

Subject: 2022 Municipal and School Board Election Accessibility Report

Department: Corporate Services

Division: Clerks

Report #: CPS-2023-003

Meeting Date: 2023-01-09

Recommendations

That Report CPS- 2023-003 2022 Municipal and School Board Election Accessibility Report, be received.

Background and Analysis

In addition to existing accessibility requirements pursuant to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, the Municipal Elections Act states:

Section 12.1 (1)

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)

Within 90 days after voting day in a regular election, the clerk shall submit a report to council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

Section 41 (3)

The clerk shall make such changes to some or all of the ballots as he or she considers necessary or desirable to allow electors with visual impairments to vote without assistance referred to in paragraph 4 of subsection 52 (1).

Section 45 (2)

In establishing the locations of voting places, the clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities

Pursuant to the reporting requirements established in the Municipal Elections Act, this report outlines the various initiatives undertaken to ensure an accessible 2022 Municipal and School Board Election.

Voting Location Accessibility Checklist

The Voting Location Accessibility Checklist was developed for the purposes of the election and was reviewed by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (JAAC) prior to locations being confirmed for use in the election. Town of Orangeville and County of Dufferin staff visited every voting location and verified all the items on the Voting Location Accessibility Checklist (see attachment 1) to ensure each location was fully accessible. JAAC was subsequently provided an update on the results of the visits once complete.

Election Accessibility Plan 2022

Attachment 2 to this report is the Election Accessibility Plan which sets out the measures implemented to ensure the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election was accessible to all voters.

The plan highlights a number of measures which include, but are not limited to, voting proxies to allow residents to appoint a proxy to vote on their behalf and accessible voting equipment, which included the use of an audio ballot marker that uses either a sip'n'puff, handheld assisted technology device, or paddles to mark a ballot.

The Town also offered both a Reduced Hour Voting Program and a new Vote at Home program. The Reduced Hour Voting Program was available at each long-term care home in Orangeville as well as at the hospital, to allow residents at those institutions the opportunity vote. The Vote at Home Program allowed residents who were homebound to have election officials attend at their home to administer the vote. Nineteen residents utilized this service and staff received very positive feedback about the initiative.

Accessibility Feedback Form

Attachment 3 to this report is the Accessibility Feedback Form which was available to the public on the Town website and on the election portal. This form was also provided to Election Officials to complete regarding any election related accessibility concerns.

The only accessibility issues identified were the distance from the parking lot at Alder Street Recreation Centre to the entrance doors and the use of the second floor for the voting place. Clerk's staff have noted such concerns and will consider this feedback in future election planning, in particular to address distance concerns and to enhance awareness of elevator access.

Strategic Alignment

Orangeville Forward – Strategic Plan

Priority Area: Municipal Services, Strong Governance

Objective: Delivered with a focus on customer service, transparent and fair decision making process

Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan

Theme: Corporate and Fiscal

Strategy: Demonstrate municipal leadership by considering the environmental, social, and economic impacts of all Town decisions

Notice Provisions

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

Not Applicable.

Respectfully submitted

Karen Landry
General Manager, Corporate Services

Reviewed by

Carolina Khan
Town Clerk, Corporate Services

Prepared by

Tracy Macdonald
Deputy Clerk, Corporate Services

Attachment(s):

1. Voting Location Accessibility Checklist
2. Election Accessibility Plan 2022
3. Accessibility Feedback Form