



THE CORPORATION OF THE NATION MUNICIPALITY

EL-2022-02

2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

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1. INTRODUCTION

This plan will address the specific accessibility requirements in relation to the 2022 Municipal Election in The Nation Municipality.

The Nation Municipality has made great efforts in promoting a barrier free community. In an effort to ensure that the 2022 Municipal Election is consistent with the core principles of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, this planning document was developed in advance of the election in order to identify measures to be taken and reported to Council following the election.

Person-first vs Identify-first Language Note:

The use of person-first or identify-first language is an important discussion and is personal to each individual. The municipal staff will strive to use the language descriptors as preferred by the individual. For the purpose of this document, the use of Person-first language will be used¹.

2. OBJECTIVES

This plan is intended to highlight measures that The Nation Municipality will be implementing to ensure equal opportunity for all electors and candidates. These objectives include:

- That persons with disabilities are able to independently cast their vote and verify their selection.
- That persons with disabilities have full and equal access to all information on where and when to vote and on eligible candidates.
- That persons with disabilities can fully participate in the Municipal Election as an elector, candidate, or election official.
- That efforts are made to ensure that electors with disabilities are aware of the accessibility measures available via channels such as the newspaper, media launches, The Nation Municipality website (in accordance with the AODA web accessibility standards (WCAG 2.0 AA)) and social media.

¹ [Disability Language Style Guide | National Center on Disability and Journalism \(ncdj.org\)](https://www.nationalcenteron.com/resources/disability-language-style-guide/)

- That all Voter Help Centres locations are accessible and barrier free.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

This Plan is a “living” document which will be improved and updated as best practices are identified and new opportunities for improvement arise. In order to develop the plan below, several steps were taken in order to ensure that the statutory requirements were met and a feasible implementation plan was in place. During the development of the 2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan, the following steps shall be implemented:

- Review and analysis of documents, policies and other supporting materials from AMCTO, neighboring municipalities, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, technology suppliers and other various stakeholder groups.
- Establish staff training standards and practices directly related to the Election to ensure that people with disabilities are able to vote in a positive customer service environment, and ensure that all Election Officials recognize that a voter’s needs shall be accommodated.
- Consult with the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee for feedback and comments on the Municipal Elections Accessibility Plan.

4. VOTING METHODS

The Nation Municipality’s 2022 Municipal Election will be working with Intelivote Systems Inc. to provide eVoting services to eligible voters. This includes the convenience and independence of voting from anywhere via telephone, internet or in-person at a Voter Help Centre during the October 19 – 24, 2022 voting period. Please note that the in-person voting at the Voter Help Centre entails internet voting or telephone voting opportunities via a laptop, touch screen monitor or telephone with the help of an Election Official.

Everyday tools like computers, telephones and other aids can present accessible opportunities for persons with disabilities to accomplish

more, while being consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity.

The Intelivote Voting System provides voters with the capability to vote from the comfort of their own home. Voting from home facilitates the voting process for persons with disabilities who may have mobility restrictions, visual impairment, and/or have a difficult time with transportation. Additionally, persons who have assistive devices set up in their homes can now use them to assist with casting a ballot privately and independently.

By allowing persons with disabilities to vote from any location and from a selection of methods, there is an increase in the capability for the voter to vote without any assistance. This provides persons with disabilities the same independence and privacy in participating in the election as other voters. If persons with disabilities do require assistance in the voting process, trained Election Officials will be present at Voter Help Centres offered across The Nation Municipality, throughout the voting period.

4.1 Telephone Voting

Eligible voters may vote using a touch-tone telephone, and the toll-free telephone number, date of birth, and the PIN number contained in their Voter Information Letter to access an audio ballot. Communications barriers can make it difficult for people to receive or convey information. Barriers may be identified as low volume, use of language that is not clear or plain, and confusing or unorganized menu options.

The Intelivote telephone voting application provides the following:

- Service on all types of touch tone phones and wireless devices.
- Clear, plain language.
- Menu options that are easy to follow, advising when to select options and provision of confirmation of the voter's selections.
- Standard volume is used to allow for adjustment dependent of the telephone or device being utilized.

4.2 Internet Voting

Eligible voters may vote online, using a smart phone, tablet device, gaming device or computer and any accompanying assistive devices or

software, along with their date of birth and PIN and qualifying information, to access the internet address provided in their Voter Instruction Letter.

The Intelivote System has been created to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG-2 Level AA), so that persons with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate and interact with the online voting system. It is compliant with the guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium website principles, which include organization, functionality and readability of information provided, as well as alternative ways of representing information, such as with audio.

4.3 In-person Voting at Voter Help Centre locations

For those individuals without means to access voting via telephone or internet, or who require the assistance of a trained Election Official, Voter Help Centre locations will be open during the voting period, including on Election Day, to provide in-person internet voting or telephone voting opportunities via a laptop, touch screen monitor or telephone.

Access to the Voter Help Centre interior and voting area shall be level and slip-resistant. Any doormats or carpeting shall be level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. The voting area shall be well lit and seating shall be available. Entrance corridors shall be clear of obstructions and tripping hazards and will allow sufficient space for use of a wheelchair or scooter.

An accessible voting area will be available at each Voter Help Centre location. These areas shall be low in height and have a wide area to allow for individuals who use a wheelchair or scooter to vote independently and secretively.

Voters may attend any Voter Help Centre location throughout the voting period as follows:

- (1) The Voter Help Centres shall be established at Town Hall (located at 958 route 500 West in Casselman) and at the Fournier Satellite Office (located at 3248 County Road 9, Fournier). These Voter Help Centres shall be open to the public during regular office hours from October 19th 2022 to October 24th 2022 and on the following dates

and times, and at such additional dates and times as determined by the Clerk:

Date	Time
Wednesday, October 19, 2022	9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, October 20, 2022	9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Friday, October 21, 2022	9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Saturday October 22, 2022	10 am to 3 pm
Sunday October 23 2022	10 am to 2 pm
Monday, October 24, 2022	9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

- (2) An alternate Voter Help Centre shall be established in the following locations, and shall be open to the public on the following dates and times, and at such additional dates and times as determined by the Clerk:

St-Isidore library alternate voting centre: 4531 Ste-Catherine Street, St-Isidore ON K0C 2B0

Date	Time
To be determined	To be determined

Limoges Library alternate voting centre: 205 Limoges Road, Limoges ON K0A 2M0

Date	Time
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To be determined	To be determined
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4.4 Special Voting Provisions

Election staff shall visit sites including long-term care facilities and retirement homes, to set-up on-site voting kiosks, or bedside voting opportunities for residents.

5. VOTER HELP CENTRE LOCATION(S)

An accessibility assessment of each physical polling location will be conducted in collaboration with the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee. The following considerations are taken into account when determining which location(s) will be used:

5.1 Accessible Route

The name and/or address of the Voter Help Centre location shall be clearly visible. An easily navigable route will be marked for entry into the Voter Help Centre location and into the voting area within the location. The voting area shall be identified with clear and understandable signage. Seating areas shall be provided throughout the Voter Help Centre location for individuals needing a rest.

5.2 Entrance and Exit

The route to the entrance of the Voter Help Centre location shall be unobstructed and accessible. The route shall be wide enough to allow for an individual using a wheelchair, scooter, other assistive device, or service animal to travel safely. Doors into the Voter Help Centre location and voting area shall be accessible and easy to open or shall remain propped open for the duration of the Voter Help Centre location hours. Routine checks of entrance and exit routes will be made throughout the hours of operation.

5.3 Parking

Accessible parking shall be available at all Voter Help Centre locations. The designated parking space(s) shall be clearly marked with the international Symbol of Accessibility and will be on firm and level ground, close to the entrance of the Voter Help Centre location. By-law

officers will monitor and enforce parking at Voter Help Centre locations throughout the day.

6. VOTING ASSISTANCE

6.1 Support Person/Friend of the Voter

Pursuant to the Telephone/Internet voting election policies and procedures for the 2022 Ontario municipal elections, people with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by a support person at any Voter Help Centre location. A designated support person and/or 'Friend of the Voter' will be administered an oath of secrecy / confidentiality by an Election Official prior to providing any such assistance.

6.2 Service Animals

Pursuant to The Nation Municipality Accessible Customer Service Policy, individuals requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all Voter Help Centre locations.

6.3 Election Officials

At in-person Voter Help Centre locations, upon request, Election Officials are available to assist any voter who requires assistance in casting their online or telephone ballot. All individuals working in the capacity of an Election Official are formally appointed as such and administered an oath of secrecy prior to voting day.

7. COMMUNICATION

The 2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will be made available at Town Hall (958 Route 500 West, Casselman) and by way of The Nation Municipality web site, www.NationMun.ca. Alternative formats will be made available upon request.

Information regarding the accessibility measures provided for the 2022 Municipal Election shall be included in general election advertising as well as in the 2022 Municipal Election Nomination Package.

7.1 Election Materials

The Nation Municipality is required, as per the Accessible Customer Service Standard, to provide a copy of a document to a person with a disability, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Alternate Formats

Alternate formats are other ways of publishing information besides regular print. Some of these formats can be used by everyone while others are designed to address the specific needs of a user.

The Nation Municipality and the person with a disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.

In the event the information is not generated by The Nation Municipality or is supplied by a third party, The Nation Municipality will make every effort to obtain the information from the third party in an alternate format and/or will attempt to assist the Elector by providing assistive equipment.

General Election Materials

Large Print – Printed material generated by The Nation Municipality will be provided in a Arial font, minimum 11 point, and can be made available in a font (print) size that is 16 to 20 points or larger.

Website – Information generated by The Nation Municipality on the website in relation to the election will be compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, and allow 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.

Video – Promotional and educational videos created for the 2022 municipal election may incorporate audio and captioning.

7.2 Service Disruptions

From time to time and/or for unforeseen circumstances beyond The Nation Municipality control, temporary service disruptions may be experienced. In the event of a temporary accessible service disruption, Election Officials will commit to making reasonable efforts to ensure

that services are reinstated as quickly as possible and that alternative services are provided where feasible.

In these instances of service disruptions, The Nation Municipality shall provide reasonable notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities.

Notice of these temporary disruptions shall be provided in a conspicuous place and manner at the respective location(s) and information shall also be posted on The Nation Municipality website. This notice shall include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Accessible services in relation to this plan include voting places, election materials and/or voting provisions for Electors with disabilities at the voting place.

In the event of disruptions to service or unforeseen circumstances that affect the accessibility of voting places during the advance vote or on Election Day, notices of disruption will be posted in real time on [The Nation Municipality website and election website](#).

8. CANDIDATES

Candidates must also have regard to the needs of electors with disabilities. Campaign offices, election materials and canvassing should all be reviewed in order to ensure that they are fully accessible. The Province of Ontario encourages candidates to review their page on [Accessibility \(elections.on.ca\)](#) for resources and further information.

9. REPORTING

Pursuant to Section 12.1 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, within 90 days after voting day, The Nation Municipality Clerk shall submit a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.