



## REPORT TO COUNCIL

**Report No.:** C-2019-0001  
**Date:** January 2, 2019  
**Council Date:** January 9, 2019  
**From:** Lori West, Clerk/Planner  
**Subject:** 2018 Municipal and School Board Election Post-Election Accessibility Report

### **Recommendation:**

That Council of The Corporation of the Municipality receive this report for information

### **Background:**

*Section 12.1 (3) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended* provides that, "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."

This report outlines the initiatives undertaken by the Clerk during the course of the 2018 Municipal Election regarding the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affected electors and candidates with disabilities and how these actions impacted their voting experience.

#### ***Preparation***

In preparation for the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election, staff reviewed the relevant legislation and implemented a number of initiatives to ensure compliance. As required under the Act, the Clerk prepared a plan regarding the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and made the plan available to the public and candidates before Election Day by posting it on the municipal [website](#).

#### ***Voting Method***

On April 5, 2017, Council for the Municipality of McDougall approved By-law 2017-17 to authorize electors to use an alternative voting method, namely voting by internet and by telephone for the 2018 Municipal and School Board Election. This method of voting greatly enhanced the overall accessibility of the election, as it allowed electors the convenience and independence of voting from anywhere during the October 9 – 22, 2018 voting period via telephone, internet or in-person at a voting assistance location.

Internet and telephone voting provided electors with disabilities to vote from any location and from a selection of methods, increasing the capability for voters to vote without any assistance, and providing persons with disabilities the same independence and privacy in participating in the election as other voters.

#### ***Voting Location***

If persons with disabilities required assistance in the voting process, trained Election Officials were present at a in-person voting assistance location offered at the Municipal Office throughout

the voting period. An accessibility assessment of the voting assistance location was conducted with the following considerations;

- Accessible Route
- Entrance and Exit
- Parking

This assessment was critical to ensure that the voting assistance location had barrier-free parking, barrier-free path of travel from the parking lot, barrier-free path of travel inside the voting location, door operators, adequate lighting, adequate signage, adequate seating areas, and adequate slope and surface.

### ***Voting Assistance***

Support persons and service animals were welcome to accompany electors, and assistance was offered to voters at every stage of the voting process by trained Election Officials.

### ***Communications***

Election information was communicated through various channels and alternative formats including telephone, email, newspaper, and via the municipal website.

For election related inquiries or feedback, all residents were able to contact election staff in person at the municipal office, or via telephone, or through email.

The election website was designed to be both informative and accessible. Upon requests from persons with disabilities, staff would provide copies of election documents, or the information contained in the document in a format that took into account the person's disability.

### ***Feedback***

Public feedback regarding the manner in which the election services were provided to persons with accessible needs may be submitted to the Municipal Clerk:

Telephone: 705-342-5252

E-mail: [lwest@mcdougall.ca](mailto:lwest@mcdougall.ca)

Mail or in person: 5 Barager Boulevard, McDougall ON P2A 2W9

The feedback process gives election staff an opportunity to take corrective measures to prevent similar recurrences, address training needs, and enhance service delivery of providing election services.

### **Conclusion:**

A summary of the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affected electors and candidates with disabilities is provided in the table below. The Municipality of McDougall will continue to learn, develop, and adjust our methods in order to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. The review of accessibility issues and initiatives and addressing barrier prevention and removal is an ongoing practice.

| <b><i>Identification of Barriers</i></b>  | <b><i>Removal and Prevention of Barriers, the Following Actions Were Taken:</i></b>   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Election Accessibility Plan was created to ensure that the electors in the Municipality who have a disability or an issue with accessibility are provided with the best opportunity to vote as independently as possible.</li> <li>• The voting assistance location where electors could come for an information letter/PIN replacement or for information regarding the election was the Municipal Office. All areas within the office were reviewed for identification of barriers.</li> <li>• Our administrative reports from the last municipal election were reviewed to identify any problems encountered by persons with disabilities or access problems.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporated information regarding the Election Accessibility Plan into the telephone/internet voting procedures.</li> <li>• The Municipal election team were trained on the procedures.</li> <li>• An area was setup in the Municipal Office to accommodate persons with disabilities to be assisted by staff as needed.</li> <li>• Post-election review to determine if there were any problems during the election that should be considered for the 2022 election. To date, no problems were noted.</li> </ul> |