



2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Report
Town of St. Marys

1. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Section 12.3 of the *Municipal Elections Act* (the MEA), 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 has been prepared in accordance with Section 12.1 of the MEA to document the actions taken to create a barrier free election in the Town of St. Marys during the 2022 municipal election.

2. VOTER LOOK UP

Eligible electors were able to seek confirmation of their existence on the Voters' List by way of calling the municipal office and by searching an online database. The municipality provided the Revision and Amendment to the Voters' List form in advance to the public to reduce unnecessary wait times at the voting locations.

3. ADVANCE POLLS AND SPECIAL VOTING LOCATIONS

Voting Location

The Voting Location for the 2022 Municipal Election was at the Pyramid Recreation Centre, 317 James Street South, St. Marys. This location was chosen because it represents a community hub, the location of the community's seniors' centre, and is accessible to persons of all ages and abilities.

The Voting Location for the 2022 Municipal Election was held at the Pyramid Recreation Centre at 317 James Street South, St. Marys. This location was chosen as it is well known throughout the community, is accessible to persons of all ages and abilities, and supported the Town's COVID-19 contingency plans. In the event that public health restrictions prevented public access to a facility, the Pyramid Recreation Centre was able to accommodate a drive through voting location.

Advance Vote

To provide greater convenience and accessibility for electors, an advance poll was held Saturday, October 8, 2022 – 10:00a.m. to 4:00pm. This date was chosen because it was the Saturday of a holiday weekend with the goal of removing a perceived barrier for post-secondary aged electors to vote because they may be home for Thanksgiving weekend.

Special Voting Places

To provide greater convenience and accessibility for electors, Special Voting Places were designated for use by eligible electors who are residents of local retirement and long term care facilities. The following special polls were held:

- Monday, October 24, 2022, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - Kingsway Lodge/Fairhill Residence
- Monday, October 24, 2022, 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. - Wildwood Care Centre

4. REMOVAL OF BARRIERS AT THE VOTING LOCATION

The Advance Poll and Voting Day Poll were held at the Pyramid Recreation Centre, 317 James Street South, St. Marys. The following actions were taken to remove barriers at the poll location:

Accessible Route

There are multiple entrances to the facility which were clearly marked as the voting location for the 2022 municipal election. The route to the entrance of the poll was unobstructed and accessible. The route followed the regular walking paths at the Pyramid Recreation Centre which exceed the 1.5 m width standard required to be wide enough to allow for an individual using a wheelchair, scooter, other assistive device, or service animal to travel safely.

An easily navigable route was marked for entry into the poll and into the voting area within the poll. Facility staff were located at all entry points to the facility to provide additional assistance for directions if required. The voting area was identified with clear signage using plain English text. Seating areas were provided throughout the voting location for individuals needing a rest and Election Officials were adequately spaced throughout the voting area to ensure an additional eye was available to meet the unexpected needs of electors.

Doors into the poll were propped open for the duration of the voting hours providing for an unimpeded access point.

Parking

Accessible parking was available at the voting location. The barrier-free accessible parking spaces were clearly marked and were located in close proximity to the main entrances of the facility.

5. VOTING ASSISTANCE

Throughout the duration of voting hours at the Advance Vote at the various voting polls and on Voting Day, the following forms of voter assistance were provided:

Proxy Voting

An elector who was not able to cast their ballot at the Advance Vote or on Voting Day was permitted to appoint another person as a Voting Proxy to vote on their behalf.

Support Person

An elector who required assistance marking their ballot was permitted to have a support person attend the voting privacy screen with them.

Service Animals

An elector who required a service animal was permitted to be accompanied by a service animal.

Assistive Personal Equipment

Electors were permitted to use assistive personal devices including wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, walking canes, note taking devices, portable magnifiers, recording machines, assistive listening devices, personal oxygen tanks and devices for grasping.

Vision Loss

Each voting place was equipped with a magnifying sheet to assist individuals with low vision.

Hearing Impairment

Each voting place was equipped with a pad of paper and pen for communication with hearing impaired electors.

Election Officials

During the Advance Vote and on Voting Day, upon request, Election Officials were available to assist any voter who required assistance within the poll location.

6. TRAINING

Election officials were required to attend a training session conducted by the Clerk's office. During the training session, there was a discussion of best practices on how to assist voters in the voting locations, including those with disabilities.

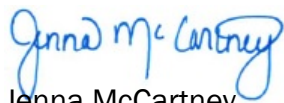
7. COMMUNICATION

As per existing Town procedures, throughout the duration of the election period, the Town remained committed to providing a copy of a document to a person with a disability, or the information contained in the document, in a format that took into account the person's disability.

Throughout the election period election related communications were distributed in a multi-media approach using traditional print, social media, and the municipal website. Information generated by the Town of St. Marys throughout the election period and posted on the municipal website was compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level A, and allowed for assistive software to be utilized. In addition, website font can be adjusted within the browser's functionality to aid the user in reading the information.

8. CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this report is a true and accurate accounting of the actions taken for the removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities during the 2022 Municipal Election in the Town of St. Marys



Jenna McCartney
Clerk