



Election Accessibility Plan

2022 Municipal Election

This Plan is for use in the 2022 Municipal Election in conjunction with the Municipality's current Accessibility Plan and IASR Standards.

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Director of Corporate Services/Clerk
May 31, 2022

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INTRODUCTION

The *Municipal Election Act*, (MEA), Section 12.1 (1) places responsibility on the Clerk to have regard to the needs of the electors and candidates with disabilities.

The municipal election will be conducted in a manner that shall ensure that Candidates and electors with disabilities have full and equal access to all election information and services including the voting area at the municipal office. The election shall be conducted in a manner that ensures that persons with disabilities are able to vote independently and privately with access to voting assistance if required.

Section 12.1 (2) of the MEA requires the Clerk to 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. Additionally, within ninety (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.

STAFF TRAINING AND ELECTION ASSISTANCE

All staff carrying out election duties have completed Accessible Customer Services in compliance with the Municipality's Accessibility Plan and will complete specific Election Training to recognize and ensure that persons with disabilities are served in a way that accommodates their individual needs. Training will include:

- How to interact/communicate with persons with various types of disability;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices, require the assistance of a support person or a service animal;
- How to clearly explain internet and telephone voting;
- What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services; and,
- How to provide voter assistance if requested.

Provision of Election Information

Election information will be provided to electors and candidates with disabilities in an alternative format agreed upon between the requester and the Clerk.

Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

The Clerk shall provide public notice on the municipal website and in the local media if there is a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services. The Notice shall include the reason for the disruption, the expected duration and an explanation of alternative methods of delivering the information or service. Every effort shall be made to provide alternative methods of providing the information or service to persons with disabilities.

Staff Assistance

Contact information for assistance:

Telephone: 1-800-795-0437 or 613-774-2105

Email: njohnston@northdundas.com

In Person: Clerk's Office
636 St. Lawrence St.
Winchester, ON

Mail: Township of North Dundas
P.O. Box 489
636 St. Lawrence Street,
Winchester, ON K0C 2K0

ASSISTANCE TO ELECTORS

The 2022 Election will be conducted with Internet and Telephone Voting methods. Detailed information about each voting method is set out in the 2022 Municipal and School Board Procedures Manual, available on the municipal website or from the Clerk's office and can be provided in an alternative format upon request.

Please contact us at 613-774-2105 or njohnston@northdundas.com if you require your Voter Information Package in an accessible format. Staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Accessible Voting Area

Section 45(2) of the MEA requires that the clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities. An accessible voting area located at the Municipal Office, 636 St. Lawrence Street, Winchester will be available to voters throughout the voting period during regular office hours and on Election Day until 8 pm.

Parking

The municipal office parking lot has designated parking for individuals with disabilities that are clearly posted and located close to the entrance to the voting area.

Entrance

The entrance to the municipal office voting area is level leading to the entrance door. Doors to the municipal office have automatic door opening devices or will be propped open in a safe manner. They are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or other mobility devices.

Interior

Access to the interior voting area is level. Carpeting and doormats are level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. The voting area is well lit and seating shall be made available.

Accessible Voting Booth

The voting area will be low in height and have a wide area to allow individuals using mobility aids to vote independently and secretively.

Voting Assistance

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person within the voting area or staff can assist the voter in casting their vote. Voting area staff shall, in conjunction with the person with the disability, determine the extent to which they need assistance and the best way to provide the assistance.

Accessible Voting Technologies

Voting areas will have a computer for internet voting that will assist voters with disabilities in casting their votes with independence and privacy. Staff will be available to assist voters upon request. Support persons and service animals will be accommodated.

INTERNET VOTING

Internet voting allows voters to vote through secured internet services. This method provides for easy voting for persons with a variety of disabilities. This format allows individuals to cast their vote with independence and privacy as voters have the option of using the assistive tools they have on their own computer.

This method of voting is designed to encourage voter participation as voters don't have to attend a physical location to cast their ballot and accessibility and privacy for persons

with disabilities is maximized.

TELEPHONE VOTING

Telephone voting allows voters to vote through secured telephone services which provides for easy voting for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their vote with independence and privacy. Land lines or cell phone can be used to vote, the method is compatible with assistive devices. Voters can register their vote selection with the telephone keypad or voice commands, greatly increasing accessibility, privacy and independence for voters who do not have internet access.

ASSISTANCE TO CANDIDATES

The 2022 Election will be conducted with Internet and Telephone Voting methods. Detailed information about each voting method is set out in the 2022 Municipal and School Board Procedures Manual, available on the municipal website or from the Clerk's Office and can be made available in an alternative format upon request.

Please contact us at 613-774-2105 or njohnston@northdundas.com if you require your Candidate Package in an accessible format.

Staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Service Animals/Support Persons

Candidates are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal and/or support person at all designated election locations.

Campaign Expenses

Expenses that are incurred by a candidate with a disability that are directly related to the disability and would not have been incurred but for the election to which the expenses relate are excluded from the permitted spending limit for the candidate.

FEEDBACK PROCESS

Feedback is encouraged and any received will be reviewed by the Clerk and appropriate action will be taken to remove barriers or provide accommodation if necessary.

The information received on the Accessible Customer Service Feedback Form will be summarized in the post-election Election Accessibility Report and will be used to improve accessibility measures in future municipal election.