



Village of Sundridge

2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

Contents

- 1. INTRODUCTION 3
- 2. OBJECTIVES 3
- 3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN 4
- 4. VOTING METHODS 4
- 5. VOTING HELP CENTRE 6
- 6. VOTING ASSISTANCE 6
- 7. COMMUNICATION 7
- 8. REPORTING 10

1. INTRODUCTION

This plan will address the specific accessibility requirements in relation to the 2022 Municipal Election in the Village of Sundridge.

The Village of Sundridge 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.

2. OBJECTIVES

This plan is intended to highlight measures that the Village of Sundridge 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 Village of Sundridge website, and social media.
- That the Voting Help Centre location is accessible.

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, other 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.

4. VOTING METHODS

The Village of Sundridge will be working with DataFix for the 2022 Municipal Election to provide Vote by Mail services to eligible voters. This includes the convenience and independence of voting from a place of residence or if assistance is required, at the Voter Help Centre.

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.

Vote by Mail 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 in their homes may be able to utilize such devices to assist with casting a ballot privately and independently.

By allowing persons with disabilities to vote from their residence, 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 the in-person Voter Help Centre location at 110 Main Street, Sundridge, throughout the voting period.

4.1 Vote by Mail

The 2022 Municipal Election will be conducted using Vote by Mail. Vote by Mail kits will be delivered to eligible voters via Canada post and eligible voters may return the declaration form and ballot through Canada Post (mail) or by returning the envelope to the municipal office during regular office hours (Monday through Friday) and until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day (October 24, 2022).

If any individuals require assistance in the voting process, trained Election Officials will be present at the Voter Help Centre location at 110 Main Street, Sundridge, throughout the voting period.

4.2 Voting at the Voter Help Centre

For those individuals who require the assistance of a trained Election Official, the Voter Help Centre will be open to provide assistance with the Vote by Mail Kit during regular office hours (Monday through Friday) and until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day (October 24, 2022).

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 the Voter Help Centre location. This area shall be low in height and have a wide area to allow for individuals who use a wheelchair or scooter to vote independently and confidentially.

Voters may attend the Voter Help Centre location throughout the voting period during regular office hours (Monday through Friday) and until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day (October 24, 2022).

5. VOTER HELP CENTER

An accessibility assessment of the voter help center will be conducted. The following considerations are taken into account when determining the location to be used:

5.1 Entrance and Exit

The route to the entrance of the voting 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 voting location and voting area shall be accessible and easy to open. Routine checks of entrance and exit routes will be made throughout the hours of operation.

5.2 Parking

Accessible parking shall be available at the voter help center. 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 voting location.

6. VOTING ASSISTANCE

6.1 Support Person/Friend of the Voter

Individuals with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by a support person at any voting 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

Individuals requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal.

6.3 Election Officials

At the in-person Voter Help Centre location, upon request, Election Officials are available to assist any voter who requires assistance in casting their 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 110 Main Street, Sundridge, Ontario and by way of the Village of Sundridge web site www.sundridge.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.

7.1 Election Materials

The Village of Sundridge 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 Village of Sundridge 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 Village of Sundridge or is supplied by a third party, the Village of Sundridge 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 Village of Sundridge will be provided in an Arial font, minimum 12 point, and can be made available in a font (print) size that is 16 to 20 points or larger.

Website – Information generated by the Village of Sundridge 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.

7.2 Service Disruptions

From time to time and/or for unforeseen circumstances beyond the Village of Sundridge 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 Village of Sundridge 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 Village of Sundridge website and social media. 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 the voting place, notices of disruption will be posted in real time on the Village of Sundridge website.

8. REPORTING

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