equity is implicitly part of the Effectiveness criterion, as it addresses the existing inequity whereby women comprise far fewer elected municipal seats than do men, there is another facet of equity which is captured here. That is the issue of the effects each policy option may have on other individuals running for municipal office

Some policy options may be seen to be giving women preferential treatment that people of other genders do not receive. In extreme cases, the possibility exists that some potential policies would actively disadvantage other genders in order to encourage more women.

This criterion therefore highlights the difference between formal and substantive equality. Formal equality refers to equal and consistent treatment for everyone (Equal

Rights Trust, 2007). Substantive equality entails acknowledging that disadvantaged groups often do not begin from an equal playing field, and it involves treating people differently such that equality of outcomes can be attained (Equal Rights Trust, 2007). In my criteria, Effectiveness can be seen as addressing substantive equality (treating women differently in order to achieve equal gender representation in politics), whereas Equity provides a counterweight of formal equality.

As mentioned in my Background section, this study does not take into account other societal inequities due to factors such as ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, or ability status. Therefore this equity criterion also does not take these into account, and focuses only on gender.

8.3. Cost

. Since these policy options are aimed at municipal governments, the onus for paying for such initiatives would also be on the municipal governments. Governments need to be efficient and responsible with taxpayer money.

While possibilities for partnerships could exist to pay for the options (such as with non-profit organizations), this criterion does not take such possibilities into account. Instead, this criterion aims only to capture the likely total cost of the policy. Cost is assessed here on a qualitative basis as exact numbers are not available.

8.4. Administrative complexity

The administrative complexity of each policy option also needs to be assessed. The ease or difficulty of implementing each policy option will determine not only its feasibility, but also its likelihood of being maintained into the future. If options involve multiple government departments or complicated staffing requirements, the policy will be more complex and therefore more difficult to implement.

8.5. Public acceptance

Finally, public acceptance is considered. Similar to considerations in the Equity criterion, some policy options may be seen to give preferential treatment to women above and beyond an acceptable level. Policies that have broad public support are more likely to be implemented and maintained.

When available, public opinion polling is used to assess the public acceptance of each option. When this information is not available, I make educated judgements based on media responses to the options or public opinion data on similar issues.

8.6. Measuring the Criteria

The criteria will be measured through qualitative assessment. Each measure uses a simple scoring method to assess how well it fulfills each criteria. Measures can have a score of 1, 2, or 3; the scores for each option are then totaled out of a possible 18 points. In general, a score of 1 represents a worse score, a score of 2 represents a moderate score, and a score of 3 represents a best score. The colours red, yellow, and green are also used for ease of visually identifying these scores. A score of 1 is red, a score of 2 is yellow, and a score of 3 is green. The measures and scoring system for each criteria are fully explained in Table 2 below.

Table 2:   Measures and scoring system

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Measure	Scoring
Effectiveness	Does it directly aim to increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	Degree to which there is a direct and clear link between the option and any increase in women running for municipal elected offices.	1: No direct link between the option and an increase in the number of women running for municipal elected offices.
			2: Moderate link between the option and an increase in the number of women running for municipal elected offices.
			3: Direct link between the option and an increase in the number of women running for municipal elected offices.
	How quickly will the option increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	Projected length of time between implementing the option and seeing a result of more women running for municipal elected offices.	1: The option will likely take 3 or more or more election cycles before its results are manifested.
			2: The option will likely take 1-2 election cycles before its results are manifested.
			3: Results from this option will likely be seen in the next election.
Equity	Does it give benefits to women that those of other genders don't receive?	Amount/significance of benefits given to women that those of other genders do not receive (e.g. financial bonuses, higher levels of other tangible resources).	1: Benefits are given to women that those of other genders do not receive.
			2: Potential for benefits to be given to women that those of other genders do not receive.
			3: No benefits given to women that those of other genders do not receive.
Cost	What is the cost to the municipal government?	Qualitative cost assessment.	1: Substantial cost required for the option.
			2: Low cost required for the option.
			3. No cost required for the option.
Administrative complexity	How simple is it to administer?	Number of departments and levels of government involved in administering the option.	1: Multiple levels of government are involved in administering the option.
			2: Only the municipal government is involved in administering the option, but multiple municipal departments are involved.
			3: Only one municipal department is involved in administering the option.
Public acceptance	Does it have support from the public?	Proportion of public in support of the option.	1: No public support for the option.
			2: Low or unclear public support for the option.
			3: Moderate or high public support for the option.

Chapter 9.   Evaluation of Policy Options

As explained in Chapter 7, I will be analyzing the following options in my analysis:

- Mentorship programs

- Campaign finance reform

- Gender-equity mandates

- Education

- Direct campaign financing

I analyze each of these options using the criteria and measurement system outlined in Chapter 8. The rationale for my analysis of each option is explained below. In Chapter 10 I will compare these options and explain my policy recommendation.

9.1. Mentorship programs

Mentorship programs fare well overall with a final score of 14 out of 18 points. The summary evaluation for this option can be found in Table 3 below.

Since mentorship programs focus explicitly on training young women to one day run for office, they are directly linked to the desired outcome. This option therefore receives the maximum score of 3 on this measure of effectiveness. On the second effectiveness measure, mentorship programs receive a moderate score of 2. This is because the program is for younger women, and these women are unlikely to run for office immediately after completing the program; they are more likely to run in a few years' time, perhaps after they have more professional or life experience.

Mentorship programs do not fare as well on the equity criterion. Since these programs are specifically for women, people of other genders are necessarily excluded from receiving the benefits of this option. Therefore mentorship programs receive a low score of 1 for equity.

When it comes to cost, mentorship programs receive a moderate score of 2. There is some cost associated with running such a program; staff time needs to go into the recruitment, advertisement, and management of the program. However, this cost is expected to be relatively low, as has been the case in Toronto (City of Toronto employee, personal communication, November 9 2015).

Mentorship programs score highly on administrative complexity. This is because only one municipal department – likely the municipality's department focusing on equity – needs to be involved in the management of the program.

Finally, support for mentorship programs is likely to be high. Both Toronto and Edmonton have received positive feedback in the media for their programs (Sanderson, 2012; Robb, 2014).

Table 3: **Summary evaluation for mentorship programs**

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Assessment
Effectiveness	Does it directly aim to increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	3: Direct link between the option and an increase in the number of women running for municipal elected offices.
	How quickly will the option increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	2: The option will likely take 1-2 election cycles before its results are manifested.
Equity	Does it give benefits to women that those of other genders don't receive?	1: Benefits are given to women that those of other genders do not receive.
Cost	What is the cost to the municipal government?	2: Low cost required for the option.
Administrative complexity	How simple is it to administer?	3: Only one municipal department is involved in administering the option.
Public acceptance	Does it have support from the public?	3: Moderate or high public support for the option.
Total /18		**14**

9.2. Campaign finance reform

Campaign finance reform also scores 14 out of 18 possible points. This evaluation is summarized in Table 4 below.

Interestingly, campaign finance reform scores very differently on the two effectiveness measures. This option receives a score of 1 on directness since it does not explicitly address increasing women's representation. However, if campaign finance reform happens it would affect the next election, meaning the playing field for funding campaigns would immediately become more even. This means the option would go into effect quickly, giving this option a score of 3 on this measure.

This option also scores well on equity. Since the option simply implements the same constraints for all candidates, it receives a score of 3 on this measure.

In terms of cost, this option receives a moderate score of 2. Though not expected to be onerous, there is still a small cost involved with crafting legislation on campaign finance reform and auditing after each election to make sure limits were followed by all candidates.

This option is expected to be moderately administratively complex and thus it receives a score of 2. Across the country most legislation on campaign finances occurs at the provincial level, as documented above. However, municipalities can pass their own bylaws if they choose. This bylaw would likely require multiple departments within the municipal level to implement.

This option is expected to have high support from the public and therefore receives a score of 3 on this measure. Though not always focused on the goal of electing more women, various groups and individuals support more stringent regulations on campaign financing. For example, Edmonton's Mayor Don Iveson supports tightening restrictions on corporate and union donations to campaigns (Lazzarino, 2015). In addition, a public opinion poll in BC found that 95.5 percent of respondents were in favour of campaign spending limits and 93.3 percent favoured limits on campaign contributions (Paulsen, 2010). Tightening the rules around campaign financing is seen as a way to "clean up" municipal politics and "restore public confidence in our democratic institutions" (Paulsen, 2010). It is therefore likely that municipalities could garner broad support for reforms to campaign financing.

Table 4:   Summary evaluation for campaign finance reform

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Assessment
Effectiveness	Does it directly aim to increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	1: No direct link between the option and an increase in the number of women running for municipal elected offices.
	How quickly will the option increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	3: Results from this option will likely be seen in the next election.
Equity	Does it give benefits to women that those of other genders don't receive?	3: No benefits given to women that those of other genders do not receive.
Cost	What is the cost to the municipal government?	2: Low cost required for the option.
Administrative complexity	How simple is it to administer?	2: Only the municipal government is involved in administering the option, but multiple municipal departments are involved.
Public acceptance	Does it have support from the public?	3: Moderate or high public support for the option.
Total /18		**14**

9.3. Gender-equity mandates

Gender-equity mandates has an overall score of 15 points out of 18. The summary evaluation of this option can be found in Table 5 below.

This option receives a score of 2 on both effectiveness measures. Though this option is explicitly linked to getting more women involved in municipal politics, it is not explicitly linked to encouraging more women to run for elected office. Therefore, it has a moderate link to this desired outcome. As well, similar to mentorship programs, this option would likely take a few years before results are manifested in the form of more women running for office. More women will become involved in municipal boards and advisory committees, but it may take these women a few years of building up their skills and confidence before they want to run for office. In addition, it will likely take a few years before the boards and committees become gender balanced: in Regina, one year after taking action for their city boards the representation of women only increased to 27 percent from 25 percent (Lypny, 2016).

This option scores well on equity with a score of 3. No benefits are given to women that those of other genders do not receive. This option also scores well on cost since there is no expected additional cost for this option. City staff will simply need to ensure their recruitment and appointment to boards and councils is gender-equal, but no new programming or legislation needs to be implemented. Gender-equity mandates requires some administrative complexity, and as such it receives a score of 2 on this measure. All municipal departments will need to implement this new recruitment and appointment criterion for their advisory bodies.

Finally, public support is expected to be high for this option. Since this idea is relatively new at the municipal level in Canada it is difficult to estimate this exactly; however, a recent public opinion poll found that 75 percent of respondents were in favour of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's decision to appoint a gender-balanced federal Cabinet (Maloney, 2016). This suggests that measures to ensure gender balance in political decision-making bodies is likely to be popular. This popularity is perhaps even more likely at this particular moment in time, since Trudeau's cabinet is receiving much public discussion and attention.

Table 5: Summary evaluation for gender equity mandates

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Assessment
Effectiveness	Does it directly aim to increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	2: Moderate link between the option and an increase in the number of women running for municipal elected offices.
	How quickly will the option increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	2: The option will likely take 1-2 election cycles before its results are manifested.
Equity	Does it give benefits to women that those of other genders don't receive?	3: No benefits given to women that those of other genders do not receive.
Cost	What is the cost to the municipal government?	3. No cost required for the option.
Administrative complexity	How simple is it to administer?	2: Only the municipal government is involved in administering the option, but multiple municipal departments are involved.
Public acceptance	Does it have support from the public?	3: Moderate or high public support for the option.
Total /18		**15**

9.4. Education

Education has a final score of 13 out of 18. This evaluation is summarized in Table 6 below.

This option fares less well than the other options on effectiveness. This option is not directly tied to encouraging more women to run for municipal elected office; instead, it simply focuses on ensuring more young children learn about the municipal governance level and see women as role models in this field. This option therefore receives a score of 2 on this measure. On the second measure of effectiveness this option receives a score of 1. Since this option targets children, it will be many years before these children become adults who are ready to run for elected office.

However, this option scores well on equity. Since its focus is simply on providing more education, it does not give benefits to women or girls that those of other genders do not receive. Similarly, there is not expected to be a cost associated with this option. Municipal councilors and mayors can visit classrooms and talk about municipal governance as part of their existing jobs.

This option scores moderately well for administrative complexity. In theory, the only municipal staff involved in implementing this option are the elected officials' own staff who would coordinate classroom visits. However, in practice this would likely entail coordination with the School Boards.

Finally, education also receives a score of 2 for public acceptance. While public opinion data does not exist for this, it is fair to assume that the public would be in support of children being informed about all levels of governance, including the municipal level. However, this option may face some backlash in that there are a number of topics that various groups advocate to be included in the curriculum. Some members of the public may question why this issue is being pursued and their ideas are not.

Table 6:   Summary evaluation for education

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Assessment
Effectiveness	Does it directly aim to increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	2: Moderate link between the option and an increase in the number of women running for municipal elected offices.
	How quickly will the option increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	1: The option will likely take 3 or more or more election cycles before its results are manifested.
Equity	Does it give benefits to women that those of other genders don't receive?	3: No benefits given to women that those of other genders do not receive.
Cost	What is the cost to the municipal government?	3. No cost required for the option.
Administrative complexity	How simple is it to administer?	2: Only the municipal government is involved in administering the option, but multiple municipal departments are involved.
Public acceptance	Does it have support from the public?	2: Low or unclear public support for the option.
Total /18		**13**

9.5. Direct campaign financing

Finally, direct campaign financing receives the lowest score with 12 out of 18 points. Table 7 below provides the full evaluation of this option.

Direct campaign financing receives full marks on both measures of effectiveness. This option very explicitly aims to increase the number of women running for municipal elected office, and would also be likely to have quick results as women running in the next municipal election would likely take advantage of this opportunity.

However, this option fares poorly on equity with a score of 1. As this program would only be available for women candidates, it gives a substantial benefit to women that those of other genders cannot receive. Similarly, this option receives a score of 1 on cost as it is expected to be quite expensive. Though the specific cost will depend on how much funding each municipality decides to set aside for the program, it would likely constitute a significant expense for the municipality.

This option does moderately well on administrative complexity. While municipal governments could implement this program without needing to coordinate with other levels of government, it is likely that the municipal departments dealing with election campaigns, budgetary issues, and gender equity would all need to be involved in its implementation.

Similarly, this option scores moderately well on public acceptance. While some factions of the public may support this idea, it is likely that the majority of the public would oppose such a plan. People of other genders may complain that this option treats them unfairly; in addition, other traditionally marginalized groups such as Indigenous peoples or immigrants may argue they should have access to a similar fund since they are also underrepresented in politics.

Table 7:   Summary evaluation for direct campaign financing

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Assessment
Effectiveness	Does it directly aim to increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	3: Direct link between the option and an increase in the number of women running for municipal elected offices.
	How quickly will the option increase the number of women running for municipal elected offices?	3: Results from this option will likely be seen in the next election.
Equity	Does it give benefits to women that those of other genders don't receive?	1: Benefits are given to women that those of other genders do not receive.
Cost	What is the cost to the municipal government?	1: Substantial cost required for the option.
Administrative complexity	How simple is it to administer?	2: Only the municipal government is involved in administering the option, but multiple municipal departments are involved.
Public acceptance	Does it have support from the public?	2: Low or unclear public support for the option.
Total /18		**12**

Chapter 10.   Policy Analysis and Recommendation

10.1. Policy analysis

All five of these options score fairly well on the given criteria and measures. Table 8 below includes the evaluations of all options side-by-side for ease of comparison.

Table 8:   **Summary of policy analysis**

Objective	Option 1: Mentorship Programs	Option 2: Campaign Finance Reform	Option 3: Gender-equity Mandates	Option 4: Education	Option 5: Direct Campaign Financing
Effectiveness 1	3	1	2	2	3
Effectiveness 2	2	3	2	1	3
Equity	1	3	3	3	1
Cost	2	2	3	3	1
Administrative Complexity	3	2	2	2	2
Public Acceptance	3	3	3	2	2
Total /18	**14**	**14**	**15**	**13**	**12**

Overall, gender-equity mandates scores the best with 15 points, but some other options are not far behind. Given that the scores are so close, it is important to consider not just the overall scores but also which options score poorly on each measure and therefore may have significant detrimental effects.

Effectiveness is an important criterion since the purpose of this project is to consider options that would be successful in encouraging more women to run for municipal elected office. On this criterion alone, direct campaign financing scores the best with full scores on both measures. Mentorship programs received 5/6 on effectiveness and are therefore likely to be quite effective. Gender-equity mandates also scores well with moderate scores on both measures. Campaign finance reform and education will likely be less effective.

In terms of equity, only mentorship programs and direct campaign financing provide a benefit to women that no other genders receive. All other options receive full scores of 3 each on this measure. However, in order to best address the current gender imbalance it is arguably necessary to give special treatment to women in this case. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities argues that "women experience city life differently from men, because established norms and traditions have given them different roles and responsibilities….Similar treatment, therefore, does not necessarily end up being equal treatment" (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2014). Therefore, the low scores for mentorship programs and direct campaign financing on this measure may not be an issue.

Only direct campaign financing is expected to be extremely onerous in terms of cost. Gender-equity mandates and education are expected to have no additional costs, while mentorship programs and campaign finance reform will require some costs to implement the necessary programming and legislation.

Administrative complexity is necessary to consider as it affects the likelihood of each option being adequately implemented. If the option is more complex and difficult to manage, it is less likely that policymakers will follow through on it. Here mentorship programs fare well, while all other options would be moderately complex to administer.

Finally, all options except for education and direct campaign financing are expected to have strong public support. The amount of public support for a policy is critical to its success, as the policy is not likely to be implemented if the public does not support it. Moreover, backlash on such a policy may prevent the municipality from taking any other actions to promote gender equity.

10.2. Policy recommendation

Overall, I recommend gender-equity mandates as the best way municipalities can encourage more women to run for office. While this option doesn't receive full scores on all the criteria, it has the highest score overall. It also is the only option that does not score poorly – i.e. with a score of 1 – on any of the measures, meaning it has no predicted major flaws.

Gender-equity mandates will address the most prevalent challenge that women face in municipal elected office, as described to me by the elected women I interviewed: that of a male-centric and unwelcoming political culture. Through assuring that more women are present in municipal spaces, the political culture will likely shift such that women become more respected and welcomed in municipal decision-making spaces. This will likely lead to more women feeling safe and confident running for elected positions. This option therefore addresses what Trimble and Arscott (2003, 120) describe as a "catch 22" in politics: more women are needed in order to change the culture, but without a change in the culture more women are unlikely to run. This option gets more women involved more quickly in municipal decision-making, shifting the culture without women needing to first decide to run for office.

Research has shown that sexism in work environments does have tangible impacts for women. Bond et al. (2004) found that gender discrimination was associated with increased psychological distress for women in the workplace. Similarly, Jones et al. (2014) concluded that benevolent sexism – subtle sexist actions – can undermine women's self-efficacy which informs how women view their own abilities, ultimately negatively affecting women's individual performance. It can be assumed that these same impacts would likely be felt in committee or board atmospheres as they mirror work environments. Policies to reduce sexism and gendered assumptions in the workplace are therefore crucial to improving women's experiences on these advisory committees and boards.

Gender-equity mandates will also build women's skills and capacities. By having more women involved in boards and advisory committees, these women will become knowledgeable about the issues and subjects addressed by municipal governance and confident in their abilities to tackle these issues. Women not feeling confident or able to run for office was another major barrier addressed in my interviews, so tackling this barrier is a crucial aspect of this recommended option.

In addition, gender-equity mandates also address the argument, mentioned by a number of my interviewees, that women can bring different perspectives to policy issues. This also aligns with that existing research which argues that having more women in

politics does lead to shifts in political culture and policy outcomes. By having women more involved with municipal decision-making it is likely that municipal policies will become more inclusive of diverse voices and experiences. This in turn will further make municipal governance a more welcoming space for women, as more women will be likely to notice that their municipalities are including their voices and may therefore be inclined to get involved themselves.

Implementing this option can be fairly straightforward. Such a mandate can be taken to City Council and, pending approval, can be official City policy very quickly. Cities interested in this option can also look to Regina and Vancouver to see examples of implementation there. Specific policies for advisory committees and boards, including how long terms are for and how the positions are recruited for, differ from city to city; however, the gender-equity mandate could be as simple as deciding that when new positions on the boards become available, equal numbers of men and women must be recruited. Over the next number of years, gender balance will gradually be reached.

One potential backlash to this option is that some may feel women didn't merit their positions on the board or committee and instead received them only because of this gender mandate. This critique can easily be mitigated. While being qualified to be on any decision-making body is important, women will inherently be qualified for some of these positions. For example, committees like a youth committee or an Indigenous peoples committee have only the requirement that members identify as part of that community. The expectation is that members' lived experiences qualify them to give feedback on city policies. For boards, which tend to focus more on specific topics such as economic development or arts and culture, members should of course be skilled in that subject area. However there are likely many women who are already knowledgeable in these areas. Sexist attitudes often underpin arguments about merit, such that "[w]hile women's merit is questioned, most men have their merit taken for granted" (Trimble and Arscott 2003, 108). The real issue is to identify the already-skilled women and actively encourage them to participate. Additionally, transparency and accountability in recruitment and appointment processes will be crucial such that community members who are concerned about this mandate would be able to check how the city is recruiting or appointing members.

In the long term, it is likely that many of these policy options would be useful in ensuring more women run for municipal offices. Mentorship programs especially emerge as another important initiative. Since the gender gap at the municipal level has not been increasing substantially or steadily over time, a more explicit action like this may be needed to jumpstart action and discussion on this issue. As well, the facts that some cities already have this programming in place and that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has a plethora of resources on this programming make this option more accessible for municipalities. Campaign finance reform and greater education on municipal governance would also be helpful, though in more indirect ways. However, direct campaign financing is not recommended due to its high cost and likelihood of substantial public opposition.

Chapter 11. Conclusion

Achieving gender balance in decision-making is important in a democratic country like Canada. While much discussion has been happening around women's representation in politics in Canada, almost none of this conversation has focused on the municipal level. This may be because the public doesn't value the municipal political level as highly, because there are not often parties at the municipal level that the public can hold accountable for not running enough women candidates, or perhaps for some other reason. Regardless of the reason, municipal policymakers should undertake initiatives within their power in order to further this conversation and encourage more women to run for elected positions.

The major barriers for women identified in this Capstone are negative gendered comments, negative expectations about women's work and abilities, and an all-around unwelcoming political culture. Arguably, these barriers will be reduced as more women are in elected positions. This is furthermore why my recommended option of gender-equity mandates is important: it begins to include more women in municipal decision-making spaces without needing the women to first run for office and be elected, thereby starting sooner with the process of transforming political culture. Though the identified barriers also point to larger societal gendered assumptions and these will obviously require broader change, municipalities can do their part to make local government a more welcoming space for women.

When asked why he implemented a gender-balanced federal Cabinet, Prime Minister Trudeau simply said "because it's 2015" (The Globe and Mail, 2015). The insinuation is that achieving gender equity in politics should by now be an obviously desirable goal. While this statement is laudable, it is also important to remember that the passage of time alone guarantees nothing; it may now be 2016, but without substantive action taken to address the gender deficit in politics this issue will not be fixed. It's time to take that action to ensure women are adequately represented at all levels of political decision-making.

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Appendix A.

Table of Women Legislators in Canada, 2000-2015

Year	Federal (%)	Provincial[a] (%)	Municipal (%)
2000	20.0	16.4	-
2002	*20.0[b]*	*16.4*	19.4
2003	20.6	20.9	*19.4*
2004	*20.6*	*20.9*	21.7
2006	20.8	21.3	16.9
2007	20.7	22.0	21.8
2008	22.1	*22.0*	*21.8*
2009	22.1	23.7	22.4
2011	24.7	*23.7*	27.6
2014	25.0	24.7	21
2015	26.0	25.7	23

a-Data limitations prevent the inclusion of the three territories

b-Where data are unavailable, the number from the previous year were used. These figures are identified in italics.

Adapted from Tolley (2011); other sources: CBC (2006, 2015), Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2006, 2015), Cool (2011), Equal Voice (2014).

Appendix B.

Criteria for Interviewees: Elected Women

1. The following criteria must be met by all interviewees:

   - Woman (self-identified)

   - Current Mayor or City Councilor in Canada, OR has been a Mayor or City Councilor in Canada in the last 15 years

   - Has held the above position in an urban centre of major economic and/or geographic importance- e.g. capital cities, economic hubs.

2. The following criteria will be considered so as to include a diverse group of interviewees:

   - Range of ages: both young and older women

   - Range of experience levels: first time councilors as well as women who have been elected for multiple terms

   - Range of locations: I would like to speak with women from across the country, though I am not seeking a representative sample

   - Political parties or not: I would like to speak with some women who ran in cities that use political parties, and some who ran in cities without political parties

   - Various domestic roles: some women with children, some without, some with other care/domestic work responsibilities

   - Women who come from various educational and work backgrounds

     o Whether park board or school board came first

   - Women from various ethnicities

   - Women who have been in different levels of government- municipal, provincial, federal

Appendix C.

Interview Questions for Elected Women

1. If you consent to having this information included in this study, please state your position (mayor or councilor), how long you held/have been holding the position, and in which city you hold this position.

2. What factors motivated you to run for office?

3. Did you face any barriers (personal or structural) to running for office? Please describe.

4. What was your experience when you ran for office? (I.e., how did voters react to you as a candidate, were there difficulties because of your gender, etc)

5. What was your experience when you were in elected office? (I.e., were/are there difficulties because of your gender, did you find you were able or unable to have the impact you thought you would, what policy areas did you work on, etc)

6. Why did you decide to run for municipal government rather than another level of politics?

7. Some research says that the municipal political level is the most accessible for women. Do you think this is true, or do you think all levels (provincial, federal) are equal in accessibility?

8. Based on your experience, what do you think could be done by municipal governments to increase the number of women who run for municipal government?

9. If not covered in answers to previous questions:

   • What was your previous work/education prior to being in office?

   • Did you have previous political experience prior to being in office? (at any level)

   • Did you run as part of a political party?

   • While running for/being in office, did/do you also have domestic care responsibilities? (children, parents, etc)

Appendix D.

Interview Questions for Experts

1. Please describe your experience in researching and/or advocating for gender equality in Canadian politics.

2. Some research says that the municipal political level is the most accessible for women. However, recent Canadian data does not always support this conclusion. Do you think the municipal level is more accessible for women, or do you think all levels (provincial, federal) are equal in accessibility?

3. The following four options have come up in my research as possible ways to increase the number of women who run for municipal office. Please comment on each of them, and/or which you think would be most effective:

   a. *Mentorship programs:* pairing young women with women City Councilors/Mayors in order to provide insight into the job(s); usually paired with training as well.

   b. *Campaign finance reform:* limiting the ceiling for campaign finances such that women, who tend to have fewer resources, face a more equal playing field.

   c. *Electoral reform*: moving to an at-large rather than a ward system, such that more positions are available to each candidate and therefore it is more likely that more women will be elected.

   d. *Policy mainstreaming*: mandating that city committees and staffing are gender-equal, such that more women will become involved in municipal affairs and therefore be more likely to run for office later.

4. Based on your experience and research, what do you think are the best practices to increase the number of women who run for municipal government?

Appendix E.

Consent Form for Interviews

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Participant Consent Form

Title of Study:
Women in Canadian Municipal Politics

Study Team:
Principal Investigator:
Halena Seiferling, Masters Candidate
School of Public Policy, Simon Fraser University
[telephone]
[email]

Supervisor:
Maureen Maloney
Professor, School of Public Policy
[telephone]
[email]

Funder
This research is funded by a Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Purpose(s) and Objective(s) of the Research:
- This project focuses on the lack of women in elected positions in municipal governments in Canada.
- This research aims to learn more about the barriers for women running for local office, what women's experiences are running for office and serving in office, and what best practices exist in some cities to encourage more women to run for office.
- This data will be used for a Masters thesis (Capstone) project.

Procedures:
- Each interview will be approximately half an hour in length. Participants will take part in one interview each.
- Interviews will be recorded on an audio recording device and then transcribed.

- Feel free to ask any questions regarding the procedures, goals of the study, or your role.

Potential Risks:
- This research is not expected to place you in a position of increased risk.
- If applicable: your employer has not been contacted to obtain permission for your participation in this project. Participating in this project is not expected to pose risks for your employment.
- If at any point during the interview you should not wish to continue, we can stop the interview. Your contributions will not be included in my data collection.

Potential Benefits:
- This research will lead to an analysis of policy options that cities can implement to encourage more women to run for office. This research will therefore hopefully contribute to more women seeking elected office at the municipal level.

Confidentiality:
- If you permit, your name, location, organization, and job title will be used in my final report.
- However, if you prefer, your name and any other identifying information will remain confidential. If you wish to remain confidential, any information that discloses your identity will not be released without your consent unless required by law.
- Direct quotations may be used, but your name will remain confidential if you prefer.
- However, given my use of direct quotations and that you may be a public figure, your identity may be inferred.
- All recorded data will be stored confidentially on a password-protected computer, and will be deleted from the recording device automatically after being uploaded to this computer. All physical data will be kept in a locked cabinet.
- All data will be permanently deleted after a time period of two years.

Right to Withdraw:
- Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time, without explanation or penalty of any sort.
- Should you wish to withdraw, we can stop the interview at any time.
- Your right to withdraw data from the study will apply until February 1st 2016. After this date, it is possible that some form of research dissemination will have already occurred and it may not be possible to withdraw your data.

Study Results:
- The results of this study will be reported in a graduate thesis which will be published via the Simon Fraser University library.

- The main study findings may also be published in journals or other academic articles.
- The information you provide will not be used for any other future studies.

<u>Follow up:</u>
- After this research has been completed, I will send you a copy of my final paper for your interest. Please provide your address here where I can send this completed copy:
  Email _____OR
  Mailing Address

  _____

  _____

<u>Questions or Concerns:</u>
- If you have any concerns about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact Dr. Jeffrey Toward, Director, Office of Research Ethics at [email] or [telephone].
- This project has been approved on ethical grounds by the Simon Fraser University Research Ethics Board on October 22nd 2015.

<u>Continued or On-going Consent:</u>
- I do not plan to conduct follow-up interviews for this research. However, if I decide after this interview that I would like more data from you, I will contact you again and at that time will seek renewed consent from you.

<u>Consent</u>
Please place a check mark on the corresponding line(s) that grants me your permission to do the following:

I grant permission to be audio taped: Yes: ___ No: ___

I grant permission for use of complete and direct quotations: Yes: ___ No: ___

I grant permission for use of my name and identifying information: Yes: ___ No: ___

If you do not wish to have your name and identifying information be included, please describe below which information you consent to having included (e.g. job title, location):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the description provided. You have had an opportunity to ask questions and your questions have been answered. You consent to participate in the research project. A copy of this Consent Form has been given to you for your records.

Name of Participant	*Signature*	*Date*

Researcher's Signature	*Date*

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Appendix F.

Directions for Future Research

As mentioned at the beginning of this Capstone, not enough research has yet focused on women in municipal politics in Canada. While my research begins to add to this area, there are a number of other areas that future research should also focus on.

First, more research is needed to address a major gap in my research around identifying the barriers for women. As mentioned in my limitations section, I rely on existing literature and my interviews with women who are already elected. Though it would be more difficult methodologically, research that focuses on women who considered running but then chose not to run would be very useful in understanding what is prohibiting women from running.

In addition, more research should investigate the factors that influence women to run for Mayor or City Councilor positions versus for school or park board positions. Some of my interviewees pointed to these board positions as easier entry points for women into local government, so this notion should be explored in the research.

Further, there are two pieces to more women being elected: more women need to run for the positions, and voters need to vote for these women. Though this Capstone asserts, with the backing of much research, that voting behavior is not the issue, more research into this area would be beneficial. Research from large Canadian municipalities (Siegel, Kushner, and Stanwick, 2001), New Brunswick (Bourgeois and Strain, 2009), and British Columbia (Lore, Beauvais, and James-Lomax, 2014) finds that women tend to fare slightly better than their male candidates when they run for office at the municipal level. However, more recent national research would be beneficial to see if this conclusion continues to hold true across the country.

Relatedly, more research should focus on women in rural municipalities. This Capstone focused only on large urban centres. I suspect that many dynamics of running for elected office would be different in smaller rural centres. For example, perhaps norms around women's and men's traditional or 'appropriate' roles would be different, which

would therefore affect how voters view women candidates and how likely women are to run for office. As well, smaller communities may prove harder for women to secure leadership positions. As Dr. Lockhart explained in her expert interview, smaller, tight-knit communities may have entrenched leadership structures and expectations which can make it harder for newcomers to break in. However, I am making a number of assumptions here. This research area would therefore benefit greatly from a focus on rural politics.

Two more important areas needing more research are the effects of municipal voting systems and municipal political parties on women running for elected office. As described above, the existing research is inconclusive as to how both of these structures affect women running for office at the municipal level. It is also difficult to separate these two issues since political parties in Canada tend to only exist in cities with at-large voting systems.

Additionally, a major area of research needing more attention is what happens to women once they are elected at the municipal level. As argued above, if we are concerned with true gender equity, it doesn't just matter that more women get elected; it also matters how they are treated by colleagues, what portfolios they are given to work on, and whether as policymakers they act substantively differently than men. Though my research did not focus on this, many of my interviewees mentioned this as a major concern, and shared stories of unequal treatment in these areas.

Finally, as stated my research does not take an intersectional approach; I focus only on women. There are many other groups that are also underrepresented in all levels of politics, such as ethnic minorities, immigrants, Indigenous peoples, and those of the LGBTQ community. More research is needed into the barriers that may exist for these groups in seeking elected office at the local level, and further, more research should examine how these identifies intersect to exacerbate barriers

Appendix G.

Demographic Features of Elected Women Interviewees

Interviewee	Position and City	Years in their position	Previous work experience	Educational experience	Previous political experience	Political party?	Caregiving responsibilities?
Barbara Young	Regina; City Councilor	3 years; elected once	Education; 45 years in public sector	Ph.D. (Public Policy and Administration)	Elected to Public School Board for 6 years	No	No
Lisa Helps	Victoria; Mayor	1 year; elected once	Non-profit; Academia	Ph.D. (Housing and Homelessness)	1 term as City Councilor; active volunteer in community issues	No	No
Druh Farrell	Calgary; City Councilor	14 years; elected 5 times	Clothing designer	Fashion/ Apparel Design	Active volunteer in community issues	No	Yes
Adriane Carr	City of Vancouver; City Councilor	4 years; elected twice	Academia; Green Party; Non-profit	MA (Urban Geography)	Active with Green Party (local, provincial, federal) since 1983	Yes- Green Party	No

Interviewee	Position and City	Years in their position	Previous work experience	Educational experience	Previous political experience	Political party?	Caregiving responsibilities?
Andrea Reimer	City of Vancouver; City Councilor and Deputy Mayor	7 years; elected 3 times	Service; Manufacturing; Non-profit	High school	1 term on Public School Board (Green Party); active in creation of Vision Vancouver; active volunteer in community issues	Yes- Vision Vancouver	Yes
Penny Priddy	Surrey; former City Councilor	3 years, elected once (2002-2005)	Academia; Consulting; Non-profit	Registered Nurse	8 years as MLA and Cabinet Minister (NDP); 5 years on School Board	No	No
Confidential	Saskatoon; City Councilor	5 years; elected twice	Research; policy; Provincial government	BA (Political Science); MA Candidate	No	No	No