

# Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: February 9, 2026

Prepared By: Christine Fraser-McDonald, Clerk

Report Number: CLKS-2026-05

Subject: 2026 Election Accessibility Plan

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## Recommendation

Be It Resolved that Council hereby approves Report CLKS-2026-05 - 2026 Election Accessibility Plan for information;

AND approves the 2026 Election Accessibility Plan

AND FURTHER authorizes the 2026 Election Accessibility Plan By-law be brought forward.

## Background

The Clerk is responsible for the appropriate legislative and administrative conduct of the municipal elections in the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie.

Section 12.1(1) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* ("MEA") requires the Clerk to have regard for the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities. Section 12.1(2) requires the Clerk to prepare a plan identifying, removing, and preventing barriers impacting electors and candidates with disabilities and to make the plan publicly available before Voting Day.

The *2026 Election Accessibility Plan* outlines the measures that will be in place to ensure a fully accessible and barrier-free election process.

Arran-Elderslie municipal elections will continue to be conducted in a manner that ensures electors and candidates with disabilities have full and equal access to all election information and services.

The Municipality will again use internet and telephone voting, which allows electors to vote independently, privately, and from any location using assistive technologies such as screen readers, touchpads, voice command tools, and sip-and-puff devices.



A **Help Centre** will be available throughout the voting period at the Municipal Office to provide in-person support, including accessible voting equipment, level access, automatic doors, adequate lighting, and space for mobility devices.

Section 12.1(3) of the MEA requires that, within 90 days after Voting Day, the Clerk shall submit a report to Council regarding the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers affecting electors and candidates with disabilities. This plan forms the foundation for that post-election reporting.

## Analysis

The 2026 municipal election will again be conducted using internet and telephone voting, which supports a highly accessible voting experience. Key accessibility features include:

### 1. Accessible Election Information

- All election information will be provided in alternative formats upon request.
- Information will be posted on the municipal election webpage, local media, and municipal social media.
- Voter Notification Letters can be provided in accessible formats.

### 2. Staff Training

All election staff will receive training on:

- communicating with people with various disabilities.
- interacting with individuals using assistive devices, support persons, or service animals.
- assisting electors with voting methods.
- providing clear explanations of internet and telephone voting.
- responding to accessibility challenges.

### 3. Help Centre Accessibility

The Help Centre will provide:

- accessible parking
- level access and wide, unobstructed doorways
- automatic door openers or propped safe entry



- well-lit voting areas
- accessible seating
- accessible voting booth with adjustable tablet or laptop

#### **4. Voting Assistance**

- Electors may bring a support person or receive assistance from trained election staff.
- Staff will work with the elector to determine the type of assistance required.
- Election officials will attend local retirement and long-term care facilities during the voting period to enhance accessibility.

#### **5. Temporary Service Disruptions**

If any disruptions occur, clear public notice will be provided, including:

- reason for disruption
- anticipated duration
- alternative ways to access information or services

#### **6. Assistance to Candidates**

Candidates may request election information in alternative formats. Staff will assist candidates with accessibility needs throughout the election period.

#### **7. Feedback Process**

The Accessibility Plan is a living document. Feedback may be provided by phone, email, mail, or in person. Adjustments will be made where feasible.

### [Link to Strategic/Master Plan](#)

#### [6.6 Modernizing Services](#)

### [Financial Implications](#)

There are no financial implications associated with this report.



MUNICIPALITY OF  
ARRAN-ELDERSLIE

## Attachments:

2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

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Approved By: Emily Dance, Chief Administrative Officer