

2026 General Local and School Trustee Election:

Candidate Information Session



Agenda

1. Division of Responsibilities – Different Levels of Government
2. What to Expect
3. Call of Elections
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5. Candidate Qualifications
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Division of Responsibilities – Different Levels of Government

- Municipal
- Provincial
- Federal
- Fraser Valley Regional District
- Abbotsford Board of Education / School District No. 34



Municipal Government

City of Abbotsford

The City is responsible for many services you use every day:

- Police
- Fire Rescue
- Water
- Roads
- Sewers
- Drainage
- Solid Waste Collection
- Snow Removal
- Business Licences
- Permits
- Parks & Recreation
- Property Taxes
- Abbotsford International Airport



Provincial Government

Government of British Columbia

The Province is responsible for:

- Healthcare
- Mental Health & Addictions
- Schools & Education Curriculum
- Social & Supportive Housing
- Provincial Courts
- Highways
- Wildlife & Conservation
- Agricultural Land Regulations
- Provincial Parks
- Child Protection



Federal Government

Government of Canada

The Government of Canada is responsible for:

- Immigration
- National Defence
- International Relations
- RCMP
- Banking & Interest Rates
- Employment Insurance
- Canadian Pension Plan
- Fisheries
- First Nation Land Issues



Other Important Organizations

Fraser Valley Regional District

- Solid Waste Management
- Air Quality
- Animal Control
- Regional & Rural Transit



Abbotsford Board of Education

- School Operations
- Staffing
- Budgets
- Catchment Areas
- Student Transportation



What to Expect

Council and Committee Meetings

- Open and Closed Council Meetings are held approximately twice a month on Tuesdays (approximately 1,000-2,000 pages)
 - start time as early as 9 am and may conclude between 5pm-8pm (Public Hearings determine how late a meeting may go)
 - Council is expected to be free for the entire day as meetings can run longer
- There are 7 Committees, 1 independent Board (Board of Variance) and 1 Authority (Abbotsford Airport Authority)
 - Committees are typically scheduled bimonthly on Thursdays, and are chaired by Council members (approximately 50-150 pages)
 - Council members will be appointed as Chairs and Vice-Chairs at the Inaugural Meeting
- Council and Committee agendas are shared electronically a week prior to the meeting date - set aside preparation time for reviewing all agenda packages

What to Expect

Deputy Mayor

- The Mayor serves as the City's chief spokesperson and represents the municipality at a wide range of community events and official functions. When the Mayor is unavailable, the Deputy Mayor typically assumes these ceremonial and representational duties, including delivering greetings on behalf of the City.
- Deputy Mayor schedule is approved at the Inaugural Meeting; Councillors are on a three-month rotation
- Mayor and Deputy Mayor meet with the City Manager almost weekly on Wednesday afternoon for 30 minutes to review Council agendas
- If the Mayor is not available to attend a Council Meeting, or must recuse himself for an agenda item due to a conflict of interest, the Deputy Mayor will assume the Chair



What to Expect

Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD)

- 7 Council members are appointed as directors to the FVRD, at the Inaugural Meeting
- FVRD Hospital and Board meet once a month on Thursday evenings (approximately 50-200 pages)

Events

- Council attended 250 events in 2025

Call of Elections



- Legislated timeline: every 4 years on the third Saturday in October
- General Voting Day: October 17, 2026
- Advanced Voting: October 7, 10 and 11, 2026
- Voters will elect:
 - 1 Mayor
 - 8 Councillors
 - 7 School Trustees
- List of locations will be available by the end of August (“Vote Anywhere”)
- Mail in Ballot opportunity; more information will be available by the end of August



Automated Voting Machines (“Tabulators”)



Roles

City's Election Office: nominations, voting & results, election signs

Elections BC: campaign financing & advertising rules

For further information on campaign period expense limits and third party advertising limits, please contact Elections BC:

- Toll-free phone: 1-855-952-0280
- Email: lecf@elections.bc.ca
- Website: www.elections.bc.ca/lecf

Candidate Qualifications

- Canadian citizen; and
- at least 18 years of age on general voting day (October 17, 2026); and
- resident of British Columbia for at least 6 months immediately before the day nomination papers are filed; and
- not disqualified under the *Local Government Act* or any other enactment from voting in an election in British Columbia or being nominated for, being elected to or holding the office, or be otherwise disqualified by law.

Submission of Nomination Documents

- Nomination Documents available at www.abbotsford.ca/elections/candidate-information
- Nominations accepted from 9:00 a.m. on September 1, 2026, until 4:00 p.m. on September 11, 2026
 - In Person: Email electionoffice@abbotsford.ca to book an appointment
 - By email: electionoffice@abbotsford.ca
 - By mail or other delivery service: Chief Election Officer, 5th Floor, 32315 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford, BC, V2T 1W7
- Candidates must be nominated by two people who are qualified to vote in the City of Abbotsford



Submission of Nomination Documents

- No deposit required
- Submitted nomination packages are posted on the City's website
 - Personal information is redacted unless the "Candidate Information Release Authorization" has been completed
- Optional Candidate Profile Form provides candidates the opportunity to provide their contact and social media information in one centralized location for voters' access



Candidate Access to List of Electors

- After completing the declaration form and once their nomination documents have been reviewed and determined to be complete, candidates will receive a USB drive containing the List of Electors. The provision of the USB is dependent on how the nomination documents are submitted:
 - In-Person Submissions: If nomination documents are submitted in person and staff determine that the submission is complete, the USB drive will be provided at that time.
 - Email or Mail Submissions: If nomination documents are submitted by email or mail, staff will review the submission for completeness. Once confirmed, staff will contact the candidate or their financial agent to arrange a time for pickup of the USB drive.
- Access to Candidate Portal: Access to the Candidate Portal is an optional service provided by the City and is not a legislative requirement. Candidates will be granted access within two business days of staff confirming that a complete nomination package has been received. An email will be sent with portal access instructions.

Candidate Representatives

- Appoint a Financial Agent or act as your own agent
- Appoint an Official Agent to act on your behalf or act as your own agent

Note: *The same person may act as both the Official Agent and Financial Agent. If a candidate does not appoint a Financial Agent, the candidate is deemed to be their own Financial Agent and no formal appointment is required.*

- Candidate and/or Official Agent may appoint Scrutineers

Note: *One Scrutineer per ballot box per voting location*

Role of Scrutineers

- Observe voting procedures & ballot-counting
- Must arrive with a completed appointment form and present identification
- Must only communicate with the PEO or APEO of each location
- Must sit in the designated area
- Must not:
 - interfere with the voting process;
 - use their phone in the voting location;
 - take pictures in the voting location; or
 - distract election officials/voters.



Election Sign Bylaw, 2021

- Signs permitted September 1 – October 17
- Height, area, placement of signs
- No signs on public property, except:
“on a boulevard immediately in front of a parcel used solely for residential purposes with the consent of the property owner, occupant, or the strata corporation in the case of a parcel containing strata lots.”
- Restrictions on placement of signs on private property – requires approval
- Must not obstruct regulatory signs, Traffic Control Devices or sight lines or movement of motor vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists or any other Highway traffic
- Must not use City logo, trademark or Official Mark, in whole or in part, owned or licensed by the City

Election Sign Bylaw, 2021

- 1-3-5 Rule: A person must not place, or permit to be placed, on public or private property, an election sign:
 - within **1.0 metre** of a sidewalk,
 - in the absence of a sidewalk, within **3.0 metres** of a highway, a roadway structure or utility appurtenance
 - A utility appurtenance is a component of a utility system that supports services such as water, sewer, gas, electricity, or telecommunications. Examples include fire hydrants, utility poles, meters, manholes, and valves.
 - within **5.0 metres** of a highway where the property is adjacent to an intersection.
- The above rules can be combined:
 - Where a property is adjacent to an intersection, signs must be both 5 metres away from a highway, and either 1 metre away from a sidewalk or, in the absence of a sidewalk, 3 metres away from a highway, a roadway structure or utility appurtenance

Election Day Advertising

- No advertising within 100 metres of voting places & election headquarters (City Hall & Old Court House)
 - Candidates will be provided maps with the 100 metre area identified
- **Advertising** includes:
 - Signs, posters, badges or flags
 - Signs visible on or in vehicles driving by or parked
 - Handouts (cannot solicit votes)
- Signage will be monitored by election staff and bylaw services

Election Results

Unofficial Results:

Starting at 8pm in the MCA, unofficial results:

- processed in the Training Room (1 Scrutineer per candidate)
- displayed in real time in the auditorium and simultaneously live-streamed

Declaration of Official Results:

Posted at www.abbotsford.ca/elections before 4:00 p.m. on October 21, 2026

Key Dates

9:00 a.m. September 1, 2026	Nomination period begins and Election sign period begins
4:00 p.m. September 11, 2026	Close of nominations
4:00 p.m. September 15, 2026	Deadline to challenge nominations
4:00 p.m. September 18, 2026	Candidate nomination withdrawal deadline and Elector organization endorsement withdrawal deadline
September 19, 2026	Campaign period begins
October 7, 10 and 11, 2026	Advance voting days
October 17, 2026	General voting day
October 19-29, 2026	Council Orientation and Governance Sessions
November 3, 2026	Inaugural Meeting of Council
January 15, 2027	Disclosure statement filing deadline
February 16, 2027	Late filing deadline for disclosure statements (with late filing fee)

Questions



For further information regarding the 2026 General Local and School Trustee Election, please contact the Abbotsford Election Office:

- Phone: 604-851-VOTE (8683)
- Email: electionoffice@abbotsford.ca
- Web: www.abbotsford.ca/elections

Robin Charl, Chief Election Officer

Harjit Gill, Deputy Chief Election Officer

Tammy Ketola, Deputy Chief Election Officer