



more women at the political table
WHY + HOW TO ACHIEVE IT

The Town of the Blue Mountains Council - May 21, 2024



TODAY'S CHANGING MUNICIPAL WORLD

- growing apathy for municipal involvement
- less respect for all levels of government
- partisan politics entering municipal levels
- higher public expectations of elected officials
- expanded responsibilities/more demands on time
- less traditional local media coverage
- social media importance/tone is rapidly changing
- constituent interactions can be challenging



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OUR MISSION To increase the number of women elected to municipal office in order to more fully represent the population it serves

OUR GOAL 50% by 2030 across 17 municipalities in Grey Bruce

WHY? Women make up 51%* of the population and bring a different perspective to the political table based on their lived experience.

Ontario Municipal Act (224): The role of council is **to represent the public** and to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality.

* Stats Can (2021) Total of 17 municipalities



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OUR GOAL 50% by 2030 across 17 municipalities in Grey Bruce

Before 2022 Election = 30/119 or 26.1%

After 2022 Election = 35/119 or 29.4%

- 33% women sitting did not re-run (#10)

+ 15 newly elected

> all 17 had at least one woman

> 1 with 50+% (Blue Mountains)





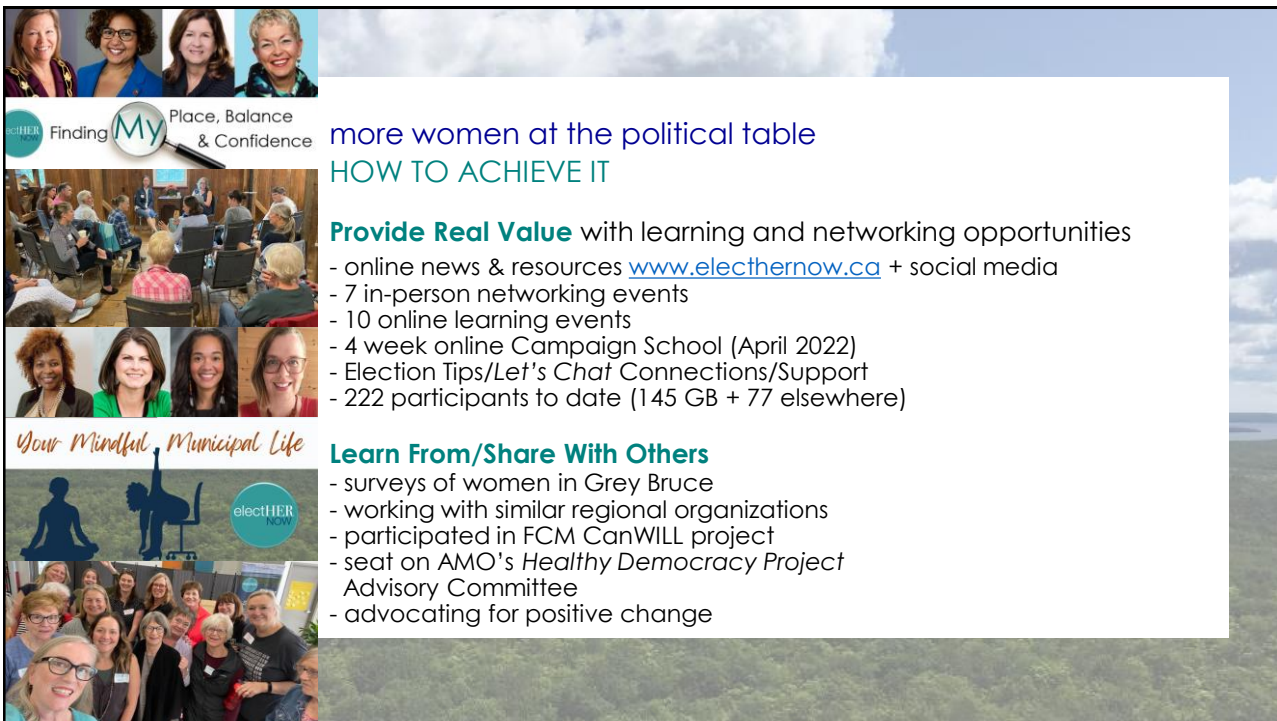
Carol Matheson, Owen Sound
 Barbara Robinson, Stratford
 Sarah Hopson, West Grey
 Charlene Moore, Owen Sound
 Heather Murray, Madoc
 Jennifer Shaw, Arden-Elgin
 Jean John, Southgate
 Julie Porter, Blue Mountains
 Kathleen Massari, Hanover
 Laura Wood, Owen Sound
 Meghan Robertson, Owen Sound
 Nadia Dizon, Grey Highlands
 Michelle Sweeting, Blue Mountains
 Paula Hogg, Blue Mountains
 Susan Tokat, Hanover


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HOW TO ACHIEVE IT

Create A Team Community Volunteers (Planning Team) + Elected Officials (Advisory Council), all committed to the goal
Term 1: 10 PT + 10 AC
Term 2: 7 PT + 9 AC

Note: All those running officially step down before election period.

Create A Plan Three strategies
 1. Encourage women to run & help them win
 2. Help newly elected thrive in first term of office
 3. Encourage already elected women to stay





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 Your Mindful, Municipal Life
 electHER

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HOW TO ACHIEVE IT

Provide Real Value with learning and networking opportunities

- online news & resources www.electhernow.ca + social media
- 7 in-person networking events
- 10 online learning events
- 4 week online Campaign School (April 2022)
- Election Tips/Let's Chat Connections/Support
- 222 participants to date (145 GB + 77 elsewhere)

Learn From/Share With Others

- surveys of women in Grey Bruce
- working with similar regional organizations
- participated in FCM CanWILL project
- seat on AMO's Healthy Democracy Project Advisory Committee
- advocating for positive change



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Your Mindful, Municipal Life



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WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

Women Want To Be Welcomed

- ongoing/specific training
- meaningful dialogue regarding issues
- part of a collaborative process

Women Want To Create Positive Communities

- have a hand in new and updating policies
- new ideas and more voices welcomed
- tone of interactions to be POSITIVE

Women Want The Role To Be Fulfilling & Safe

- work valued
- appropriate boundaries respected
- ongoing support, as needed



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HOW TO ACHIEVE IT: COUNCIL'S ROLE

Ongoing Check-Ins/Training

- regular check-ins with the team
- ongoing specific training to support teamwork
- actively encourage collaboration

Welcome Constructive Feedback

- ask for it (council, staff, the public)
- acknowledge and support new/different ideas
- actively ensure all interactions are POSITIVE

Make Council MORE Accessible & Safe

- offer varied meeting day/times
- review time commitments / help establish limits
- offer flexible and reasonable compensation
- support efforts to improve council codes of conduct



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We welcome your ideas and questions