

2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

Section 12.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, states that

“a Clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities.”

Section 12.2 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, states that

“The clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election”

The City Clerk is responsible for conducting Municipal Elections in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

The following is the proposed Accessibility Plan for the 2018 Municipal Election and the status of each item.

Actions	Status
Attend meeting a of the Accessibility Advisory Committee to discuss measures used in 2014 Municipal Election and receive comments and suggestions for 2018	Spring, 2017
Consult with the Accessibility Coordinator to discuss 2018 Municipal Elections Accessibility Plan throughout various stages of the election planning and delivery	Ongoing
Utilize an accessibility checklist that was created with input from the Accessibility Advisory Committee that was reviewed by the Accessibility Coordinator in the spring of 2017 to ensure it is still AODA compliant.	To be reviewed again with Accessibility Coordinator prior to site inspections commencing in spring, 2018
Assess voting equipment to ensure it met the needs of the electorate.	Discussed with AAC in Spring 2018
Review past election practices and identify any issues identified associated with the accessibility of candidates and electors and identified the impact of the risk and developed measures to minimize the risk.	Completed

Communications and Information

Actions	Status
Communication initiatives and information for candidates and electors to be made available in alternate formats	Under development

Post all information to City's website including links to information prepared by the Province, AMCTO as well as other related material (if guides/information produced in 2018)	Under development
Provide candidates and staff with information related to accessible customer service	Under development
Provide information to candidates and staff concerning campaign expenses including rules that will affect disabled candidates	Under development
Communications will be made available to facilitate notice of service disruption	Under development
Conduct site visits of all voting locations to ensure accessibility based on checklist requirements.	Spring, 2018
Continue to review locations to ensure full accessibility for all electors/workers/candidates	Ongoing
Provide accessible voting equipment at each permanent voting location on all voting days, with the following provisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio ballots to be provided for on each machine • Sip and puff will be provided for at each location • Size and contrast on each machine is adjustable • Sign language interpreter will be on stand by 	Fall, 2018
Review the provision of voting opportunities at individual buildings or complexes with 75 or more dwelling units to increase accessibility and voting opportunities. A comprehensive communications strategy will be developed to advertise these opportunities	Ongoing
Provide appropriate signage at voting locations; including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile signs will be rented to identify voting locations as well as voting dates and times. The signs are highly visible and very effective. • Provide additional signage to buildings/complexes with 75 units or more, particularly if units are in more than one building. 	Fall, 2018
Permit service animals and support persons in all voting locations. Election staff will be trained to ensure that service animals would be permitted.	Spring, 2018

Confirmation will be requested from each voting location regarding access for service animals.	
Ensure designated or reserved parking for persons with disabilities at each voting location. This will be confirmed during site inspections of each location.	Spring, 2018
Voting locations will be set up to allow for maximum accessibility, including appropriate distances between voting machines, location of power cords, lighting, signage (internal), etc. all considered in the set up of the room, as feasible. Additional seating will be provided, where feasible at voting locations.	October, 2018
Election Supervisors will be provided with a corporate issued cell phone so they can contact the Deputy City Clerk and Election Coordinator with any questions to ensure expedient customer service and minimize disruptions to voters	October, 2018

Voting

Actions	Status
Accessible voting equipment will be available at all voting locations during all voting opportunities. Touch screen equipment will be utilized for every voter. This equipment can provide a larger text size and the availability of an audio ballot on each machine, at every voting location, every voting day.	October, 2017
Provide instructions on the use of accessible voting equipment including the notice of availability of the Accessible Customer Service Policy. Signs posted at each voting machine. Information concerning all voting opportunities will be included in insert in the newspaper (special pull out feature).	October, 2017
Magnifying sheets will be made available if an elector requires one for viewing forms or the ballot on the touchscreen (beyond the enhanced font size already provided by the touchscreen). Magnifying sheets provide enhanced capability for those who are visually impaired to read and complete paperwork and vote more independently	October, 2017

<p>Schedule extended advance voting opportunities including the Saturday of the Thanksgiving weekend</p> <p>Multiple advance voting dates will be scheduled for the 2018 Municipal Election.</p>	Dates to be finalized early 2018
<p>Promote advance voting opportunity for electors with disabilities</p> <p>Notices for the entire voting period will include a promotion to encourage voting early for all electors and information about accessible voting.</p>	Summer/Fall 2017
<p>Provide vote anywhere in the municipality at advance voting dates and on Voting Day</p>	October, 2018
<p>Provide two voting opportunities on the premises of an institution in which 20 or more beds were occupied by persons who are disabled, chronically ill or infirmed and retirement homes in which 50 or more beds were occupied.</p> <p>Advance communication of alternative and Voting Day opportunities to electors throughout complexes, particularly those buildings with a mix of life lease, seniors apartments, institutions and retirement homes will be provided.</p>	October, 2018
<p>Provide American Sign Language interpreters at a facility occupied by the hearing impaired.</p> <p>An American Sign Language interpreter was also on standby on final voting day and a staff member with knowledge of American Sign Language was available for alternate/advance voting days.</p>	October, 2018

Staff Training

Actions	Status
<p>Staff training will incorporate provisions to meet accessible customer service standards – including a section of the staff manual.</p> <p>The Election Worker Manual will include information on accessible customer service. Staff will be required to read an Accessible Customer Service Handbook and sign an acknowledgement form in this regard.</p> <p>Election staff will be trained on how to assist voters with any abilities.</p>	September, 2018

<p>Election staff will be encouraged to monitor an elector's concerns and needs to ensure they are met</p>	<p>October, 2018</p>
<p>Election staff will be trained to identify a service animal and followed the Municipality's Accessible Customer Service Policy details related to service animals were included as part of the Accessible Customer Service Handbook that will be provided to staff.</p> <p>Staff will be advised during training that service animals will be permitted in voting locations</p>	<p>September, 2018</p>
<p>Election staff will be instructed to access doors frequently to offer assistance and watch for electors unable to easily enter the building</p> <p>Greeters will be available to open doors at locations without push button automatic door openers for every elector.</p>	<p>September, 2018</p>