



**LEGISLATIVE AND COURT
SERVICES DEPARTMENT
MEMORANDUM**

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TO: MAYOR NUTTALL AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

FROM: WENDY COOKE, CITY CLERK/DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE AND COURT SERVICES

NOTED: D. MCALPINE, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES

M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RE: WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW

DATE: OCTOBER 9, 2024

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of General Committee with an update concerning a ward boundary review including Municipal Act requirements, guidelines followed to determine whether a review is appropriate and results of a recent RFP for a consultant to undertake this work.

Municipal Act Requirements

Section 222 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* outlines the provisions for a municipality to undertake a ward boundary review, including: public notice, by-law requirements and that new ward boundaries must be in place by January 1 of an election year.

Ward Boundaries and Guidelines to undertake a Review

Ward boundaries are intended to provide an effective and equitable system of representation. The City's ward boundaries were last reviewed in 2013 and the adjustments became effective with the 2014 Municipal Election. Generally accepted principles that are regularly considered when defining or refining political boundaries include representation by population, population and electoral trends (growth/decline in population), means of communication and accessibility (arranging boundaries based on primary and secondary road patterns, postal codes, etc), use of geographic and topographical features (natural features as potential boundary lines), community or diversity of interests (recognizing traditional neighbourhoods and not fragmenting a community) and effective representation.

Attached as Appendix A is a chart illustrating population growth by ward that has occurred and updated forecasts for the 2018 to 2031 period.

As part of the generally accepted principles for the ward boundary reviews, under the representation by population criteria, an acceptable range of variation between the average population per ward and either the highest or lowest ward population has been identified as (+/- 25%). Based on the information contained within Appendix "A", the variance between the average population per ward and the ward with the lowest population and the highest population is greater than the acceptable range in some cases. This has been realized in two wards already with a projected increase to three to four wards over the next four years. Based on these growth projections, staff feel it is appropriate to retain a consultant to undertake a ward boundary review to take effect for the 2026-2030 term of Council.

Recent RFP Process

Funds were approved in the 2024 Operating Budget to undertake a ward boundary review. An RFP process was undertaken and completed early Fall 2024. The preferred submission came in at twice the amount budgeted. This cost includes retaining a consultant and public consultation and reporting back to Council. Staff are planning on awarding the tender and will attempt to mitigate the exposure of the higher than anticipated cost through total budget management for the Department.