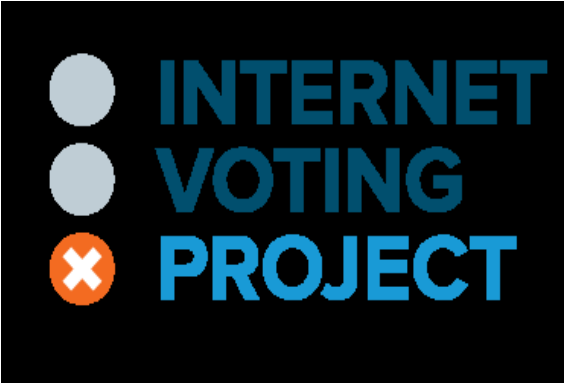


# **City of Markham 2018 Municipal Election Survey Results**

January 21, 2019

Prepared by: Dr. Nicole Goodman

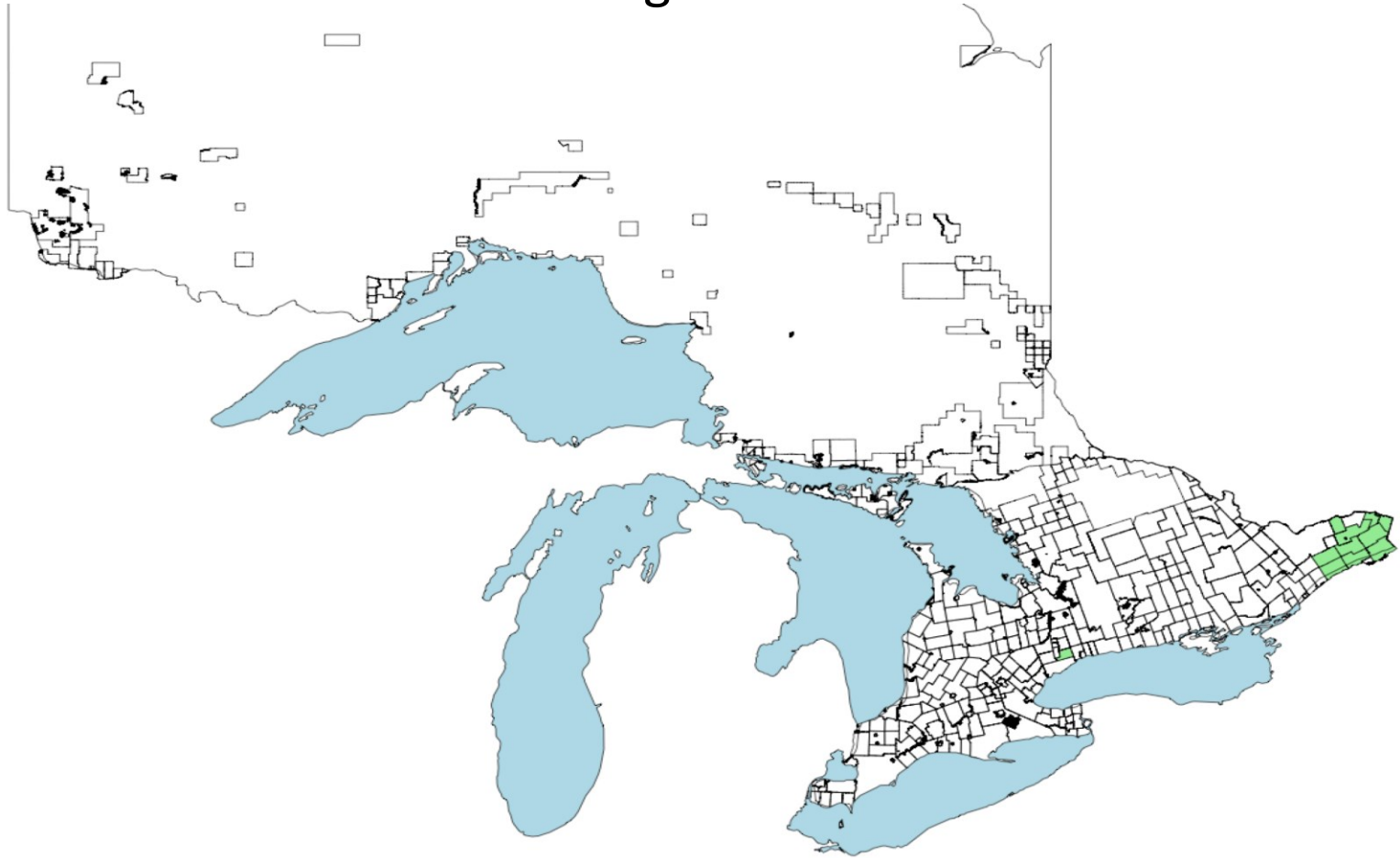
# Canadian Voting Technology Projects



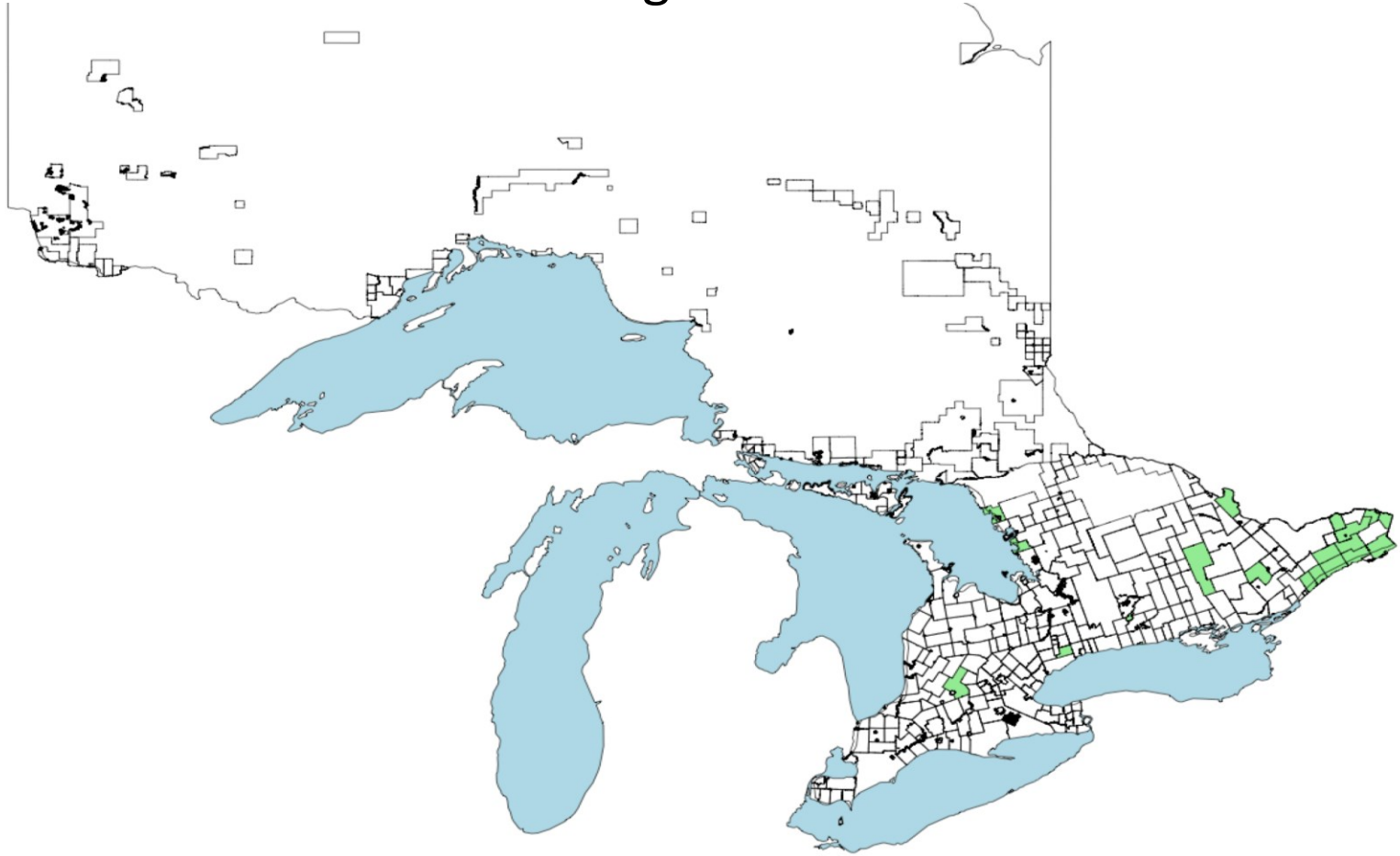
# Municipal history

- Late 1990s push toward remote voting.
- Mail failure prompted interest in technology in 2000.
- First adoption in 2003.
- Markham was the first major municipality in Canada to use online voting.

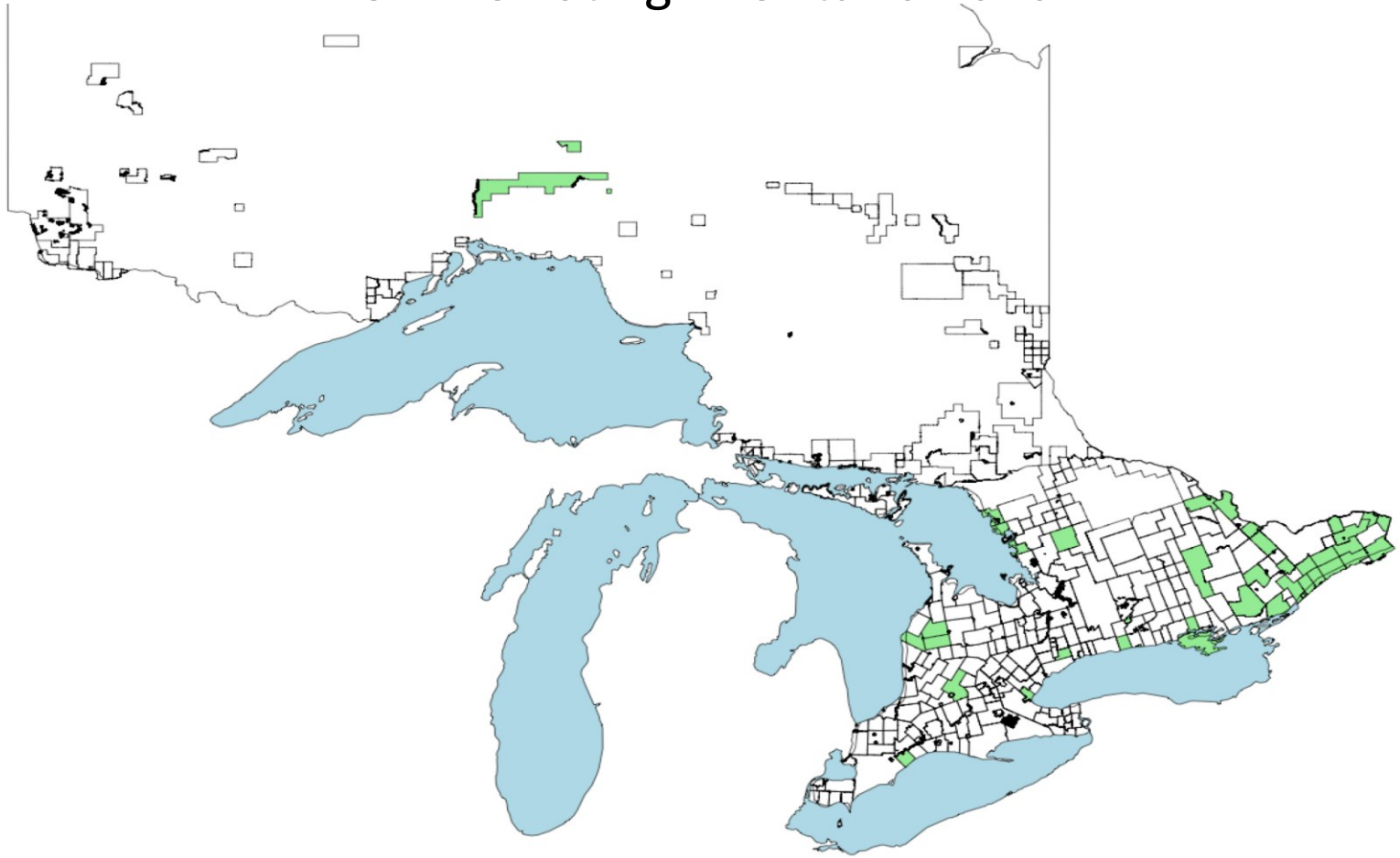
# Online voting in Ontario 2003



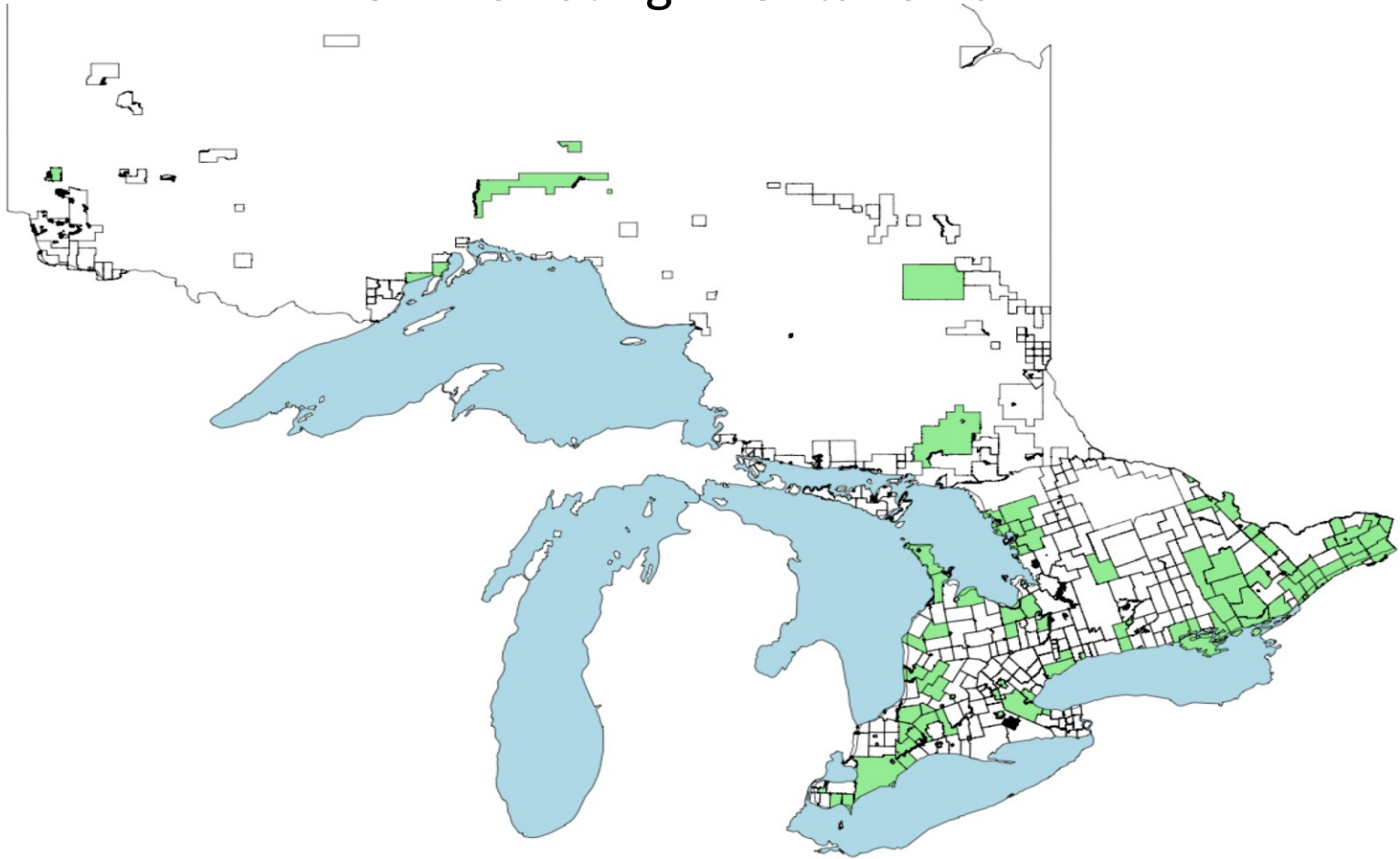
# Online voting in Ontario 2006



# Online voting in Ontario 2010



# Online voting in Ontario 2014



# Current context

- 209 municipalities used online voting in 2019.
- Many of them (100+) eliminated paper voting.
- Markham still very much a leader in the space.



# Overview

This presentation presents the results of an exit survey of online voters in the City of Markham during the 2018 municipal election.

The report proceeds as follows:

1. Information about the project & survey completion
2. Voter satisfaction
3. Vote information
4. Public attitudes
5. Voter profile & participation
6. Broader findings
7. Takeaways

# Context

The October 2018 municipal election in the City of Markham was conducted using a combination of online voting and paper voting at the polls.

38.26% of eligible electors voted compared with 37.1% in the 2014 municipal election.

To better understand voter opinions and experiences, the City participated in the Internet Voting Study, which offered electors the option to complete a voluntary survey about their voting experience after voting online.

# Context: Data

Where relevant, this report compares survey results with findings from two sources of data:

1. 2018 Internet Voting Study data from 31 municipalities.
2. The 2014 Internet Voting Project (IVP) surveys of online voters in 43 municipalities and paper voters in 4 communities.
  - 30,090 online voters completed a survey.
  - 1,766 paper voters completed surveys in the municipalities of Guelph, Markham, Springwater and Sudbury referred to as 'IVP data' in the report.

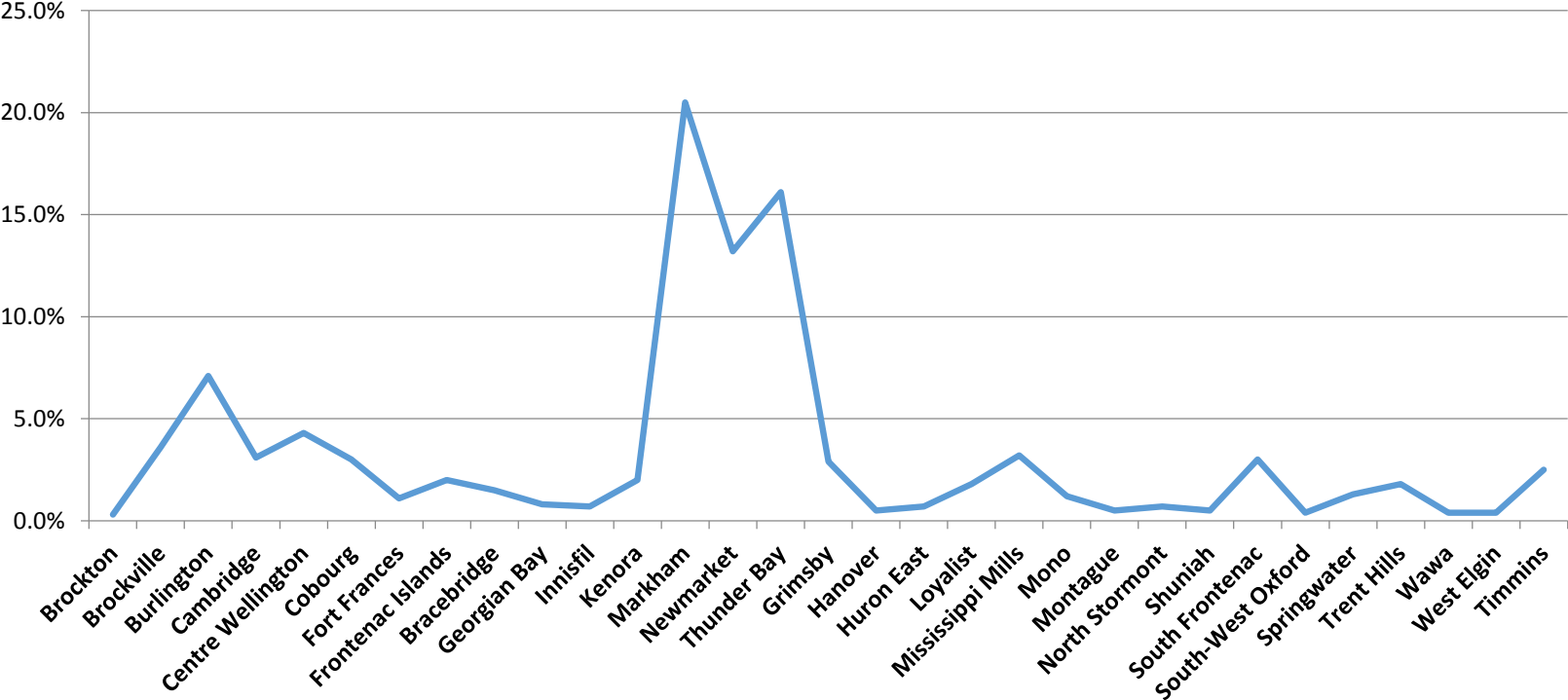
# **1. Information about survey completion**

# Participating municipalities

## 2018 Internet Voting Study Participants

Brockton	Grimsby	Newmarket
Bracebridge	Hanover	North Stormont
Brockville	Huron East	Shuniah
Burlington	Innisfil	South Frontenac
Cambridge	Kenora	South-West Oxford
Centre Wellington	Loyalist	Springwater
Cobourg	<b>Markham</b>	Thunder Bay
English	Mississippi Mills	Timmins
Frontenac Islands	Mono	Trent Hills
Georgian Bay	Montague	Wawa
		West Elgin

# Survey respondents by municipality



# Information about survey completion

- 52,914 surveys completed.
  - Largest voting study ever carried out in Canada.
- 10,945 of these were completed in Markham out of 70,784 voters.
  - In 2014, 1,612 out of 11,002 voters completed a survey.

2018 response rate	2014 response rate
15.46%	14.67%

- Open for completion in Markham from October 12<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Average length of time to complete a survey was 8 minutes.

## **2. Voter satisfaction & rationale for use**



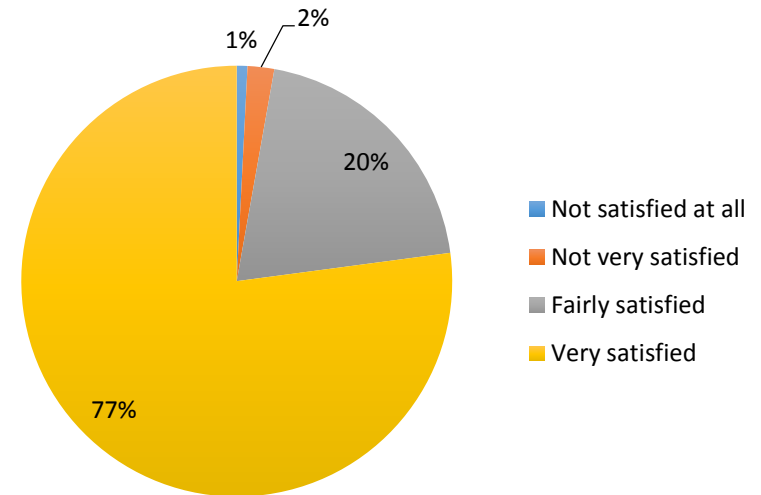
# Voter satisfaction

97% of respondents in Markham are satisfied with online voting.

- 77% are 'very satisfied'

A high satisfaction rate compared with data from other Ontario municipalities.

In 2014, online voter satisfaction was 90% and paper voter satisfaction 68%.

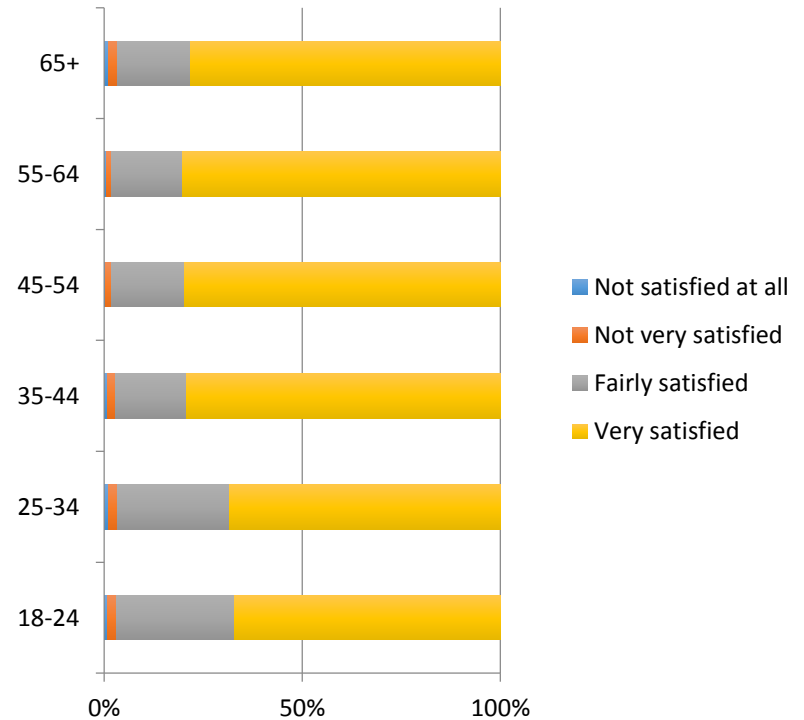


# Voter satisfaction by age

There is strong satisfaction among all age groups.

It is highest among those aged 45-64.

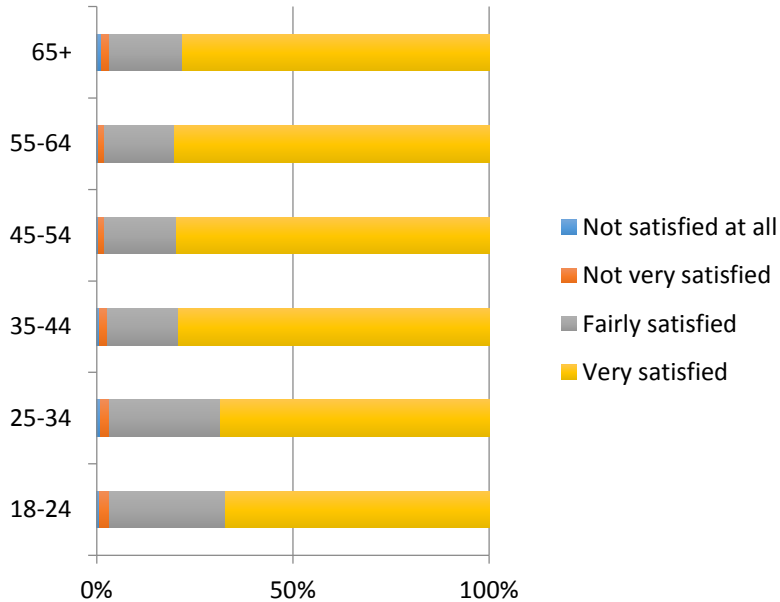
Voters 34 years and younger are less likely to report being 'very satisfied'.



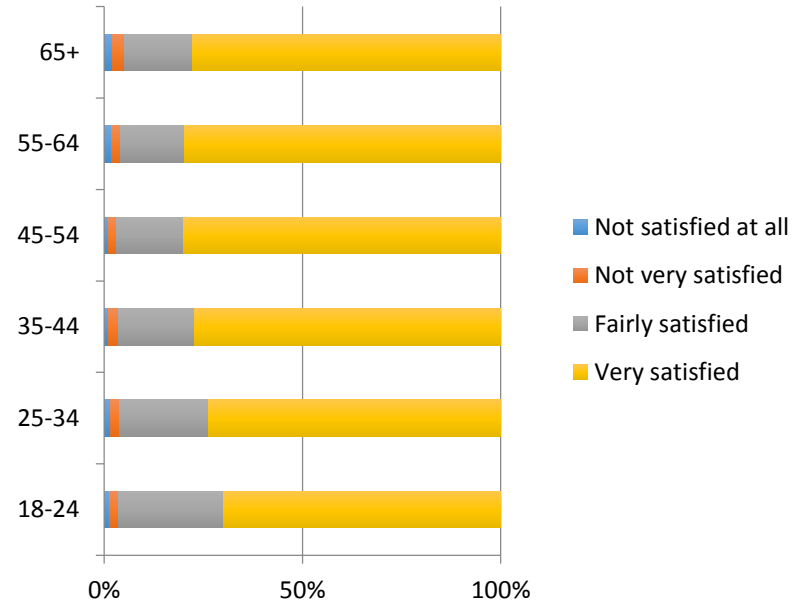
# Comparing satisfaction with IVS data

Markham respondents slightly more satisfied than the rest of the sample.

## Markham 2018



## IVS data



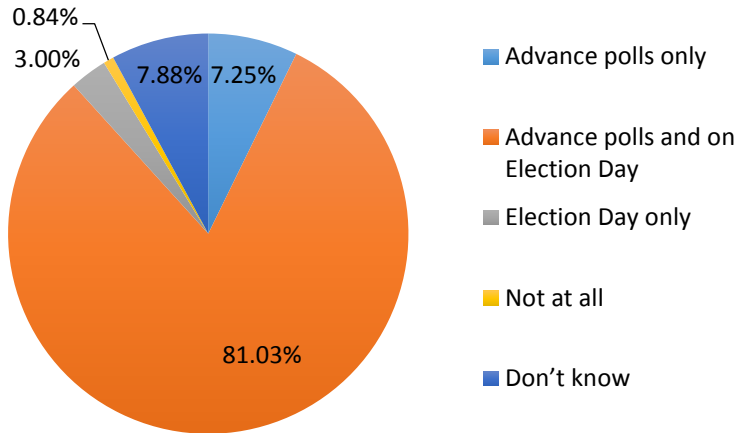
# Rationale for use

Rationale	2014	2018
Convenience	76.86%	75.07%
Accessibility	3.68%	7.67%
Found it interesting/wanted to try something new	4.42%	5.68%
Suggestion from friend(s) or family member(s)	.48%	1.11%
Suggestion from a candidate	.07%	0.64%
Positive past experience with voting online	9.39%	3.73%
Privacy	.75%	1.96%
Internet and telephone voting were my only choices	1.36%	1.14%
Internet voting was the only method offered in my municipality	3.00%	1.44%
Other (please specify)	0	1.55%

# Voter satisfaction & rationale

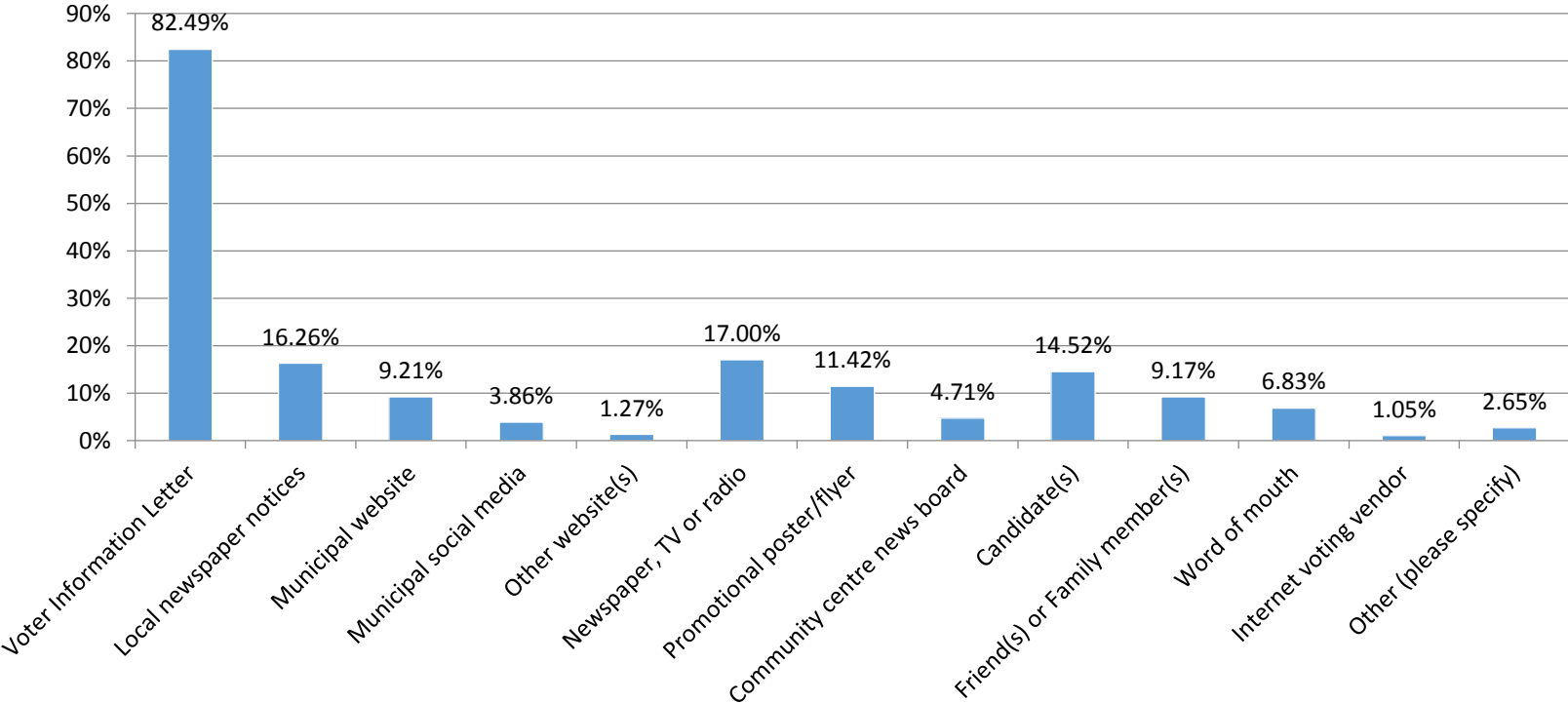
- Online voter satisfaction in Markham is very strong.
  - Slightly higher than the IVS average
- Increase from 2014 and much higher than reported satisfaction among paper voters in 2014.
- Online voting model changes well received by voters.
- Convenience main reason for use.

## Ideal online voting period

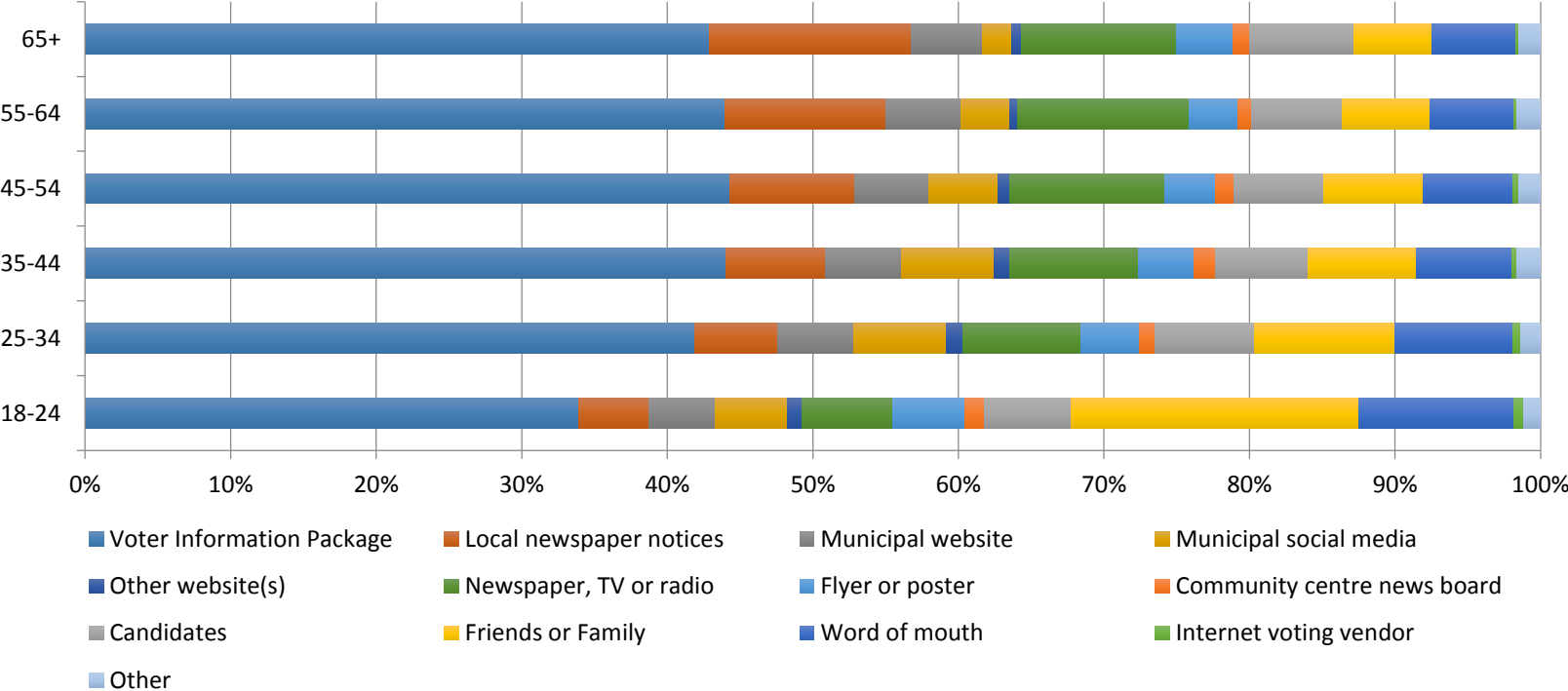


# 3. Vote information

# Source of voting information



# Source of voting information by age





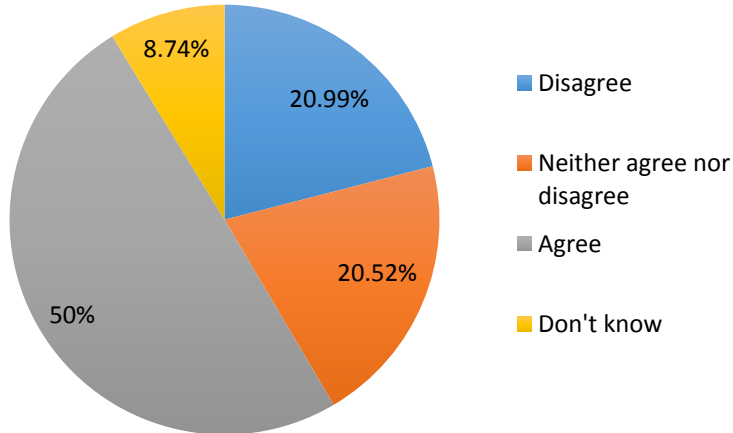
# Vote information

- The Voter Information Package and newspaper notices are two consistently important sources to inform Markham electors.
  - News is an especially important source for those aged 45+.
- Voters under 45 are more likely to be reached via social media, word of mouth and friends and family.
  - This is especially true for those aged 18 to 24.
- For these reasons a combination of information sources – traditional and newer, digital sources - would continue to work well to reach electors of all ages.

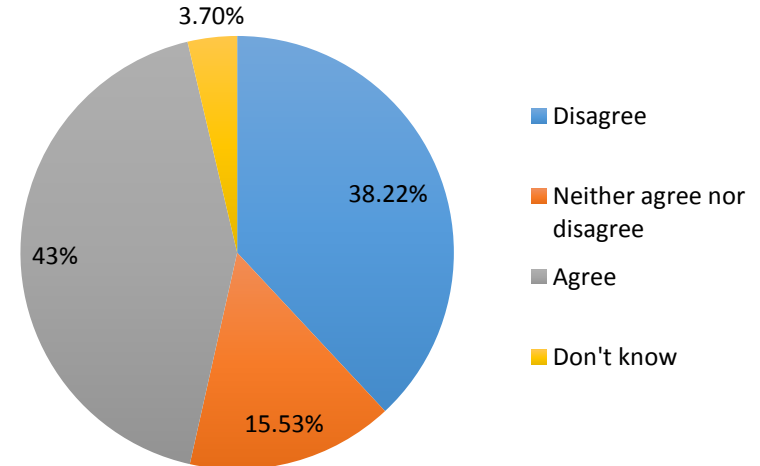
## **4. Public attitudes**

# Public attitudes

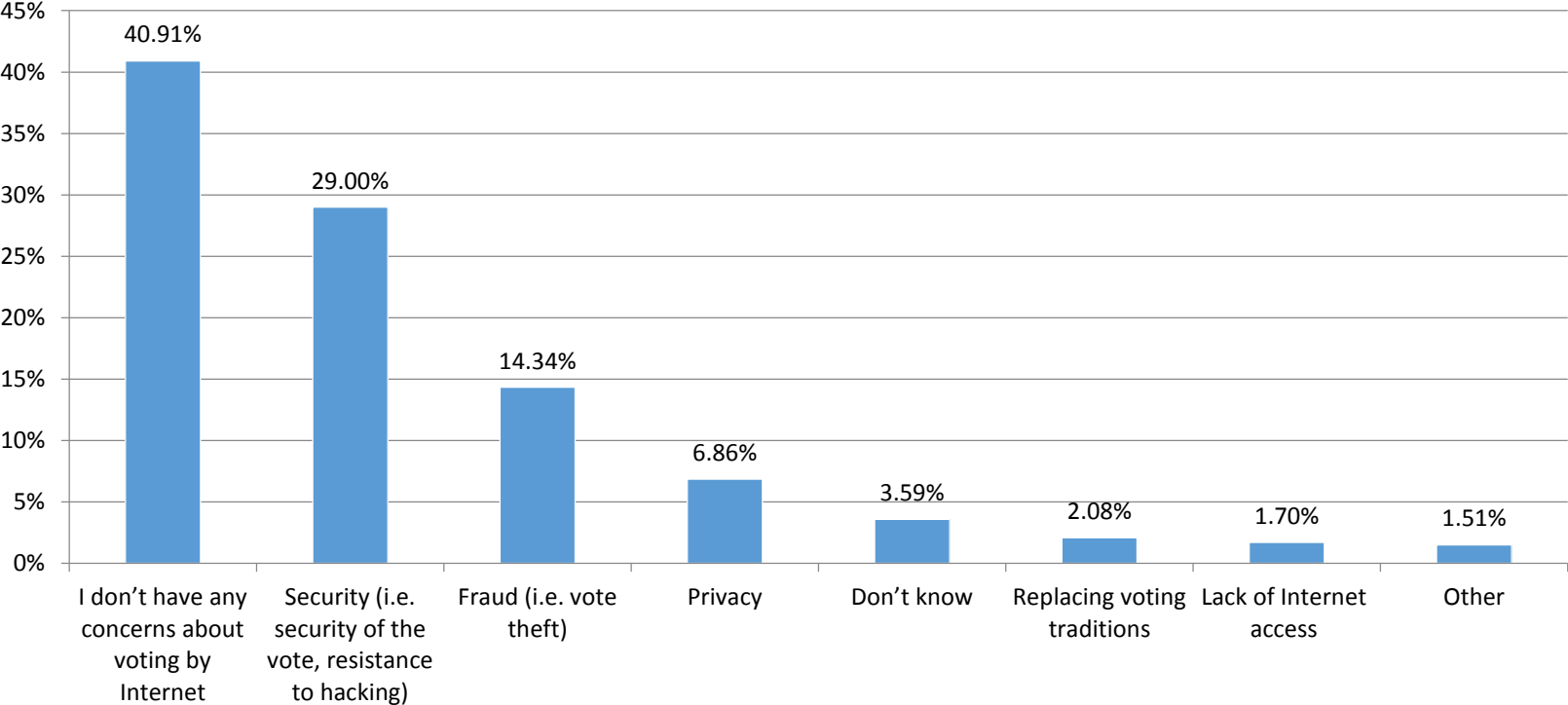
Elections with paper ballots are just as risky as elections where voting is electronic.



Paper voting is not needed in municipal elections where internet voting is available.



# Concerns



# Public attitudes

- Voters are accepting of electronic and online voting.
- The 2014 study showed that voters perceive online voting to be less risky than other remote forms of voting.
- While security is a concern, the largest proportion of online voters have no concerns.

# **5. Voter profile & participation**

# Voter profile

Profile	Characteristics	Online voter Markham, 2018	Paper voter IVP data, 2014
Socio-demographic	Age	54 years	44 years
	Annual household income	\$75,000 to \$99,999 before taxes	\$60,000 to \$79,999 before taxes
	Community density	Urban to Suburban	Urban to Suburban
	Education	Some university	Completed technical, community college
Attitudes	Voting history	Habitual	Very habitual
	Interest level in politics	Moderate	Moderate

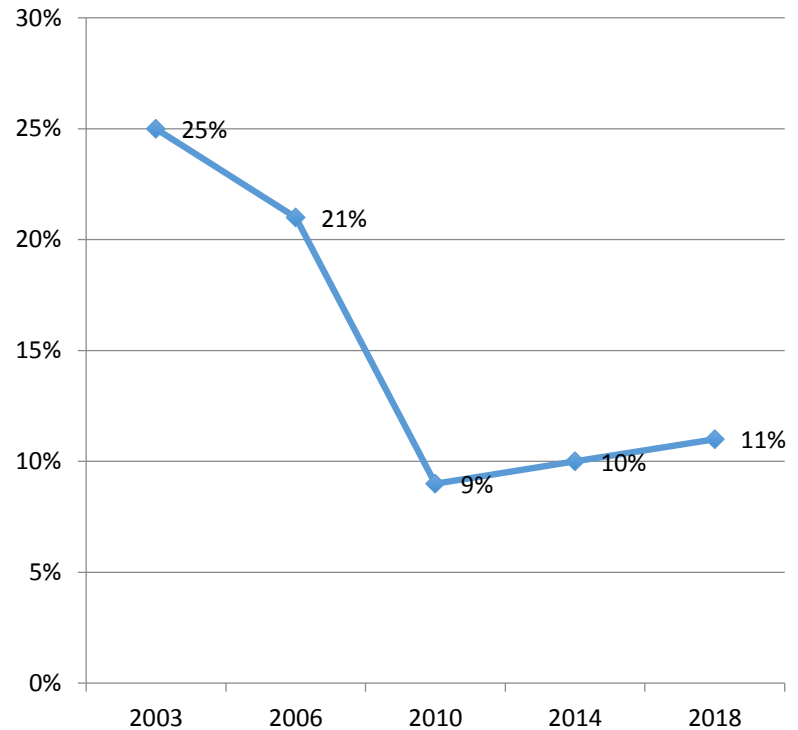
# Engaging infrequent and non voters

12% of respondents say they 'probably' or 'definitely' would not have voted without online voting.

- 12.5% in 2014.

Those with less committed voting records are not as certain they would have voted.

11% of the sample say they did not vote in 2014.



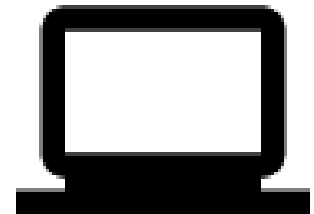


# Reasons for not voting in a past municipal election (2014)

Category	Markham	IVS
Everyday life issues (access)	48.7%	41.4%
Political issues (lack of interest)	30.6%	33.7%
Administrative issues	8.16%	6.76%
Markham N=1201; IVS N=5640 Excludes Other and Don't know		

# Voter profile & participation

- Online voters are older, more educated and higher income than paper voters but with less habitual voting histories.
- Continued evidence to suggest online voting encourages the participation of some electors for reasons of accessibility.
- Brings occasional voters in the voting process more permanently.



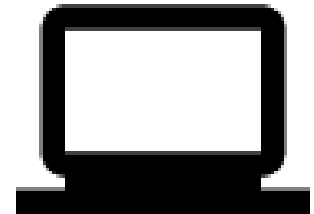
## **6. Broader findings**

# Turnout

- Markham
  - 300 percent increase in 2003
  - 43 percent increase in 2006
  - No change in 2010 (less than 1 percent decrease)
- Ontario municipal elections, 2000-2014
  - 171 elections in 98 municipalities across 5 election time periods
    - Increase of 3.5 percentage points
    - 7 percentage points if voting by mail not in place beforehand
    - Increases effective voting population by 7%
  - **LARGER THAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM CHANGE**

# Going all electronic?

- Observe a turnout increase of 2 percentage points.
- Evidence that eliminating paper voting disenfranchises voters on the basis of digital literacy.
- Still a lot we don't know, but we will answer a lot of these questions in the coming months.



# Policy considerations

- When there is no registration requirement 35% more people vote by internet.
- 9% less people use it when available in advance voting only.



# 7. Takeaways

# Takeaways

- Markham online voters are very satisfied.
  - Slightly more satisfied than IVS voters and much more satisfied than paper voters.
- Mainly vote online for convenience, though access has increased.
- The change in this election to have online voting available for the full election period was desired and well received by voters.
- Making a move to a fully electronic election is less certain. Suggest doing a public opinion poll prior to eliminating a voting method.



# Takeaways

- Voter Information Package, newspaper notices and TV and radio are top election information sources.
- Given key differences in information source by age a blended model is suggested, which combines traditional and non-traditional mediums.
- Public attitudes are supportive of online voting and findings suggest there is a positive effect on voter participation.
- Markham continues to be a leader in this space.

# Questions & bio



Dr. Nicole Goodman, Director at the Centre for e-Democracy and Assistant Professor at Brock University is recognized internationally as a leading expert on electoral modernization. She has co-authored reports for EMBs and governments across Canada and has provided advice to governments internationally about the modernization of elections. Dr. Goodman has led a number of projects studying elections in municipalities and First Nations across Canada. She currently represents Canada on the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance Board of Advisers.