



**City of Kingston
Information Report to Council
Report Number 19-037**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Gerard Hunt, Chief Administrative Officer
Resource Staff: John Bolognone, City Clerk
Date of Meeting: January 22, 2019
Subject: 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

Executive Summary:

In accordance with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act* (MEA) the City Clerk prepared the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan which identified the accessibility measures to be implemented for the 2018 municipal election and any subsequent by-elections. This Plan was presented to the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC) on September 6, 2018 ([MAAC-18-015](#)).

The MEA requires that a report be submitted to Council and be made available to the public within 90 days after the election reporting on the success of the measures that were implemented to identify, remove and prevent barriers for electors and candidates with disabilities.

Overall, the measures that were implemented to identify, remove and prevent barriers for electors and candidates with disabilities were successful. Based on the input received from the Site Supervisors of the various voting places there were very few complaints related to the accessibility measures. There were some concerns expressed with respect to the distance from the parking area at two of the voting places and at two voting places the door activation switch was not working. There were also some complaints related to voting places with more than one entrance into the building.

In total, there were five (5) votes cast using the accessible voting equipment. No votes were cast using the accessible voting equipment on Advance Voting Day. On Voting Day, the accessible voting equipment was used at only three (3) of the twenty-five (25) voting places. In one case the elector had difficulty hearing the instructions due to the background noise in the voting place and in another case the elector commented that using the accessible voting equipment was too complicated. Both MAAC and one of the stakeholders that reviewed the Accessibility Plan commented on the need to consider making the services of a sign language

January 22, 2019

Page 2 of 15

interpreter available on voting days. The provision of a sign language interpreter will be discussed further with MAAC prior to the next municipal election as part of a broader discussion respecting the provision of accessible voting equipment.

The City's Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will be updated as best practices and opportunities for enhancements are identified. Staff will review all feedback received and will revise the Accessibility Plan as deemed appropriate for any future by-elections and/or the 2022 municipal election.

The 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan is attached as Exhibit A.

Recommendation:

This report is for information purposes only.

January 22, 2019

Page 3 of 15

Authorizing Signature:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Gerard Hunt, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Lanie Hurdle, Community Services	Not required
Jim Keech, President and CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required
Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services	Not required

January 22, 2019

Page 4 of 15

Options/Discussion:**Background**

The City of Kingston understands the importance of accessibility for persons with disabilities. The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) came into force in 2005 and since then the City as a public organization has made significant strides to identify, remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities.

For the 2014 municipal election, an Accessibility Plan was prepared and reviewed by the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC). New voting technology was introduced to provide electors with more options for voting, including: internet voting; telephone voting; and, accessible voting equipment (provided at all voting places except those located in institutions, retirement homes and long-term care facilities).

Internet voting and accessible voting equipment were used for the 2018 municipal election. The accessible voting equipment was again provided at all voting places (except in institutions, retirement homes and long-term care facilities). There was one (1) voting place in each electoral district on Advance Voting Day (October 13, 2018) and two (2) voting places in each electoral district, except Countryside which had three, on Voting Day (October 22, 2018). In addition, on Voting Day there were seventeen (17) dedicated voting places located in various institutions, retirement homes and long-term care facilities for the residents of those buildings only.

Development of the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

The 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan was prepared in advance of the 2018 municipal election in order to comply with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act* and to identify the accessibility measures already in place and/or to be implemented for the 2018 municipal election and any subsequent by-elections. The measures proposed in the Accessibility Plan were intended to ensure that the election process and procedures would be consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

During the development of the 2018 Accessibility Plan, staff reviewed the 2014 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan as well as various documents, accessibility plans and policies from government agencies and other municipalities. In addition, a Training Booklet for all designated election officials was developed to ensure that electors with disabilities were able to vote in a positive environment and to ensure that all election officials recognized the importance of accommodating an elector's needs whenever possible. The Training Booklet was reviewed by the City's Community Projects Manager and the MAAC Project Team members.

A draft of the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan was also reviewed by the Community Projects Manager and the MAAC Project Team members.

Mandate of the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

January 22, 2019

Page 5 of 15

“To provide every candidate, elector and election worker with equal opportunity for positive involvement in the 2018 municipal election and any subsequent by-elections”.

Overall Goal of the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

“To establish objectives and actions for the 2018 municipal election and any subsequent by-elections which respect the dignity and independence of and address the needs of candidates, electors and election workers of all ability”.

Objectives of the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

- that all voting places are accessible;
- that a person with a disability is able to independently cast a ballot and verify his or her choices;
- that a person with a disability has full and equal access to all information on where and when to vote, on the candidates for each office, and on the referendum question;
- that a person with a disability can fully participate in the 2018 municipal election as an elector, candidate, or designated election official; and
- that electors and candidates with disabilities are aware of the accessibility measures available for the 2018 municipal election through such means as the newspaper, media releases, the elections page on the City of Kingston website, and social media.

Accessibility Measures for the 2018 Municipal Election

The accessibility measures that were either already in place and/or that were implemented for the 2018 municipal election are briefly summarized below. For further details on each of the accessibility measures please refer to the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan attached as Exhibit A to this report.

(a) Communications

All relevant information for electors, candidates and third party advertisers was posted to the elections webpage on the City’s website. The webpage included separate tabs for Voters, Candidates, Ranked Ballots and Third Party Advertisers. Every effort was made to ensure that the elections webpage remained current and up to date. The elections webpage was compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level A and allowed for the use of assistive software. If requested, printed materials were made available in large print and alternate formats. The ranked ballot voting video created for the 2018 municipal election incorporated both audio and captioning. The communications section of the Accessibility Plan also outlined the procedures to be followed in the event of service disruptions.

(b) Voting Place Accessibility Audits

January 22, 2019

Page 6 of 15

An accessibility audit was completed on all voting places. A Voting Location Assessment Project Team comprised of two City staff and two members of MAAC reviewed and evaluated all potential voting places based on an Accessibility Checklist. Many of the voting places selected for the 2018 municipal election were locations that were used for the 2014 municipal election. The Project Team did not identify any major issues with the voting place locations that were selected. In finalizing the 2018 voting place locations, the Project Team paid particular attention to key considerations such as:

- proximity to a transit route;
- identification of an easily navigable route for entry into the voting place building and the room or area where voting would take place;
- that the route to the entrance of the voting place was unobstructed, accessible and wide enough to accommodate an elector using a wheelchair, scooter or other assistive device or if accompanied by a support person or a service animal;
- that the doors to the voting place and voting area were accessible and easy to open;
- that accessible parking was available close to the entrance to the voting place or could be designated at all voting places; and
- that the voting place had adequate lighting at the entrance and in the parking area.

A post-election survey sent to all Site Supervisors requested comments on whether or not the voting place was adequate, if there were any complaints or accessibility concerns and if the location should be used in subsequent elections. The responses received noted the following:

- the walking distance from the parking lot to the voting place at LaSalle Secondary School was too far;
- the walking distance from the parking lot to the voting place at Our Lady of Lourdes School was too far – a number of the electors were using canes, walkers and wheelchairs;
- the lighting in the parking lot at Our Lady of Lourdes School was poor which made finding the correct entrance to the school more difficult – also the light would flicker on and off – it was recommended that the site not be used for future elections;
- direct access to the room where voting was taking place was identified as an issue at Regiopolis-Notre Dame Catholic High School (two entrances), RMC (Kingston Military Community Sports Centre), St. Paul the Apostle Parish (two entrances), and St Francis of Assisi Catholic School (two streets and many doors);
- it was recommended that St Francis of Assisi Catholic School not be used for future elections;

January 22, 2019

Page 7 of 15

- the door activation switch was not working at two of the school sites on Advance Voting Day; and
- there was inadequate signage at some voting places on Advance Voting Day (e.g. the directional arrows were too small and not enough signs were provided). Additional signage and larger directional arrows were provided for Voting Day.

The foregoing matters will be taken into consideration during the review of potential voting places and the planning for the 2022 municipal election.

(c) Dedicated Voting Places

In accordance with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act*, dedicated voting places were provided on Voting Day in seventeen (17) institutions, retirement homes or long-term care facilities throughout the City. These voting places were for the residents of those buildings only and generally had reduced voting hours (either 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.). In some cases the voting hours were altered to accommodate the needs of the residents or the operational requirements of the facility. In one instance the retirement home was subject to a scheduled power outage that could not be rescheduled and that affected the operation of the building's elevators. The assigned election staff moved the voting place from floor to floor in the building to ensure that all residents who wanted to vote had the opportunity to do so.

(d) Voting Place Setup and Layout

Members of MAAC were invited to evaluate a model voting place setup and provide feedback to the Election Team. That feedback was taken into consideration in the development of the typical voting place diagram that was provided to each Site Supervisor and that was included in the Accessibility Plan. Setting up the voting place to ensure maximum accessibility formed part of the training for designated election officials and the Site Supervisor had the discretion to adjust the voting place setup as needed to address the physical layout of the voting place and thereby ensure accessibility for all. Election staff were also trained to regularly check the entrance to the voting place and the pathway to the room where voting was taking place to ensure that it remained unobstructed throughout the voting days.

An accessible voting area was set up at each voting place that provided increased table height to accommodate electors in wheelchairs or scooters, the accessible voting equipment (audio tactile interface, paddle buttons and sip 'n puff) and a separate voting compartment to ensure privacy. Magnifiers were available to assist electors with low vision and a pen and paper were available to communicate with electors with hearing loss. Notices and a site diagram were posted either at the entrance to the room where voting was taking place or in the voting compartments to assist electors with way finding around the voting place and to provide directions in marking a ballot.

A post-election survey sent to all Site Supervisors requested comments on whether or not the voting place was adequate, if there were any complaints and if the location should be used in future elections. The responses received noted the following:

January 22, 2019

Page 8 of 15

- 90.5% of the Site Supervisors indicated that the voting place was adequate for the volume of electors;
- the need for larger signs inside some of the voting places to direct electors to the room where voting was taking place (following Advance Voting Day, additional signage was provided to those voting places);
- the need for additional signage at some of the voting places to direct electors to the correct building entrance or to the room where voting was taking place (following Advance Voting Day, additional signage and larger directional arrows were provided for most of the voting places);
- while not specifically an accessibility issue, MacLachlan Woodworking Museum was considered too tight for the number of election staff and the associated tables and equipment and it was recommended that the site not be used for future elections; and
- while not specifically an accessibility issue, Artillery Park was not recommended for future elections as it was considered too small for all the voting stations and electors did not have anywhere to line up to vote.

The foregoing matters will be taken into consideration during the review of potential voting places and the planning for the 2022 municipal election.

(e) Free Transportation to the Voting Places

The Election Team worked with both the Kingston Access Bus and Kingston Transit on the provision of free transportation to the voting places on both Advance Voting Day and Voting Day. Free transportation on Kingston Access Bus was only for registered users of that service as well as any support person accompanying the elector. The elector had to identify the voting place he or she would be travelling to when booking the transportation. Kingston Access Bus indicated that approximately ten (10) persons used the service for transportation to and from the voting places. Kingston Access bus had no suggestions for future elections and noted that the only issue that may be encountered would be if an elector waited too long into the booking period to reserve a time for transportation to a voting place.

Free transportation on Kingston Transit was approved by Council and was available on both Advance Voting Day and Voting Day between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. to electors who showed his or her Voter Information Notice when boarding the bus. Kingston Transit noted that the ridership for electors was not specifically tracked and that no issues or complaints were reported. It was also noted that there were many positive comments on social media about the availability of free transit for electors.

In advance of the 2022 election, the Elections Office will approach both Kingston Access Bus and Kingston Transit/City Council with a request for free transportation for electors travelling to a voting place.

(f) Accessible Voting Options

January 22, 2019

Page 9 of 15

The Accessibility Plan outlined the different accessible voting options that were available to electors with a disability, including:

- Accessible Voting Equipment – the Plan outlined the Accessible Voting Equipment that was available at each voting place (audio tactile interface, sip 'n puff and paddle buttons) and the procedures for an accessible voting session. No votes were cast on the accessible voting equipment on Advance Voting Day. On Voting Day there was a total of five (5) votes cast on the accessible voting equipment. The Machine Operators at all voting places were trained on the setup and operation of the accessible voting equipment. The provision of accessible voting equipment is one component of the Accessibility Plan that the Elections Team will be discussing further with MAAC prior to the next election as detailed below under the heading Future Considerations.
- Internet Voting – began at 10:00 a.m. on Advance Voting Day (October 13, 2018) and was originally intended to be available until 8:00 p.m. on Voting Day, as long as the elector was registered for internet voting by 7:00 p.m. on Voting Day. Due to internet voting being disrupted, voting was extended until 9:15 p.m. on Voting Day and electors were required to be registered for internet voting by 8:45 p.m.

Internet voting was accessible to everyone and provided an elector with the capability to vote from anywhere and at any time as long as the elector had his or her Voter Information Notice. Voting from home facilitated the voting process for persons with disabilities who may have mobility restrictions, visual impairment, and/or a difficult time with transportation. Any electors with assistive devices set up in his or her home could use them to assist with casting a ballot privately and independently. This provides persons with disabilities the same opportunity to participate in the election as other voters.

- Designated Voting Places – were established in various institutions, retirement homes and long-term care facilities for the residents of those buildings only. If an elector was not able to come to the room where voting was taking place, the Deputy Returning Officer could attend on an elector anywhere within the institution, retirement home or long-term care facility designated as the voting place to allow him or her to vote. One of the designated voting places had a scheduled power outage that affected the building's elevators. In that case the elections staff moved the voting place from floor to floor to give everyone the opportunity to vote.
- Voting Proxy – an elector could have appointed another eligible elector to vote on his or her behalf.
- Curbside Elector Support – provision was made for a designated election official to assist an elector who was at the voting place but could not access the room where voting was taking place.
- Assistive Devices – an elector with his or her own assistive device was allowed in any voting place and voting compartment.

January 22, 2019

Page 10 of 15

- Support Person – an elector was permitted to be accompanied by a support person in any voting place and voting compartment. If the support person was going to assist in marking the ballot, the support person was required to take an Oath of Secrecy.
- Assistance by Designated Election Official – an elector who was not able to mark his or her own ballot or who did not have access to internet voting could request the Site Supervisor or Deputy Returning Officer at a designated voting place to accompany him or her into a voting compartment and assist with marking the ballot as directed by the elector. At a number of the voting places, designated election officials assisted electors in this manner.
- Service Animals – an elector was permitted to be accompanied by a service animal in all voting places and voting compartments.

(g) Accessibility Training

All designated election officials received accessibility training. A Training Booklet was developed to ensure compliance with the training requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. The Training Booklet was reviewed by the members of the MAAC Project Team and was revised based on the feedback received.

The Training Booklet provided an overview of the applicable legislation and the City's Accessibility Standards Policy, outlined overarching customer service principles, and provided suggestions for interacting and communicating with electors with disabilities and who may be using assistive devices or be accompanied by a support person or service animal. Each designated election official was required to submit a signed Compliance Form verifying that he or she had read and understood his or her requirements and responsibilities for providing accessible customer service during the 2018 municipal election.

In addition, there were designated election officials at every voting place who had been trained on the accessible voting equipment and who could provide assistance to electors, as required.

(h) Candidate Information

A number of reference documents were posted to the elections webpage to assist candidates with accessible election considerations.

Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee Consultation

The 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan was presented to the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC) on September 6, 2018 ([MAAC-18-015](#)). At the meeting staff responded to questions with respect to the accessibility training being provided to the designated election officials and confirmed that staff at each voting place would receive hands on training on the operation of the accessible voting equipment and that the accessible voting equipment would be available throughout all voting days. Staff also responded to questions about consideration being given to having an ASL interpreter available to assist electors that may be deaf, hard of hearing or have hearing loss and advised that if an elector contacted the Elections Office with an accommodation request staff would make reasonable efforts to provide

January 22, 2019

Page 11 of 15

an interpreter. In response to other comments/questions from MAAC, staff confirmed that the free transportation on the Kingston Access Bus was only for registered users of that service and any accompanying support person, revisions were made to the Accessibility Plan and the Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf was added to the stakeholder consultation list.

For the next municipal election in 2022, members of MAAC will again be invited to participate in the review of potential voting places and a typical voting place setup. The 2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will also be presented to MAAC for review and comment. Prior to preparation of the 2022 Accessibility Plan Elections Office staff will initiate discussions with MAAC with respect to such matters as the use of accessible voting equipment and an ASL interpreter (see the Future Accessibility Considerations section below).

Stakeholder Consultation

The Plan was circulated to a number of community stakeholders to raise awareness of the accessibility measures being implemented for the 2018 municipal election and to obtain feedback. The following comments were received:

(i) Canadian Hearing Society

“After reviewing the City of Kingston’s Municipal Election Accessibility Plan, a couple of the following suggestions:

1. Use Elections Ontario’s Accessible Voting Guide <https://www.elections.on.ca/en/voting-in-ontario/accessible-voting.html> specifically to Assistance on election day (i.e., TTY, casting your ballot for voters who may need to book an ASL-English or French-LSQ interpreter or Video Remote Interpreter (VRI) from Canadian Hearing Society to accompany them to vote Elections Ontario will cover the cost of the interpreter). There may need for City of Kingston to establish access and accommodation funds for covering the costs of Video Remote Interpreting Services or Sign Language interpreting services. Cheryl Wilson, Director, CHS Interpreting Services cwilson@chs.ca
2. Contact Paul Abbott, Director, Sales and Client Experience (pabbott@chs.ca) for Accessibility Services. Our specialists will provide you expert advice and communication solutions to make your City of Kingston accessible to individuals who are Deaf and hard of hearing
3. To obtain information on the Accessible Election Guidelines for voters, volunteers, citizens or candidates who participate in election campaign activities or election polls, Canadian Hearing Society has compiled resourceful links (Accessible Elections Resources) <http://www.chs.ca/elections-resources>.”

Reporting

This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act* that within 90 days after the election, a report must be submitted to Council with respect to the success of the accessibility measures that were implemented with respect to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with

January 22, 2019

Page 12 of 15

disabilities. The report must also be made available to the public. The report was a schedule to the January 22, 2019 Council meeting agenda and will be posted to the elections webpage on the City's website.

Future Accessibility Considerations

As noted above, for both the 2014 and 2018 municipal elections accessible voting equipment was provided at all voting places (except in institutions, retirement homes and long-term care facilities). Approximately five (5) votes were cast on the accessible voting equipment in 2014. Based on the input from Site Supervisors, for the 2018 election no votes were cast on the accessible voting equipment on Advance Voting Day and five (5) votes in total were cast on the accessible voting equipment on Voting Day. The total cost to provide the accessible voting equipment for the 2018 election was \$29,800 - \$27,300 for the equipment plus an additional \$2,500 to audit the accessible voting equipment and train the Machine Operators on how to set up and use the equipment. This works out to a cost of approximately \$6,000 for each vote cast on the accessible voting equipment. In comparison, the cost for each vote cast in-person or on the internet is about \$21 (based on an overall election budget of \$750,000, less the cost for the accessible voting equipment, and a total of 34,526 electors that cast a ballot, less the 5 electors that used the accessible voting equipment).

Staff recognizes that cost should not necessarily be the overriding factor in ensuring that a person with a disability can independently cast a ballot and fully participate in a municipal election. Staff also recognizes a fiscal responsibility to the City's taxpayers to run a cost-effective election. Staff contacted a number of other Ontario municipalities and/or reviewed other election accessibility plans in order to obtain information on the use of accessible voting equipment in those municipalities. The following information was obtained:

- Burlington – “internet voting is completely accessible so we no longer provide equipment at the polls”;
- Windsor – accessible voting equipment provided at all voting places on Advance Voting Day and two voting places on Voting Day (the two voting places have a high number of disabled voters) – the services of a sign language interpreter are not available however a “language line” is provided that can be accessed by elections staff and utilized to interpret for a voter;
- Guelph – accessible voting equipment provided at all voting places on Advance Voting Day (4 locations across three days) and one voting place per ward on Voting Day (6 locations across City) – the services of a sign language interpreter are not available – Guelph noted a low rate of use of the accessible voting equipment;
- Thunder Bay – accessible voting equipment provided at two (2) locations on all Voting Days – one (1) south ward location and one (1) north ward location – the services of a sign language interpreter are not available;
- Vaughan – accessible voting equipment provided on the 8 days of advance voting at one location only (City Hall) – the services of a sign language interpreter are not available;

January 22, 2019

Page 13 of 15

- Chatham-Kent – accessible voting equipment provided at one (1) location on Advance Voting Days and one (1) location on Voting Day – “Zero people used it” – the services of a sign language interpreter are not available;
- Oakville – accessible voting equipment provided at one (1) central location (Town Hall) on Advance Voting Days and Voting Day;
- Welland – accessible voting equipment provided at one (1) central location (Civic Square) on Advance Voting Days and Voting Day;
- Port Colborne – accessible voting equipment not provided;
- Ajax – accessible voting equipment not provided – Voter Assistance Centres provided during the eight day voting period;
- Caledon – used a universal touch screen voting system with Sip ‘n Puff, ATI and Rocker Paddle interfaces at all voting places;
- Village of Casselman – accessible voting equipment not provided – a Voter Help Centre was established at the Town Hall where electors could receive help from a designated election official in casting a ballot;
- London – accessible voting equipment provided at all voting places on Advance Voting Days; and
- Ottawa – accessible voting equipment provided at all voting places on all Voting Days (212 locations).

The Elections Team will be consulting with MAAC well in advance of the next municipal election to investigate options for providing accessible voting opportunities in a manner that is both fiscally responsible and that will ensure that electors are provided with the assistance that may be required to enable them to cast a ballot privately and independently.

Feedback on Accessibility Concerns

The City has established a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which it provides goods, services and facilities to persons with disabilities. The Election Team welcomes any further feedback on the 2018 municipal election with respect to any improvements or changes that could enhance the delivery of a fully accessible election or by-election for electors, candidates or election workers. Staff will review all feedback received and will revise the Accessibility Plan as deemed appropriate for any future by-elections and/or the 2022 municipal election.

Notice Provisions:

There are no required notice provisions. In accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act*, this report must be made available to the public. The report has been included on

January 22, 2019

Page 14 of 15

Council's agenda for the January 22, 2019 meeting, which is available to the public, and will also be posted on the elections webpage on the City's website.

Legislated Accessibility Considerations:

Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (the MEA), as amended:

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.
- (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.
- (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.

Subsection 45 (2)

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

Financial Considerations:

As already noted, the total cost to provide the accessible voting equipment for the 2018 election was \$29,800 - \$27,300 for the equipment plus an additional \$2,500 to audit the accessible voting equipment and train the machine operators on how to set up and use the equipment. While this amount represents only about 4% of the total election budget of \$750,000, with only five (5) votes cast on the accessible voting equipment it works out to a cost of about \$6,000 for each vote cast. In comparison, the cost for each vote cast in-person or on the internet is about \$21.

The Elections Team will work with MAAC prior to the next election to investigate options for providing accessible voting equipment in a manner that is both fiscally responsible and that will ensure that all electors have the opportunity to cast a ballot independently and privately.

Contacts:

John Bolognone, City Clerk and Returning Officer, telephone number 613-546-4291 extension 1247

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Janet Jaynes, Deputy City Clerk and Assistant Returning Officer

Blair Johnson, Corporate Records & Information Officer

George Wallace, Senior Special Projects Manager

January 22, 2019

Page 15 of 15

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A - 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan



2018 Municipal Election

Accessibility Plan

This Accessibility Plan is for use in the 2018 municipal election and any subsequent by-elections during the 2018-2022 term of Council in conjunction with the City of Kingston's current Accessibility Standards Policy, guidelines, training and customer service feedback standards.

Prepared by:
John Bolognone, City Clerk and Returning Officer
Elections Office

August, 2018

This document is available in alternate formats upon request. Please call 613-546-4291, ext. 1430 or email elections@cityofkingston.ca

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction and Background	3
Mandate	4
Goal	4
Corporate Policy	4
City of Kingston 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan	4
Provincial Legislation	5
Objectives	5
Communications	6
Voting Place Accessibility Audits	7
Dedicated Voting Places (Institutions and Retirement Homes)	9
Voting Place Setup and Layout	10
Transportation to the Voting Places	11
Accessible Voting Options	12
Accessibility Training for Designated Election Officials	15
Candidates	17
Stakeholder Consultation	17
Reporting	18
Feedback on Accessibility Concerns	18
Appendix A (Definition of “disability”)	20
Appendix B (Voting Place Locations – Advance Voting Day)	21
Appendix C (Voting Place Locations – Voting Day)	22
Appendix D (Sample Voting Place Layout)	23

Introduction and Background

The City of Kingston is committed to making the 2018 municipal election and any subsequent by-elections accessible to all candidates, electors and election workers. The City of Kingston understands the importance of accessibility for persons with disabilities. The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) came into force in 2005 and since then the City as a public organization has made significant strides to identify, remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities.

For the 2014 municipal election an Accessibility Plan was prepared and reviewed by the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC). New voting technology was introduced to provide electors with more options for voting, including:

- internet voting;
- telephone voting; and,
- accessible voting equipment (provided at all voting places except those located in institutions or retirement/long-term care homes).

Recent changes to the *Municipal Elections Act* (MEA) now require the City Clerk to prepare an Accessibility Plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect candidates and electors with disabilities and to make the Accessibility Plan available to the public before Voting Day. The core principles contained in the City of Kingston Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and the City's Accessibility Standards Policy are the foundations of the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan. As the election process progresses over the coming months, the 2018 Accessibility Plan may evolve.

Internet voting and accessible voting equipment will again be used for the 2018 municipal election. The accessible voting equipment will be provided at all voting places (except in institutions or retirement/long-term care homes). However, telephone voting is being discontinued as it was not widely used in 2014. There will be one (1) voting place in each Electoral District on Advance Voting Day (see Appendix B) and two (2) voting places in each Electoral District on Voting Day except Countryside which will have three (see Appendix C). In addition, on Voting Day there will also be eighteen (18) dedicated voting places located in various institutions and retirement/long-term care homes for the residents of those buildings only.

This Accessibility Plan has been prepared in advance of the 2018 municipal election in order to comply with the requirements of the MEA and to identify the accessibility measures to be implemented for the 2018 municipal election and any subsequent by-elections. As required by the MEA, following the election information will be presented to Council and be made available to the public reporting on the success of the measures that were implemented to identify, remove and prevent barriers for electors and candidates with disabilities. The MEA requires that the report be submitted to Council within 90 days after the election.

2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

Mandate

To provide every candidate, elector and election worker with equal opportunity for positive involvement in the 2018 municipal election and any subsequent by-elections.

Goal

To establish objectives and actions for the 2018 municipal election and any subsequent by-elections which respect the dignity and independence of and address the needs of candidates, electors and election workers of all abilities.

Corporate Policy

As required by the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11 (the Regulation), City Council approved the current version of the Accessibility Standards Policy in October, 2016. The Policy and its related procedures apply to all City employees, volunteers and any individual or organization that provides goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties on behalf of the City. The Policy is intended to provide an overarching framework for the City's standards, procedures, By-laws and guidelines that are required in order to comply with the Regulation developed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. This Policy establishes accessibility standards, procedures and guidelines in the areas of information and communication, employment, transportation, design of public spaces and customer service for the City of Kingston.

In accordance with the Accessibility Standards Policy, the City is committed to:

- identifying, removing and preventing barriers to people with disabilities (see Appendix A for definition) to enable better access to municipal goods, services and facilities; and,
- ensuring that the City meets the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner.

City of Kingston 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

As required by the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, City Council has approved a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan that outlines the steps to be taken to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility in Kingston. The Plan includes strategies to help make Kingston more accessible to all its residents and visitors thereby ensuring that the accessibility standards under the AODA are fully implemented by 2025.

With respect to the 2018 municipal election, the Plan provides as follows:

“Ensure that coordination of the 2018 municipal election includes accessibility considerations, some of which may include:

- Evaluation of all voting locations to ensure that the location is fully accessible and provides barrier free access to voters, candidates and workers.
- Production of election materials using simple, easy to understand language and the availability of information regarding the election in a number of communication formats.”

Provincial Legislation

Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (the MEA), as amended:

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.
- (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.
- (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.

Subsection 45 (2)

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

Objectives

The objectives of the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan include:

- that all voting places are accessible;
- that a person with a disability is able to independently cast a ballot and verify his or her choices;
- that a person with a disability has full and equal access to all information on where and when to vote, on the candidates for each office, and on the referendum question;
- that a person with a disability can fully participate in the 2018 municipal election as an elector, candidate, or Designated Election Official;
- that electors and candidates with disabilities are aware of the accessibility measures available for the 2018 municipal election through such means as the newspaper, media launches, the Elections page on the City of Kingston website, and social media; and
- that candidates are provided with information on how to make their campaigns accessible.

Communications

a) Elections Page on the City Website

The Elections page on the City's website (www.cityofkingston.ca/elections) will be used as the primary tool to communicate to the electors and candidates with respect to the municipal election. All relevant information for electors and candidates will be posted to the Elections webpage. Every effort will be made to ensure that the Elections webpage remains current and up to date. In addition, the Elections webpage on the City's website is compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level A and allows for the use of assistive software. The webpage font can be adjusted within the browser's functionality to aid the user in reading the information.

b) Large Print

Printed material generated by the City of Kingston will be provided in an Arial font, minimum 12 point, and can be made available in a font (print) size that is 16 to 20 points or larger.

c) Alternate Formats

Section 7 b) of the City's Accessibility Standards Policy requires the City, upon request, and in consultation with the person making the request, to provide or make arrangements to provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Alternate formats are other ways of publishing information besides regular print. All forms and documents posted on the City's website are accessible. For those items that cannot be modified, alternate formatted documents will be provided upon request through the City's Elections Office.

In the event that the information is not generated by the City or is supplied by a third party, the City will make every effort to obtain the information from the third party in an alternate format and/or attempt to assist the individual by providing assistive equipment. Alternatively, if a third party document is not accessible, a link to the document on the third party's website will be provided.

d) Videos

Promotional and educational videos created for the 2018 municipal election, such as the video on Ranked Ballot Voting, shall incorporate audio and captioning.

e) Service Disruptions

From time to time and/or for unforeseen circumstances beyond the City's control, temporary service disruptions may be experienced. Section 6 d) of the City's Accessibility Standards Policy provides that where the service disruption is planned the City will provide notice in advance of the disruption. However, in the case where the disruption is unplanned, the City will provide notice as soon as possible.

In the event of a temporary accessible service disruption, the City's Designated Election Officials commit to making reasonable efforts to ensure that services are reinstated as quickly as possible and that alternative services are provided where feasible. Accessible services in relation to this Plan include the voting places, the Elections Office, election materials and/or voting provisions for electors with disabilities at the voting place.

Notice of these temporary service disruptions shall be provided in a conspicuous place and manner at the location of the disruption and information shall also be posted on the City's website, the Elections webpage on the City's website and the City's social media outputs. The notice shall include information about the reason for the disruption, its estimated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

If service disruptions affect the accessibility of the voting places on Advance Voting Day or Voting Day, notices of the service disruption will be posted in real time:

- On the Elections page on the City's website;

- On Facebook and on Twitter;
- At the site of the service disruption; and
- A news release will be issued.

f) Accessibility Guides

Candidates will be provided with an array of accessibility Guides and literature. These guides will also be posted to the City's Elections page on the City's website in the Resources section for public viewing. The following is a list of the Guides that have been posted to the Elections webpage:

- [AMCTO Candidates' Guide to Accessible Elections](#)
- [Count Us In: Removing Barriers to Political Participation – Quick Reference Guide to Accessible Campaign Information and Communication](#)
- [Count Us In: Removing Barriers to Political Participation - Quick Reference Guide to Accessible Constituency, Riding Association, Central Party and Campaign Offices](#)
- [Count Us In: Removing Barriers to Political Participation – Quick Reference Guide to Accessible All Candidates Meetings](#)

Voting Place Accessibility Audits

Subsection 45 (2) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended, requires that “in establishing the locations of voting places, the clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities.” The City of Kingston is committed to providing voting places that are accessible to all candidates, electors and election workers.

The Clerk's Department partnered with the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC) to form a Voting Location Assessment Project Team (see MAAC Report MAAC-18-006) to assess potential voting places in the City of Kingston. The Project Team was comprised of two City staff and two members of MAAC. Approximately 40 sites were considered and evaluated based on an Accessibility Checklist. Potential sites that did not meet the Accessibility Checklist criteria were rejected by the Project Team. Each potential voting place was evaluated on the basis of the following ten criteria:

1. Connections – availability of sidewalks and/or walkways; the distance to the building entrance; and, the distance to the nearest transit stop.
2. Parking – provision of walkway connection to the voting place; signage; location of the parking; lighting; entrance/exit design; and, the availability of accessible parking.
3. Drop-off and Loading Zones – provision of walkway connection to the voting place; signage; location; lighting; and, entrance/exit design.
4. Walkways and Ramps – connection to the building entrance; provision of curb-cuts; width; surface treatment; slope; and provision of ramps/handrails.
5. Entrance – Vestibule – width of doors; type of hardware; lighting; and, signage.

6. Lobby, Hallways and Corridors – path of travel to the voting room; width; surface treatment; and, signage.
7. Interior Doors – path of travel; width; type of hardware; signage; and, vision panels.
8. Elevator / Lift – location; signage; lighting; control panel; call button-operator; and, design-type.
9. Stairways – location; handrails; surface treatment; tactile-colour contrast; and, lighting.
10. Washrooms – signage; location; lighting; emergency call button; toilet stall design; and, accessories.

Many of the voting places selected for the 2018 municipal election were locations that were used for the 2014 municipal election. The Project Team did not identify any major issues with the voting place locations that have been selected. In finalizing the 2018 voting place locations, the Project Team paid particular attention to the following key considerations:

- a) Accessible Route – that the voting place was in close proximity to a transit route and that an easily navigable route was identified for entry, both into the voting place building and into the room or area where voting will take place. 74% of the voting places are within a three minute walk of a transit stop and 90% are within a four minute walk. Each voting place will be clearly marked with signage both inside and outside to direct the elector to the room where voting will take place. In addition, since an elector can vote at any of the voting places in his or her electoral district that gives an elector the option to select the voting location in his or her district that is most accessible in his or her particular circumstance.
- b) Building Entrance and Egress – that the route to the entrance of the voting place is unobstructed, accessible and wide enough to accommodate an elector using a wheelchair, scooter, other assistive device or a service animal. That the doors to the voting place and voting area are accessible and easy to open. Most of the voting places have an automatic push button or a push bar on the door to allow for ease of access. For locations that were identified with no automatic push button, an additional election worker will be assigned to the voting place to assist with the door, and will be instructed to open the door for every elector. If the weather allows, the exterior doors will be propped open where possible to facilitate entry into the voting place. Also, at least one Designated Election Official at each voting place will be responsible to regularly check the voting place entrance and the route to the room where voting will take place to make sure it remains unobstructed throughout each voting day.
- c) Parking – that accessible parking is available close to the entrance to the voting place or can be designated at all voting places and that the accessible parking spaces are clearly marked. If there are no designated accessible parking spaces at a voting place, the Election Team will work with various City departments to ensure that temporary accessible parking spaces are provided on both Advance Voting Day and Voting Day in appropriate locations.
- d) Adequate Lighting around the Voting Place - that the voting place has adequate lighting at the entrance and in the parking area.

The voting place locations for Advance Voting Day are listed in Appendix B and the voting place locations for Voting Day are listed in Appendix C.

Dedicated Voting Places (Institutions and Retirement Homes)

Subsection 45 (7) of the MEA requires that voting places be provided on Voting Day on the premises of:

- An institution for the reception, treatment or vocational training of members or former members of the Canadian Forces;
- An institution in which, on September 1, 20 or more beds are occupied by persons who are disabled, chronically ill or infirm; and
- A retirement home in which, on September 1, 50 or more beds are occupied.

In addition, subsections 45 (8) and (9) of the MEA permit the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) to attend on an elector who may be bedridden to allow him or her to vote and to attend on an elector anywhere within the institution or retirement home designated as the voting place to allow him or her to vote. As such, the DRO will provide bedside voting where required or make other accommodations, as necessary, for the residents of an institution, retirement home or long-term care facility wishing to cast a ballot.

The City of Kingston will be providing Dedicated Voting Places in institutions, retirement homes and long-term care facilities that are subject to the legislation to allow eligible residents of the facility to vote in his or her own home. The Election Team has worked with the administrator or his or her designate to select the optimal room from an accessibility perspective. In accordance with the provisions of the MEA, voting at the designated voting places will be provided on a reduced hours basis, i.e. generally for a two hour period (either from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. or from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.), and will be available for residents of the institution, retirement home or long-term care facility only.

Seventeen (17) Dedicated Voting Places will be provided on Voting Day at the following locations:

Arbour Heights (Town Hall First Floor – 564 Tanner Drive);

Extendicare Kingston (Family Room – 309 Queen Mary Road);

Fairmount Home for the Aged (Conference Room, 2nd Floor – 2069 Battersea Road);

Providence Manor (Activity Room – 275 Sydenham Street);

Rideaucrest Home (Front Lobby – 175 Rideau Street);

Trillium Ridge Nursing Home (Second Floor Lobby – 800 Edgar Street);

Providence Care Hospital (752 King Street West) – 2 Voting Places;

Kingston General Hospital (Conference Room – 76 Stuart Street);

Waterford Kingston Retirement Residences (Crafts Room – 463-471 Cataraqui Woods Drive);

St. Lawrence Place (Second Floor Library – 181 Ontario Street);

Trillium Ridge Retirement Centre (Dining Room – 800 Edgar Street);
Royale Place Retirement Residence (Activities Room – 2485 Princess Street);
Rosewood Retirement Home (Chestnut Lounge – 833 Sutton Mills Court);
Chartwell Conservatory Pond (Activities Room – 1499 Stoneridge Drive);
Kingsdale Chateau (Activities Room – 520 Kingsdale Avenue); and
Providence Motherhouse (Auditorium – 1200 Princess Street).

Voting Place Setup and Layout

a) Model Voting Place Setup

A model voting place will be set up to determine the optimal layout with respect to such matters as the distance between voting compartments, the height of tables and the overall flow of the voting place. The MAAC Project Team members will be invited to evaluate the model voting place and provide feedback to the Election Team. That feedback will then be incorporated into the typical voting place diagram that will be provided to each Site Supervisor. Setting up the voting place to ensure maximum accessibility will form part of the training for all Designated Election Officials. A sample voting place layout is attached as Appendix D.

b) Creating an Accessible Voting Area

For the 2018 municipal election a separate accessible voting area will be provided at each voting place. Wooden blocks will again be used to raise the height of the table in the accessible voting area in order to facilitate access by electors using wheelchairs and scooters to the accessible voting equipment and thereby enable an enhanced degree of accessibility for the elector. A separate voting compartment will be located on the same table as the accessible voting equipment to ensure privacy while the elector marks his or her ballot. Both the Machine Operator and the Site Supervisor will be trained on using the accessible voting equipment and will be able to assist electors, as required.

c) Magnifiers

Magnifiers will be available at each voting place to assist electors with low vision. The Election Team will ensure that election workers are aware that the magnifiers are available and are to be provided, if requested. Part of the Designated Election Official training will include the proper way to approach an elector who may possibly require assistance.

d) Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Hearing Loss

Each voting place will be equipped with a pad of paper and a pen to communicate with electors with hearing loss, if required. At the entrance to the room where voting will take place and inside each voting compartment, there will be a poster providing “Directions for the Guidance of Electors at the Voting Place Who Have Received a Ballot”. In addition, a new poster has been developed which will be placed at the entrance to the room where voting will take place that will provide “Directions for the Guidance of Electors Arriving at the Voting Place”. A diagram of the Voting Place will also be posted at the entrance to the room where voting will take place.

Transportation to the Voting Places

(a) Free Kingston Access Bus

The Election Office has consulted with Kingston Access Services (KAS) and has confirmed that registered clients of the KAS service will be able to arrange free rides to his or her voting place on both Advance Voting Day and Voting Day. When booking his or her free transportation the elector will need to identify the location of his or her voting place. If accompanied by a support person, the support person also rides for free. The Election Team will work with KAS to ensure that up to date information about voting place locations and voting times are provided to ensure that KAS can optimize service delivery.

(b) Free Kingston Transit

The Election Office also consulted with Kingston Transit about providing free transit for electors on voting days. As a result, City Council has approved free transit for electors travelling to a voting place if the elector shows his or her Voter Information Notice. Free transit will be available between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. on both Advance Voting Day and Voting Day.

Accessible Voting Options

(a) Accessible Voting Equipment

For the 2018 Municipal Election, accessible voting equipment will again be available at all voting places (not at the designated voting places).

The accessible voting equipment will be set up close to the Machine Operator's station, and will have its own table and voting compartment for privacy. The Machine Operator is the Designated Election Official who will be responsible for operating the Optical Scan Vote Tabulator and administering the accessible voting session. The Site Supervisor and the Machine Operator will be trained on the equipment and will be able to administer the accessible voting session and provide instruction and assistance to electors, as required. With all assistive devices, the elector listens to instructions and ballot content through audio headphones that are connected to the Audio Tactile Interface (ATI).

The following definitions and instructions regarding the accessible voting can be found in the Optical Scan Vote Tabulator Procedures document which will be provided to all Site Supervisors and Machine Operators:

“Accessible Voting Session” means the process by which an elector independently marks a ballot using the accessible features of the Optical Scan Vote Tabulator, resulting in a marked ballot being produced which is tabulated by the Optical Scan Vote Tabulator.

“Audio Tactile Interface (ATI)” means the handheld controller that allows electors requiring an Accessible Voting Session to navigate, and make selections on, the ballot. Audio instructions are provided via headphones to assist the elector with operating the ATI.

“Paddle Buttons” means the device that is used to navigate and make selections on the ballot by pressing color-coded Left (L) and Right (R) paddles in lieu of an ATI. Audio instructions are provided via headphones to assist the elector with operating the Paddle Buttons.

“Sip ‘n’ Puff” means the device used in lieu of the ATI to navigate, and make selections on, the ballot by sipping or puffing on a straw. Audio instructions are provided via headphones to assist the elector with operating the Sip ‘n’ Puff.

b) Accessible Voting Session

If an elector wishes to mark his or her ballot using the accessible voting equipment, the Designated Election Official shall:

- a. proceed to the designated accessible voting area with the elector;
- b. explain to the elector that with the accessible voting equipment, he or she can mark the ballot by using:
 - (i) the ATI: Audio Tactile Interface;
 - (ii) Sip ‘n’ Puff device; or
 - (iii) Paddle Buttons.
- c. explain to the elector how to proceed with marking the ballot after the elector has chosen which method to use;
- d. advise the elector that after he or she has completed the accessible voting session and has confirmed his or her selections, the attached printer will generate a marked ballot accordingly and the marked ballot will be fed through the Optical Scan Vote Tabulator and be deposited into the ballot box;
- e. use the security key to activate an accessible voting session; and
- f. leave the elector to cast his or her ballot in privacy while staying close to the accessible voting compartment in the event that the elector asks for assistance.

The paper ballot is printed from a tethered printer located close to the elector. The system is able to produce unique vote marks, which will make the ballot indistinguishable from “hand marked” ballots. In the event of a recount, the public will not be able to distinguish a ballot marked in an accessible voting session and an independent ballot created by hand.

c) Internet Voting

For the 2018 municipal election the City of Kingston will be working with Dominion Voting to provide eVoting service to eligible electors. Council has approved an extended period for the use of Internet voting which will be available beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Advance Voting Day (October 13th) and will be active until 8:00 p.m. on Voting Day (October 22nd). Registration for internet voting will close at 7 p.m. on Voting Day (October 22nd).

The Dominion Voting system provides an elector with the capability to vote at any time and from any location, including the comfort of his or her own home. Voting from home facilitates the voting process for persons with disabilities who may have mobility restrictions, visual impairment, and/or have a difficult time with transportation. Allowing persons with disabilities to vote from any location and providing a selection of methods to cast a ballot increases the capability for an elector to vote without any assistance. This provides persons with disabilities the same independence and privacy in participating in the election as other electors.

Eligible electors may vote online using a smart phone, tablet device, gaming device or computer and any accompanying assistive devices or software. Instructions on how to access the online voting will be provided in the elector's Voter Information Notice. The Dominion Voting system has been developed to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG-2 Level A) so that persons with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate and interact with the online voting system.

d) Voting Proxy

An elector with a disability that is homebound or otherwise unable to go to a voting place may appoint another person to act as his or her voting proxy and go to a voting place to cast a ballot on his or her behalf. The appointment must be made on the prescribed form which is available at the Elections Office or on the City's Elections webpage. Further information on appointing a voting proxy is available on the Elections webpage (www.cityofkingston.ca/elections) under the Voters Tab.

e) Curbside Elector Support

If an elector is on the voting place premises but is not able to physically access the room inside the building where voting is taking place, a Designated Election Official will be permitted to make external accommodations. Once advised that there is an elector in the parking lot or at curbside who cannot physically access the voting place, a ballot can be brought out and marked at his or her vehicle. In the event that the elector does not have his or her Voter Information Notice or an acceptable form of identification, the Designated Election Official will assist the elector in completing an Application to Amend the Voters' List and/or completing the written Declaration of Identity.

The individual who brought the elector to the voting place may assist the elector in marking the ballot. However, that individual will first be required to take the Oral Oath of Friend of Elector before marking the ballot.

Once the elector has voted, the ballot will be placed in a privacy sleeve. The individual who brought the elector to the voting place will then accompany the Designated Election Official back into the voting place in order to witness the ballot being inserted into the tabulator and to receive confirmation that the votes were successfully recorded.

f) Assistive Devices

Section 6 a) of the City's Accessibility Standards Policy allows a person with a disability to provide his or her own assistive device to obtain, use and benefit from the City's goods and services. An assistive device is a piece of equipment a person with a disability uses to help with

his or her daily living. Examples include a wheelchair, electric scooter, hearing aid, portable magnifier, cane or walker, or personal oxygen tank. An elector with his or her own assistive device is permitted to enter any voting place and voting compartment and, if required, use the assistive device in marking his or her ballot.

g) Support Person

Section 6 c) of the City's Accessibility Standards Policy allows a person with a disability to enter premises owned or operated by the City with a support person, and to have access to the support person at all times while on the premises. As such, an elector may be accompanied by a support person at any voting place and the support person may assist the elector in marking his or her ballot. The support person, or "Friend of Elector", must first attest to an oath of confidentiality (Oral Oath of Friend of Elector) which will be administered by the Site Supervisor or the Deputy Returning Officer at a Designated Voting Place. After the oath is attested the support person will be able to accompany the elector into the voting compartment and provide assistance in marking the ballot as directed by the elector.

h) Assistance by Designated Election Officials

In the case of an Elector who is unable to read or is blind or has a disability that impedes the marking of a ballot, and he or she does not wish to use the accessible voting equipment, the elector can take the Oral Oath of Friend of Elector as to his or her inability to mark his or her Ballot and then have the Site Supervisor or Deputy Returning Officer at a Designated Voting Place accompany him or her into a voting compartment. Prior to entering the voting compartment, the Designated Election Official shall confirm with the elector the extent to which he or she requires assistance and the best way to provide the assistance. This may include actually marking the ballot as directed by the elector.

i) Service Animals

Section 6 b) of the City's Accessibility Standards Policy allows a person with a disability to enter premises owned or operated by the City accompanied by a service animal, and to keep the animal with them if the public has access to such premises and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law. As the voting places are accessible to the public, there is no apparent reason to exclude a service animal in a voting place. It is the responsibility of the person with the disability to ensure that his or her service animal is kept in control at all times.

An elector is permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all voting places in the City of Kingston and in the voting compartment as well. There is no restriction on what type of animal can be used as a service animal. An animal is considered a service animal if:

- it wears a harness, vest or other visual indicator;
- the person with a disability provides documentation from a regulated health professional confirming that the animal is required for reasons relating to the person's disability.

At times it may be difficult to differentiate between a person with a disability using a service animal and an individual accompanied by a pet. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, a Designated Election Official may ask the person to provide documentation

from one of the defined regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Accessibility Training for Designated Election Officials

All Designated Election Officials are required to complete the City's general Accessible Customer Service training which includes:

- The purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*;
- How to interact with persons with various disabilities; and
- How to interact with persons who use the assistance of a service animal or support person.

All Designated Election Officials will be provided with the "Training Booklet for Designated Election Officials – Providing Accessible Customer Service – 2018 Municipal Election - What You Need to Know!" and in-person training to assist them in delivering and maintaining accessible customer service. The Training Booklet provides information on the *Human Rights Code*, the AODA and the City's Accessibility Standards Policy, and provides definitions of different disabilities and tips to assist Designated Election Officials in providing accessible customer service.

Elements of the accessible customer service training include:

- Being aware of the accessibility features available at the voting place;
- Providing a Greeter / Demonstrator to assist and/or direct electors as needed;
- Monitoring electors concerns and ensuring that their needs are met. For example, if an individual with a cane or walker is in long line and it is felt that the elector is having difficulties, offer a chair and ensure that his or her place in line is saved;
- Observing electors during discussions with them, and if it appears the elector is having difficulty understanding, work with the elector in any manner he or she is comfortable with to ensure his or her needs are met;
- Approaching an elector if it appears he or she needs assistance getting around the voting place;
- Ensuring that electors are aware that assistance (in varying forms) is available, if required;
- Ensuring electors are aware that accessible voting equipment is available and where it is located, if required;
- Recognizing support persons and service animals and following the City's Accessibility Standards Policy;
- Regularly checking the entrance to the voting place and the route to the room where voting is taking place to make sure it remains unobstructed throughout each voting day; and
- Maintaining a friendly and approachable demeanor.

In addition to the customer service training, Machine Operators and Site Supervisors will be trained to administer an accessible voting session. They will be trained on all three accessible voting devices, i.e. the Audio Tactile Interface, the Paddle Buttons, and Sip 'n' Puff. The Election Team will ensure that all Site Supervisors understand how to administer curbside voting. Site Supervisors will also be tasked to monitor the voting place (entire site), to ensure that the site is accessible; this may involve routine checks on doors, routes to the voting place, and the parking lot by the Site Supervisor or another Designated Election Official.

The Training Booklet and the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will be posted on the City's Elections webpage and a hard copy of each will be provided to each Designated Election Official. The Training Booklet has been reviewed by the Community Projects Manager and the MAAC Project Team members.

The Training Booklet for Designated Election Officials has been prepared to ensure compliance with the training requirements noted above. All Designated Election Officials are required to thoroughly review the contents of this Training Booklet. After the review is complete, each Designated Election Official **MUST** submit a signed Compliance Form verifying that he or she has read and understands his or her requirements and responsibilities for providing accessible customer service during the 2018 municipal election. The signed Compliance Forms will be retained by the Elections Office as a record that the required accessibility training was provided.

Candidates

Candidates must also have regard to the needs of electors with disabilities. Campaign offices, election materials and canvassing should all be reviewed in order to ensure that they are fully accessible. The Accessibility Directorate of Ontario has released the following quick reference documents to assist candidates with accessible election considerations. The guides are posted on the City's Elections webpage.

- i. [Count Us In: Removing Barriers to Political Participation – Quick Reference Guide to Accessible Campaign Information and Communication](#)
- ii. [Count Us In: Removing Barriers to Political Participation - Quick Reference Guide to Accessible Constituency, Riding Association, Central Party and Campaign Offices](#)
- iii. [Count Us In: Removing Barriers to Political Participation – Quick Reference Guide to Accessible All Candidates Meetings](#)

Stakeholder Consultation

a) Community Projects Manager, Community Services

Throughout the election planning process, the Community Projects Manager, Community Services will be consulted to ensure that accessibility concerns have been considered in the planning for the election. The Manager will be invited to the demonstrations of the accessible voting equipment and model voting place setup and invited to provide feedback. The vote tabulation systems and accessible voting equipment being used in the 2018 election are the same as those used in 2014. The 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan has been reviewed

by the Manager. The Manager also reviewed and provided input with respect to the Accessible Customer Service Training Booklet for Designated Election Officials.

b) Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC)

Consultation with MAAC began in April 2018 with the tabling of Report MAAC-18-006, with respect to the appointment of a Voting Location Assessment Project Team. A draft of the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan was circulated to the MAAC Project Team members for review and comment. In September the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan and a staff report will be presented to MAAC for information. The MAAC Municipal Election Team will also be invited to attend a demonstration of the accessible voting equipment and the model voting place setup and provide feedback to the Election Team.

c) Community Stakeholders

After the draft of the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan has been presented to MAAC for feedback, the Plan will be amended as required and circulated to a number of community stakeholders to raise awareness of the accessibility measures being implemented for the 2018 municipal election, and obtain feedback. The following community stakeholders will be consulted:

- i. Canadian Hearing Society;
- ii. Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf;
- iii. CNIB Kingston;
- iv. Community Living Kingston;
- v. Ongwanada;
- vi. Seniors Association; and
- vii. United Way.

Reporting

As required by Section 12.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, within 90 days after Voting Day (i.e. by January 20, 2019) the City Clerk shall submit a report to Council with respect to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities. This report shall also be made available to the public.

Feedback on Accessibility Concerns

In accordance with Section 7 a) of the City's Accessibility Standards Policy, the City has established a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which it provides goods, services and facilities to persons with disabilities. General accessibility concerns and barrier reports can be submitted to www.cityofkingston.ca/residents/accessibility.

The City's 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will be improved and updated as best practices and opportunities for improvement are identified. The Election Team welcomes feedback to identify areas where changes can enhance the delivery of a fully accessible election for electors, candidates or election workers. Staff will review all feedback received and will

revise the Accessibility Plan as deemed appropriate for any future by-elections and/or the 2022 municipal election. In addition, this information will be included in the City's Annual Accessibility Report to City Council.

Please provide your feedback on suggested changes to the Municipal Election Accessibility Plan:

E-Mail: elections@cityofkingston.ca

Phone: 613-546-4291, ext. 1430 (Election Office)

By Mail: City of Kingston,
Clerk's Department,
216 Ontario Street,
Kingston, Ontario, K7L 2Z3

Appendix A

Definition of Disability

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, as amended, and the *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990 define “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 on 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*.

Appendix B

Voting Place Locations
Advance Voting Day (October 13, 2018)

Electoral District	Voting Place Location
Countryside	Glenburnie Fire Hall (1485 Unity Road)
Loyalist - Cataraqui	Cataraqui Woods Elementary School (1255 Birchwood Drive)
Collins-Bayridge	Mother Teresa Catholic School (1044 Lancaster Drive)
Lakeside	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School (20 Cranbrook Street)
Portsmouth	Portsmouth Olympic Harbour (53 Yonge Street)
Trillium	Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School (974 Pembridge Crescent)
Kingscourt-Rideau	St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School (114 Wiley Street)
Meadowbrook-Strathcona	St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Catholic School (355 Waterloo Drive)
Williamsville	Kingston Memorial Centre (303 York Street)
Sydenham	Winston Churchill Public School (530 Earl Street)
King's Town	Artillery Park Aquatic Centre (382 Bagot Street)
Pittsburgh	St. Martha Catholic School (455 St. Martha Street)

Appendix C

Voting Place Locations
Voting Day (October 22, 2018)

Electoral District	Voting Place Locations
Countryside	Rock Road Fire Hall (2835 Highway 38) Glenburnie Fire Hall (1485 Unity Road) MacLachlan Woodworking Museum (2993 Highway 2)
Loyalist - Cataraqui	INVISTA Centre (1350 Gardiners Road) Christ Church, Cataraqui (990 Sydenham Road)
Collins-Bayridge	St. Paul the Apostle Parish (1111 Taylor-Kidd Boulevard) Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School (1085 Woodbine Road)
Lakeside	Frontenac Secondary School (1789 Bath Road) St. Andrew's by the Lake Church (1 Redden Street)
Portsmouth	Portsmouth Olympic Harbour (53 Yonge Street) Cooke's-Portsmouth United Church (200 Norman Rogers Drive)
Trillium	Bayridge Alliance Church (825 Gardiners Road) Bay Park Baptist Church (775 Progress Avenue)
Kingscourt-Rideau	Rideau Heights Community Centre (85 McCauley Avenue) Our Lady of Fatima Parish (588 Division Street)
Meadowbrook-Strathcona	The Salvation Army Kingston Citadel (816 Centennial Drive) Bath Road Baptist Church (193 Bath Road)
Williamsville	Kingston Memorial Centre (303 York Street) Calvin Park Library (88 Wright Crescent)
Sydenham	Chalmers United Church (212 Barrie Street) Queen's University Athletics and Recreation Centre (284 Earl Street)
King's Town	Artillery Park Aquatic Centre (382 Bagot Street) Regiopolis-Notre Dame Catholic High School (130 Russell Street)
Pittsburgh	LaSalle Secondary School (773 Highway 15) Kingston Military Community Sports Centre (11 Navy Way)