

2018



City of Peterborough

Post-Election Accessibility Report

December 2018

Introduction

Purpose of the Report

This report highlights the ways the City worked to achieve the goals outlined in the Accessibility Report to make the 2018 Municipal and School Board elections accessible for everyone casting a ballot on October 22, 2018.

The City's Election Accessibility Plan was developed to ensure compliance with relevant legislation including the **Municipal Election Act, 1996**, **Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**, and Human Rights Code.

The report was also developed within the framework of the City's Accessibility Plan and Election Accessibility Plan. As such, our reports reaffirm the Statement of Commitment adopted by Council on September 10, 2018.

Statement of Commitment

The City of Peterborough is committed to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in the community.

Our goal is to meet the diverse needs of all people, and follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

We will strive to achieve an inclusive environment for our facilities, goods, services, employment, information and transportation.

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Section 1: Accessibility Initiatives	4
Customer Service Standard.....	4
Voting Methods.....	4
Accessible Advance Voting at City Hall	4
Institutions and Retirement Homes.....	4
Voting Assistance	4
Online Voting	5
Customer Service Feedback	5
Training	5
Information and Communications Standard	5
Alternate Formats	5
Large Print.....	5
Web Content.....	5
Service Disruptions.....	6
Employment Standard	6
Transportation Standard.....	6
Proximity of Public Transit to the Voting Location.....	6
Parking	6
Design of Public Spaces Standard	6
Voting Location Inspection Checklists	6
Entrance to the Voting Location.....	6
Interior Voting Area.....	6
Section 2: Feedback Form.....	7
Section 3: Feedback Responses	9
Election Day Feedback	9
Advance Voting Feedback.....	10
Election Day Comments	12
Enjoyed Voting In Person	12
Online Voting Problems/Criticisms.....	12
Wait Times.....	13
Voter Card/List Problems.....	13
Summary.....	13

Section 1: Accessibility Initiatives

When planning the 2018 municipal election, the focus of the Clerk's Office was on creating an environment where anyone regardless of ability could cast a secret ballot independently. Our commitments were outlined in our 2018 Election Accessibility Plan, published on our website, and presented to the Accessibility Advisory Committee on February 7, 2018.

This section reiterates those commitments and serves to highlight how we delivered on them.

Customer Service Standard

Voting Methods

The City of Peterborough offered several different ways to cast a ballot in the 2018 Municipal Election to make voting as accessible and convenient as possible. Electors were able to cast a ballot online or a physical paper ballot at any voting location in the City on Election Day or in advance.

Accessible Advance Voting at City Hall

The City offered an Accessible Advance Poll at City Hall, Monday to Friday, the week before the election from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Election staff also attended institutions and retirement homes prior to and on Election Day. Internet voting was also available so that electors could cast a ballot wherever they had access to a smartphone, tablet, or computer.

The City Hall Accessible Advance Poll was located in the City Boardroom. It offered a quiet, accessible, well-lit location for 455 people to cast a ballot. It also featured a voting tabulator equipped with special equipment to allow any elector to independently cast a ballot.

Institutions and Retirement Homes

The **Municipal Elections Act, 1996** mandates that the City attend Long-Term Care Facilities and Retirement Homes in the City of Peterborough to serve those electors. Staff attended 14 of these locations on Election Day and served 564 electors.

In addition, Clerk's Office staff identified four additional locations that were primarily occupied by vulnerable seniors. These additional locations were offered in advance of Election Day and to residents of these buildings only. 116 people took advantage of these opportunities.

Voting Assistance

Anyone requiring assistance to vote was able to be assisted by a support person. The person assisting the elector completed an oral oath with the Deputy Returning Officer prior to providing any such assistance. Electors were also entitled to be accompanied by a Service Animal.

Online Voting

Online voting was available twenty-four hours a day from October 9 until October 22, 2018. Online voting was compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), which includes standards such as: organization, functionality and readability of information provided, as well as alternative ways of representing information (ie. audio). The voter module was coded with XHTML transitional document type and conformed to all W3C web standards. Additionally, persons who had assistive devices setup in their homes would have been able to use them to assist with casting a ballot privately and independently.

Customer Service Feedback

Election Staff encouraged anyone to submit feedback about any aspect of their voting experience using the Customer Service Feedback Form. It was available online and at every voting location. **Section 2: Feedback Form** discusses the format of the form, and **Section 3: Feedback Responses** outlines the responses we received from the public.

Training

All staff carrying out election duties were trained to ensure persons with disabilities were served in a way that accommodates their individual needs so that everyone could cast a ballot independently. Training included:

- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities 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; and
- What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services.

Information and Communications Standard

Alternate Formats

The City of Peterborough did not receive any requests for alternative formats to be provided.

Large Print

Printed material generated by the City of Peterborough was provided in Arial, 12 point font, and was available in a font (print) size that is 16 to 20 points - or larger upon request.

Web Content

Information published by the City on the election website, or provided by third party vendors used by the City for the purposes of conducting the election, were all WCAG 2.0 compliant. Web content, including PDF documents, were also mobile, tablet and screen-reader friendly.

Service Disruptions

Unforeseen circumstances beyond the City's control resulted in a temporary service disruption of the online voting system. As a result services were extended at physical voting locations and online for an additional hour. Notice of the disruption was sent out through the media, and notice was published on our website with a description of the alternate methods people could use to vote.

Employment Standard

This standard tells employers that they must make accessible accommodations available, if requested, in all stages of the employment life cycle.

- The City of Peterborough is committed to identifying and removing barriers so that all future and current employees can reach their full potential
- Ensure everyone working the election receives training on accessibility

The City of Peterborough is an organization that strives to embrace the spirit of inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility. We are an equal opportunity employer committed to building an inclusive and barrier-free environment in which all individuals have access to the City's goods, services and facilities.

Transportation Standard

Proximity of Public Transit to the Voting Location

Proximity of the voting location to accessible public transit routes was a consideration when selecting voting locations. Free transit was also offered to voters by presenting their Voter Information Card.

Parking

Accessible parking spaces were clearly identifiable and easy to see from the road and marked with the International Symbol of Access. Routine checks of routes to the entrance of the Voting Location were conducted by election staff throughout the day.

Design of Public Spaces Standard

Voting Location Inspection Checklists

Site audits for all Voting Locations were completed and each location was scored according to suitability. Of the 35 locations visited, 17 were selected based on criteria that included accessible provisions.

Entrance to the Voting Location

All voting locations selected were measured against the accessibility requirements of Ontario's Building Code, and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. All voting locations had a zero step entrance, clear paths of travel and accessible surfaces.

Interior Voting Area

Access to the interior voting area and voting booth was level and easily traversed. All voting areas were well lit and seating was available. Magnifying sheets and book lights for additional illumination were also made available to assist any individual with low vision.

Section 2: Feedback Form

The Customer Service Feedback Form was designed for several purposes. It was designed to provide staff with immediate feedback that they could use to mitigate any issues that developed during the course of voting day. It also helps our department to plan for the next election.

The feedback form had two separate sections. A sample of the Customer Service Feedback Form used during the election is provided on the next page of this report.

Feedback Form Section 1

The first section included questions based on a Likert-type, or slider scale where people could rate their experience on key items such as: accessibility of the location, familiarity/comfort with the location itself, and overall interactions with staff.

The first question asked electors to rate their experience dealing with the overall accessibility of the voting location on a scale of 1 to 5.

Question 1: This voting location was accessible. Doors provided easy access, there was sufficient light, and there was smooth, unobstructed access to the voting location.

It was designed to get people to think about the physical space of the location, their ease of access navigating site, and to evaluate our assessment of what we thought when we conducted our accessibility inspections earlier in the year.

The second question asked electors to rate their familiarity/comfort with the location itself on a scale of 1 to 5.

Question 2: This voting location met my expectations as a voter. It was convenient for me to access from home/work.

Convenience and the extent to which voters were likely to be familiar with the location were factors we considered in our assessment of sites. Having people know where locations are translates into better turnout and less lines because people have choice of where they cast a ballot.

The third question asked electors to rate their experience with staff at voting locations on a scale of 1 to 5.

Question 3: Election staff met my expectations as a voter. People were polite and friendly and met my needs as an elector.

Customer Service is important for many reasons, but for elections it informs how the electorate will view future voting experiences and how they perceive the City in general.

Feedback Form Section 2

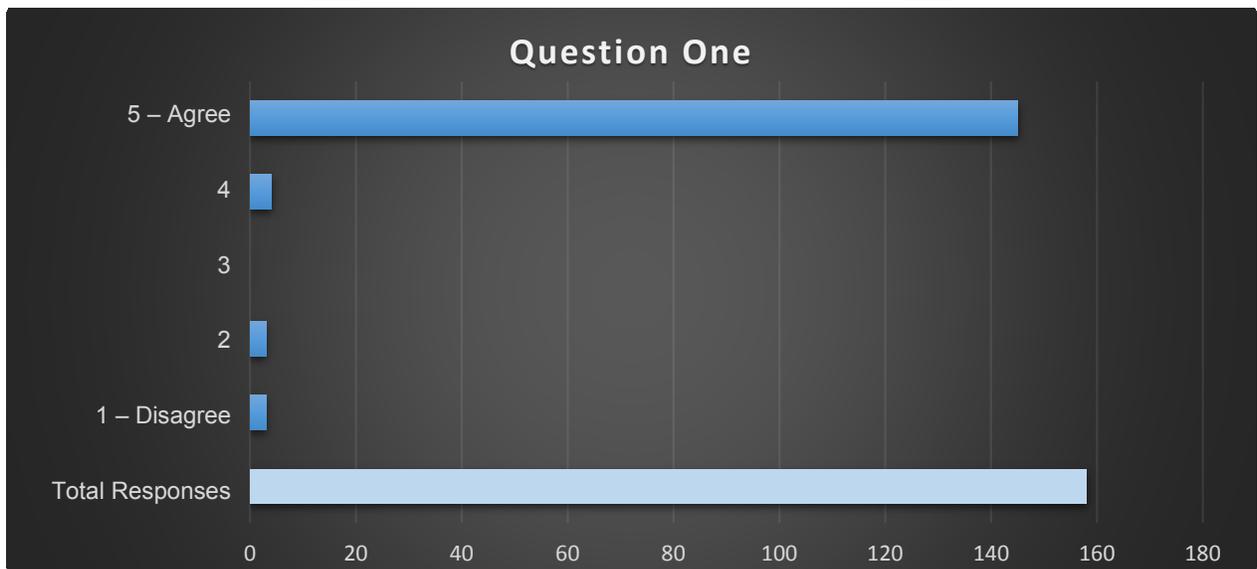
The second section allowed free-form responses from electors to provide their comments. The comment section began on the front and additional space was provided on the entire second side of the form.

Section 3: Feedback Responses

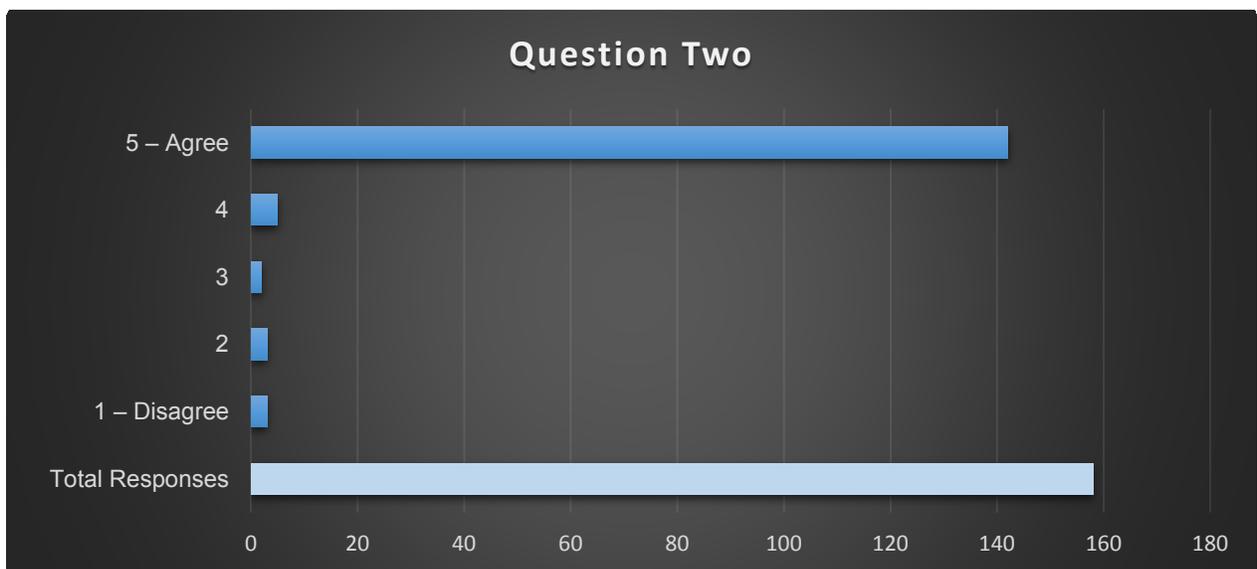
Election Day Feedback

On Election Day, 13,162 people cast a ballot at 17 voting locations throughout the City. Of those people who voted, 158 completed paper copies of Feedback Forms at voting locations. The City did not receive any copies electronically. Eight people did not provide any values for Questions 1-3. These people only left comments. The following provides a summary of the responses.

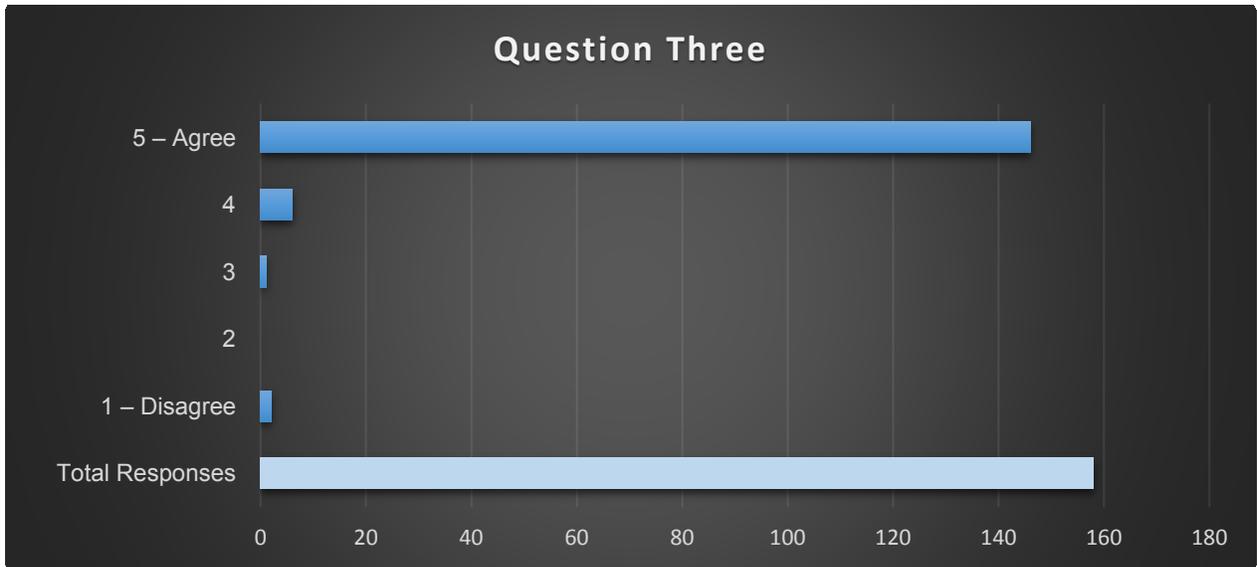
Question 1: This voting location was accessible. Doors provided easy access, there was sufficient light, and there was smooth, unobstructed access to the voting location.



Question 2: This voting location met my expectations as a voter. It was convenient for me to access from home/work.



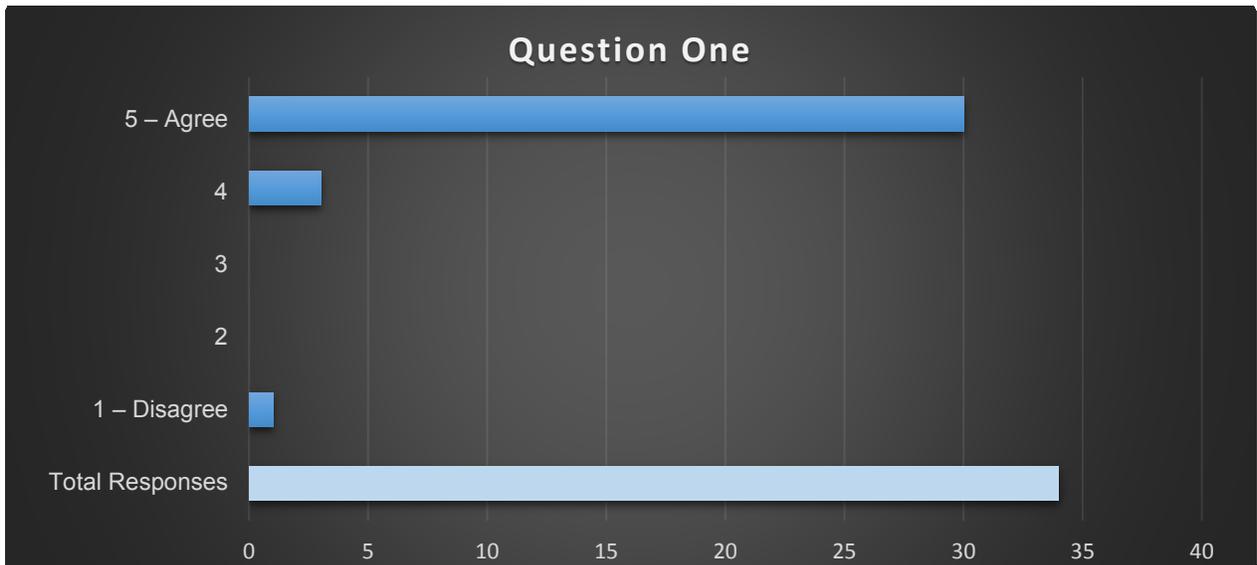
Question 3: Election staff met my expectations as a voter. People were polite and friendly and met my needs as an elector.



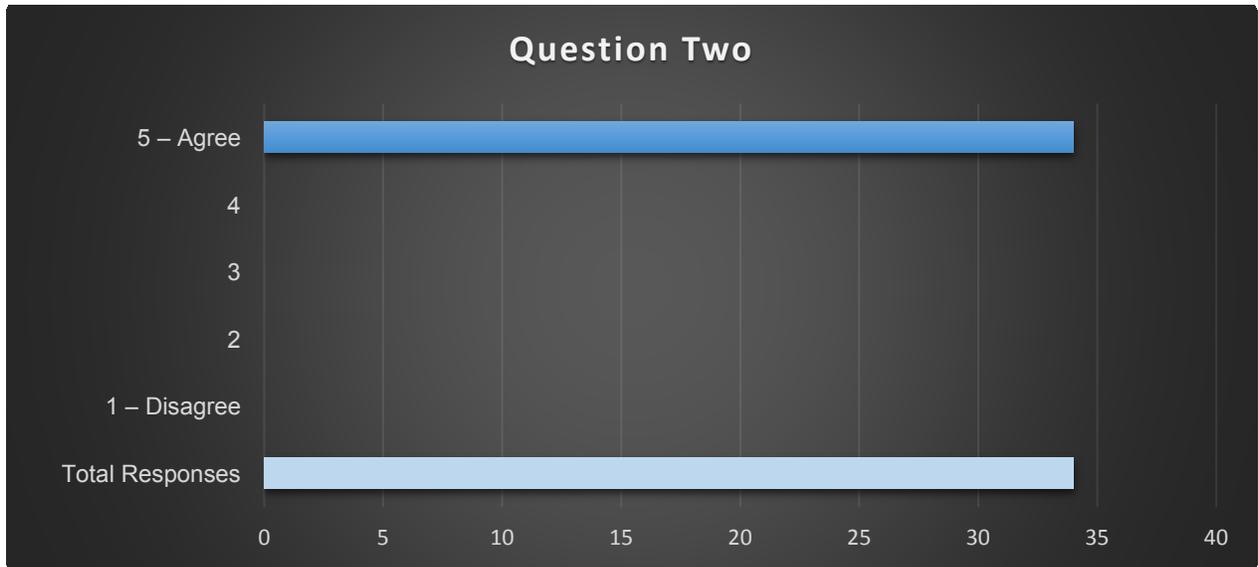
Advance Voting Feedback

Another 3,274 voted in the many advanced voting opportunities that the Clerk’s Office offered. Another 34 people completed paper copies of Feedback Forms at voting locations.

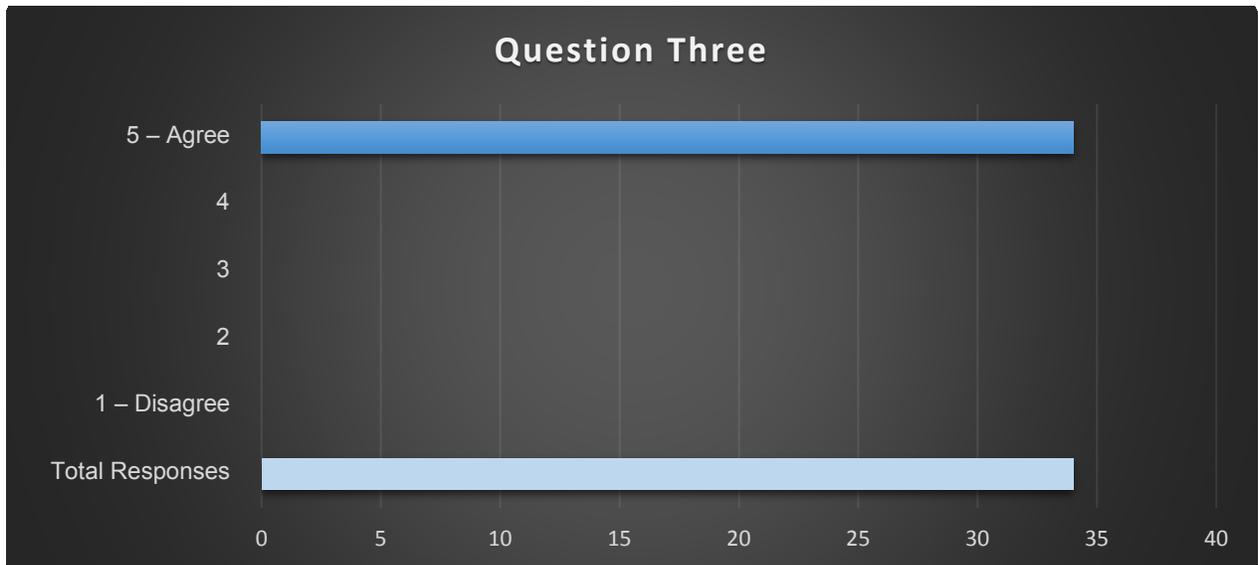
Question 1: This voting location was accessible. Doors provided easy access, there was sufficient light, and there was smooth, unobstructed access to the voting location.



Question 2: This voting location met my expectations as a voter. It was convenient for me to access from home/work.

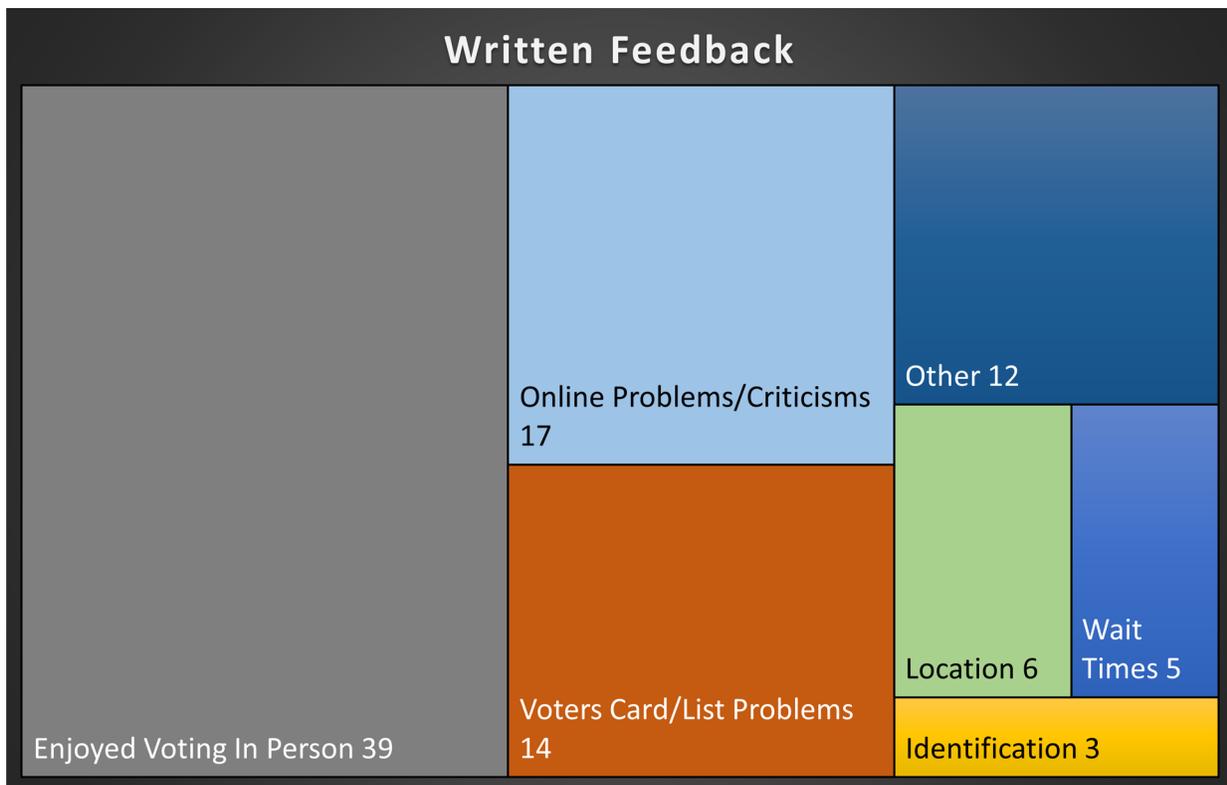


Question 3: Election staff met my expectations as a voter. People were polite and friendly and met my needs as an elector.



Election Day Comments

Of the 158 completed Feedback Forms received by staff, 85 included comments for feedback. The feedback was reviewed and organized into categories outlined in the chart below. Several comments touched on a few categories:



Enjoyed Voting In Person

The majority of people leaving comments did so to express that they were satisfied with the process overall. These people expressed satisfaction in the service they received by staff, and our selection of locations.

- **“Staff were friendly, welcoming, helpful & efficient. Venue is amazing! The animals are a great encouragement.” – Voter at the Zoo**
- **“Walked right in, no waiting. Fantastic” – Voter at Community Services**

Online Voting Problems/Criticisms

The City of Peterborough uses a two-step registration process for online voting. People receive a Voter Card with an Elector ID number on it and electors had to visit our website and register for a pin. Several people expressed problems stemming from the two-step registration process.

Wait Times

In addition to offering advance voting options and nearly ten days of online voting, staff also looked at ways to improve how people moved through physical voting locations. Electors who were on the voters list used a voting express lane to receive a ballot. The express lanes helped reduce the amount of time people had to wait in line and streamlined the overall voting process. Electors who needed to be added to the voters list used a regular lane. At the end of the add elector process, ballots were issued to electors directly from the regular lane to minimize the amount of stations people had to go to.

As a result of these changes only two people expressed that they had to wait too long to vote, while three cited the length of time it took to cast a ballot associated to the registration process.

- “Too long senior's should not have to wait” – Voter at the Library

Voter Card/List Problems

The Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) is responsible for our municipal tax information. They are also responsible for maintaining the voters list for municipalities outside of the election period. They worked collaboratively with Elections Ontario to ensure list accuracy. In addition, staff attended popup events to update voter information, and to encourage others to take proactive steps to ensure their correct information was on the list. Prior to October 22, 2018 MPAC made 5,945 updates to the list of electors, and staff made 2,980 updates. On Election Day staff made more changes to the list as illustrated in the following chart:

Change Type	Electors
Elector Added	1,611
Elector Moved	330
Elector Updated	1,114

From these changes, fourteen people expressed problems with the voter’s list and/or voter card.

- “Did not receive a voter ID card - very annoying. Had to wait in line 20 min to get registered.” – Voter at the Wellness Centre

- “Thank you for your help & patience as I had moved and had nothing updated.” – Voter at Community Services

Voter cards are generated from our voters list, so ensuring the accuracy of the list is a priority for staff.

Summary

This report is provided for information purposes and is legislated by the Municipal Elections Act, 1996. It fulfils the Municipality’s obligation to report on the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

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