



Town of Prescott

2018 Municipal Election Accessibility

Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

Under Section 12.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act*:

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, 2. 8 (8)

Plan re barriers

(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.

Report

(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.

2. 2018 Municipal Accessibility Plan

The 2018 Municipal Accessibility Plan intended to highlight measures that the Town of Prescott would be implementing to ensure equal opportunity for all electors and candidates. These objectives included:

- That persons with disabilities were able to independently cast their vote and verify their selection.
- That persons with disabilities had full and equal access to all information on where and when to vote and on eligible candidates.
- That persons with disabilities could fully participate in the Municipal Election as an elector, candidate, or election official.
- That efforts were made to ensure that electors with disabilities were aware of the accessibility measures available via channels such as the newspaper, media launches, the Town of Prescott's website, and social media.
- That all the Town of Prescott polling locations were accessible.

3. 2018 Accessible Municipal Election

The 2018 Town of Prescott Municipal Election worked with Intelivote Systems Inc. to provide eVoting services to eligible voters. This included the convenience and independence of voting from anywhere via telephone, internet, or in-person at the voting station during the October 15 – 22, 2018 voting period. Voters also had the choice of voting by paper ballot on Election Day at the voting station.

Everyday tools like computers, telephones and other aids presented 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 provided voters with the capability to vote from the comfort of their own home. Voting from home facilitated the voting process for persons with disabilities who may have had mobility restrictions, visual impairment, and/or had a difficult time with transportation. Additionally, persons who had assistive devices set up in their homes were able to 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 was an increase in the capability for the voter to vote without any assistance. This provided persons with disabilities the same independence and privacy in participating in the election as other voters. If persons with disabilities required assistance in the voting process, trained Election Officials were present at the voting station throughout the voting period.

3.1 Telephone Voting

Eligible voters were able to use a touch-tone telephone, and the toll-free telephone number and PIN number contained in their Voter Information Letter to access an audio ballot.

The Intelivote telephone voting application provided the following:

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

3.2 Internet Voting

Eligible voters were able to 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 was created to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG-2 Level AA), so that persons with disabilities could perceive, understand, navigate and interact with the online voting system. It was compliant with the guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium website principles, which included organization, functionality and readability of information provided, as well as alternative ways of representing information, such as with audio.

3.3 In-person Voting at the Voting Station

For those individuals without means to access voting via telephone or internet, or who required the assistance of a trained Election Official, an advance voting station and Election Day voting station was open to provide in-person internet voting and paper voting opportunities via a laptop, touch screen monitor, or paper ballots.

Paper ballots were only be available on Election Day. The voting station was located at Town Hall, 360 Dibble Street West, Prescott.

The voting station was located on the third floor of Town Hall. Access to the voting station interior was accessible by elevator and stairs. The voting area was level and slip-resistant. The voting area was well lit and seating was available. Entrance corridors were clear of obstructions and tripping hazards and allowed sufficient space for use of a wheelchair or scooter.

An accessible voting area was available at the voting location. This area was low in height and had a wide area to allow for individuals who use a wheelchair or scooter to vote independently and secretively.

Voters were able to attend at the voting station location throughout the voting period. The Town of Prescott operated the following voting place locations during the Advance Voting Period:

October 15 to 19 - 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Town Hall, (360 Dibble Street West, Prescott)
Internet only

The following voting location was open on Election Day, Monday October 22, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.:

Town Hall, (360 Dibble Street West, Prescott)
Internet (and Paper)

Election officials also attended two long-term care facilities (The Mayfield and Wellington House) on Election Day and assisted residents of these locations with voting via paper ballot.

3.4 Special Voting Provisions

Election officials also attended two long-term care facilities (The Mayfield and Wellington House) on Election Day and assisted residents of these locations with voting via paper ballot.

4. VOTING LOCATION(S)

An accessibility assessment of each physical voting station was conducted. The following considerations were taken into account when determining which location would be used:

4.1 Accessible Route

The name and address of the voting location was clearly visible. An easily navigable route was marked for entry into the voting location and into the voting area within the location. The voting area was identified with clear and understandable signage. Seating areas were provided throughout the voting location for individuals needing a rest.

4.2 Entrance and Exit

The route to the entrance of the voting location was unobstructed and accessible. The route was wide enough to allow for an individual using a wheelchair, scooter, other assistive device, or service animal to travel safely. Doors into the voting location and voting area were accessible remained propped open for the duration of the voting location hours. Routine checks of entrance and exit routes were made throughout the hours of operation.

4.3 Parking

Accessible parking was available at the voting location. The designated parking spaces were clearly marked with the international Symbol of Accessibility and were on firm and level ground, close to the entrance of the voting location.

5. VOTING ASSISTANCE

5.1 Support Person/Friend of the Voter

People with disabilities were permitted to be accompanied by a support person at any voting location. A designated support person and/or 'Friend of the Voter' was administered an oath of secrecy/confidentiality by an Election Official prior to providing any such assistance.

5.2 Service Animals

Individuals requiring service animals were permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all voting locations.

5.3 Election Officials

At the in-person voting location, upon request, Election Officials were available to assist any voter who required assistance in casting their online or paper ballot. All individuals working in the capacity of an Election Official were formally appointed as such and administered an oath of secrecy prior to voting day.

6. COMMUNICATION

6.1 Election Materials

The Town of Prescott is required, as per the Accessible Customer Service Standard, 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.

General Election Materials

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

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