



2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

Town of St. Marys

Introduction

This accessibility plan will address the specific accessibility requirements in relation to the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election in the Town of St. Marys.

The Town of St. Marys is committed to enriching the quality of life for persons with disabilities. The Town strives to remove barriers that limit inclusion while sustaining a community where residents are proud to be a member. In an effort to ensure that the 2026 Municipal Election is consistent with the core principals 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.

In addition to the Town's Accessibility Policy, the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, states the following:

"A Clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of the electors and candidates with disabilities." Municipal Elections Act, 1996 Section 12.1

"The clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect the electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election." Municipal Elections Act, 1996 Section 12.2

Objectives

This plan is intended to highlight measures that the Town of St. Marys will implement to ensure equal opportunity for all electors and candidates. These objectives will include:

- That all voting locations are accessible
- That persons with disabilities can fully participate in the Municipal Election as an elector, candidate, or election official
- That persons with disabilities are able to 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 on eligible candidates
- That efforts are made to ensure that electors with disabilities are aware of the accessibility measures available via channels such as newspaper and the Town of St. Marys website and social media (Twitter/Facebook)

Voting Location

For the purpose of this plan, voting location includes the exterior parking and walkways associated with the location.

In order to ensure that the voting location is accessible to electors with disabilities, a Voting Location Accessibility Audit Checklist will be completed prior to confirming the site as a voting location.

Accessible Route

An easily navigable route will be marked for the entry into the voting location and into the voting area within the location. The voting area will be identified with clear and understandable signage.

Parking

Designated parking for electors with disabilities is to be provided in close proximity to the entrance of the voting location where possible. Accessible parking spaces will be clearly marked and will be on firm and level ground. Routine checks will be made to ensure all entrances remain barrier free through the course of the day.

Entrance and Exit to the Voting Location

All entrances to the voting location will be easy to access and barrier free. Every effort will be made to ensure that the door to the interior voting area is wide enough for a wheelchair, scooter and other assistive device or service animal to pass through safely and easily. Should doors into the interior voting area not be accessible, the door shall remain propped open for the duration of the voting location hours. Routine checks of the entrance and exit routes will be made throughout the day.

Interior Voting Area

Access to the interior voting area will be level and easily traversed. Any doormats or carpeting will be level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. All voting areas are to be well lit and seating will be available.

Support Persons

Electors with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person within the voting place. In addition, an Election Official in each voting place may assist the voter in casting their vote. Prior to entering the voting booth, the Election Official shall, in conjunction with the elector with disability, determine the extent to which the elector requires assistance and the best way in which this assistance may be provided. This may include marking the ballot as directed by the person with the disability.

Assistive Personal Equipment

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.

Service Animals

An animal is a service animal if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to his or her disability, for example, a guide dog wearing a harness. Service animals will be permitted in voting places. Emotional support animals may not be permitted.

Vision Loss

Each voting place will be equipped with magnifying sheets to assist an individual with low vision.

Hearing Impaired, Deafness and Hearing Loss

Each voting place will be equipped with a pad of paper and writing device to communicate with electors with hearing impairments, if required.

Proxy Voting

An elector who is not able to cast their ballot on voting day at their designated voting place or on the advance voting date, may appoint another eligible person as a voting proxy to vote on their behalf.

Voting Methods

The Town of St. Marys will be using a paper ballot on which electors choose their preferred candidate(s) by placing a mark, with a marking tool in the circle next to the name of the chosen candidate(s).

An elector with a disability may also choose to have a person assist them behind the voting screen. If an elector does not have a support person, trained Election Officials will be present at the voting location to provide assistance.

Staff Training

Election Officials will be trained on assisting electors with a disability and accessible customer service training as regulated under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

Feedback and Reporting

The Town of St. Marys welcomes feedback to identify areas where changes need to be considered and ways in which the Town can improve the delivery of an accessible election.

Feedback can be provided to:

Town of St. Marys
Clerks Department
175 Queen Street East
PO Box 998
St. Marys, ON N4X 1B6

clerksoffice@town.stmarys.on.ca

This feedback process provides election staff with an opportunity to take corrective measures to prevent similar recurrences. As outlined in Section 12.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act* the Town of St. Marys must also prepare a report within ninety days after voting day. This report will outline the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors.

Schedule A

Voting Location Accessibility Checklist

Voting Location:	
Address:	
Facility Type	
Date of Review	

Exterior Access		
Is there exterior signage?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the identifier clearly visible from the street and sidewalk?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is there accessible parking?	Yes ☐	No ☐
What is the total number of spaces on site?		
What is the total number of accessible parking spaces on site?		
Are the accessible parking spaces at least 2400 mm (95:) in width?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Are the accessible parking spaces at located on a firm, level surface?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Are the accessible parking spaces designated by a vertical marking?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Are the accessible parking spaces designated by markings on the pavement?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the parking area well lit?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is there an unobstructed path from parking to main entrance?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the maximum running slope of the walkway not steeper than 1:20?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Are curb cuts provided to the barrier-free path of travel?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the approach to the voting area easy to travel (no broken pavement or potholes)?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is there a ramp located in the barrier-free path of travel?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Does the ramp have a maximum slope of 1:12 or less?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the width of the ramp between handrails 910 mm (36") or greater?	Yes ☐	No ☐
If the ramp is longer than 9 m (29.5") is there a landing with a minimum dimension of 1500 m x 1500 mm (5'x5').	Yes ☐	No ☐
Are all landings including the top and bottom 1500 mm x 1500m (5'x5')?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the path well lit?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Interior Access		
Is there an accessible entrance to the building?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the entrance well lit?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the threshold at the entrance 13mm (1/2") or less?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the width of the door opening a minimum of 810 mm (32")?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Does the main accessible entrance have an automatic door	Yes ☐	No ☐

opener?		
Is the entrance clearly marked with signage?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Are interior corridors and doorways accessible?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the elevator clearly visible or is there adequate signage?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the area free of obstacles? (no uneven surfaces, tripping hazards)	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the width of the door opening a minimum of 810 mm (32')?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is there level access from the entrance of the voting location to the voting area?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is the floor non-slip, even and level?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Voting Location		
Is the voting location well lit?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Are there seats available for people to rest if needed?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is there enough space inside the voting area for a wheelchair to move easily?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Does the building have an accessible washroom for staff?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Have election officials been trained to support persons with disabilities who may ask for assistance in marking the ballot?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is assistive personal equipment available? • Magnifying sheets • Paper and pen to communicate	Yes ☐	No ☐
Does the location permit service animals?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Comments or observations:		