

Candidate Q&A - 2026

The following questions have been submitted by candidates that have filed with the City of Stratford for the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election. For the awareness of all candidates, the responses to these questions are shared below:

Voting

Question – Can an elector vote online from Europe where they are travelling for the entire month of October?

Answer – Yes, as long as they have their Voter Information Letter which contains their unique PIN. Electors will use their PIN and date of birth to access the voting system and cast their vote.

Question - How do people in long-term care vote, or seniors with mobility issues or that may not have the tech capabilities (or comfort) to vote. Do long-term care citizens have to travel to the Rotary?

Answer – Voter Help Centres have been established to assist electors with the voting process or other general election enquiries (i.e. internet/telephone).

A Voter Help Centre will be provided to the following institutions and retirement homes on the specified date(s) and hours:

Name of Retirement Home or Institution	Date	Hours for Assistance
Anne Hathaway Residence 480 Downie Street	October 20, 2026 October 26, 2026	1-3:30 p.m. 12:30-1:30 p.m.
Stratford General Hospital CCU 46 General Hospital Drive	October 23, 2026 October 26, 2026	9-11:30 a.m. 1:30-2:30 p.m.
Spruce Lodge, Woodland Towers and Hamlet Estates 639 and 643 West Gore Street and 300 John Street North	October 21, 2026 October 26, 2026	9-11:30 a.m. 3-4 p.m.

Name of Retirement Home or Institution	Date	Hours for Assistance
Cedarcroft Place 260 Church Street	October 21, 2026 October 26, 2026	1-3:30 p.m. 2-3 p.m.
Greenwood Court 90 Greenwood Drive	October 20, 2026 October 26, 2026	9-11:30 a.m. 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Windmill Gardens 94 McCarthy Road West	October 22, 2026 October 26, 2026	9-11:30 a.m. 11 a.m.-12 p.m.
McCarthy Place Retirement Residence 200 McCarthy Road West	October 22, 2026 October 26, 2026	1-3:30 p.m. 9:30-10:30 a.m.
River Gardens Retirement Home 10 Romeo Street North	October 19, 2026 October 26, 2026	1-3:30 p.m. 9-10 a.m.

A Voter Help Centre will be available at the Stratford Rotary Complex, 353 McCarthy Road West, Stratford during the following dates and times:

Date	Time
Saturday, October 24, 2026	10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 25, 2026	1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Monday, October 26, 2026	10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Members of the public can vote using computers at the Voter Help Centre or receive help with voting.

A Voter Help Desk will be available in the Clerk's Office, located in the Municipal Office, 1 Wellington Street, Stratford during the following dates and times:

Date	Time
October 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 2026	8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
October 24, 2026	10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (telephone inquiries only)
October 25, 2026	1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (telephone inquiries only)
Monday, October 26, 2026	8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

At the Voter Help Desk a scent free voting place will be provided. Electors can also obtain assistance with voting.

The Clerk reserves the right to relocate, close or designate a place as a Voter Help Centre in order to accommodate unforeseen circumstances. The Clerk shall communicate any changes to the above locations made after September 1, 2026, by email to certified candidates, on the City's website, and if time permitting, through any other means as determined by the Clerk.

Municipal Property / Facilities

Question - Is the library considered a municipal asset and property for the purposes of campaigning?

Answer – The Stratford Public Library is owned and operated by the Library Board and has adopted the enclosed Policy which states:

- in point 2, "Candidates may rent meeting rooms in accordance with the Library's Meeting Room Rental Policy."
- in point 7, "that there are no signs allowed in the building or on the property."

Election Signs

Question - Do I need to report every election sign infraction, or are the by-law officers out patrolling the signs and dealing with infractions prior to reporting?

Answer – The By-law Enforcement Division investigates complaints received from the public regarding alleged violations and non-compliance with various City by-laws, including the Sign By-law. Questions regarding election sign requirements and complaints may be directed to the [City of Stratford By-law team](#).

Question - I am trying to understand the sign by-laws for municipal election signs. Is there an exemption to the by-laws at the end of C H Meier Blvd? Also, what about signs at the end of Streets such as Romeo and Vivian St.

Answer – There is not an exemption for the end of C. H. Meier Blvd. Candidates are encouraged to review the Information Bulletin on Election Signs or the Sign By-law to understand where signs are

permitted. Questions about election sign requirements can be directed to the [City of Stratford By-law team](#).

Question - Do signs placed on boulevards, some of the extremely wide boulevards, where the properties "backdoor" the street such as parts of Romeos Steet north, Queensland Drive, McCarthy Road, parts of Mornington Street, CH Meier and others require the approval of the property owners on the other side of the fence?

Answer - Where a boulevard or road allowance directly abuts private property, including where a rear yard or fence faces the street, an election sign requires the consent of the abutting property owner under section 21.1(d)(iii) of Sign By-law 159-2004. This remains subject to all other applicable restrictions.

Question - There are signs across from the entrance to the Rotary Rec Complex and there is now development on that lot. This indicates to me that all the candidates of the signs placed have had permission from that land owner. How do you verify whether they do or not? Does by-law enforcement wait for a complaint from the land owner when they do not want the signs there? If they do, does by-law enforcement contact the candidate to remove the signs or do they just remove them and destroy them?

Answer - Potential contraventions are investigated following a complaint. In the event of non-compliance with the Sign By-law, Stratford By-law Enforcement Officers will contact the Candidate or Third Party Advertiser about the concern and work collaboratively with them to bring the sign into compliance. Alternatively, the individual responsible for the sign may be asked to remove the sign in contravention of the By-law. Should any signs be placed that cause an immediate safety concern, such as impacting visibility within a sight triangle, By-law Enforcement will remove the sign and contact the individual afterwards to advise. As outlined in section 23(i), election signs placed in contravention of the By-law may be removed by the City without notice.

Question - With industrial and commercial lands, it is my understanding that permission is required form the owners of those lands before a sign can be placed on the boulevard of those properties, how is this enforced?

Answer - Owner consent is required for election signs placed on private property, including industrial or commercial property, or on the road allowance directly abutting that property, under section

21.1(d)(iii). Additionally, the property owner would need to make a complaint for it to be investigated.

Question - Are railway easements considered Crown land? If not, then is it considered public land and permission to place a sign from the railway is not required?

Answer - The Sign By-law does not determine whether railway land is privately owned or Crown land. Where railway land is privately owned, owner consent is required under section 21.1(d)(iii). Election signs are prohibited on property owned by the Province of Ontario, the Crown, or the federal government under section 21.1(c)(i)1.

Question - Do signs mounted on buildings in the Heritage District require approval?

Answer – Signs must comply with the City’s Sign By-law and if a sign is located in the Heritage Conservation District, the sign must also comply with section 10 of the Sign By-law.

Question - I reviewed the zoning map as signs are not allowed on parkland. There were some comments on Facebook about the location on Devon across from CH Meier that it is an open lot with a storm sewer and is parkland. In my review of the zoning by-law map this lot is not designated as parkland and the land behind it is designated as open space. Please confirm.

Answer – The City’s Planning Division has confirmed the subject lands are designated as a park. Under section 21.1(c)(i)2, election signs are prohibited on designated parkland and on the road allowance abutting it.

Advertising

Question - If you share another candidate's post is this considered 3rd party advertising?

Answer – The [2026 Third Party Advertiser Guide](#) provides the following information in response to the question:

- On page 1: “Third-party advertising refers to advertisements that support, promote or oppose a candidate, or support, promote or oppose a “yes” or “no” answer to a question on the ballot. The meaning of “third party” in this context means a person or entity who is not a candidate. Third-party advertising is separate from any candidate’s campaign, and must be done independently from a candidate. Any advertisements or materials that are made and

distributed by a candidate, or under a candidate's direction, are part of the candidate's campaign.

Activities that do not involve incurring expenses, such as discussions or expressing an opinion about a candidate (or an answer to a question on the ballot) are not considered to be third-party advertising. Examples include:

- speaking to friends and neighbours
- posting on social media, such as X, Facebook or Instagram
- sending an email to a group or mailing list"

Candidate Access Portal and the Voters' List

Question – Will the portal contain information about candidate debates and events? What do I use the portal for?

Answer – The Candidates Portal does not contain information about candidate debates or events. Candidates can use the Portal to:

- Search for registered electors and view selected voter details
- Request Voters' List extracts or Revision Reports

Revenue and the Burnside Agriplex

Question – How much revenue does the Burnside Agriplex generate now compared to previous years?

Answer – From August 1, 2025 to present, the revenue is approximately \$32,000, however, there are many community events that were subsidized to promote diversity in programming and community well-being. Previously, the City received \$81,000.

A copy of the [Sign By-law](#), [2026 Candidates Guide](#), [2026 Third Party Advertiser Guide](#) and the [2026 Voters' Guide](#) were placed in the Candidates Package and are available on the [City's website](#).

POLICY: The Library and Political Elections		POLICY NO: LG 06
POLICY LEVEL: Library Governance	LAST REVIEW / REVISION DATE: April 14, 2026	SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE: April 2030

The Library and Political Elections

The Stratford Public Library (the Library) must act and appear to act in a non-partisan way at all times, while supporting the democratic process, fundamental freedoms, and informed discussion on political issues, especially during elections.

This policy applies to Board members, employees and volunteers of the library in their dealings with candidates and political parties and the use of library resources during the campaign periods for municipal elections. These rules and procedures will also be used for provincial and federal elections.

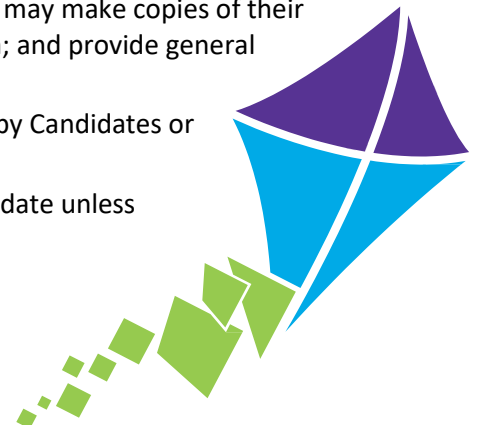
Use of Library Resources and Property

It is the responsibility of the library to ensure that no candidate, registered-third party advertiser, or political party is provided with an unfair advantage in the use of library resources at any time.

For municipal elections, by May 1st in the election year, the library establishes the rules and procedures with respect to use of library resources during the period leading up to the municipal election. This requirement is found in the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c. 32, Sched., Section 88.18

Rules for use of library resources and property are as follows:

1. All candidates and political parties will have equal access to publicly available resources and library services.
2. Candidates may rent meeting rooms in accordance with the Library's Meeting Room Rental Policy.
3. Library equipment, supplies, or personnel cannot be provided to candidates for campaign purposes.
4. The Library logo cannot be used in any campaign material.
5. All-candidates meetings may be held at the library, either as a library program or sponsored by another group, provided that all candidates are invited to attend such meetings. A candidate cannot be featured or promoted in association with any other regular library program or event.
6. Candidates and political parties are permitted to distribute campaign materials on public right-of-ways at the Library, unless prohibited by municipal by-law.
7. No election sign or poster specific to a candidate or political party can be posted on Library property or in the Library building.
8. In accordance with the Canada Elections Act section 81.1(1) federal election candidates or their representatives are allowed to campaign in facilities that are available for free to the public. During municipal and provincial elections candidates will be granted the same right to campaign in the library. Such activities must be coordinated with the CEO or designate to avoid any conflict with regular or planned library operational needs.
9. During an election, the Library may provide an area where candidates may make copies of their campaign brochures available; will promote awareness of the election; and provide general information on elections.
10. Photographs produced for and owned by the Library will not be used by Candidates or Third-Party Advertisers for any election purposes.
11. No advertising paid for by the Library will contain the name of a Candidate unless consistent with their duties as Library representative.



Campaign Contributions

The library will comply with legislation on campaign contributions at all levels.

1. **Municipal Elections**

The board may not contribute to the campaign of any candidate or political party in the form of money, goods, or services. This is in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, Section 88.8(4).

2. **Provincial Elections**

The board may not contribute to the campaign of any candidate of a provincial election, constituency association, nomination contestant, candidates, and leadership contestant of provincial political parties in the form of money, goods or services. This is in accordance with the Ontario Elections Finances Act, Section 16(1).

3. **Federal Elections**

The board may not contribute to the campaign of any candidate of a federal election, a registered party, a registered association, nomination contestant, and leadership contestant of federal political parties in the form of money, goods or services. This is in accordance with the Canada Elections Act, Section 363(1).

Participation in Election Campaigns

1. A Library employee or volunteer involved in a political campaign must be politically neutral in carrying out their library duties during and must not participate in campaign activities during working hours.
2. Any Library employee running as a candidate in the municipal election will comply with Section 30 of the Municipal Elections Act.
3. While engaging in election campaign purposes or activities or campaign-related activities, Library employees will not wear any clothing such as a uniform or badge which identifies them as a Library employee, or use any vehicles, technology, or other resources that are owned or leased by the Library.
4. Library Board members may continue their board responsibilities when they are running for office.

Requests for Information About the Library

The CEO or designate will coordinate requests for information about the Library received from candidates or political parties.

1. Information that is provided by the Library to one candidate or political party will be provided to all other candidates and political parties upon request during an election.
2. Any candidate or political party may request a meeting with the CEO or a tour of the library.

References:

- OP 01 Meeting Room Rental
- [Canada Elections Act](#)
- [Election Finances Act](#)
- [Municipal Elections Act](#)

ORIGINAL DATE ADOPTED	June 5, 2018	Review Cycle	4 years
REVIEW/APPROVAL HISTORY	April 1, 2022, April 14, 2026		

