**Township of North Kawartha**
280 Burleigh Street, PO Box 550, Apsley, ON K0L 1A0
Tel: 705-656-4445 | 1-800-755-6931 | Fax: 705-656-4446
**www.northkawartha.ca**

# Post – Election Accessibility Report
# Municipal Election 2026

## Introduction

It was the goal of the Township of North Kawartha to ensure that all electors in the Township of North Kawartha who have a disability or an issue with accessibility were provided with the best opportunity to vote as independently as possible in the 2026 Municipal Election.

The Post-Election Accessibility Report will evaluate the accessibility of the services offered to all electors and candidates in the 2026 Municipal Election.

Section 12.1 (3) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, requires the clerk to prepare a report about the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and make the report available to the public within 90 days after a regular election.

## Post - Election Reporting

### Accessibility Plan and Elector and Candidate Information

Section 12.1 (2) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, requires the clerk to prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election.

The 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan supports accessible elections and the Township's commitment to the needs of persons with disabilities." The Plan permitted electors and candidates to be accompanied by a service animal or support person. A copy of the 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan was posted on the website and available in a paper copy or accessible format upon request.

The Election Page on the Township website included a section for Accessibility and a statement that: The Township of North Kawartha recognizes that persons with disabilities should be provided with an equal opportunity to access goods, services and information in a manner consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality. The Township website, launched on September 23, 2024, is WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliant. The website was updated regularly with election information and any temporary service disruptions. Election Information was provided through the website, social media, posters around the Community and newspapers.

A copy of The Ministry of Community and Social Services document titled Count Us In: Removing Barriers to Political Participation Quick Reference Guide to Accessible Campaign Information and Communication was posted on the website for candidates. The Nomination Package for candidates included a copy of the Association of Municipal Managers Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) Candidate's Guide to Accessible Elections. A form to request accessible formats was provided to candidates. All accessibility information was available on the website as well as in paper format or accessible format upon request.

The Township did not receive any requests for accessible formats or accommodation.

### Voting Location

The Voting Place was located in the Township Office and was assessed in order to identify any barriers to accessibility. No barriers were identified. An accessible parking

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space was clearly marked and available close to the main entrance to the Voting Place / Municipal Office. Chairs were available for those who needed a rest spot while waiting to vote. Two voting kiosks and telephone were placed on a desk that could accommodate a mobility device.

**Staff Training**

Staff carrying out election duties received accessibility training to ensure that persons with disabilities were served in a way that accommodated their needs. Election Staff were all trained in accessibility and experienced in serving the needs of the public. Attention was given to the voting process to determine any barriers that may arise and how these would be dealt with. Election staff were available to the public by phone, in-person and by email.

**Assistance to Candidates**

The Accessibility Plan permitted candidates and scrutineers to be accompanied by a service animal at the Voter Help Centre / Municipal Office. The Plan included a statement that expenses related to a disability are excluded from the spending limit. Accessibility Information to assist candidates with their campaign was made available on the Township website and in their nomination package, including a form to request accessible formats.

**Assistance to Electors**

**Voters List and Voting Education**

Instructional videos were made available on the Township website and on the voting kiosk at the Voting Place. The videos included closed captioning. Voter training videos were made available in advance of Voting Day on the Township website and were promoted via social media so voters could become familiar with the process prior to casting their vote. These demonstrations provided an opportunity to identify any accessibility issues that may need accommodation on Voting Day.

Election staff attended the Annual Lions Flea Market to promote the accessible election and encourage voters to check the Election Ontario website to ensure they were on the voters list. In addition, staff attended an ABC Seniors Luncheon to promote the accessible election and to provider voter lookup services as well as providing an opportunity to individuals to have staff amend the voters list to ensure they were included. To assist the residents of our assisted living senior home, Spruce Corners staff visited each resident to share the video of voting methods and ensured each resident was on the voters list. In addition, the Clerk received a call from a resident with mobility issues and subsequently visited this voter in their home to have them complete the EL15 form to allow the voter list to be amended to include this voter.

Election staff were friendly, approachable and available to provide individual assistance to the Voter. Assistance was offered and was provided upon request at the voting place. Internet and Telephone voting was well received and many commented that they found the experience quite easy.

**Internet and Telephone Voting**

The Township of North Kawartha used Vote by Internet and Telephone in the 2026 Municipal Election. Internet voting and telephone voting provided easy access for voters to vote independently from the privacy of their home and accommodated a variety of disabilities. Magnifying sheets and an Audio-Enhancer were available if needed. The Voter Information Letter was in an accessible font and informed electors how to request assistance to vote.

Voters had the option to use assistive devices on their home computers or telephone to cast their vote. Voters also had the option to attend the voting place where election staff were prepared to assist them to vote using either a tablet within a voting kiosk or the telephone. The tablet was easily mobile and therefore could accommodate a person with mobility issues by taking the tablet to a vehicle in the parking lot or a home, if needed.

Two voting kiosks and a telephone were available in a private room at the voting place where the voter could vote by touching their finger to the screen or by using a stylus pen. Some individuals found the stylus pen easier. The pen could also be held in the mouth, if needed.

If this was found to be difficult for a voter, they could easily switch to vote using the telephone.

**Notice to Electors**

Notice was given to electors as follows:

The Township of North Kawartha recognizes that persons with disabilities should be provided with an equal opportunity to access goods, services and information in a manner consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality. The 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan supports accessible elections and the Township's commitment to the needs of persons with disabilities.

North Kawartha Election Staff will be pleased to assist you. You can contact Kelly Picken, Clerk/Election Returning Officer or Keely-Anne Johnson, Deputy Clerk/Deputy Returning Officer.

**Contact Us**

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**Feedback**

Public feedback about the way election services were provided to persons with accessible needs may be submitted to the Clerk through:

Telephone: 705-656-5187

Fax: 705-656-4446

Email: k.picken@northkawartha.ca

Mail or in person: P.O. Box 550, 280 Burleigh Street, Apsley, Ontario K0L 1A0

Kelly Picken, *Dipl. M.M., Dipl. M.A, AOMC, AMP*
Clerk / Election Returning Officer