



Accessibility Plan

Township of Georgian Bluffs Municipal
Election 2018

VotetheBluffs2018

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1. Introduction

The Clerk is responsible for the legislative and administrative conduct of municipal elections in the Township of Georgian Bluffs.

The Municipal Elections Act, 1996 ('MEA'), Section 12.1 (1) places responsibility on the clerk to have regard to the needs of the electors and candidates with disabilities.

Section 12.1 (2) of the MEA requires that 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.

Township of Georgian Bluffs municipal elections 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.

Section 12.1 (3) of the MEA requires that within (90) days of voting day the clerk who is responsible for conducting the election shall submit a report to Council regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

2. Staff Training

All staff carrying out election duties will complete 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.

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 the provision of information in an alternative format will be provided on the Township election website, www.georgianbluffs.ca, and included in the election notices in the local media.

4. Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

The Clerk shall provide public notice on the Township election website, www.georgianbluffs.ca, and in 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 use alternative methods of providing the information or service to persons with disabilities.

5. Staff Assistance

The Clerk's Office 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: 519-376-2729 Ext. 243 / 244

Email: election@georgianbluffs.on.ca

Fax: 519-372-1620

In Person or by Mail: Township of Georgian Bluffs
Administration Office

177964 Grey Road 18
RR#3
Owen Sound ON N4K 5N5

6. Assistance to Electors

The 2018 Township of Georgian Bluffs municipal elections will be conducted with internet and telephone voting methods. Detailed information about each voting method is set out in the 2018 Internet/Telephone Voting Procedure, available on the Township website, www.georgianbluffs.ca, or from the Clerk's Office and can be provided in an alternative format upon request.

Please contact us at 519-376-2729 or election@georgianbluffs.on.ca if you require your Voter Information Letter in an accessible format.

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

7. Help Centres

Help Centres located throughout the municipality will be available to voters throughout the voting period and on Voting Day until 8:00 p.m. The locations, accessible parking and entrance information will be posted on the Township election website, www.georgianbluffs.ca

Parking

Help Centres will be located in buildings that have private or municipal designated parking for individuals with disabilities.

Entrance

The entrances to Help Centres will be level or have steps and ramps with handrails leading to the entrance doors. Doors will have automatic door opening devices or will be propped open in a safe manner. The doors will be wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or other mobility devices.

Interior

Access to the interior voting area and voting booth will be level. Carpeting and doormats will be level with the floor. The voting area will be well lit and seating shall be made available.

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 will be a large, touchscreen tablet on a stand. If the tablet height needs to be adjusted it can easily be removed from the stand to be held on its own or with assistance.

Elevator Access

At any location where a help centre is not located on the main floor, an accessible elevator will be available.

Voting Assistance

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

All election officials are sworn to an oath of secrecy.

8. Internet Voting

Internet voting allows voters to vote from their home through secured internet services. This method provides for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their vote easily, with independence and privacy, as voters have the option of using the assistive tools they have on their own computer such as paddles, a hand-held touchpad, a thumbswitch or sip and puff technology.

This method of voting is designed to encourage voter participation as voters don't have to attend a physical location to cast their ballot and accessibility and privacy for persons with disabilities is maximized.

The internet election platform will include the capability to change font size and colour scheme.

9. Telephone Voting

Telephone voting allows voters to vote from their home through secured telephone services which provides for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their vote easily, with independence and privacy. Land lines or cell phones can be used to vote and the method is compatible with assistive devices.

Voters can register their vote selections with the telephone keypad, increasing accessibility, privacy and independence for voters who do not have internet access.

10. Assistance to Candidates

The 2018 Township of Georgian Bluffs municipal elections will be conducted with internet and telephone voting methods. Detailed information about each voting method is set out in the 2018 Internet/Telephone Voting Procedure, available on the Township website, www.georgianbluffs.ca, or from the Clerk's Office and can be provided in an alternative format upon request.

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

Accessibility measures for candidates to consider in regards to their campaign messaging are included in the candidate package.

11. Feedback

The Township Clerk welcomes feedback to identify areas where changes need to be considered and ways in which the Township can improve the delivery of an accessible election. This plan is a living document and will continue to undergo changes when necessary. Feedback on this plan can be submitted through the following:

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12. Additional Information

Township Website: www.georgianbluffs.ca