

# MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL BOARD **ELECTION 2026**

## CANDIDATE INFORMATION AND NOMINATION PACKAGE



Township of Zorra  
163 Brock Street  
Thamesford, Ontario  
N0M 2M0

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# Candidate Information and Nomination Package

## 2026 Municipal and School Board Election

Included in this package:

### **Section A: Township of Zorra Information**

- Township of Zorra 2026 Municipal Election – Candidates Information Guide
- Township of Zorra Ward Map

### **Section B: Candidate Information**

- Ministry of Municipal Affairs - 2026 Candidates' Guide
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario – Lead Where You Live

### **Section C: Zorra Policies and By-laws**

- Policy 100-10 Use of Corporate Resources
- Policy 100-11 Code of Ethical Conduct
- Election Signs
  - By-law 2018-20 Election Sign By-law
  - Oxford County Election Sign Correspondence

### **Section D: Finance Information**

- Overview
- Preliminary Certificate of Max Expenses and Max Contributions to Campaign
- Notice of Financial Filing Requirements and Penalties

### **Section E: Township of Zorra Election and Voting Procedures**

- Telephone and Internet Voting Procedures
- 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

### **Section F: Forms and Declarations**

- Nomination Paper (Form 1)
  - Declaration of Qualifications – Council
- Endorsement of Nomination (Form 2)
- Proper Use of Voters' List
  - Declaration of Proper Use of Voters' List Info
  - Candidates - Proper Use of Voters' List Form
- Consent to Release Personal Information (Form EL52)
- Election Campaign Bank Account Form

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Section A:

Township of Zorra  
Information



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# Township of Zorra 2026 Municipal Election Candidates Information Guide

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## Introduction

The municipal and school board election will be held on **Monday, October 26, 2026**. The new term of Council begins on November 15, 2026.

This package has been prepared for the purpose of supplying information to persons intending to stand for elected office. The information is intended only as a guide to help potential candidates. This package is available at the Township of Zorra municipal office and electronically on the Township of Zorra website. This package may be updated periodically.

This package contains certain provisions of relevant legislation and does not purport to recite all applicable statutory references. It is the candidate's responsibility to refer to and be informed of the relevant legislation and regulations. Candidates are responsible for ensuring they are familiar with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and should consult the Act for complete information and legislative requirements. A copy of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 is available online at [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca). Specific questions regarding the legislative requirements can be directed to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (the Ministry can be reached at [mea.info@ontario.ca](mailto:mea.info@ontario.ca)).

### Other Resources

The [Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing](https://www.ontario.ca/page/municipal-elections) (MMAH) provides helpful election information and guides for candidates and voters (guides can be found at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/municipal-elections>).

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing also provides the [2026 Candidate's Guide – Ontario Municipal Council and School Board Elections](#) to use during the term of office to help elected officials understand and meet their responsibilities. The MMAH Candidate's Guide is included in this package. **The remainder of this package will assume that candidates have read the MMAH Candidate's Guide.**

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) offers an online guide for those considering running for municipal office called "[Lead Where You Live: A guide on running for municipal council.](#)" The guide will introduce you to some of the key steps in running for election in 2026 and will also give you a sense of what life is like as an elected member of a municipal council. The AMO "Lead Where You live" guide is also included in this package. Visit their website at <https://www.amo.on.ca/about-us/municipal-101/municipal-elections> for more details as well as many other helpful election and campaigning resources.

Candidates for school board offices are encouraged to visit the [Ministry of Education website](#) and to contact the office of the Director of Education of the appropriate school board to access helpful resources and obtain information on the duties and responsibilities of a trustee.

On March 26, 2026, the Township of Zorra, in partnership with Oxford County municipalities, hosted a **Candidate Information Meeting** in preparation for the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election. The session provided prospective and returning candidates, as well as the public, with information on council roles, eligibility, nominations, and campaign finance rules. Presentations were delivered by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and municipal consultant Nigel Bellchamber, with both in-person and virtual participation available. A link to the Candidate Information meeting is provided below.

[Watch the Candidate Information Meeting.](#)

## Elected Offices

On Monday, October 26, 2026, voters in the Township of Zorra will elect members of the following offices:

- 1) **MAYOR**  
One (1) to be elected by all electors in the Township of Zorra.
- 2) **WARD COUNCILLOR**  
Four (4) to be elected by the electors of their respective ward (e.g., ward 1 councillor will be elected by the electors of ward 1, etc.).
- 3) **THAMES VALLEY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (English Public)**  
Two (2) to be elected by English public-school electors in Oxford County. The City of Woodstock is responsible for accepting nominations.
- 4) **LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD (English Separate)**  
One (1) to be elected by English separate school electors in Oxford County. The City of Woodstock is responsible for accepting nominations.
- 5) **CONSEIL SCOLAIRE CATHOLIQUE PROVIDENCE (French Separate)**  
One (1) to be elected by French language separate school electors to represent the Counties of Oxford, Elgin, and Middlesex. The City of Woodstock is responsible for accepting nominations.
- 6) **CONSEIL SCOLAIRE VIAMONDE (French Public)**  
One (1) to be elected by French language public school electors to represent the Counties of Oxford, Elgin, Lambton, Haldimand and Norfolk and the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. The City of Sarnia is responsible for conducting the election for this position. However, nominations for this position will be accepted by the Clerk (or their designate) of the Township of Zorra and forwarded to the Clerk of Sarnia. The candidate may file Form 1 – Nomination Paper with the Township of Zorra office and the City of Sarnia will follow up with the candidate to complete all other forms and to coordinate payment.

## General Council Information

It is critical that candidates understand their responsibilities and the time commitment that is involved by sitting on the Township of Zorra Council. Once elected, Council members will receive orientation training.

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) offers an online guide for those considering running for municipal office called "[Lead Where You Live: A guide on running for municipal council.](#)" The guide will introduce you to some of the key steps in running for election in 2026 and will also give you a sense of what life is like as an elected member of a municipal council. The Lead Where You Live document is also included in this package. Visit the Association of Municipalities of Ontario website at <https://www.amo.on.ca/about-us/municipal-101/municipal-elections> for more details as well as many other helpful election and campaigning resources.

### **Legislated Responsibilities of Council and the Mayor**

The *Municipal Act, 2001*, is the primary Ontario legislation establishing the legal framework for municipal government. It defines the responsibilities of municipal councils to act as a representative, policymaker, and steward of public assets, ensuring accountability and financial integrity.

Section 224 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, describes the role of Council is to:

- a) represent the public and consider the well-being and interests of the municipality;
- b) develop and evaluate the policies and programs of the municipality,
- c) determine which services the municipality provides;
- d) ensure that administrative policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of council;
- e) ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality, including the activities of senior management;
- f) maintain the financial integrity of the municipality; and
- g) carry out any other duties of council under any Act.

Section 225 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* describes the role of the Mayor as:

- a) act as chief executive officer of the municipality;
- b) preside over council meetings so that its business can be carried out efficiently and effectively;
- c) provide leadership to the council;
- d) provide information and recommendations to the council with respect to the role of council;
- e) represent the municipality at official functions; and
- f) carry out any other duties of the head of council under any Act.

## Annual Salary

In addition to the 2026 salary rates noted below, the Mayor and Council are provided with a spending limit for conferences and professional development.

Mayor	\$35,715.58
Deputy Mayor	\$23,604.19
Ward Councillor	\$20,740.28

## Time Commitment

Township of Zorra Council meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. and the third Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. In January, July, August and September, Council meetings have historically been held once a month at 9:30 a.m. Meeting times vary in length but are typically between 1-2.5 hours. Closed and special meetings of Council are called as required.

Council members may also be appointed to boards and committees, which require the Councillor to attend and participate. Currently, the Township of Zorra has the following boards and committees:

<b>Committee Name</b>	<b>Frequency of Meetings</b>	<b>Meeting Time</b>	<b># of Council Members Appointed</b>
North Embro Cemetery Board	3 times per year	evening	1 Councillor
Beachville & District Museum Board	Monthly (recess for July, August and December)	7:00 p.m.	2 Councillors
Upper Thames River Conservation Authority	Monthly	9:30 a.m.	1 Councillor
Zorra Multi-Use Courts Committee	Monthly (recess for December)	7:00 p.m.	1 Councillor
Embro Dog Park Committee	Monthly until project is complete	4:00 p.m.	1 Councillor

Council members can expect to spend considerable time reviewing reports, emails and correspondence for discussion at meetings. Members must be able to commit the time to read, understand and get clarification on the information, so they can be ready to speak comfortably to issues during the Council meetings.

## Time Commitment – Public Events and Community Relations

During the year, public events are hosted by the Township or community groups and Council members may be invited to receptions, open houses, conferences, celebrations, annual general meetings and other community events. Attendance at public events is usually not mandatory; however, this provides an opportunity for Council to connect with the public.

While out in the community, Council members are often approached by individuals who want to address a problem or concern. Council members also receive numerous emails and phone calls. Council members may be able to respond to some inquiries themselves while others may need to be referred to Township staff.

## Qualification of Candidates

Prospective candidates must satisfy themselves through their own determination that they are in fact qualified by law to seek elected office and that they have complied with the election financing regulations.

The below checklist may be used as a starting point for candidates when determining if they are eligible to seek elected office. However, candidates are encouraged to review the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and the *Municipal Act, 2001*, to ensure they are qualified to hold office.

1. I am qualified pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and the *Municipal Act, 2001* to be elected to and hold the office of Mayor or Ward Councillor.
2. Without limiting the generality of paragraph 1, I am a Canadian citizen, at least eighteen years of age, a resident of the Township of Zorra or the owner or tenant of land in the Township of Zorra or the spouse of such owner or tenant.
3. I am not ineligible or disqualified under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the *Municipal Act, 2001*, or any other Act to be elected to or hold the above-mentioned office.
4. Without limiting the generality of paragraph 3,
  - I am not an employee of the Township of Zorra, or if I am an employee of the Township of Zorra, I am on unpaid leave of absence as provided for by section 30 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
  - I am not a judge of any court.
  - I am not a member of the Assembly as provided in the Legislative Assembly Act or of the Senate or House of Commons of Canada, or if I am such a person, I will provide a proof of my resignation in a form satisfactory to the Clerk of the Township of Zorra prior to 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day, August 21, 2026. I understand that the Clerk of the Township of Zorra will reject my

nomination for the above-mentioned office if I fail to provide proof of resignation by this deadline.

- I am not a member of the Executive Council of Ontario or a federal Minister of the Crown.
  - I am not a Provincial Crown employee within the meaning of the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006*, or if I am a Provincial Crown employee, I am on an unpaid leave of absence as provided by Part V of such Act.
  - I am not a Federal employee within the meaning of the *Public Service Employment Act*, or if I am a Federal employee, I have followed and will continue to follow all the relevant provisions of Part 7 of such Act.
5. I am not prohibited from voting at the municipal election under subsection 17(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
6. Without limiting the generality of paragraph 5,
- I am not a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution.
  - I am not prohibited because of conviction of a corrupt practice described in section 90(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* from voting in a municipal election.
7. I am not ineligible for office because of conviction of a corrupt practice under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* or of an offence under the Criminal Code in connection with an act or omission that relates to a municipal election.
8. I am not disqualified from being elected to or holding office by reason of any violations of the election campaign financial requirements or violations for not filing the financial statement pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

#### **Reminders to Candidates:**

1. Must be an eligible elector for the office being sought.
2. Must file their Nomination Paper in person or by agent.
3. Cannot be nominated for more than one office.
4. Must pay a filing fee of \$100 or \$200 cash, debit, or cheque made payable to the Township of Zorra.
5. Cannot accept donations or spend any funds on a campaign until such time as you have filed a Nomination Paper with the Clerk and opened an Elections Bank Account.
6. You are responsible for keeping records of the financial activities related to your campaign. Remember to issue receipts for all donations, including donations of goods or services; obtain receipts for expenses incurred; keep copies of all

receipts.

7. Keep receipts for all expenditures and a record of the value of all contributions which are not money (i.e., sign stakes, paper, printing services, etc.).
8. It is the responsibility of the candidate to file a complete and accurate financial statement on time. Candidates should completely familiarize themselves with the appropriate sections of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

## **Nomination Procedures**

Every person who intends to run for Township of Zorra Council must file nomination papers with the Clerk, or their designate, in person or by an agent. Nominations can be filed starting **Friday, May 1, 2026, to Friday, August 21, 2026**. Nominations can be filed Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except for on the final day of the nomination period, Friday, August 21, by which candidates can only file up until 2:00 p.m.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to make an appointment to file a nomination to avoid any delays. Appointments can be made by calling 519-485-2490 or emailing [clerk@zorra.ca](mailto:clerk@zorra.ca).

The nomination must be accompanied by the prescribed nomination filing fee. The prescribed fee is \$200 for the head of council, and \$100 for all other offices, and can be paid by cash, debit, or certified cheque payable to the Township of Zorra.

### **Nomination Filing Forms**

There are several forms that candidates must complete to file their nomination. The following forms are included in this information package (see Section F: Forms and Acknowledgements) and are required at the time of filing a nomination:

1. Form 1 – Nomination Paper
2. Form 2 – Endorsement of Nomination
3. Form EL14 – Candidate’s Declaration – Proper Use of Voters’ List
4. Form EL52 – Consent to Release Personal Information
5. Election Campaign Bank Account Form

There are additional forms that the Township Clerk, or designate, will provide to candidates when they file their nomination, including:

1. Form 37A – Certificate of Maximum Campaign Expenses
2. Form 37B – Certificate of Maximum Amount of Contributions – Own Campaign
3. Form 4 – Financial Statement – Auditor’s Report Candidate

**Candidates are responsible for ensuring that they meet all the qualifications and have followed the procedures with respect to the filing of Nomination Papers.**

### **Exception for Additional Nominations**

If the number of nominations filed for an office is less than the number of persons to be elected to an office, additional nominations may be filed between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on the Wednesday following Nomination Day – **August 26, 2026**.

### **Examination and Certification of Nominations by Clerk**

The Clerk is required to examine each nomination that has been filed. If the Clerk is satisfied that a person is qualified to be nominated, the Clerk will certify the nomination. If the Clerk is not satisfied that a person is qualified to be nominated, the Clerk will reject the nomination. The candidate will be given notice when the Clerk rejects a nomination. *The Clerk's decision to certify or reject a nomination is final.*

The Clerk shall examine each nomination that has been filed before 4:00 p.m. on the Monday following Nomination Day - **August 24, 2026**. Any additional nominations filed under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, s.33(5) shall be examined before 4:00 p.m. on the Thursday following Nomination Day - **August 27, 2026**.

### **Withdrawal of Nominations**

A person may withdraw his or her nomination by filing a written withdrawal in person at the Clerks Department before 2:00 p.m. on **August 21, 2026**, using form EL19 (available on the Township of Zorra elections website).

### **Acclamations**

If, at 4:00 p.m. on **Monday, August 24, 2026**, the number of certified candidates for an office is the same as the number to be elected, the Clerk shall immediately declare the candidate or candidates elected by acclamation.

### **Refund of Nomination Deposit**

A candidate is entitled to receive a refund of their nomination filing fee if he or she files their financial statements with the Clerk by the filing date. For the 2026 municipal election, the filing date is before 2:00 p.m. on March 30, 2027.

## **General Election Information**

### **Telephone and Internet Voting Procedures**

The Township of Zorra is utilizing telephone and internet voting methods for the 2026 municipal election. Online and telephone voting will be available during the designated voting window preceding Voting Day. Electors will receive instructions on how to access

the online voting system via their Voter Notification Letter, along with necessary credentials/PINs. The **Online and Telephone Voting Procedures** will be available on June 1, 2026.

### **Accessibility**

The goal of the Township of Zorra is to ensure that electors in the Township of Zorra who have a disability are provided with the best opportunity to vote as independently as possible. The Township of Zorra has a **2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan**, which lays out the steps the Township is taking to make the election accessible. The 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan can be viewed on the Township of Zorra website as of June 1, 2026.

Within 90 days after Election Day, the Clerk will submit a report to Council about the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

## **Campaign Information**

It is the candidate's responsibility to provide voters with information about the candidate and their campaign. Only the contact information provided in the "**Consent to Release Personal Information**" form submitted with nominations (see "Forms" section in the Zorra Candidate's package) will be included on the candidate page on the Township's election website.

Candidates are advised to refer to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Candidates Guide – Ontario municipal council and school board elections, for information on campaign contributions, fund raising, campaign expenses, and compliance audits. The guideline is available in this package and on the Province of Ontario website.

### **Debates**

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, does not require candidate debates to be held, and the Township is not responsible for organizing meetings or debates. Debates can be organized by community groups, candidates, or any other interested person.

### **Prohibition of Canvassing in Voting Places**

The Clerk does not permit electioneering of any nature in, on, or in the immediate vicinity of the premises used as a voting place. The premises are deemed to include the entire building and the property on which it is located. The Township Municipal Office is deemed a voting place for the 2026 municipal election.

Section 48(2) of the Municipal Election Act states: "*No person shall display a candidate's election campaign material or literature in a voting place.*"

Section 48(3) of the Municipal Election Act states: “*Voting Place*’ includes any place in the immediate vicinity of the voting place designated by the Clerk.”

Deputy Returning Officers are instructed to remove any material or literature of any nature in, or in the immediate vicinity, of any voting place.

## **Election Signs**

To support a fair, transparent, and impartial election process, the Township has established clear rules regarding the placement, display, and removal of election signs within the Township. These rules ensure that all candidates and registered third party advertisers are treated equitably, protect the safety and accessibility of roadways and public spaces, and uphold the neutrality of municipal operations throughout the campaign period.

The Township of Zorra’s Election Sign By-law 2018-20, and the correspondence from the County of Oxford regarding election signs on Oxford County Road allowances/properties are included in this package (see Section C – Zorra Policies and By-laws (Election Signs)). These documents outline the standards and requirements governing where and how election signs may be displayed on public property. **Candidates are responsible for ensuring that their campaign teams and volunteers understand and follow the Election Sign Policy.** Candidates must sign an acknowledgment stating that they have received and understood the election sign provisions for the 2026 election (this will be provided when a candidate files their nomination).

All election signs must be removed by October 29, 2026.

## **Municipal Resources**

To protect the neutrality of the municipal corporation during the election and to prohibit contributions by the municipality during campaign periods, municipal resources cannot be used for campaigning purposes. Further, the Township is required by the *Municipal Elections Act*, to establish rules for using municipal resources for campaigning purposes. The Township’s **Policy 100-10 – Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes**, has been included in this package (see Section C – Zorra Policies and By-laws).

This policy is necessary to safeguard the interests of the Township and to preserve public trust and overall integrity of the elections process. It also ensures that all candidates are treated equally, fairly, and consistently within the Township.

## **Scrutineers**

A scrutineer is an individual appointed by a candidate to observe the voting process and ballot counting at a polling place. Each candidate may appoint a scrutineer to represent them at the municipal office during the opening and testing of the voting system, the receipt of voting results, a recount and announcement of recount results. The Municipal

Elections Act, 1996 includes provisions for what scrutineers can and cannot do.

Scrutineers must show proof of their appointment to an Election Official.

Should candidates choose to appoint a scrutineer, they must do so by completing the Appointment of Scrutineer by Candidate Form (EL12A). This form is available from the Township Clerk.

## Voter Information

### **Voter Qualification**

According to the *Municipal Elections Act*, section **17(2)**

A person is entitled to be an elector at an election held in a local municipality if, on voting day, he or she:

1. Resides in the local municipality or is the owner or tenant of land there, or the spouse of such owner or tenant;
2. Is a Canadian citizen;
3. Is at least 18 years old; and
4. Is not prohibited from voting under subsection (3) or otherwise by law.

According to the *Municipal Elections Act*, section **17(3)**

The following are prohibited from voting:

1. A person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution;
2. A corporation;
3. A person acting as executor or trustee or in any other representative capacity, except as a voting proxy; or
4. A person who was convicted of the corrupt practice described in subsection 90(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act*, if voting day in the current election is less than five years after voting day in the election in respect of which he or she was convicted.

### **Voters' List**

Beginning with the 2026 Municipal and School Board Elections, Elections Ontario is responsible for preparing and maintaining the Voters' List for all municipal and school board elections across Ontario. The Preliminary List of Electors supplied to the Township

of Zorra will include the name, address, and school support designation for every eligible elector registered with Elections Ontario. Candidates are strongly encouraged to direct electors to verify their information through [registertovoteON.ca](https://registertovoteON.ca) until August 12, or via the Township after that deadline.

Candidates are entitled to receive a copy of the list for their use and candidates may request either an electronic or paper copy of the list by completing **Form EL14-Candidate's Declaration – Proper Use of Voters' List**.

According to section 23(7) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*,

(7) The clerk may not provide a copy of the voters' list under subsection (3) or part of the voters' list under subsection (4) to a person unless the person provides a written acknowledgment that they,

- a) Shall only use it for electoral purposes and shall not use it for commercial purposes;
- b) Are bound by the restrictions in this subsection and subsection (8); and
- c) May only disclose its content to others after obtaining their written acknowledgment that they are bound by the restrictions in this subsection and subsection (8).

### **Revision of the Voters' List**

The Voters' List will be available by **September 1, 2026**. Applications for amendments to the list will be accepted by the Clerk from September 1, 2026, to the close of voting on Voting Day – October 26, 2026, at 8:00 p.m.

## Important Dates

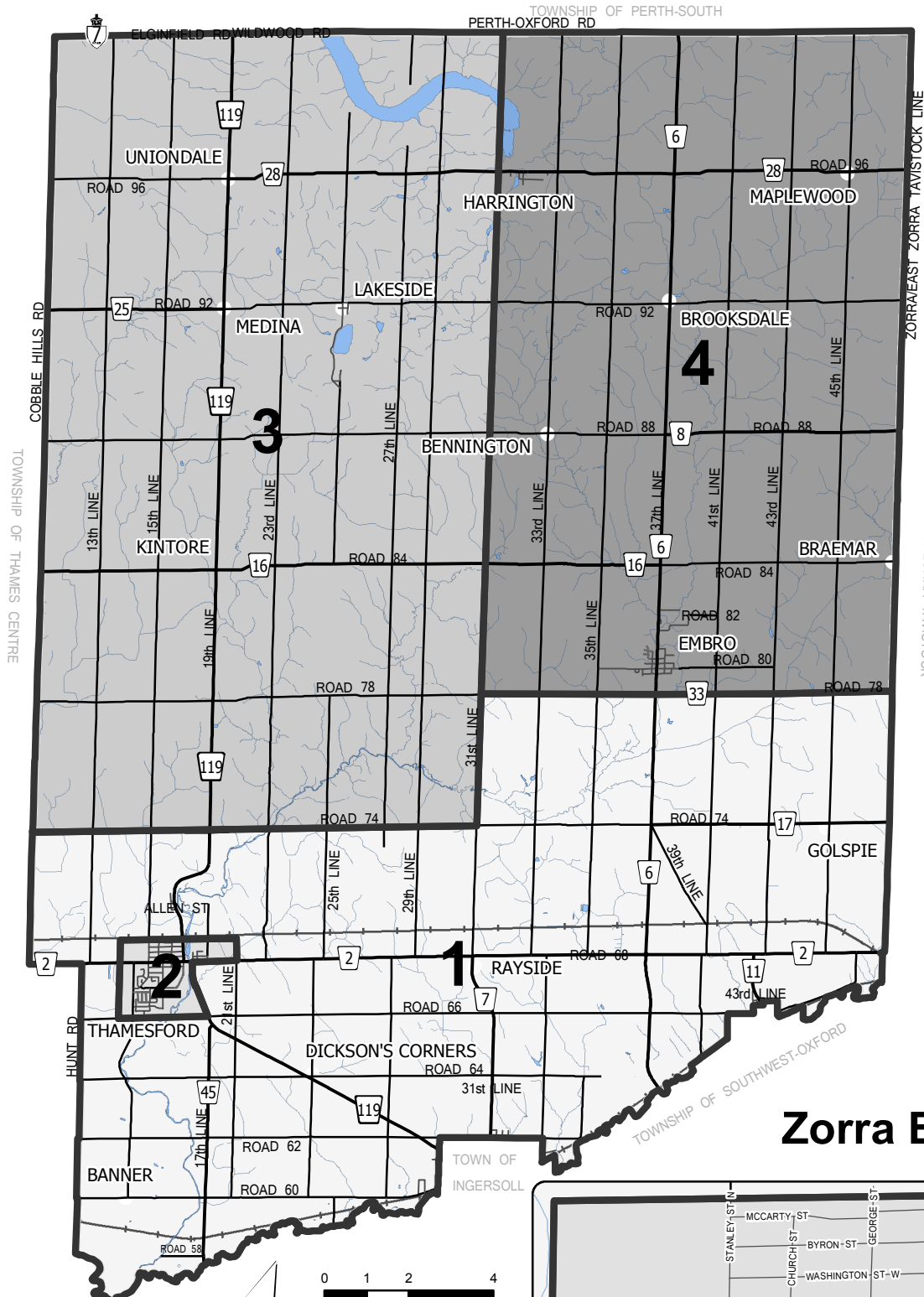
### 2026 Dates

<b>May 1</b>	First day for candidates to file a nomination paper for the office of mayor, councillor or school board trustee.
	First day for an individual or entity to file a notice of registration as a third-party advertiser.
<b>August 21 at 2:00 p.m. (Nomination Day)</b>	Last day for a candidate to file a nomination (deadline is 2:00 p.m.)
	Last day for a candidate to withdraw (deadline is 2:00 p.m.)
<b>August 24</b>	Nominations to be certified or rejected by the Clerk and a final list of Candidates posted.
<b>September 1</b>	Voters' list available to certified candidates.
	Revision period begins – Electors may update or add their name to the voters' list.
<b>September 30</b>	Final expense limits provided to candidates and third party advertisers.
<b>October 13 to October 25</b>	Internet and telephone voting advance voting period.
<b>Monday, October 26</b>	Final voting day. Polls close at 8:00 p.m.
<b>October 27</b>	Anticipated date to declare official Election results.
<b>November 15</b>	New term of Council commences.
<b>December 31</b>	Campaign period ends for candidates and registered third-parties.

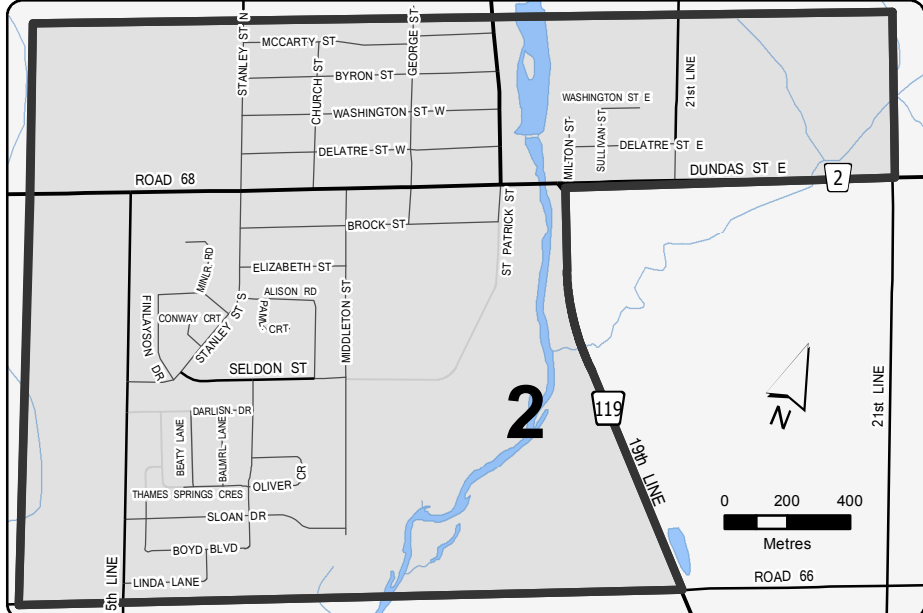
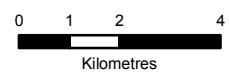
### 2027 Dates

<b>March 30 at 2:00 p.m.</b>	Filing date for financial statements and auditor's reports.
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## Zorra Electoral Wards



# Section B:

# Candidate Information



# 2026 candidates' guide

Ontario municipal council and  
school board elections

# 2026 candidates' guide – Ontario municipal council and school board elections

Find out how to run as a candidate in Ontario municipal council and school board elections.

This guide provides information to candidates for the 2026 municipal and school board elections. The information also applies to any by-elections that may be held during the 2026–2030 council and school board term.

This guide is not meant to replace provincial legislation. It provides general information about the rules contained in the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), and other legislation and regulations, such as:

- [Municipal Act, 2001](#)
- [City of Toronto Act, 2006](#)
- [Education Act](#)

## New election rules for 2026

There are new requirements regarding how copies of the voters' list are to be handled. These include:

- written acknowledgements to receive a copy of the voters' list
- limits to sharing copies
- requirements to destroy copies after the campaign has ended

For more information regarding these requirements please see [the voters' list](#).

## Contact us

If you have further questions or would like to give feedback on this guide, please contact us at [mea.info@ontario.ca](mailto:mea.info@ontario.ca).

You can also contact your regional [Municipal Services Office](#) at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

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## General information

Every four years, voters across Ontario elect municipal councillors and school board trustees.

The Province of Ontario sets out common rules that all candidates and voters must follow. However, municipalities are responsible for conducting elections to their council and for conducting the election of school trustees to Ontario's school boards. This guide contains information about the rules that are the same for all municipal elections, such as who is eligible to run for office, and rules about campaign spending.

Your municipality may have specific rules on issues such as:

- where and when election signs may be displayed
- whether campaign activities may occur on municipal property
- whether those who make contributions to candidates may receive a rebate

Contact your municipal clerk if you have questions about the election in your municipality.

To learn more about the duties of municipal councillors and the role of council, please see the [Ontario municipal councillor's guide](#).

## The municipal clerk

Every municipality has a municipal clerk who is in charge of running the election.

Contact the municipal clerk if you are interested in becoming a candidate. You must file any election forms, such as the nomination form and campaign financial statements, with your municipal clerk. The clerk is also responsible for providing information about spending limits and filing deadlines to candidates.

If your municipality does not have a website, you could visit or contact your municipality's offices for more information.

## Emergency declaration by the clerk

If the municipal clerk believes that circumstances have arisen that prevent the election from being conducted in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, they may declare an emergency. This declaration is specific to the election and separate from an emergency that may be declared by the municipality or the province.

Once the clerk has declared an emergency, they can decide what arrangements to make to allow the election to appropriately proceed. The arrangements that the clerk makes will depend on the nature of the emergency.

If your municipal clerk has declared an emergency in relation to an election or by-election in your municipality, you should contact the clerk for information about the arrangements that they have put in place and how those arrangements may affect voting and campaigning.

## Eligibility to run for election

### Running for municipal council

To run for a position on council, you must be eligible to vote in that municipality. On the day you file your nomination, you must be a Canadian citizen aged 18 or older, and qualify as a resident or non-resident elector. For more information about eligibility to vote, please see the [2026 voters' guide](#).

You must be eligible to hold office on the day you file your nomination. For example, a person who is 17 years old but will turn 18 before nomination day must wait until they have turned 18 to file their nomination.

If your municipality has wards, you can run in any ward — you do not have to live in a particular ward to be its councillor. However, if you run in a ward where you do not live, you will not be able to vote for yourself. Having a campaign office or a business in a ward where you would not otherwise be eligible to vote does not make you eligible to vote in that ward.

### Municipal employees

You cannot work for a municipality and be on its council at the same time. If you are an employee of a municipality and you want to run for office on that municipality's council, you must take a leave of absence that begins the day you are nominated. If you are elected, you must resign from your job.

If you are an employee of a municipality and you want to run for office in a different municipality, you do not have to take a leave of absence or resign. However, you should check with your employer to see if there are any policies in place that could affect you.

If you are an employee of an upper-tier municipality, you can run for office in a lower-tier municipality without taking a leave of absence or resigning unless being elected to the lower-tier council means that you would also be a member of the upper-tier council.

## Who is not eligible?

The following people are not eligible to be elected to municipal office:

- any person who is not eligible to vote in the municipality
- an employee of a municipality who has not taken an unpaid leave of absence and resigned (see above)
- a judge of any court
- an MP, an MPP or a senator
- an inmate serving a sentence in a penal or correctional institution

## Running for school board trustee

To run for a trustee position on a school board, you must be a resident within the jurisdiction of the board and you must be eligible to vote in a school board election. On the day you file your nomination, you must be a Canadian citizen aged 18 or older and you must meet any other qualifications to vote for the school board (for example, being a Roman Catholic, or holding French language rights). For more information about eligibility to vote, please see the [2026 voters' guide](#).

Additional information about [French-language rights](#) is available from the Ministry of Education.

## School board employees

You cannot work for a school board and be a trustee in Ontario at the same time.

If you are an employee of any Ontario school board and you want to run for a trustee position on any school board in the province, you must take an unpaid leave of absence that begins the day you are nominated. If you are elected, you must resign from your job.

## Municipal officials

If you are a clerk, deputy clerk, treasurer or deputy treasurer of a municipality within the jurisdiction of a school board, you are not permitted to run for office as a trustee of that board unless you take a leave of absence. If you are elected, you must resign from your job.

## Who is not eligible?

The following people are not eligible to be elected as a school trustee:

- any person who is not eligible to vote in the school board election
- an employee of a school board or a municipal official who has not taken an unpaid leave of absence and resigned (see above)

- a judge of any court
- an MP, an MPP or a senator
- an inmate serving a sentence in a penal or correctional institution

## Note for MPs, MPPs and senators

If you are an MP, MPP or senator, you may file your nomination for municipal or school board office without resigning your current seat in parliament, the legislature or the senate. However, you must resign your seat by the close of nominations (2 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026). If you are a federal or provincial cabinet minister, you must step down from cabinet prior to filing your nomination and must resign your seat by the close of nominations.

If you have not resigned by nomination day, your nomination will be rejected and your name will not appear on the ballot.

# Nominations

## Filing your nomination

To file your nomination, you must give the following to your municipal clerk:

- a [nomination form \(Form 1\)](#)
- the nomination fee
- completed [endorsement of nomination forms \(Form 2\)](#)

**Note:** Candidates for municipal council in municipalities with fewer than 4,000 electors and candidates for school board trustee do not have to submit endorsement signatures. Your municipal clerk will be able to tell you if you need to submit endorsement signatures.

When you fill out the nomination form, write down your name as you want it to appear on the ballot. If you normally go by a different name than your legal first name, you may use that name provided that the clerk agrees.

You do not have to provide all of your names under the box entitled “Given Name(s)” on the form. Only provide the one(s) that you want to appear on the ballot. If your legal name is a single name, you do not have to provide any given names.

Clerks can decide to allow nominations to be filed electronically. If your municipality allows electronic filing, contact the clerk for more information about how to file your nomination.

If electronic filing is not allowed in your municipality, you must file the nomination form that you have signed — the form may not be a copy and may not be scanned and submitted electronically. You must file the nomination form in person or have an agent file it on your behalf.

The clerk may require you to show identification or fill in an additional form to prove that you are eligible to be nominated. If an agent is going to file the form on your behalf, you should check with the clerk to see if you are required to provide identification or additional paperwork.

Your campaign period begins when the clerk has received your nomination. If you file your nomination electronically at a time when the clerk's office is not open, you may have to wait to begin your campaign. You should contact the clerk for more information.

## The nomination fee

The fee to file a nomination is \$200 to run for head of council and \$100 for all other positions. This fee must be paid to the clerk at the time you submit your nomination form.

Your nomination fee will be refunded if you file your campaign financial statement by the deadline.

## Endorsement signatures

If you are running for municipal council in a municipality that has 4,000 or more electors, you must submit 25 original signatures endorsing your nomination.

You do not have to submit endorsement signatures if you are running for:

- municipal council in a municipality that has fewer than 4,000 electors
- school trustee

You must use [Form 2](#) to collect the endorsement signatures.

Anyone providing an endorsement signature must also fill in their name and address, including the postal code.

Anyone providing an endorsement signature must be eligible to vote in the municipality on the day that they signed the endorsement. In addition to their endorsement, they will also be required to sign a declaration that they are eligible to vote in the municipality.

A person who is eligible to vote in the municipality may provide endorsements to as many candidates as they would like and may endorse candidates for any office on the municipal

council. A person who is running for a ward councillor office may submit signatures from voters who do not live in that ward.

If you submit 25 original endorsement signatures and find out later that a person (or persons) was not eligible to vote on the day that they signed the endorsement, you will not lose your nomination. The person who supplied false information (by declaring that they were eligible to endorse your nomination when they were not eligible) could be subject to prosecution.

If the clerk has allowed electronic filing, you must still collect original endorsement signatures. You can submit an electronic copy of the forms when you file your nomination. You must keep the forms with the original signatures as part of your campaign records.

The [Endorsement of Nomination Form \(Form 2\)](#) is a public document. Endorsements of candidates cannot be revoked if the document has already been filed with the clerk.

## Deadline to file your nomination

The nomination period begins on May 1, 2026. The last day to file a nomination is Friday, August 21, 2026, by 2 p.m.

The clerk has until 4 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2026, to certify or reject your nomination. The clerk must be satisfied that you are eligible to run in order to certify your nomination. If your nomination is not certified, your name will not appear on the ballot.

## Where to file

If you are running for council office in a single-tier or lower-tier municipality (city, town, township, village, etc.), you must file your nomination with the clerk of that municipality.

If you are running for an office in an upper-tier municipality that does not also sit on a lower-tier council, you must file your nomination with the clerk of the upper-tier municipality. For example, a person running for county councillor in Wellington County would file their nomination with the clerk of Wellington County rather than the clerk of a lower-tier municipality such as the Town of Minto.

If you are running for a school trustee position that represents more than one municipality, contact your municipal clerk for information about where to file your nomination.

## Changing your mind – withdrawal

If you decide to withdraw your nomination, you must notify the clerk in writing by the close of nominations (2 p.m. August 21, 2026).

If you withdraw your nomination, you are still required to file a campaign financial statement covering all the financial transactions you made in your campaign.

If your campaign did not have any financial transactions, you must file a financial statement reporting this. Your nomination fee will be refunded by the clerk if you file your financial statement by the deadline.

## Changing your mind – running for a different office

You can only run for one office at a time. If you decide to run for a different office, your first nomination is deemed to be withdrawn when you file your second nomination.

If you decide to run for a different office on the same council or school board, and both offices are elected at large (for example, an office such as the mayor, which everyone in the municipality may vote for), everything (contributions, expenses, etc.) from your first campaign is simply transferred to your second campaign.

### **Example:**

You file your nomination to run for deputy mayor on May 12, 2026. During the summer you decide to run for mayor instead, and file your second nomination form on June 29, 2026.

- Your first nomination for deputy mayor is deemed to be withdrawn.
- The nomination fee you paid on May 12 is transferred to your second nomination (in this case, you would have to pay an additional \$100 to make up the \$200 fee to run for head of council).
- You do not have to submit new endorsement signatures. Your initial 25 original endorsement signatures still qualify since you withdrew and filed a nomination for a different office on the same municipal council.
- Your campaign for mayor is deemed to have started on May 12.
- Any campaign contributions or expenses that occurred prior to June 29 are transferred to your mayoral campaign.
- You must file one campaign financial statement covering your campaign finances from May 12 until December 31, 2026.
- Your nomination fee will be refunded if you file your campaign financial statement by the filing deadline.

If you decide to run for a different office on the same council or school board, and one or both of the offices is elected by ward, then you must keep the two campaigns separate.

### **Example:**

You file your nomination to run for mayor on May 12, 2026. During the summer you decide to run for councillor in ward 1 instead and file your second nomination form on June 29, 2026.

Your first nomination for mayor is deemed to be withdrawn, and your campaign for mayor ends. You may not transfer any contributions or expenses from your mayoral campaign to your ward councillor campaign.

- You must pay a separate nomination fee when you file your nomination for ward councillor.
- You do not have to submit new endorsement signatures. Your initial 25 original endorsement signatures still qualify since you withdrew and filed a nomination for a different office on the same municipal council.
- You must file a campaign financial statement covering your campaign for mayor (May 12 to June 29) – your first nomination fee will be refunded if you file this financial statement by the filing deadline.
- You must file a separate campaign financial statement covering your campaign forward councillor (June 29 to December 31) — your second nomination fee will be refunded if you file this financial statement by the filing deadline.

If you decide to run for office on a different council or school board, then you must keep the two campaigns separate. If you decide to run for council in a municipality that has more than 4,000 electors, you will need to submit original endorsement signatures from electors eligible to vote in that municipality. If you are unsure if the municipality has more than 4,000 electors, you should contact the municipal clerk.

**Example:**

You file your nomination to run for school board trustee on May 12. During the summer you decide to run for councillor instead, and file your second nomination form on June 29, 2026.

- Your first nomination for school board trustee is deemed to be withdrawn.
- You are required to pay a nomination fee when you file your nomination for ward councillor.
- If the municipality where you are running for ward councillor has 4,000 or more electors, you must submit 25 endorsement signatures.
- Your campaign for school board trustee ends. You may not transfer any contributions or expenses from your trustee campaign to your ward councillor campaign.

- You must file a campaign financial statement covering your campaign for schoolboard trustee (May 12 to June 29) — your first nomination fee will be refunded if you file this financial statement by the filing deadline.
- You must file a separate campaign financial statement covering your campaign forward councillor (June 29 to December 31) — your second nomination fee will be refunded if you file this financial statement by the filing deadline.

## Acclamations

If there is only one certified candidate running for an office at 4 p.m. on Monday, August 24, that candidate will be declared elected by acclamation. Similarly, in a municipality where multiple candidates are elected at large, if the number of certified candidates is the same as or less than the number of offices, those candidates will be declared elected by acclamation.

If you are elected by acclamation, you must still file a campaign financial statement.

## Additional nominations

If there are positions with no candidates or positions that are still vacant after the candidates who did run have been acclaimed, the clerk will call for additional nominations.

Additional nominations for the remaining vacant seats must be filed between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26, 2026. The clerk must either certify or reject each nomination by 4 p.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2026.

## The voters' list

The voters' list becomes a public document on September 1, 2026. As a candidate, you can request that the municipal clerk give you the part of the voters' list that relates to the office that you are running for. This request must be in writing.

To receive the voters' list from the municipal clerk, you must give the clerk a written acknowledgement confirming that you will:

- only use the list for electoral purposes, not for commercial purposes
- follow the restrictions set out in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, for handling the voters' list
- only share the list with others (such as campaign workers) after obtaining a similar written acknowledgement from them

## Restrictions on handling the voters' list

You are the only person who may share the voters' list. If you have given someone a copy, they are not allowed to share it further.

You must keep track of who you have shared the voters' list with. If you give someone a physical copy of the list, they must return that copy to you. If you share an electronic copy, they must destroy the copy and provide you with a written acknowledgement that the copy has been destroyed.

You cannot keep copies of the voters' list after your campaign had ended. On or before the day your campaign ends, you must:

- destroy the copy of the voters' list that you received from the clerk
- have any print copies that you shared with others returned to you and destroy them
- ensure you have received written acknowledgements from anyone who received an electronic copy confirming that the electronic copy has been destroyed

## Written acknowledgements

Before you share the voters' list with someone, you must obtain a written acknowledgement from that person. That written acknowledgement must confirm that:

- they will only use the list for electoral purposes, not for commercial purposes
- they will not share or give copies to anyone else
- if they receive a physical copy, they will return it to you
- if they receive an electronic copy, they will destroy the copy and give you written confirmation that the electronic copy has been destroyed

The written acknowledgement should include the dates by which physical copies must be returned and written confirmations of destroyed electronic copies must be provided.

You must keep all written acknowledgements you have received until November 15, 2030, when the next council or school board takes office. You must also keep any written confirmations that electronic copies of the list have been destroyed.

## Campaigning

### Signs

Your municipality may have rules about when you can put up campaign signs and how signs may be displayed on both private and public property.

All of your campaign signs and other advertising must identify that you are responsible for the sign. This is so that people seeing the sign or advertisement can tell that it is from your campaign, rather than from a third-party advertiser.

Please see [leftover campaign inventory](#) if you plan to reuse signs from the last election.

You are responsible for ensuring that your campaign signs are removed after voting day in accordance with municipal by-laws. Your municipality may require a sign deposit or have penalties for failing to remove your signs. Contact your local clerk for more information.

You are entitled to have your nomination fee refunded if you file your campaign financial statement by the filing deadline. The clerk cannot make removing your signs a condition for receiving your refund.

## Getting information out

It is up to you to provide voters with information about you as a candidate and about your campaign. The municipal clerk is not responsible for providing your contact information to voters.

## All candidates' debates

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, does not require candidate debates to be held, and the municipal clerk is not responsible for organizing meetings or debates. Debates can be organized by community groups, media outlets, candidates or any other interested persons.

## Joint campaigns / running on a slate

There is nothing in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, that would prevent like-minded candidates from campaigning on the same platform or identifying themselves as a group or slate. However, each candidate must keep their campaign finances separate and any joint expenses (for example, signs with two candidates' names on them) must be divided between the campaigns.

For information on campaign finance rules please see [campaign finance](#).

## Third-party advertising

### General information

There are rules for third-party advertising in Ontario's municipal council and school board elections.

A third-party advertisement is an ad that supports, promotes or opposes a candidate or 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. Eligible individuals, corporations and trade unions can register to be third-party advertisers. Third-party advertising is separate from any candidate’s campaign and must be done independently from a candidate.

Third-party advertisers who want to spend money on advertisements during the election must register with the municipal clerk and must file a financial statement.

For more information about third-party advertising rules, including eligibility, spending limits and enforcement, see the [2026 third-party advertisers’ guide](#).

## On voting day

### Campaigning on voting day

The [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), does not prohibit campaigning on voting day. While there are restrictions on advertising for federal and provincial elections on voting day, these “blackouts” do not exist for municipal council and school board elections.

The Act prohibits the display of campaign material inside a voting place. The “voting place” could include the entire property of a building that has a voting place inside it, including the parking lot. You are not allowed to have campaign brochures, campaign buttons, signs or any other material inside the voting place.

### Remaining in a voting place

As a candidate, you are allowed to stay in a voting place to observe, but you are not allowed to interfere with voters, attempt to influence how they vote, or ask a voter how they voted. Scrutineers may also stay in the voting place.

You and your scrutineers are entitled to be in the voting place 15 minutes before it opens and to inspect the ballot boxes, the ballots and any other papers or forms relating to the vote. However, you may not delay the opening of the voting place.

You and your scrutineers are entitled to place a seal on the ballot box so that ballots put in the box cannot be removed without breaking your seal.

**Note:** If you have been acclaimed, you are not allowed to be in the voting place or to appoint scrutineers.

## Scrutineers

You may appoint a scrutineer for each ballot box in a voting place. You do not have to appoint that many scrutineers, or any scrutineers at all. If you have appointed one scrutineer for each ballot box, a scrutineer must leave while you are in the voting place.

Scrutineers may observe but they are not allowed to interfere with voters, attempt to influence how they vote, or ask a voter how they voted.

You must provide each of your scrutineers with an appointment in writing. Scrutineers may be required to show their appointment document to election officials at the voting place.

Scrutineers may be required to take an oath of secrecy.

There are no general restrictions on who you can appoint as a scrutineer (for example, a scrutineer can be any age and does not have to be a citizen). However, an acclaimed candidate cannot be appointed as a scrutineer for another candidate.

## Counting votes

If your municipality is using voting machines or vote counting equipment, the clerk must have the processes and procedures for use of this equipment in place by June 1, 2026. If vote counting equipment is used, the clerk will be able to provide you with information on how the votes will be counted and how many scrutineers may be present.

The vote count begins immediately after the close of voting at 8 p.m. on October 26, 2026.

If the votes are counted manually, you and your scrutineers are entitled to view the ballots as they are counted, but you cannot touch the ballots. You and your scrutineers may object to a ballot or how it is counted (for example, if it is unclear who the vote is for or if the ballot has extra markings on it). The deputy returning officer is responsible for deciding whether to accept the objection and must keep a list of all the objections raised.

## Results

After the votes have been counted, the deputy returning officer will prepare a statement showing the results and seal all the other election documents, including the ballots, inside the ballot box. You and your scrutineers are entitled to put your or their own seal on the ballot box at this time and are entitled to sign the statement showing the results.

The sealed ballot box and the statement of the results will then be delivered to the municipal clerk, who will compile the results and declare who has been elected.

**Note:** results announced on voting night are unofficial. It may take the clerk a few days or more to make the official declaration.

## After voting day

### Recounts

The [\*Municipal Elections Act, 1996\*](#), requires an automatic recount only if the votes are tied.

Your municipal council or school board may have a policy in place that sets out other specific circumstances under which the clerk must conduct an automatic recount. For example, a council may decide that if two candidates are within 10 votes of each other, an automatic recount will be held. The policy must be adopted on or before May 1, 2026.

A municipal council or school board may also order a recount within 30 days after the clerk has officially declared the results of the election. If you feel there should be a recount, you must either persuade council (or the school board) to order one or you may apply to the Superior Court of Justice to request that a judge order a recount. This application may be made by any eligible elector, and must be made within 30 days of the clerk declaring the results of the election.

Recounts must be conducted in the same way that the votes were originally counted, unless the recount is ordered by the court. For example, if the votes were counted by a vote tabulator, they may not be counted by hand during the recount.

If the recount is ordered by the court, the judge may order that the votes be counted in a different manner if the judge believes that the way the votes were counted the first time was an issue.

### Tied votes

If two or more candidates get the same number of votes and they cannot all be elected, there is an automatic recount. The recount must be held within 15 days of the clerk declaring the results of the election. If you are one of the candidates in the tie, you are entitled to be present at the recount.

If the recount shows that there is still a tie, then the legislation states that the clerk will choose the winner by lot. This means putting the names of the tied candidates into a hat (or other suitable container) and drawing the name of the winner.

## Wrapping up your campaign

After voting day, remove any election signs that have been put up and take down your campaign website, if you have one. If you would like to keep using your website, remove any references to the campaign. Websites that say “Vote for me” which are left up for years after the election can make it look like you are attempting to campaign for the next election early.

Your campaign must end on December 31, 2026, unless you have a deficit and inform the clerk in writing that you are going to extend your campaign. Once your campaign has ended, you should close your campaign bank account and prepare your campaign financial statement.

The deadline to file financial statements is the last Friday in March. Since March 26, 2027, falls on Good Friday, and March 29 is Easter Monday, financial statements **may be filed with the clerk until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2027.**

## Term of office

The council and school board term of office will run from November 15, 2026, to November 14, 2030.

# Campaign finance

## General information

### Record keeping

You are responsible for keeping records of the financial activities related to your campaign. The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, does not require you to use any specific accounting system. You may want to consult with an auditor or an accountant early in your campaign to make sure that you are using a bookkeeping and accounting system that will suit your needs.

You should also look through the [campaign financial statement \(Form 4\)](#) that you will be required to file to make sure that you are keeping records of all the information that must be included on the statement.

You are required to keep all of your campaign financial records until November 15, 2030, when the next council or school board takes office.

You must keep the following campaign records:

- receipts issued for every contribution including when you accepted the contribution and the date you issued the receipt (remember to issue receipts to yourself for any contributions you make)
- the value of every contribution, whether it is in the form of money or goods or services, and the contributor's name and address
- all expenses, including the receipts obtained for each expense
- any claim for payment of an expense that the campaign disputes or refuses to pay
- the funds raised and expenses incurred from each separate fundraising event or activity
- the terms of any loan received from a bank or other recognized lending institution

## Campaign period

You may accept contributions or incur campaign expenses during your campaign period only.

Your campaign period begins on the day the clerk receives your nomination.

In most cases, your campaign will end on December 31, 2026. Exceptions are if you:

- withdrew your nomination, your campaign ends on the date you informed the clerk in writing that you wanted to withdraw
- were not certified as a candidate and your name did not appear on the ballot, your campaign ends on nomination day (August 21, 2026)
- know you will not have any more financial activity, you can end your campaign at anytime after voting day and before December 31, 2026

If you have extended your campaign to pay down a deficit, the end date for the extended campaign period will be the earliest of:

- the day you notify the clerk in writing that you will be ending your campaign and not accepting any more contributions
- June 30, 2027

## Bank account

You must open a bank account exclusively for your campaign if you accept any contributions of money (including contributions from yourself or your spouse) or incur any expenses. You do not have to open a campaign bank account if you do not spend any money and do not receive any contributions of money. If you receive contributions of goods or services, but no contributions of money, you do not have to open a campaign bank account.

You cannot use your personal bank account for campaign finances, even if you are planning a very small campaign.

All contributions — including contributions you make to yourself — must be deposited into the campaign bank account. All expenses must be paid from the campaign account.

The nomination fee is considered to be a personal expense, not a campaign expense. You do not need to have a campaign bank account in order to pay the nomination fee.

## Contributions and campaign income

### Contributions

Campaign contributions are any money, goods or services that are given to you for use in your campaign, including money and goods that you contribute to yourself.

If you are given a special discount on a good or service that you are purchasing for your campaign, the difference between what you were charged and what the market value would be is considered to be a contribution.

Corporations and other businesses are not permitted to make contributions to candidates. If you are being offered a discount, you should make sure that whoever is offering the discount is entitled to make a personal contribution to your campaign.

If a professional who would normally charge for a service gives you that service for free, the market value of the service is considered to be a contribution.

If you sell tickets to a fundraising event, the cost of the ticket is considered to be a contribution. If you sell goods at a fundraising event for more than their market value, the difference between what the person attending the fundraising event paid you and what they would have normally paid for the item is considered to be a contribution.

If you have inventory such as signs left over from a previous campaign and you use them again, the current market value of the signs (what it would cost you to buy those signs today) is considered to be a contribution that you make to your campaign.

If you or your spouse guarantees your campaign loan and the campaign is unable to repay the full amount, any unpaid balance is considered to be a contribution by the guarantor.

### Things that are not contributions

If you have volunteers working for your campaign, the value of their volunteer labour is not considered to be a contribution.

A cash donation of \$25 or less received at a fundraising event is not considered to be a contribution, and you may accept such donations without keeping track of who gave them to you. You will have to report the total amount of money that you received from these donations on your financial statement.

The value of free political advertising, provided that such advertising is made available to all candidates and is in accordance with the *Broadcasting Act (Canada)* is not considered to be a contribution.

If you obtain a campaign loan from a bank or a recognized lending institution, the amount of the loan is not considered to be a contribution.

### Who can make a contribution

You can accept contributions only from individuals who are residents of Ontario. Corporations and trade unions are not permitted to make contributions to candidates.

If your spouse is not a resident of Ontario, they can still make contributions to your campaign. They may not make contributions to any other candidate.

Groups such as clubs, associations or ratepayer's groups are not eligible to make contributions. The members of these groups may make individual contributions from their personal funds (as long as they are residents of Ontario).

### Who cannot make a contribution

The following individuals and organizations are not permitted to make contributions to municipal council and school board campaigns:

- a corporation
- a trade union
- an individual who is not normally a resident in Ontario
- a federal political party, constituency association, or a registered candidate in a federal election
- a provincial political party, constituency association, or a registered candidate or leadership contestant
- a federal or provincial government, a municipality or a school board

### When you can receive contributions

You can only accept contributions after the clerk has received your nomination, and you cannot accept contributions after your campaign period has finished. Any contributions received outside the campaign period must be returned to the contributor. If you cannot return the contribution to the contributor, you must turn it over to the clerk.

## Contribution limits – contributions from yourself and your spouse

If you are running for municipal council, there is a limit on the total amount that you and your spouse may collectively contribute to your own campaign. The contribution limit is calculated based on the number of electors who are eligible to vote for the office that you are running for. The formula to calculate the limit is:

- for head of council: \$7,500 plus \$0.20 per eligible elector
- for council member: \$5,000 plus \$0.20 per eligible elector

There is a cap of \$25,000. If the formula results in a number greater than \$25,000, the limit will still be \$25,000.

The clerk will tell you what your self-funding limit is.

All of the contributions that you and your spouse make to your own campaign count towards this limit, including:

- contributions of money
- the value of goods or services that you or your spouse donate to the campaign
- the value of any inventory from the previous election that you use again in this campaign

This limit does not apply to school board trustee candidates.

## Contribution limits – contributions from other people

There is a \$1,200 limit that applies to contributions from other individuals. If a person makes more than one contribution (for example, contributes money, contributes goods, and purchases a ticket to a fundraising event), the total value of all the contributions cannot exceed \$1,200.

If you are running for mayor in the City of Toronto, the limit is \$2,500.

The maximum total amount that a contributor can give to candidates in the same jurisdiction (for example, running for the same council or for the same school board) is \$5,000.

You are required to inform every contributor of the contribution limits. An easy way to ensure compliance is to include the contribution limits on the receipt that you provide for each contribution.

Only a contribution that is \$25 or less can be made in cash. All contributions above \$25 must be made by cheque, money order, or by a method that clearly shows where the funds came from (such as certain debit, credit or electronic transfer transactions).

## Contribution receipts

You must issue a receipt for every contribution you receive. The receipt should show who made the contribution, the date, and the value. If the contribution was in goods or services, you must determine the value of the goods or services and issue a receipt for the full value.

If you receive a contribution from a joint account, the contribution can only come from one person. You must determine who is making the contribution and issue the receipt to that person.

You are required to list the names and addresses of every contributor who gives more than \$100 total to your campaign in your financial statement. You should keep a record of the names and addresses of every contributor, regardless of the value of their contribution, because the same contributor may make multiple contributions that end up totalling more than \$100.

**Note:** Contribution receipts are not tax receipts. Contributions to municipal council and school board campaigns cannot be credited against provincial or federal income taxes.

## Returning ineligible contributions

You are required to return any contribution that was made or accepted in contravention of the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), as soon as you learn that it was an ineligible contribution. If you cannot return the contribution, you must turn it over to the clerk.

Contributions should be returned or paid to the clerk if the contribution is:

- made outside your campaign period
- from an anonymous source (except for donations of \$25 or less at a fundraising event)
- from an ineligible source (someone who doesn't live in Ontario, a corporation, etc.)
- greater than the individual \$1,200 limit or the \$5,000 total limit per jurisdiction
- a cash contribution greater than \$25
- from funds that do not belong to the contributor who gave them to you

## Unused contributions

If your campaign ends with a surplus, you can withdraw the value of contributions that you and your spouse made from the surplus. If you still have a surplus once you have withdrawn your contributions, the remaining surplus must be turned over to the clerk.

You are not permitted to refund eligible contributions made by anyone other than yourself or your spouse.

## Contribution rebates

Your municipality may have a contribution rebate program. Contact your clerk for more information.

Contributions to municipal council and school board campaigns are not tax deductible.

## Fundraising

Fundraising functions are events or activities held by you, or on your behalf, for the primary purpose of raising money for your campaign. If you hold an event to promote your campaign and you happen to receive some contributions or ask people to consider contributing to your campaign, this would not qualify as a fundraising event.

Similarly, if you have a sentence in your campaign brochure asking people to make a contribution or giving them information about how to contribute, this would not make the production of the brochure a fundraising expense since its primary purpose is to promote your campaign, not to raise money. Fundraisers can only be held during your campaign period. You must record the gross income (including ticket revenue and other revenue) and the expenses related to each event and activity on your campaign financial statement.

If you sell tickets to an event, the ticket price is considered to be a contribution to your campaign and you must issue a receipt to each person who purchases tickets. If the ticket price is higher than \$25, tickets cannot be paid for in cash.

## Campaign income

If you raise funds by selling goods or services for more than fair market value, the difference between the fair market value and the amount paid is considered to be a contribution. If the good or service is sold for \$25 or less, the amount paid is considered to be campaign income that is not a contribution.

## Campaign expenses

### Expenses

Campaign expenses are the costs that you incur (or that a person such as your campaign manager incurs under your direction) during your campaign.

Reminder: the nomination fee is a personal expense rather than a campaign expense. It should not be reported on your campaign financial statement.

Expenses must be paid from your campaign bank account. If you use a credit card to pay for purchases, you should make sure that you keep clear records showing that the expense on the credit card was reimbursed from the campaign account.

Any taxes such as HST paid on purchases should be included in the amount of the expense.

You can incur expenses only during your campaign period, except for expenses related to the preparation of an auditor's report. If you are required to include an auditor's report with your financial statement, you may incur these expenses after the campaign period has ended. These expenses must also be reported on your financial statement.

## Goods and services

Goods or services that are contributed to your campaign are also expenses. They should be treated as if the contributor gave you money and you went out and purchased the goods and services. You must record both the contribution and the expense.

## Spending limits

Candidates are subject to two spending limits — a general limit, and a separate limit for expenses relating to parties and expressions of appreciation after voting day.

### General spending limit

The general spending limit for your campaign is calculated based on the number of electors who are eligible to vote for the office that you are running for. The formula to calculate the limit is:

- for head of council: \$7,500 plus \$0.85 per eligible elector
- for council member or trustee: \$5,000 plus \$0.85 per eligible elector

When you file your nomination, the clerk will give you an estimate of your general spending limit. This estimate will be based on the number of electors in the previous election.

On or before September 30, 2026, the clerk must give you a final general spending limit which is based on the number of electors on the voters' list for the current election.

If the spending limit estimate that you received when you filed your nomination is higher than the final spending limit you receive in September, the estimate becomes your official spending limit.

While most of your expenses will be subject to the general spending limit, the following expenses are not:

- expenses related to holding a fundraising event or activity

- expenses relating to a recount
- expenses relating to a court action for a controverted election
- expenses relating to a compliance audit
- expenses incurred by a candidate with a disability that are directly related to the candidate's disability and would not have been incurred if not for the election
- audit and accounting fees

**Note:** Any materials, events or activities must have fundraising as the primary purpose in order to be exempt from the spending limit. An incidental mention of contributions is not enough to qualify as fundraising.

### When the general spending limit applies

Your spending limit covers expenses that you incur between the beginning of your campaign and voting day. Expenses that you incur between the day after voting day and the end of your campaign are not subject to the spending limit.

**Note:** If you incur an expense before voting day, but don't get around to paying for it until after voting day, it would still be subject to the spending limit.

### Spending limit for parties and expressions of appreciation

The spending limit for expenses related to holding parties and other expressions of appreciation after the close of voting is calculated as 10% of the amount of your general spending limit.

Expenses related to parties and expressions of appreciation are subject to the specific spending limit regardless of whether they are incurred before or after voting day.

### Leftover campaign inventory

If you ran in the last municipal council or school board election and you want to reuse leftover goods such as signs or office supplies, you must establish the current market value of the goods – what it would cost you to purchase them today. You must record the current market value as an expense.

If you have inventory left at the end of your campaign it becomes your personal property. If you want to store materials such as signs for use in another election, any costs related to storage are personal costs, not campaign expenses.

**Note to accountants:** The value of all goods must be recorded as an expense regardless of whether the campaign ends with used or unused goods in inventory. Do not deduct the

value of unused goods from the campaign expenses, as this will result in the campaign having a surplus on paper that the candidate does not actually have.

## Surplus and deficit

If your campaign has a surplus after you have refunded contributions made by yourself or your spouse, you must pay the surplus over to the clerk when you file your financial statement. The surplus will be held in trust, and you can use it if you incur expenses related to a compliance audit. If the surplus is not needed for these expenses, it becomes the property of the municipality or the school board.

If your campaign expenses are greater than your campaign income, your campaign will be in deficit.

**Note:** Ending your campaign with a deficit may result in questions being raised about how expenses were paid for, and whether you contributed more than your self-funding limit by paying outstanding expenses with personal funds.

## Campaign advertisements

When campaign advertising appears in broadcast, print, electronic or other media, the broadcaster or publisher of the advertising must keep certain records:

- a written copy of the candidate's name, as well as the name, business address and telephone number of the individual who deals with the broadcaster or publisher under the direction of the candidate (this could be the candidate themselves)
- a copy of the advertisement (or the means of reproducing the advertisement for inspection)
- a statement of the charge made for its appearance

These records will be kept for four years after the date the advertisement appears.

Broadcasters and publishers must allow the public to inspect the records during this time.

If your campaign includes advertising that is broadcast or published, you must record the name of the broadcaster or publisher as well as their contact information in Schedule 3 of the campaign financial statement (Form 4).

## Campaign financial statement

It is your responsibility as a candidate to file a **complete and accurate financial statement on time**.

The filing deadline is 2 p.m. on the last Friday in March following the election. Since March 26, 2027, falls on Good Friday and March 29, 2027, is Easter Monday, financial statements may be filed with the clerk until **2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2027**.

If you have a bookkeeper or accountant complete the financial statement for you, you are still responsible for ensuring that it is complete and accurate and filed on time.

Financial statements are not required to have original signatures. You should contact your clerk for information about whether you can file your financial statement electronically if you are not able to file your statement in person.

**If you filed a nomination form, you must file a financial statement.** This includes candidates who withdrew their nomination, candidates who were not certified and did not appear on the ballot, and candidates who were acclaimed.

If you did not receive any contributions (including contributions from yourself) or incur any expenses, you are only required to fill out the first page of the financial statement and sign it.

If you received contributions or incurred any expenses you must complete the relevant parts of the financial statement.

If your campaign contributions (including contributions from yourself) or campaign expenses are greater than \$10,000, you must have your financial statement audited and include the auditor's report when you submit your financial statement to the clerk.

### Filing early

You can file your campaign financial statement after you have ended your campaign. If you file your statement early and then discover an error, you can submit a corrected statement at any time before the filing deadline on March 30, 2027. Your original statement is deemed to be withdrawn when you file the corrected statement. You cannot withdraw a financial statement without submitting a corrected one.

### Applying for an extension

If you think that you will be unable to file your financial statement by the deadline, you may apply **before March 30, 2027**, to the Superior Court of Justice for an extension. If the court grants the extension, you will receive the refund of your nomination fee if you file by the deadline given to you by the court.

## Grace period for filing

If you have not filed your financial statement by the deadline, you may file your financial statement within 30 days after the deadline if you pay the municipality a \$500 late filing fee. This grace period ends at 2 p.m. on Thursday, April 29, 2027. You will not receive a refund of your nomination fee if you file during the 30-day grace period.

If you have not filed your financial statement by the end of the 30-day grace period and you did not apply to the court for an extension prior to the deadline, automatic penalties apply:

- you will forfeit your elected office (if you won the election)
- you will be ineligible to run for office or be appointed to fill a vacancy until after the 2030 election

If you did not file your financial statement by the end of the grace period, you may still file it for the purposes of having your finances on the record. The clerk will accept the financial statement and make it available to the public. The penalties will still apply.

## Separate statement for each office

If you filed a nomination and then changed your mind and filed a nomination for a different office, you may be required to file a separate financial statement for each campaign.

## Extended campaigns

Your campaign period ends on December 31, 2026. However, if your campaign has a deficit, you can extend your campaign in order to do some additional fundraising. If you want to extend your campaign, you must notify the clerk on or before December 31, 2026, using the [Notice of Extension of Campaign Period form \(Form 6\)](#).

Your campaign may be extended until June 30, 2027.

If you extend your campaign, you must file two financial statements:

- a financial statement reflecting your campaign until December 31, 2026, (due March 30, 2027)
- a supplementary financial statement that includes the information from your initial statement and adds financial information from your extended campaign

The supplementary financial statement must be filed with the clerk by 2 p.m. on Friday, September 24, 2027.

## Auditor's report

You must have an auditor review your financial statement and provide a report if any of the following are true:

- your campaign expenses exceed \$10,000
- the contributions you received (including contributions from yourself) exceed a total of \$10,000
- both your expenses and your contributions exceed \$10,000 each

The auditor's report must be prepared by an auditor licensed under the [Public Accounting Act, 2004](#). Before you hire someone to prepare the report, ensure that they are properly qualified.

You can incur expenses relating to the auditor's report after December 31, 2026. These expenses do not count toward your spending limit. Include these expenses on the financial statement that you are filing.

## Compliance and enforcement

Enforcement of the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), is done through the courts. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing does not have a role in investigating elections or in determining penalties.

### Automatic penalties

There are three contraventions of the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), where penalties apply automatically:

1. if you fail to file a financial statement by the end of the 30-day grace period or fail to apply to the court before March 30, 2027, for an extension by the filing deadline
2. if your financial statement shows that you exceeded your spending limit
3. if you fail to turn over your surplus to the clerk when you file your financial statement

The penalty is that you forfeit your office (if you won the election) and you become ineligible to run or be appointed to fill a vacancy until after the 2030 election.

### Compliance audits

Each municipality and school board must establish a compliance audit committee.

If an eligible elector believes that you have contravened the election finance rules, they may apply for a compliance audit of your campaign finances. The application must be in writing and must set out the reasons why they believe you contravened the rules.

An application for a compliance audit must be submitted to the municipal clerk who conducted the election within 90 days of the deadline to file the campaign financial statement.

The compliance audit committee will consider the application and decide whether to grant or reject the application. You may appeal the committee's decision to the Superior Court of Justice within 15 days after the decision is made.

If the committee grants the application, it will appoint an auditor to conduct a compliance audit of your campaign finances. The auditor is entitled to have access to all of the financial records related to your campaign. The auditor will produce a report, which you are entitled to receive.

The compliance audit committee will meet to consider the auditor's report. If the report concludes that there is an apparent contravention of the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), the committee will decide whether to commence legal action.

The compliance audit committee does not have any authority to set penalties. Only the court can decide if you contravened the Act and, if so, which penalties should apply.

A person who does not want or who is not able to apply for a compliance audit may decide to commence legal action on their own. A prosecution related to the 2026 election must be commenced by November 15, 2030.

## Penalties

If you are convicted of an offence, you may be subject to the following penalties:

- a fine of up to \$25,000
- ineligibility to vote or run in the next general election
- up to six months in prison
- forfeiture of your elected office, if the judge finds that you committed the offence knowingly

If you are convicted of exceeding the spending limit, you may also be fined the amount by which you exceeded the limit.

# Completing the financial statement

## General information

**All candidates must file a financial statement.** This includes candidates who withdrew their nomination, candidates who were not certified and did not appear on the ballot, and candidates who were acclaimed.

Candidates must use [Form 4](#).

All candidates must complete Box A: Name of Candidate and Office and Box B: Declaration.

- **If you did not receive any contributions** (including contributions from yourself) or incur any expenses, check the box indicating this, and complete the Declaration in Box B. No further information is required.
- **If you did receive contributions** (including contributions from yourself) or incur expenses, you must fill in the information in Box C, Box D, Schedule 1 and Schedule 2, as appropriate. You may find it easier to fill out the form if you start with the more detailed sections such as the tables in Schedule 1 before filling in Box C (Statement of Campaign Income and Expenses).

If you received contributions or incurred expenses in excess of \$10,000, you must include an auditor's report with your financial statement.

Your completed financial statement must be submitted to the clerk by **2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2027**.

Supplementary financial statements must be submitted to the clerk by **2 p.m. on September 24, 2027**.

## Tips for completing Form 4

Learn more about how to correctly fill out the campaign financial statement.

### Box A: Name of candidate and office

Record your general spending limit and your spending limit for parties and other expressions of appreciation.

**Note:** automatic penalties will apply if the form reports that either of the spending limits have been exceeded.

If you are running for a council position, record your self-funding limit.

## Box B: Declaration

By signing the form, you are declaring that the information recorded in the financial statement is true and accurate. If your financial statement was prepared by someone else, you as the candidate are still responsible for its accuracy.

## Box C: Statement of campaign income and expenses

### Loan

If you obtained a loan for your campaign, you must record the name of the bank or recognized lending institution and the amount borrowed.

You are permitted to get a loan only from a bank or other recognized lending institution in Ontario, and it must be paid directly into your campaign bank account. You may not receive a loan from family members or from any corporate accounts that you may have access to.

The loan is not considered to be campaign income, and paying it back is not a campaign expense. However, if you or your spouse guarantee the loan and the campaign does not repay all of it, the remaining balance is considered to be a contribution (since the guarantor is basically providing the campaign the means to repay the loan). This amount counts towards your self-funding limit.

Any interest that the campaign pays on the loan is a campaign expense.

### Income

Your campaign income includes all contributions received from yourself, your spouse and other eligible contributors. This includes the value of contributions of goods and services. Income also includes any refunds of deposits, interest earned by your campaign bank account, and revenue from fundraising events or activities that is not deemed a contribution (for example, if you sold refreshments at market value).

### Example

You have 100 t-shirts printed to sell at a fundraiser. The cost to the campaign is \$10 per shirt, and you sell them for \$25 each.

The \$25 is not a contribution. You do not have to collect names and contact information, or issue a contribution receipt to anyone who buys a shirt.

The \$1,000 that you spent on the shirts must be recorded as a campaign expense.

The \$2,500 that you raised by selling the shirts must be recorded as revenue from fundraising events not deemed a contribution.

If you sell goods (such as food and drink) at market value, the revenue is not considered to be a contribution and must be recorded as revenue from fundraising events not deemed a contribution.

## Sign deposit

If your municipality requires a deposit for election signs, this should be recorded as a campaign expense and paid for using campaign funds. If your deposit is refunded, record the amount under Income.

## Expenses

Your campaign expenses include the value of any goods or services that have been contributed to your campaign (it is as if the contributor gave money to the campaign, which the campaign then spent on acquiring the goods or services).

The general spending limit applies only to expenses incurred until the end of voting day. Expenses incurred after voting day are not subject to the spending limit.

**Note:** An expense subject to the general spending limit that was incurred prior to voting day but not paid for until after voting day is still subject to the limit.

Some types of expenses are not subject to the general spending limit even if they are incurred prior to voting day.

Expenses related to parties and expressions of appreciation after voting day are subject to that spending limit regardless of when they are incurred.

## Box D: Calculation of surplus or deficit

### Campaign deficit

At the top of Box D, you must subtract the total amount of your campaign expenses from the total amount of your campaign income. If your expenses are greater than your income, your campaign is in deficit.

**If you have extended your campaign in order to fundraise, you must still file a financial statement reflecting your campaign finances to December 31, 2026.**

### Campaign surplus

At the top of Box D, you must subtract the total amount of your campaign expenses from the total amount of your campaign income. If your income is greater than your expenses, your campaign has a surplus.

You are entitled to reimburse contributions made by yourself or your spouse out of the surplus. For example, if the surplus was \$500 and you contributed \$400 to your campaign, you may deduct that \$400, leaving your campaign with a surplus of \$100. If the surplus was \$500 and you contributed \$600, you may deduct \$500 of your contribution, leaving your campaign with \$0. You may not deduct more than the value of the surplus.

If, after deducting contributions made by yourself or your spouse, the campaign still has a surplus, these funds must be turned over to the clerk.

## Schedule 1: Contributions

Schedule 1 includes a summary of contributions from your campaign.

The following tables are included in Schedule 1 and need to be filled in, if applicable:

- Table 1: Contributions in goods or services from candidate or spouse
- Table 2: Inventory of campaign goods and materials from previous municipal campaign used in this campaign
- Table 3: Monetary contributions from individuals other than candidate or spouse where contributions exceed \$100 per contributor
- Table 4: Contributions in goods or services from individuals other than candidate or spouse where contributions exceed \$100 per contributor

### Contributions from yourself and/or your spouse

If you are running for municipal council, you and your spouse are subject to limits on how much you can contribute to your campaign. This limit applies to contributions of money, goods and services, as well as the value of any inventory from a previous campaign that you have used in your current campaign.

Record these amounts on the lines provided in Schedule 1. Do not include them in the tables of contributions (Table 1 or Table 2). The other reason to identify the contributions from you and your spouse is because those contributions can be reimbursed by you and your spouse if the campaign ends with a surplus.

**Note:** you must report the full amount of the contributions made by you and your spouse, including any amounts that have been reimbursed from a surplus.

### Contributions totalling \$100 or less

If the total amount contributed (including the value of goods and services) from a single contributor is \$100 or less, you do not need to provide details on the form. Simply indicate the total value of all such contributions on the line provided at the top of Schedule 1.

If an anonymous contribution is \$100 or less, include it in the total value of contributions not exceeding \$100 per contributor. Any anonymous contribution that is greater than \$25 must be turned over to the clerk.

### Goods and services from candidate or spouse

If you or your spouse contribute goods and services to your campaign, this must be recorded as a contribution. Record any contributions in Table 1 of Schedule 1.

### Inventory from previous campaign

Any inventory from a previous campaign that you are using again is a contribution in goods that you make to your campaign and counts towards your self-funding limit. You must calculate the current market value (for example, if you have 100 signs left over from 2022 and use them again, you must calculate how much it would cost to purchase those same signs in 2026) and record it in Table 2. This inventory must also be recorded as a campaign expense.

### Contributions totalling more than \$100

If a contributor makes 1 or more contributions totalling more than \$100 (including the value of goods and services and the cost of tickets to fundraising events), you must record all of these contributions in the tables provided in Schedule 1 (Tables 3 and 4).

If an anonymous contribution is more than \$100, include it in the total value of contributions exceeding \$100 per contributor, and include it in Table 3 (listing “anonymous” as the name of the contributor). Any anonymous contribution that is greater than \$25 must be turned over to the clerk.

**Note:** it is the total amount contributed that matters — if an individual buys a ticket to a fundraising event for \$50, and then later in the campaign contributes \$75, each of these contributions must be recorded in Table 3 because the total exceeds \$100.

### Goods and services from individuals other than candidate or spouse

Eligible contributors may donate goods and services to the campaign. These must be recorded as a contribution and as an expense (as if the contributor donated money, which the campaign then spent on the goods and services).

Corporations and trade unions are not permitted to make contributions to candidates. This includes contributions of goods and services.

### Example:

Your friend spends \$150 on coffee and baked goods which they donate for a campaign event. You should record a contribution of \$150 in goods or services from your friend and record an expense of \$150.

If you are given a special discount on a good or service that you are purchasing for your campaign, you should record the expense as if you were not given the discount (since the value of the discount is considered to be a contribution of the good or service to your campaign).

**Example:**

Your order for campaign signs would normally cost \$500, but the vendor lets you have them for \$300 because he wants to help your campaign. You should record an expense of \$500 for the signs and record a contribution of \$200 in goods or services from the vendor.

**Note:** As businesses are not permitted to make contributions, the contribution would have to be a personal contribution from the vendor.

Contributions in goods or services from individuals other than the candidate or spouse must be recorded in Table 4 of Schedule 1.

## Schedule 2: Fundraising events and activities

The cost of holding fundraising events or activities is not subject to the spending limit. However, in order to be considered a fundraising cost, the primary purpose for the expense must be related to fundraising rather than promoting the candidate. Incidental fundraising that happens to occur during a promotional event is not sufficient to make it a fundraising event. Similarly, a line at the bottom of a campaign brochure asking people to donate does not make the production of the brochure a fundraising expense.

If you have included costs of fundraising events/activities as an expense in Box C, you must provide details of these events and activities in Schedule 2.

Contributions received at a fundraising event may include:

- the price of the ticket
- if goods or services are offered for sale, any amount of money paid that exceeds their market value (for example, if a \$100 item is sold for \$175, the purchaser has made a \$75 contribution to the campaign)
- personal cheques collected from contributors at the event

If contributors have donated goods or services for the fundraising event, these must be recorded as contributions and as expenses.

These contributions must be recorded in Schedule 1, and where the total from a contributor exceeds \$100, be detailed in the appropriate tables. Refer to the section above [Schedule 1: Contributions](#) for more information.

The fundraising event may also generate revenue that is not considered to be a contribution:

- donations of \$25 or less
- if goods or services are offered for sale, the market value of those goods and services sold (for example, if a \$100 item is sold for \$175, \$100 is revenue)
- the amount paid for goods or services offered for sale for \$25 or less

### Anonymous contributions

You may keep anonymous contributions that do not exceed \$25 each that are received at a fundraiser (such as those collected by passing the hat or having a tip jar). Report the total amount of money received from these donations in Schedule 2 for that fundraiser.

All other anonymous contributions must be turned over to the clerk.

You will then subtract the contribution as paid or payable to the clerk to arrive at the Total for Part II Contributions in Schedule 2.

### Schedule 3: Broadcasters and publishers

If your campaign had any advertising that was broadcast or published, you must record the name of each broadcaster and publisher, along with their contact information.

### Auditor's report

If your campaign expenses or the contributions you received total more than \$10,000, you must have an auditor review your financial statement and provide a report.

The auditor's report must be prepared by an auditor licensed under the [Public Accounting Act, 2004](#). Before you hire someone to prepare the report, you should ensure that they are properly qualified.

## Forms referred to in this guide

You can get copies of forms from your municipal clerk, or you can download them from the [Government of Ontario's Central Form Repository](#).

[Nomination Paper \(Form 1\)](#)

[Endorsement of Nomination \(Form 2\)](#)

[Financial Statement – Auditor’s Report – Candidate \(Form 4\)](#)

[Financial Statement – Subsequent Expenses \(Form 5\)](#)

[Notice of Extension of Campaign Period \(Form 6\)](#)

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# Lead Where You Live

A guide to running for  
municipal council

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The Association of Municipalities of Ontario aims to make municipal governments stronger and more effective through advocacy, training and events, and business services. Through AMO, Ontario's 444 municipalities work together to achieve shared goals and meet common challenges

# Introduction



From clean drinking water, affordable housing and childcare, to good roads and safe streets, Ontario's 444 municipal governments provide the services that people rely on most, every day. Collectively, they own more infrastructure than the provincial and federal governments combined, and each year they manage budgets totalling more than \$65 billion.

Municipal government is important. Well-run governments are led by strong councils, and municipal councils are more effective when good, qualified candidates step forward to serve on them.

Elected municipal leaders play a vital role in making sure that communities are healthy and successful, socially and economically. Councils shape priorities, ensure accountability to the public, and represent the people who elect them. They provide a democratic forum for diverse perspectives and experiences to be heard, so that better decisions are made and good governance is maintained. Having people with a variety of backgrounds and lived experiences on council helps the municipality better meet the needs of all residents and businesses.

If you are thinking of running for election in 2026, this guide will introduce you to some of the key steps in that process. It will also give you a sense of what life is like as an elected member of a municipal council.

## Municipal Councils



Councils represent the best interests of the public and the municipal government. They develop policies and programs. They determine what services are provided. And they ensure that the municipality is well run by qualified municipal staff.

That last point is key. Elected officials provide strategic direction and oversight. The day-to-day work of municipal governments is provided by municipal employees. That means you do not have to be a municipal expert before you run for office. Councils are supported by a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or City Manager, clerk, and other senior municipal staff who work with elected representatives to ensure that responsibilities are met.

Diversity is important to municipal government. Councils benefit when people with different life experiences and skills come together to make a positive impact on their community. AMO created the *We All Win* campaign in 2021 to encourage more candidates from diverse communities to participate in Ontario municipal elections. Since then, AMO has expanded its work through the Healthy Democracy Project to support democracy on a number of fronts. The project [homepage](#) provides more information, links to helpful organizations and resources.

Once elected, councillors are expected to learn and adhere to municipal policies and procedures, as well as provincial legislations such as the *Municipal Act*. Municipal staff often assist with that education, and organizations like the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) offer training programs for elected representatives.

## Service on Council

You will be expected to dedicate four years to the position, with the understanding that it involves more than attending meetings and reviewing agenda packages.

The role of an elected municipal official includes:

- Being a community ambassador, advocating for the needs of your community and your municipal government.
- Developing a working relationship with your fellow councillors and municipal staff that's built on mutual trust and respect.
- Serving on committees related to areas such as planning, policing, or economic development.
- Helping to set the municipal budget, priorities and policies.
- Listening and learning from your residents, so you may best represent their interests.
- Attending conferences, educational sessions and community events.
- Reviewing documents and participating in meaningful discussions.

Service on council can change other aspects of your life, positively and negatively. Most councillors look back on it as an honour and a rewarding experience. However, it can present challenges.

- It may change your relationships with your friends, family and colleagues. You or your council may make decisions they do not like.
- You will attend several meetings a month and be expected to review a lot of information.
- People will want to engage with you in person, on the phone, by text and email, and through a wide range of social media platforms. It can feel overwhelming.
- The public can have high expectations and you may be asked to address matters that are well beyond your authority, influence or control.
- You may face harsh criticism or behaviour from people at meetings, in public, or on social media.
- There are significant legal liabilities. Failing to perform your duties can have consequences.
- You will be involved in matters that require you to keep certain kinds of information private and confidential.

You may want to find out how much councillors and mayors earn in your municipality as part of your decision-making process. But, also consider there are perks of the job that money can't buy, like opportunities for learning, skill-building, networking, and having the opportunity to participate in municipal decision-making on behalf of your community.



“You have to work with your council colleagues and not everything will go your way, or things you worked for may get overturned. It can be hard, but it is all part of the democratic process. The important thing is that it's an open and respectful debate.”

– MP Arielle Kayabaga, London West, Former City of London Councillor

# Responsibility by Level of Government

It is important to know which level of government is responsible for which areas of service. Candidates and elected officials get a lot of questions and requests about topic areas that are not under municipal jurisdiction. It is helpful to share with residents who is responsible for what.

## Who Does What?

### RESPONSIBILITY BY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT

#### Federal

Services affecting the **whole country**:

- Citizenship
- Immigration
- International Relations
- Currency & Banking
- Income Tax & Sales Tax
- Census
- Defense
- International Trade
- Postal Service
- Transportation

#### Provincial

Services affecting the **province of Ontario**:

- Agriculture
- Employment
- Education
- Health Care
- Highways
- Planning & Development Framework
- Social Services
- Sales Tax
- Mental Health
- Income Tax

#### Municipal

Services affecting a local **municipality, region, or county**:

- Housing Support & Homelessness
- Emergency Services
- Libraries
- Parks, Trails & Playgrounds
- Planning & Development Decisions
- Roads, Bridges, Sidewalks
- Waste Management
- Drinking Water
- Sewers & Wastewater
- Snow Clearing
- Animal Services



# The Structure of Municipal Government

The head of a local or municipal council is normally called a mayor or the reeve, and the members of council are normally called councillors or aldermen. The head of council serves as the voice of their council, reflecting consensus.

Council sets the strategic direction for the corporation. Municipal staff carry out those decisions and provide services to taxpayers. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or City Manager is the most senior staff member.

It's also a common misconception that a single councillor can bring change forth for taxpayers. It's council as a body that makes decisions and sets policy, not individual councillors.



## Managing Your Campaign

Once you have made the decision to run for an elected position, there's work to be done. **May 1, 2026**, is the first day to file nomination papers.

Everyone running for council must meet the same criteria:

- A resident, a non-resident owner, or tenant of land in the municipality, or the spouse of a non-resident owner or tenant
- A Canadian citizen
- At least 18 years old
- Legally eligible to vote
- Not disqualified by any legislation from holding municipal office

Candidates must **not** be:

- An inmate of a penal or correctional institution under sentence of imprisonment
- Any person not eligible to vote in the municipality
- A staff member of the municipality, **UNLESS** he or she takes an unpaid leave of absence during the campaign period and resigns once elected to office
- A judge of any court
- A member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, a Senator, or a member of the House of Commons

If your municipality has more than 4,000 electors, your nomination must be endorsed by 25 eligible electors (voters) in the municipality, and you must pay a nomination fee of \$100 for councillors and \$200 for heads of council (mayor or reeve). You cannot begin campaigning until the municipal clerk accepts your paperwork as complete.



“The highlight of working in municipal government is the public interaction and meeting so many people throughout the city. I continue to learn and grow because of it.”

– Kristin Murray, City of Timmins Councillor

# 2026 Municipal Election: Key Dates

**MAY 1, 2026**

## FIRST DAY TO FILE A NOMINATION

You will require:

- A signed nomination paper delivered to the clerk
- ID proving that you meet local eligibility criteria
- A form showing that 25 voters endorse your candidacy if your municipality has more than 4,000 electors
- The nomination filing fee of either \$100 or \$200



**AUGUST 21, 2026**

## FINAL NOMINATION DAY

- All candidates must file paperwork by 2 p.m.
- This is the last day for candidates to withdraw their nomination by providing written correspondence to the clerk by no later than 2 p.m.



**SEPTEMBER 1, 2026**

## VOTERS' LIST IS FINALIZED

- Candidates now have access to the [Voters' List](#). Members of the public can access the list, but only to confirm they are on it, and that their information is correct
- From now until election day, requests can be made to the clerk to amend the list to add or remove voters or amend voter information



**AUGUST 2026**

## ELECTIONS ONTARIO TO DELIVER THE VOTERS' LIST

- [Elections Ontario](#) provides the municipality with the Voters' List
- The clerk reviews this list to add and remove names and/or adjust voter information

**AUGUST 24, 2026**

## CANDIDATES ARE CERTIFIED

- All candidates will be certified by the clerk by 4 p.m.
- Acclamations are announced

**OCTOBER 26, 2026**

## VOTING DAY

- While some municipalities may have already held advance polls since September 26, 2026, this is the official election day
- Voting places are open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. unless otherwise established by the clerk



“The most important thing for candidates is to understand the job. Many people get drawn into local politics over a single issue. The role is bigger than that. It is really about what you want growth to look like and thinking strategically about the future, not about micromanaging services.”

– Former AMO President,  
Mayor Lynn Dollin, Town of Innisfil

# Welcome to the Spotlight

Municipal candidates attract attention. In fact, it is hard to get elected without it. You may have to give speeches, participate in debates, or give media interviews.

Increasingly, there is pressure to engage with audiences using social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook or Instagram. Campaign styles vary, but here are some approaches that many seasoned election winners follow.

## Social media:

- Simple ideas and information tend to build confidence and trust more than complicated ideas. Find ways to explain complicated things simply, fairly and accurately in your posts.
- Memorable messages are often simple, colourful and credible. To gain traction on social media, you will want to use compelling photos or videos to tell your story.
- You do not need to create a lot of social media content or be an expert on every topic. Often, the most practical approach is to lead people to useful, credible information that others have created.
- Focus on being helpful. Remember that the person you are at odds with today could be someone you work with tomorrow. This is important when tackling challenges or looking for the right words on social media. How do you want to be remembered?
- Create a social media plan for yourself. Why are you on it? What platforms will you use? What issues will you focus on? How much of your personal life will you share? Who will manage the account?
- Always think about your online audience before you choose your words. Think about how you can connect with your audience quickly, give them something useful, and make what you're explaining interesting.
- Remember it's rare to win a debate on social media and keep in mind your audience is potential voters. Rather than responding emotionally, listen to what the person is saying, focus on valid concerns, and respond in a way that inspires confidence and trust in the larger audience that is watching.

## Media relations:

- No matter how urgent the request is, carve out some time to gather your thoughts, plan your response and focus your message.
- If you expect media at an event, try to think ahead of time about what message you most want to get across.
- You will not have the answers to every question. No one does and you should be comfortable with that. Focus on what you do know, and the story that you want to tell.
- If you have a lot to explain, or the topic is complicated, make sure you can start with a simple sentence or two that captures what is happening, or what you want, and *why*.
- End the interview with a strong summary of your message. This will help shape the final story.

# Campaign Finance

Campaign finance rules ensure a fair election for everyone. Under the Municipal Elections Act, a candidate should open a bank account for the campaign if they accept any contributions of money or incur any expenses.

The candidate and/or the person managing their campaign is responsible for keeping financial records, and there are rules to follow during an election campaign, as well as when the campaign is over. Candidates can't use a personal bank account to operate their campaign, even if they have very few expenses. It's important to keep good records.

These expectations are simple, and important. If you are subject to an Election Compliance Audit, failure to meet spending limits and campaign rules can cost you your seat on council.

Receipts and dates issued for campaign contributions, as well as the contributor's name and address. Any one candidate can receive a maximum campaign contribution up to \$1,200. If an individual is supporting more than one candidate, their contribution total can't be more than \$5,000. It's important you keep records for any contributions you receive – even cash contributions under \$100.

The terms and conditions of loans received at a bank or lending institution (the loan itself is not considered a campaign contribution).

Receipts for your own campaign contributions / expenses.

The funds raised and expenses incurred at fundraising events.

The value of contributions, if you receive support in the form of goods instead of money, along with the contributor's name and address.

Also keep in mind:

- Businesses cannot contribute to a campaign. However, business owners can donate as individuals.
- There are limits on campaign expenses. The Clerk's Office can provide this information to candidates.
- Candidates must provide their campaign financial statements to the municipal clerk by the last Friday in March of year following the election (for October 2026, this would be March 2027). Failure to do so could result in penalties, or an inability to run in subsequent elections.

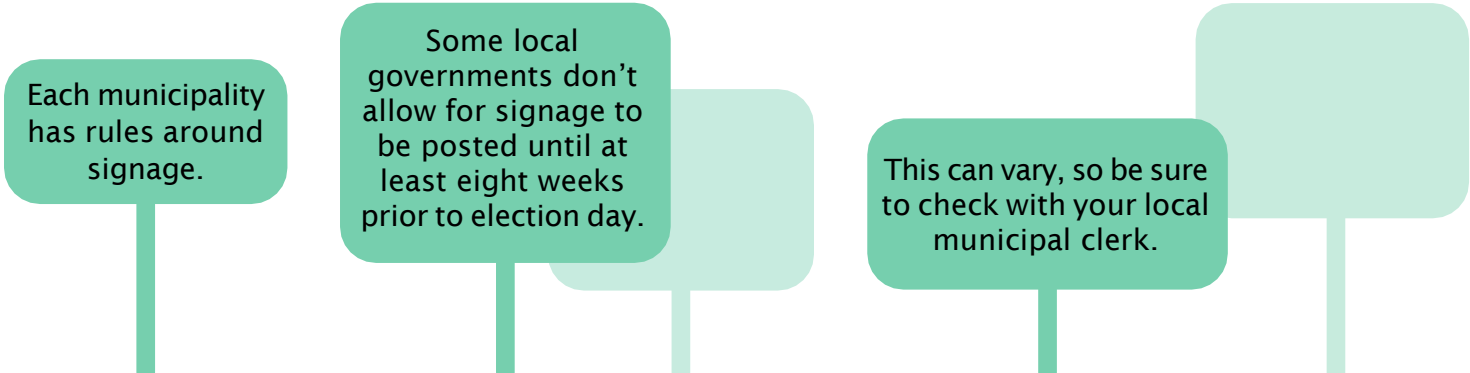


“Campaigning successfully is hard work. You have to put yourself out there and just outwork everyone else. You have to start early and just keep knocking on doors, so people get to know you.”

– Jasvinder Sandhu, Healthy Democracy Project Chair,  
Former Town of Oakville Councillor

## Campaign Rules

The campaign period begins as soon as nomination forms have been filed by the municipal clerk.



Each municipality has rules around signage.

Some local governments don't allow for signage to be posted until at least eight weeks prior to election day.

This can vary, so be sure to check with your local municipal clerk.

There are some campaign rules that all candidates must follow:

- Candidates cannot use a municipal property to support events, activities or meetings related to their campaign. This includes municipally owned phones, computers, supplies or staff time.
- Municipal staff should not participate in partisan political activities for candidates while on municipal time or while being paid for by the municipality.
- In most municipalities, campaign signs are required to be on private property and usually are not allowed on municipal or provincial property, including provincial highways. Municipal staff have the right to remove signs that break this rule. It's best to check with your respective municipality to confirm where signs can go.
- Candidates have the right to access apartment buildings, condominiums, non-profit housing units and gated communities, between the hours of 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and tenants are allowed to place campaign signs in windows.
- Candidates and advertisers must identify themselves on all signs.

Sometimes campaign expenses exceed contributions and candidates are left with a deficit. It is possible to extend a campaign past election day to try and raise money to offset expenses by submitting appropriate paperwork to the municipal clerk.

## Election Day and Alternative Voting

Election day is **October 26, 2026**. Voting will be available on this day. Locations and times vary between municipalities.

Your municipality may use traditional paper ballots, vote by phone, internet, mail, or a combination of voting methods. Check with your municipality.

Election staff are sworn to confidentiality and professionalism and are not allowed to tamper with anyone's vote, as outlined in the [Municipal Elections Act](#). The Act says The election should be accessible to voters, and that secrecy and confidentiality of the individual is paramount.

Candidates have a right to be at the voting station on election day, provided they are not campaigning in any way. They are not allowed to pressure, influence or intimidate voters or staff working at the election poll. They can only observe. Alternatively, candidates may have what is called a "scrutineer" present on election day. This person must come to the polls with written authority, signed by the candidate, to observe the polls in place of a candidate.

On election day, the candidate or the scrutineer can:

- View the Voters' List to see who has voted, as long as this doesn't interfere with the act of voting.
- Ask for clarification on why a voter is getting assistance.
- Examine ballots when they are being counted and object to any that are marked incorrectly or unclear.

Vote counts begin immediately after the polls close. This may be done manually, if the municipality is using paper ballots, or electronically. The clerk will have already established the count method at least 60 days prior to election or advance voting day.

During this time, candidates and appointed scrutineers may be present and can watch the ballot count. If a candidate or scrutineer objects to a ballot, the deputy returning officer will note the objection and make the final decision about counting the ballot.

Once a ballot box has been counted, it will be sealed by the deputy returning officer and delivered, along with the statement of results, to the clerk.

## **Alternative Voting – Why?**

- Allows eligible electors to vote from anywhere around the world
- Allows for advance voting ahead of election day
- Can be more cost effective for municipalities
- Allows staff to take equipment to places like long-term care homes
- Is more accessible for everyone with options other than paper and pencil

## After the Election

Win or lose, candidates have some responsibilities to perform after the election.

Financial statements have to be filed with the clerk. If needed, you can ask for a campaign extension to address the financial deficit.

Candidates must remove all campaign signs, or the municipality may remove them and bill you for the expense.

### Resources

Although this document doesn't get into the ins and outs of council and council meetings, there are a few things you may want to get familiar with during your campaign, so you are prepared should you be elected. After the election, AMO will be providing a range of training and resources to help incoming councillors navigate the ins and outs of council meetings, legislation, staff-council relationships, conflict of interest and so much more.

### AMO's New Councillor Education

In partnership with the Institute on Governance (IOG), AMO is developing its new, bold and forward-focused education series for new councillors. Available following this year's municipal elections, our workshops will address the municipal leadership demands of today. Recognizing the breadth of knowledge required for decision making and planning, the AMO/IOG new council education will challenge our members to think strategically, communicate powerfully and act with knowledge, insight and understanding. Participants will leave our workshops with sharper insight, stronger influence and practical strategies that can be applied to their leadership and to serve their organizations and communities. From legislation to leadership skills in municipal government-these workshops will cover it all.

### The Municipal Act

All municipalities follow the [Municipal Act](#), which identifies the powers and jurisdiction of municipal governments. It defines how municipal governments function in terms of open and closed meetings, procedure, policy, accountability and transparency. It helps municipalities establish a Code of Conduct for elected officials, and very clearly identifies what authority municipalities have.

The *Municipal Act* is a long document. Councillors are not expected to memorize or understand every section. Knowing the *Municipal Act* well is mainly the role of the clerk, CAO or city manager.

You may want to take note of Section 239(2), which relates to closed meetings. Municipalities are the most open and the transparent order of government. Information can only be kept private under limited and specific circumstances. Just as there are rules to demand that government is open and transparent, there are legal responsibilities to keep some kinds of information private and confidential. It is important that everyone understands these rules.

Here are some links:

- [Conflict of Interest Act](#)
- [Council Transparency and the Role of the Integrity Commissioner](#)
- [Municipal Elections Act](#)
- [Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act](#)
- [Planning Act](#)
- [AMO's Municipal 101 resource](#)
- [AMO's Leading with Respect Handguides](#)

## Candidate support organizations

There are local and national candidate support organizations that can help candidates navigate the election process and experience. These organizations support candidates in different ways based on geographies and demographics. Candidates don't have to run without support.

If you would like to see the various types of resources provided by these groups, please take a look at the candidate supports catalogue in AMO's [Local Democracy Solutions Bank](#).

Organization	Link
electHER NOW	<a href="http://electhernow.ca">electhernow.ca</a>
Equal Voice	<a href="http://equalvoice.ca">equalvoice.ca</a>
Guelph Campaign School	<a href="http://municipalcampaignschool.ca/Guelph">municipalcampaignschool.ca/Guelph</a>
Leadership féminin Prescott-Russell	<a href="http://leadershipfemininpr.ca">leadershipfemininpr.ca</a>
Nominee	<a href="http://gonominee.com">gonominee.com</a>
Operation Black Vote Canada	<a href="http://obvc.ca">obvc.ca</a>
Oxford Campaign School	<a href="http://municipalcampaignschool.ca/oxford">municipalcampaignschool.ca/oxford</a>
PoliticsNOW	<a href="http://polinow.org">polinow.org</a>
ProudPolitics	<a href="http://proudpolitics.org">proudpolitics.org</a>
The Canadian-Muslim Vote	<a href="http://canadianmuslimvote.ca">canadianmuslimvote.ca</a>
The Jean Collective	<a href="http://thejeancollective.ca">thejeancollective.ca</a>
Waterloo Region Women's Campaign School	<a href="http://wrwomenrun.wordpress.com">wrwomenrun.wordpress.com</a>
Wellington Campaign School	<a href="http://municipalcampaignschool.ca/wellington">municipalcampaignschool.ca/wellington</a>



“Municipal elections are about the future of our communities, the places that we call home. Win or lose, every candidate makes a difference by respectfully debating priorities. We congratulate all who choose to run for demonstrating their commitment to their municipality.”

– Former AMO President,  
Mayor Jamie McGarvey, Town of Parry Sound



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# Section C:

## Zorra Policies and By-laws





## Purpose:

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended, requires municipalities to establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal resources during an election period. Municipalities are prohibited from making campaign contributions to municipal candidates or registered third parties. As a campaign contribution may take the form of money, goods or services, this procedure provides a fair and consistent approach on how municipal corporate resources can and cannot be used during a municipal election.

This policy applies to members of Council, Township employees, municipal and school board election candidates (including acclaimed candidates) and members of the public.

## Definitions:

**“Candidate”** shall mean a person who has filed a nomination for an office pursuant to section 33 of the *Municipal Elections Act 1996*, as amended, and includes a person who has filed a nomination for election to a school board pursuant to the *Education Act 1990*, as amended.

**“Corporate resources”** shall mean facilities, infrastructure, assets, equipment, supplies, services, staff or any resource that belongs to, or is funded by, the Township of Zorra.

**“Council”** shall mean the Council of the Township of Zorra, including Council members that who are running for reelection, members who are not running for reelection, and members who have been acclaimed, as well as all Township of Zorra committee members.

**“Township”** shall mean the Corporation of the Township of Zorra.

**“Township staff”** shall mean all full-time, part-time, contract, temporary, student and cooperative placement staff hired by the Township of Zorra.

## Policy:

### 1.0. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The Corporation of the Township of Zorra (the “Township”) is committed to ensuring that all candidates running for elected office for the Township are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner.
- 1.2. In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* the use of corporate resources qualifies as a campaign contribution by the Township, which could be construed as support by the Township of the candidate and provide unfair bias, positive or negative, to the Township’s electorate.
- 1.3. The adoption of a policy regarding the use of corporate resources for election purposes will ensure that the interests of members of Council, candidates, and members of the public are protected during the election period.



1.4. This policy shall form part of the Council information package distributed to candidates filling Nomination papers and available from the Clerk's Department, 163 Brock Street, Thamesford, ON, N0M 2M0 or by contacting the Clerk's Department at 519-485-2490 or through e-mail to clerk@zorra.ca

## 2.0. General Provisions

2.1. Members of Council, candidates, and members of the public shall not use corporate resources nor funding for any election-related purposes.

2.2. Members of Council, candidates, and members of the public must abide by the following:

- (a) Shall not use facilities, equipment, supplies, services, staff or other resources of the Township for any election campaign or campaign related activities;
- (b) Shall not use the Township office or any municipally provided facilities for any election related purposes, which includes displaying of any campaign related signs in the window or on the premises, as well as, displaying any election related material;
- (c) Shall not undertake campaign related activities on Township property during regular working hours; and
- (d) Shall not use the services of persons during hours in which those persons receive any compensation from the Township.

2.3. In addition to section 2.2., of this policy, members of Council shall abide by the following provisions:

(a) That the following practices be discontinued for Members of Council from the day prior to Nomination Day in a municipal election year to Election Day;

- i. All forms of advertising, including in Township publications;
- ii. All printing, photocopying and distribution;
- iii. Ordering of stationery;

(b) Members of Council may not deliver any unsolicited material outside their existing ward where the printing and/or distribution costs are paid by the Township;

(c) Members of Council may not:

- i. Print or distribute any material paid with Township funds that illustrates that a Member of Council or any other individual is registered in any election or where they will be running for office;
- ii. Profile (name or photograph), or make reference to, in any material paid by Township funds, any individual who is registered as a candidate in any election;
- iii. Print or distribute any material using Township funds that makes reference to, or contains the names or photographs, or identifies registered candidates for municipal elections (Minutes of Township Council and Committee meetings are exempt from this policy);



(d) Members of Council are responsible to ensure that the content of any communications material, including printed material such as newsletters, advertising, etc. funded by the Township for the operation of the Township is not directly election-related; and

(e) Members of Council may not use the Township's voice mail system to record election related messages.

### **3.0. Township Staff**

3.1. Township staff shall not canvass or actively work for any registered candidate during hours in which the staff member is receiving compensation from the Township.

### **4.0. Facility Rentals for Election Campaign Activities**

4.1. Township owned or run assets and facilities, excluding the Township municipal office, may be rented in accordance with municipal agreements and current rates and fees for election campaign activities, provided that the rental is available to all candidates. Use of rentals are subject to the following conditions:

(a) All election campaign materials must only be displayed within the allotted rental period in the allotted rented area designated in the rental agreement; and

(b) Rentals for campaign related activities are not permitted from the first date of advance voting to the day after voting day.

4.2. The Township will not host or organize all-candidates meetings or debates. With the exception of the Township municipal office, use of township facilities for all-candidates meetings or debates is permitted, provided that the rental fee is paid and all candidates for an office are invited to attend and participate.

### **5.0. Use of Corporate Identifiers**

5.1. The Township's corporate logo, corporate branding, chain of office, slogan or other corporate identifiers, shall not be used by members of Council, candidates, and members of the public for any election campaign-related purposes.

5.2. Members of Council, candidates, and members of the public may not use photographs, videos, electronic images, or graphics produced by the Township for any election campaign-related purposes. However, use of the Township of Zorra videos that are posted to YouTube is permitted, in accordance with YouTube's Terms of Service.

### **6.0. Social Media and Technology Related Provisions**

6.1. If a member of Council uses any social media account for campaigning, such account must not be created or supported by Township resources. Social media accounts used for campaign purposes must utilize personal cell phones, tablets and/or computers.

6.2. Members of Council who choose to create or use social media accounts for campaigning must include, for the duration of the election period, a clear statement on each campaign website or



social media account's home page (or profile) indicating that the account is being used for election campaign purposes and is not related to their duties as members of Council.

- 6.3. Members of Council may not use the Township's meeting software and/or account to host election-related campaign meetings and/or events.
- 6.4. Members of Council that use web sites or domain names and email addresses that are funded by and/or created by the Township may not include any election related campaign material or be used for election related purposes.

### 7.0. Township Organized Events

- 7.1. Members of Council may attend Township-organized events and act as participants in their capacity as elected officials, including speaking at the event and partaking in ceremonial activities, but shall not campaign while in attendance or distribute campaign-related materials and they shall not promote or oppose the candidacy of a person for elected office or party.
- 7.2. Where a current member of Council is invited to an event, whether a Township event or community event, in the capacity of their elected position, they are not to speak of their candidacy, their intention to run, or any campaign-related matters.

### 8.0. Limitation and Authority

- 8.1. Nothing in this Policy shall preclude a member of Council from performing their job as a Councillor, nor inhibit them from representing the interests of the constituents who elected them, even during a municipal election. Members of Council are responsible for their adherence to this policy.
- 8.2. That the Municipal Clerk be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect to this Policy.

### Departments Affected:

Members of Council, Township of Zorra staff, municipal and school board election candidates (including acclaimed candidates) and members of the public

### Next revision date: (every four years)

April 2030

### Accessible Formats:

If you require this document to be in an accessible format, please contact the Director of Corporate Services at [clerk@zorra.ca](mailto:clerk@zorra.ca) or 519-485-2490 ext. 7228.



## Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for the behavior of members of Council in the performance of their duties and responsibilities as elected community representatives.

Subsection 223.2(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* authorizes a municipality to establish codes of conduct for members of the council of the municipality and of local boards. Subsection 223.3(1) also authorizes a municipality to appoint an Integrity Commissioner who would be responsible for performing in an independent manner the functions assigned by Council with regard to the application of a Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct sets minimum standards for the behaviour of Council members in carrying out their functions. It has been developed to assist Council to:

1. Understand the standards of conduct that are expected of them and the law that applies in relation to these standards;
2. Fulfill their duty to act honestly and exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
3. Act in a way that enhances public confidence in local government.

## Definitions:

**“Municipality”** – means the Corporation of the Township of Zorra.

**“Members”** – means members of Zorra Council/Committees/Local Boards of the municipality.

**“Committee”** - means any advisory or other committee, subcommittee or similar entity of which at least 50 per cent of the members are also members of one or more Councils or local boards.

**“Local Board”** - means a local board established or exercising any power under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities.

**“Integrity Commissioner”** – means the person appointed by Township Council By-Law in accordance with Section 223.3 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* and who is responsible for performing in an independent manner the functions assigned by the municipality with respect to the application of the Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards

## Policy:

### 1.0. Application

- 1.1. This policy applies to members of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Zorra in the performance of their duties and responsibilities as elected community representatives on Council/Committees/Local Boards.

### 2.0. Statement of Principle



- 2.1. A written Code of Conduct helps to ensure that the members of Council of the municipality share a common basis of acceptable conduct. These standards are designed to provide a reference guide and a supplement to the legislative parameters within which the members must operate. These standards should serve to enhance public confidence that Zorra's elected and appointed representatives operate from a base of integrity, justice and courtesy.
- 2.2. Members are responsible for making honest statements. No member shall make a statement when they know that statement is false. No member shall make a statement with the intent to mislead Council members and the public.
- 2.3. The Township of Zorra's Code of Conduct for Municipal Council is a general standard that augments Provincial laws and municipal policies and by-laws that govern conduct. It is not intended to replace personal ethics.
- 2.4. This Code of Conduct is a complement to the existing legislation governing the conduct of Members of Council.
- 2.5. The following federal, provincial legislation governs the conduct of Members of Council: the *Municipal Act, 2001*, the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the *Provincial Offences Act*, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the *Criminal Code of Canada*; and the by-laws and policies of Council as adopted and amended from time to time.
- 2.6. All members whom this Code of Conduct applies to shall serve their constituents in a conscientious and diligent manner. No member shall use the influence of office for any purpose other than the exercise of his or her official duties.

### **3.0. Gifts and Benefits**

- 3.1. No member shall accept a fee, advance, gift or personal benefit that is connected directly or indirectly to the performance of his or her duties of Office, unless permitted by law. Members shall make decisions based on impartial and objective assessment, free from the influence of gifts, favours, hospitality and entertainment.
- 3.2. Members shall decline any personal gift where the acceptance of such gift would imply a contractual agreement with or obligation to the donor.
- 3.3. This section does not apply to tokens, mementoes, souvenirs, or such gifts or benefits up to and including a value of \$200.00 that are received as an incident of protocol or social obligation that normally accompanies the responsibilities of office. Tokens, mementoes, souvenirs or gifts with a value of greater than \$200.00 shall be the property of the municipality.
- 3.4. No member shall seek or obtain by reason of his or her office any personal privilege or advantage with respect to Township services not otherwise available to the general public and not consequent to his or her official duties.



#### **4.0. Confidentiality**

- 4.1. All information, documentation or deliberation received, reviewed or taken in closed session of Council and its Committees and Local Boards are confidential.
- 4.2. Members shall not disclose or release by any means to any member of the public either in verbal or written form any confidential information acquired by virtue of their office, except when required by law to do so. Where a matter has been discussed at a closed session meeting and the information remains confidential, no member shall disclose the content of the matter or the substance of deliberations of the closed session meeting.
- 4.3. Members shall not permit any persons other than those who are entitled thereto to have access to information that is confidential.
- 4.4. Particular care should be exercised in ensuring confidentiality of the following types of information:
  - Labour relations and personnel matters;
  - Information about suppliers provided for evaluation which might be useful to other suppliers;
  - Matters relating to the legal affairs of the Township of Zorra;
  - Information that infringes on the rights of others (i.e. sources of complaints where the identity of the complainant was given in confidence);
  - Items under litigation or negotiation;
  - Price schedules in contract tender or Request for Proposal submissions if so specified;
  - Information deemed to be “personal information” under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*; and
  - Statistical data required by law not to be released (e.g. certain census or assessment data).

This list is provided as an example and is not exclusive. It is recommended that requests for information be referred to the Clerk to be addressed as either an informal request for access to municipal records or as a formal request under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

#### **5.0. Use of Township Property**

- 5.1. Subject to Section 6, no member shall use for personal purposes any Township property, equipment, services, supplies or services of consequence other than for purposes connected with the discharge of Township duties or associated community activities of which Township Council has been advised.



5.2. No member shall obtain financial gain from the use of Township developed intellectual property, computer programs, technological innovations or other patentable items, while an elected official or thereafter. All such property remains exclusive property of the Township of Zorra.

5.3. No member shall use information gained in the execution of his or her duties that is not available to the general public for any purposes other than his or her official duties.

#### **6.0. Use of Township Technology Resources**

6.1. The Township of Zorra licenses the use of computer software from a variety of vendors. The Township does not own the software or its documentation. Software is normally copyrighted, and no individual may copy or distribute the software unless expressly permitted to do so under the applicable licence.

#### **7.0. Work of a Political/Personal Nature**

7.1. The use of corporate resources for election purposes is prohibited in accordance with Policy 100-10 – Use of Corporate Resources (Elections) Policy and no member shall use Township facilities, services or property for his or her re-election campaign. Further, no member shall use the services of Township employees for his or her re-election campaign, during hours in which the employees are in the paid employment of the Township.

7.2. No member shall use Township facilities, services or property for his or personal business gain. No member shall use the services of Township employees for his or her personal business during the hours in which the employees are in the paid employment of the Township.

#### **8.0. Conduct at Meetings**

8.1. Members shall conduct themselves with decorum at Council, Committee and Local Board meetings in accordance with the provisions of the Township's Procedural By-law.

8.2. Respect for deputations and for fellow members and staff requires that all members show courtesy and not distract from the business of Council, Committees and Local Boards during presentations and when other members have the floor.

#### **9.0. Representing the Township**

9.1. Members shall make every effort to participate diligently in the activities of the Committees and Local Boards to which they are appointed. Members are encouraged to attend openings and charity events.

#### **10.0. Influence on Staff**

10.1. Members shall be respectful of the fact that staff work for the Township as a body corporate and are charged with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and corporate

perspective. Members shall be further respectful of the fact that staff carry out directions of Council and administer the policies of the municipality, and are required to do so without any undue influence from any individual member or group of members of Council.

#### **11.0. Business Relations**

- 11.1. No member shall borrow money from any person who regularly does business with the Township unless such person represents an institution or company whose shares are publicly traded and who is regularly in the business of lending money.
- 11.2. No member shall act as a paid agent before Council or any Committee or Local Board of Council at which the Township is represented.

#### **12.0. Expenses**

- 12.1. Members shall comply with the provisions of the Township's applicable policies relative to per diem payments and expenses governing reimbursement for attendance at conferences, seminars, training courses and workshops.
- 12.2. Members shall be reimbursed out-of-pocket expenses incurred in accordance with approved Township policies while attending official functions and representing the Township in their official capacity.

#### **13.0. Encouragement of Respect for the Township and its By-laws and Policies**

- 13.1. Members shall encourage public respect for the Township and its by-laws and policies.

#### **14.0. Discrimination and Harassment**

- 14.1. Members shall comply with Township Policy 300-25 – Harassment & Violence in the Workplace Policy and will promote and champion against discrimination and promote a harassment-free workplace. Discrimination or harassment of another member, staff or any member of the public is misconduct. All persons shall be treated fairly in the workplace in an environment free of discrimination and of personal and sexual harassment.
- 14.2. Harassment may be defined as any behaviour by any person that is directed at or is offensive to another person on the grounds of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status and any other grounds under the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- 14.3. Members are responsible for communications that may constitute harassment, whether in person, in writing, by public comment and online, including social media.

#### **15.0. Accountability and Transparency**



15.1. Members of Council shall conduct and convey Council business in accordance with the Township's Policy 100-08 – Accountability and Transparency Policy, as amended from time to time.

## 16.0. Interpretation

16.1. Members seeking clarification of any part of this Code should consult with their solicitor.

## 17.0. Complaints

### 17.1 Informal Complaint Procedure

Any person or representative of an organization if they believe that a Member, is in contravention of the Code of Conduct may wish to address the behaviour themselves. In doing so, they should implement the following steps:

- (a) advise the Member of the behaviour that they feel contravenes the Code;
- (b) engage in discussions with the Member in an attempt to address and to resolve the concerns;
- (c) with the agreement of both parties the Integrity Commissioner may be asked to assist the parties in informally resolving the issue;
- (d) consider the need to pursue the formal complaint process.

It is not a condition that a complainant pursue the informal complaint process prior to pursuing the formal complaint process.

### 17.2 Formal Complaint Process

- (a) Complaint process shall occur as follows:
  - i. A request for an investigation of a *Complaint* that a Member has contravened the Code shall be sent directly to the Integrity Commissioner by mail, email, fax, or courier and shall be in writing. A completed form (see attached) setting out the evidence in support of the allegation must be included.
  - ii. All Complaints must be sent by an identifiable individual.
  - iii. A Complaint shall set out reasonable and probable grounds for the allegation that a Member has contravened the Code of Conduct and shall include the name of the Member, the provisions of the Code allegedly contravened, the facts supporting the



allegations, the names and contact information of any witnesses and contact information for the complainant.

- iv. Municipal Council may by motion file a Complaint or request an investigation of one of its Members.
- (b) Upon receipt of the Complaint:
- i. Upon receipt of the Complaint, the Integrity Commissioner shall make an initial classification to determine if the matter is, on its face, a Complaint with respect to non-compliance under the Code. If the Complaint is not a complaint with respect to non-compliance under the Code, or is covered by other legislation, or a Complaint procedure under another policy, the Integrity Commissioner shall advise the Complainant in writing and attempt to direct the Complainant to the correct service for his or her Complaint.
  - ii. If the Integrity Commissioner determines that the Complaint is not within the Integrity Commissioner's jurisdiction or is frivolous, vexatious, or not made in good faith, the Integrity Commissioner shall advise the complainant of that fact along with any referral he or she deems appropriate. In such case, the Integrity Commissioner will pursue the matter no further.
- (c) The Integrity Commissioner shall report annually to Municipal Council on complaints not within the Integrity Commissioner's jurisdiction but shall not disclose any information identifying a person concerned.
- (d) If a Complaint is received that is within the Integrity Commissioner's jurisdiction that is not rejected as frivolous, vexatious or not in good faith, the Integrity Commissioner shall investigate. At any point the Integrity Commissioner may attempt to settle a Complaint.
- (e) Where the Integrity Commissioner determines that the Complaint meets the criteria to be investigated, the Integrity Commissioner may elect to conduct an informal investigation which may include mediation or alternatively to exercise the powers of a Commissioner under the *Public Inquiries Act, 2009*.
- (f) The Integrity Commissioner will proceed as follows, except where otherwise required by the *Public Inquiries Act, 2009*:
- i. Serve the Complaint and supply material received on the Member who is the subject of the Complaint and request a written response to the allegations within ten (10) business days.
  - ii. Serve a copy of the response received upon the Complainant request a written reply within ten (10) business days.



- iii. If necessary, after receiving the written materials, the Integrity Commissioner may speak to anyone relevant to the Complaint, examine any of the information referred to in Sections 223.4(3) and (4) of the *Municipal Act* and enter any municipal work location relevant to the Complaint for purposes of the investigation.
  - iv. Prior to issuing a report finding a violation of the Code, the Integrity Commissioner shall provide the Member who is the subject of the Complaint with reasonable notice of the proposed finding and recommended penalty and provide an opportunity for the Member to comment on the proposed finding and recommended penalty.
- (g) If the Integrity Commissioner has not completed an investigation before Nomination Day for a regular election, as set out in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the Integrity Commissioner shall terminate the inquiry on that day. If an investigation is terminated in accordance with Section 223.4(7) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, the Integrity Commissioner shall not commence another inquiry with respect to the matter unless, within six (6) weeks after Voting Day in a regular election, the Complainant, or the Member whose conduct is concerned makes a written request to the Integrity Commissioner that the investigation be commenced.
  - (h) The Integrity Commissioner shall retain all records related to the Complaint and investigation.
  - (i) In the year of a regular election, during the period between Nomination Day for a regular election and ending on Voting Day, there shall be no requests for an inquiry concerning contraventions of the Code, the Integrity Commissioner shall not report to council on the conduct of a Member and the council shall not consider whether to impose penalties under the Code.
  - (j) The Integrity Commissioner shall report to the Complainant and the Member generally no later than ninety (90) days after the investigation has been commenced. If the process takes longer than ninety (90) days, the Integrity Commissioner shall inform the Complainant and the Member and provide an estimate of the expected time.
  - (k) Where the Complaint is sustained, the Integrity Commissioner shall report to Municipal Council outlining the findings, any settlement, or recommended penalty. The report shall be delivered to the Clerk who shall place the report on the agenda for the next meeting of Municipal Council.
  - (l) Where the Complaint is dismissed, other than in exceptional circumstances, the Integrity Commissioner shall not report to Municipal Council.
  - (m) Municipal Council shall consider and respond to the report within ninety (90) days after the day the report appears on the Council agenda.
  - (n) Municipal Council shall not consider a report during the period of time starting on Nomination Day and ending on Voting Day in a year in which a regular election will be held.

- (o) In responding to the report, Municipal Council may vary a recommendation by the Integrity Commissioner.
- (p) Upon receipt of recommendations from Integrity Commissioner, council may in circumstances where the Integrity Commissioner has determined there has been a violation of the Code and pose either of two penalties:
  - i. A reprimand; or
  - ii. Suspension of the remuneration paid to the Member in respect of his/her services as a Member of Council or a local board as the case may be for a period of up to ninety (90) days.
- (q) The Integrity Commissioner may also recommend that Municipal Council impose one of the following sanctions:
  - i. Written or verbal public apology;
  - ii. Return of property or reimbursement of its value or of money spent;
  - iii. Removal from memberships of a committee; and
  - iv. Removal of Chair of a committee.
- (r) The Integrity Commissioner has authority to apply Sections 5, 5.1 and 5.2 of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and investigate complaints. If the Integrity Commissioner determines that a violation has occurred, the Integrity Commissioner may apply to a judge of the Superior Court of Justice for a determination of the question of whether the Member has contravened Sections 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of the *Act*.
- (s) A complaint will be processed in compliance with the confidentiality requirements in Section 223.5 and 223.6 of the *Municipal Act* as follows:
  - i. The Integrity Commissioner and every person acting under the Integrity Commissioner's instructions shall preserve secrecy with respect to all matters that come to his or her knowledge in the course of any investigation except as required by law in a criminal proceeding.
  - ii. All reports from the Integrity Commissioner to Council will be made available to the public.
  - iii. The Integrity Commissioner in a report to Council shall only disclose such matters as in the Integrity Commissioner's opinion are necessary for the purposes of the report.

## **18.0. Consequences of Non-Compliance**



18.1. Penalties described in subsection 223.4(5) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* that a municipality may impose if a member has contravened a Code of Conduct include:

- (a) A reprimand; and
- (b) Suspension of the remuneration paid to the member in respect of his or her services as a member of council or local board, as the case may be, for a period of up to 90 days.

### 19.0. Review Cycle

19.1. This policy will be reviewed in each term of Council by the CAO in conjunction with Council.

### 20.0. Implementation

20.1. Upon adoption of the Code of Ethical Conduct and thereafter at the beginning of each term, Council members will be expected to sign two (2) copies of the Code of Ethical Conduct (one for the member of Council and one for the Clerk's Office) to convey that they have read, understood and accepted the terms outlined.

20.2. The Code of Ethical Conduct is to be included as part of orientation for all members of Council

### Departments Affected:

Council.

### Next revision date: (every five years)

April 2027.

### Accessible Formats:

If you require this document to be in an accessible format, please contact the Director of Corporate Services at [clerk@zorra.ca](mailto:clerk@zorra.ca) or 519-485-2490 ext. 7228.

Date Approved by Council: April 20, 2022

### Signature

The undersigned hereby acknowledges that they have read, understood and accept this Code of Ethical Conduct.



**Policy: Code of Conduct for Municipal Council**

**No: 100-11**

**Section: Mayor and Council**

**Page 11 of 11**

**Effective Date: April 20, 2022**

**By-law #:25-2022**

**Last Revision Date: April 20, 2022**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Member

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**CORPORATION OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF ZORRA**



**BY-LAW NO. 20-18**

**A BY-LAW TO MANAGE AND REGULATE ELECTION  
SIGNS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF ZORRA**

**WHEREAS** the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, section 11 authorizes the Corporation of the Township of Zorra to pass by-laws respecting highways over which it has jurisdiction, and to pass by-laws respecting signs;

**AND WHEREAS** the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, section 63 authorizes the Corporation of the Township of Zorra, if it passes a by-law for prohibiting or regulating the placing of an object on a highway, to provide for the removal of any object placed on a highway in contravention of that by-law;

**AND WHEREAS** the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c. 32 provides provisions for election campaign advertising which includes but is not limited to election signs;

**AND WHEREAS** By-law No. 56-1980 was enacted and passed to regulate or prohibit signs and other advertising devices within the municipality;

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of the Township of Zorra deems it necessary to remove the election sign provisions currently in By-law No. 56-1980 and form a separate by-law for the regulation of election signs for the purpose of preventing the unlimited proliferation of signs on highways and property that would create dangerous and undesirable situations, and to reflect the addition of third party advertisers as per the Municipal Elections Act;

**AND WHEREAS** the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, section 425 establishes that any person who contravenes any by-law of The Corporation of the Township of Zorra is guilty of an offence;

**NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ZORRA ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

**1. SHORT TITLE OF BY-LAW**

1.1 This By-law may be referred to as the "Election Sign By-law".

**2. DEFINITIONS**

- (a) **Billboard sign** means any billboard legally established under the Township of Zorra Sign By-Law;
- (b) **Boulevard** means that portion of every highway or street which is not used as a sidewalk, driveway access, or travelled roadway or shoulder;
- (c) **Campaign office** means a building or structure, or part thereof, used by a candidate to conduct an election campaign;
- (d) **Candidate** means a person who has been nominated under the *Canada Elections Act*, the *Election Act (Ontario)*, or the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*;
- (e) **Clerk** means the Municipal Clerk or designate as appointed by the Council of the Township of Zorra, or his or her designate;
- (f) **Election sign** means any sign promoting, opposing or taking a position with respect to:
  - (i) Any candidate or political party in an election under the *Canada Elections Act*, the *Election Act (Ontario)*, or the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*;
  - (ii) An issue associated with a person or political party in an election under the *Canada Elections Act*, the *Election Act (Ontario)*, or the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*;
  - (iii) A question, law or by-law submitted to the electors under the *Canada Elections Act*, the *Election Act (Ontario)*, or the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- (g) **Highway** includes a common and public highway, street, avenue parkway, driveway, square, place and includes any bridge, trestle, viaduct or other structure forming part of the highway and includes the boulevards and any area between the lateral property lines of the highway, under the jurisdiction of the Township of Zorra;
- (h) **Intersection pedestrian signal** means traffic control signals or a stop sign;
- (i) **Owner** means the person who places or permits the placing of an election sign or any person described on the sign, whose name, address or telephone number is on the sign or who benefits from the message on the

sign and for the purposes of this By-law there may be more than one owner of an election sign;

- (j) **Municipal Law Enforcement Officer** means a person appointed as such, and shall include an officer of the Ontario Provincial Police;
- (k) **Park** for the purposes of this By-law shall include any land or premises under the control or ownership of the Township for park and recreational purposes and includes any lane, walkway or public parking area leading thereto, and also includes any and all buildings, structures, equipment, facilities and improvements located in or on such land;
- (l) **Person** means an individual, corporation, or association, and includes a registered third party;
- (m) **Place** means attach, install, erect, build, construct, reconstruct, move, display, or affix in any manner;
- (n) **Private property** means real property that is not a highway or public property;
- (o) **Public property** means real or material property owned or under the control of the Township of Zorra or any of its agencies, boards or commissions, including highways, boulevards and road allowances, roadside ditches, parks, gardens and shall be deemed to include public utilities facilities, regardless of whether the poles are owned by or under the control of the Township and shall also be deemed to include located on a highway regardless of whether the containers or structures are owned by the Township.
- (p) **Registered third party** means an individual, corporation or trade union which has filed a notice of registration as required pursuant to s.88 of the *Municipal Elections Act*;
- (q) **Roadway** means that part of a highway that is improved, designed or ordinarily used for vehicular traffic including reserved lanes, municipal rights of way, shoulders and curbs and gutters;
- (r) **Sidewalk** means that part of a highway with a surface that is improved, designed or ordinarily used for pedestrians or bicycles and includes a multi-use path;
- (s) **“Sight Triangle”** means the triangular space formed of a corner lot and a line drawn from a point in one street line to a point in the other street line,

each such point being 9 metres from the point of intersection of the street lines (measured along the street lines). Where the two street lines do not intersect at a point, the point of intersection of the street lines shall be deemed to be the intersection of the projection of the street line or the intersection of the tangents to the street lines.

- (t) **Sign** means any surface, structure and other component parts, which are used or capable of being used as a visual medium to attract attention to a specific subject matter or to create a design or convey a message and includes posters, billboards, advertising devices or notices;
- (u) **Sign area** means the area of one side of a sign where copy can be placed;
- (v) **Sign height** means the vertical height of a sign from the finished grade to the highest part of the sign;
- (w) **Township** means The Corporation of the Township of Zorra
- (x) **Voting place** means a place where electors cast their ballots and:
  - (i) When a voting place is located on public property, includes all of the area enclosed by the lot lines of the public property and any highway abutting, and
  - (ii) When a voting place is located on private property, includes all of the common elements of the private property and any highway immediately abutting.
- (y) **Voting day** means voting day as defined by the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and polling day as defined by the *Federal Elections Act* or the *Elections Act (Ontario)*

### 3. GENERAL PROHIBITIONS

- 3.1 No person shall place or permit to be placed an election sign except in accordance with this By-law.

#### MAXIMUM SIZE AND HEIGHT

- 3.2 With the exception of a billboard sign and an election sign on vehicles, no person shall place or permit to be placed an election sign that:
  - (a) is illuminated;

- (b) has a sign area greater than 3 square meters (32 square feet);
- (c) has a sign height greater than 2.13 meters (7 feet);
- (d) interferes with the safe operation of vehicular traffic or the safety of pedestrians; or
- (e) impedes or obstructs the Township's maintenance operations.

#### MANDATORY INFORMATION ON ELECTION SIGNS AND ADVERTISEMENTS

- 3.4 All parties, including candidates and third party advertisers, shall comply with the sign and advertisement requirements set out in Section 88 of the *Municipal Elections Act, as amended*.
- 3.5 All candidate election signs and advertisements purchased by or under the direction of a candidate shall identify the candidate.
- 3.6 All election signs supplied by a third party advertiser shall contain the following information:
  - (a) the name of the registered third party;
  - (b) the municipality where the registered third party is registered;
  - (c) a telephone number, mailing address or email address at which the registered third party may be contacted regarding the advertisement.

#### **4. SIGNS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY NOT TO OBSTRUCT EXITS, ACCESS**

- 4.1 No person shall affix, erect or otherwise display an election sign on private property without the expressed consent of the owner or tenant of the property.
- 4.2 No person shall place or permit to be placed an election sign which obstructs or impedes any fire escape, fire exit, door, window, skylight, flue or air intake or exhaust in a manner that may impede or prevent the free access of emergency personnel to any part of a building including emergency water connections and fire hydrants.
- 4.3 No person shall permit an election sign be located where it will interfere with the safe movement of any vehicle or pedestrian traffic or where it is a general hazard to public safety.

#### **5. SIGNS IN GOOD REPAIR AND SAFE LOCATION**

5.1 No person shall permit an election sign to be left in a state of disrepair.

**6. TIMING**

6.1 No person shall place or permit to be placed an election sign for a federal or provincial election or by-election earlier than the day the writ of election or by-election is issued.

6.2 No person shall place or permit to be placed an election sign for a municipal election prior to Nomination Day (the third Friday in August of an election year), except an election sign which is placed on a campaign office.

6.3 Election signs may be erected on campaign offices once the candidate has filed his or her nomination with the Clerk.

6.4 No owner shall fail to remove his/her election sign within 72 hours (3 days) immediately following 11:59 p.m. of the day of the election.

**7. ELECTION SIGNS ON PUBLIC PROPERTY AND HIGHWAYS**

7.1 No person shall place or permit to be placed an election sign on public property or in a park.

7.2 No person shall place or permit to be placed an election sign that:

- (a) is on a roadway;
- (b) impedes or obstructs the passage of pedestrians on a sidewalk;
- (c) is less than 10 metres from a roadway on a highway where pedestrians are prohibited;
- (d) is on a median or island located within the roadway;
- (e) is within a sight triangle;
- (f) in addition to a sight triangle, any location that would, by reason of size or location, obstruct the vision of drivers or pedestrians, or obstruct or detract from the visibility or effectiveness of any traffic sign or control device or any other sign authorized pursuant to the Sign By-law so as to endanger any person or risk damage to any vehicle;
- (g) inside or outside of a municipal facility or on associated property;

- (h) is on a trailer;
- (i) is on a utility pole, tree, fence or gate located on public property;
- (j) within any urban area, is within 10 meters of any other election sign of the same candidate; or
- (k) outside the urban area, is within 50 meters of any other election sign of the same candidate.

7.3 No person shall place or permit to be placed an election sign on a highway structure.

7.4 No person shall damage or foul a highway or any public structure when placing an election sign.

**NO SIGNS AT VOTING PLACE, ON PARKED VEHICLES, OR OUTSIDE CANDIDATE'S WARD**

7.5 No person shall place or permit to be placed an election sign at a voting place.

7.6 No person shall place on or affix to, or permit to be placed on or affixed to a motor vehicle, an election sign, where the motor vehicle is parked at a voting place.

7.7 No person shall place on or affix to, or permit to be placed on or affixed to a motor vehicle, an election sign, where the motor vehicle does not have a valid Ontario license plate affixed to it.

7.8 No person shall place or permit to be placed an election sign outside of the ward where that candidate is running for office, except if it is a sign erected at the candidate's campaign office.

7.9 Candidate and third party advertisements for those seeking office in a municipality or other jurisdiction other than the Township of Zorra are not permitted within the geographical limits of the Township.

**NO USE OF TOWNSHIP LOGO**

7.10 No person shall display the Township's logo or the Township's municipal election logo, in whole or in part, on any election sign.

**8. REMOVAL AND DESTRUCTION OF ELECTION SIGNS**

- 8.1 The Clerk or a Municipal Law Enforcement Officer may remove any Election Sign erected in contravention of this by-law without notice.
- 8.2 The Township may recover the expense for the removal of an election sign under this By-law from the Owner of such sign, and may commence proceedings against the Owner to recover such costs.
- 8.3 Election signs removed in accordance with this By-law may be destroyed or otherwise disposed of by the Township without notice and without compensation to any party.

#### **CANDIDATE RESPONSIBLE FOR ELECTION SIGNS OF CANDIDATE**

- 8.4 The registered third party, or the candidate, as the case may be, to whom an election sign relates shall be responsible for the erection and display of the election sign and shall ensure that all the requirements of this by-law are met.

### **9. ADMINISTRATION**

- 9.1 The administration of this By-law is delegated to the Clerk.
- 9.2 The Township of Zorra shall not be liable for any damage or loss to any signs for the purpose of an election campaign that was displayed in accordance with this By-law or that was removed by an Officer of the Township of Zorra.

### **10. ENFORCEMENT & REMOVAL OF SIGNS**

- 10.1 The Township reserves the right to remove, without notice to any person, including the candidate or third party advertiser, any election sign which it deems to be a hazard to the travelling public or to any person, regardless of its compliance to this By-law.
- 10.2 Candidates or third party advertisers that have been requested to remove an election sign by the Township must remove the sign within twelve (12) hours of the request being made. If not removed within the required timeframe, the Township reserves the right to remove the sign without any further notice to the candidate or third party advertiser.
- 10.3 This by-law may be enforced by a Municipal Law Enforcement Officer.
- 10.4 This By-law only regulates election signs located within the jurisdiction of the municipality. Any signs located on a County Road must abide by the County of Oxford Sign By-law or any other applicable Provincial or Federal Statute or Regulation.

10.5 Any provision of this By-law found to be ultra vires shall be deemed to be severable and the balance of the By-law deemed to continue in full force and effect.

**11. OFFENCE AND PENALTY**

11.1 Every person who contravenes any provision of this By-law is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a fine as provided for in the Provincial Offences Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.33.

**12. FORCE AND EFFECT**

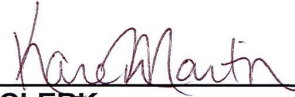
12.1 That Section (f)(iii) of By-law No. 56-1980, be hereby repealed, including any reference to election signs throughout such by-law.

12.2 This by-law shall come into force and effect on the day it is passed.

**READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME THIS 17<sup>th</sup> day of APRIL, 2018.**

**READ A THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED THIS 17<sup>th</sup> day of APRIL, 2018.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR  
MARGARET LUPTON

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK  
KAREN MARTIN

April 14, 2026

Attention: Candidates for 2026 Municipal Election

**Re: Election Signs on Oxford County Road Allowances/Facilities/Properties**

---

Candidates in the upcoming municipal election are asked to adhere to the following requirements with respect to placement of election signs or any other election advertising material within Oxford County road allowances and on County owned property.

Placement of election signage is not permitted as follows:

- In proximity to intersections where sign would pose a safety hazard by obstructing Driver sightlines
- In the median portion of Oxford Road 2, east of Oxford Road 4, in Woodstock
- On the grounds of County owned facilities/property

All election signs and any other election advertising must clearly identify the candidate or third party advertiser and shall not incorporate flashing lights or animation.

Placement of election signage that does not adhere to the requirements above or is deemed to cause visibility problems and/or constitute a hazard will be removed and the candidate may be invoiced for the costs. Any signs that are removed may be picked up at a County or Area Municipality facility; locations will be available upon request.

Please remove all election signs by no later than October 30, 2026.

If you have questions or comments, please contact Oxford County at 519 539-9800.

Yours truly,



Melissa Abercrombie, P.Eng., PMP  
Director of Public Works

Cc Frank Gross, Senior Manager of Transportation and Waste Management Services  
Cc Shawn Vanacker, Supervisor of Road Operations  
Cc Shannon Noonan, Supervisor of Traffic Management

# Section D:

# Election Finance Information



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## Campaign Finances – Overview

The [Ministry of Municipal Affairs 2026 Candidates' Guide for Ontario Municipal and School Board Elections](#) included in this information package contains a great deal of information about campaign finances and rules that are important for candidates to know.

A candidate's campaign begins the day a nomination is filed. Candidates are responsible for keeping records of the financial activities related to their campaign. Candidates may want to consult with an auditor or an accountant early in the campaign to make sure that they are using a bookkeeping and accounting system that will suit their needs.

### Election Bank Account

Candidates are required to open a separate bank account for their campaign if they plan to accept contributions or incur any expenses. Candidates are not permitted to use their personal bank account for campaign finances. All contributions – including contributions candidates make to themselves – must be deposited into the campaign bank account. All expenses must be paid from the campaign account (except the filing fee – this is considered a personal expense). If your financial institution will not open a campaign bank account until proof of candidacy is provided, the Clerk or their designate can provide you with a declaration that nomination papers have been filed.

### General Spending Limit for Campaign

The general spending limit for your campaign is calculated based on the number of electors who are eligible to vote for the office that you are running for. The general spending limit estimates are included on the **Preliminary Certificate of Maximum Expenses and Maximum Contributions to a Candidate's Own Election Campaign** document in this section. On or before September 30, 2026, the Clerk or their designate, will give you a final general spending limit.

### Financial Statement

All candidates will be required to file a **Financial Statement – Auditor's Report Candidate – Form 4**, a copy of which will be provided to candidates upon filing their nomination. Candidates should review the form to ensure they are keeping records of all the information that must be included in the statement. Candidates are required to keep all their campaign financial records until November 15, 2030 when the next council or school board takes office.

### Duties of candidates under the *Municipal Elections Act* (as it relates to campaign finances)

**88.22** (1) A candidate shall ensure that

- a) no contributions of money are accepted or expenses are incurred unless one or more campaign accounts are first opened at a financial institution exclusively for the purposes of the election campaign;
- b) all contributions of money are deposited into the campaign accounts;
- c) all funds in the campaign accounts are used exclusively for the purposes of the election campaign;
- d) all payments for expenses are made from the campaign accounts;
- e) contributions of goods or services are valued;
- f) receipts are issued for every contribution and obtained for every expense;
- g) records are kept of,
  - i. the receipts issued for every contribution,
  - ii. the value of every contribution,
  - iii. whether a contribution is in the form of money, goods or services, and
  - iv. the contributor's name and address;
- h) records are kept of every expense including the receipts obtained for each expense;
- i) records are kept of any claim for payment of an expense that the candidate disputes or refuses to pay;
- j) records are kept of the gross income from a fund-raising function and the gross amount of money received at a fund-raising function by donations of \$25 or less or by the sale of goods or services for \$25 or less;
- k) records are kept of any loan and its terms under section 88.17;
- l) the records described in clauses (g), (h), (i), (j) and (k) are retained by the candidate for the term of office of the members of the council or local board and until their successors are elected and the newly elected council or local board is organized;
- m) financial filings are made in accordance with sections 88.25 and 88.32;
- n) proper direction is given to the persons who are authorized to incur expenses and accept or solicit contributions under the direction of the candidate;
- o) a contribution of money made or received in contravention of this Act or a by-law passed under this Act is returned to the contributor as soon as possible after the candidate becomes aware of the contravention;
- p) a contribution not returned to the contributor under clause (o) is paid to the clerk with whom the candidate's nomination was filed;
- q) an anonymous contribution is paid to the clerk with whom the candidate's nomination was filed; and
- r) each contributor is informed that a contributor shall not make contributions exceeding,
  - i. subject to subsection (2), a total of \$1,200 to any one candidate in an election, and
  - ii. a total of \$5,000 to two or more candidates for offices on the same council or local board.



## PRELIMINARY CERTIFICATE OF MAXIMUM EXPENSES AND MAXIMUM CONTRIBUTIONS TO A CANDIDATE'S OWN ELECTION CAMPAIGN

*Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended (s.33.0.1 and 33.0.2)*

**All candidates must retain this document and sign an acknowledgement (provided by the Township Clerk when the candidate files their nomination) before the candidate's nomination will be certified.**

Section 88.9.1 of the *Municipal Election Act, 1996* states "a candidate for an office on a council and his or her spouse shall not make contributions to the candidate's own election campaign that, combined, exceed an amount calculated in accordance with that section." This limit does not apply to school board trustee candidates.

Section 88.20 (6) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* states that during the period that begins on the day a candidate is nominated under section 33 and ends on voting day, his or her expenses shall not exceed an amount calculated in accordance with the prescribed formula. This amount does not apply to expenses described in subsections 3. and 5.-9. in section 88.19(3), as listed below.

### EXPENSES

*Section 88.19 (3) of the Municipal Elections Act states that: (3) Without restricting the generality of subsections (1) and (2), the following amounts are expenses:*

1. The replacement value of goods retained by the person, individual, corporation or trade union from any previous election in the municipality and used in the current election.
2. The value of contributions of goods and services.
3. Audit and accounting fees.
4. Interest on loans under section 88.17.
5. The cost of holding fund-raising functions.
6. The cost of holding parties and making other expressions of appreciation after the close of voting.
7. For a candidate, expenses relating to a recount or a proceeding under section 83 (controversed elections).
8. Expenses relating to a compliance audit.
9. Expenses that are incurred by a candidate with a disability or a registered third party who is an individual with a disability, are directly related to the disability, and would not have been incurred but for the election to which the expenses relate.
10. The cost of election campaign advertisements (within the meaning of section 88.3) or third party advertisements, as the case may be.



In accordance with the requirements of section 33.0.1 and 33.0.2 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996 as amended*, I hereby certify that the maximum amounts described in section 88.9.1 and 88.20 (6) are as follows:

	Maximum contributions to a candidate's own campaign	Maximum campaign expense limit
<b>MAYOR</b>	\$8,826.60	\$13,138.05
<b>WARD 1 COUNCILLOR</b>	\$5,279.40	\$6,186.60
<b>WARD 2 COUNCILLOR</b>	\$5,393.20	\$6,671.10
<b>WARD 3 COUNCILLOR</b>	\$5,326.80	\$6,388.90
<b>WARD 4 COUNCILLOR</b>	\$5,327.40	\$6,391.45

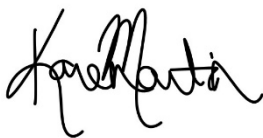
The Clerk of the City of Woodstock provides estimated contribution and expense limits for the **Thames Valley District School Board (English Public)**, the **London District Catholic School Board (English Separate)**, and the **Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence (French Separate)**.

**CONSEIL SCOLAIRE VIAMONDE (French Public)**

The Clerk of the City of Sarnia provides estimated contribution and expense limits for the **Conseil Scolaire Viamonde (French Public)**.

The number of electors used for the final calculation of contribution and spending limits will be the greater of the number determined from the voters' list from the 2022 election as it existed on September 15, 2022, or the number determined from the voters' list for the 2026 election as it exists on September 20, 2026. The contribution and expense limits using the 2022 information have been included in this certificate. The Clerk will provide a maximum contribution and spending limit calculation using the number of voters eligible to vote in the 2026 election (if the number of eligible voters is greater than that of 2022) to each certified candidate **on or before September 30, 2026**.

A certificate of the applicable maximum amounts is hereby given in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.



Karen Martin, Municipal Clerk



## Township of Zorra

2026 Municipal and School Board Election



519-485-2490



[www.elections.zorra.ca](http://www.elections.zorra.ca)



[clerk@zorra.ca](mailto:clerk@zorra.ca)

### NOTICE OF FINANCIAL FILING REQUIREMENTS AND PENALTIES RELATED TO CAMPAIGN FINANCES 2026 MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

*Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended*

**All candidates must retain this document and sign an acknowledgement (provided by the Township Clerk when the candidate files their nomination) before the candidate's nomination will be certified.**

In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996 as amended*, every candidate is required to file a financial statement.

Section 33.1 of the *Municipal Election Act* states that the clerk shall, before voting day, give to each person nominated for an office notice of

- (a) the penalties under subsection 88.23 (2) and 92 (1) related to election campaign finances; and
- (b) the refund of the nomination filing fee that the candidate is entitled to receive in the circumstances described in section 34.

Section 88.25 (9) of the *Municipal Election Act* states that at least 30 days before the filing date, the clerk shall give notice of the following matters to every candidate whose nomination was filed with him or her:

1. All the filing requirements of this section.
2. The candidate's entitlement to receive a refund of the nomination filing fee if he or she meets the requirements of section 34.
3. The penalties set out in subsections 88.23 (2) and 92 (1).

#### **Penalties:**

##### **88.23 (1) Effect of default by candidate**

A candidate is subject to the penalties listed in subsection (2), in addition to any other penalty that may be imposed under this Act,

- (a) if the candidate fails to file a document as required under section 88.25 or 88.32 by the relevant date;
- (b) if a document filed under section 88.25 shows on its face a surplus, as described in section 88.31, and the candidate fails to pay the amount required by subsection 88.31 (4) to the clerk by the relevant date;
- (c) if a document filed under section 88.25 shows on its face that the candidate has incurred expenses exceeding what is permitted under section 88.20; or



## Township of Zorra

### 2026 Municipal and School Board Election

(d) if a document filed under section 88.32 shows on its face a surplus and the candidate fails to pay the amount required by that section by the relevant date.

#### **88.23 (2) Penalties**

Subject to subsection (7), in the case of a default described in subsection (1),

- (a) the candidate forfeits any office to which he or she was elected and the office is deemed to be vacant; and
- (b) until the next regular election has taken place, the candidate is ineligible to be elected or appointed to any office to which this Act applies.

#### **92 (1) Offences by candidate**

A candidate is guilty of an offence and, on conviction, in addition to any other penalty that may be imposed under this Act, is subject to the penalties described in subsection 88.23 (2),

- (a) if the candidate incurs expenses that exceed the amount determined for the office under section 88.20; or
- (b) if the candidate files a document under section 88.25 or 88.32 that is incorrect or otherwise does not comply with that section.

### **Refund**

#### **34 Refund**

A candidate is entitled to receive a refund of the nomination filing fee if the documents required under subsection 88.25 (1) are filed on or before 2 p.m. on the filing date in accordance with that subsection.

### **Filing Requirements**

Every candidate shall file by March 30, 2027, with the Clerk with whom their nomination was filed a financial statement and auditor's report in accordance with s.88.25 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*

- 88.25 (1) On or before 2:00 p.m. on the filing date, a candidate shall file with the Clerk with whom the nomination was filed a financial statement and auditor's report, each in the prescribed form, reflecting the candidate's election campaign finances,
- a) in the case of a regular election, as of December 31 in the year of the election;
  - b) in the case of a by-election, as of the 45<sup>th</sup> day after Voting Day.
- (2) If a candidate's election campaign ends as described in paragraph 3 of subsection 88.24(1), the financial statement and auditor's report must reflect the candidate's election campaign finances as of the day the election campaign period ended.



- (3) If an error is identified in a filed financial statement, the candidate may withdraw the statement and, at the same time, file a corrected financial statement and auditor's report on or before the applicable filing date under section 88.30.
- (4) If the candidate's election campaign period continues during all or part of the supplementary filing period, the candidate shall, before 2:00 pm on the supplementary filing date, file a supplementary financial statement and auditor's report for the supplementary reporting period.
- (5) If a candidate's election campaign period ends as described in paragraph 3 of subsection 88.24(1) and the election campaign period continued during all or part of the supplementary filing period, the candidate shall, before 2:00 pm on the supplementary filing date, file a supplementary financial statement and auditor's report for the period commencing on the day the candidate's election campaign period ends and including the six-month period following the year of the election.
- (6) A supplementary financial statement or auditor's report shall include all the information contained in the initial statement or report filed under subsection (1) updated to reflect the changes to the candidate's campaign finances during the supplementary reporting period.
- (7) An auditor's report shall be prepared by an auditor licensed under the *Public Accounting Act, 2004*.
- (8) No auditor's report is required if the total contributions received and total expenses incurred in the election campaign up to the end of the relevant period are each equal to or less than \$10,000.

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# Section E:

## Township of Zorra Election and Voting Procedures



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## **Township of Zorra**

# **TELEPHONE/INTERNET VOTING POLICIES and PROCEDURES for the 2026 MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION**

Approved by the  
Clerk / Returning Officer of  
The Township of Zorra  
this 28th day of May, 2026

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These Policies and Procedures have been prepared for the purposes of convenience ONLY. For accurate reference, please refer to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended and the *Good Government Act, 2009*.

## 1. AUTHORITY

On June 4, 2025, the Council of the Township of Zorra adopted By-law Number 2025-23 authorizing the use of an alternative voting method, that being the Telephone/Internet Voting method.

The Municipal Elections Act, more specifically Subsection 42(3), states as follows:

### **Procedures and forms**

- (3) The Clerk shall,
- (a) establish procedures and forms for the use of,
    - (i) any voting and vote-counting equipment authorized by by-law, and
    - (ii) any alternative voting method authorized by by-law; and
  - (b) provide a copy of the procedures and forms to each candidate when his or her nomination is filed. 2009, c. 33, Sched. 21, s. 8 (22); 2016, c. 15, s. 31 (3).

Subsection 42(4), states that the Clerk shall provide the procedures and forms on or before June 1 in the year of the election.

Subsection 42(4), states that the procedures and forms established by the Clerk, if they are consistent with the principles of the Act, prevail over anything in the Act and the regulations made under it.

In addition, at the December 18, 2024, Council meeting, the Council of the Township of Zorra endorsed the use of Internet and Telephone voting for the 2026 municipal election. The Township of Zorra, in collaboration with the other Oxford County municipalities using internet and telephone voting for the 2026 election, issued a Request for Proposal in September 2025. As a result, Intelivote Systems Inc., an eVoting Service Provider, was awarded the proposal for Telephone/Internet Voting service for the 2026 Municipal & School Board Elections.

Subsection 11(2) of the Municipal Elections Act states that the Clerk of a local municipality has responsibility for conducting elections within that municipality and responsibility for,

- a) preparing for the election;

- b) preparing for and conducting a recount in the election;
- c) maintaining peace and order in connection with the election; and
- d) in a regular election, preparing and submitting the report described in subsection 12.1 (2). 1996, c. 32, Sched., s. 11 (2); 2009, c. 33, Sched. 21, s. 8 (7).

With respect to the duties and authority of a municipal Clerk, the Municipal Elections Act further states as follows:

- 12(1) A Clerk who is responsible for conducting an election may provide for any matter or procedure that,
- (a) is not otherwise provided for in an Act or regulation; and
  - (b) in the Clerk's opinion, is necessary or desirable for conducting the election.
- 12(2) The power conferred by subsection (1) includes power to establish forms, including forms of oaths and statutory declarations, and power to require their use.
- 12(3) The power conferred by subsection (1) includes power to require a person, as a condition of doing anything or having an election official do anything under this Act, to furnish proof that is satisfactory to the election official of the person's identity or qualifications, including citizenship or residency, or of any other matter.
- 13(1) Any notice or other information that this Act requires the Clerk to give shall be given in a form and manner and at a time that the Clerk considers adequate to give reasonable notice or to convey the information, as the case may be.
- 13(2) The Clerk shall provide electors, candidates and persons who are eligible to be electors with information to enable them to exercise their rights under this Act.

Subsection 42(5) states that when a by-law authorizing the use of an alternative voting method is in effect, Sections 43 (advance votes) and 44 (voting proxies) apply only if the by-law specifies. The Township of Zorra By-law Number 2025-23, as amended, prohibits proxy voting in the municipal election. With respect to proxies, a person cannot give his or her Voter Information Letter to another eligible elector or other individual for the purpose of voting. Acceptance of a Voter Information Letter including the actual voting thereof will be considered an

illegal and corrupt practice and therefore subject to the penalty provision under the Municipal Elections Act.

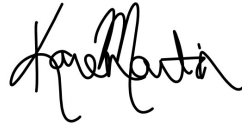
The Municipal Elections Act, more specifically Section 53, also provides that the Clerk may declare an emergency if he or she is of the opinion that circumstances have arisen that are likely to prevent the election being conducted in accordance with this Act and provides the authority to the Clerk to make arrangements for the proper conduct of the election. Any arrangements made by the Clerk, if they are consistent with the principles of the Municipal Elections Act, prevail over anything in the Act and the regulations and all such arrangements, if made in good faith, shall not be reviewed or set aside on account of unreasonableness or supposed unreasonableness.

Therefore, as Clerk of the Township of Zorra and Returning Officer for the 2026 Municipal & School Board Elections, I do hereby certify and approve the following procedures for conducting the 2026 Municipal & School Board Elections and also establish that the attached forms are the forms permitted to be used during this election process.

May 28, 2026

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Date Approved



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Karen Martin, Clerk / Returning Officer

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- a) Advance Voting - means voting conducted starting at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 13, 2026, to 7:59 a.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026.
- b) Ballot - means either an image on a computer screen, or any web enabled device, of a ballot card for an election to be voted for, including all choices available to the electors and containing spaces in which the electors mark their votes; or when voting using a telephone or wireless phone, an audio set of instructions which describe all choices available to the electors and instruction to mark their selection by depressing the numbered touchtone keypad.
- c) Candidate - means a person who has been nominated under Section 33 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.
- d) Certified Candidate - means a candidate whose nomination has been certified by the municipal Clerk under Section 35 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.
- e) Clerk - means the Clerk of the Township of Zorra who is responsible for conducting this election under the authority of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended. *(This legislation provides that the Clerk of a municipality may provide for any matter that is not otherwise provided for in an Act or regulation and is, in the Clerk of the municipality's opinion, necessary or desirable - Section 12 of the Municipal Elections Act)*
- f) Election official - means the Clerk or other person(s) appointed in writing by the Clerk to carry out election duties under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996. An election official can only carry out the tasks and duties as assigned in writing by the Clerk and must take the prescribed oath.
- g) Eligible Elector - means a person who is entitled to be an elector at an election held in the local municipality, if on voting day he or she meets the qualifications outlined in Section 17(2) and 17(3) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

- h) Password - means an additional access control word assigned by Intelivote Systems Inc., to each authorized user to provide additional security for access to the voting system.
- i) Personal Identification Number (PIN) - means a unique multiple digit number assigned by the Intelivote Systems Inc., to each voter to provide security for access to the voting system.
- j) Preliminary List of Electors - means a list of electors for the Township of Zorra compiled by Elections Ontario (EO) and provided to the Township of Zorra between July 31 and September 1 of an election year as agreed upon by EO and the Clerk.
- k) Satisfactory Identification - means the identification required under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (Ontario Regulation 304/13) which would provide proof of identity and residence of an individual to the satisfaction of an election official.
- l) Script - means all information flow and system prompts from the eVoting system including instructions, informational messages, error messages, and exceptions.
- m) Scrutineer - means an individual, appointed in writing by a certified candidate, to represent him or her during the voting process.
- n) Support person - means a person who has been requested by an elector to assist him or her in the voting process.
- o) Voter Help Centre - means a location provided by the Township of Zorra to assist electors with the Telephone/Internet Voting process or other general election inquiries, including revisions. The Voter Help Centre is located at the Zorra Municipal Centre, 163 Brock Street, Thamesford, Ontario, N0M 2M0.
- p) Voters' List - means the Preliminary List of Electors, as corrected by the Clerk, under the provisions of Section 22 of the Municipal Elections Act 1996.

- q) Voting Day - means the final day on which the vote is to be taken in an election and shall be until 8:00 p.m. on that day. Voting day in a regular election is the fourth Monday in October – October 26, 2026.
  
- r) Voter Information Letter - means a sealed envelope containing a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for each person on the voters' list or who has completed an application, duly approved by an election official, for inclusion on the voters' list, a telephone access number and internet address for voting, a Voter Help Centre number for assistance and a list of candidates for office. These envelopes shall be mailed individually, or hand-delivered as required, to every person on the voters' list.

### **3. APPLICATION**

1. This procedure has been developed under the authority of Subsection 42(4) pursuant to Subsection 42(3) (a) (ii) of the Municipal Elections Act and applies to the Telephone/Internet Voting being conducted by the Township of Zorra between October 13, 2026, and October 26, 2026.
  
2. The procedures and forms established by this document prevail over anything in the Act and its regulations, as per Subsection 42(4) of the Municipal Elections Act.
  
3. Where these procedures do not provide for any matter, the election shall be conducted as far as is consistent and practical within the principles of the Municipal Elections Act with the same being determined and established by the Clerk.
  
4. These procedures may be amended, as necessary and deemed appropriate, by the Clerk of the Township of Zorra. Any amendment to these procedures shall be signed by the Clerk and a copy of the amendment(s) shall be provided forthwith to all certified candidates for office for the Township of Zorra and/or school boards.

#### **4. SECRECY**

1. The Clerk shall require all election official(s) and/or other persons working in connection with the municipal elections to swear or affirm an oath of secrecy in accordance with Section 49 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.
2. No person shall interfere or attempt to interfere with an elector while in the process of accessing the Telephone/Internet Voting service or interfere or attempt to interfere in the voting process while using the Telephone/Internet Voting service unless expressly requested and authorized by an elector asking for assistance.
3. No person shall obtain or attempt to obtain information about how an elector intends to vote or has voted. Any individual requested by an elector to assist him or her in voting is required to maintain the secrecy of the vote(s) cast by the elector and shall vote according to the instructions and wishes of the elector.
4. No person shall communicate any information that might have been inadvertently obtained about how an elector intends to vote or has voted.
5. No elector shall reveal how he or she intends to vote except when obtaining assistance in voting from either a support person or an election official.
6. All electors voting at the Voter Help Centre may vote with the assistance of a support person; however, the support person shall be required to take the appropriate oath prior to providing assistance.
7. All complaints regarding any and/or all breaches of secrecy shall be investigated by the proper authorities and shall be prosecuted according to the provisions of “Corrupt Practices and Other Offences - Penalties and Enforcement” under Sections 89 and 90 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

#### **5. PRELIMINARY LIST OF ELECTORS / VOTERS’ LIST**

1. The Preliminary List of Electors shall be requested from Elections Ontario (EO) in an electronic format. The list shall be reviewed by the Clerk of the Township of Zorra and obvious errors shall be corrected as permitted

under Section 22 of the Municipal Elections Act, and the list shall be approved for use as the Voters' List.

- a. The list shall then be reproduced in paper or electronic format and distributed to those who are entitled to copies under Subsections 23(3), (4) and (5) of the Act. All certified candidates shall be entitled to a paper copy or an electronic format and shall sign a statement acknowledging that the voters' list shall not be used for any commercial purposes.

The candidates shall receive login ID(s) and password(s) allowing them to view the voters' list that contains the names of the electors who are entitled to vote for their office. They can use the module to identify and track individual electors during the course of the election campaign and voting period to observe participation.

- b. The list shall be available in an electronic format to accommodate the administration in the voting process at the Voter Help Centre.
- c. Additions, corrections and deletions may be made to the list in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.
- d. The Clerk and/or Intelivote Systems Inc., shall produce an electronic list of the additions, corrections and deletions, as stated in paragraph (5.1.c.) of this document, and make available online these additions, corrections and deletions to those who are entitled to copies of the voters' list under the Act and the same shall be the final voters' list. This list, as required under Section 27 of the Municipal Elections Act, shall be available on September 30.
- e. The voters' list, as corrected by the Clerk pursuant to Section 22 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 shall be provided to Intelivote Systems Inc., in computer format in order for Intelivote Systems Inc., to manage the Voter Information Letter.

Voter Information Letters shall be distributed by incentive letter mail or hand delivered as required, to all eligible electors to enable them to use the Telephone/Internet Voting service.

2. The Voter Help Centre shall be responsible for the following:

- a. Eligible electors who attend the Voter Help Centre and are not on the voters' list will be able to be added to the list by filling out a declaration form and providing satisfactory identification.
  - i. Their names will be added to the voters' list and they will be assigned and receive (or mailed) a Voter Information Letter containing a (PIN); and
  - ii. they will be able to vote at the Voter Help Centre if they so wish during the voting period.
- b. Verifying and re-issuing a Voter Information Letter to qualified voters:
  - i. where a person on the voters' list has lost their Voter Information Letter or did not receive it in the mail, or does not have access to it, they can attend a Voter Help Centre in order to receive a new one. The authorized election official will disable the voter's lost Personal Identification Number (PIN) and electronically mark it in the system with the appropriate details. Upon providing satisfactory identification to an election official, an oath shall be taken by the voter and a new Voter Information Letter containing a new Personal Identification Number (PIN) shall be issued.
- c. Verifying and re-issuing a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to qualified voters:
  - i. where a person on the voters' list has lost their Personal Identification Number (PIN), did not receive it in the mail, or does not have access to it, they can attend a Voter Help Centre in order to receive a new one. The authorized election official will disable the voter's previous PIN and electronically mark it in the system with the appropriate details. Upon providing satisfactory identification or information to a Voter Help Centre election official, as may be defined, a new Personal Identification Number (PIN) shall be issued.

## 6. NOTICES

1. The Clerk of the Township of Zorra shall notify voters of the following election information using advertisements:

- a. that municipal & school board elections are being held for the Township of Zorra and that the Municipality has adopted an alternative voting method (and the manner in which electors may use the alternative voting method), being Telephone/Internet Voting;
  - b. the date(s), time(s) and location(s) for the holding of the vote including advance voting, and the methods of voting for each;
  - c. the office(s) of the council and/or school boards;
  - d. the manner in which electors may or may not use voting proxies;
  - e. who is eligible to vote in the municipal & school board elections; and
  - f. the location and dates, and hours of operation of the Voter Help Centre, how persons can check to see if their name is on the voters' list and the procedures by which their name can be added or information corrected on the voters' list.
2. At the Clerk's discretion, notices will be published in the local newspapers and/or posted on the Municipality's website. All notices shall be made available in English only.

The following essential notices shall be issued:

- a. Notice of Election Information. See paragraph 6.1;
- b. Notice of Revision of Voters' List. See paragraph 6.1(f);
- c. Notice of Nomination; and
- d. Certified Election Results.

The Clerk reserves the right to publish additional advertisements and notices as deemed appropriate.

3. Where possible, cooperative advertising may take place - costs to be approved and shared by the participating municipalities.
4. Each person on the voters' list shall be mailed, by "Incentive Letter Mail" a sealed Voter Information Letter containing:
  - a. their Personal Identification Number (PIN), the telephone number(s) to call to cast a vote, and the designated internet address (URL) to access to cast a vote using the internet;

- b. instructions on how to vote;
  - c. dates and hours of voting; and
  - d. the location(s) and telephone number(s) of the Voter Help Centre.
5. All Voter Information Letters shall be made available in English only.

## 7. VOTING

1. A Telephone/Internet Voting method shall be used for the 2026 Municipal & School Board Elections.
  - a. Telephone/Internet Voting:
    - i. Eligible voters shall be required to telephone a designated number or access a designated internet address and cast their vote.
    - ii. Every eligible elector shall be limited to only one vote through the use of a PIN distributed by Incentive Letter Mail, or hand-delivered as required, in a sealed and personalized Voter Information Letter.
    - iii. Intelivote Systems Inc. will allow the eligible voter to vote using a telephone or the internet.
    - iv. Following the voter's selection, the voting system response shall identify the voter's choice and provide the voter with the option of changing or confirming their vote.
    - v. The voting system shall enable the voter to decline from voting for an office(s) if he/she wishes to do so.
    - vi. Once the PIN has been used to complete all assigned races associated with the election it cannot be used again, and further access shall not be granted to the Telephone/Internet Voting service to vote again.
  - b. Voting will commence on Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

2. Prior to the eVote activation, being on Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., the auditor or other authorized election official will generate the confirmation report that contains all candidate names running for an office (through the eVoting system by secure ID and password). The report displays in real time the sum total of votes cast for each candidate running for an office. The timing of this report activity ensures that all totals for all candidates, confirms zero (0) votes before the electronic election begins.

The eVote will be activated unless any of the counts associated with the candidate names do not indicate a zero total, and unless directed otherwise by an election official.

3. Candidates or their scrutineer may be present to verify and ensure that all totals of votes cast are at zero (0) and shall be permitted to sign a document that attests to this fact.
4. Intelivote Systems Inc., will make available online a list to the Clerk and any other appropriate individuals of the Township of Zorra, of all voters' list individuals by order of wards, who have voted during the voting period if such an event has taken place. The names of individuals who have voted will be marked as voted. A list of voters who have voted will be provided or made available to the candidates or their respective scrutineer through the Clerk's office or by electronic means by Intelivote Systems Inc. at the Clerk's discretion. This list shall be provided by Intelivote Systems Inc., in real time or as closely as possible to real time.
5. If so allowed by the Clerk, Intelivote Systems Inc., will make available during the course of the election, IDs and passwords for candidates and their scrutineers, who when using this authorization can connect to a Candidate module to review voter's list information previously identified by them to recognize participants in the election. This capability does not provide the candidate or their designate information on *how* a voter has voted, only if they *have* voted in the election. A voter who has voted at least one race during an election is considered a participant.
6. Where a voter is associated with multiple properties within the Township of Zorra, the voter may vote only once, and the qualifying address to determine eligibility for voting shall be the place of residence of the voter. All duplication of names on the Preliminary List of Electors shall be verified by the Clerk and/or election official(s), and all duplicate names of

individuals shall be deleted prior to the final preparation of the voters' list. Should a voter receive more than one Voter Information Letter, the voter may only vote once and must return the other Document(s) to the Zorra Municipal Centre. All voters that vote more than once or who improperly use the Voter Information Letter shall be reported to the Ontario Provincial Police for further investigation as to possible corrupt practices under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

7. Should a Voter Information Letter be returned to the Zorra Municipal Centre unopened, the PIN status will be disabled by an election official in a manner that prevents the PIN from being successfully validated in the voting process. The Voter Information Letters will then be marked "unused" and be retained in a secure means and subsequently destroyed at the same time as all other Municipal Election material as provided for under Section 88(2) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.
8. Should a Voter Information Letter be returned to the Zorra Municipal Centre that has been opened but has not been used for voting purposes, the PIN status will be disabled by an election official in a manner that prevents the PIN from being successfully validated in the voting process. In this circumstance, the Voter Information Letter shall be marked unused and be retained and destroyed as in item 7 above.
9. The Clerk and the election official(s) shall ensure a complete audit trail is maintained of all Voter Information Letters:
  - a. that were sent to voters on the voters' list;
  - b. that were undeliverable and returned from the Post Office;
  - c. that were returned by a voter or other individual(s) either opened or unopened but unused for voting purposes;
  - d. that were re-issued to an eligible elector;
  - e. whose PIN on the Letters were set to a status that prevented them from being validated in the voting process.
  - f. Where an eligible voter has attempted to validate his or her PIN and they have determined that the PIN has already been used, the voter can attend the location determined by the Clerk, bringing satisfactory identification and have an election official confirm that the PIN has been used by an impersonator.
10.
  - a. Prior to authorizing the re-issuance of a new Voter Information Letter which contains a new PIN, the voter shall be required to

respond and answer any and all questions from the election official. The election official shall document, to his or her satisfaction, questions and answers of the voter and, if deemed appropriate, the Clerk shall submit same to the Ontario Provincial Police for further investigation and prosecution.

- b. If the election official believes that all questions have been answered truthfully and to his or her satisfaction, the election official may authorize the provision of a new Voter Information Letter which contains a new PIN or, at the discretion of the election official the elector will be required to make a declaration as to his or her statement and take an oath which shall be given by the election official. A copy of this declaration shall also be submitted to the Ontario Provincial Police should further questioning be required in order to ascertain if corrupt practices have occurred. The elector will be required to assist and cooperate in the investigation in determining the individual(s) who has fraudulently used the voter's assigned PIN.
  - c. Once the voter has properly answered all questions and if required, taken the prescribed oath, a new Voter Information Letter containing a new PIN can be issued.
  - d. Where an eligible voter has received an incorrect Voter PIN in terms of ward and school support association, the voter can contact a Voter Help Centre and have the proper information applied to the existing PIN. The voter may re-access the system and vote all races not yet completed.
  - e. The eligible voter shall be able to re-enter the system at any time during the election using the existing PIN or the re-categorized PIN until voting for all races has been completed.
11. New PIN(s) shall not be given out over the telephone or by mail without the expressed approval of the Clerk or their designate. A Voter Information Letter containing a PIN shall not be given to any person at the Voter Help Centre unless satisfactory identification is provided and the individual has taken the required oath, if required, as administered by an election official.

## **8. VOTER QUALIFICATIONS**

1. A person is entitled to be an elector at an election held in a local municipality if, on Voting Day, October 26, 2026, he or she:
  - i. is a Canadian citizen,
  - ii. is at least 18 years old,
  - iii. resides in the local municipality, or is the owner or tenant of land in the local municipality, or the spouse, of such owner or tenant; and
  - iv. is not prohibited from voting under subsection 17(3) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 or otherwise, by law.

## **9. VOTING PROCESS**

1. Eligible voters may vote by:
  - a. accessing the telephone number provided by using a touch-tone telephone - but not a rotary dial telephone. “Digi-pulse” telephones will be able to access the system if the telephone over-ride button is set to a “touch-tone” mode. Should the preceding not be done correctly, the interactive response system will provide an error message requesting that the eligible elector obtain assistance,
  - b. accessing the internet address provided by using an internet connected device.
  - c. Eligible voters may vote by attending the Voter Help Centre during the following hours:
    - Tuesday, October 13, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
    - Wednesday, October 14 – Friday, October 16, 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
    - Monday, October 19 – Friday, October 23, 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
    - Monday, October 26, 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

and using a touch-tone telephone or the internet access provided. Any telephone provided at the Voter Help Centre shall delete any display options on the telephone.

- d. Attending the Voter Help Centre during hours identified in paragraph (c) with a support person, taking the appropriate oath(s), and having a support person vote using a touch tone telephone or the internet access provided. In the absence of a support person, the voter may request the assistance of an election official, who may provide assistance only after the appropriate oath, if required, has been taken.
- e. Attending the Voter Help Centre during hours identified in paragraph (c) with an interpreter, taking the appropriate oral oath(s), and voting using a touch-tone telephone or the internet access provided.

## 10. SCRUTINEERS

- 1. Scrutineers may be appointed, in writing by the candidate, as stated under Section 16 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996. If appointed, scrutineers will be entitled to the following:
  - a. upon request and after producing the properly signed “Appointment of Scrutineer” and prescribing to the oath(s) of secrecy, they will be provided access to a Candidate module; showing them a voter sequence number and/or the elector names who are entitled to vote for their designate office, allowing them to identify, observe, and list all electors that have participated. Scrutineers may log in to the system any time after the election has started and voters have cast ballots, and determine who has voted.
  - b. upon request and after producing the properly signed appointment of scrutineer form and prescribing to the oath(s) of secrecy, they may attend a Voter Help Centre during hours of operation to observe the process. Scrutineers who do not follow the instructions of the Clerk or election official, or who attempt to interfere, influence or determine how an elector is voting, will be requested to leave the Voter Help Centre immediately. Their appointment will be revoked and they will not be permitted to re-attend a Voter Help Centre.
  - c. to be present at the time and place where results are received by the Clerk including signing the results report indicating the final results and votes cast.

2. Use of a cellular telephone or any other electronic device shall NOT BE PERMITTED within a Voter Help Centre by any candidate or scrutineer.

## 11. SYSTEM

1. The integrity of the voting process shall be the responsibility of the Clerk of the Township of Zorra and shall be preserved by:
  - a. ensuring that every eligible elector on the voters' list is mailed, using Incentive Letter Mail or hand-delivered as required, a sealed Voter Information Letter which contains the voter's unique PIN;
  - b. ensuring that no one except Intelivote Systems Inc., the Clerk of the Township of Zorra, or designate, maintains a list of Personal Identification Numbers that matches each voter's name and address; and
  - c. providing an opportunity for eligible electors who do not appear on the voters' list to be added to the list, or to make amendments to the list, up to and including election day, October 26, 2026, at 8:00 p.m..
2. The voting system shall be tested on several occasions. The test(s) shall include, but not be limited to the following:
  - a. checking the wording of the script;
  - b. checking the Voter Help Centre telephones and internet access;
  - c. checking Script and input timing;
  - d. attempting to use a PIN more than once;
  - e. balancing a predetermined number of votes with those cast;
  - f. matching PINs to names and addresses;
  - g. checking the system which is used for activating PINs; and
  - h. deliberately entering the wrong information.

3. All certified candidates are to provide to the Clerk the proper pronunciation of their name, in English and, in French if applicable, no later than August 21, 2026.

## **12. CORRUPT ELECTION PRACTICES PROVINCIAL OFFENCE AND PROSECUTION**

1. Sections 89 and 90 of the Municipal Elections Act provides for penalties and enforcement of corrupt practices and other offences during an election process.
2. Although the Township of Zorra will be using an alternative voting method, being Telephone/Internet Voting, the principles and the integrity of the election process will remain and is enforceable.
3. Section 89 of the Municipal Elections Act continues by stating:  
*A person is guilty of an offence if he or she*
  - a. votes without being entitled to do so;
  - b. votes more times than this Act allows;
  - c. votes in a voting place in which he or she is not entitled to vote;
  - d. induces or procures a person to vote when that person is not entitled to do so;
  - e. having appointed a voting proxy that remains in force, votes otherwise than by the proxy;
  - f. having been appointed a voting proxy, votes under the authority of the proxy when the elector has cancelled the proxy, is no longer entitled to vote or has died;
  - g. before or during an election, publishes a false statement of a candidate's withdrawal;
  - h. furnishes false or misleading information to a person whom this Act authorizes to obtain information;
  - i. without authority, supplies a ballot to anyone;
  - j. delivers to the deputy returning officer to be placed in a ballot box a paper other than the ballot the deputy returning officer gave him or her;
  - k. takes a ballot away from the voting place;
  - l. at an election, takes, opens or otherwise deals with a ballot, a ballot box, or a book or package of ballots without having authority to do so;

m. attempts to do something described in clauses (a) to (l). 1996, c. 32, Sched., s. 89.”

Penalties for offences under the Act are described in Section 94.1 of the act and include amounts of fines and terms of imprisonment.

4. No person(s) shall solicit a Voter Information Letter from an eligible elector. All valid complaints or knowledge of solicitation shall be reported immediately to the Ontario Provincial Police for investigation of corrupt practices.
5. In addition, under the provisions of Section 90 of the Municipal Elections Act, if a person is convicted of an offence and the offence was committed knowingly, the offence also constitutes a corrupt practice and the person is liable, in addition to any other penalty, for a term of imprisonment of not more than six (6) months.
6. Although many provisions of the Municipal Elections Act also deal with voting places, ballots and ballot boxes, etc. the same must be used interchangeably with the “alternative form” of voting since the principle of the Act must be maintained and is therefore enforceable and subject to penalties.
7. As such, the Municipal Clerk of the Township of Zorra in this alternative form of voting, has agreed to the following rules and regulations:
  - a. THAT all complaints about actions which may contravene the provisions of the Municipal Elections Act, either verbally or written, will be investigated by the Clerk;
  - b. THAT all such valid complaints, once investigated to the extent and knowledge of the Clerk, will be submitted to the local detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police;
  - c. THE Detachment Commander of the Ontario Provincial Police has been advised that all such complaints will be turned over to his or her office for further investigation;
  - d. THE Detachment Commander of the Ontario Provincial Police, once the investigation is completed will communicate with the Crown Attorney’s Office to determine if an individual(s) will be prosecuted.

- e. THE Clerk or any election official will not attempt to intervene in the prosecution and may be called to give evidence during prosecution.

### **13. MAIL TAMPERING – CRIMINAL OFFENCE AND PROSECUTION**

1. The Criminal Code of Canada states that tampering with the mail of an individual is a criminal offence and a person(s) found guilty is liable to a term of imprisonment not exceeding ten (10) years.
2. Since the Township of Zorra will be using an alternative voting method, that being Telephone/Internet Voting, and the notification of the voting process and how electors can access the voting system in order to exercise their right to vote will be completed through the mail, mail tampering is a criminal offence under the Criminal Code of Canada.
3. As such and in order to ensure the integrity and confidence of the voting process for all electors and the candidates, the Municipal Clerk of the Township of Zorra in this alternative form of voting has agreed to the following rules and regulations:
  - a. THAT all complaints about actions which may contravene the provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada with respect to mail tampering, either verbally or written, will be investigated by the Clerk;
  - b. THAT all such valid complaints, once investigated to the extent and knowledge of the Clerk, will be submitted to the local detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police;
  - c. THE Detachment Commander of the Ontario Provincial Police has been advised that all such complaints will be turned over to his or her office for further investigation;
  - d. THE Detachment Commander of the Ontario Provincial Police, once the investigation is completed, will communicate with the Crown Attorney's Office to determine if an individual(s) will be prosecuted.
  - e. THE Clerk or any election official will not attempt to intervene in the prosecution and may be called to give evidence during prosecution.

## 14. RESULTS

1. The Township of Zorra shall keep its public internet and telephone voting open until 8:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026, and its Voter Help Centre access open until the Clerk confirms that all eligible voters in the Voter Help Centre at 8:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026, have completed voting. All voters who have entered the Voter Help Centre prior to 8:00 p.m. will be eligible to cast their vote.
2. The Clerk of the Township of Zorra, at 8:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026, providing that all eligible electors within the Voter Help Centre have voted, shall request the close and deactivation of the Telephone/Internet Voting service and shall also request the tabulation of the results for each candidate.
3. The Clerk shall report the “unofficial” results when received from Intelivote Systems Inc. as soon as practicable after 8:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026, at the Zorra Municipal Centre located at 163 Brock Street, Thamesford, Ontario. The unofficial results of the counting will also be posted on the Township’s website at [www.zorra.ca](http://www.zorra.ca).
4. Pursuant to Subsection 55(4) and subject to the provisions of Section 56 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 concerning “Recount”, the Clerk shall as soon as practicable after the tabulation of the election results on Monday, October 26, 2026, at the Zorra Municipal Centre located at 163 Brock Street, Thamesford, Ontario;
  - i. declare the candidate or candidates, as the case may be, who received the highest number of votes to be elected.
5. The “Official Results” of each candidate by ward, shall be available at the Zorra Municipal Centre and posted on the Township website, as soon as possible after Voting Day.

## 15. TIE VOTE – RECOUNT PROCEDURES

1. The Clerk will conduct all recounts as per the regulations in the Act, Sections 56 to 64. A recount is required when:
  - a. A tied vote where both or all candidates cannot be declared elected;
  - b. By resolution of Council;
  - c. By resolution of a local board; or
  - d. By order of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice.
2. In the case of a tie vote, as provided under Section 56 of the Act, the Clerk of the Township of Zorra shall request from the Intelivote Systems Inc. a re-tabulation of the votes cast to be conducted in the same manner as the original vote tabulation.
3. Pursuant to Subsection 56(2) of the Act, the recount shall be held within fifteen (15) days after the Clerk's declaration of the results of the election.
4. The Clerk will notify all involved parties of the recount and confirm a date and time of the recount.
5. Pursuant to Subsection 61(1) of the Act, the following persons will be authorized to attend the recount:
  - a. The Clerk and any other Election Official appointed by the Clerk for the recount procedure;
  - b. The Municipal lawyer and/or Chief Administrative Officer;
  - c. Every certified candidate for the office;
  - d. The lawyer for each of the candidate(s); and
  - e. Only one (1) scrutineer for each of the candidate(s).
6. Within 15 days after the declaration of the election results, the Clerk shall request Intelivote Systems Inc. to re-tabulate the results for the office(s) that are subject to the recount procedure and that the results be segregated by ward. Intelivote Systems Inc. shall send the results of the recount by electronic mail (E-mail) and these results will be compared to the results tabulated by the Auditor assigned to the election.
7. If, after a recount is conducted, there is still a tie vote, the names of the candidates who tied will be placed in a container. The Clerk will blindly draw a name from the container. The name drawn will be the successful candidate.

AFTER VOTING DAY

8. At no time after voting day shall any information regarding the voter, PINs and ballots come together to allow anyone to know how an elector has voted.
9. All election materials shall be destroyed in accordance with the principles of Section 88 of the Municipal Election Act, 1996.

## **16.EMERGENCIES**

Pursuant to the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, Section 53, an emergency shall be declared in the event of a flood, fire or power failure in the municipality; acute illness or accident of the Clerk/returning officer or assistant returning officer which prevents her/him from conducting the election pursuant to the Municipal Elections Act.

In the event of an emergency, the Clerk/returning officer shall advertise on radio and television stations if possible, and post notices on the municipality's website, to the extent possible, that the election has been delayed.

In the event of an emergency, Intelivote Systems Inc., under direction from the Clerk/returning officer, shall stop the eVote system from accepting calls via a telephone and connections from the Internet, thus preventing the election from continuing, or starting, as the case may be.

In the event the Clerk/returning officer or assistant returning officer is unable to be present to conduct procedures on voting day, there shall be a substitute qualified person appointed or available to attend to the election details.

## **17.ACCESSIBILITY**

The Clerk shall have regard for the needs of candidates and electors with disabilities.

The Clerk shall ensure the Voter Help Centre is accessible to candidates and electors with disabilities.

The Clerk shall prepare a Report to be submitted to the Council 90 days after Voting Day about identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affect voters and candidates with disabilities.

Election officials will be available for assistance during the Voting Period and on Voting Day.

The Township of Zorra has an Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy, an Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy, and a 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan. The Municipal Election for the Township of Zorra will be conducted with having regard to the policies as established.

## **18.AMENDMENTS TO PROCEDURES**

The Clerk has the right, at any time, up to and including Voting Day, to amend the procedures contained herein. A copy of any amendment will be forwarded to each candidate.

## **19.ATTACHMENTS – FORMS**

The following forms have been approved for use by the Township of Zorra for the election process:

<b>Form #</b>	<b>Name of Form</b>	<b>Section</b>
EL07	List of Certified Candidates	(S.11(4) 2)
EL08	Certificate of Election Results	(S.11(4) 3)
EL09	Final Summary of Election Results	(S.11(4) 4)
EL10	Appointment and Oath of DRO	(S.15(1))
EL11	Appointment and oath of an Election Official	(S.15(2))
EL12(A)	Appointment of Scrutineer by Candidate	(S.16(1))
EL12(B)	Oral Oath of Secrecy	
EL14	Candidate's Declaration-Proper Use of Voters' List	(S.23(5))
EL15	Application to Amend Voters' List	(S.24)
EL16	Application for Removal of Another's Name from the Voters' List	(S.25)
EL17	Notice of Nomination for Office	(S.32)
EL18(A)	Declaration of a Qualified Candidate – Municipal	(S.35(2))
EL18(B)	Declaration of a Qualified Candidate - School Trustee	
EL19	Withdrawal of Nomination	(S.36)
EL20	Declaration of Acclamation to Office	(S.37(1))
EL21	Notice of Death of Candidate	(S.39(A))
EL22	Certificate on Voters' List	(S.28(1))
EL10	FOI Freedom of Information Release	
EL24	Sample Notice of Election Information (For Newspaper Ad)	(S.40)

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EL25(A)	Certificate and Receipt for Ballots	(S.41(1))
EL26	Oath of Qualification	(S. 52(1) 3)
EL27	Oral Oath of Friend or Interpreter	
EI 27A	Oath of Elector Requesting Assistance of a Friend	
EL29(A)	Voting Instructions	(S.52(3),(4))
EL29(B)	Voter Instructions and Sample Ballot	
EL30	List of Objections to Vote Count	(S.54(4))
EL31(A)	Statement of Election Results (Deputy Returning Officer)	(S.55(1) A)
EL32	Declaration of Election Candidate	(S.55(4) A)
EL34	Statutory Provisions Regulating Voting Procedures	(S.48, 49)
EL35	Notice of Offence, Notice of Corrupt Practice	(S.89)
EL36	Disclaimer to Right to Office	(S.84(1)- (3))
EL37	Certificate of Maximum Campaign Expenses	(88.20(13))
EL38	Witness Statements as to Destruction of Ballots	(S. 88(2))
EL39	Notice of Recount	(S.56 - 58)
EL40	Recount Results	(S.62(1))
EL41	Declaration of Recount Results	(S.62(4))
EL42	Notice to Candidate of Filing Requirements	(s.88.25)
EL43	Notice of Default	(S.88.27(1))
EL46	Ballots Account	
EL47	Election Official Application	
EL48	Refund of Nomination Fee	

Additional forms have been prepared for the 2026 Municipal Elections and will be utilized when necessary or desirable for conducting the election under the direction of the Clerk, as per Section 12(1) and 12(2) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S. O. 1996.



Township of Zorra  
**2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This plan will address the specific accessibility requirements in relation to the 2026 Municipal Election in the Township of Zorra.

The Township of Zorra has made great efforts in promoting a barrier free community. In an effort to ensure that the 2026 Municipal Election is consistent with the core principles 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 and reported to Council following the election.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

This plan is intended to highlight measures that the Township of Zorra will be implementing to ensure equal opportunity for all electors and candidates. These objectives include:

- 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 persons with disabilities can fully participate in the Municipal Election as an elector, candidate, or election official.
- That efforts are made to ensure that electors with disabilities are aware of the accessibility measures available via channels such as the newspaper, media launches, the Township of Zorra website and social media.
- That the Voter Help Centre location is accessible.

## **3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN**

This Plan is a “living” document which will be improved and updated as best practices are identified and new opportunities for improvement arise. In order to develop the plan below, several steps were taken in order to ensure that the statutory requirements were met and a feasible implementation plan was in place. During the development of the 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan, the following steps shall be implemented:

- Review and analysis of documents, policies and other supporting materials from AMCTO, neighboring municipalities, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, technology suppliers and other various stakeholder groups.
- Establish staff training standards and practices directly related to the Election to ensure that people with disabilities can vote in a positive customer service environment, and ensure that all Election Officials recognize that a voter's needs shall be accommodated.

## 4. VOTING METHODS

The 2026 Township of Zorra Municipal Election will be working with Intelivote Systems Inc. to provide eVoting services to eligible voters. This includes the convenience and independence of voting from anywhere via telephone, internet or in-person at the Voter Help Centre.

Everyday tools like computers, telephones and other aids can present accessible opportunities for persons with disabilities to accomplish more, while being consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity.

The Intelivote Voting System provides voters with the capability to vote from the comfort of their own home. Voting from home facilitates the voting process for persons with disabilities who may have mobility restrictions, visual impairment, and/or have a difficult time with transportation. Additionally, persons who have assistive devices set up in their homes can now use them to assist with casting a ballot privately and independently.

By allowing persons with disabilities to vote from any location and from a selection of methods, there is an increase in the capability for the voter to vote without any assistance. This provides persons with disabilities the same independence and privacy in participating in the election as other voters. If persons with disabilities do require assistance in the voting process, trained Election Officials will be present at in-person at the Voter Help Centre offered at the Zorra Municipal Centre (163 Brock Street, Thamesford), throughout the voting period.

#### **4.1 Telephone Voting**

Eligible voters may vote using a touch-tone telephone, and the toll-free telephone number, date of birth, and the PIN number contained in their Voter Information Letter to access an audio ballot. Communications barriers can make it difficult for people to receive or convey information. Barriers may be identified as low volume, use of language that is not clear or plain, and confusing or unorganized menu options.

The Intelivote telephone voting application provides the following:

- Service on all types of touch tone phones and wireless devices.
- Clear, plain language.
- Menu options that are easy to follow, advising when to select options and provision of confirmation of the voter's selections.
- Standard volume is used to allow for adjustment dependent of the telephone or device being utilized.

#### **4.2 Internet Voting**

Eligible voters may vote online, using a smart phone, tablet device, gaming device or computer and any accompanying assistive devices or software, along with their date of birth and PIN and qualifying information, to access the internet address provided in their Voter Instruction Letter.

The Intelivote System has been created to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG-2 Level AA), so that persons with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate and interact with the online voting system. It is compliant with the guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium website principles, which include organization, functionality and readability of information provided, as well as alternative ways of representing information, such as with audio.

#### **4.3 In-person Voting at the Voter Help Centre**

For those individuals without means to access voting via telephone or Internet, or who require the assistance of a trained Election Official, voting stations will be available at the Voter Help Centre (located in the Zorra Municipal Centre, 163 Brock Street, Thamesford), to provide in-person internet voting opportunities via a laptop or tablet, and telephone voting opportunities via a touch-tone telephone

Voters may attend the Voter Help Centre throughout the voting period. The Township of Zorra will be operating the following voting place location during the Advance Voting Period:

October 13 - 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Zorra Municipal Centre, Lupton Board Room (163 Brock Street, Thamesford)  
Internet and telephone

October 14 -16 and October 19-23 - 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Zorra Municipal Centre, Lupton Board Room (163 Brock Street, Thamesford)  
Internet and telephone

The following voting location will be open on Election Day, Monday October 26, 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Zorra Municipal Centre Lupton Board Room (163 Brock Street, Thamesford)  
Internet and telephone

Access to the voting station interior and voting area shall be level and slip-resistant. Any doormats or carpeting shall be level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. The voting area shall be well lit and seating shall be available. Entrance corridors shall be clear of obstructions and tripping hazards and will allow sufficient space for use of a wheelchair or scooter.

An accessible voting area will be available at each voting location. These areas shall be low in height and have a wide area to allow individuals who use a wheelchair or scooter to vote independently and secretively.

#### **4.4 Special Voting Provisions**

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

## **5. VOTER HELP CENTRE**

The Voter Help Centre is located at the Zorra Municipal Centre (163 Brock Street, Thamesford). The following considerations were taken into account regarding the Voter Help Centre.

### **5.1 Accessible Route**

An easily navigable route will be marked for entry into the voting location and into the voting area within the location. The voting area shall be identified with clear and understandable signage. Seating areas shall be provided throughout the voting location for individuals needing a rest.

### **5.2 Entrance and Exit**

The route to the entrance of the voting location in the Voter Help Centre shall be unobstructed and accessible. The route shall be wide enough to allow an individual using a wheelchair, scooter, other assistive device, or service animal to travel safely. Doors into the voting location and voting area shall be accessible and easy to open or shall remain propped open for the duration of the voting location hours. Routine checks of entrance and exit routes will be made throughout the hours of operation.

### **5.3 Parking**

Accessible parking shall be available at all voting locations. The designated parking space(s) shall be clearly marked with the international Symbol of Accessibility and will be on firm and level ground, close to the entrance of the voting location. By-law officers will monitor and enforce parking at voting locations throughout the day.

## **6. VOTING ASSISTANCE**

### **6.1 Support Person/Friend of the Voter**

Pursuant to the Township of Zorra Accessible Customer Service Policy people with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by a support person at any voting location. A designated support person and/or 'Friend of the Voter' will be administered an oath of secrecy/confidentiality by an Election Official prior to providing any such assistance.

### **6.2 Service Animals**

Pursuant to the Township of Zorra Accessible Customer Service Policy individuals requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all voting locations.

### **6.3 Election Officials**

At the in-person voting location, upon request, Election Officials are available to assist any voter who requires assistance in casting their online ballot. All individuals working in the capacity of an Election Official are formally appointed as such and administered an oath of secrecy prior to voting day.

## **7. COMMUNICATION**

The 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will be made available at the Zorra Municipal Centre (163 Brock Street, Thamesford) and by way of the Township of Zorra web site [www.zorra.ca](http://www.zorra.ca). Alternative formats will be made available upon request.

Information regarding the accessibility measures provided for the 2026 Municipal Election shall be included in general election advertising as well as in the 2026 Municipal Election Nomination Package.

### **7.1 Election Materials**

The Township of Zorra is required, as per the Accessible Customer Service Standard, to provide a copy of a document to a person with a disability, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

#### **Alternate Formats**

Alternate formats are other ways of publishing information besides regular print. Some of these formats can be used by everyone while others are designed to address the specific needs of a user.

The Township of Zorra and the person with a disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.

In the event the information is not generated by the Township of Zorra or is supplied by a third party, the Township of Zorra will make every effort to obtain the information from the third party in an alternate format

and/or will attempt to assist the Elector by providing assistive equipment.

### **General Election Materials**

**Large Print** – Printed material generated by the Township of Zorra will be provided in Arial font, minimum 11 point, and can be made available in a font (print) size that is 16 to 20 points or larger.

**Website** – Information generated by the Township of Zorra on the website in relation to the election will be compliant with WCAG 2.1 Level AA, and allow for assistive software to be utilized. In addition, website font can be adjusted within the browser’s functionality to aid the user in reading the information.

### **7.2 Service Disruptions**

From time to time and/or for unforeseen circumstances beyond the Township of Zorra control, temporary service disruptions may be experienced. In the event of a temporary accessible service disruption, Election Officials will commit to making reasonable efforts to ensure that services are reinstated as quickly as possible and that alternative services are provided where feasible.

In these instances of service disruptions, the Township of Zorra shall provide reasonable notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities.

Notice of these temporary disruptions shall be provided in a conspicuous place and manner at the respective location(s) and information shall also be posted on the Township of Zorra website. This notice shall include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Accessible services in relation to this plan include voting places, election materials and/or voting provisions for Electors with disabilities at the voting place.

In the event of disruptions to service or unforeseen circumstances that affect the accessibility of voting places during the advance vote or on

Election Day, notices of disruption will be posted in real time on the Township of Zorra website and election website.

## **8. CANDIDATES**

Candidates must also have regard to the needs of electors with disabilities. Campaign offices, election materials and canvassing should all be reviewed in order to ensure that they are fully accessible. Here is the link to the AMCTO's Candidates Guide to Accessible Elections - <https://www.amcto.com/sites/default/files/2025-07/AMCTO-Candidates-Guide-to-Accessible-Elections.pdf>

## **9. REPORTING**

Pursuant to Section 12.1 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, within 90 days after voting day, the Township of Zorra Clerk shall submit a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

# Section F:

# Forms and Declarations



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**Instructions**

It is the responsibility of the person being nominated to file a complete and accurate nomination paper. Please print or type information (except signatures).

Nomination paper of a person to be a candidate at an election to be held in the following municipality

Nominated for the Office of		Ward Name or Number (if any)	
Nominee's name as it is to appear on the ballot paper (subject to agreement of the municipal clerk)			
Last Name or Single Name		Given Name(s)	
Nominee's full qualifying address			
Suite/Unit Number	Street Number	Street Name	
Municipality		Province	Postal Code
Mailing Address <input type="checkbox"/> Same as qualifying address			
Suite/Unit Number	Street Number	Street Name	
Municipality		Province	Postal Code
Email Address		Telephone Number	Telephone Number 2

**Declaration of Qualification**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, declare that I am presently legally qualified (or would be presently legally qualified if I were not a member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario or the Senate or House of Commons of Canada) to be elected and to hold the office for which I am nominated.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Nominee \_\_\_\_\_  
Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

Date Received (yyyy/mm/dd)	Time Received	Initial of Nominee or Agent (if filed in person)	Signature of Clerk or Designate
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**Certification by Clerk or Designate**

I, the undersigned clerk of this municipality, do hereby certify that I have examined the nomination paper of the aforesaid nominee filed with me and am satisfied that the nominee is qualified to be nominated and that the nomination complies with the Act.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date Certified (yyyy/mm/dd) \_\_\_\_\_

Save Form
Print Form
Clear Form



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### DECLARATION OF QUALIFICATIONS COUNCIL

*Municipal Elections Act, 1996, s. 35(2)*

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#### Declaration of Qualifications for Township of Zorra 2026 Municipal Election Candidates

It is the candidate's responsibility to determine if they are eligible to run for municipal office for the Township of Zorra. The information in this document may be used as a reference when determining whether a candidate is qualified; however, it should not be used as the sole method for determining eligibility for office. Candidates should consult the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and the *Municipal Act, 2001* to ensure they are familiar with the requirements under these acts to run for elected office.

1. I am qualified pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and the *Municipal Act, 2001* to be elected to and hold the office of:  
 Mayor                       Councillor, Ward \_\_\_\_\_
2. Without limiting the generality of paragraph 1, I am a Canadian citizen, at least eighteen years of age, a resident of the Township of Zorra or the owner or tenant of land in the Township of Zorra or the spouse of such owner or tenant.
3. I am not ineligible or disqualified under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the *Municipal Act, 2001*, the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act or any other Act to be elected to or hold the above-mentioned office.
4. Without limiting the generality of paragraph 3,
  - I am not an employee of the Township of Zorra, or if I am an employee of the Township of Zorra, I am on an unpaid leave of absence as provided for by section 30 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.
  - I am not a judge of any court.
  - I am not a member of the Assembly as provided in the Legislative Assembly Act or of the Senate or House of Commons of Canada, or if I am such a person, I will provide a proof of my resignation in a form satisfactory to the Clerk of the Township of Zorra prior to 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day, August 21, 2026. I understand that the Clerk of the Township of Zorra will reject my nomination for the above-mentioned office if I fail to provide proof of resignation by this deadline.

- I am not a member of the Executive Council of Ontario or a federal Minister of the Crown.
  - I am not a Provincial Crown employee within the meaning of the Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006, or if I am a Provincial Crown employee, I am on an unpaid leave of absence as provided by Part V of such Act.
  - I am not a Federal employee within the meaning of the Public Service Employment Act, or if I am a Federal employee, I have followed and will continue to follow all the relevant provisions of Part 7 of such Act.
5. I am not prohibited from voting at the municipal election under subsection 17(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
6. Without limiting the generality of paragraph 5,
- I am not a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution.
  - I am not prohibited because of conviction of a corrupt practice described in section 90(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* from voting in a municipal election.
7. I am not ineligible for office because of conviction of a corrupt practice under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* or of an offence under the Criminal Code in connection with an act or omission that relates to a municipal election.
8. I am not disqualified from being elected to or holding office by reason of any violations of the election campaign financial requirements or violations for not filing the financial statement pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Instructions**

- Candidates must obtain a minimum of 25 original signatures.
- An individual providing an endorsement signature must be a Canadian citizen, aged 18 or older and have a qualifying address in the municipality. An individual may sign an endorsement for more than one person seeking nomination.
- The qualifying address provided must include the postal code.

Personal information collected on this form is obtained under the authority of sections 33 and 95 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. Under section 88 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (and despite anything in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*) documents and materials filed with or prepared by the clerk or any other election official under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* are public records and, until their destruction, may be inspected by any person at the clerk's office at a time when the office is open.

**Name of person seeking nomination**

Last Name or Single Name

Given Name(s)

Endorsement signatures for the nomination of a person for an office in the municipality of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>Name of person providing endorsement – 1</b>			
Last Name or Single Name		Given Name(s)	
Qualifying Address			
Suite/Unit Number	Street Number	Street Name	
Municipality		Province	Postal Code
I endorse _____ as a candidate and declare that I am qualified to be an elector in this municipality.			
_____		_____	
Signature		Date (yyyy/mm/dd)	

<b>Name of person providing endorsement – 2</b>			
Last Name or Single Name		Given Name(s)	
Qualifying Address			
Suite/Unit Number	Street Number	Street Name	
Municipality		Province	Postal Code
I endorse _____ as a candidate and declare that I am qualified to be an elector in this municipality.			
_____		_____	
Signature		Date (yyyy/mm/dd)	

**Name of person providing endorsement – 3**

Last Name or Single Name

Given Name(s)

## Qualifying Address

Suite/Unit Number

Street Number

Street Name

Municipality

Province

Postal Code

I endorse \_\_\_\_\_ as a candidate and declare that I am qualified to be an elector in this municipality.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (yyyy/mm/dd)**Name of person providing endorsement – 4**

Last Name or Single Name

Given Name(s)

## Qualifying Address

Suite/Unit Number

Street Number

Street Name

Municipality

Province

Postal Code

I endorse \_\_\_\_\_ as a candidate and declare that I am qualified to be an elector in this municipality.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (yyyy/mm/dd)**Name of person providing endorsement – 5**

Last Name or Single Name

Given Name(s)

## Qualifying Address

Suite/Unit Number

Street Number

Street Name

Municipality

Province

Postal Code

I endorse \_\_\_\_\_ as a candidate and declare that I am qualified to be an elector in this municipality.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (yyyy/mm/dd)



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### DECLARATION OF PROPER USE OF VOTERS' LIST

*Municipal Elections Act, 1996, s. 23*

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#### **Declaration of Proper Use of Voters List for Zorra 2026 Municipal Election Candidates**

Candidates must agree to use the Voters' List for election purposes only and understand that they are prohibited by the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, from using the Voters' List for commercial purposes. Please refer to Form EL14 – Candidates Declaration – Proper Use of Voters' List. It is the candidate's responsibility to understand the rules and restrictions for use of the Voters' List.

As per section 23 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*

#### **Copies for candidates**

(4) On the written request of a certified candidate for an office, the clerk shall provide him or her with part of the voters' list that contains the names of the electors who are entitled to vote for that office.

#### **Same**

(5) The clerk shall not provide a copy of the voters' list under subsection (3) or a part of the voters' list under subsection (4) until September 1.

#### **Restrictions**

(7) The clerk may not provide a copy of the voters' list under subsection (3) or a part of the voters' list under subsection (4) to a person unless the person provides a written acknowledgement that they,

- a) Shall only use it for electoral purposes and shall not use it for commercial purposes;
- b) Are bound by the restrictions in this subsection and subsection (8); and
- c) May only disclose its content to others after obtaining their written acknowledgment that they are bound by the restrictions in this subsection and subsection (8).

#### **Further rules**

The following rules apply to persons who are required to provide a written acknowledgement under subsection (7):

1. In the case of a person who has been provided with a copy of the voters' list from a person described in clauses (3) (a) to (c) or part of the voters' list from a certified candidate under subsection (4),
  - i. They shall not provide it to any other person, and shall not make further copies, either in printed form or electronically,
  - ii. If they received a printed copy, they shall return it to the person who provided it, on or before the date specified by that person, and
  - iii. If they received an electronic copy, they shall destroy it, and shall provide the person who provided it with a written acknowledgement of the destruction, on or before the date specified by that person.
2. Where a person has been provided with a copy of the voters' list under clauses (3)

(a) to (c) or a certified candidate has been provided with part of the voters' list under subsection (4), and they have provided it to another person, they shall retain the written acknowledgement provided by each person to whom they provided it, in accordance with paragraph 5.

3. A person who has been provided with a copy of the voters' list under clauses (3) (a) to (c) shall, on or before December 31 in the year of a regular election or 45 days after voting day in a by-election,
  - i. destroy the copy of the voters' list,
  - ii. destroy any printed copies returned to them under subparagraph 1 ii, and require the receipt of the written acknowledgments of destruction that are to be provided to them under subparagraph 1 iii.
4. A certified candidate who has been provided with part of the voters' list under subsection (4) shall, on or before the day when the candidate's election campaign period ends under subsection 88.24 (1),
  - i. destroy the part of the voters' list,
  - ii. destroy any printed copies returned to them under subparagraph 1 ii, and
  - iii. require the receipt of the written acknowledgments of destruction that are to be provided to them under subparagraph 1 iii.
5. The written acknowledgements received under this section shall be retained for the term of office of the council or local board and until their successors are elected and the newly elected council or local board is organized.



# Township of Zorra

2026 Municipal and School Board Election



519-485-2490



www.elections.zorra.ca



clerk@zorra.ca

**FORM EL14**

**Township of Zorra  
CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION - PROPER USE OF VOTERS' LIST**

*Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (s.23(4) and (5));*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, being a candidate for the office of \_\_\_\_\_, hereby request the Clerk to provide me

with the following information when it becomes available:

a paper copy of the Voters' List. Please note that a copy of all revisions made to the Voters' List will be provided on or before Wednesday, September 30, 2026.

OR

an electronic copy of the Voters' List. Please note that a copy of all revisions made to the Voters' List will be provided on or before Wednesday, September 30, 2026.

AND

access to the Lists showing the name of each person who has voted at each Advance Vote.

**I, the undersigned, do hereby agree to use the Voters' List for election purposes only and I understand that I am prohibited by the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 from using the Voters' List for commercial purposes.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)



Form EL52

### CONSENT TO RELEASE PERSONAL INFORMATION

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

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Personal information on the Nomination Paper is collected under the authority of s.88(5) of the *Municipal Elections Act* and will be used to assist the Township Clerk in the administration of the 2026 Municipal Elections.

Questions regarding this collection should be forwarded to the Township Clerk, at [clerk@zorra.ca](mailto:clerk@zorra.ca) or 519-485-2490.

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Name of Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate for the office of:

- Mayor
- Ward 1 Councillor
- Ward 2 Councillor
- Ward 3 Councillor
- Ward 4 Councillor

I acknowledge that the Nomination Form (Form 1) filed by me contains personal information and I am aware that the Township Clerk will disclose all or part of it to the general public.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Candidate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Township Clerk or Designate

Dated at \_\_\_\_\_, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.



# Township of Zorra

2026 Municipal and School Board Election



519-485-2490



www.elections.zorra.ca



clerk@zorra.ca

## ELECTION CAMPAIGN BANK ACCOUNT

### Election Campaign Bank Account

Section 88.22 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* as amended states that:

#### Duties of candidate

88.22 (1) A candidate shall ensure that,

- (a) no contributions of money are accepted or expenses are incurred unless one or more campaign accounts are first opened at a financial institution exclusively for the purposes of the election campaign.

As such, you must open a bank account if you accept any contributions (including contributions of money from yourself) or incur any expenses. All contributions (including contributions you make yourself) must be deposited into the campaign bank account. All expenses must be paid from the campaign account.

Note: Corporations and trade unions are not permitted to make contributions to candidates. This includes contributions of money, goods and services, or any special discounts on goods and services.

The nomination fee is considered to be a personal expense – not a campaign expense. If, after you pay the nomination fee, you do not spend any money on your campaign, and do not accept any contributions, you do not have to open a bank account.

- In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended*, I understand that I must have an election campaign bank account open if I accept contributions or incur expenses and will provide the Clerk with written proof of the existence of such bank account prior to the close of nomination day, August 21, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. I understand that failure to provide the Clerk with sufficient written proof of the existence of an election bank account, prior to 2:00 p.m. on August 21, 2026 may result in my nomination being rejected. Sufficient written proof shall include the bank account number and opening balance on documentation provided by the financial institution.
- I will not accept contributions of money or incur expenses in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996 as amended* and, as a result, will not be opening an election campaign bank account. If this changes I will provide the Clerk with written proof of the existence of such bank account prior to the close of nomination day, August 21, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

Candidate's Name (please print)	Candidate's Signature	Date
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