



TOWNSHIP OF PERTH EAST 2018 MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION ELECTION ACCESSIBILITY REPORT

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended (*MEA*), requires the Clerk to have regard for the needs of voters and candidates with disabilities and to ensure that all voting places are accessible to voters with disabilities. This report describes the legislative environment under which elections are conducted in Ontario. It provides an overview of the Election Accessibility Plan and highlights how physical, attitudinal, informational, technological and communications barriers were identified, removed and prevented in the conduct of the 2018 Election.

The Municipal Clerk is responsible for the appropriate legislative and administrative conduct of the municipal election in the Township of Perth East. The *MEA*, places responsibility on the Clerk to have regard for the needs of voters and candidates with disabilities. The Clerk is also required, after the regular election, to prepare a report on the identification, removal and prevention of barriers. The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2016 (AODA)* sets out clear goals and timeframes for making Ontario Accessible by 2025. 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.

In 2018, the Township of Perth East election was conducted by Internet and Telephone Voting. An Accessibility Plan was developed to reflect the use of these two alternative voting methods and the way they may impact voters with disabilities. As well, the Township of Perth East Election Accessibility Plan includes the following components:

- Staff Training and Election Assistance
- Assistance to Voters
- Internet and Telephone Voting
- Assistance to Candidates
- Feedback Process

The Clerk/Returning Officer and all election staff have received Accessible Customer Services Training in compliance with the *AODA*. Additionally, the Clerk/Returning Officer reviewed ways in which to clearly explain internet and telephone voting to voters that may have various types of disabilities.

- No Perth East voters requested election information in an alternative format,
- No Temporary Service Disruptions were experienced during the election period, and;
- All election related material (newspaper ads, website, social media posts, tax newsletters, Voter Instruction Letters) provided contact information for the Township of Perth East, to ensure that any elector who required assistance could easily obtain additional information.

Voters were able to contact municipal election staff by phone, email, fax and in person at the Township Office. In addition, Voting Kiosks throughout the voting period were available at the Township Office, Perth East Public Library, as well as two help centres at the Sebringville Fire Station and the Shakespeare Fire Station.

Assistance to Voters

As previously noted, the 2018 election was conducted by internet and telephone voting methods. The details on each of these voting methods are set out in the 2018 Election Procedure Manual. The Manual was made available at the Township of Perth East Municipal Office and on the Township of Perth East website (www.pertheast.ca); and could be provided in alternative formats upon request. The *Municipal Elections Act*, Section 45(2) requires that the Clerk ensure that each voting area is accessibility to voters with disabilities. The Township of Perth East provided the following for those electors without access to the internet or telephone voting:

Voter Locations / Kiosks and Help Centres

October 12	Township of Perth East Administrative Office 25 Mill St. E. Milverton, ON	10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
October 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19	Township of Perth East Administrative Office 25 Mill St. E. Milverton, ON	8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
October 15	Shakespeare Fire Station 2174 Line 34, Shakespeare	12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
October 15	Sebringville Fire Station 66 Road 130, Sebringville	12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
October 22	Township of Perth East Administrative Office 25 Mill St. E. Milverton, ON	8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
October 12 - 22	Perth East Public Library 19 Mill St. E. Milverton, ON	During regular hours of operation

Retirement Homes - Voter Help and Kiosks provided for the following;

October 16, 2018	Knollcrest Lodge 50 William St. Milverton, ON
October 18, 2018	Hillside Manor 5066 Line 34, Stratford, ON
October 18, 2018	Country Meadows 6124 Ana St, Brunner, ON

In accordance with the Election Accessibility Plan, parking, the entrance, the interior and voting kiosks provided by the Township of Perth East were fully accessible to voters with various abilities. Voters with disabilities were able to be accompanied to the Voting Kiosks with a support person.

Internet and Telephone Voting

Internet and telephone voting enabled voters to vote through secure internet and/or telephone services. These alternative methods of voting provided voters with disabilities, the ability to vote independently and privately using assistive technologies they have available in their own home and on their own computer. Internet and telephone voting allowed voters to participate without attending a physical location to cast a ballot. Voters were able to use assistive technologies, keypads, voice commands etc. that are readily available to them.

Assistance to Candidates

At the time of filing Nomination Papers, all candidates were provided with a copy of the 2018 Township of Perth East Election Procedures and the Clerk's Department staff were available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may have arising with respect to removing barriers for candidates.

Feedback Process

Any voters and/or candidates that experienced barriers during the 2018 election process were able to utilize the Accessible Customer Service Feedback Form to identify the issue to the Township of Perth East.

CONCLUSION:

The Township of Perth East did not receive any formal Feedback about barriers facing voters with disabilities, during the 2018 Municipal Election process.

Theresa Campbell
Municipal Clerk/Returning Officer
Township of Perth East

January 11th, 2019