

Town of The Blue Mountains

Election Accessibility Plan
2022 Municipal & School Board Elections

townclerk@thebluemountains.ca

August 26, 2022

**Corrina Giles,
Town Clerk/Returning Officer**

Section 1

Introduction

The Clerk is responsible for the appropriate legislative and administrative conduct of the municipal elections in the Town of The Blue Mountains. The Blue Mountains election will be conducted in a manner that shall ensure that candidates and electors with disabilities have full and equal access to all election information and services, including help centres. The election will be conducted in a manner that ensures that persons with disabilities are able to vote independently and privately with access to voting assistance if required.

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended states the following:

12.1 (1) A clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities.

12.1 (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.

12.1 (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.

45 (2) In establishing the locations of voting places, the clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities.

Section 2

Staff Training

All staff carrying out election duties will have accessible customer service training and specific election training to recognize and ensure that persons with disabilities are serviced in a way that accommodates their individual needs. Training will include:

- How to interact/communicate with persons with various types of disability;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices, require the assistance of a support person or a service animal;
- How to clearly explain internet and telephone voting
- What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services; and
- How to provide voter assistance, if requested.

Section 3 Provision of Election Information

Election information will be provided to electors and candidates with disabilities in an alternative format, agreed upon between the requester and the Clerk.

Notice of provision of information in an alternative format is provided on the Town website and included in the election notices.

Section 4 Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

The Clerk shall provide public notice on the Town’s election webpage www.thebluemountains.ca/election.cfm and the local media if there is a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services. The notice shall include the reason for the disruption, the expected duration and an explanation of alternative methods of delivering the information or service. Every effort shall be made to provide alternative methods of providing the information or service to persons with disabilities.

Section 5 Staff Assistance

The Clerk’s Office, Election Staff, are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Contact information for assistance:

Telephone: 519-599-3131 ext 232

Email: townclerk@thebluemountains.ca

In person: Town of The Blue Mountains, Town Hall
Clerk’s Office
32 Mill Street
Thornbury, Ontario

Mail: Town of The Blue Mountains, Town Hall
Clerk’s Office
32 Mill Street
Thornbury, Ontario N0H 2P0

Section 6 Assistance to Electors

The 2022 Town of The Blue Mountains municipal election will be conducted with internet and telephone voting methods. Detailed information about each voting method is set out in the 2022 Municipal Election Procedures, available on the Town website, or from the Clerk's Office and can be provided in an alternative format upon request.

A video, with step-by-step instructions on how to vote using telephone or internet will be posted to the Town website in advance of the voting period.

The Clerk's Office, Election Staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Section 7 Help Centres

In addition, to the extended hours during the Voting Period, a Help Centre is available at The Blue Mountains, Town Hall, 32 Mill Street, Thornbury. Elections Staff will be available to assist individuals wishing to confirm if they are on Voters' List or to receive assistance to vote during normal office hours of operation and the extended hours as noted below:

VOTING PERIOD:

- Friday, October 14, 2022 10:00 am to 4:30 pm
- Saturday, October 15, 2022 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
- Monday, October 17, 2022 9:00 am to 8:00 pm
- Tuesday, October 18, 2022 9:00 am to 8:00 pm
- Wednesday, October 19, 2022 9:00 am to 8:00 pm
- Thursday, October 20, 2022 9:00 am to 8:00 pm
- Friday, October 21, 2022 9:00 am to 8:00 pm
- Saturday, October 22, 2022 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
- Monday, October 24, 2022 9:00 am to 8:00 pm

The LE Shore Memorial Library and Craigleith Heritage Depot will have computer terminals available for those that wish to vote via internet at the Library or Depot (during normal hours of operation). Also, the Town Hall, LE Shore Memorial Library and Craigleith Heritage Depot have public WIFI that the public can access to vote on their personal devices. Both the LE Shore Memorial Library and Craigleith Heritage Depot are accessible facilities.

Parking

The Blue Mountains Town Hall, Craigleith Heritage Depot and LE Shore Memorial Library parking lots have designated parking for individuals with disabilities.

Entrance

The entrances to the Town Hall and LE Shore Memorial Library are level leading to the entrance doors. Doors have automatic door opening devices, or will be propped open in a safe manner. The doors are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or other mobility device. The entrance to the Craigeith Heritage Depot has a door bell outside the main door that patrons may ring for assistance in entering the Depot.

Interior

Access to the interior help centre is level with some hard flooring and carpeted areas that are all level with the floor. The Help Centre voting area is well lit and seating is available.

Town Hall - Accessible Voting Booth

The voting booth will have a wide area to allow individuals using mobility aids to vote independently and secretly. In the voting booth there is a large computer screen, computer and mouse. Electors also have access to a touchscreen tablet or telephone to vote in a designated area within the Town Hall.

Note pads and pens will be made available to assist in communicating with electors.

Curb-Side Voting

Individuals are provided the option to request that a voting device be brought to their vehicle or to another location within the voting place to assist them in casting their vote.

Section 8 Voting Assistance

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person within the voting booth or the Help Centre Election Staff can assist a voter in casting their vote. The Help Centre Election Staff will, in conjunction with the person with the disability, determine the extent to which they need assistance and the best way to provide the assistance.

Election Staff will attend the Errinrung Nursing & Retirement Home and Grey County Housing, Maple Villa and Lemon Court to assist individuals to be added to the voter's list.

Election Staff will attend Errinrung Nursing & Retirement Home during the Voting Period with voting devices to assist residents in voting, if required. All election officials are sworn to an oath of secrecy.

Section 9 Internet Voting

Internet voting allows voters to vote anywhere through secured internet services. This method provides for easy voting for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their vote with independence and privacy as voters have the option of using the assistive tools they have on their own computer. This method of voting is designed to encourage voter participation as voters are not required to attend a physical location to cast their ballot. Accessibility and privacy for persons with disabilities is maximized. The internet election platforms includes the capability to increase the font size and colour scheme.

Section 10 Telephone Voting

Telephone voting allows voters to vote from their home through secured telephone services which provides for easy voting for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their vote with independence and privacy. This method of voting is designed to encourage voter participation as voters are not required to attend a physical location to cast their ballot. Land lines or cell phones can be used for vote and the method is compatible with assistive devices.

Voters can register their vote selections with the telephone keypad greatly increasing accessibility, privacy and independence for voters. The telephone election platforms includes the ability to increase the volume and phonetic pronunciation.

Section 11 Assistance to Candidates

The Blue Mountains 2022 Municipal and School Board Election will be conducted with internet and telephone voting methods. Detailed information about each voting method is set out in the “Town of The Blue Mountains, Municipal Election Procedures for Use of Vote-Counting Equipment and Alternative Voting Method (Internet and Telephone)”, posted to the Town website, or available from the Clerk’s Office. This document can be provided in an alternative format upon request.

The Clerk’s Office, Election Staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Section 12

Feedback

The Clerk welcomes feedback to identify areas where changes need to be considered and ways the Town may improve the delivery of an accessible election. This plan will be revised and updated, when necessary. Feedback on this plan can be submitted to the following:

Telephone: 519-599-3131 ext 232

Email: townclerk@thebluemountains.ca

Fax: 519-599-7723

In person: Town of The Blue Mountains, Town Hall
Clerk's Office
32 Mill Street
Thornbury, Ontario

Mail: Town of The Blue Mountains, Town Hall
Clerk's Office
32 Mill Street
Thornbury, Ontario N0H 2P0

Section 13

Additional Information

Town of The Blue Mountains Accessibility Webpage:

<https://thebluemountains.ca/accessibility.cfm>

Town of The Blue Mountains Election Website:

<https://thebluemountains.ca/election.cfm>