



REPORT TO: Mayor and Members of Council

PREPARED BY: Jackie Tiedeman, Clerk

DEPARTMENT: Administration & Finance

DIVISION: Clerk

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, December-19-18

SUBJECT: 2018 Election Accessibility Compliance Report

RECOMMENDATION

That the report entitled “2018 Election Accessibility Compliance Report” be received and that staff be directed to post on the municipal website as well as within the Municipal Office which will be available to the general public.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 12.1 (3) of the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996, as amended, states “*that within 90 days after voting day in a regular election, the Clerk shall prepare a report about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the report available to the public*” This report will satisfy the requirement of the Act and provide the required notice to the public.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Leadership: To Create a Positive, Open Organizational Culture By Providing High Quality Public Services

Engages: To Encourage Community Participation That Helps Residents Feel Welcomed, Informed and Engaged By Providing Timely and Relevant Communication To Everyone

BACKGROUND

As required under Section 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. In 2017, the Municipality of North Middlesex entered into an agreement with Intelivote Systems Inc. to provide a software program that would meet the necessary requirements for conducting an accessible election for its electors and candidates.

DISCUSSION

Everyday tools like computers, telephones and other aids can present accessible opportunities for persons with disabilities to accomplish more, while being consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity.

The Intelivote Voting System provides voters with the capability to vote from the comfort of their 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. Additionally, persons who have assistive devices set up in their homes can now use them to assist with casting a ballot privately and independently.

By allowing persons with disabilities to vote from any location and from a selection of methods, there is an increase in the capability for the voter to vote without any assistance. This provides persons with disabilities the same independence and privacy in participating in the election as other voters

Telephone Voting

Eligible voters may vote using a touch-tone telephone, and the toll-free telephone number, and PIN number contained in their Voter Information Letter to access an audio ballot. Communications barriers can make it difficult for people to receive or convey information. Barriers may be identified as low volume, use of language that is not clear or plain, and confusing or unorganized menu options.

The Intelivote telephone voting application provides the following:

- Service on all types of touch tone phones and wireless devices.
- Clear, plain language.
- Menu options that are easy to follow, advising when to select options and provision of confirmation of the voter's selections.
- Standard volume is used to allow for adjustment dependent of the telephone or device being utilized.

Internet Voting

Eligible voters may vote online, using a smart phone, tablet device, gaming device or computer and any accompanying assistive devices or software, along with their PIN and qualifying information, to access the internet address provided in their Voter Instruction Letter.

The Intelivote System has been created to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG-2 Level AA), so that persons with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate and interact with the online voting system. It is compliant with the guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium website principles, which include organization, functionality and readability of information provided, as well as alternative ways of representing information, such as with audio.

The use of the North Middlesex Shared Services Building as the Voter Help Centre offered electors and candidates an accessible location to receive assistance in person or by calling from their home. Access is by street level, with automatic doors and an accessible public washroom. Results of the election were provided through the municipal website as well as on site in the Council Chambers which is also a fully accessible room within the Shared Services Building.

A voting station was set up in the lobby of this building which could accommodate motorized vehicles such as scooter, wheel chairs and/or walkers within its area. A touch screen IPAD was provided for use by the electors. Election staff was trained and available to provide assistance when requested.

Alternative formats would have been made available to anyone should a request have been made. During the 2018 Municipal Election, no special requests were made to the Municipality.

FINANCIAL

Not Applicable

ATTACHMENT

None

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Approved By: Nandini Syed, CAO/Director of Finance (Treasurer)