

When you go to the polls this fall to elect a new mayor and council, give a little extra thought before marking your ballot.

Because you will have to live with the consequences longer than in the past.

Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development Coralee Oakes announced this week legislation will be tabled to extend local government terms from three years to four.

That's great if you happen to like who ends up in office. If we wind up with a couple of duds, well, there is an old saying that says we get the government we deserve.

When it comes to hair-brained schemes, we've had a few doozies emanate from City Hall in recent years - the Eckhardt Avenue hockey dorm, the expensive battle with the hotel association and a \$450,000 bill to stage a triathlon at the expense of the city's economic tourism driver.

We'll leave it at that (although the latest controversies are urban deer and bike lanes on Ellis Street).

We've seen good councillors and bad, and that probably won't change. Some school board trustees are better than others.

But all deserve some respect for putting their names forward.

Committing to a four-year term could sway some qualified candidates not to run, and that's a shame.

But for those who do, four years gives them more time to grow into the responsibilities of the job. It also saves taxpayers money on the cost of less frequent elections and allows those who are elected to plan further in advance and see major projects through to completion.

All these are good things - as long as we elect the right people. Mark your ballots carefully in November.