

2026 Municipal Election

Candidate Accessibility Checklist

1. Know the Local Election Context (Town of Ajax)

- Coordinate with the **Town of Ajax Elections Office (Legislative Services)** to ensure you are sharing clear information on:
 - Where, when, and how to vote
 - Voter Assistance Centres
 - Advance voting options
 - Accessible voting support
 - Town of Ajax Municipal Election Accessibility Plan
- Encourage voters with disabilities to contact the **Town of Ajax Elections Team** for voting assistance or questions
- Review the **2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan**

2. Campaign Office (if applicable)

- Use an already accessible space (e.g. home or office with step-free entry and automated door operator)
- If not fully accessible, **disclose limitations honestly** and offer alternatives (phone/virtual meetings)
- Choose locations near accessible transit; provide clear external signage; ensure accessible parking with marked stalls, curb cuts, firm and slip resistant surface; plan for snow/ice removal so it does not impact barrier-free parking access.
- Provide step-free entry or a ramp with handrails and safe slope; install lever/pull handles that pass the ‘fist test’ (ability to open with a closed fist); ensure adequate door width and good lighting.
- Maintain interior circulation: non-slip, level flooring; 1100mm – 1800mm clear paths; remove clutter/obstructions; provide seating; minimize glare.
- Ensure at least one accessible washroom: tactile signage, L-shaped/rear grab bars, lever taps; shield hot-water pipes beneath sinks.
- Allow service animals wherever the public is permitted; confirm lease/agreements do not restrict them.
- Offer telephone access via TTY and clear after-hours recorded messages.
- Train staff/volunteers on AODA Customer Service and Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR). The Government of Ontario provides a free online accessibility training resource through the [Access Forward](#) modules.

Minimum Requirements

- Step-free access or virtual meeting option
- Clear pathways (no cords, clutter, or narrow passages)
- Seating options for waiting or rest
- Service animals and support persons always welcome

3. Events & Meet-and-Greets

Venue Choice

- Select accessible venues: verify transportation options, signage, accessible parking, level paths of travel, entrances/corridors, and accessible washrooms.
- Choose venues accessible via **Durham Region Transit (DRT)** routes
- Avoid restaurants or private venues with stair-only access

Event Accessibility

- Use microphones (rent or borrow from venue, if possible)
- Pace speech; describe visuals verbally; ensure one speaker at a time
- Ask speakers to face the audience and speak clearly
- Provide reserved seating near the front/aisles for individuals using mobility devices
- Share event details in advance (location, duration, format)
- Make handouts available in alternative formats
- Advertise accessibility in event promotions and provide clear instructions/deadlines for requesting accommodations.

Interpreting & Captioning

- For small events: provide written summaries or live notes/transcription
- For virtual events: auto-captions may already be available in platform (e.g. Zoom, Google Meet, Teams)
- Provide communication supports as needed: consider booking ASL interpreters 2–3 weeks ahead; plan for two interpreters for events over ~2 hours; consider real-time captioning (CART) for live/virtual events, assistive listening systems, deaf-blind intervenors, and attendant services; budget accordingly.

4. Campaign Signs

- Understand local by-laws for **sign placement** (especially sidewalks, boulevards, and curb ramps) and review the **Town of Ajax Election Sign By-law**.
- Use high-contrast colours (e.g., dark text on light background or light text on dark background)
- Use large, simple (sans serif) fonts; avoid thin or decorative lettering
- Place signs so they **do not block sidewalks, curb cuts, or trails**

5. Website & Social Media

Website

- Use accessible platforms (i.e. Wix, WordPress, Squarespace templates)
- Simple layout, clear headings, plain language, sans serif font
- Add alt text to all images
- Avoid text embedded in images
- Include an **Accessibility Statement** (see below)

Social Media

- Add alt text to images (available on Instagram, Facebook, X)
- Caption all videos (auto-captions are acceptable)
- Avoid flashing graphics or fast animations

6. Printed & Digital Materials

- Use minimum 12–14 pt font that is sans serif (e.g. Arial, Verdana, Calibri)
- Use high contrast (black text on white or light background)
- Provide content in short paragraphs and bullet points
- Make materials available digitally (accessible PDF or webpage)
- Add a line: ‘Alternate formats available upon request.’ And include contact details (see below)

7. Canvassing in Ajax Neighbourhoods

Door-to-Door

- Do not block ramps, driveways, or accessible entrances
- Respect “no knocking” or accessibility signage

- Be ready to leave accessible materials rather than insist on conversation
- Speak clearly and patiently; avoid assumptions

Phone / Text

- Use clear, plain language scripts
- Allow extra response time
- Offer to follow up by email or text

8. Volunteers & Training

- Brief volunteers on disability awareness
- Emphasize:
 - Ask before helping
 - Respect invisible disabilities
 - Use person-first or identity-first language as preferred
- Ensure volunteers know how to escalate accommodation requests

9. Accessibility Requests & Feedback

- Provide at least **two contact methods** (email + phone/text)
- Respond promptly, even if the answer is “we’re working on it”
- Keep a simple log of requests and solutions
- Adjust future events based on feedback

10. Sample Wording

Campaign Accessibility Statement:

Our campaign is committed to accessibility and inclusion. We strive to remove barriers wherever possible and welcome requests for accommodation so that everyone in Ajax can participate fully in the democratic process.

Accommodation request template (include on invites and website):

“To request an accessibility accommodation (e.g., ASL, captioning, large print, Braille, assistive listening), please contact: _____ by _____ (date). We will confirm arrangements and follow up within X business days.”