



## **The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle**

**To:** Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee

**Prepared by:** Linda Jean, Deputy Clerk

**Department:** Council Services

**Date of Report:** March 1, 2021

**Report Number:** CL-2022-02

**Subject:** 2021 Year End Accessibility Report

### **Recommendation**

That the report of the Deputy Clerk dated March 1, 2022 (CL-2022-02) regarding the 2021 year end Accessibility Status Report be received and forwarded to Council for information.

### **Report**

Section 4(1) of O. Reg. 191/11 states that municipalities shall establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan which outlines an organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. (AODA) Furthermore, section 4(3) states that municipalities shall prepare an annual status report on yearly progress made.

This report outlines accessibility initiatives undertaken in 2021 in response to legislative requirements.

#### **Information and Communications Standards**

- Due to COVID-19, the Town continued to hold electronic Council and Committee meetings using Zoom. Staff worked with Committee members and the public to provide assistance with electronic meeting participation and accommodation
- A re-design of the Town of LaSalle website was completed providing users with improved navigation and search tools, quick link access to the customer service portal, responsive design for compatibility with all screen sizes and mobile devices and the ability to subscribe to any page allowing users to receive an email when updates are made to the webpage

- Continued use of AbleDocs software and ESolutions form builder to ensure attachments and forms found on the Town's website are compliant with legislative requirements
- Continued use of Site Improve software to identify broken links and spelling errors on the Town's website. Site Improve also has an accessibility checker which conducts automated accessibility checks which adhere to WCAG standards
- Continued use of PlaceSpeak online engagement software. As we are unable to hold in-person open houses due to COVID 19, this software allows us to share relevant information with the public and encourage them to respond when suitable to their needs.
- Continued training and technology provided to employees responsible for creating accessible documents
- Communication Boards were developed and installed at the Vollmer Recreation Complex
  - located indoor near the food court and outside near the concession building
- Continued use of the Everbridge emergency notification system
  - Emergency notifications are communicated in a variety of ways including text messages, email and electronic voice messaging

#### Employment Standards

- Continue to provide notice of accommodation when advertising for employment opportunities
- Due to COVID 19 restrictions, virtual interviews continue to be held in order to accommodate applicants and fulfill the hiring process
- Continue to educate all successful applicants of current policies regarding accommodation during offer of employment and orientation
- Continue to provide accommodation to employees when required

#### Transportation & Design of Public Spaces Standards

- Three public access motorized lifts were installed in the municipality accompanied by automatic doors.
  - A public motorized lift was installed on the second level in LaSalle Town Hall, another in the family changeroom in the pool area of the Vollmer Complex and another in the food court area of the Vollmer Complex
- All municipal buildings were outfitted with wave activated touchless door operating buttons

- Continued upgrades to sidewalk approaches within the Municipality which include tactile warning plates
- Improvements to St. Clair Park including a new play structure with an engineered wood fiber base, a new 3m wide asphalt pathway and new fenced in basketball court
- Bench installed in Hockey Rink B of the Vollmer Complex to provide seating for caregivers

#### Customer Service Standards

- Continue to provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request
- Continue to provide accessibility training to all employees

#### Other initiatives including Access to Recreation

- In partnership with Family Respite Services, the in person Fantastic Friday program was re-introduced as well as free summer swims
- Provided virtual and telephone fitness programming with specific activities for mobility (eg chair fitness)
- Reopened free use of the indoor walking track to the community (used by participants with disabilities and caregivers)
- Developed an event map for the Holiday Lights that highlighted accessibility at the site
- Offered and promoted a sensory friendly hour at Holiday Lights

### **Consultations**

Each department has provided information regarding respective accessible initiatives undertaken in 2021.

### **Financial Implications**

Allocated departmental budgets were used to fund the various projects as outlined in this report.

### **Prepared By:**



Deputy Clerk

## **Link to Strategic Goals**

1. Enhancing organizational excellence - Yes
2. Strengthen the community's engagement with the Town - Not Applicable
3. Grow and diversify the local economy - Not Applicable
4. Build on our high-quality of life - Yes
5. Sustaining strong public services and infrastructure - Not Applicable

## **Communications**

Not available

## **Notifications**

Not available

**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	2021 Year End Accessibility Report.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Mar 2, 2022

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Director, Council Services/Clerk

Jennifer Astrologo



## **The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle**

**To:** Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee

**Prepared by:** Linda Jean, Deputy Clerk

**Department:** Council Services

**Date of Report:** March 22, 2022

**Report Number:** CL-2022-003

**Subject:** 2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

### **Recommendation**

That the report of the Deputy Clerk dated March 17, 2022 (CL-2022-003) regarding the 2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan be received.

### **Report**

In an effort to ensure that the 2022 Municipal Election is consistent with core principles of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and the Town of LaSalle Accessible Customer Service Policy, this plan has been developed to identify and promote a barrier free election and will address the specific accessibility requirements as outlined in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (MEA)*.

In accordance with the *MEA*, all municipalities are required to adhere to the following provisions:

#### Electors and Candidates with disabilities

12.1(1) A clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities

#### Plan regarding barriers

12.1(2) 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

#### Report

12.1(3) Within 90 days after voting 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

**Accessibility**

45(2) In establishing the locations of voting places, the clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities

The draft 2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan highlights measures the Town of LaSalle will be implementing to ensure equal opportunity for all electors and candidates and is attached for review and comment from members of the Committee.

**Consultations**

None.

**Financial Implications**

None.

**Prepared By:**



Deputy Clerk

## **Link to Strategic Goals**

1. Enhancing organizational excellence - Yes
2. Strengthen the community's engagement with the Town - Yes
3. Grow and diversify the local economy - Not Applicable
4. Build on our high-quality of life - Not Applicable
5. Sustaining strong public services and infrastructure - Not Applicable

## **Communications**

None

## **Notifications**

None

**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan.docx
Attachments:	- 2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan Final (accessible).pdf
Final Approval Date:	Mar 21, 2022

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Director, Council Services/Clerk

Jennifer Astrologo



2022 Municipal Election  
#LivingLaSalle

**The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle**  
**2022 Municipal Election**  
**Accessibility Plan**

April 2022

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## Introduction

The 2022 Municipal Election will be conducted in a manner that ensures persons with disabilities are served in a way that will accommodate individual needs and provide all candidates and electors full and equal access to all election information and services.

The 2022 Accessibility Plan will address specific requirements in relation to the Municipal and School Board Election consistent with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (“MEA”), the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (“AODA”), and the Town of LaSalle Accessible Customer Service Standards Policy.

## Legislative Requirements

The Clerk is responsible for the legislative and administrative conduct of municipal and school board elections for the Town of LaSalle. In accordance with the *MEA*, all municipalities are required to adhere to the following provisions:

### 12.1(1) Electors and candidates with disabilities

A Clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors with disabilities

### 12.1(2) Plan – barriers

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

### 12.1(3) Report – barriers

Within 90 days after voting 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

### 45(2) Location – accessibility

In establishing the locations of voting places, the Clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities

## Objectives

This plan is intended to highlight measures that the Town of LaSalle will be implementing to ensure equal opportunity for all electors and candidates including:

- 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 about the election, including voting times and locations

- That persons with disabilities can fully participate in the municipal election as an elector, candidate or election official in a way that respects their dignity and independence

## **Development of the Plan**

This Plan is a “living” document which will be improved upon and updated as best practices are identified and opportunities for improvement arise.

This plan will address the requirements pertaining to accessibility in relation to the 2022 Municipal Election in the Town of LaSalle.

This plan will be brought before the LaSalle Accessibility Committee for review and comment.

## **Voting Methods**

Council for the Town of LaSalle has chosen an Internet and Telephone Voting method for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election.

The Town of LaSalle will be working with Scyt! Canada to provide electronic voting services to eligible voters. Electronic voting provides a convenient and accessible method of election. Voter Information Letters will be mailed to eligible electors which will include voting instructions and personalized login credentials. This secure method of voting will allow for an elector to cast their vote using a form of technology that is accessible and convenient. Electors can vote from a location of their choice as long as they have access to a telephone or the internet.

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.

Electronic voting 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 difficulty 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, Election Officials will be present at the Town of LaSalle Civic Centre throughout the voting period.

## **Internet Voting**

Eligible voters can use a smartphone, tablet device, gaming device, or computer and any accompanying assistive devices or software to cast their ballot.

The Scytl online voting application provides the following:

- A voter interface without the need to install software
- An intuitive voting process that is easy to use
- Support of common commercially available screen-magnifier, screen readers and other assistive devices
- A voting portal compliant with WCAG 2.0 level AA standards as required by the AODA which supports the use of screen readers

## **Telephone Voting**

Alternatively, eligible voters may vote using a touch-tone telephone to access an audio ballot.

The Sctyl 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.

## **Voting Assistance**

### **Voter Assistance Centre at the Town of LaSalle Civic Centre**

For those individuals without means to access voting via telephone or internet, or who require the assistance of a trained Election Official, the LaSalle Civic Centre will be open to provide in-person telephone voting and internet voting opportunities during the voting period.

Steps taken to ensure access to the Voter Assistance Centre is accessible:

- Accessible parking clearly marked with the International Symbol
- The voting area will be identified with clear signage.
- Accessible doors with automatic wave function to automatically open doors shall be available and operating.
- Access to the 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 obstruction and tripping hazards and will allow for sufficient space for use of a wheelchair or scooter.

### **Support Person/Friend of the Voter**

Persons requiring the assistance of a support person, shall be permitted to be accompanied by their support person at the Voter Assistance Centre. The support person and/or 'Friend of the Voter' shall be required to take an oath of secrecy/confidentiality, administered by an Election Official, prior to providing any such assistance to the elector.

### **Service Animals**

Pursuant to the Town of LaSalle Accessible Customer Service policy, individuals requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by their service animal at the Voter Assistance Centre.

### **Election Officials**

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.

### **Special Voting Provisions**

Election staff shall visit sites including Long-Term Care and Retirement Facilities to provide voting opportunities for residents.

### **Communication**

The 2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will be made available on the Town of LaSalle Election Website at [www.lasalle.ca/electionresources](http://www.lasalle.ca/electionresources). Alternative formats can be made available upon request.

### **Election Materials**

In consultation with the person making the request, The Town of LaSalle will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communications supports for persons with disabilities.

### **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 Town of LaSalle 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 Town of LaSalle or is supplied by a third party, the Town of LaSalle 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 Town of LaSalle can be made available in a font (print) size that is larger.

**Website** – Information generated by the Town of LaSalle 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.

### **Service Disruptions**

From time to time and/or for unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the Town of LaSalle, 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 Town of LaSalle 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 and information shall also be posted on the Town of LaSalle 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 election materials and/or voting provisions for Electors with disabilities at the voting place.

### **Reporting**

Pursuant to Section 12.1(3) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, within 90 days after voting day, the Town of LaSalle Clerk shall submit a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities. The report will be posted on the Town's website.

## **Feedback**

Public Feedback about the way election services are provided to persons with disabilities may be submitted to the Clerk's Office through a variety of methods:

### **Phone**

519-969-7770

### **Fax**

519-969-4469

### **Email**

[election@lasalle.ca](mailto:election@lasalle.ca)

### **In Person**

LaSalle Civic Centre located at 5950 Malden Road, LaSalle, Ontario

### **Mail**

LaSalle Civic Centre  
Department of Council Services  
5950 Malden Road  
LaSalle, ON N9H 1S4  
Attention: Deputy Clerk

The Town of LaSalle Accessible Customer Service Feedback Form can also be completed and sent to the Clerk's Office. A copy of the Feedback form is available on the Town's website at: [www.lasalle.ca](http://www.lasalle.ca) or by contacting the Clerk's Office at 519-969-7770.