



The Corporation of the
Town of Arnprior

2018 Post Election Accessibility Report

Background:

In accordance with Section 12.1(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act* 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 outlines the various initiatives undertaken during the course of the 2018 Municipal Election regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

In addition to the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, the Clerk must also comply with the requirements of the following legislation:

- The Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990 provides that all persons have the right to equal treatment without discrimination, including on the basis of disability, and that persons with disabilities be provided with accommodation short of undue hardship.
- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). Under the AODA, private and public sector organizations across Ontario are required to comply with Regulations established by the Province. These Regulations include the Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standards. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR) brings together accessible standards for Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, and Design of Public Spaces under one regulation and harmonizes the requirements common to each standard. Each of the standards articulates specific requirements and compliance deadlines, which will be phased in across Ontario between 2011 and 2025.

Initiatives

Election officials responsible for conducting an election must have regard for the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities. Municipal and school board elections must provide the public with equal access and equal opportunity in casting a ballot.

The following are the various initiatives undertaken by the Town during the course of the 2018 Municipal Election:

- Leading up to the election, Election Accessibility Initiatives were discussed with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, following which an Accessibility Plan was developed, and posted to the Town's website. The 2018 Plan guides the provision of election related services to persons with disabilities. The Plan was designed to respect the dignity and independence of electors and candidates, and ensure that practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

- For the 2018 Election, the Town chose to conduct the election utilizing the alternative method of electronic voting. (telephone and internet). Telephone and Internet voting provided the electors with the ability to mark their ballot from home at their convenience using their phone or electronic device. This allowed increased rights of privacy to electors with disabilities whom may find voting at traditional paper-based voting locations more difficult, as they had the ability to vote with little or no assistance required from others.
- Extended office hours were provided, to assist those residents were who were not able to visit the Voter Help Centre during regular office hours, at the following times:
 - Friday, October 12, 2018 10:00 am - 7:00 pm,
 - Saturday, October 13, 2018 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
 - Monday, October 12 - Friday, October 19, 2018 8:30 am - 7:00 pm
 - Saturday October 20, 2018 9:00 am - 12:00 pm Monday,
 - October 22, 2018 (Voting Day) 8:30 am - 8:00 pm
- Election Staff made sure the Voter Help Centre was accessible to electors with disabilities, ensuring that the Voter Help Centre had:
 - Election staff to assist them as may be necessary using a touch-screen; tablet or telephone,
 - Barrier free path of travel from parking lot/sidewalk;
 - Accessible parking;
 - Accessible elevator lift;
 - Accessible doors;
 - Adequate lighting; and an
 - Accessible Washroom
- Election staff travelled to the Grove Nursing Home, the Arnprior Villa, Island View Suites, and Baskin Drive Seniors to assist in the voting process in order to maintain the high participation rates found in the 65 years+ age range. Election staff arranged to have Voter Instruction Letters belonging to electors residing in the Grove Nursing Home, the Arnprior Villa, and Island View Suites to be mailed directly to the election officials for handling. When election staff visited the various facilities, with a kiosk wireless Internet-enabled tablet, seniors were able to use the tablet to cast their ballot.
- Election information was communicated through various channels and alternative formats including emails, social media, newspaper and radio. For election-related inquiries or feedback, all residents were able to contact the municipal office via a telephone or through a designated email.
- Election staff ensured that all information was made available to candidates and voters in alternate formats upon request.

Conclusion

It was the goal of the Town of Arnprior to ensure that electors who required accessibility services were provided with the best opportunity to vote as independently as possible in the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election. The 2018 Municipal and School Board Election total voter turnout for the Town of Arnprior was 47.6%.

Feedback

Public feedback about the manner in which election services were provided to persons with accessible needs may be submitted to the Clerk through a variety of methods:

Telephone: 613-623-4231 ext. 1817

Email: mspratt@arnprior.ca

Mail or in person: 105 Elgin Street West, Arnprior, ON K7S 0A8

The feedback process provides election staff with an opportunity to take corrective measures to prevent similar recurrences, address training needs, enhance service delivery and provide alternative methods of providing election services.