



TOWNSHIP OF
GREATER MADAWASKA

**2026 Municipal Election
Accessibility Plan**

Approved by the
Clerk / Returning Officer
Township of Greater Madawaska
April 24, 2026

Introduction and Overview

This Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will address the specific accessibility requirements of the 2026 Municipal Election within the Township of Greater Madawaska.

The Township is committed to ensuring that the Municipal Election is accessible to all electors and candidates, through the use of effective procedures and processes.

To ensure that the Municipal Election is consistent with the core principles of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, this document was developed in advance of the election period, to identify measures to be taken prior to and during the election period. A follow-up report will be prepared post-election.

The Clerk is responsible for proper legislative and administrative conduct of a municipal election. In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, the Clerk is authorized to establish procedures and provide appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities will have the opportunity to participate fully in the 2026 Municipal Election.

The 2026 Township of Greater Madawaska Municipal Election will be conducted in such a manner to ensure that the following *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, legislative requirements are met:

12.1(1) A clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities.

12.1(2) The Clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election.

12.1(3) Within 90 days after voting day in a regular election, the Clerk shall prepare a report about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the report available to the public.

45(2) In establishing locations of voting places, the Clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities. (this will apply to Voter Assistance Centres)

Information and Communication

This plan will be made available at Township Office, 19 Parnell Street, Calabogie and on the Township's website. Alternative formats will be made available upon request. The plan will also be provided to all registered candidates to assist with ensuring that their campaign is accessible to all electors.

Election information will be provided in an accessible font and format; alternate formats may be available at the request of any individual. The Township and the person with a disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.

If there is a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services, the Township will provide public notice on the Township's website, social media accounts, and at the physical site of the disruption. The notice will include the reason for the disruption, anticipated duration and a description of alternative methods of delivering the information or service.

Voting Methods

The 2026 Municipal Election will be conducted using an internet and telephone voting system.

These methods of voting provide the convenience and independence of voting from any location, specifically one's own home.

Voting from any location alleviates barriers associated with mobility restrictions, transportation concerns, and visual, auditory, speech and cognitive disabilities, as well as temporary disabilities due to an illness or health issue. These barriers would be present in traditional elections that provide only a paper ballot voting method at a set voting station.

Internet and telephone voting allows a person to use assistive devices that they already have access to in their homes to cast a ballot privately and independently. The use of a computer or phone can also present accessible opportunities for persons with disabilities while being consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity.

The Internet Voting System provided by Voatz, meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines WCAG-2.1 Level AA, allowing persons with disabilities to perceive, understand, navigate and interact with the voting system. The system is compliant with the guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium website principles, which include organization, functionality and readability of information provided, as well as alternative ways of representing information, such as with audio.

For those individuals without the means to access the internet or telephone voting system, or who require the assistance of a trained Election Official, Voter Assistance Centres will be available throughout the voting period and on election day.

Voter Assistance Centres

The location, dates, and times of the Voter Assistance Centres will be posted on the Township website, social media accounts, and any other means deemed appropriate. Locations will be equipped to facilitate internet voting using a laptop or tablet, assist voters in updating their information, assist voters with obtaining a PIN, and assist voters with casting their vote (upon request).

Each location will have:

- an unobstructed and accessible route to the entrance from parking area
- space to accommodate an individual using a wheelchair, mobile equipment, other assistive device, or service animal
- clear and easily understood signage

- accessible parking spaces
- accessible doors or door operators
- adequate lighting
- adequate seating
- accessible washrooms

Voter Assistance

At Voter Assistance Centres, persons with disabilities will be permitted to allow a support person to assist with casting their vote provided the support person is administered an oath of secrecy by an Election Official prior to providing any such assistance.

At Voter Assistance Centres, upon request, Election Officials are available to assist any voter who requires assistance in casting their online ballot. All individuals working in the capacity of an Election Official are formally appointed as such and administered an oath of secrecy prior to voting day. Prior to assisting the voter, the Election Official will, in conjunction with the voter, determine the extent to which he/she/they needs assistance and the best way in which this assistance can be provided. This may actually be marking the online ballot as directed by the person with the disability.

Individuals requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all Voter Assistance Centres.

Electors with disabilities may use assistive personal devices including wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, walking canes, note taking devices, portable magnifiers, recording machines, assistive listening devices, personal oxygen tanks and devices for grasping at any Voter Assistance Centre.

Each Voter Assistance Centre will be equipped with magnifying sheets to assist an individual with low vision.

Each Voter Assistance Centre will be equipped with paper and pen to communicate with electors with hearing impairments.

Candidates and Registered Third Party Advertisers

Candidates and scrutineers are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all Voter Assistance Centres.

The Township will also work with candidates and registered third party advertisers who require mandatory election documents, forms and materials in an alternate format.

In accordance with section 88.20 (8) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, expenses directly related to an individual's disability which would not have been incurred if not for the election, are not subject to the spending limit if they are incurred by a candidate or a registered third party advertiser who is an individual with a disability.

Candidates must also have regard to the needs of electors with disabilities. Campaigns should be managed by candidates in such a way as to be accessible to all electors. A copy of the Candidate's Guide to Accessible Elections, produced by the Ministry of

Municipal Affairs and Housing in partnership with the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasures of Ontario (AMCTO), will be provided to each candidate.

Election Officials Training

The Township will utilize Township staff as Election Officials and as a requirement, all staff members have been provided with training on the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the accessibility standards referred to within the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities and on Municipal policies and procedures related to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its Regulation to all Election Officials.

Customer Service Standards

In accordance with the Township's Customer Service Standards Policy, the Township is committed to being responsive to the needs of all its residents. To do this, the diverse needs of all of our residents are recognized and responded to by providing services and facilities that are accessible to all. This policy is directly applied to all elements of the Municipal Election. As well, the Township is committed to adhering to the customer service standards of the *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Reporting

Pursuant to Section 12.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, within ninety (90) days after voting day, the Clerk will prepare a report about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and will make the report available to the public.

Feedback

Feedback is welcome in order to identify areas where changes need to be considered and ways in which the Township can improve the delivery of an accessible Municipal Election.

Feedback on this plan can be submitted to the Clerk at:

Township of Greater Madawaska
19 Parnell Street,
Calabogie ON
K0J 1H0

613-752-2229
clerk@greatermadawaska.com