



City of Peterborough

Election Accessibility Plan

EL 471

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The City of Peterborough's Election Accessibility Plan Introduction

This plan supports and strengthens the City's commitment and efforts to respond to the needs of persons with disabilities. This plan was developed to complement the City's existing Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

The focus of this Plan is to ensure that electoral services are accessible to everyone – candidates, electors, and staff. This Plan identifies ways we can eliminate barriers for persons of all abilities and to create a positive electoral experience for everyone.

The identification, prevention and removal of barriers is an ongoing process. As such, the City Clerk's Office will continue to learn, develop, and adjust our approach to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. This plan will be improved and updated as new opportunities are identified or become available.

The actions listed in the City of Peterborough's Election Accessibility Plan have been developed under the guidelines of the Accessibly for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), which include:

Customer Service – provide accessible customer service to people with disabilities so they can access the same goods and services as everyone else.

Information and Communications – create, provide, and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities.

Employment – employers will include accessibility practices for employees across all stages of the employment cycle including recruitment, assessment, and selection.

Transportation – transportation service providers will make their services and vehicles accessible.

Design of Public Spaces – newly designed or renovated public spaces will include specific accessibility features, which will make it easier for everyone to use.

Customer Service Standard

The Customer Service Standard guides organizations on how to provide services to people with disabilities using the core principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity.

Voting Methods

The City of Peterborough offers several different ways to cast a ballot in the 2022 Municipal Election to make voting as accessible and convenient as possible.

The City is offering an Accessible Advance Poll at City Hall, Monday October 17 to Friday October 21, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Accessible Advance Poll is equipped with vote anywhere technology and therefore all voters, from across the City, can access this voting location. Election staff will also attend institutions, retirement homes, and buildings deemed populated by people over the age of 65 prior to and on Election Day. Internet voting is also available from October 1-24, so that electors can cast a ballot wherever they have access to a smartphone, tablet, or computer.

Accessible Advance Voting at City Hall

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

When a voter wishes to use accessible voting features, election staff program the appropriate ballot (ward, school support, etc.) in the tabulator. The election staff person will insert a blank ballot paper into the printer slot of the device and provide the voter with the headphones and the ATI (or other supplemental equipment, where necessary).

The Audio Tactile Interface (ATI) is a keypad that is paired with a set of headphones. Instructions, such as listing candidate names in alphabetical order, are heard through the headphones and electors can make their selections when prompted using the keypad. The keypad can also be supplemented with paddles or a sip-and-puff device for electors with limited dexterity.



Figure 1 – Audio Tactile Interface (ATI)

The ATI includes Braille labels and raised tactile buttons with different colours and shapes to aid voters with various types of vision disabilities to vote independently.

The voter hears the audio ballot and uses the controller to adjust volume, speed of the audio presentation, move between each contest (such as: mayor, councillor, school board trustee), and select the candidates they wish to vote for. When the voter makes and confirms all their vote selections, they use the handheld controller to print their actual paper ballot.

The printed ballot is indistinguishable from a ballot marked by hand because the unit has a library of random handmade marking images which it prints on the ballot. This feature ensures voter anonymity, if examined manually.

The paper ballot is printed by the accessible equipment emerging from the unit hidden from view inside a secrecy folder. The Deputy Returning Officer then inserts the ballot into the scanner component of the tabulator just like any other 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 will attend 15 of these locations on Election Day.

In addition, the Clerk's Office staff will identify additional locations that are primarily occupied by people over the age of 65. These additional locations will be offered in advance of Election Day and to residents of these buildings only.

Internet Voting

Internet voting allows any elector with access to a smartphone, tablet, or computer to independently cast a ballot at any time, or in any place most convenient to them. This method of voting provides persons with disabilities, electors who may have mobility restrictions, visual impairments, and/or do not have access to transportation, the same independence and privacy as other voters to participate in the election.

Internet voting is compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), which include organization, functionality and readability of information provided, as well as alternative ways of representing information, such as with audio. The Voter Module is coded with XHTML transitional document type and conforms to all World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) web standards. Additionally, people who use custom assistive technology on their personal devices could now use them to assist with casting a ballot privately and independently.

The City of Peterborough uses a one-step registration process for online voting. Electors will use a PIN located on their voter notification card plus their date of birth to cast a ballot online.

Internet voting in the City of Peterborough will run from October 1-24, 2022.

Voting Assistance

Anyone requiring assistance to vote will be able to be assisted by a support person. The person assisting the elector completes an oral oath with the Deputy Returning Officer

prior to providing any such assistance. Electors are also entitled to be accompanied by a service animal.

Customer Service Feedback

Election Staff encourage anyone to submit feedback about any aspect of their voting experience using the Customer Service Feedback Form. It will be available and can be submitted in person at any voting location, the City's website, at the Clerk's office or through regular mail or email, and alternate formats can be made available upon request.

This feedback will be gathered and presented to Council in a report at the end of the election to report on the success of efforts made to improve accessibility.

Training

All staff carrying out election duties are trained to recognize and ensure that persons with disabilities are served in a way that accommodates their individual needs. All staff undertake measures so that everyone can cast a ballot independently. Training includes:

- 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.

Covid Procedures

To assist electors who are Deaf or hard of hearing, election staff at the polling locations will be provided anti-fog facemasks with a clear panel, in the event personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn.

Information and Communications Standard

Under the information and communication standard, the City must make sure:

- Accessible formats and communication supports are available to help people provide feedback and help them receive information in return;
- People can use the City website to request information in an accessible format;
- Information on the City website meets international standards for web accessibility; and
- Offline information is available in an alternative format upon request..

Alternate Formats

Alternate formats are other ways of accessing information besides regular print, such as large print, recorded audio, Braille or accessible PDF. Some of these formats can be used by everyone while others are designed to address specific needs of a user.

In the event the information was not generated by the City of Peterborough or is supplied by a third party, the City will make every effort to obtain the information from the third party in an alternate format and/or would have attempted to assist the elector by providing assistive equipment.

Large Print

Printed material generated by the City of Peterborough is provided in Arial font, minimum 12 point, and is 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 any digital information in relation to online voting will be compliant with WCAG 2.0 and allow for assistive technology to be utilized. In addition, website font can be adjusted within the browser to aid the user in reading the information. The City has developed easy to follow website content that is mobile optimized.

Service Disruptions

Unforeseen circumstances beyond the City's control could result in temporary service disruptions. Where service is disrupted, election staff will make reasonable efforts to maintain services or to provide alternative services until normal operations can resume.

In the event of disruptions to ordinary service or unforeseen circumstances that affect the accessibility of voting during the advance vote or on Election Day, notices of disruption will be posted in real time:

- on the City's website and election website
- at the site of the disruption
- where applicable, a media advisory will be issued

Employment Standard

This standard tells employers that they must make accessible accommodations available, if requested, in all stages of the employment life cycle (e.g., assessment, selection and retention).

- 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

The goal of the Transportation Standard is to make sure that transportation providers as well as municipalities, universities, colleges, hospitals, and school boards make their services and vehicles accessible to people with disabilities.

- The City of Peterborough will offer free, accessible transit to any elector with a voter card on Advance Voting Days and Election Day.

Proximity of Public Transit to the Voting Location

Proximity of the voting location to accessible public transit routes shall be a consideration when selecting voting locations and will be located on election maps provided on our website.

Parking

Designated or reserved parking for individuals with disabilities and older adults will be provided as close as possible to the entrance of the Voting Place. Accessible parking spaces will be clearly posted, easy to identify from the road and marked with the International Symbol of Access. Where selected voting locations are deficient in accessible parking, the number of accessible parking spaces will be increased, if possible, to 3 spaces. Routine checks of routes to the entrance of the Voting Location will be conducted by the election staff throughout the day.

Design of Public Spaces Standard

While the Design of Public Spaces Standard applies to public spaces that have been newly constructed or renovated, election staff have gone beyond the legislative requirement to ensure these standards are reflected in how voting locations are assessed for suitability.

Voting Location Inspection Checklists

Site audits for all Voting Locations to be used in the 2022 Municipal Election shall be conducted by the 2022 Election Team. The purpose of the audits will be to ensure that voting locations are conducive to the needs of election officials and voters. A sample Voting Location Inspection Checklist is attached to this document as Appendix A.

Voting Location Site Maps

A map of all advance voting and voting day locations will be available on the City's election website (www.peterborough.ca/vote). Using the map, people will be able to determine the voting location in their Ward, that best suits their needs.

Entrance to the Voting Location

Election staff will strive to select voting locations that comply with current accessibility requirements of Ontario's Building Code and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, the best of the City's control. Due to limited availability of newly constructed

buildings with fully accessible assembly spaces, some voting locations may have features that only comply with older accessibility standards.

Every effort shall be made to ensure the path of entry to the Voting Location is accessible. The path of entry will always include doors wide enough for a wheelchair or scooter to pass through easily, door hardware that can be operated by a person with limited dexterity, and/or have a power assist function. Voting locations with stairs will always have a ramp and/or elevator to ensure equal access for voters.

Interior Voting Area

Access to the interior voting area and voting booth shall be level and easily traversed. Any doormats or carpeting shall be level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. All voting areas will be well lit, and seating shall be made available. At least one voting booth will provide adequate knee clearance below the voting table to accommodate mobility aids. A large print Voting Instructions shall be displayed within the voting booth. Magnifying sheets will also be made available to assist any individual with low vision.

Remediations

In some instances, Voting Locations may require minor modifications to make them accessible for every elector. This may include providing additional lighting, a ramp with handrails where only stairs are present, identifying additional accessible parking spaces where needed, or providing additional support such as a Greeter to open doors where no power assist function is available. Any remediations required will be indicated on the Voting Location Inspection Checklist.

Summary

The City of Peterborough's Municipal Election Accessibility Plan is meant to help the City provide the best possible customer service during the election. If anyone would like to provide feedback or ask questions regarding our standards, please contact us.

We can be reached using the contact information provided below:

Telephone: 705-742-7777

In Person: Clerk's Office, City Hall, 500 George St. N Peterborough, ON, K9H 3R9

Email: cityptbo@peterborough.ca

Additionally, individual members of our election staff can be contacted directly for assistance:

Vicki King - Elections Co-ordinator

Telephone: 705-742-7777 ext. **1619**

Email: vking@peterborough.ca

John Kennedy – City Clerk

Telephone: 705-742-7777 ext. **1799**

Email: JKennedy@peterborough.ca

Liz Matheson - Elections Assistant

Email: lmatheson@peterborough.ca

Voting Location Inspection Checklist

Voting Location Name:		Landlord/Site Contact Information	
Voting Location Address:		Name:	
		Address (if different):	
		Phone:	

Overall Score:	0	Poll Capacity:	Single	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double	<input type="checkbox"/>	Triple	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quad	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Pass = 53									

Required Remediations:	

Additional Furniture Required:	

HST Number: (If exempt)	
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Date of Inspection:	
Inspection Team:	

Assessment Criteria	Points	Score	Minimum
1 Signage			
1.1 Location name and address clearly visible	Good signage, contrasting colours, clearly visible	5	
	Poor signage, temporary sign required	3	
	No signage and temporary signs can't be used	0	
Total			3
Section Total		0	3
2 Parking and Transportation			
2.1 Parking spaces are close	Parking spaces are within 25m/82' of the building	5	
	Parking spaces are within 50m/164' of the building	3	
	No Parking is available close by	0	
Total		0	3
2.2 Number of accessible parking spaces	Three (3) or more accessible spaces	5	
	Can modify existing parking	3	
	Can't modify existing parking	0	
Total		0	3
2.3 Size of accessible parking spaces	Parking space has a width of (at least) 340cm/11' with a 150cm/5' access aisle	5	
	Can modify existing parking	3	
	Can't modify existing parking	0	
Total		0	3
2.4 Parking surface	Firm and level	5	
	Compacted/hard dirt	3	
	Soft/loose gravel	0	
Total		0	3
2.5 Public Transportation	Bus stop near voting location	5	
	No bus stop within 800m/2624'	0	
Total		0	5
Section Total		0	17

Assessment Criteria	Points	Score	Minimum
3 Path of Entry (Exterior)			
3.1 Wideness of the path	Route is over 1.5m/5' wide	5	
	Route can be modified	3	
	Route is less than 1.5m/5' wide and can't be modified	0	
	Total		0 3
3.2 Pathway	Route is smooth, continuous, free of obstructions, with no level changes over 1.2cm/0.5"	5	
	Can modify and/or have the route paved or fixed	3	
	Route is unstable with obstructions and cannot be modified	0	
	Total		0 3
3.3 Door Width	Entry door clear width of 86cm/33.75" or greater	5	
	Entry door width is minimum 82cm/32.25" or can be modified by removing a centre post	3	
	Entrance not accessible	0	
	Total		0 3
Section Total		0	9
4 Path of Entry (Interior)			
4.1 Door Width	Entry door clear width of 86cm/33.75" or greater	5	
	Entry door width is minimum 82cm/32.25" or can be modified by removing a centre post	3	
	Entrance not accessible	0	
	Total		0 3
4.2 Door Assists/Hardware	Main entrance has a power assist and handle passes "fist test"	5	
	No power assist, staff required to assist	3	
	Fails "fist test"	0	
	Total		0 3
4.3 Lighting/Surfaces	Working lights, glare-free and no slip hazards	5	
	Lighting and interior spaces can be fixed with minor changes	3	
	Surface unstable/unable to be fixed	0	
	Total		0 3
4.4 Thresholds	Interior threshold not over 1.2cm/0.5"	5	
	Temporary threshold needs to be installed	3	
	Level change over 1.2cm/0.5" with no way to overcome	0	
	Total		0 3
Section Total		0	12

Assessment Criteria		Points	Score	Minimum	
5	Voting Area				
	5.1	Voting Room	Location is on ground floor or has elevator (with audible instructions)	5	
			Location is not on ground floor, and elevator is distant from accessible entrance	3	
			Staff required to operate elevator	2	
			No elevator, and/or fails criteria	0	
	Total			0	3
	5.2	Accessible Washrooms	Accessible washroom available and meets standards - grab bars, height of sink, toilet, etc.	5	
			Washroom, but no accessible washroom available	3	
			No washroom	0	
	Total			0	3
	5.3	Technology	City/School Board Internet access is available	5	
			Portable internet sticks required	3	
			Weak signal prohibit internet connectivity	0	
	Total			0	3
		Electrical	Outlets present on each wall	5	
Power bars/extension cable required			3		
Total			0	3	
Section Total			0	12	
Additional Notes					

Voting Location Diagram

