

**Returning Officer's Report to
Combined Meeting of Council
2020 June 15**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
C2020-0638**

Ward Boundary Review

Executive Summary

This report provides the Returning Officer's recommended changes to ward boundaries based on criteria outlined in the Ward Boundary Review and Determination Policy (the Policy) - Attachment 1.

RETURNING OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION:

That the Returning Officer bring forward a bylaw to adopt the recommended ward boundaries (Attachment 2) at the July 20, 2020 Combined Council meeting to take effect for the 2021 October 18 General Election

HIGHLIGHTS

- Changes to ward boundaries are necessary to balance the population in each ward, supporting effective representation.
- Wards 3, 7 and 12 are not currently within allowable mean population deviation.
- Online and in-person engagement of two concept scenarios provided insightful feedback to the Returning Officer.
- Recommended ward boundaries address population deviation for the 2021 General Election, reflect community feedback and changes that align with the Policy.
- Changes to the ward boundaries for the 2021 General Election will be widely communicated to impacted Calgarians.

BACKGROUND

In preparation for the 2021 General Election, on 2019 October 21, Council directed a minor review of the ward boundaries to be led by the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer's review is consistent with her impartial and independent oversight role in the elections.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

At the 16 December 2019 Combined Meeting of Council, Council approved the following:

That Council approve the engagement plan and timelines for the ward boundary review set out in Report C2019-1584.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS DISCUSSION

In preparation for the 18 October 2021 General Election, the Returning Officer led an independent, minor review of The City's ward boundaries. The Returning Officer's mandate was to develop a scenario aligning with criteria set out in the Ward Boundary Review and Determination Policy CP2019-04 (the Policy), in particular the desire for relatively equal population among wards.

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Currently, The City's wards have an imbalance of population in Wards 3, 7 and 12.

Through online and in-person engagement, two ward boundary scenarios were shared with the public. These scenarios achieved improved population parity among wards and address other policy criteria. The engagement exercise solicited public feedback on the proposed scenarios and assisted with informing the Returning Officer about important relationships between communities and opportunities to improve current ward boundaries.

Public feedback was considered alongside select demographic and community data to help refine a more viable scenario in keeping with the scope of a minor review.

The recommended scenario improves population parity between the wards for the 2021 term of Council, reflects public input and includes boundary changes in alignment with the Policy.

Summary of Ward Boundary Changes

The recommended ward boundaries (Attachment 2) address population deviation for the 2021 General Election, reflect community feedback and technical changes required to align with the Policy, including:

- To adjust the population deviation in Ward 3, MacEwan Glen and Sandstone Valley move from Ward 4 to Ward 3.
- Winston Heights will be fully contained in Ward 4 (currently in Ward 7 and a portion in Ward 4).
- Downtown Commercial Core and Downtown West move from Ward 8 to Ward 7, to reflect a cohesive grouping of inner-city communities, using block formation.
- Beltline (currently split between Ward 8 and Ward 11) is unified in Ward 8. Mission and Elbow Park move from Ward 11 to Ward 8.
- Communities on the east bank of the Elbow River currently in Ward 11, move to Ward 8 (Britannia, Elboya, Erlton, Parkhill, Rideau Park and Roxboro). Ward 8 also reflects a cohesive grouping of inner-city communities using block formation.
- To adjust the population deviation in Ward 8, Wildwood and Spruce Cliff move from Ward 8 to Ward 6.
- Fairview, Fairview Industrial, East Fairview Industrial, and Glendeer Business Park move from Ward 9 to Ward 11 (establishing Glenmore Trail SE and Deerfoot Trail SE as the boundary between Wards 11 and 9).

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- To accommodate projected population growth in Wards 12 and 14, Douglasdale/Douglasglen (currently in Ward 14) and Riverbend/Quarry Park (currently in Ward 12) move to Ward 11. This move also adjusts the population deviation in Ward 11 due to the loss of communities north of 50th Avenue SW to Ward 8. Ward 11 reflects a grouping of established communities, generally using a block formation.
- Split commercial or industrial properties moved into the same ward, in alignment with the Policy:
 - The commercial property bound by 112 Avenue NW and 85th Street NW in Ward 2 moves to the balance of the property in Ward 1; and,
 - Commercial properties on the east side of Barlow Trail NE, north of McKnight Boulevard in Ward 5 move to Ward 10.
- There are no changes proposed to Ward 13.

The population deviation analysis of the recommended ward boundary changes is found in Attachment 3. The Returning Officer's review of ward boundaries analysis is more fully articulated in Attachment 4.

Implementing Bylaw

The Municipal Government Act requires that a bylaw to enact recommended ward boundary changes to be advertised. As a result, the implementing bylaw will be considered at the 2020 July 20 Combined Council meeting which will include a non-statutory public hearing. In addition, at that meeting, the Returning Officer will bring any recommendations related to the Policy or future reviews.

Communications plans for the 2021 General Election will include strategies to build awareness and understanding of the ward boundary changes for both candidates and electors.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

The public engagement process started with the Returning Officer releasing two concept scenarios to garner feedback from Calgarians. A mix of communication tools focused on informing all Calgarians of the review work being done, targeting citizens living in areas that were identified as exceeding population deviation, and reaching those that could be impacted by the proposed changes in the two concept scenarios.

The feedback helped identify the strengths and weaknesses of each scenario, scenario preference, important relationships between communities and opportunities to improve current ward boundaries. Details on the public engagement process including summary and verbatim survey responses are outlined in the What We Heard report (Attachment 5).

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Strategic Alignment

This report aligns with One Calgary's citizen priority: A Well-Run City (*One Calgary 2019-2022*).

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:

The communication campaign to inform about ward boundary changes will be absorbed within existing budgets.

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, the ward boundaries will not be in line with acceptable population deviations as set out in the Policy, or required by law.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendations address ward boundary changes in line with the Policy to balance the population in each ward, and support effective representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 – Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy
2. Attachment 2 – Recommended Ward Boundaries
3. Attachment 3 – Recommended Ward Boundaries Deviation Analysis
4. Attachment 4 – Minor Ward Boundary Review Analysis
5. Attachment 5 – What We Heard Report