



REPORT

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Renée Brown, Deputy Clerk - Administration

DATE: December 23, 2022

REPORT NO.: ADMIN-2023-0001

SUBJECT: 2022 Municipal Election Town of Halton Hills Accessibility Plan
– Final Report

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. ADMIN-2023-0001 dated December 23, 2022, regarding 2022 Municipal Election Town of Halton Hills Accessibility Plan – Final Report, be received for information.

KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- Under the Municipal Election Act section 12.1(2) 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 before voting day in a regular election
- Municipal Election Act also requires the clerk within 90 days after voting day in a regular election to prepare a report to Council regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

Under the Municipal Election Act section 12.1(2) 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 before voting day in a regular election. This report was prepared and made available on the Town of Halton Hills website prior to the 2022 Municipal Election.

The Municipal Election Act also requires the clerk within 90 days after voting day in a regular election to prepare a report to Council regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities. Attached as Appendix A to this Report is the 2022 Municipal Election Town of Halton Hills Accessibility Plan indicating the actions taken to implement the plan and the status of each goal.

Throughout the election planning process, the election team kept accessibility at the forefront. All voting locations were assessed to ensure that they had as many accessible features as possible before being selected.

On-line voting was introduced to provide an alternative to the traditional in person voting. On-line voting was available for 15 days from October 7 – October 22 providing greater flexibility and accessibility to all electors. The election team promoted on-line voting on the Town's website, through social media, ActiVan advertising sources and providing community outreach at the Halton Hills Public Libraries (Georgetown & Acton Branches), Hillsvie Active Living Centers (Georgetown & Acton locations) and the Youth Centers (Georgetown & Acton locations). The election team also provided four days of on-line voting help desks/kiosks at the Acton Arena and the Georgetown Marketplace Mall.

Two days of advance in person voting was also provided at Town Hall that any person could attend with the added feature of accessible voting equipment including ATI (Avelo Tactile Interface), sip and puff and paddles.

On Election Day all voting locations were set up to ensure accessibility by means of entranceways, equipment and table locations and had magnifying sheets and flashlights for those that needed them. Electors needing assistance could bring a friend or family member to help them or request the assistance of election staff. The Municipal Election Act permits voters to acquire assistance with the voting process as long as the person assisting takes the appropriate oaths to ensure they maintain the integrity of the election by voting as per the direction of the elector and maintaining the secrecy of the elector's vote.

With each election the election team reviews the best accessibility initiatives from the previous election and continues them and/or tries to improve upon them. The addition of on-line voting with the 2022 Municipal Election was very well received and vastly improved accessibility for all electors.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report is administrative in nature and does not have an impact on the Town's Strategic Plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

This report is administrative in nature and does not directly impact or address climate change and the Town's Net Zero target.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement was not needed as this report is administrative in nature.

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

The Town Clerk and the Election Team.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report is administrative in nature and does not have any financial implications.

Reviewed and approved by,

Valerie Petryniak, Town Clerk & Director of Legislative Services

Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer