

Asphodel  Norwood

MUNICIPAL ELECTION

2  26

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

April 24, 2026

antownship.ca/elections

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2026 Municipal Election - Accessibility Plan Introduction

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for persons with disabilities. This Accessibility Plan supports that commitment by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers that may affect electors and candidates during the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election.

In accordance with Sections 12.1(1) and (2) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, (the MEA) Clerk is required to conduct elections with regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities, and to prepare and make publicly available an accessibility plan prior to Voting Day. All election services will also comply with applicable Accessible Customer Service Standards.

The Township will conduct the election in a manner that ensures equal access to all election information and services, including accessible voting locations. Electors with disabilities will be able to vote independently and privately, with assistance available if required.

This Plan aligns with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equal opportunity as set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. Following the election, the Clerk will report to Council within ninety (90) days of Voting Day on measures taken to identify, remove, and prevent barriers, and on the overall accessibility of the election process.

This Plan may be amended as best practices evolve and opportunities for improvement are identified.

Objectives

The key objectives of this Plan are to ensure that:

- persons with disabilities are able to vote independently and privately;
- persons with disabilities have full and equal access to all publicly available election information; and
- persons with disabilities have full and equal access to municipal facilities used for election purposes.

Election Assistance

Election Officials will ensure that all electors have the support they need to participate in the election process and that services are accessible to all. Assistance will be available throughout the election to help electors confirm their information on the voters' list, request additions or corrections, and access election information.

All assistance will be provided in a respectful, inclusive, and accessible manner, in accordance with applicable accessibility standards.

Voting Methods

For the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election, the Township of Asphodel-Norwood will offer both internet and telephone voting through Voatz Canada Ltd.. These options allow electors to cast their ballot from any location using a telephone, smartphone, tablet, or computer.

A Help Centre/Voting Location will be available in the Board Room at the Municipal Office, equipped with telephones and electronic devices for voting. Trained Election Officials will be available to assist electors as needed. Election staff will also attend Retirement and Long-Term Care (LTC) homes to support accessible voting opportunities.

Retirement and Long-Term Care Homes

Retirement and Long-Term Care homes within the Township will be visited by Election Officials to provide on-site or bedside voting opportunities. Staff will work with facility administrators to determine the most appropriate method and timing to meet the needs of residents.

Internet and Telephone Voting

Offering multiple voting methods enhances accessibility by allowing electors to vote independently and privately using technology that best suits their needs. Electors with assistive devices can use them to access election information and cast their ballot from home. For those who require assistance or do not have access to the necessary technology, the Help Centre will provide in-person support and access to voting equipment.

The voting system complies with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and meets WCAG 2.2 Level AA requirements. Accessibility features include screen reader compatibility, keyboard navigation, scalable text, high-contrast display options, and audio/voice guidance. The system has undergone third-party accessibility audits and usability testing with assistive technologies.

Internet voting enables electors to vote at any time during the voting period using a web-enabled device. The system provides clear on-screen instructions, adjustable text, and prompts to guide users through the ballot and confirm selections prior to submission.

Telephone voting offers an audio-based option for electors using a telephone or smartphone (excluding rotary phones). Electors receive instructions and candidate information through audio prompts and make selections using the keypad, with confirmation prompts provided to support accuracy.

Internet and telephone voting in the Township of Asphodel-Norwood will be available from Tuesday, October 13, 2026 to Monday, October 26, 2026.

Help Centre/Voting Location

A Help Centre/Voting Location will be available in the Board Room at the Municipal Office (lower level of Town Hall), located at 2357 County Road 45 in Norwood. This location is intended for electors who prefer to vote in person, require assistance, or need access to technology or reliable internet. The Help Centre will be operated with full consideration for accessibility.

In accordance with Section 45(2) of the MEA, the Clerk will ensure that the voting location is accessible to electors with disabilities.

The Help Centre/Voting Location will be open from October 13 to 23, 2026 during regular office hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), and on October 26, 2026 from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Accessibility Features

Signage

Signage at the Help Centre/Voting Location will be clear, easy to understand, and designed with accessibility in mind, including appropriate font size, style, and high-contrast colours.

Parking

Accessible parking spaces are available at the Municipal Office to accommodate electors with disabilities.

Entrance

The entrance to the Help Centre/Voting Location is equipped with an accessible ramp. Doors are fitted with automatic door openers and are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs and other mobility devices.

Interior

The interior voting area will be level and easy to navigate. Floor surfaces, including mats and carpeting, will be secure and flush to prevent tripping hazards. The space will be well lit, and seating will be available for electors as needed.

Voting Assistance

Staff Assistance

Election Officials will be available throughout the election to assist electors and candidates and to support a barrier-free voting experience.

Staff Training

All Election Officials have received accessibility training, including Accessible Customer Service, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. Training also includes election-specific procedures to ensure that persons with disabilities are served in a manner that respects their individual needs.

Service Animals and Support Persons

Electors and candidates may be accompanied by a service animal and/or a support person at the Help Centre/Voting Location. Where assistance is provided, the support person must be identified to Election Officials. Service animals should be clearly identifiable.

Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers

Certified Candidates and Registered Third-Party Advertisers are encouraged to consider the needs of electors with disabilities throughout their campaigns. This includes ensuring that campaign offices, materials, and canvassing activities are accessible to all electors.

The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) has developed a [Candidate's Guide to Accessible Elections](#) to support accessibility considerations. The Guide is available on the Township website and in print upon request.

The Township will strive to provide clear, effective, and accessible communications, and will work with Certified Candidates and Registered Third-Party Advertisers who require mandatory election documents, forms, or materials in an alternate format.

In accordance with Sections 88.19(3), 88.20(8), and 88.21(8) of the MEA expenses incurred by a candidate or registered third-party with a disability that are directly related to the disability, and would not otherwise have been incurred, are excluded from the applicable spending limit.

Communication

Provision of Election Materials

Election information will be made available in accessible formats and with communication supports upon request, taking into account the individual's needs

Alternate Formats

Alternate formats are available to ensure information is accessible to all users. The Township will work with individuals to determine the most appropriate format. Where information is provided by a third party, reasonable efforts will be made to obtain or provide it in an accessible format.

Large Print

Printed materials produced by the Township will use a minimum 12-point Arial font and can be made available in larger sizes (16–20 point or greater) upon request.

Web Content

Election-related information published on the Township's website will comply with Web Content Accessibility Guideline (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA to support the use of assistive technologies. Website text can also be adjusted through browser settings to improve readability.

Service Disruptions and Emergencies

The Township will make reasonable efforts to prevent and minimize service disruptions. Where disruptions occur, notice will be provided as soon as possible at the affected location and on the municipal website. Notices will include the reason for the disruption, the services affected, the expected duration, and any alternative arrangements. In the event that accessibility at a voting location is impacted during the voting period or on Voting Day, updates will be provided in real time on the Township website, and additional communication methods may be used where appropriate.

If circumstances arise that, in the opinion of the Clerk, compromise the integrity or conduct of the election, an emergency may be declared. In such cases, the Clerk will take appropriate actions, including delaying or extending voting, and will communicate any changes as broadly as possible.

Reporting

In accordance with Section 12.1(3) of the MEA, the Clerk will prepare and make publicly available a report within 90 days after Voting Day outlining measures taken to identify, remove, and prevent barriers.

Feedback and Contact Information

The Township welcomes feedback to help improve accessibility in the election process. Electors and candidates are encouraged to share their experiences or request additional information.

Feedback may be submitted using the [Customer Service Feedback Form](#) or by contacting the Clerk's Office:

Telephone: 705-639-5343

In Person: Clerk's Office, Municipal Office
2357 County Rd 45, Norwood ON K0L 2V0

Mail: PO Box 29, Norwood ON K0L 2V0

Email: clerk@antownship.ca

All feedback will be reviewed and considered as part of the post-election accessibility report to Council.

Election Officials

Melanie Hudson, Clerk/Returning Officer
Pam Quinlan, Deputy Returning Officer

Voting Location Inspection Checklist

Voting Location Name:	Landlord/Site Contact Information
Voting Location Address:	Name:
	Address (if different):
	Phone:

Overall Score:	0
	Pass = 53

Poll Capacity:	Single	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double	<input type="checkbox"/>	Triple	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quad	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Required Remediations:	

Additional Furniture Required:	

HST Number: (If exempt)	
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Date of Inspection:	
Inspection Team:	

Assessment Criteria	Points	Score	Minimum
1 Signage			
1.1 Location name and address clearly visible	Good signage, contrasting colours, clearly visible	5	
	Poor signage, temporary sign required	3	
	No signage and temporary signs can't be used	0	
Total			3
Section Total		0	3
2 Parking and Transportation			
2.1 Parking spaces are close	Parking spaces are within 25m/82' of the building	5	
	Parking spaces are within 50m/164' of the building	3	
	No Parking is available close by	0	
Total		0	3
2.2 Number of accessible parking spaces	Three (3) or more accessible spaces	5	
	Can modify existing parking	3	
	Can't modify existing parking	0	
Total		0	3
2.3 Size of accessible parking spaces	Parking space has a width of (at least) 340cm/11' with a 150cm/5' access aisle	5	
	Can modify existing parking	3	
	Can't modify existing parking	0	
Total		0	3
2.4 Parking surface	Firm and level	5	
	Compacted/hard dirt	3	
	Soft/loose gravel	0	
Total		0	3
2.5 Public Transportation	Bus stop near voting location	5	
	No bus stop within 800m/2624'	0	
Total		0	5
Section Total		0	17

Assessment Criteria	Points	Score	Minimum
3 Path of Entry (Exterior)			
3.1 Wideness of the path	Route is over 1.5m/5' wide	5	
	Route can be modified	3	
	Route is less than 1.5m/5' wide and can't be modified	0	
	Total		0 3
3.2 Pathway	Route is smooth, continuous, free of obstructions, with no level changes over 1.2cm/0.5"	5	
	Can modify and/or have the route paved or fixed	3	
	Route is unstable with obstructions and cannot be modified	0	
	Total		0 3
3.3 Door Width	Entry door clear width of 86cm/33.75" or greater	5	
	Entry door width is minimum 82cm/32.25" or can be modified by removing a centre post	3	
	Entrance not accessible	0	
	Total		0 3
Section Total		0	9
4 Path of Entry (Interior)			
4.1 Door Width	Entry door clear width of 86cm/33.75" or greater	5	
	Entry door width is minimum 82cm/32.25" or can be modified by removing a centre post	3	
	Entrance not accessible	0	
	Total		0 3
4.2 Door Assists/Hardware	Main entrance has a power assist and handle passes "fist test"	5	
	No power assist, staff required to assist	3	
	Fails "fist test"	0	
	Total		0 3
4.3 Lighting/Surfaces	Working lights, glare-free and no slip hazards	5	
	Lighting and interior spaces can be fixed with minor changes	3	
	Surface unstable/unable to be fixed	0	
	Total		0 3
4.4 Thresholds	Interior threshold not over 1.2cm/0.5"	5	
	Temporary threshold needs to be installed	3	
	Level change over 1.2cm/0.5" with no way to overcome	0	
	Total		0 3
Section Total		0	12

Assessment Criteria		Points	Score	Minimum	
5	Voting Area				
	5.1 Voting Room	Location is on ground floor or has elevator (with audible instructions)	5		
		Location is not on ground floor, and elevator is distant from accessible entrance	3		
		Staff required to operate elevator	2		
		No elevator, and/or fails criteria	0		
	Total			0	3
	5.2 Accessible Washrooms	Accessible washroom available and meets standards - grab bars, height of sink, toilet, etc.	5		
		Washroom, but no accessible washroom available	3		
		No washroom	0		
	Total			0	3
	5.3 Technology	City/School Board Internet access is available	5		
		Portable internet sticks required	3		
		Weak signal prohibit internet connectivity	0		
	Total			0	3
	Electrical	Outlets present on each wall	5		
Power bars/extension cable required		3			
Total			0	3	
Section Total			0	12	
Additional Notes					

Voting Location Diagram

