



The Cowlitz County Auditor's Office and Elections Office are located in the historic County Court House in Kelso, Washington. The Court House, originally constructed in 1923, has been modified since. A new Court House was built in 1976/1977, and the original Court House became the County Administration Building in 1977/1978, housing county offices.



The entryway and lobby to the Elections Office is accessible and user friendly. Both are well lit and wheelchair accessible. A portion of the front counter was lowered so voters in wheelchairs can conduct their business. Automatic door openers were installed to give easy passage to and from the Elections Office.



Accessible Administration Building and Elections Office

In 2007, the Elections Office moved from the second floor to the first floor in the County Administration Building to make it more accessible to seniors and voters with disabilities. The old carpeting was removed and new non-skid flooring was installed on the entire first floor of the Administration Building to make it easier to navigate from any entrance. Extra lighting was installed and the hallways were cleared to make them wider.



TV in Deli Area available for observing election work



Accessible Voting Device

The eSlate is the accessible, electronic voting device that voters can use to view, vote, and cast a ballot. The eSlate provides a non-visual access method that includes touch controls and audible recording of all ballot instructions and ballot text. The audio component uses a human voice, not computer-generated. This personalization permits the audio to reflect local pronunciation patterns and accents. The input buttons are large. Each button is a different shape, and has Level 1 Braille located underneath each control. The eSlate has a user friendly SELECT wheel that allows voters to easily navigate the ballot and vote. Each time the enter button is pressed, the

audio reader confirms the choice recorded by the voter, preventing overvotes. The voter has the opportunity to review choices as the audio reader confirms them on the Ballot Summary. The voter may return to the ballot and make or change choices as many times as desired.





Double Box at Longview Civic Circle



Longview Box on Broadway



Kelso Box on 3rd Avenue N



Woodland Box on Davidson and 2nd Street



Kalama Box near the Kalama Post Office



Castle Rock Box near Hattie's

Accessible Ballot Boxes

Cowlitz County has six accessible ballot boxes located throughout the county. The boxes are accessible to voters who drive, walk, or use a wheelchair. There are two ballot boxes in Longview, around the Civic Center Circle; and one in Kelso, near the Kelso Post Office; in Woodland, on Davidson and 2nd Street; in Castle Rock on Cowlitz Street and 1st Avenue SW; and in Kalama, near the Kalama Post Office boxes. In recent elections, 70% of all ballots are returned through the accessible ballot boxes.

Audio Voters Pamphlet

An audio local voters pamphlet is available on CD for the Primary and General Elections for voters who are not able to read the printed pamphlet. Contact the Elections Office for a copy.

Elections Center and Video/Audio System

The Elections Office received grant funds to install a live feed video/audio system. It is located in a conference room next to the Elections Office, and captures the elections process, including ballot processing, ballot counting, and the work of the Canvassing Board in certifying elections. Four LCD flat panel TV's have been installed in key locations throughout the Administration Building so voters can view the process and ask questions. The grant also allowed for modifying the conference room to make it accessible to persons with disabilities. The goal is to make the elections process more visible to everyone in the community and more accessible to



TV in Elections Office for viewing election process

persons with disabilities who would like to participate in the elections process.



Modified accessible conference room



Wheelchair accessible entrance

Live feed video/audio system



Disability Advisory Committee

The Disability Advisory Committee advises the Auditor and Elections Office on ways to improve accessibility for voters with disabilities. The goal is to give all voters, including voters with disabilities, the opportunity to vote privately and independently.

The committee first met in July 2006, and meets quarterly. Committee members are from the visually impaired, deaf and hearing impaired, physically disabled, and developmentally disabled communities; organizations and agencies that serve persons with disabilities; the elderly population; and the Auditor's Office. The committee has made many great suggestions and recommendations that have been implemented by the Elections Office. We are always looking for new ideas. If you would like to join this group, please contact the Elections Office.



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Voter Accessibility Enhancements



Cowlitz County made changes over the last few years to improve voter accessibility and allow all voters, particularly voters with disabilities, to vote independently and privately.