



The Corporation of the Town of
Petrolia
2026 Municipal Election
Accessibility Plan

March 2026

Mandi Pearson
Clerk/Returning Officer

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Objectives	4
3. Development of the Plan.....	5
4. Voting Methods	5
Internet voting	5
Voter Assistance Centre	6
Accessibility Inside the Voter Assistance Centre.....	6
Accessible Voting Area.....	6
Entrance and Exit	7
Accessible Parking	7
Polling Stations in Long-Term Care Facilities.....	7
5. Election Information and Communication	7
Service Disruptions.....	8
6. Service Animals.....	8
7. Training of Election Workers	9
8. Candidates.....	9
9. Feedback	9
10. Reporting.....	10
11. Additional Information.....	10

The Corporation of the Town of Petrolia 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

The Corporation of the Town of Petrolia is committed to ensuring that the 2026 Municipal Election is accessible to all electors, candidates, and election workers. This Accessibility Plan outlines the actions that will be taken to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to participation for people with disabilities.

1. Introduction

The Clerk is responsible for the proper legislative and administrative conduct of municipal elections in the Corporation of the Town of Petrolia.

In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended; the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*; and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*, the Clerk is authorized to establish procedures and implement appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can participate fully in the 2026 Municipal Election.

Accordingly, the 2026 Municipal Election will be conducted in a manner that ensures the following:

- The needs of electors, candidates, and election officials with disabilities are considered throughout the election process.
- Voting places are accessible to persons with disabilities, as required under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- An accessibility plan is prepared to identify, remove, and prevent barriers that

may affect electors and candidates with disabilities, and that this plan is made available to the public prior to Voting Day.

- An accessibility report is prepared and made public within 90 days after Voting Day, outlining the identification, removal, and prevention of election-related barriers affecting persons with disabilities.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan align with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity established under the *Municipal Elections Act* and the *AODA*.

To support an accessible election process, the objectives of the Plan are to ensure that:

- Persons with disabilities are able to independently cast their vote and verify their selection.
- Persons with disabilities have full and equal access to all information on where and when to vote and on eligible candidates.
- Persons with disabilities can fully participate in Municipal Elections as an elector, candidate, or election official.
- Electors with disabilities are aware of the accessibility measures available via channels such as the newspaper, media launches, the Corporation of the Town of Petrolia' website (in accordance with the *AODA* web accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1 AA)) and social media.
- That the Voter Assistance Centre location is accessible and barrier free.
- Barriers are identified, addressed, and documented for continuous improvement

3. Development of the Plan

This plan is considered a “living” document and may be updated as new accessibility solutions become available.

The plan will be developed and implemented through:

- Review of feedback and findings from the 2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Report.
- Review of best practices from other Ontario municipalities.

4. Voting Methods

To reduce barriers and support voter choice, Petrolia Municipal Office and Kerr Building will offer accessible voting options consistent with the *Municipal Elections Act*:

Internet voting

The Municipality has successfully used internet voting since 2018, providing an accessible, secure, and convenient alternative to traditional paper ballots.

Internet voting supports accessibility by allowing electors to:

- Vote from any location with an internet connection
- Use their own personal assistive technology (screen readers, voice navigation, magnifiers, etc.)
- Vote at a time convenient to them during the voting period
- Avoid transportation barriers or mobility challenges
- Cast their ballot privately and independently

Comprehensive voter instructions, including video tutorials, step by step guides, and accessible format materials, will be available closer to the opening of the voting period.

Voter Assistance Centre

A Voter Assistance Centre will be available on the following dates and times:

1. 411 Greenfield Street (Municipal Office)

October 16, 2026 9:00 am to 4:30 pm

October 19-23, 2026 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

October 26, 2026 8:30 am to 8:00 pm

2. 396 Fletcher Street (Kerr Building)

October 17, 2026 8:30 am to 3:00 pm

October 18, 2026 8:30 am to 3:00 pm

October 24, 2026 8:30 am to 3:00 pm

October 25, 2026 8:30 am to 3:00 pm

Accessibility Inside the Voter Assistance Centre

- Floors will be level and slip-resistant.
- Doormats or carpets will be flush with the floor to prevent tripping.
- The voting area will be well lit, with seating available.
- Entrance corridors will be clear of obstacles and wide enough for wheelchairs and scooters.

Accessible Voting Area

A dedicated accessible voting area will be provided at 411 Greenfield Street (Municipal Office). It will be low in height with wide clearance, allowing people using wheelchairs or scooters to vote independently and privately. Clear, easy-to-understand signage will identify the voting area. Seating will be available throughout the VAC areas.

Entrance and Exit

The route to the entrance will be unobstructed and accessible. It will be wide enough for wheelchairs, scooters, assistive devices, and service animals. Doors will be easy to open or propped open during operating hours. Staff will perform regular checks to keep entrances and exits clear and safe.

Ramp access will be available at 411 Greenfield Street (Municipal Office), north/east entrance.

Accessible Parking

Accessible parking spaces will be clearly marked with the International Symbol of Accessibility. They will be located on firm, level ground close to the entrance. By-law officers will monitor and enforce parking throughout the day.

Polling Stations in Long-Term Care Facilities

Election staff shall visit sites including long-term care facilities and retirement homes, to set-up on-site voting kiosks, or bedside voting opportunities for residents.

5. Election Information and Communication

The Corporation of the Town of Petrolia will ensure that election-related information is accessible by:

- Publishing information on the municipal website in compliance with WCAG 2.1 Level AA
- Providing election materials in alternative formats upon request

- Using plain language in all public communications
- Promoting accessibility measures through multiple channels, including the Town of Petrolia website, social media, and local media

Service Disruptions

If a temporary disruption affects the delivery of election information or services, every reasonable effort will be made to provide alternative options to persons with disabilities to ensure continued access to election information and services.

The Clerk's Office will issue public notice through the following channels:

- The Municipality's election website
- Signage posted at the physical location where the disruption has occurred
- Town of Petrolia Social Media channels
- Local media, when possible

Each notice will include:

- The reason for the disruption
- The anticipated duration
- A description of alternative methods for accessing the affected information or service

6. Service Animals

We are committed to providing accessible and inclusive service for all voters. Service animals are welcome in all Voter Assistance Centres. We recognize the important role animals play in supporting individuals with disabilities and will ensure that voters accompanied by a service animal are given full access to election services. Staff respect and will not interfere with or distract a service animal while it is working.

7. Training of Election Workers

All election workers will receive training that includes:

- How to interact respectfully with persons with various disabilities
- How to assist voters using mobility aids, assistive devices, service animals, or support persons
- How to respond to accessibility-related questions or concerns
- An overview of obligations under the *AODA* and *Municipal Elections Act*

8. Candidates

Candidates with disabilities will be able to request:

- Accessible formats for nomination and election-related materials
- Accommodation when filing nomination papers, attending briefings, or participating in municipal election processes

9. Feedback

The Corporation of the Town of Petrolia welcomes feedback regarding the accessibility of election services. Feedback helps identify areas for improvement, informs training needs, and supports the development of alternative service delivery methods where required.

Electors and candidates may submit feedback in various ways. A Feedback Form is available on the Municipality's website at <https://petrolia.civicweb.net/Portal/CitizenEngagement.aspx> Municipal staff are also available to assist persons with disabilities by completing and submitting the form on their behalf.

2026 Town of Petrolia Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

All completed feedback forms are reviewed by Municipal staff. When appropriate, a response will be provided within two business days, including an anticipated action plan or timeline for a full response.

Feedback can also be submitted through the following channels:

- Telephone: 519-882-2350 (ext. 229)
- In Person or by Mail: Municipal Office, 411 Greenfield Street | Petrolia, ON | N0N 1R0
- Email: clerksdepartment@petrolia.ca

10. Reporting

In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the Clerk will submit a report to Council within 90 days after Voting Day.

This report will outline:

- Barriers that were identified
- Measures taken to remove or prevent those barriers
- Recommendations for future improvements

11. Additional Information

The Corporation of the Town of Petrolia' website is regularly updated to reflect the most current election information. Electors are encouraged to visit [Petrolia Votes](#) for:

- Up-to-date candidate listings

- Voting instructions
- Key dates
- Important notices and election-related updates

Please note that the Clerk may amend this plan at any time to support the conduct of the vote, the counting and tabulation process, and the security of the election.

The Clerk's interpretation of this document is final.