



Township of Strong 2022 Municipal and School Board Election Post-Election Accessibility Report

Prepared: November 8, 2022
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1.0 Introduction

The focus of the Post-Election Accessibility Report is to evaluate the accessibility of the electoral services offered to all electors and candidates in the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election. This report outlines the actions taken regarding the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affected electors and candidates with disabilities and how these actions impacted their voting experience.

The Township of Strong Clerk Administrator will continue to learn, develop, and adjust approaches in order to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. The review of accessibility issues and initiatives and addressing barrier prevention and removal is an ongoing practice.

2.0 Governing Legislative and Policy Framework

Under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996, (The Act)* the Clerk is legislatively responsible for conducting Municipal and School Board Elections and establishing policies and procedures to ensure that all electors have the opportunity to participate fully in the election. The *Act* requires the Clerk to have regard for the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities and to ensure that all voting places are accessible to electors with disabilities. The Clerk is also required, within 90 days after a regular election, to prepare a report on the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and make the report available to the public.

In addition to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the Clerk must also comply with the requirements of the following legislation:

- The *Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990* provides that all persons have the right to equal treatment without discrimination, including on the basis of disability, and that persons with disabilities be provided with accommodation short of undue hardship.
- The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* was enacted in 2005 and sets out clear goals and timeframes for making Ontario accessible by 2025. Under the *AODA*, private and public sector organizations across Ontario are required to comply with Regulations established by the Province. These Regulations include the Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standards.
 - The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR) brings together accessible standards for Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, and Design of Public Spaces under one regulation and harmonizes the requirements common to each standard. Each of the standards articulates specific requirements and compliance deadlines, which will be phased in across Ontario between 2011 and 2025.

Additionally, the *Township of Strong's Accessibility Plan* highlights the Township's planned strategies for identifying, removing, and preventing barriers within the community. This Plan also outlined strategies to be used to enhance the overall accessibility of the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election.

3.0 Election Preparation

In preparation for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election, staff reviewed the relevant legislation and implemented a number of initiatives to ensure compliance. Significantly, as required under the *Act*, the Clerk prepared a plan regarding the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and made the plan available to the public before Election Day by posting it on the Township's website.

To elaborate, the Township's 2022 Municipal and School Board Election Pre- Election Accessibility Plan highlighted the planned strategies and actions for the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers in the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election. After the plan's development, the Clerk continued to monitor the applicable legislation, standards, and deadlines and look to relevant court decisions to ensure that any new requirements were incorporated in the Pre-Election Accessibility Plan and considered in the implementation of the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election.

4.0 Strategies and Actions for the Identification, Removal, and Prevention of Barriers

4.1 Method of Vote – Vote by Mail

On August 24, 2021, Township Council approved the alternate voting method of Vote by Mail. Previously, the Township of Strong offered the traditional method of in person voting by ballot for municipal and school board voting. The Vote by Mail ballots were printed on standard paper with adequate font size and high contrast black print. Kits were sent to each eligible voter, where they could vote in the comfort of their home with whichever support devices they required. Once kits were received, Voters had the option to return by mail or deliver to the municipal office. We received one phone call from a voter who was not able to get to the office and could not guarantee it would be mailed on time. We arranged for a candidate to pick up the kit and deliver to the office. Vote by Mail was also recommended by staff due to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 Pandemic, as this provided an option for those who were not comfortable or able to attend in person voting. Accessible Election ads were run in partnership with the Almaguin Clerks Group in the local paper, social media and local radio, which instructed anyone needing alternate format ballots to notify the applicable Clerk by August 31, 2022. No requests were made.

There were three oaths of assistance sworn to the election staff on Voting Day, which allowed a Voter to bring a friend/spouse/election official to the voting area to assist with completing their voting kit. Magnifying sheets were provided at each voting station.

Voter turnout was 42% with the Vote by Mail method which is a notable improvement from the 2018 turnout of only 28% with traditional ballot (advanced poll and voting day). The 2014 election saw a voter turnout of 34% with traditional ballot (advanced poll and voting day). The Clerk received many comments about how easy and convenient the Vote by Mail method was, and those who were homebound, sick, hunting or live here seasonally appreciated the ability to vote.

4.2 Staff Training

Election Officials were mandated to attend a training session hosted by Clerk. This session

highlighted best practices on how to assist voters in voting locations, including voters with disabilities, and the accommodations and special services available to assist voters should the need arise.

A majority of the Election Staff hired were current staff and a former elected official so the Clerk provided supplemental accessibility training which outlined the customer service standard and how to serve persons with disabilities. Annual training is required of and completed by all staff under AODA. It is also important to note that information pertaining to the customer service standard and serving persons with disabilities was included in the Election Worker Manual, and training session presentation. The Election Worker Manual specifically contained accessibility guidelines and tips for interacting with persons with a variety of disabilities.

4.3 Voting Locations

The 2022 Municipal and School Board Election was held at the Township of Strong Administration Office because of the ease of access to the Voting Place (Council Chambers), which is on the main floor and has flat access right from the paved portion of the parking lot. The Clerk used an accessibility checklist to examine the voting location prior to confirming the use in the election. This was critical to ensuring that there was no change or repair that was needed to ensure a barrier-free path of travel from the parking lot and sidewalk, barrier-free path of travel inside the voting location, barrier-free parking, door operators or accessible doors, adequate lighting, and adequate slope and surface.

Voting Day was also held in Council Chambers on Monday October 22 from 10AM to 8PM for anyone wishing to request a new/replacement voter kit, or to deliver completed voting kits. Candidates were also able to attend the vote count after 8:00PM.

Before the opening of all voting locations, Election Officials performed final accessibility checks to ensure that the locations were set-up in an accessible manner. They prioritized the identification of voting location access routes and entrances by providing appropriate internal and external signage, ensuring that voters with accessibility needs were directed to the accessible voting entrance through prominent signage, and making the accessible entrance the same as the main entrance where possible. The Clerk also ensured that all Election Officials responsible for setting-up voting locations were aware of legislative accessibility requirements in the event that last-minute changes needed to be made to voting locations.

During the entire voting period, personal assistive devices were permitted in all voting locations, such as wheelchairs and walkers. Support persons and service animals were welcomed and assistance was offered to voters at every stage of the voting process, including being greeted at the door, making any necessary amendments to their information on the Voters' List, and casting their ballot. Election Officials treated all voters with dignity and respect, being sensitive to the individual needs of voters and recognizing that some required unique attention. While forms and oaths were printed in large font, magnifying sheets were also present to assist voters with low vision and Election Officials read and signed oaths upon voters' requests.

4.4 Information and Communication

The Township of Strong considered accessibility in all information and communication strategies for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election. Upon requests from persons with disabilities, Clerk would provided copies of election documents, or the information contained in the document, in a format that took into account the person's disability.

The Township's election website page was designed to be both informative and accessible. All information for voters, candidates, and third parties was placed in distinct sections on the website and they were directed to access all documents and forms through the website in an effort to promote accessibility and transparency. The information available online used clear and simple language and was continuously updated to reflect the most recent election developments and information.

Additionally, the website was compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level A guidelines. Notably, the election website contained an election accessibility plan that outlined the voting locations and accessible features of the voting system.

Election information was communicated through various channels and alternate formats including regular candidate emails, social media, radio, and newspaper. Information about the Voter's List, Candidates and Voting Location were mailed out with each tax bill mail out for the year.

Conclusion

It was the goal of the Township of Strong Clerk to ensure that electors within the municipality who required accessibility services were provided with the best opportunity to vote as independently as possible in the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election. The Clerk also strived to make the nomination and registration process as accessible as possible for candidates and third parties.

The 2022 Municipal and School Board Election total voter turnout was 42.00%, which is higher than the provincial average of 33.00%*. Both resident and staff feedback regarding the accessibility of the election will be considered by Clerk in preparation for the next Township of Strong Municipal and School Board Election.

*Based on AMO 2022 Municipal Election Website data. As of November 8, 2022, only 417 of 444 municipalities had reported their results to AMO which resulted in an average 33% voter turnout.

<https://elections2022.amo.on.ca/web/en/home>

CONTRACT



Vista Radio Ltd.
7 John Street
Huntsville, ON P1H 1G1
Canada
(705)789-4461

<u>Contract / Revision</u> 370062 /		<u>Alt Order #</u>
<u>Order Currency</u> CAD	<u>Contract Dates</u> 08/01/22 - 08/28/22	<u>Original Date / Revision</u> 06/24/22 / 06/24/22
<u>Advertiser</u> Central Almaguin Townships		<u>Estimate #</u>
<u>Product</u> Accessibility - Vote		<u>Order Brand</u>
<u>Demographic</u> Households		<u>Total Ratings / Imp (000)</u> /
<u>Property</u> CFBK-FM	<u>Account Executive</u> Kailey Luker	<u>Sales Office</u> Bracebridge
<u>Billing Cycle</u> EOM/EOC	<u>Billing Calendar</u> Broadcast	<u>Cash/Trade</u> Cash
<u>Invoice Handling</u>		

And:

Central Almaguin Townships
c/o Township of Strong
P. O. Box 1120, 1713 Hwy 11
SUNDRIDGE, ON P0A 1Z0

*Line	Ch	Start Date	End Date	Description	Start/End Time	Days	Length	Spots/Week	Rate	Type	Spots	Amount
N 1	CFBK	08/01/22	08/28/22	Monday-Sunday	6a-12a		:30			NM	36	\$810.00
		<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Weekdays</u>				<u>Spots/Week</u>	<u>Rate</u>			
	Week:	08/01/22	08/07/22	3232323				18	\$22.50			
	Week:	08/08/22	08/14/22	-----				0	\$0.00			
	Week:	08/15/22	08/21/22	-----				0	\$0.00			
	Week:	08/22/22	08/28/22	2323233				18	\$22.50			
Totals											36	\$810.00

*Tax 1 Note: HST(13%)100984947 13%.

Time Period	# of Spots	Gross Amount	Net Amount	*Tax 1	Total
08/01/22 -08/28/22	36	\$810.00	\$810.00	\$105.30	\$915.30
Totals	36	\$810.00	\$810.00	\$105.30	\$915.30

$\div 12 = 67.50$ 8.78 76.28

$\div 12$
 76.28 / each

Signature: _____ Date: _____

21-31000 839.08

(* Line Transactions: N = New, E = Edited, D = Deleted)

Notwithstanding to whom bills are rendered, advertiser, agency and service, jointly and severally, shall remain obligated to pay to station the amount of any bills rendered by station within the time specified and until payment in full is received by station. Payment by advertiser to agency or to service or payment by agency to service, shall not constitute payment to station. Station will not be bound by conditions, printed or otherwise contracts, insertion orders, copy instructions or any correspondence when such conflict with the above terms and conditions. Two week advance cancellation notice is required unless otherwise specified.

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Vista Radio Ltd.
60 James Street Suite 301
Parry Sound, ON P2A 1T5
Canada
(705)746-2163

Contract / Revision 370103 /		Alt Order #
Order Currency CAD	Contract Dates 08/01/22 - 08/28/22	Original Date / Revision 06/24/22 / 06/24/22
Advertiser Central Almaguin Townships		Estimate #
Product Accessibility - Vote		Order Brand
Demographic Households		Total Ratings / Imp (000) /
Property CKLP-FM	Account Executive Kailey Luker	Sales Office Bracebridge
Billing Cycle EOM/EOC	Billing Calendar Broadcast	Cash/Trade Cash
Invoice Handling		

And:

Central Almaguin Townships
c/o Township of Strong
P. O. Box 1120, 1713 Hwy 11
SUNDRIDGE, ON P0A 1Z0

*Line	Ch	Start Date	End Date	Description	Start/End Time	Days	Length	Spots/Week	Rate	Type	Spots	Amount
N 1	CKLP	08/01/22	08/28/22	Monday-Sunday	6a-12a		:30			NM	36	\$703.80
		<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Weekdays</u>				<u>Spots/Week</u>	<u>Rate</u>			
	Week:	08/01/22	08/07/22	3232323				18	\$19.55			
	Week:	08/08/22	08/14/22	-----				0	\$0.00			
	Week:	08/15/22	08/21/22	-----				0	\$0.00			
	Week:	08/22/22	08/28/22	2323233				18	\$18.55			
Totals											36	\$703.80

*Tax 1 Note: HST(13%)100984947 13%.

Time Period	# of Spots	Gross Amount	Net Amount	*Tax 1	Total
08/01/22 -08/28/22	36	\$703.80	\$703.80	\$91.49	\$795.29
Totals	36	\$703.80	\$703.80	\$91.49	\$795.29

$\frac{58.12}{12} = 4.84$
 $\frac{58.65}{12} = 4.89$
 $\frac{7.62}{12} = 0.635$
 $\frac{7.12}{12} = 0.593$
 $\frac{66.27}{12} = 5.5225$

Signature: _____ Date: _____

21-31000 728.97

(* Line Transactions: N = New, E = Edited, D = Deleted)

Notwithstanding to whom bills are rendered, advertiser, agency and service, jointly and severally, shall remain obligated to pay to station the amount of any bills rendered by station within the time specified and until payment in full is received by station. Payment by advertiser to agency or to service or payment by agency to service, shall not constitute payment to station. Station will not be bound by conditions, printed or otherwise contracts, insertion orders, copy instructions or any correspondence when such conflict with the above terms and conditions. Two week advance cancellation notice is required unless otherwise specified.

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CHUR-FM
Rogers Media Inc.
 273 Main Street East
 North Bay, ON P1B 1B2
 Canada
 (705) 474-2000

<u>Contract / Revision</u> 801317 /		<u>Alt Order #</u>
<u>Advertiser</u> TOWNSHIP OF STRONG		<u>Original Date / Revision</u> 06/15/22 / 06/15/22
<u>Contract Dates</u> 08/08/22 - 08/26/22	<u>Estimate #</u>	
<u>Product</u> ACCESSIBILITY CAMPAIGN		
<u>Billing Cycle</u> EOM/EOC	<u>Billing Calendar</u> Broadcast	<u>Cash/Trade</u> Cash
<u>Property</u> CHUR-FM	<u>Account Executive</u> CARRIE SMITH	<u>Sales Office</u> LOCAL
<u>Special Handling</u>		
<u>Demographic</u> Adults 25-54		
<u>Agy Code</u>	<u>Advertiser Code</u>	<u>Product 1/2</u>
<u>Agency Ref</u> 316104	<u>Advertiser Ref</u> 316104	

And:

TOWNSHIP OF STRONG
 PO BOX 1120
 SUNRIDGE, ON P0A 1Z0

*Line	Ch	Start Date	End Date	Description	Start/End Time	Days	Length	Spots/Week	Rate	Type	Spots	Amount
N 1	CHUR	08/08/22	08/26/22	M-Su 5am-10am	5am-10am		:30			NM	15	\$435.00
		<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Weekdays</u>				<u>Spots/Week</u>	<u>Rate</u>			
Week:		08/08/22	08/14/22	MTWTFSS				5	\$29.00			
Week:		08/15/22	08/21/22	MTWTFSS				5	\$29.00			
Week:		08/22/22	08/28/22	MTWTF--				5	\$29.00			
N 2	CHUR	08/08/22	08/26/22	M-Su 10am-3pm	10am-3pm		:30			NM	15	\$435.00
		<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Weekdays</u>				<u>Spots/Week</u>	<u>Rate</u>			
Week:		08/08/22	08/14/22	MTWTFSS				5	\$29.00			
Week:		08/15/22	08/21/22	MTWTFSS				5	\$29.00			
Week:		08/22/22	08/28/22	MTWTF--				5	\$29.00			
N 3	CHUR	08/08/22	08/26/22	M-Su 3pm-8pm	3pm-8pm		:30			NM	15	\$435.00
		<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Weekdays</u>				<u>Spots/Week</u>	<u>Rate</u>			
Week:		08/08/22	08/14/22	MTWTFSS				5	\$29.00			
Week:		08/15/22	08/21/22	MTWTFSS				5	\$29.00			
Week:		08/22/22	08/28/22	MTWTF--				5	\$29.00			
N 4	CHUR	08/08/22	08/26/22	M-Su 8pm-12am	8pm-12am		:30			NM	15	\$435.00
		<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Weekdays</u>				<u>Spots/Week</u>	<u>Rate</u>			
Week:		08/08/22	08/14/22	MTWTFSS				5	\$29.00			
Week:		08/15/22	08/21/22	MTWTFSS				5	\$29.00			
Week:		08/22/22	08/28/22	MTWTF--				5	\$29.00			
N 5	CHUR	08/08/22	08/26/22	M-Su 5am-12am	M-Su 5am-12am		:30			NM	30	\$0.00
		<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Weekdays</u>				<u>Spots/Week</u>	<u>Rate</u>			
Week:		08/08/22	08/14/22	MTWTFSS				10	\$0.00			
Week:		08/15/22	08/21/22	MTWTFSS				10	\$0.00			
Week:		08/22/22	08/28/22	MTWTF--				10	\$0.00			

Totals 90 \$1,740.00

*Tax 1 Note: ONHST# 89552 5954 13%.

Time Period	# of Spots	Gross Amount	Net Amount	*Tax 1	Total
08/01/22 - 08/26/22	90	\$1,740.00	\$1,740.00	\$226.20	\$1,966.20
Totals	90	\$1,740.00	\$1,740.00	\$226.20	\$1,966.20

72 = 145 18.85 / 163.85 / each

(* Line Transactions: N = New, E = Edited, D = Deleted)

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