



Post-Election Report – 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Initiatives

January 18, 2019

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*.

Section 12.1(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 12.1(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 2018 Municipal Election Plan was completed May 28, 2018. The plan was made available through a variety of means, including hard copies, electronic copies and posted to the City’s Election Website.

Section 12.1(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* states that:

“Within 90 days after voting day in a regular election, the clerk shall prepare a report about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the report available to the public.”

This report provides comments and observations on the accessibility actions take for the 2018 Municipal Election and identified in the election accessibility plan.

2018 Election Plan	Comments and Observations
General Items	
Attend meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee to discuss measures used in 2014 Municipal Election and receive comments and suggestions for 2018.	The Committee provided advice and noted that measures used in 2014 should be continued for the 2018 Municipal Election.
Consult with the Accessibility Coordinator to discuss 2018 Municipal Elections Accessibility Plan throughout various stages of the election planning and delivery	The Accessibility Coordinator provided information, expertise and assistance throughout various stages of the election planning and delivery
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.	The checklist was very effective for identifying any challenges with potential locations and determining the final voting locations as well as any measures that would be required to mitigate any accessibility concerns.
Assess voting equipment to ensure it met the needs of the electorate.	For the 2018 Municipal Election new voting equipment was introduced which was a combination of touch screen voting machine and ballot printer. The new voting equipment provided more accessible options which met the needs of the electorate.



2018 Election Plan	Comments and Observations
Review past election practices and identify any risk to the accessibility of candidates and electors and identified the impact of the risk and developed measures to minimize the risk.	Evaluation of previous elections assisted in determination of potential voting locations for 2018 as well as additional accessibility measures that were implemented.
Communications and Information	
Communication initiatives and information for candidates and electors will be available in alternate formats	Staff were prepared to provide information in alternate formats, but there were no requests for information in alternate formats.
Post all information to municipality's website including links to the Candidates Guide to Accessible Elections, produced jointly by the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerk's and Treasurer's of Ontario as well as other related material. (if produced in 2018)	The website was updated to provide easier access to voter, candidate and third party advertisers information and forms. Efforts were undertaken to improve the layout of website content to improve readability.
Provide candidates and staff with information relating to accessible customer service	Information was made available for candidates on the City's website related to accessible customer service including a variety of quick reference guides. In consultation with the Accessibility Coordinator, accessible customer service handbooks were provided to all election staff. Election staff were required to sign and complete a form to confirm his/her reading and understanding of the booklet.
Provide information to candidates regarding campaign expenses and particular rules affecting disabled candidates	A copy of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs Candidates Guide and Third Party Advertisers Guide included the details regarding any election expenses incurred as a result of a disability. In addition the Candidates Guide and Third Party Advertisers Guide was available on the City's website.
Communications will be available to facilitate notice of service disruption	The website, media and signage at locations was available if service was to be disrupted at a voting location or if a voting location had to be closed or moved at the last minute.
Voting Locations	
Conduct site visits of all new voting locations to ensure accessibility based on checklist requirements. Sites that were used in 2014 will be revisited to ensure that accessibility standards were still met.	Site visits were completed for all permanent voting locations. Greeters were hired to provide assistance at all 20 voting locations on alternate voting days and two greeters and/or one greeter and student volunteer were hired for final voting day.
Continue to look for locations that are fully accessible in 2018 or work with City staff /voting location staff to ensure location is accessible or made accessible for voters.	Roads Parks and Fleet provided extra directional signage for Ferris Lane Community Church of the Nazarene and Hyde Park Public School. A temporary ramp installed by the Roads Parks and Fleet in 2014 to the voter entrance of Life Church Barrie (Oasis of Hope Church) which provided level access to the voting location continued to be used for the 2018 Municipal Election.

2018 Election Plan	Comments and Observations
<p>Provide accessible voting equipment at each permanent voting location, on all voting days. Audio ballots will be provided on every machine, at every location. In addition, the size of the text on the ballots can be increased to enhance readability. An attachment for sip and puff will be available at each voting location.</p> <p>A sign language interpreter will be on “stand by” on Voting Day to ensure availability for electors requiring assistance.</p>	<p>All voting locations were provided with accessible voting equipment on all vote days. Audio ballots were provided on every machine, at every location. In addition, the size and contrast of the text on the ballots was adjustable to enhance readability. Each voting location was provided with a sip ‘n puff device and footpaddle/toggle switch for use with the voting equipment.</p> <p>Election staff were trained to assist voters with a disability.</p> <p>There were no requests received for a sign language interpreter on Voting Day. A staff member was available if a request for sign language interpreter was required.</p>
<p>Provide a voting opportunity 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</p>	<p>Offering a voting opportunity within the buildings or complexes with 75 units or great was very well received. A comprehensive communications strategy was developed to address the advertising at these voting locations.</p>
<p>Provide appropriate signage at voting locations.</p> <p>Mobile signs will be rented to identify voting locations as well as voting dates and times. The signs are highly visible and very effective.</p> <p>Provide additional signage to buildings/complexes with 75 units or more, particularly if units are in more than one building.</p>	<p>Mobile signs were rented to identify voting locations as well as voting dates and times. The signs were highly visible and very effective.</p> <p>Roads, Parks and Fleet provided additional directional signage for Hyde Park Public School and Ferris Lane Community Church of Nazarene.</p> <p>Each building or complex with 75 or more dwelling units received additional signage for their locations. These voting opportunities were also communicated on the City’s website.</p>
<p>Permit service animals and support persons in all voting locations.</p> <p>Election staff will be trained to ensure that service animals would be permitted.</p> <p>Confirmation will be requested from each voting location regarding access for service animals.</p>	<p>Election staff were trained to ensure that service animals and support persons would be permitted in the voting location.</p> <p>Confirmation was received from each voting location regarding access for service animals.</p>
<p>Ensure designated or reserved parking for persons with disabilities at each voting location. This will be confirmed during site inspections of each location.</p>	<p>Each voting location included designated or reserved parking for persons with disabilities.</p>





2018 Election Plan	Comments and Observations
<p>Provide Barrie Transit/BACTS passes to attend voting location as part of voter notification information letter.</p> <p>Information will be posted on buses and on some transit shelters regarding voting and promoted free transit as an alternative means to reach voting locations.</p> <p>Investigate and work with Transit to have a voting bus.</p>	<p>Barrie Transit/BACTS passes were included with the voter notification cards.</p> <p>The information regarding voting and promoting free transit as an alternative means to reach voting locations was posted on buses and some transit shelters.</p> <p>Legislative and Court Services partnered with Transit and Access Barrie regarding the use of an accessible City bus as a voting bus. The Voting Bus travelled to 15 locations over 5 days throughout the City for 3 hours each. The Voting Bus was provided with accessible voting equipment on all voting days and met the needs of the electors. Communication regarding the location of the voting bus was available on the City's website, social media and the newspaper. The Voting Bus generated positive feedback from the voters.</p>
<p>Voting locations set up to allow for maximum accessibility. This will include ensuring the distance between voting machines, location of power cords, lighting, signage (internal), etc. all considered in the set-up of the room, as feasible.</p> <p>Additional seating will be provided, where feasible at voting locations.</p>	<p>The distance between the voting equipment, location of power cords, lighting, signage (internal), etc. were all considered in the set-up of the room to ensure it was as accessible as possible.</p> <p>Additional seating was provided where feasible at voting locations.</p>
<p>Election Supervisors will be provided with a corporate issued cell phone so they could contact the Deputy City Clerk and Election Coordinator with any questions to ensure expedient customer service and minimize disruptions to voters</p>	<p>Election Supervisors were each provided with a corporate issued cell phone so they could contact the Deputy City Clerk and Election Coordinator with any questions to ensure expedient customer service and minimize disruptions to voters.</p>
<p>Accessible voting equipment will be available at all voting locations during all voting opportunities.</p> <p>A 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.</p>	<p>All voting locations were provided with touch screen voting equipment to be utilized by each voter. The voting equipment provided the ability to display a larger and high contrast text. The voting equipment also permitted an audio ballot using headphones, sip n' puff and toggle/footpaddle accessories. This equipment was available at all voting locations, including the Vote Bus.</p>



2018 Election Plan	Comments and Observations
<p>Provide instructions on use of accessible voting equipment including notice of availability of the Accessible Customer Service Policy.</p> <p>Signs posted at each voting machine. Video demonstration provided on the City's website and through Rogers Television. Information on all voting opportunities will be included in insert in the newspaper (special pull out feature).</p>	<p>Election staff were trained on the use of accessible voting equipment. Signs were posted at each voting location regarding a notice on the availability of the Accessible Customer Service Policy.</p> <p>All voting opportunities were advertised on the City's website through social media and included as an insert in the newspaper.</p>
<p>Magnifying sheets will be available if an elector required 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</p>	<p>Magnifying sheets were available if an elector required 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 voter more independently.</p>
<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>	<p>Advance voting was held over 4 days, including the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Voting at Apartments, Condos, Long-Term Care and Retirement Residences took place over four days.</p> <p>In, addition an accessible City Bus was used as a Voting Bus for five days and parked at various locations throughout the City.</p>
<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>	<p>Notices for the entire voting period including a promotion to encourage voting early opportunities and information about accessible voting was communicated through the City's website, social media and newspapers</p>
<p>Provide vote anywhere in the municipality at advance voting dates and on Voting Day</p>	<p>The City promoted and provided vote anywhere opportunities on advance voting opportunities and on Voting Day.</p>
<p>Provide two voting opportunities on the premises of 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>	<p>An advance voting opportunity was provided at each of the institutions and retirement homes as planned, except for two locations. Two locations were under quarantine for the advance vote days. Election staff were able to attend to these locations on voting day.</p> <p>Communication was provided to complexes and those which a mix of life lease, seniors apartments, institutions and retirement homes to advise electors of alternative and Voting Day opportunities.</p>



2018 Election Plan	Comments and Observations
<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>	<p>A facility occupied by the hearing impaired provided a staff member who was an American Sign Language interpreter at their facility on advance and final voting day.</p> <p>A staff member was available with knowledge of American Sign Language if there was a request for an interpreter on alternate/advance voting days.</p>
Staff Training	
<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 were 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>	<p>The Accessible Customer Service Handbook included information of accessible customer service. Staff were required to read the Accessible Customer Service Handbook and sign and return the acknowledgement form in this regard.</p> <p>During training election staff were trained on how to assist voters with any abilities.</p>
<p>Election staff will be encouraged to monitor an elector's concerns and needs to ensure they were met, i.e. if an individual with a walker was in a long line, staff observed, and if felt that the elector was having difficulties, offered a chair and ensured that their place was saved in the voting line-up or offered assistance to help (did not assume assistance was required)</p>	<p>Election staff monitored voter needs and attempted to provide assistance when appropriate and feasible.</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>Details related to service animals were included as part of the Accessible Customer Services Handbook provided to Election staff.</p> <p>Staff were advised during their training that service animals were permitted in voting locations.</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>Election staff were instructed to access doors frequently and to offer assistance and to watch for electors unable to easily enter the voting location.</p> <p>Greeters opened doors at locations without push button automatic door openers for every elector.</p>

