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Export date: Fri Oct 30 7:48:43 2026 / +0000 GMT

Telephone and internet voting approved at council for Shelburne?s next municipal election

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LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Shelburne residents will have more than one option when they cast their ballot in the next municipal election.

During their meeting on April 28, Shelburne Town Council authorized the use of telephone and internet ballots when voting in the 2026 municipal election.

?This means they [residents] can vote anywhere, anytime,? explained Jennifer Willougby, director of legislative service for the Town of Shelburne.

The use of internet and telephone voting in the municipal election is not a new concept for the Town of Shelburne.

After experiencing a ?dismal? turnout in voters during the 2010 and 2014 elections, in which paper ballots were solely used, the Town of Shelburne opted into using additional voting methods in the 2018 and 2022 municipal and school board elections.

Willoughby noted that the Town of Shelburne saw an 18 per cent increase in voter turnout when they introduced alternative methods for voting in the municipal election.

According to the report, the percentage of voter turnout in the 2018 municipal election was 38.89 per cent, and in 2022 the election saw a 36.24 per cent turnout in voters.

For internet voting, each elector is provided with a unique credential to access the voting website from a personal computer, tablet, or smartphone.

A resident can cast their vote at anytime or from anywhere during the voting period, as long as they are connected to the internet.

Telephone voting is a secondary option if internet connectivity is a barrier. Voters can cast their ballots remotely from anywhere that has access to a phone line.

While the Town of Shelburne is re-introducing telephone and internet voting for the 2026 municipal election, residents will still have the option to vote in person.

?Most folks feel the need to attend a polling station so we will be here,? said Willoughby.

?We will be open the two Saturdays before election day and we'll be open late.

They'll be able to still come here to utilize an iPad for voting purposes.?

The voting period for the municipal election will take place over one week, starting on October 16, 2026, through to Election Day, which will be held on October 26, 2026.