

Returning Officer's Report to
Combined Meeting of Council
2019 October 21

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
C2019-1195

Proposed Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report recommends Council adopt a new Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy, which sets out a framework for ensuring equitable representation by Members of Council in each ward. And further, direct the Returning Officer to initiate a Minor Review as set out in the proposed Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy.

RETURNING OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Council:

1. Rescind the Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy (CC017) and approve the proposed Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy; and,
2. Direct the Returning Officer to conduct a Minor Review in keeping with the proposed Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy and present ward boundary recommendations in June 2020 for Council's consideration.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2019 April 29 Council received PFC2019-0394, which outlined a four-year election and census program model and various continuous improvement initiatives, including the review of key policies and ward boundaries.

On 2016 May 16 Council amended the Ward Boundary Bylaw (Bylaw 19M91) and established the current ward boundaries for the City of Calgary.

On 2013 March 18 Council amended Council Policy CC017, included for reference as Attachment 1.

BACKGROUND

A ward boundary system maintains equitable representation by councillors across a municipality. Standards in Canadian municipalities provide for a range of allowable deviations in mean population or elector counts in each ward (+/- 15% permitted, but no more than +/- 25%).

Council policy CC017 outlines The City's current ward boundary review process. In keeping with the Council Policy Program (CC046), Council policy CC017 is scheduled for review in 2019. A review of Council policy CC017 is also aligned with the election readiness activities associated with the Returning Officer's four-year election and census program.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Proposed Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy

The proposed Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy (Proposed Policy) is appended as Attachment 2. A comparison of Council policy CC017 and the Proposed Policy is appended as Attachment 3. Key components of the Proposed Policy include:

Returning Officer's Report to
Combined Meeting of Council
2019 October 21

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
C2019-1195

Proposed Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy

- Within eighteen (18) months of the General Election, the Returning Officer provides Council with a report highlighting potential population and elector count deviations that may require ward boundary changes prior to the next General Election. Timing will allow for the review process to be undertaken and readiness activities to be completed, including mapping and information prepared for potential candidates to file their nominations on January 1 in an election year, as required by the *Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA)*.
- When eight (8) or more wards are identified as exceeding a deviation of plus or minus 15% in terms of population and elector counts, a Ward Boundary Review Commission (Commission) will be enacted to lead the review process. Where seven (7) or fewer wards require change according to the deviation report, the Returning Officer will lead the review process. The Ward Boundary Review Commission and the Returning Officer will have access to City business partners such as Corporate Analytics and Innovation, Engage and Corporate Project Management Centre available to support the review processes efficiently.
- The Commission or Returning Officer are required to recommend a review timeframe and a stakeholder engagement plan to Council, ensuring alignment with Council's priorities. The Proposed Policy is flexible in terms of how public engagement is delivered which can vary based on the scope of the change and the nature of the communities affected.
- Two (2) additional members are added to the Commission, providing enhanced support and representation for a Commission-led review process.
- Current best practices are captured and clear responsibilities are outlined for Council, the Commission and the Returning Officer. The Proposed Policy uses the current policy template and corporate standards regarding gender neutral language.

Deviation Analysis

The Returning Officer has completed an analysis on the population and elector count by ward (Attachment 4), based on 2019 Census and Elections Alberta data.

Three wards have been highlighted as exceeding a deviation of plus or minus 15% in terms of population counts: Ward 3 (-22.9%), Ward 7 (-15.9%), and Ward 12 (+20%). Ward 5 has been highlighted as exceeding a deviation of plus or minus 15% in terms of elector count (-30.8). As set out in the Proposed Policy, addressing deviations in population is the primary consideration in a review, followed by elector count deviations. Based the deviations, the Proposed Policy recommends a Minor Review. The Minor Review will involve the following activities and associated target timeframes:

Returning Officer's Report to
Combined Meeting of Council
2019 October 21

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
C2019-1195

Proposed Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy

Activity	Target Timeframes
Recommend timelines and a public and stakeholder engagement plan to Council	December, 2019
Develop ward boundary scenarios	December, 2019 – January, 2020
Obtain Council, public and stakeholder (school boards) feedback on ward boundary scenarios	February, 2020 – April, 2020
Provide Council with recommendations	May, 2020
Advertise for Public Hearing	June, 2020
Final Approval by Council with Public Hearing	July, 2020
Prepare maps and information in preparation for the 2021 General Election	July, 2020 – September, 2020

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Research was undertaken on policies and practices in other jurisdictions. The 2019 Civic Census data and Elections Alberta were consulted in examining population and elector count deviations.

Strategic Alignment

This report aligns with Council's priority of a well-run city: "Calgary's government is open, responsive, accountable and transparent, delivering excellent services at a fair price."

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

There are no social, environmental or economic impacts associated with the recommendations of this report.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

Expenses relating to a Minor Review will be absorbed in existing budgets. A funding source would need to be identified for a Major Review. The 2011 Ward Boundary Commission incurred expenses of approximately \$123,000, over and above administration costs.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There is no impact on current and future capital budgets.

Risk Assessment

If no changes are made to ward boundaries, there is the risk that ward boundaries will not be in line with best practices regarding acceptable deviations in ward boundary population and elector counts.

Returning Officer's Report to
Combined Meeting of Council
2019 October 21

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
C2019-1195

Proposed Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations ensure alignment to the scheduled Council policy review (Council Policy Program CC046) and the 4-year election and census program. Recommendations also address ward boundary changes in line with the Proposed Policy intended for implementation in the 2021 term of Council.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Council Policy CC017
2. Proposed Policy
3. Comparison Chart: Council Policy CC017 and Proposed Policy
4. Population and Elector Count Analysis by Ward
5. Ward Boundary Maps: City-wide, Wards 3, 7, 12 and 5