



2023 Councillor Ward 20 By-election

Media Technical Briefing

How to access Election Results

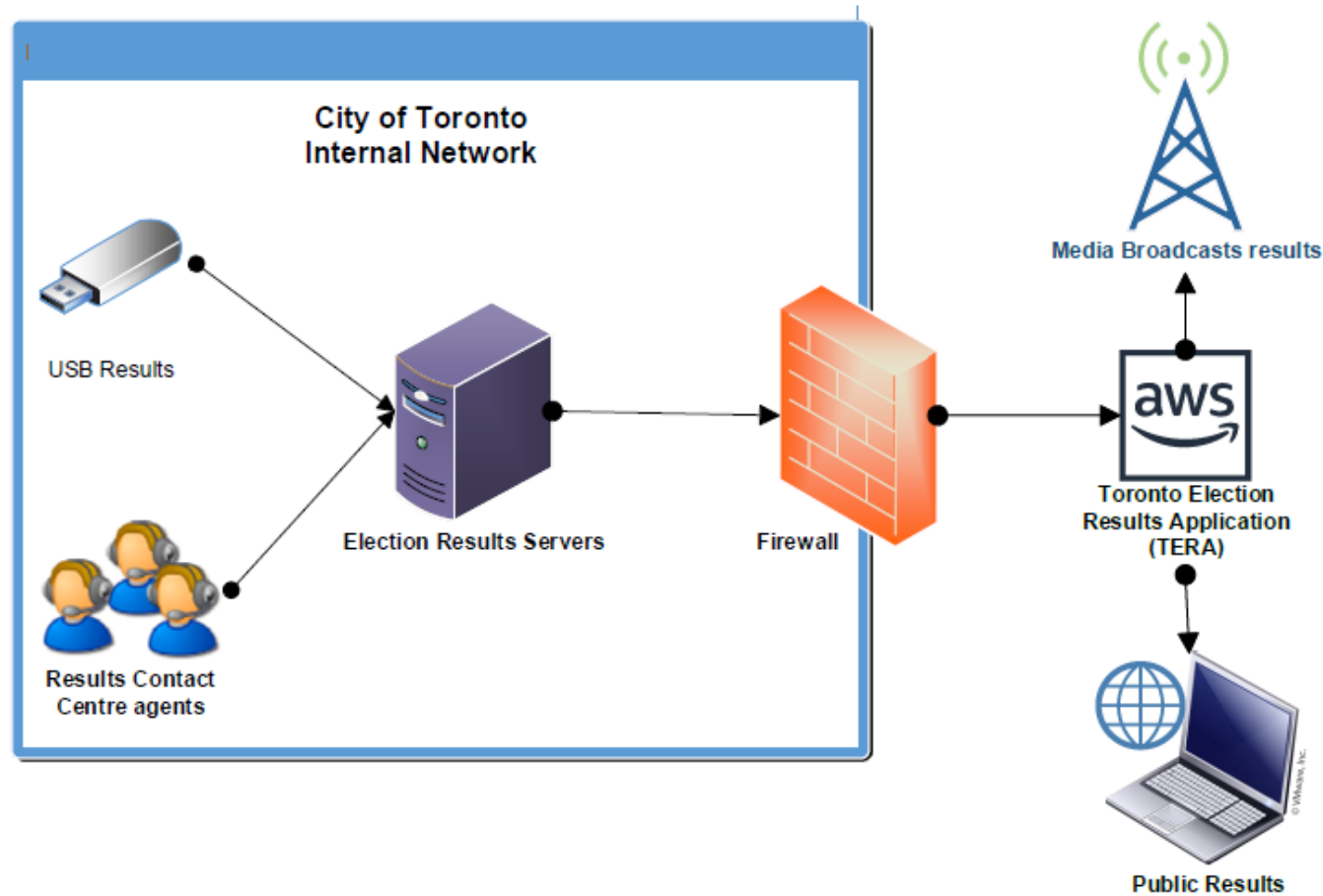
Notice



This briefing provides information for the media to gain access to City's election results data.

- The City will make the 2023 Ward 20 Councillor by-election results file available beginning November 17.
- On November 17, the data file will be in the format showing zero vote totals for each candidate and voters, voting subdivisions, and will be updated as polls are reporting in on Election Day November 30 at 8pm.
- The City is not providing any live system test data at this time.

Election Results Transmission



Media Results files

Election Results files will be available in a machine-readable JSON file format

Data format type of the election results files that will be available below.

- [unofficialresult.json](#)
All Candidates – Councillor Ward 20



Getting the latest information

- Technical information and updates will be available on the Toronto Elections website

toronto.ca/elections/results

- Check the 'Live Results Information for Media' tile regularly for any new information.
- We strongly suggest you **test in advance of election day! No technical support will be available on Election Day November 30.**
- The Technical contacts will be available to answer your questions leading up to election day. Plan accordingly!



Technical Contact Information

Tharshan Sundaramoorthy, Elections Manager

Tharshan.Sundaramoorthy@toronto.ca

416-395-1319

Simon Leung, Project Manager

Simon.Leung@toronto.ca

416-338-7388

All other questions directed to media@toronto.ca

Important Dates



| Date | Details |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| November 17, 2023 | Sample JSON files for the 2023 Councillor Ward 20 By-Election testing with zero totals will be available. |
| November 30, 2023 | Election Day results will be available after 8 pm. |

* Please note there will be no system test data for this by-election.

Q&A



Question: The filename is given as “unofficialresult.json”. Can you confirm that the filename will be the same on the night of the election? We just want to be sure it won’t be changing to “officialresult” or something like that. And once the results are complete, will there be a final data file with official results?

Answer: The filename will not change on election night.

Question: The JSON files are being stored in AWS, is there any caching on those files and how long is the cache set for? Do we need to apply a cache buster or something?

Answer: AWS will refresh the files every 60 seconds for the JSON file. You will need to address any caching scenarios based on how you build your consuming solution. For your consideration, the JSON file have a “seq” attribute where the value is based on a timestamp.

Question: Will there be results file available but just with zeroed data until election night?

Answer: Unofficial results file with zeroed data will be posted on November 17 until election night.

Q&A Cont.



Question: We have a workaround, but it seems the CORS policy on the data files doesn't allow them to be accessed by other domains. Will you be updating the cross domain policy?

Answer: It is not recommended to make direct AJAX calls to mediareresults.toronto.ca from another domain. The intent is to download the results file, parse it and setup/host your own website or television crawl.

Question: I understand that the feed will activate at 8 p.m. on November 30, after the polls close. I also understand that the feed will be updated every 60 seconds. But I can't find when the feed will be turned off. Will it run until midnight?

Answer: On November 30, the live JSON results files will be updated every 60 seconds, starting from 8 p.m. until all results have been received. There is no fixed end time, but we expect the majority of results to be received between 8:00 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. A zeroed unofficial results file will be posted on November 17 for reference.

Question: Will the election results be available at the exact same URL for both testing and election night?

Answer: Yes

Q&A Cont.



Question: Are the total number of polls and total voters values in that feed accurate? In other words, can we pre-populate our system with these values now with the values in the feed or will these values change as we get closer to election day?

Answer: Both values are subject to change as we approach election day.

Question: Does the candidate field reorganize itself based on votes received or does it stay in alphabetical order?

Answer: It will reorganize based on total votes received. If two or more candidates have the same number of votes, those will organize based on name.

Question: I cannot find any mention in the documentation about rate limiting on the election results API. As we are testing, should we be mindful of how often we poll the API?

Answer: There is no rate limiting; however, you should retrieve the JSON file, parse and then store it into your own system. Rate limiting will become an issue if you link directly to the content from your own web pages (for example, by hosting a web page that retrieves the JSON file via AJAX). The JSON should not be retrieved in this fashion.

Q&A Cont.



Question: Are there any concerns related to retrieving the results files over HTTP vs HTTPS?

Answer: The files can be downloaded over Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS) only. If your integration software attempts an unencrypted Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) connection to the mediareresults.toronto.ca site, the site responds with a redirect to the HTTPS version of the URL.

It is strongly recommended that you configure your integration software to use the HTTPS version of the URL. This improves security by ensuring the connection is always encrypted, and may improve your integration software's system performance by reducing the number of requests. Doing so will also improve your resilience to certain types of internet service provider outages.

Appendix



Top Level

```
{
  "electionDesc" : "2023 Councillor Ward 20 By-Election",
  "office" : [ ... ],
  "seq" : "1698173913075"
}
```

unofficialresult.json

Office

```
{
  "id" : 2,
  "name" : "Councillor",
  "ward" : [ ... ]
},
...
```

Ward

```
{
  "name" : "Scarborough Southwest",
  "num" : "20",
  "polls" : "58",
  "pollsReceived" : "0",
  "totalVoters" : "76715",
  "votesReceived" : "0",
  "candidate" : [ ... ]
},
...
```

Candidate

```
{
  "name" : "Malik Ahmad",
  "votesReceived" : "0",
  "percentage" : "0.00"
},
...
```