

**CITY OF HAMILTON
ELECTION 2022
POST-ELECTION ACCESSIBILITY
REPORT**



January 23, 2023

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Accessibility Report: Results from the 2022 Municipal Election

In advance of the 2022 Municipal Election, the City of Hamilton released an Accessibility Plan to provide information to the community on accessibility features and initiatives implemented to assist in the removal of barriers for electors engaging in the Municipal Election. The development and release of this plan is in alignment with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (MEA), which requires that a clerk who is responsible for conducting an election to have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities, and develop and share their plan to address these needs. This plan was developed in alignment with the following policies, procedures and legislation:

- a. Municipal Elections Act, 1996,
- b. Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001
- c. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- d. The City of Hamilton's Equity and Inclusion Policy
- e. The City of Hamilton's Customer Service Standards Policy
- f. The City of Hamilton's Multi-year Accessibility Plan (2020-2025)

The requirements of the City Clerk with regard to Electors and Candidates with disabilities are outlined in the MEA as follows:

Electors and candidates with disabilities

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

(2) The clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election. 2016, c. 15, s. 11.

(3) Within 90 days after voting day in a regular election, the clerk shall prepare a report about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the report available to the public. 2016, c. 15, s. 11.

The Accessibility Plan released in September 2022 was developed in adherence to the requirements of the Municipal Elections Act and related acts and policies, and additionally was developed to address the following goals for the Municipal Election:

- a) to ensure that electoral services are accessible to all eligible voters and candidates;

- b) to engage with equity seeking and citizen advisory committees to help identify additional barriers to voting
- c) to identify and eliminate barriers for persons with disabilities; and
- d) to create a positive and inclusive voting experience for all electors.

Further to the overarching goals, the plan identified five key areas of focus to consider throughout the election planning process, including:

1. Elections Communication and Information
2. Voting Places
3. Voting Methods
4. Recruitment, Selection and Training of Election workers
5. Assistance for Candidates

Throughout the 2022 Municipal Election planning and implementation processes, a number of specific initiatives were undertaken in support of greater accessibility for electors. This report outlines the initiatives taken and the outcomes, and further, identifies areas of opportunity for further accessibility in future elections.

1. Elections Communication and Information

In the Accessibility Report, the City committed to ensuring that communications and information is shared in a manner that is accessible for all electors. In order to achieve this goal, the plan outlined two key initiatives and strategies in support of these initiatives. These initiatives and their associated strategies were implemented in order to address information/communication barriers, technological barriers, and attitudinal barriers.

Initiative 1: Provide an informative and accessible election website.

Strategies:

- a) Ensure election information is available in clear, simple language.
- b) Continuously update election information posted on the City's website to reflect the most recent information
- c) Enhance the City's "Where Do I Vote?" web application to provide accessibility information about voting places.
- d) Ensure election web pages are W3C Consortium WCAG 2.0 Level A compliant
- e) Establish a dedicated accessibility section on the election's website that provides information on the initiatives undertaken by the City Clerk's Office.
- f) Build and implementation a virtual agent function on the City's website to assist electors with questions and accessing information.
- g) Provide a feedback mechanism on the website for electors to provide feedback on accessibility in the election

Results Achieved:

Throughout the election period, information and resources were made accessible to the public through a variety of mediums, including print, web and social media, and radio. All materials developed for the Election were reviewed to ensure that language was clear and simple and printed materials met AODA requirements. Information was available in alternate formats upon request.

The City of Hamilton's website is accessible and is compliant with WCAG 2.1 AA web accessibility standards. Regular accessibility checks are completed on the website, and the new corporate Hamilton.ca website is assessed at a 90% overall compliance rating. The Municipal Election pages on the Hamilton.ca website was redesigned for the 2022 Municipal Election with ease of navigation for the end user in mind. To streamline information and navigation, the website was divided into sections with information for voters, for candidates and third parties, election resources, and archives. The main page for the Municipal Election included links to each section, and additionally housed a banner which highlighted recent news and most relevant information.

Accessibility information was made available on the City's Municipal Election webpages under Elections Resources and in the Voters section. In the Election Resources, a dedicated page to the Elections Accessibility Plan included details of the strategies, a link to the plan, and a video designed to show information on the accessible voting equipment available to electors at designated poll locations. In the Voters section, information on poll locations was made available to all residents in the community in September 2022, and sites with enhanced accessibility features including accessible voting machines were identified to assist residents in their planning.

New for 2022, a virtual agent feature was added to the Municipal Election pages on the City's website. The addition of this technology allowed residents to type or use voice command to ask questions and receive election related information or links to information directly without having to search the site.

Electors were able to provide feedback through a variety of means. A dedicated email address, elections@hamilton.ca was set up to receive feedback and questions, and additionally a dedicated elections line was put in place to receive calls from residents. Additionally, the City of Hamilton has a dedicated Accessibility Feedback and Complaint Form that allows residents to provide feedback on accessibility-related items through the City's Human Rights, Diversity and Inclusion Office.

Metrics:

- 76895 website hits between September 1 and October 24
- Website is 90% compliant with WCAG 2.1 AA web accessibility standards
- 4,298 virtual agent sessions, with an 81% engagement rate and a high-resolution rate of 60%.

- 23 social media posts related to accessibility; 21 responses to inquiries resulting from posts

Initiative 2: Provide election information in alternative formats and through multiple channels

Strategies:

- a) Present information about election accessibility to stakeholder and community organizations
- b) Produce “How to Vote” Resources in English and Additional Languages
- c) Produce an accessible “How to Vote” Video and post to the City’s Website
- d) Build and implement a voice assistant to assist electors using smart home features.

Results Achieved:

In the lead up to the Municipal Election, the Elections team engaged with a number of community organizations and residents to share information and seek feedback and input on the election, including information on accessibility. This included engagement with the following groups:

- Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities
- Seniors Advisory Committee
- Status of Women Committee
- Committee Against Racism
- Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee
- Indigenous Advisory Committee
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Advisory Committee
- Hamilton Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- Hamilton Regional Indian Centre
- Immigrant Working Centre
- McMaster University
- Mohawk College
- Redeemer University
- Hamilton Public Library

Throughout July and August of 2022, the City dispatched a team of Elections Ambassadors to go out into the community and provide information on the voters list and the election, and to answer any elections-related questions. The Ambassadors visited 96 locations across all 15 wards of the City, including Recreation Centres, Farmers Markets, parks, and special events.

The Elections Team developed a number of resources throughout the election, including a Voter Information Resources that was translated into the most common languages spoken in Hamilton as informed by Census information. This included, Arabic, Farsi, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Spanish, Tagalog, Mandarin and Serbian.

Videos were developed to provide information in an alternate format to voters on the voting process and on Accessible Voting technology. These videos were shared on the City's Municipal Election webpages, and through social media posts. All videos were closed captioned. Additionally, Instagram reels were developed to share information with the community, including accessibility information.

A Voice Assistant was additionally introduced at the beginning of October 2022 that enabled community members using Smart Home devices such as Google Alexa or Apple Siri to use these devices to receive information on the Municipal Election. The introduction of this technology provided an accessible alternative to receiving election information, as users could verbally request and receive information on the election or be directed to resources.

Metrics:

- 23 social media posts related to accessibility; 21 responses to inquiries resulting from posts
- Voice Assistant usage: 1296 Alexa interactions and 785 Google assistant interactions
- 18 Presentations in 2022
- 96 Community Engagements
- 2515 video views through the City of Hamilton YouTube account
- 38, 207 views of Instagram Reels

2. Voting Places

As in-person voting is the most commonly used voting method for electors, and as it requires the elector to attend at a voting location to cast a ballot, it is essential that voting places were accessible for all electors. To achieve this goal, the plan outlined five initiatives and associated strategies, including ensuring that voting places are accessible to all voters with disabilities; ensuring that voting routes and entrances are clearly identified; ensuring that all voting place owners and managers are aware of accessibility requirements; provide a mechanism for feedback, and provide information on accessibility features at voting locations. Initiatives focused on voting places were intended to address organizational barriers, information/communication barriers, physical/architectural barriers, and attitudinal barriers.

Initiative 1: Ensure all Voting Places are accessible to voters with disabilities

Strategies:

- a) Engage with community stakeholders on voting place selection criteria
- b) Review and update voting place accessibility checklist
- c) Review all potential voting places with consideration for public transit access where applicable
- d) Review all potential voting places for accessibility features, including:
 - door operators / accessible doors
 - barrier-free parking
 - accessible ramps and thresholds
 - a barrier-free path of travel from the parking lot
 - adequate lighting
- e) Inspect all voting locations prior to Voting Day to ensure accessibility for all voters
- f) In the event of disruption or unforeseen circumstances requiring a poll location to be closed, a back-up poll location identified and secured that meets accessibility standards
- g) In the event of disruptions to service or unforeseen circumstances that affect the accessibility of voting places during the Advance Vote or on Voting Day, notices of disruption will be posted as soon as possible:
 - on the City's website
 - on the City's social media accounts (Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn)
 - at the site of the disruption
 - when applicable, a media advisory will be issued.

Results Achieved:

City staff reviewed criteria for poll location selection from the 2018 Municipal Election and engaged with both internal and external stakeholders to update the criteria and ensure alignment with AODA legislation and requirements. The stakeholders consulted included the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities, the Seniors Advisory Committee, AODA Facilities Specialists, and Human Rights, Diversity and Inclusion Specialists. As a result of these consultations, and based on best practice research and additional feedback from presentations, directly through the elections@hamilton.ca email, and through the Engage Hamilton Survey conducted in October and November 2021, the criteria for the selection of voting places used on the accessibility checklist was updated to ensure a robust review and selection of sites occurred.

New considerations added to the accessibility checklist for 2022 included:

- Additional consideration given to building access, including slope or changes to the entrance; condition and stability of sidewalks, pathways, and walkways; width of pathways, ramp slope specifications
- Additional details on interior building flooring, elevations, and stairs
- Consideration of requirements to physically distance voters should there have been a need to do so
- Inclusion of requirements for Wifi access and access to accessible washrooms
- Accessibility of location to bus route and availability of bike storage

During the period of February – April of 2022, Elections Officers conducted 197 in-person site visits and used the assessment criteria to select the most appropriate and accessible sites within each ward subdivision.

For election day, 157 sites were selected to serve as poll locations, with the majority of the sites used from the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic School Board, and City of Hamilton locations as these facilities meet AODA requirements. Additional community sites such as churches, meeting rooms or club space was used where a school or city location was not available. In addition to the sites selected as poll locations, 15 additional sites that met the accessible criteria identified were secured (one per ward), as backup locations should a poll have been unusable on a voting day.

Processes were in place to communicate any disruption to service or unforeseen circumstances that affected the accessibility of voting places during the Advance Vote or on Voting Day.

Measures:

- 51 voting places located directly on a public transit route

- 37 voting places located less than 250 meters from public transit route
- 69 voting places located greater than 250 meters from a public transit route
- 197 locations inspected
- 157 poll locations selected for Election Day
- 15 poll locations selected for Advance Polls
- 15 of backup locations identified and secured for Election Day
- 66 individual considerations included in the Voting location assessment checklist used in the determination of a poll location

Initiative 2: Ensure all Voting Place access routes and entrances are clearly identified

Strategies:

- a) Ensure voters with accessibility needs are directed to the accessible voting entrance by prominent signage.
- b) Use large-print signage at voting places
- c) Train election workers to communicate with people who are blind or have low vision.
- d) Consult on best practices in signage and identification

Results Achieved

All voting places were equipped with signage to ensure that electors were able to easily navigate to the polling station at the location. This included signs to identify the polling location for the building exterior, and navigational signs for inside the voting location. The Elections team consulted with Communications and Graphics and AODA Specialists on signage and to determine best practices.

Signage at the polling station was printed in a large and clear font.

Election workers were required to review and complete training on accessibility and inclusion, which was further reinforced in printed manuals that were supplied to each worker. Training provided direction on customer service principles and inclusive practices.

In addition to training and signage, additional Greeters were hired for most poll locations to provide customer service and support as required. Greeters were tasked with

assisting electors in navigating to the polling location, and providing assistance to electors who requested support.

Measures:

- 54 signs at each voting place
- 1541 Elections Workers provided with resources and training on accessibility and customer service

Initiative 3: Ensure all Voting Place owners and managers are aware of accessibility requirements

Strategies:

- a) Notify all voting place owners and managers of legislative accessibility requirements in order to prevent last minute changes to voting places
- b) Welcome the use of support persons and service animals in voting places.
- c) Educate elections staff on appropriate communication with voters and service animals

Results Achieved:

As accessibility features were a part of the site assessment criteria, discussions of accessibility took place at each of the sites with the owners of the location. Further, as the sites used for polling locations were primarily schools and facilities that provide service to the community, they were familiar with AODA requirements.

Election workers were required to review and complete training on accessibility and inclusion, which was further reinforced in printed manuals that were supplied to each worker. Training provided direction on customer service principles and inclusive practices. As many of the Managing Deputy Returning Officers were City of Hamilton Staff, they additionally were familiar with the City's Customer Service Standards and AODA principles.

Measures:

- Over 200 facility owners and managers engaged
- Information provided in election accessibility and customer service in manuals for all poll positions and training resources
- 1541 Elections Workers provided with resources and training on accessibility and customer service

Initiative 4: Provide a system to deal with accessibility issues, concerns or complaints

Strategies

- a) Establish a website link to an accessibility feedback form so an elector who encounters an accessibility issue can contact Election or Accessibility staff
- b) Use the received feedback to ensure that voting places are accessible to voters, as required by the Municipal Elections Act, 1996

Results Achieved:

Information on how to contact the Municipal Elections Team was identified on the hamilton.ca Municipal Elections pages, and in all communications and resources that were provided by the Elections Office. Electors were directed to contact Elections staff via email at elections@hamilton.ca or through the direct elections phone line.

The City of Hamilton additionally has a dedicated Accessibility Feedback and Complaint Form on the City of Hamilton's website that allows residents to provide feedback on accessibility-related items through the City's Human Rights, Diversity and Inclusion Office. Any comments or concerns raised through this format were directed to Elections for action.

As some residents reach out to the City via the Customer Contact Centre or the Office of the City Clerk, customer service staff were provided with resources to assist in answering questions or providing information on the election. Staff in these positions were directed to forward any callers with accessibility issues, complaints or concerns directly to Elections staff to address.

Initiative 5: Provide information on the accessibility features available at each Voting Place

Strategies:

- a) Provide details of accessibility features available to voters and candidates at Advance Vote locations on the City's website
- b) Provide details of accessibility features available to voters and candidates at voting places on Voting Day on the City's website.

Results Achieved:

All candidates were provided with a full listing of the City's poll locations, including the advance and election day poll sites, via email and through the Candidate Portal. As a part of this listing, candidates were provided with information on the poll location criteria, the accessibility of all sites, and specific information on sites with additional accessibility features.

Voters were provided with information on the City's poll locations via the Municipal Elections Voter Information web page. Polls for each ward subdivision were identified, and those with enhanced accessible voting equipment were identified.

Measures:

- 35,377 webpage hits to - 'Where to Vote'

3. Voting Methods

To enhance accessibility, the City provided electors with options for voting and worked to ensure that each method of voting was accessible. The options

Initiative 1: Provide accessible voting opportunities

Strategies:

- a) Provide voters with the option to vote by mail
- b) Provide voters with the option to vote by proxy
- c) Review ballot design to increase legibility
- d) Increase legibility of ballots through use of accessible font styles, appropriate case usage, and colours, where possible
- e) Provide an accessible ballot-marking device at all advance polls, and one in each ward on Election day for independent voting via “sip-and-puff”, the use of paddles, or a tactile device
- f) Provide magnifiers, pens and paper at all voting place

Results Achieved:

The City offered a special Vote by Mail option for voters to cast their ballot in the 2022 Municipal Election. 3186 voters requested a vote by mail package, and approximately 70%, or 2397 vote by mail ballots were returned to the City and cast.

Voters had the option to appoint a proxy to cast a ballot on their behalf if they were unable to attend at a polling station. For the 2022 Municipal Election, 72 proxy forms were certified.

For voters casting their ballot in person, accessible voting equipment was available in one identified poll location in each ward. This equipment provided electors with the option to cast a ballot using a sip and puff device, an audio-tactile device, or paddles.

Voters who opted not to attend a polling location with accessible voting equipment had access to magnifiers, pens, and paper pads at their poll. Additionally staff was on hand to assist electors where it was requested.

Measures:

- 3186 vote by mail ballots requested, and 2397 received
- 72 proxy forms received
- 18 accessible voting machines used
- 5 opportunities to vote using accessible voting machines (in each ward on advance polls and on election day)

- 2320 ballots cast on accessible voting tabulators (note, not all ballots cast on accessible voting equipment required use of accessible voting equipment)
- 1 magnifier screen at each voting place
- minimum of two pen and paper pads at each voting location

Initiative 2: Provide voting opportunities in institutions and long-term care facilities and for underserved communities

Strategies:

- a) Establish voting places at the following facilities in order to allow eligible residents of the facility the opportunity to vote:
 - a. any institution in which 20 or more beds are occupied by persons who are disabled, chronically ill or infirmed
 - b. a long-term care facility in which 50 or more beds are occupied.
- b) Provide additional lead time for voting to occur at institutions to ensure all voters have time to cast their ballots by voting day
- c) Establish Polls in locations that fall outside of those legislated but which specifically provide seniors, post-secondary students, Indigenous electors, and electors experiencing homelessness with an additional and focused voting opportunity

Results Achieved:

The Elections Team worked with Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes to implement a vote by mail process for the election. This process was introduced to provide additional time for electors to cast their ballot, and additionally, to ensure that all electors wishing to vote could do so regardless of any potential public health impact or quarantine.

Legacy Special Advance Poll locations were maintained for the 2022 Municipal Election. Many of the locations of Special Advance Polls were in buildings that fall short of the legislated requirement for institutions, or where there are populations that are traditionally underserved. Voting opportunities were held over the course of two days at 18 sites across the City.

In addition to the Institutional and Retirement home voting process and the Special Advance Polls, a Ballot on Demand Poll was introduced for 2022. This technology allowed electors from any ward in the City to attend at a location and receive a ballot for their ward. The ballot on demand program was utilized at McMaster University, Mohawk College, and Redeemer University, in addition to at the Hamilton Regional Indian Centre, Carol Ann's Place, Willow's Place, and the Wesley Day Centre .

Measures:

- 50 long-term care and retirement homes where voting process was implemented
- 18 Special Advance Polls established
- 7 Ballot on Demand Polls established

Initiative 3: Provide assistance to voters with disabilities as requested**Strategies:**

- Ensure that voters using DARTS to get to a poll location on a voting day have front of the line access, reducing their time at the poll and ensuring that their transportation will wait for them.
- Upon request, provide voters with the opportunity to vote from anywhere at the voting place (including curbside) with assistance from a Managing Deputy Returning Officer and a Deputy Returning Officer.
- Upon request, assist the elector with voting or reading of ballot.
- Train Deputy Returning Officers to assist voters with voting process when requested
- Enable voters to swear an oath if they are unable to provide the required identification and/or documentation with a signature.
- Allow voters to bring a friend or interpreter to assist them as required with the voting process

Results Achieved:

The Elections Team partnered with DARTS to operate the front of the line access for electors who were using DARTS service to get to the poll location. These electors were able to move to the front of the line to cast their ballot, and DARTS drivers were instructed to wait for the elector. On election day, 43 trips were made with DARTS by 43 electors to a polling location.

To provide assistance, any elector who was unable to enter the voting location was able to request a curbside vote. This process allows for a ballot be brought outside to an eligible elector to complete. Elections staff was trained on this process, and process steps were outlined within training materials to act as a guide for staff on voting day.

Electors who required assistance are able to bring a friend or interpreter with them to assist in voting. Should an elector not have had access to an individual to assist them, Elections Staff was available to assist.

Measures:

- 43 trips to poll via Darts
- 472 Deputy Returning Officers trained

Initiative 4: Provide instructions on the use of accessible voting equipment

Strategies:

- Produce videos that outline the voting process and the accessible voting technologies in use for the election. Videos will include accessible elements and captioning, and post the videos on the City's website
- Provide pictorial instructions on voting processes

Results Achieved:

In an effort to provide more information on the election in different formats to the community, the Elections Team developed four videos that were released in the lead up to the Election. This included the following videos:

- Accessible Voting in the 2022 Municipal Election – a video providing information on accessible voting equipment available for use during the election, the City released a video that highlighted the features of this equipment. This included a demonstration of the sip and puff equipment, paddles, and audio-tactile device. This video was released on the City's website and through the City's YouTube channel.
- What to Expect at the Polling Station, which walked viewers through the voting location and process was developed and released. This video was created to assist voters in understanding the flow of a poll location and the process to vote in order to allow electors to prepare and identify areas where they may need assistance.
- What you Need to Know About the Municipal Election, which provided general information on the Election and methods of voting.
- Vote by Mail in Hamilton's Municipal Election, that walked Electors through the process to request a Vote by Mail package, how to complete the package, and how to return the package to the City

Accessible Voting Specialists (AVS) were trained on the accessible voting equipment using pictorial instructions and through hands on training. AVS staff was on hand at polls where this equipment was used in order to assist electors and provide guidance.

Measures:

- 4 videos produced
- 2515 views of the videos through the City of Hamilton YouTube Channel
- Pictorial instructions provided to 27 AVS Staff
- 27 AVS Staff hired to support the Election

4. Recruitment and Staffing

To ensure enhance accessibility for the 2022 Municipal Election and to ensure that all Electors were included and supported in voting, the City committed to ensuring that recruiting and staffing practices were accessible, and that staff were trained and supported to provide accessible customer service to all Electors. The implementation of this initiative intended to address organizational barriers, attitudinal barriers, physical/architectural barriers, and information/communication barriers.

Initiative 1: Provide accessibility training to all workers who participate in the election

Strategies:

- Develop an Accessible Election Manual providing direction on how the City of Hamilton will address the needs of persons with disabilities during the election and distribute the manual during training.
- Develop accessibility training and reference materials for all elections staff, including:
 - how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
 - how to interact with persons who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or support person;
 - how to use voting equipment and assistive devices to deliver election services;
 - what to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services

Results Achieved:

All staff who were hired to support polls were required to complete training on Accessibility and Diversity. This training was housed in the electronic worker portal, and included modules on Accessibility and Diversity, and a video presentation providing key information. In addition, all staff received a hard-copy training manual that replicated the information in the worker portal. This information was on-hand as a guide during voting days should a member of staff have needed a refresher. The training provided information and direction on accommodations and disabilities, how to provide effective customer service, and what to do if there are questions or more assistance is needed.

Additional training was provided to Accessible Voting Specialists on Accessible Voting equipment to ensure that they were familiar with the equipment and could effectively assist electors using the equipment when required.

Measures

- 4570 manuals printed and distributed
- 1597 staff trained

Initiative 2: Ensure the recruitment process for applicants is accessible

Strategies

- Provide accommodations and special services for testing and interviews, upon request
- Ensure the worker's manual and/or other relevant materials are available in an accessible format, upon request.

Results Achieved:

In alignment with the City's recruitment practices, any applicant requiring accommodation was able to request accommodation from the Elections Team in the interviewing stage or for testing where required. In addition, any training materials were available in an accessible format where it was requested. Applicants were additionally accommodated in the position they filled upon request.

Measures

- For the 2022 Municipal Election, training materials were provided electronically and in hard copy. No additional requests for training materials in alternate formats were made.

5. Assistance to Candidates

To provide greater assistance to Candidates, the Elections team ensured that any Candidates who identified an accommodation need were provided with assistance and support. Additionally, all Candidates were provided with accessible resources and information throughout the campaign period. These measures were introduced to address information/communication barriers, technology barriers, physical/architectural barriers, and organizational barriers.

Initiative 1: Provide candidates with access to information in alternative and accessible formats

Strategies:

- Ensure the candidate guide and/or other relevant publications are available in an accessible format, upon request
- Provide the City of Hamilton's Voters' List in an electronic format to candidates
- Meet with Candidates to provide an overview of the election processes
- Hold candidate information sessions in accessible locations and virtually
- Provide accommodations and special information services upon request

Results Achieved:

All Candidates were provided with access to guides, policies and procedures through the electronic candidate portal. Information was provided in PDF format, and was available in other formats upon request.

For the 2022 Municipal Election, candidates were provided with access to an electronic voters' list through the candidate portal, which was able to be downloaded in a xls format. This enabled candidates to download information and convert into other formats as required.

The City Clerk conducted meetings with certified candidates to provide them with information and to provide an opportunity for candidates to ask questions. In addition, the City hosted two separate open Candidate information sessions in a virtual format that focused on campaigning information and campaign finances.

Measures:

- Electronic Voters' List available to all 150 Candidates
- 2 candidate information sessions held virtually

Feedback and Opportunities for Improvement

During and following the 2022 Municipal Election, the Elections Office received feedback and suggestions regarding accessibility. This included feedback on poll locations, experiences at the poll, and experiences with staff at the poll. Additionally, suggestions were made for improvements enhancements for future elections that would provide greater accessibility. The feedback that has been received to date has been reviewed and the following opportunities have been highlighted to improve accessibility for future elections.

Opportunities:

- Investigate additional and updated accessible voting equipment for use at the polls.
- Enhance voting location assessment to include a greater focus on flow of the polling station, Wi-Fi connectivity, sensory concerns, and access to the polling station in advance to ease anxiety by elections employees.
- Develop a plan to introduce online and telephone voting for the 2026 Municipal Election.
- Investigate the potential to add additional accessible resources at all poll locations, including Braille overlay and large-print ballots.
- Provide electors with additional information on features of voting locations in advance of voting days to ensure that electors are familiar with the layout and potential barriers of a polling location.

- Further enhance training, engaging with additional persons with lived experience in the development of training.
- Work with the Province to align practices and resources in voting accessibility.
- Develop an Elections Accessibility Working Group to provide guidance and advice for the administration of the 2026 Municipal Election.

The Elections Office continues to seek out feedback and input in order to improve processes for future elections. Feedback and suggestions can be provided to the Elections Office via email at elections@hamilton.ca or by phone at 905-546-2424 x4408