2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

This Plan is for use in the 2018 Municipal Election in conjunction with the Municipality's current Accessibility Plan and IASR Standards.

If you require this document in an alternate format, please contact
info@mattawa.ca or 705-744-5611

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Introduction

In accordance with the Municipal Elections Act and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Clerk is authorized to establish procedures and provide appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to participate fully in the Town of Mattawa's 2018 municipal election.

The Municipal Election Accessibility Plan supports and strengthens the municipality's commitment and efforts to respond to the needs of persons with disabilities.

The focus of this plan is to ensure that elections services are accessible to all electors and candidates, to identify and eliminate barriers for persons with disabilities and to create a positive voting experience for everyone.

This plan is a "living" document which will be improved and updated as best practices are identified and opportunity for improvement arises. Staff is committed to continuously reviewing and improving the Plan as the 2018 municipal election approaches.

Objectives

The Town of Mattawa's 2018 Municipal Elections Accessibility Plan will ensure that:

- Individuals with disabilities, without exception, can independently and privately cast their ballot; and

- Individuals with disabilities will have full and equal access to all information concerning the 2018 Municipal Election; and

- Individuals with disabilities can fully participate in the Municipal Election as volunteers, electors and/or candidates; and

- The Town of Mattawa will make the public and candidates aware of accessibility measures available.

Legislative Requirements
(Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended)

12.1(1) A clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities. 2009, c. 33 Sch. 21, s. 8 (8).

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 to the public before voting day in a regular election. 2016, c. 15, s. 11.

12.1(3) 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. 2016, c. 15 s. 11.

45 (1) The clerk shall establish the number and location of voting places for an election as he or she considers most convenient for the electors. 1996, c. 32, Sch., s. 45(1).

45 (2) In establishing the locations of voting places, the clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities. 2009, c. 33, Sch. 21, s. 8 (23).

Definition of a Disability

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 defines "disability" as follows:

(a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or in a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.

(b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability.

(c) A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language.

(d) A mental disorder; or

(e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Disabilities can take many forms, both visible and invisible.

Accessibility Training for Election Staff

Staff Training
All staff carrying out election duties will complete the Accessible Customer Services Training and specific Election Training to comply with the municipal Accessibility Plan and to recognize and ensure that persons with disabilities are served in a way that accommodates their individual needs. Staff will be available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election. Accessible Customer Service Training and specific Election Training will include:

- How to interact/communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- 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 paper ballot 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.

Voting Places

The voting places are:

1. Mattawa Municipal Office
160 Water Street S. F. Monestime Council Chambers
Advance Polls
Saturday October 13, 2018   and   Wednesday October 17, 2018
10 am to 4 pm   4 pm to 8 pm

2. Mike Rodden Arena and Community Centre – 450 Hurdman Street
Voting Day – Monday October 22, 2018
10 am to 8 pm

3. Algonquin Nursing Home – 231 Tenth Street
Voting Day – Monday October 22, 2018
10 am to 2 pm
For residents only
(As per section 45(7) of the Municipal Elections Act, a voting place shall be provided on voting day to Institutions with 20 or more beds that are occupied by persons who are disabled, chronically ill or infirm. Section 46(3) of the Municipal Elections act allows for the Clerk to establish reduced voting hours with respects to a voting place described in subsection 45(7) that is only for the use of residents of the institution or retirement home. 2016, c. 15, s.35 (2)).

The following initiatives and actions will be carried out for all voting places:

- Barrier free parking and barrier free path of travel from parking lot/sidewalk
- Accessible doors and/or door operators (Election Assistants)
- Adequate lighting
- Ensure all washrooms are accessible for everyone
- Conduct an accessibility check prior to voting dates to ensure no changes have been made to voting places
- Election staff will perform final accessibility checks on Election Day to verify the accessibility of the voting places.
- Ensure all voting places have access routes and entrances that are clearly identified.

Service Animals/Support Persons

Any individual voter or candidate is permitted to be accompanied by a service animal and/or support person at all voting places.

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.

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.

Any feedback provided to the Clerk will be summarized in the post-election Election Accessibility Report and will be used to improve accessibility measures in future municipal elections.