Election Accessibility Plan

2026 Municipal & School Board Elections

The City of Dryden's (the City) Election Accessibility Plan (the Plan) serves as the City's commitment to identifying, removing and preventing barriers that inhibit individuals from participating in the electoral process. As potential barriers emerge during this election, the City will take steps to address them and incorporate those actions into the Plan and the subsequent Post-Election Accessibility Report.

Legislative Requirements

The Municipal Clerk is responsible for the appropriate legislative and administrative conduct of municipal elections.

The Municipal Elections Act, (MEA) Section 12.1(1) places responsibility on the Clerk to have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities. Accessible Customer Service Standards must be followed when conducting a municipal election.

Section 12.1(2) of the MEA requires the Clerk to prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and to make the plan available to the public before Voting Day (4th Monday of October) in a regular election.

The municipal election will be conducted in a manner that shall ensure the candidates and electors with disabilities have full and equal access to all election information and services including the voting area at the municipal office. The election shall be conducted in a manner that ensures that persons with disabilities are able to vote independently and privately with access to voting assistance if required.

Section 12.1(3) of the MEA requires that within ninety (90) days of Voting Day, the Clerk who is responsible for conducting the election shall prepare a report regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and that report shall be made public.

Definitions

Pursuant to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA) "disability" means:

(a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
(b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
(c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
(d) A mental disorder, or
(e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; ("handicap")

Pursuant to the AODA "barrier" means:

Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice; ("obstacle")

Provision of Election Information

Election information will be provided to electors and candidates with disabilities in an alternative format agreed upon between the requester and the Clerk.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

The Clerk shall provide public notice on the municipal website if there is a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services. The notice shall include the reason for the disruption, the expected duration of the disruption and an explanation of alternative methods of delivering the information or service.

Every effort shall be made to provide alternative methods of providing the information or service to persons with disabilities.

Staff Assistance

City staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Contact information for assistance:

Telephone: 807-223-1147

Email: election@dryden.ca

In Person: Clerk's Office, City Hall
30 Van Horne Avenue
Dryden, ON

Mail: City of Dryden
30 Van Horne Avenue
Dryden, ON P8N 2A7
Attention: City Clerk

Assistance to Electors

General

The 2026 Election will be conducted with internet and telephone voting. Internet and telephone voting will be available 24 hours a day from 10:00a.m. on Friday, October 16, 2026 to 8:00p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026. Voters will be able to use a touch tone telephone or any device connected to the internet to cast their electronic ballot. If access to telephone or internet is unavailable during the voting period, if they don't have telephone or internet access or if they require assistance, voters may vote via the internet at City Hall.

Information about internet and telephone voting is available on the municipal website or from the Clerk's office and can be provided in an alternative format upon request.

Staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Accessible Voting Area

Section 45(2) of the MEA requires that the Clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities.

An accessible voting area located at City Hall, 30 Van Horne Avenue in Dryden, will be available to voters throughout the voting period during regular business hours and of Voting Day (October 26 2026) until 8:00p.m.

Parking

Street parking in front of City Hall has designated parking for individuals with disabilities.

Entrance to City Hall

The entrance to City Hall has a ramp leading to the entrance door. Doors have automatic door opening devices and are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs or other mobility devices. The voting kiosk is located immediately inside the City Hall lobby.

Interior

Access to the voting area is level. The voting area is well lit and seating will be available.

Accessible Voting Kiosk

The voting kiosk will have a desk which is low in height and will have a wide area to allow those using mobility devices to vote independently and in secret.

Voting Assistance

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person within the voting area or staff can assist the voter in casting their vote. Staff shall, in conjunction with the person with the disability, determine the extent to which they need assistance and the best way to provide it.

Accessible Voting Technologies

Voting areas will have a computer for internet voting that will assist voters with disabilities in casting their votes with independence and privacy. Staff will be available to assist voters at the kiosk upon request. Support persons and service animals will be accommodated.

The Dryden Public Library also provides internet access during regular library hours. This provides voters another option to access the internet if they do not have their own internet to access for voting.

Internet Voting

Internet voting allows voters to vote through secured internet services. This method provides for easy voting for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their votes with independence and privacy as voters have the option of using the assistive tools they have on their own computers.

This method of voting is designed to encourage voter participation as voters don't have to attend a physical location to cast their ballots and accessibility and privacy for persons with disabilities is maximized.

Telephone Voting

Telephone voting allows voters to vote through secured telephone services which provides for easy voting for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their votes with independence and privacy. Land lines or cell phones can be used to vote. This method is compatible with assistive devices.

Voters can register their vote selections with the telephone keypad increasing accessibility, privacy and independence for those without internet access.

This method of voting is designed to encourage voter participation as voters don't have to attend a physical location to cast their ballots and accessibility and privacy for persons with disabilities is maximized.

Assistance to Candidates

General

The 2026 Election will be conducted with internet and telephone voting.

Staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Service Animals/Support Persons

Candidates are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal and/or support person at all designated election locations.

Campaign Expenses

Expenses that are incurred by a candidate with a disability that are directly related to the disability and would not have been incurred but for the election to which the expenses relate, are excluded from the permitted spending limit for the candidate.

Feedback Process

Feedback is welcome and any received will be reviewed by the Clerk and appropriate action will be taken to remove barriers or provide accommodation if necessary.