



THE MUNICIPALITY OF CASSELMAN

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 Casselman Municipality.

The Casselman 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 Casselman 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 Casselman Municipality website (in accordance with the AODA web accessibility standards (WCAG 2.0 AA)) and social media.
- That the Voter Help Centre location is accessible and barrier free.

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

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.

4. VOTING METHODS

The Casselman 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 internet or in-person at the 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 opportunities via a laptop or touch screen monitor with the help of an Election Official.

Everyday tools like computers 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 the Voter Help Centre offered across The Casselman Municipality, throughout the voting period.

4.1 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.

4.2 In-person Voting at Voter Help Centre location

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

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. The 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 secretively.

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

- (1) The Voter Help Centre shall be established at the J.R. Brisson Complex's Community Hall (located at 758 Brébeuf, Casselman, K0A 1M0, ON). This Voter Help Centre shall be open to the public 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 2 pm
Sunday October 23 2022	10 am to 2 pm
Monday, October 24, 2022	9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

4.3 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 as required in the Municipal Elections Act.

5. VOTER HELP CENTRE LOCATION

An accessibility assessment of the physical polling location will be conducted. The following considerations are taken into account when determining which location 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 location. 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 location throughout the day.

6. VOTING ASSISTANCE

6.1 Support Person/Friend of the Voter

Pursuant to the Internet voting election policies and procedures for the 2022 municipal elections, people with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by a support person at the 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 Casselman Municipality Accessible Customer Service Policy, individuals requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all Voter Help Centre location.

6.3 Election Officials

At in-person Voter Help Centre location, upon request, Election Officials are available to assist any voter who requires assistance in casting their online 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 City Hall (751 St-Jean, Casselman, K0A 1M0, ON), the Voter Help Centre (758 Brébeuf, Casselman, K0A 1M0, ON) and by way of The Casselman Municipality web site, www.casselmann.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 Casselman 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 Casselman 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 Casselman Municipality or is supplied by a third party, The Casselman 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 Casselman 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 Casselman Municipality on the website in relation to the election will be compliant with provincial legislation.

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 Casselman 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 Casselman 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

Casselman 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 Casselman 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 \(elections.on.ca\)](https://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 Casselman Municipality Clerk shall submit a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.