



City of Adelaide Elections



Voting Rights for Property Owners and Businesses



Property Council of Australia
South Australian Division
June 2026





Why this matters

Business pays 75% of the City of Adelaide's rate revenue. It's time to make your voice heard. If you own or occupy commercial property within the City of Adelaide, you may be eligible to vote in the upcoming Council election.

Businesses help power the CBD and contribute 75% of the City's rate revenue. Yet too often, the business community does not fully exercise its voice at the ballot box. When that happens, decisions can be made by elected representatives without a strong understanding of the needs of businesses, investment and city growth.

This election is an opportunity to ensure the people driving jobs, investment and economic activity in our city have their voices heard. Don't sit this one out. We need to get off the bench and make our voices heard.



Who can vote?

You may be eligible if you are:

- ✓ A resident
- ✓ A commercial property owner
- ✓ A commercial tenant (in a rateable tenancy)
- ✓ A company (i.e. a body corporate) that owns or occupies property
- ✓ A group of owners/occupiers (must nominate one person)



The golden rule

One person = one vote

Even if linked to multiple companies or properties, **an individual can only vote once.**



The Process to Vote

Step 1

Entitlement to Vote

If you are a **Company (including a Body Corporate) or Group** you can vote if you are:

- A ratepayer; and
- Enrolled as a State Elector & Australian Citizen; and
- An 'eligible person' nominated to vote on behalf of the body corporate, company or group.

Eligible officer = director, executive, or manager involved in the business.

If you are commercial tenant, you can vote if you are:

- The tenant of a rateable property; and
- Paying council rates, and
- Not living at the property; and
- Enrolled as a State Elector & Australian Citizen.

Step 2

Enrolment (nomination) of an eligible person to vote (Critical)

- Council will send a notice to nominate by 12 June
- You must:
 - Complete the nomination form;
 - **Return before the deadline of 31 July 2026;**
 - Attach evidence of your role in the company to qualify as an 'eligible person' – which could be uploading a business card, board minutes or other evidence.

Do not rely on council to nominate a 'default person' as you may lose voting opportunities.

Miss the deadline?

- If you miss the deadline, Council appoints a default person, relies on ASIC and ABR data.
- If that person is already on the City of Adelaide voters roll for the same ward, Council cannot appoint them and you will not receive a vote.

Step 3

Voting

Each:

- Owner / Occupier (Body Corporate, Group, Individual) = **1 vote per individual per property**
- Property tenancy (eligible) = **1 vote**
- Remember each person can only vote once

Practical tips



Submit your nomination when you receive it in the mail - don't rely on a default nomination



Ensure you provide the nominees full name, date of birth and residential address



Choose representatives (eligible person) carefully (no duplication)



Avoid nominating CBD residents (already automatically enrolled as a resident)



Keep records (i.e. lease, rates, business card, ASIC extract)



Ensure your nomination form is returned by 31 July 2026



Track who is voting across your organisation



Call the Property Council for advice if required

Case study

Body Corporates

While a single company cannot vote multiple times by owning multiple properties, property investors often structure their assets using subsidiary companies. Here are how the rules apply to that scenario:



Separate Entities = Separate Enrolments:

Consider a company that holds five (5) properties in the Council area, but each property is owned by a distinct subsidiary company. Because each subsidiary is a separate legal entity and the sole ratepayer for its respective property, each of the five (5) companies is legally entitled to its own enrolment on the voters roll.



Problem

Suppose John Smith is the sole director of all five (5) subsidiary companies. If all five (5) companies nominate John Smith to vote on their behalf, all five (5) companies will still only have **one (1) vote**. This is because the Act strictly mandates that a natural person may only vote in 1 capacity in each ward at an election.



The Solution

To cast five (5) votes, the five (5) subsidiary companies must nominate (enrol) *5 different* eligible officers or employees. Because the legal definition of an "officer" includes senior managers or anyone engaged in the management of the corporation's affairs, the companies do not need five (5) directors but still need sufficient operations to have 'officers' required at the company. By nominating five (5) distinct 'officers' to represent the five distinct companies, the corporate group legally exercises all five (5) of its votes without breaching the "one capacity" rule.