



2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTION

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACKAGE



Township of Blandford-Blenheim



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Part A

1. Welcome Message

Thank you for your interest in serving the community by running for municipal office in the Township of Blandford-Blenheim.

Municipal government plays an important role in shaping the quality of life in our communities. Council decisions influence many of the services residents rely on every day, including roads, recreation facilities, parks, planning and development, infrastructure, and community services.

This Candidate Information Package has been prepared to assist individuals considering running for office in the 2026 Municipal Election.

The information contained in this document is intended as a general guide only. Candidates are responsible for ensuring they understand and comply with all applicable legislation, including the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as well as any applicable municipal by-laws.

Additional election information and updates will be available on the Township's election website: elections.blandfordblenheim.ca



2. About Municipal Government

Municipal governments deliver many of the services residents rely on every day. These include maintaining local roads, operating recreation facilities, managing land use planning and development, delivering infrastructure services, and supporting local economic development.

In some areas of Ontario, municipalities operate within a two-tier system, where services are shared between an upper-tier municipality (such as a county) and lower-tier municipalities (such as towns or townships). Upper-tier municipalities typically deliver services like social services, paramedic services, and regional roads, while lower-tier municipalities are responsible for local services such as parks, recreation, and local roads.

Municipal councils provide leadership and strategic direction for the municipality. Councils represent the interests of residents and make decisions about policies, services, and municipal priorities. Municipal staff are responsible for implementing council decisions and managing the day-to-day operations of the municipality.

3. Offices to be Elected

Voters in the Township of Blandford-Blenheim will elect members of Council for a four-year term beginning November 2026 and ending October 2030.

The following offices will be elected:

- Mayor

One (1) to be elected by all electors of the Township.

- Deputy Mayor

One (1) to be elected by all electors of the Township.

- Councillors

Three (3) to be elected by all electors of the Township.



4. Key Election Dates

Important dates for the 2026 Municipal Election include:

- Nomination Period Opens - May 1, 2026
- Nomination Day - August 21, 2026 (2:00 p.m.)
- Certification of Candidates - August 31, 2026
- Voting Period - Exact dates to be determined, October 2026
- Election Day - October 26, 2026
- Term of Council Begins - November 18, 2026
- Financial Statements are due - March 26, 2027

These dates are established through the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

Part B

5. Thinking About Running for Council

Serving on municipal council is an important form of public service. Members of council help shape policies that affect the entire community and contribute to decisions about municipal services and priorities.

Municipal councils benefit from individuals with diverse backgrounds, skills, and experiences. Community members with an interest in public service are encouraged to consider running for municipal office.



Serving on council may involve:

- attending council meetings and special meetings
- reviewing agendas and staff reports
- participating in committees and advisory boards
- representing the municipality at community events
- responding to inquiries from residents
- contributing to policy discussions and decision-making.

Effective councils rely on collaboration, open communication, and a shared commitment to serving the community.

6. Roles and Responsibilities of Council

The role of a municipal council is defined in provincial legislation. Council responsibilities include:

- representing the public and considering the well-being of the municipality
- developing and evaluating municipal policies and programs
- determining which services the municipality provides
- ensuring the financial integrity of the municipality
- maintaining accountability and transparency in municipal operations.

The Mayor serves as the head of council and provides leadership to council while representing the municipality at official functions.

The Deputy Mayor supports the Mayor and assumes the Mayor's duties when the Mayor is absent or unable to act. The Deputy Mayor also participates as a full member of Council.



Councillors work collaboratively with other members of council to make decisions that reflect the best interests of the municipality as a whole. Each member of Council has one vote, and decisions are made collectively by Council.

6.a Code of Conduct and Working with Staff

Members of Council are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Township's Council Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct establishes standards of behaviour for members of Council and promotes accountability, integrity, and respectful conduct in municipal governance.

Council members provide direction to municipal staff collectively through Council decisions, typically through passing resolutions during Council meetings.

Individual members of Council do not direct municipal staff independently.

Municipal staff are responsible for implementing Council decisions and managing the day-to-day operations of the municipality.

Maintaining respectful and professional relationships between Council and staff is essential to effective municipal governance.



7. Time Commitment for Council Members

Serving on council requires a commitment of time and energy.

Council members must prepare for meetings by reviewing agendas and staff reports in advance. There are twenty-two (22) regular meetings of Council per year, occurring the first and third Wednesday of each month September to June, and the first Wednesday of the month only for July and August. Meetings are held at 4:00 p.m. in the Municipal Office, in Council Chambers at 47 Wilmot St. South in Drumbo. An exception is the annual budget process, where the meeting generally begins at 10:00 a.m. Members have the option of attending virtually, if required. Council may also hold special meetings at different times throughout the term.

Council members may also participate in:

- committee meetings
- community events
- meetings with residents and stakeholders
- regional or county meetings
- conferences and training sessions.

7.a Council Compensation

Members of Council receive remuneration for fulfilling their responsibilities as elected officials.

Council compensation is established through municipal by-law and may be adjusted periodically by Council.



Current compensation levels can be obtained from the Township Clerk's Office.

Individuals considering running for office should be aware that the role of a Council member is a part-time public service position that involves ongoing preparation, meetings, and engagement with the community.

8. Candidate Eligibility

To run for municipal council in Ontario, an individual must:

- be a Canadian citizen
- be at least 18 years old
- qualify as an elector in the municipality
- not be disqualified by law from holding office.

Certain individuals are not eligible to run, including:

- municipal employees who have not taken a leave of absence
- judges
- Members of Parliament, Members of Provincial Parliament, or senators
- individuals serving a sentence in a correctional institution.

Candidates are responsible for confirming their eligibility before filing nomination papers.



Part C

9. Filing Your Nomination

Individuals wishing to run for municipal office must file nomination papers with the Township Clerk.

The nomination package typically includes:

- Nomination Form
- Endorsement signatures from at least 25 eligible electors
- Filing fee.

Filing Fees:

- Mayor – \$200
- Deputy Mayor – \$100
- Councillor – \$100

Candidates may not raise funds or incur campaign expenses until their nomination has been filed with the municipal clerk.

Candidates can contact the Clerk's Office to schedule a nomination appointment.

The campaign period begins when a candidate files their nomination. Campaign signs and materials may not be erected or distributed prior to that time.

9.a Election Forms

A number of prescribed forms are required throughout the municipal election process.



The most common forms used by candidates include:

- Nomination Form (Form 1)
- Endorsement of Nomination Form (Form 2)
- Financial Statement – Auditor’s Report (Form 4)
- Appointment of Scrutineer Form
- Withdrawal of Nomination Form
- Voters’ List Request Form

All forms required for the 2026 Municipal Election are available from the Township Clerk’s Office and on the Township’s election website at elections.blandfordblenheim.ca.

Candidates are responsible for ensuring all required forms are completed accurately and submitted within the required timelines set out in the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

9.b Candidate Contact Information

Candidates may choose to provide campaign contact information to be posted on the Township’s election website.

This information may include:

- telephone number
- email address
- campaign website
- mailing address

Providing contact information allows electors to learn more about candidates and their campaigns.



Candidates are responsible for ensuring any contact information provided remains current throughout the election period.

The Township does not publish campaign platforms, biographies, photographs, or endorsements on the election website.

9.c Unofficial and Official List of Candidates

During the nomination period, the Township will maintain an Unofficial List of Candidates.

This list will be updated as nomination papers are filed and will be posted on the Township's election website.

After the close of nominations, the Clerk will review all nomination papers to ensure they meet the requirements of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

Once nominations are certified, the Township will publish the Official List of Certified Candidates.

The official list will be available on the election website and will identify all candidates whose nominations have been certified by the Clerk.



10. Withdrawal of Nomination

A candidate who has filed nomination papers may withdraw their nomination by submitting a written withdrawal to the Clerk.

Withdrawal must occur before 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day (August 28, 2026).

Once the withdrawal deadline has passed, a candidate's name will remain on the ballot unless the nomination is rejected by the Clerk under the provisions of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

Candidates who withdraw their nomination before the deadline may be eligible for a refund of the nomination filing fee, provided their financial statements have been filed with the office of the Clerk.

11. Campaign Rules and Responsibilities

Candidates must comply with the rules set out in the Municipal Elections Act and any applicable municipal by-laws.

These rules include:

- restrictions on campaign advertising
- rules governing election signs
- restrictions on campaigning at voting help centres.
- rules regarding the use of municipal resources.

Municipal logos, crests, or branding may not be used in campaign materials.

Candidates are responsible for ensuring their campaign volunteers and staff follow election rules.



12. Election Advertising

Election campaign advertising must comply with the requirements of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

Campaign advertisements must clearly identify the name of the candidate responsible for the advertisement.

Election advertising may include printed materials, online advertising, radio advertising, or other promotional materials used as part of a candidate's campaign.

Candidates are responsible for ensuring that all campaign advertising complies with provincial legislation and any applicable municipal by-laws.

The Township does not review or approve campaign materials and is not responsible for the content of campaign advertising.

13. Third-Party Advertising

Individuals, corporations, or trade unions that wish to advertise in support of or opposition to a candidate must register as a third-party advertiser with the Clerk before incurring expenses or running advertisements. Third-party advertisers are subject to specific rules regarding registration, spending limits, and financial reporting under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.



14. Use of Municipal Resources

Municipal resources may not be used for election campaign purposes.

Municipal resources include, but are not limited to:

- municipal facilities
- municipal equipment
- municipal email systems
- municipal staff time
- municipal logos, branding, or letterhead
- municipal social media accounts.

The Township has policies in place governing the use of municipal resources during an election period to ensure fairness and neutrality.

Candidates who are current members of council must ensure that their campaign activities remain separate from their official municipal duties.

15. Campaign Finances

Campaign finances are regulated under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

Candidates must:

- track all campaign contributions
- record all campaign expenses
- ensure contributions come from eligible individuals
- file financial statements after the election.



Contribution limits and spending limits apply to all candidates.

Failure to comply with campaign finance rules may result in penalties.

Detailed information regarding campaign finance rules is established by the Province of Ontario and is available through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing candidate resources.

Part D

16. Campaign Spending Limits

The Municipal Elections Act establishes spending limits for candidates.

Spending limits are calculated using the following formulas:

- Mayor (Head of Council) - \$7,500 + \$0.85 for each eligible elector.
- Other Offices (Deputy Mayor and Councillor) - \$5,000 + \$0.85 for each eligible elector.

The Clerk will provide candidates with a preliminary spending limit shortly after nominations are filed.

A final spending limit will be issued once the number of eligible electors has been confirmed.

Candidates must ensure their campaign expenses do not exceed the prescribed spending limit.



17. Election Signs

Election signs must comply with the Township of Blandford-Blenheim Sign By-law and any applicable County of Oxford requirements.

Key provisions include:

- Election signs may not be erected prior to Nomination Day
- Signs must not obstruct visibility or create a safety hazard for drivers or pedestrians
- Signs are not permitted within a sight triangle or in locations that interfere with traffic control devices
- Signs may not be placed on trees, utility poles, or light standards
- Signs may not be located on municipal or County property, including road allowances, without permission
- Signs must be placed on private property with the property owner's consent
- Signs must be maintained in good condition and securely installed
- Signs must be removed within the timeframe required following the election

Candidates are responsible for ensuring that their election signs comply with all applicable Township and County regulations.

18. Debates

The Municipal Elections Act, 1996 does not require municipalities to organize candidate debates.

The Township of Blandford-Blenheim does not organize or host debates as part of the municipal election process.



Community organizations, media outlets, or community groups may choose to organize candidate debates or information sessions.

Participation in such events is voluntary for candidates.

19. Scrutineers

Candidates may appoint individuals to act as scrutineers (candidate representatives).

Scrutineers may observe certain parts of the election process to help ensure transparency.

Because the Township uses internet and telephone voting, scrutineers will not observe voting at physical polling stations. However, scrutineers may be permitted to observe certain administrative procedures related to the operation of the electronic voting system, subject to the procedures established by the Clerk.

Additional information regarding scrutineer roles and permitted activities will be provided closer to the voting period.

20. Code of Conduct and Integrity Commissioner

Members of council are required to follow the Township's Code of Conduct, which establishes standards for ethical behaviour and accountability.



The Code of Conduct outlines expectations regarding:

- respectful conduct
- the use of municipal resources
- confidentiality of information
- interactions with staff, the public, and other members of council
- avoiding conflicts of interest.

The Township has appointed an Integrity Commissioner who is responsible for providing advice to members of council and investigating complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct.

Individuals considering running for office are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct and the role of the Integrity Commissioner.

Information regarding the Township's Code of Conduct is available on the municipal website.

21. Conflict of Interest Rules

Members of council must comply with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

A conflict of interest may arise when a member of council has a direct or indirect financial interest in a matter being considered by council or a committee.



If a conflict of interest exists, the member must:

- disclose the nature of the conflict before the matter is discussed
- refrain from participating in discussion or voting on the matter
- leave the meeting while the matter is being considered
- file a written statement describing the conflict with the Clerk.

The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act establishes strict rules and penalties related to conflicts of interest.

Individuals considering running for council are encouraged to review the legislation to understand these responsibilities.

22. Accessibility and Campaigning

Candidates are encouraged to consider accessibility when planning campaign activities and communicating with voters.

Accessibility considerations may include:

- ensuring campaign materials are easy to read and understand
- providing alternative formats when possible
- selecting accessible locations for campaign events
- ensuring websites and online content meet accessibility standards where feasible.

Accessible campaigning helps ensure that all residents, including individuals with disabilities, are able to participate in the democratic process and access information about candidates.



Additional information regarding accessibility requirements in Ontario is available through the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

23. Voting Process

Internet and Telephone Voting

The Township of Blandford-Blenheim will conduct the 2026 Municipal Election using internet and telephone voting only.

There will be no in-person voting locations. Voting help centres will be available to assist voters with internet and telephone voting if needed.

Eligible electors will be able to vote using:

- a computer
- a smartphone or tablet
- a telephone.

Voting Period

Voting will take place during a designated voting period prior to Election Day.

The voting system will close at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day (October 26, 2026).

Voter Information Letters

Eligible electors will receive a Voter Information Letter by mail.



This letter will include:

- instructions for voting online or by telephone
- the election website address
- a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN).

Security

Electronic voting systems use secure encryption and authentication measures to protect the secrecy and integrity of ballots.

Votes are securely tabulated once voting closes.

24. Voters' List

The voters' list is prepared by Elections Ontario and provided to municipalities for use in the municipal election. The voters' list will be available beginning September 2026.

The list includes:

- elector names
- addresses
- school support designation.

Certified candidates will receive access to the voters' list for campaign purposes only. It cannot be used for commercial purposes.



25. Resources for Candidates

Helpful resources include:

[Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#)

[AMO “Lead Where You Live” Guide](#)

Township’s Election Website: elections.blandfordblenheim.ca

26. Clerk Contact Information

For additional information regarding the 2026 Municipal Election, please contact:

Clerk’s Office
Township of Blandford-Blenheim
47 Wilmot Street South
Drumbo, ON N0J 1G0
Phone: 519-463-5347

Email: generalmail@blandfordblenheim.ca

Election Website: elections.blandfordblenheim.ca



Part D

27. Candidate Nomination Checklist

Before filing your nomination, ensure you:

- Confirm your eligibility to run for municipal office
- Review the Municipal Elections Act
- Obtain 25 endorsement signatures
- Complete the Nomination Form
- Prepare the required filing fee

Once your nomination is filed, you may begin campaigning and accepting contributions in accordance with election rules.

Thank you for your interest in serving the Township of Blandford-Blenheim. Your willingness to contribute to the community through public service is appreciated.