

**2023 Ward Boundary Review****Report Purpose**

To present ward boundary options to Council for consideration.

**Recommendation**

THAT Administration prepare a new Ward Boundary Bylaw for Council's consideration by the end of April, 2023 to establish ward boundaries as set out in Option A in enclosure 4 to the February 28, 2023 Legislative and Legal Services report.

**Our Prioritized Strategic Goals**

Governance Requirement

Goal 4 - Municipal Excellence

Goal 4 Priority - Optimal use of resources that meets the community's needs

**Report**

Using the 2022 census data, Administration has conducted an analysis on the current ward boundaries and has identified that the current ward boundaries no longer comply with the provisions of the Ward Boundary Policy GOV-002-032 (Enclosure 2). Enclosure 3 provides a breakdown of the current population by ward. All wards fall within the maximum allowed deviation of the Policy (+/- 25%), except Ward 4 which is at +37.1%.

The intent of the Policy is to ensure equal and effective representation, which is fundamental to any democratic electoral system and the primary goal of a ward boundary review. Equal representation is the principle that all votes should have equal weight and therefore the number of people living in each ward should be similar. Effective representation ensures that voters are able to access their elected representative equal in strength to the rest of the population.

In conducting the review of the ward boundaries, Administration applied the Policy criteria and developed three options for Council's consideration. Enclosure 4 contains the options along with the population projections for 2025 and 2029.

Option A is the preferred option for the following reasons:

- It allows the most room for future growth
- By 2029 the projected population of the urban wards will level out and the range of deviation will fall (from -15.5% to 8.7% in 2025, to -3.8% to 3.2% in 2029)
- Maintains the most stable population and will last beyond two municipal elections
- The boundary between Wards 3 and 8 is adjusted to align with a major street rather than a greenbelt separating communities of interest

Option B may be considered as it follows the Policy with respect to population deviation however:

- Ward 8 will be close to the maximum allowed deviation by 2029
- Adjusting the boundary between Wards 3 and 8 is not possible
- Another ward boundary adjustment will likely be required after the 2029 municipal election

Option C may be considered as it follows the Policy with respect to population deviation however:

- Ward 8 will be close to the maximum allowed deviation by 2029
- Adjusting the boundary between Wards 3 and 8 is not possible
- Another ward boundary adjustment will likely be required after the 2029 municipal election

The options presented align the urban service area boundary with the urban ward boundaries. Bremner and West of 21 are moved into Ward 4 and Hillshire is moved into Ward 3.

Based on the 2022 census data and the population projections, the rural ward boundaries do not require an adjustment at this time, other than to move the three areas above into the urban wards.

### **Council and Committee History**

- June 25, 2019 Council passed a motion THAT, despite the provisions of section 2 of Policy GOV-002-032 Ward Boundary Review, Administration conduct a ward boundary review after the next general municipal election and report to Council by the end of Q1 2023.
- June 18, 2019 Priorities Committee received a presentation on ward boundary options from Administration. The Committee considered several options and referred the report to the June 25, 2019 Council meeting for debate and decision.
- Jan 29, 2019 Priorities Committee was updated on the Ward Boundary Review.
- Oct 23, 2018 Priorities Committee, Report for Information, Municipal Census update and summary of 2018 census results.
- Sept 13, 2016 Council gave second and third reading to Bylaw 22-2016: Municipal and Boundaries and Council Composition bylaw which made minor changes to the municipal boundaries for the 2017 election.
- June 21, 2016 Council gave first reading to Bylaw 22-2016: Municipal Ward Boundaries and Council Composition.
- June 21, 2016 Council directed Administration to conduct a ward boundary review following the 2018 municipal census and report back to Council by the end of Q1 2019.
- April 5, 2016 Council approved GOV-002-032: Ward Boundary Review Policy.

### **Other Impacts**

**Policy:** GOV-002-032: Ward Boundary Review Policy

**Legislative/Legal:** *The Municipal Government Act* (MGA) and the *Local Authorities Election Act* (LAEA) govern processes associated with municipal elections. The legislation allows municipalities to establish electoral boundaries for municipal elections and to determine the number of councillors for each ward

**Financial/Budget:** N/A

**Interdepartmental:** GIS Branch of Information Technology Services, Planning & Development Services, Communications

**Master Plan/Framework:** N/A

**Alternatives**

THAT Council direct Administration to prepare a new Ward Boundary bylaw using the boundaries as presented in Option B.

THAT Council direct Administration to prepare a new Ward Boundary bylaw using the boundaries as presented in Option C.

**Communication Plan**

Should Council choose to move forward with adjustments to the ward boundaries, Administration will communicate with our election partners, Elk Island Public Schools and Elk Island Catholic School Division. Historically, the school boards have aligned their electoral district boundaries with our urban ward boundaries.

**Enclosures**

- 1 Ward Boundary Review PowerPoint presentation
- 2 Ward Boundary Review Policy GOV-002-032
- 3 Current ward boundaries and population analysis
- 4 Proposed urban and rural ward boundary options and population analyses