



Town of Aylmer

2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

FINAL – MAY, 2018

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1. INTRODUCTION

This plan will address the specific accessibility requirements in relation to the 2018 Municipal Election in the Town of Aylmer.

The Town of Aylmer has made great efforts in promoting a barrier free community. In an effort to ensure that the 2018 Municipal Election is consistent with the core principles of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, this planning document was developed in order to identify measures to be taken and reported to Council following the election.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Town's Accessibility Policy 2.14 sets out the Town's commitment to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for people with disabilities in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. The full policy and procedures can be found on the Town's website at www.aylmer.ca or by contacting the municipal office.

This plan is intended to highlight measures that the Town of Aylmer will be implementing to ensure equal opportunity for all electors and candidates.

These objectives include:

That persons with disabilities are able to independently cast their vote and verify their selection.

- That persons with disabilities have full and equal access to all information on how and when to vote.
- That persons with disabilities can fully participate in the Municipal Election as an elector, candidate, or election official.
- That efforts are made to ensure that electors with disabilities are aware of the accessibility measures available via channels such as the newspaper, media launches, the Town of Aylmer website.
- That all voting assistance locations are accessible and have Election Officials available for assistance.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

This Plan is a “living” document which will be improved and updated as best practices are identified and new opportunities for improvement arise. In order to develop the plan below, several steps were taken to ensure that the statutory requirements were met, and a feasible implementation plan was in place. During the development of the 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan, the following steps shall be implemented:

- Review and analysis of documents, policies and other supporting materials from AMCTO, neighboring municipalities, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, technology suppliers and other various stakeholder groups.
- Establish staff training standards and practices directly related to the Election to ensure that people with disabilities are able to vote in a positive customer service environment and ensure that all Election Officials recognize that a voter’s needs shall be accommodated.

4. VOTING METHODS

The 2018 Town of Aylmer Municipal Election will be working with Intelivote Systems Inc. to provide eVoting services to all eligible voters. This includes the convenience and independence of voting from anywhere via telephone or internet during the October 15 – 22, 2018 voting period.

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. If persons with disabilities do require assistance in the voting process, trained Election Officials will be available at appointed voting assistance locations, throughout the voting period.

4.1 Telephone Voting

Eligible voters may vote using a touch-tone telephone, and the toll-free telephone number, date of birth, 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.

4.2 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 date of birth and 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.

4.3 Special Voting Provisions

Election staff shall visit sites including long-term care facilities and retirement homes, to set-up on-site voting kiosks, or bedside voting opportunities for residents. These provisions will be made the Municipal Clerk in consultation with the staff of the facility and have regard to the Objectives set out in section 2 of this plan.

5. VOTER HELP CENTRE

An accessibility assessment of the Voter Help Centre will be conducted. The following considerations are taken into account:

5.1 Accessible Route

The name and/or address of the Voter Help Centre shall be clearly visible. An easily navigable route will be marked for entry into the building and the location designated as the Voter Help Centre. The Voter Help Centre area shall be identified with clear and understandable signage and seating areas shall be provided throughout the location for individuals needing a rest.

5.2 Entrance and Exit

The route to the entrance of the Voter Help Centre location shall be unobstructed and accessible. The route shall be wide enough to allow for an individual using a wheelchair, scooter, other assistive device, or service animal to travel safely. Doors into the location shall be accessible and easy to open or shall remain propped open for the duration of the location hours. Routine checks of entrance and exit routes will be made throughout the hours of operation.

5.3 Parking

Accessible parking shall be available at the Voter Help Centre. The designated parking space(s) shall be clearly marked with the international Symbol of Accessibility and will be on firm and level ground.

6. VOTING ASSISTANCE

6.1 Support Person/Friend of the Voter

Pursuant to the Town of Aylmer Accessibility Policy (#2.14) and Procedure 2.14 E re accessibility support persons, people with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by a support person at any voting location/Voter Help Centre. A designated support person and/or 'Friend of the Voter' will be administered an Oral oath of secrecy/confidentiality per Election Form A-9 by an Election Official prior to providing any such assistance.

6.2 Service Animals

Pursuant to the Town of Aylmer Accessibility Policy 2.14 and Procedure 2.14 – D re Service Animals in the Workplace, individuals requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at the voting locations/Voter Help Centre.

6.3 Election Officials

Election Officials are available to assist any voter who requires assistance in casting their online ballot or casting their telephone ballot. All individuals working in the capacity of an Election Official are formally appointed as such and administered an oath of secrecy prior to voting day.

Any person acting as an Election Official per Procedure 2.14 B of the Accessibility Policy will be required to complete accessibility training using the Town's accessibility training modules.

7. COMMUNICATION

The 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will be made available at the Municipal Office, 46 Talbot Street West, Aylmer, ON and by way of the Town of Aylmer web site www.aylmer.ca Alternative formats will be made available upon request.

7.1 Election Materials

The Town of Aylmer is required, as per the Accessibility Policy 2.14 and Procedure 2.14 C re accessible formats and communication supports, to

provide a copy of a document to a person with a disability, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Alternate Formats

Alternate formats are other ways of publishing information besides regular print. Some of these formats can be used by everyone while others are designed to address the specific needs of a user.

The Town of Aylmer and the person with a disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.

In the event the information is not generated by the Town of Aylmer or is supplied by a third party, the Town of Aylmer will make every effort to obtain the information from the third party in an alternate format and/or will attempt to assist the Elector by providing assistive equipment.

General Election Materials

Large Print – Printed material generated by the Town of Aylmer will be provided in an Arial font, minimum 11 point, and can be made available in a font (print) size that is 16 to 20 points or larger.

Website – Information generated by the Town of Aylmer on the website in relation to the election will be compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level A, and allow for assistive software to be utilized. In addition, website font can be adjusted within the browser's functionality to aid the user in reading the information.

7.2 Service Disruptions

From time to time and/or for unforeseen circumstances beyond the Town of Aylmer control, temporary service disruptions may be experienced. In the event of a temporary accessible service disruption, Election Officials will commit to making reasonable efforts to ensure that services are reinstated as quickly as possible and that alternative services are provided where feasible. In these instances of service disruptions, the Town of Aylmer, per the Accessibility Policy 2.14 and its Procedure 2.14 – Free Accessibility Temporary Service Disruptions, shall provide reasonable notice in the event of a planned

or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities.

Notice of these temporary disruptions shall be provided in a conspicuous place and manner at the respective location(s) and information shall also be posted on the Town of Aylmer website. This notice shall include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, a description of alternative facilities or services, if available and contact information.

Accessible services in relation to this plan include voting places, Voter Help Centre, election materials and/or other voting provisions for Electors with disabilities.

8. 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 is a good source of information. The Directorate along with AMCTO has released a quick reference document to assist candidates with accessible elections called “A Candidates Guide to Accessible Elections.” A copy will be provided in the Candidates’ Information Packages.

9. FEEDBACK

The Town of Aylmer welcomes public input as feedback helps to identify areas where changes need to be considered and ways in which the Town can improve its services to people with disabilities. The Town’s Accessibility Policy and Procedure 2.14 – A provide a process for feedback on accessibility issues.

10. REPORTING

Pursuant to Section 12.1 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, within 90 days after voting day, the Town of Aylmer Clerk shall submit a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

This Accessibility Plan is hereby approved:

Original signed by

J. Reynaert, Deputy Clerk

May, 2018