



DEPARTMENT: CAO/CLERK
SUBJECT: 2022 MUNICIPAL ELECTION ACCESSIBILITY
REPORT NO. CAO 2023-01
COUNCIL MEETING DATE: JANUARY 17, 2023

- Approved**
 - Approved with Amendments**
 - Other**
- Resolution #**
-

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Section 12.1 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, this report is to provide information and public report regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Identification of Barriers

The following actions were taken to identify barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities:

- Reviewed and assessed past election administration practices to identify potential issues of accessibility for candidates and electors to developed measures to mitigate or minimize impacts
- Gathered comments and recommendations from the municipality's Accessibility Coordinator on methods to meet accessibility needs
- Assessed voting equipment and election plan to ensure it met the needs of the electorate

Removal and Prevention of Barriers

The following actions were undertaken to remove and prevent barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities:

Communications and Information

- Ensured candidates and voters were aware that communications and information for candidates and electors were available in alternate formats upon request.
- Posted all information to municipality's website.
- Staff involved in elections process provided training relating to accessible customer service.
- Utilized radio advertisements

Voting Locations

- Proceeded to offer the 2022 election using an alternative voting method – Vote By Mail – which does not require electors to attend at a voting place in order to vote.
- For Ballot Return Station (alternate to mailing of ballot) selected location subject to audit of accessibility requirements – Township Municipal Building.
- Election assistants made available to assist voters with specific needs and ensure site accessibility.
- Appropriate signage provided
- Service animals and support persons permitted in location
- Seating areas provided at location
- Designated or reserved parking for persons with disabilities available
- All election signs to use large print in order to improve visibility

Voting

- Utilized Vote By Mail method to support voter access, including increasing access for voters who are unable to come to a voting location
- Accessible equipment provided at Ballot Return Station
- Provided ballot magnifiers at Ballot Return Station
- Established voting booths at Ballot Return Station accessible to allow use of wheelchairs/scooters

Staff Training

- Staff training incorporated provisions to meet accessible customer service standards
- Ensured that electors were aware that magnifiers were available, if required, throughout the day.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

CONCLUSION

This report outlines initiatives undertaken to improve accessibility to the municipal election process. Staff will continue to examine improvements for the next election process.

RECOMMENDATION

That report CAO 2023-01 be received for information.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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