



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Transmittal of the Report on the Identification, Removal and Prevention of Barriers to Accessibility in the 2014 Municipal Election

Date:	March 11, 2015
To:	Executive Committee
From:	City Clerk
Wards:	All

SUMMARY

In accordance with subsection 12.1(2) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended (*MEA*), the City Clerk has prepared a report about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities. The attached report identifies the various initiatives undertaken by the City Clerk for the 2014 election as well as the outcomes and actions moving forward.

Members of the accessibility community made extraordinary contributions to the 2014 Election. Their willingness to share their time and expertise allowed the Clerk and staff to gain a far deeper understanding of the issues and barriers faced by persons with disabilities. The Clerk will continue to work closely with the Accessibility Outreach Network, the Disability Issues Committee and persons with disabilities to identify, remove and prevent barriers for future elections.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Clerk recommends that City Council receive this report for information.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact of receiving this report for information. The cost of implementing the 2014 Election Accessibility Plan was \$456,939.05. The source of these funds was the Election Reserve, and the expenditures are detailed in the attached report.

COMMENTS

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* requires the Clerk to:

- have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities;
- ensure that all voting places are accessible to electors with disabilities; and
- submit a report to Council within 90 days of voting day on the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that effect electors and candidates with disabilities.

These are among the City Clerk's statutory duties. The manner in which these sorts of duties are fulfilled is within the sole discretion of the Clerk. Subsection 12.1(2) of the *MEA* requires the City Clerk to report on these matters within 90 days after voting day. To meet this legislative requirement, the attached report was posted on the City's website on January 26, 2015 and circulated to Members of Council and to 250 individuals, agencies and organizations that represent persons with disabilities.

The Election Accessibility Plan was developed to implement and communicate a strategy for identifying, removing and preventing barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities. The Plan is a living document that will continue to be updated and enhanced as new information and opportunities are identified or become available.

The attached report outlines the various initiatives implemented by the City Clerk and how barriers were identified, removed and prevented in the conduct of the 2014 Election to enable all electors to exercise their democratic right to vote.

Experiences from the 2014 Election reinforced the importance of consulting and collaborating directly with persons with disabilities and the organizations that represent them. As we move forward, the Clerk will continue to work with persons with disabilities to ensure we continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers for all electors.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Ulli S. Watkiss
City Clerk

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A - 2014 Municipal Election Report on Accessibility