

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Finance and Administration
January 17, 2019

Report of the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Regional Clerk

2018 Municipal Election Accessibility Report

1. Recommendations

1. Council receive this report for information.

2. Summary

Section 12.1 (3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* requires the Regional Clerk to make a report available to the public within 90 days after voting day (before January 21, 2019) on the actions taken for identification, removal and prevention of barriers affecting electors and candidates with disabilities.

Key Points:

- Notwithstanding the amendments to the Regional Chair election process, this report is a mandatory requirement prescribed by the *Municipal Elections Act*.
- As part of the preparation and planning for the Regional Chair election, staff undertook measures to ensure compliance with accessibility standards.
- The Region's main focus was with respect to the removal of barriers for candidates, as the local municipalities were responsible for the voting process.

3. Background

Identification, removal and prevention of barriers affecting electors and candidates is a mandatory legislative requirement

The *Municipal Elections Act* requires clerks to consider accessibility requirements when planning for elections. Specifically, clerks must prepare a plan on the identification of barriers to electors and candidates and make it available to the public before voting day.

Within 90 days after voting day, clerks must submit a report on how the plan was implemented.

4. Analysis

The Region's Municipal Election Accessibility Plan was published on June 20, 2018 in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act*

The [Municipal Election Accessibility Plan](#) was presented at the June 2018 meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and posted to the Region's Election webpage. This met the legislated obligation to make the Plan available before October 19, 2018.

The Plan was based largely on the Region's Accessibility Policy. It included the Policy's 'Statement of Organizational Commitment' as well as sections pertaining to: accessible customer service, information and communications, employment and training, and accessible facilities. The Plan set out the overarching guidelines and principles used to identify and remove possible barriers. This approach is similar to that of other regional municipalities.

All documentation and communication developed for the Municipal Election was available in accessible formats

The public-facing counter at York Region's Administrative Centre was provided with signage to inform electors and candidates of the availability of election related documents in accessible formats and communication supports.

York Region is committed to website accessibility and the Election page conformed to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* standards for web content.

One potential physical barrier for candidates was specifically addressed

All candidates for the Regional Chair position were required to file their nomination papers with the Regional Clerk. Although the York Region Administrative Centre meets accessibility standards, a potential barrier for candidates was mitigated through the installation of a power door operator on the public entrance to the Regional Clerk's Office, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Installation of Power Door Operator



5. Financial

The installation of the power door operator cost approximately \$3,050, which was accommodated within the 2018 budget.

6. Local Impact

The voting process was managed by the nine local municipalities

Each of the local municipal clerks had obligations to prepare their own accessibility plans, including for voting places and the voting process.

The Region relied on each local area municipality for the selection of voting locations, including advanced voting places and to process the votes, ensuring that locations and processes are accessible for persons with disabilities. The Region also relied on each local area municipality to ensure their election ballot was accessible for persons with disabilities.

7. Conclusion

The Office of the Regional Clerk, in consultation with the Region's Accessibility Advisory Committee, developed York Region's 2018 Municipal Elections Accessibility Plan. The Plan and the actions arising from it are consistent with the principles of the *Municipal Elections Act* and the AODA standards, and respected the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. The Region complied with all publication requirements set out in the *Municipal Elections Act*.

For more information on this report, please contact Christopher Raynor, Regional Clerk at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71300. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by:

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Approved for Submission:

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