



# The Corporation of the Town of Cobourg

## 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan



Approved by the  
Municipal Clerk / Returning Officer of  
The Town of Cobourg  
This 18 day of February 2026

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## 1. Introduction

This plan will address the specific accessibility requirements in relation to the 2026 Municipal Election in the Town of Cobourg.

The Town of Cobourg has made great efforts in promoting a barrier free community. In an effort to ensure that the 2026 Municipal Election is consistent with the core principles of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, this planning document was developed in advance of the election in order to identify measures to be taken and reported to Council following the election.

## 2. Objectives

This plan is intended to highlight measures that the Town of Cobourg will be implementing to ensure equal opportunity for all electors and candidates.

These objectives include:

- That persons with disabilities can independently cast their vote and verify their selection.
- That persons with disabilities have full and equal access to all information on where and when to vote and identifying Voter Helps Centres which are available and information on eligible candidates.
- That persons with disabilities can fully participate in the Municipal Election as an elector, candidate, or election official.
- That efforts are made to ensure that electors with disabilities are aware of the accessibility measures available via channels such as media launches through radio, the Town of Cobourg website, and social media.
- That all voting assistance being Voter Helps Centres locations are accessible.

### **3. Development of the Plan**

This Plan is a “living” document which will be improved and updated as best practices are identified and new opportunities for improvement arise. In order to develop the plan below, several steps were taken in order to ensure that the statutory requirements were met, and a feasible implementation plan was in place.

During the development of the 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan, the following steps shall be implemented:

- Review and analysis of documents, policies, and other supporting materials from the Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCT) neighbouring municipalities, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), technology suppliers and other various stakeholder groups.
- Establish staff training standards and practices directly related to the Election to ensure that people with disabilities are able to vote in a positive customer service environment and ensure that all Election Officials recognize that a voter’s needs shall be accommodated.

### **4. Voting Methods**

The 2026 Town of Cobourg Municipal Election will be working with Simply Voting to provide eVoting services to eligible voters. This includes the convenience and independence of voting from anywhere via internet/online voting during the October 16 – 26, 2026 voting period.

Everyday tools like computers, tablets, mobile devices and other aids can present accessible opportunities for persons with disabilities to accomplish more, while being consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity.

The Simply Voting Inc. System provides voters with the capability to vote from the comfort of their own home. Voting from home facilitates the voting process for persons with disabilities who may have mobility restrictions, visual impairment, and/or have a difficult time with transportation.

Additionally, persons who have assistive devices set up in their homes can now use them to assist with casting a ballot privately and independently.

By allowing persons with disabilities to vote from any location and from a selection of methods, there is an increase in the capability for the voter to vote without any assistance. This provides persons with disabilities the same independence and privacy in participating in the election as other voters. If persons with disabilities do require assistance in the voting process, trained Election Officials will be present at designated Town of Cobourg Voter Help Centres, throughout the voting period.

#### **4.1 Internet Voting**

Eligible voters may vote online, using a smart phone, tablet device, gaming device or computer and any accompanying assistive devices or software, along with their date of birth and PIN and qualifying information, to access the internet address provided in their Voter Instruction Letter (VIL).

The Simply Voting Inc. System has been created to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG-2 Level AA), so that persons with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate and interact with the online voting system. It 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.

## 4.2 In-person Voting at Designated Voter Help Centres

For those individuals without means of accessing voting via internet, or who require the assistance of a trained Election Official, several Voter Help Centres will be open to provide in-person internet voting opportunities via a laptop and touch screen monitor.

Access to the Voter Help Centre interior and voting area shall be level and slip resistant. Any doormats or carpeting shall be level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. The voting area shall be well lit, and seating shall be available. Entrance corridors shall be clear of obstructions and tripping hazards and will allow sufficient space for use of a wheelchair or scooter.

An accessible voting area will be available at each Voter Help Centre location. These areas shall be low in height and have a wide area to allow for individuals who use a wheelchair or scooter to vote independently and secretively.

Voters may attend any Voter Help Centre location throughout the voting period. The Town of Cobourg will be operating the following Voter Help Centre location(s) during the Advance Voting Period:

October 16, October 19 to October 25, 2026 – 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
**Election Day** - October 26, 2026, 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m  
Victoria Hall, Old Bailey Courtroom  
(55 King Street West, Cobourg ON, K9A 2M2)

October 16, October 19 to October 25, 2026 - 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
**Election Day** - October 26, 2026, 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Cobourg Public Library  
(200 Ontario Street, Cobourg, ON K9A 5P4)

October 19 – October 22, 2026 - 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
**Election Day** - October 26, 2026, 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Cobourg Community Centre (CCC)  
(750 D'Arcy Street, Cobourg, ON K9A 0G1)

### **4.3 Special Voting Provisions**

Election staff shall visit sites including long-term care facilities and retirement homes, to explain voting opportunities for residents and provide guides to vote and all Voter Information Letters (VILs) to residents.

## **5. Voting Location(s)**

An accessibility assessment of each Voter Help Centre will be conducted. The following considerations are taken into account when determining which location(s) will be used:

### **5.1 Accessible Route**

Proximity of the Voter Help Centre to accessible public transit routes shall be considered in the selection of Voter Help Centre location(s). The name and/or address of the Voter Help Centre shall be clearly visible. An easily navigable route will be marked for entry into the Voter Help Centre and into the voting area within the location. The voting area shall be identified with clear and understandable signage. Seating areas shall be provided throughout the Voter Help Centre for individuals needing a rest.

### **5.2 Entrance and Exit**

The route to the entrance of the Voter Help Centre shall be unobstructed and accessible. The route shall be wide enough to allow for an individual using a wheelchair, scooter, other assistive device, or service animal to travel safely. Doors into the Voter Help Centre and voting area shall be accessible and easy to open or shall remain propped open for the duration of the voting location hours. Routine checks of entrance and exit routes will be made throughout the hours of operation.

### **5.3 Parking**

Accessible parking shall be available at all Voter Help Centres. The designated parking space(s) shall be clearly marked with the international Symbol of Accessibility and will be on firm and level ground, close to the entrance of the Voter Help Centre. Municipal Law Enforcement officers will monitor and enforce parking at voting locations throughout the day.

## **6. Voting Assistance**

### **6.1 Support Person/Friend of the Voter**

Pursuant to the Town of Cobourg Accessible Customer Service Policy people with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by a support person at any Voter Help Centre. A designated support person and/or 'Friend of the Voter' will be administered an oath of secrecy/confidentiality by an Election Official prior to providing any such assistance.

### **6.2 Service Animals**

Pursuant to the Town of Cobourg Accessible Customer Service Policy individuals requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all Voter Help Centre locations.

### **6.3 Election Officials**

At Voter Help Centre locations, 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.

## 7. Communication

The 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will be made available at the Municipal Clerk/Returning Officer Office, Victoria Hall, Cobourg and by way of the Town of Cobourg website [cobourgvotes.ca](http://cobourgvotes.ca) Alternative formats will be made available upon request.

Information regarding the accessibility measures provided for the 2026 Municipal Election shall be included in general election advertising as well as in the 2026 Municipal Election Nomination Package.

### 7.1 Election Materials

The Town of Cobourg is required, as per the Accessible Customer Service Standard, to provide a copy of a document for a person with a disability, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

#### **Alternate Formats**

Alternate formats are other ways of publishing information besides regular print. Some of these formats can be used by everyone while others are designed to address the specific needs of a user.

The Town of Cobourg and the person with a disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.

In the event the information is not generated by the Town of Cobourg or is supplied by a third party, the Town of Cobourg will make every effort to obtain the information from the third party in an alternate format and/or will attempt to assist the Elector by providing assistive equipment.

#### **General Election Materials**

**Large Print** – Printed material generated by the Town of Cobourg will be provided in an Arial font, minimum 12 point, and can be made available in a font (print) size that is 16 to 20 points or larger.

**Website** – Information generated by the Town of Cobourg on the website in relation to the election will be compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level A and allow for assistive software to be utilized. In addition, website font can be adjusted within the browser’s functionality to aid the user in reading the information.

**Video** – Promotional and educational videos created for the 2026 municipal election shall incorporate audio and captioning.

## **7.2 Service Disruptions**

From time to time and/or for unforeseen circumstances beyond the Town of Cobourg’s control, temporary service disruptions may be experienced. In the event of a temporary accessible service disruption, Election Officials will commit to making reasonable efforts to ensure that services are reinstated as quickly as possible and that alternative services are provided where feasible.

In these instances of service disruptions, the Town of Cobourg shall provide reasonable notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities.

Notice of these temporary disruptions shall be provided in a conspicuous place and manner at the respective location(s) and information shall also be posted on the Town of Cobourg website. This notice shall include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Accessible services in relation to this plan include Voter Help Centre’s, election materials and/or voting provisions for Electors with disabilities at the Voter Help Centre.

In the event of disruptions to service or unforeseen circumstances that affect the accessibility of voting places during the advance vote or on Election Day, notices of disruption will be posted in real time on the Town of Cobourg’s website and election website.

## 8. Candidates

Candidates must also have regard to the needs of electors with disabilities. Campaign offices, election materials and canvassing should all be reviewed in order to ensure that they are fully accessible.

Below are some resources for candidates to review.

The Government of Canada has released a quick reference guide to help prevent the most common accessibility barriers:

- [Guidelines for creating accessible documents](#)

The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks, and Treasurers of Ontario has released a quick reference guide to measurers candidates should implement to ensure campaign activities are accessible to everyone:

- [Candidate's Guide to Accessible Elections](#)

## 9. Reporting

Pursuant to Section 12.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, within 90 days after voting day, the Municipal Clerk shall submit a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.