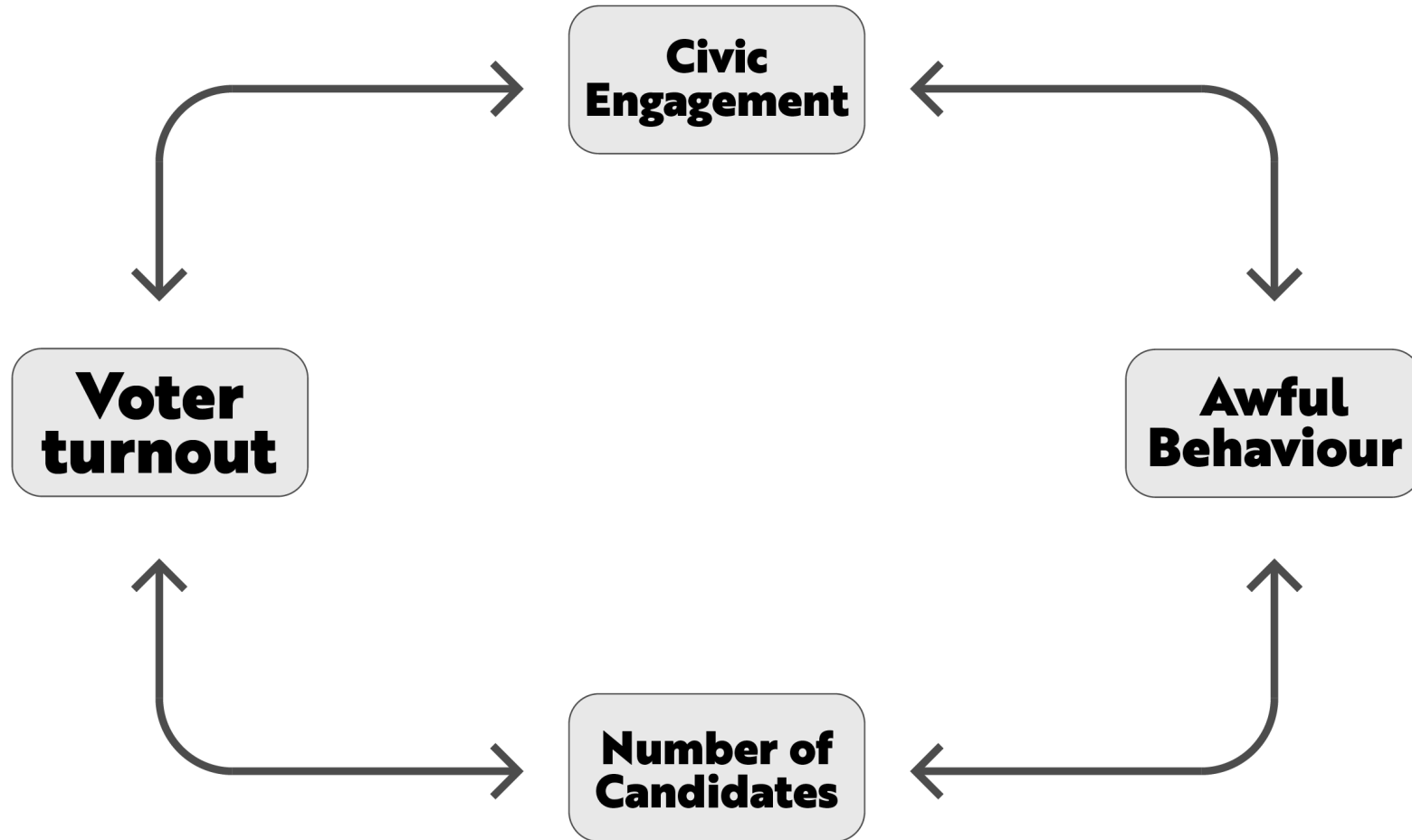


Collision at the intersection of Voter Turnout, Civic Engagement, and Incivility



Dr. Chris Erl
Stewart McDonough

Crowded intersection



Meeting concerns with action



AMO's Healthy Democracy Project

- AMO's [Healthy Democracy Project](#) promotes the value and importance of municipal governments in Ontario's political system, including the importance of diversity of leadership and perspectives.
- The Healthy Democracy Project builds on AMO's 2021—2022 **We All Win** campaign and works to:
 - Attract more diverse candidates to municipal office.
 - Support elected officials to be equity-informed leaders.
 - Promote more respect for the people engaged in democratic processes.
 - Encourage greater participation in local democracy and an increase in voter turnout.
 - Promote greater civic engagement and greater awareness of the role of municipal government.

AMO **Healthy Democracy Project**

We All Win

- Representative councils
- Resources, tools, and training
- Equity-informed leadership
- People running for office don't feel alone and have recourse

Respect for Democracy

- Increase trust in local government
- Improving the tone of discourse
- AMO as a thought leader on participatory democracy

Engagement & Education

- Civic education and youth engagement
- Civic engagement support for AMO members
- AMO member engagement in Healthy Democracy work

A “Confluence of Concerns”

- **Concern 1: Growing incivility and toxicity in local politics**
- **Concern 2: Civic engagement is being restricted**
- **Concern 3: Steadily declining candidate registrations**
- **Concern 4: Rapidly declining voter turnout**

#1 Incivility and Toxicity

Politics

Why Is Politics Getting Nastier?

With threats and harassment rising, running office has become a dangerous job

BY STEPHEN MAHER

Updated 21:32, May. 30, 2022 | Published 14:00, May. 12, 2022

Local News

Trolling is a major barrier for women considering politics, conference hears

"I want to put my time into developing good policy, not fighting trolls on the internet. It is frustrating and it is draining."

Elizabeth Payne

Published Aug 15, 2022 • 3 minute read

Politics

MPs des panic bu



One MP said t

Montreal

Quebec launches helpline for politicians following wave of resignations at municipal level

Hundreds have left public life since 2021

The Canadian Press - Posted: Feb 28, 2024 1:26 PM EST | Last Updated: February 28



Quebec Municipal Affairs Minister Andrée Laforest says a growing number of elected officials are quitting because of intimidation and harassment. (Jacques Boissinot/The Canadian Press)



Quebec is committing \$2 million to connect politicians and their families with psychological aid after a wave of resignations and leaves of absence among elected municipal officials.

political
t up to fail

ADA

/asaga Beach, Ont., disables comments on its social media to prevent spread of hate, misinformation

Staff • The Canadian Press
sted October 27, 2021 9:13 pm

al's office closes social media a wave of hateful remarks

s have been 'abusive, misogynistic and racist' in nature

#2 Civic Engagement



helpline for poli
ns at municipal

nce 2021

OPP investigating after Pickering mayor, council file criminal harassment complaint against fellow councillor

Complaint is a joint filing by the rest of council, Coun. Linda Cook says



[Rochelle Raveendran](#) · CBC News · Posted: Jan 09, 2025 5:04 PM EST | Last Updated: January 9



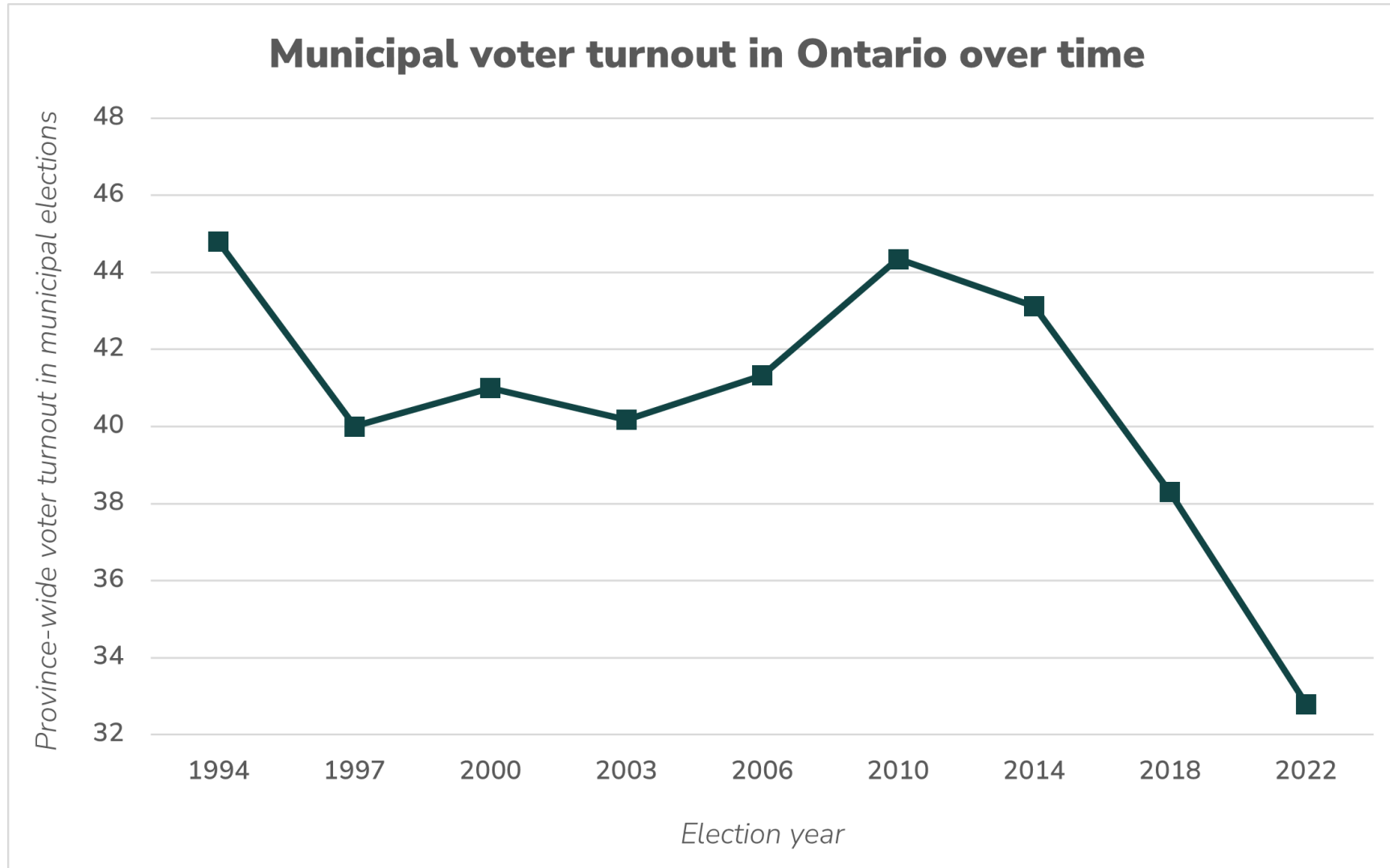
says a growing number of elected officials are quitting
Boissinot/The Canadian Press)

al's office closes social media
a wave of hateful remarks

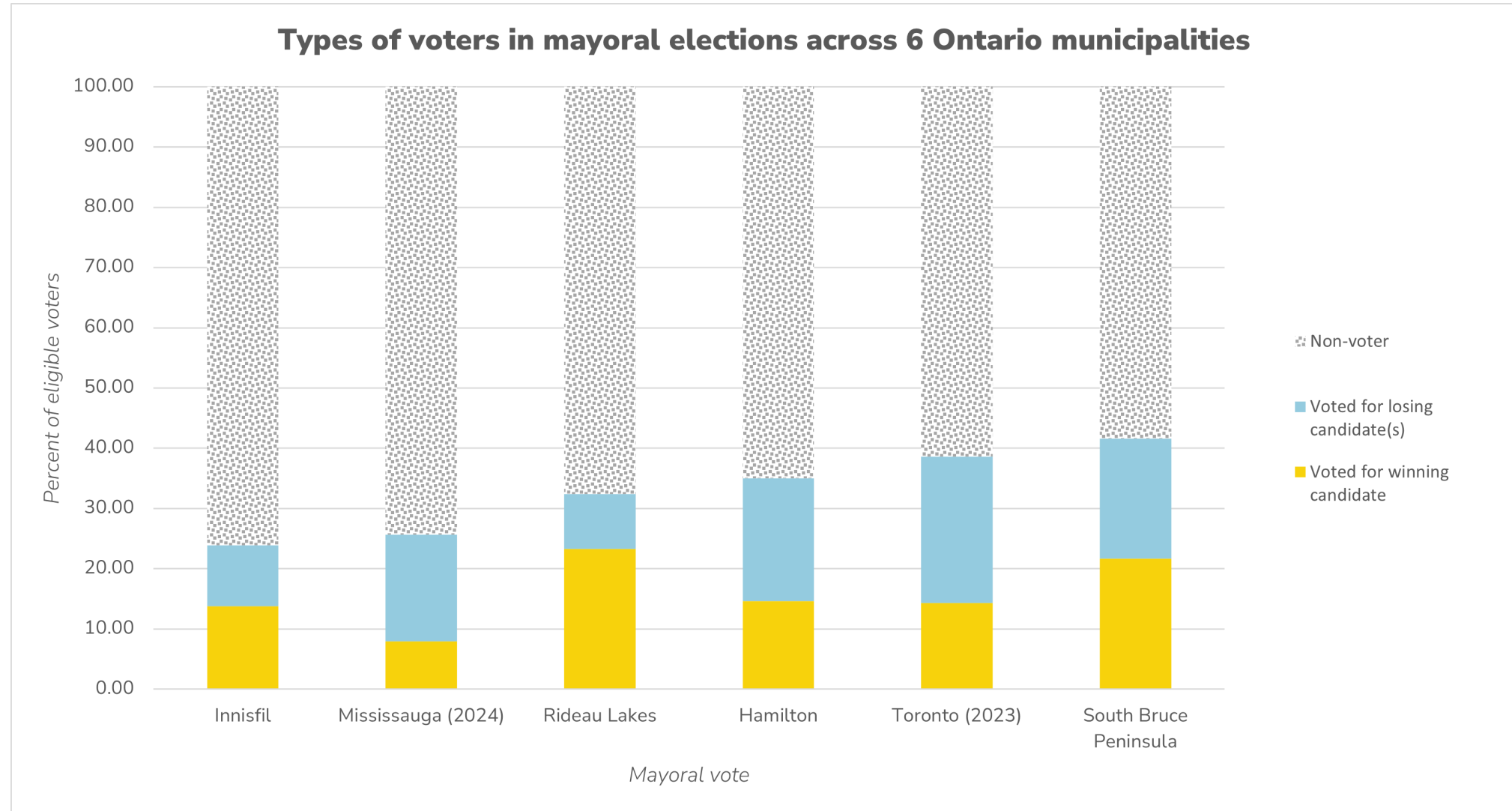
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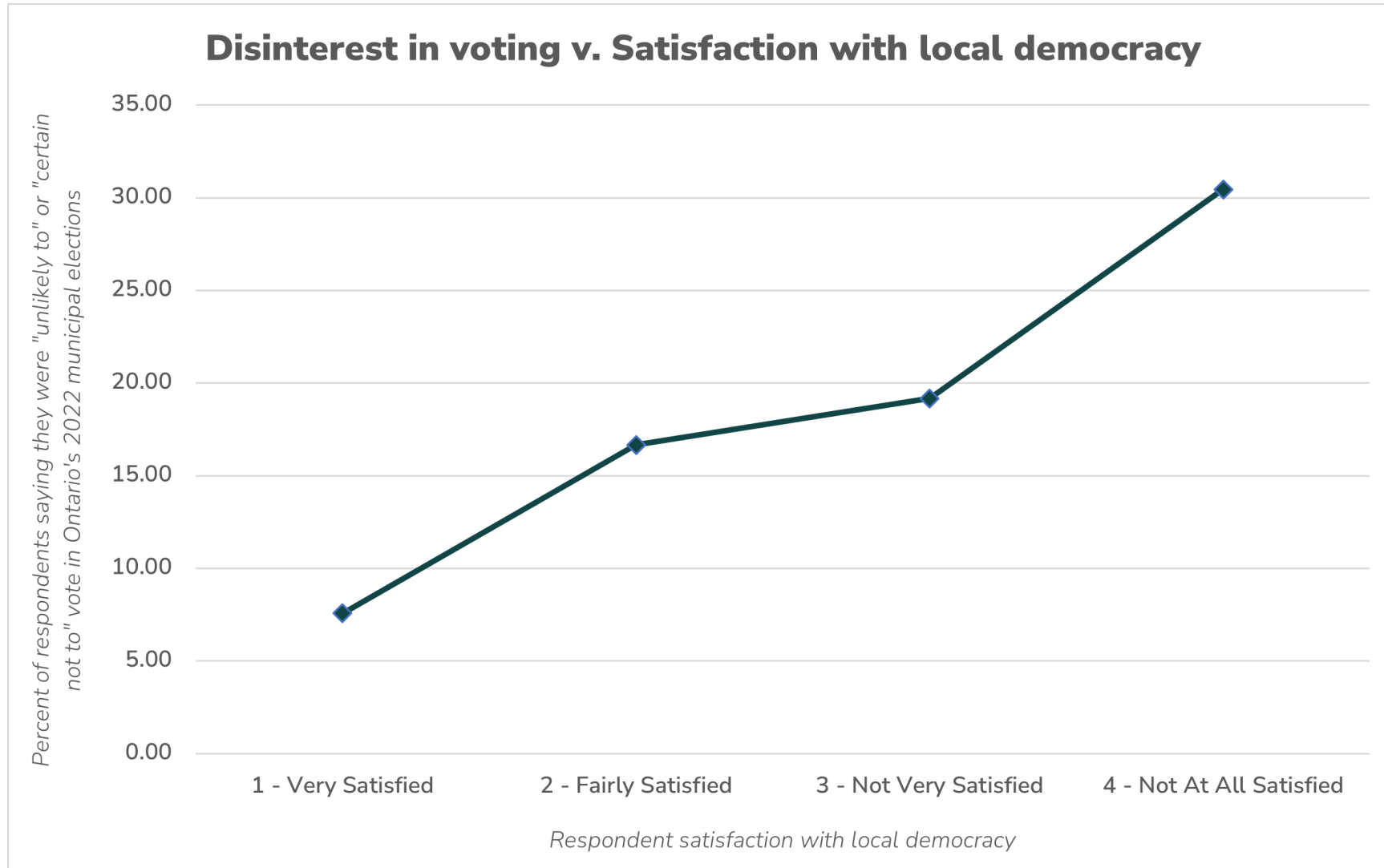
#3 Declining turnout



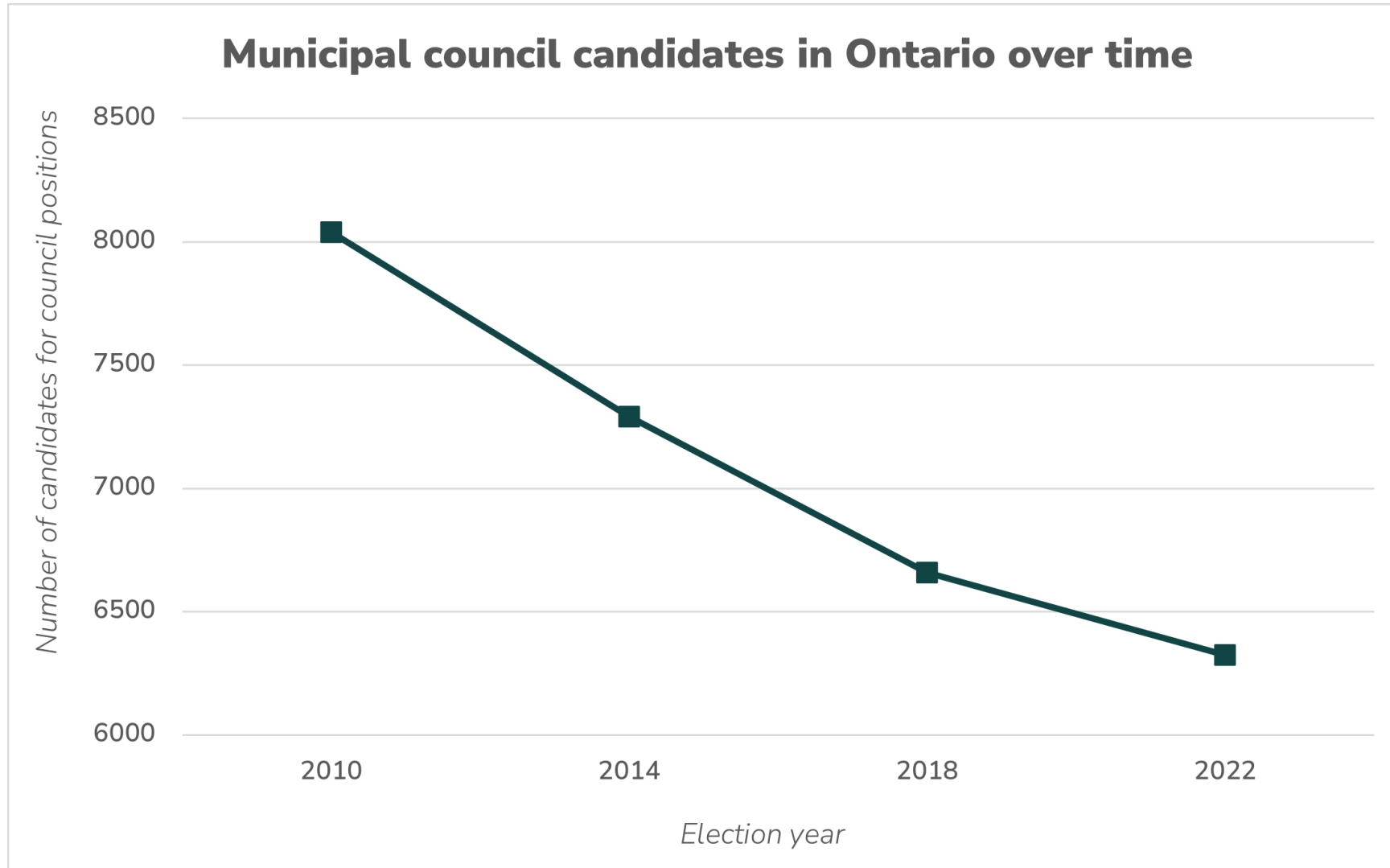
#3 Declining turnout



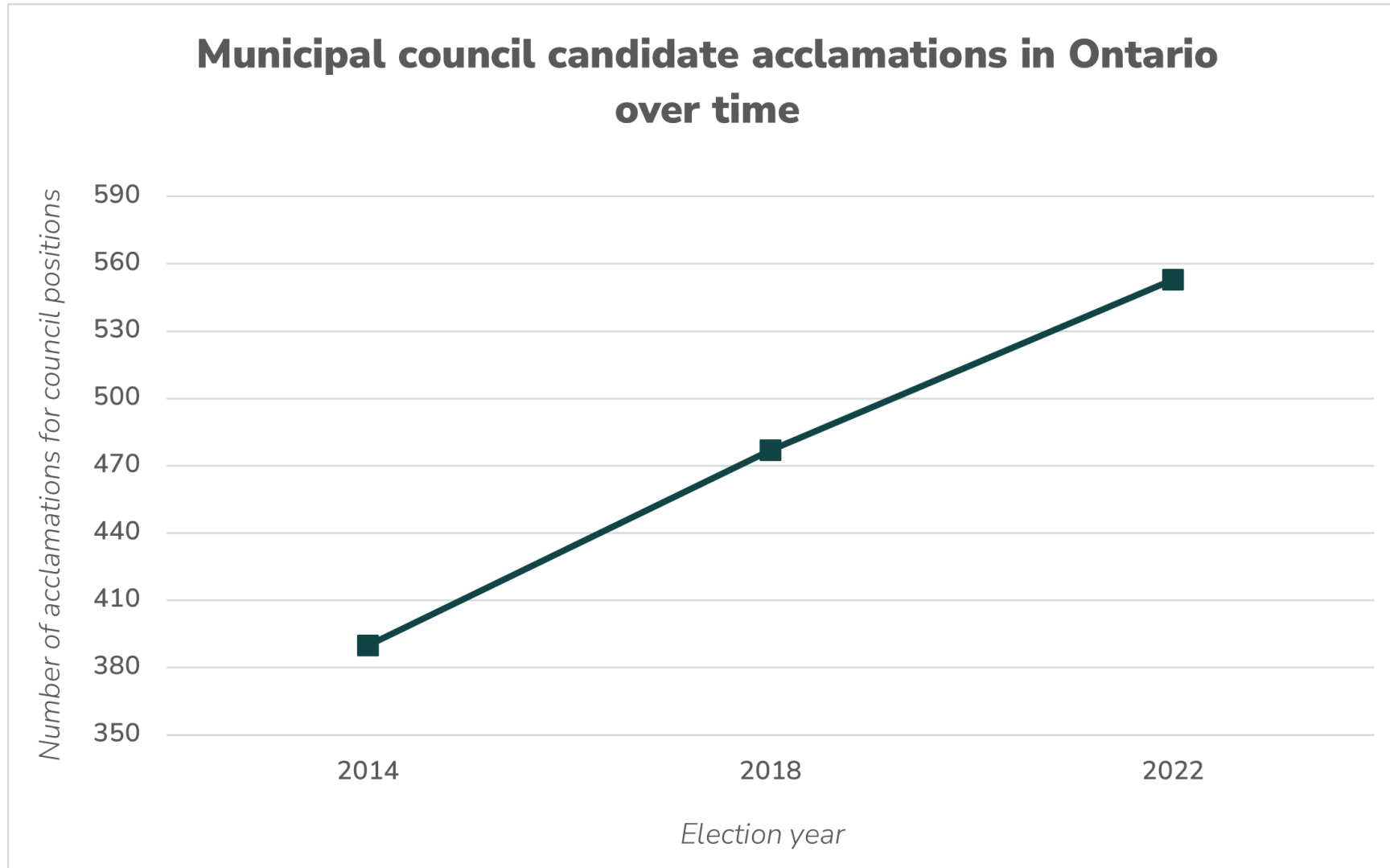
#3 Declining turnout



#4 Declining candidate registration



#4 Declining candidate registration



Clearing the Collision

Strengthening Local Democracy

- **Local Democracy Accelerator**
- **Democratic Engagement Solutions Bank**
- **Voter turnout framework**
- **Civility & Anti-Harassment Strategy**

Clearing the Collision

Strengthening Local Democracy

- **Youth Engagement & Civic Education**
- **Public Affairs Campaign**
- **Healthy Democracy Forums**
 - **June 11: Rural Healthy Democracy Forum**
 - **October 18 & 19: 2nd Healthy Democracy Forum**

Democratic Engagement Solutions Bank

AMO's Democratic Engagement Solutions Bank

Solutions

About

Solutions Map

Add Solution

New Screen

Solution Categories

Review Suggestions

Accepted/Rejected Suggestions

Add/Edit Solutions

Manage Users

Contact Us

AMO

Association of Municipalities of Ontario

AMO's Democratic Engagement Solutions Bank

AMO's Democratic Engagement Solutions Bank is a resource designed to help communities in Ontario find practical ways to improve democratic and political participation. This project is part of AMO's Healthy Democracy Project.

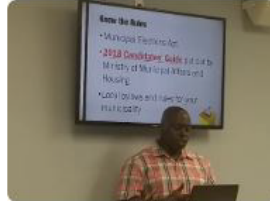
Solutions Spotlight

Operation Black Vote's Municipal Boot Camp

Operations Black Vote's Municipal Boot Camp is a hands-on training program tailored for local democracy champions and community leaders eager to drive change in municipal politics. This initiative provides a practical roadmap for navigating local government, enhancing leadership skills, and deepening civic engagement at the grassroots level.

#Spotlight Press Freedom Awareness Campaign


The Spotlight Press Freedom Awareness Campaign is a global initiative that rallies communities and civic leaders to support a free, independent press on UN World Press Freedom Day (May 3). This campaign provides a practical framework for public advocacy and policy engagement to safeguard media freedom and strengthen democracy.



SUPPORTING CANDIDATES, ENGAGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Operation Black Vote - Municipal Bootcamp



Helping historically marginalized people kickstart their campaigns





MEDIA AND MISINFORMATION, IMPROVING CIVIC EDUCATION, CIVILITY AND RESPECT


#Spotlight Press Freedom Awareness Campaign for UN World Press Freedom Day

Raising awareness for local journalism

Type in the  Search box to search for solutions. Click on  to filter solutions by categories, types of municipalities and more.



 Search


 Filter



15

Democratic Engagement Solutions Bank

Type in the  Search box to search for solutions. Click on  to filter solutions by categories, types of municipalities and more.

 Search

 Filter **1** 



SUPPORTING CANDIDATES,
ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING CIVIC
EDUCATION, CIVILITY AND
RESPECT

electHER Now

Achieving sustainable
gender balance of elected
municipal officials



ENGAGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
**Marathon's "Student
Councillor" program**

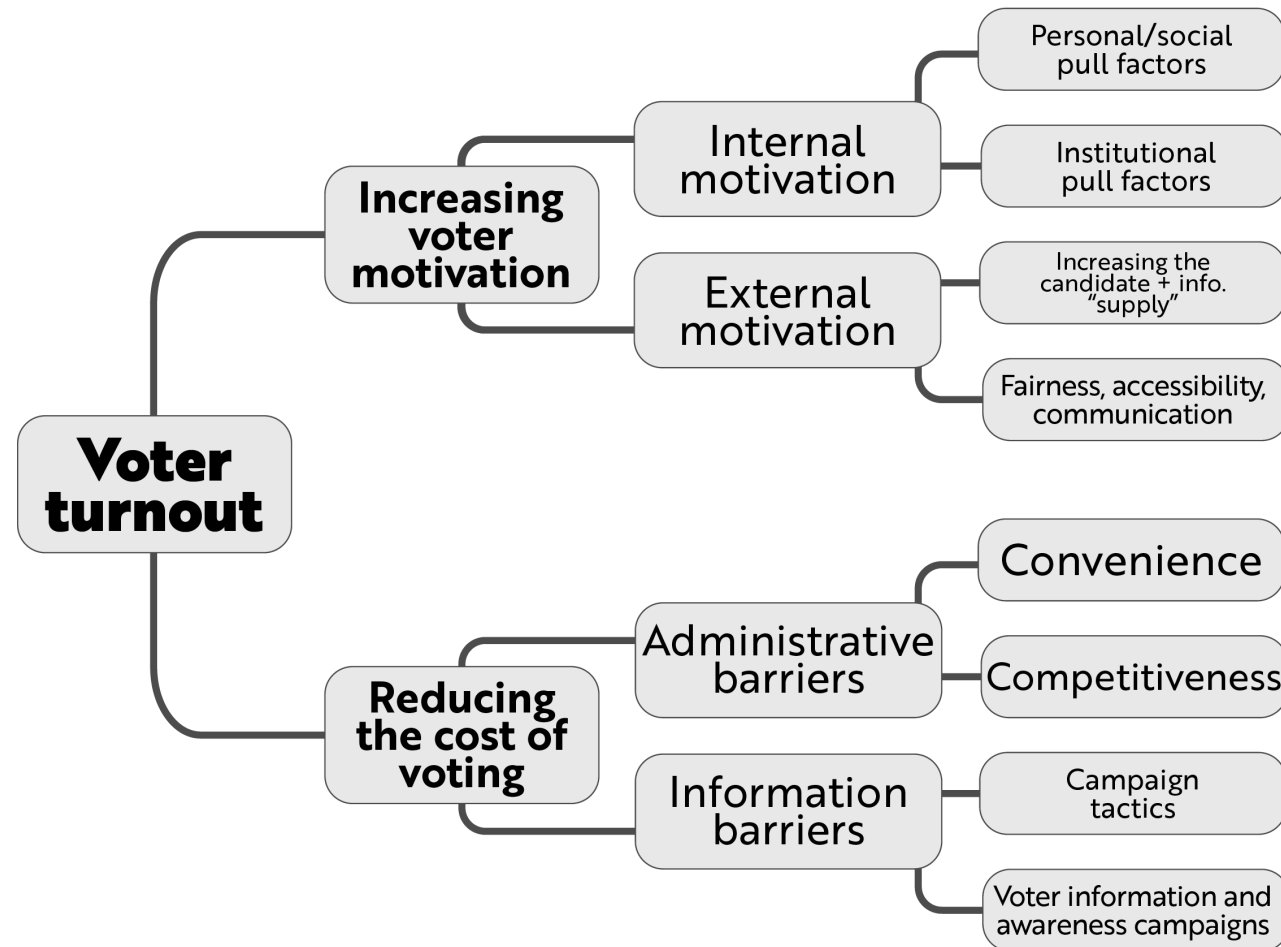
Providing youth a seat at the
council table



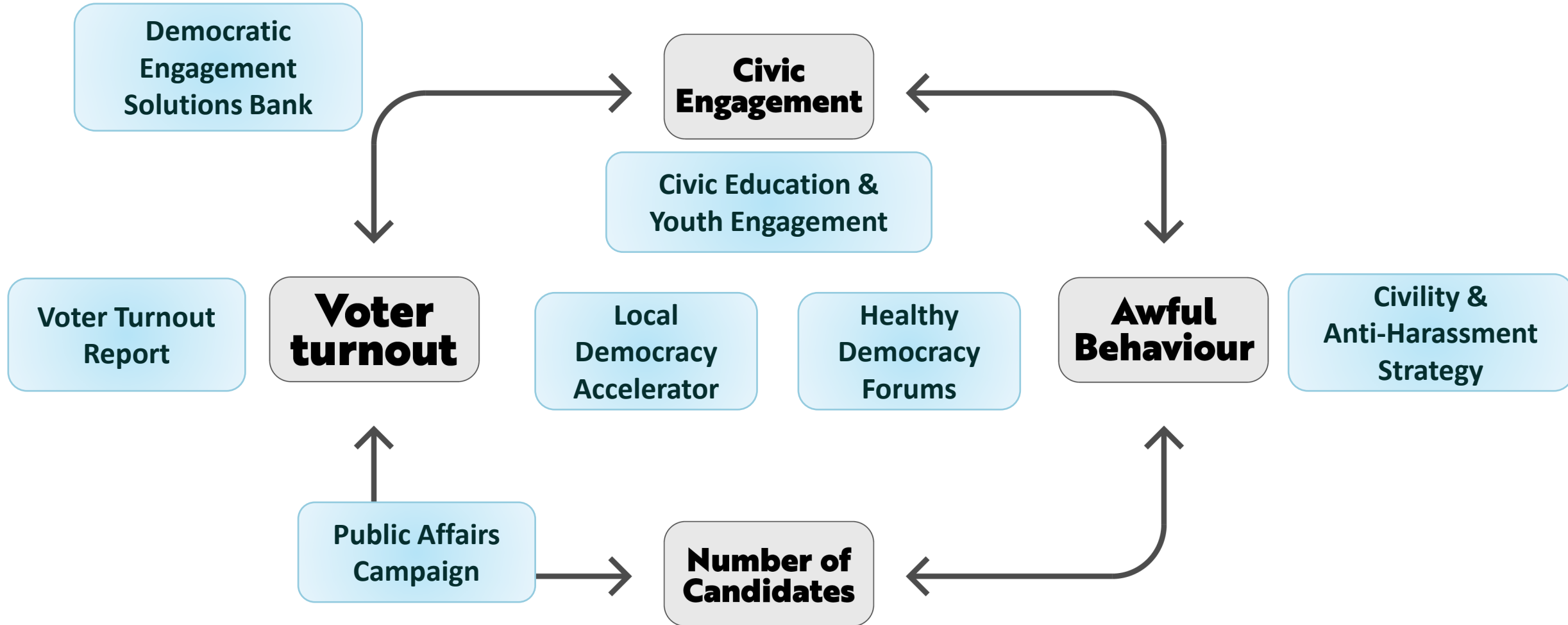
SUPPORTING CANDIDATES,
ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION,
MEDIA AND MISINFORMATION,
IMPROVING CIVIC EDUCATION
**Grey Highlands Municipal
League's Candidate Menu**

Quickly introducing
residents to candidates

Voter Turnout: Motivation & Barriers



Hope, Optimism, and Partnerships



Discussion





Thank you