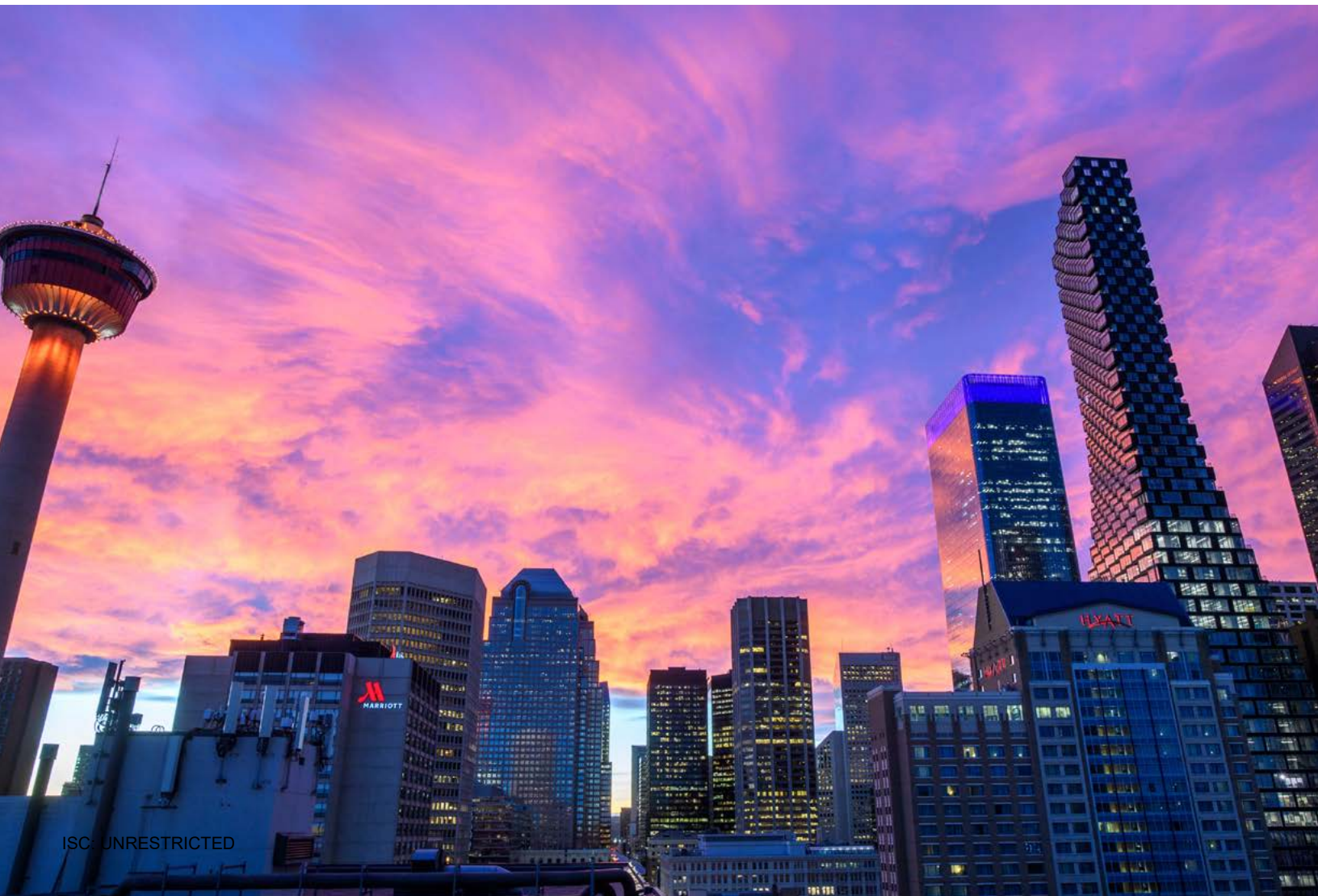# Ward Boundary Commission report

Land acknowledgement

The Ward Boundary Commission would like to take this opportunity to appreciate and acknowledge that the public engagement, deliberations, and preparation for this final report took place on the ancestral and traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy, made up of the Siksika, Piikani, Amskaapipiikani and Kainai First Nations; the Îethka Nakoda Wîcastabi First Nations, comprised of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. The city of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, Métis Nation Battle River Territory (Nose Hill Métis District 5 and Elbow Métis District 6).

We acknowledge all Indigenous people who have made Calgary their home.

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Message from the Ward Boundary Commission Chair

In 1977, Calgarians cast their ballot in a municipal election that featured 14 Councillors, each from single-member wards, for the first time in Calgary's history. In the nearly 50 years since, Calgary has changed dramatically. Calgary's population has more than tripled in that time as Calgary emerged as one of the most livable cities in the world. Today, we are recognized as a city of limitless possibilities creating opportunities for thousands of people who arrive here from around the world.

In 1977, each Councillor in Calgary served roughly 43,000 residents. Today that number is more than 100,000. This growth has made the role of local government more complex and resource intensive. Front-of-mind issues for modern Calgary City Councils span from planning for growth, to providing high-quality public services, to responding to complex social issues, to numerous other pressing challenges.

Local government is important. No order of government is closer to the people they represent, and no order of government makes a bigger day-to-day impact on the lives of their residents. That is a truly humbling reality for anyone who has the privilege of representing their community. Council's establishment of this Ward Boundary Commission is a recognition that improvements are required to enable Council to better represent a growing Calgary.

This report is a result of more than nine months of work by a group of passionate Calgarians committed to our great city. Throughout our time together the Commission looked at examples from other jurisdictions, considered feedback and perspectives from hundreds of Calgarians, and conducted dozens of hours of interviews with current and former Members of Council and their staff, senior Administration at The City of Calgary, Calgary school boards, ethnocultural groups, business groups, community associations, and many other important voices. We thank all these interested parties for their willingness to share their perspectives. Your passion for the betterment of this city is an inspiration.

On behalf of the Ward Boundary Commission, I would like to thank Calgary City Council for appointing us to deliver on this mandate. It has been a privilege to serve Calgarians through this important project. We hope the recommendations within this report generate a constructive discussion on how Calgarians can be better served by their local government.

We thank you for your consideration,

Jordan Pinkster
Chair, Ward Boundary Commission

Acknowledgements

The Commission thanks members of the public, members of Calgary City Council and their staff, Trustees and Administration of the Calgary Board of Education and Calgary Catholic School District, former Mayor Al Duerr, former members of Calgary City Council Shane Keating, Jeromy Farkas, and Druh Farrell, and other interested parties for their participation and recommendations provided throughout the review of the effectiveness of the 14-ward system and *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy*.

The Commission is also grateful for the participation, guidance and support provided by representatives and business units of The City of Calgary, including:

- Sarah D'Alton, Council Compensation Review Committee Chair
- Kelly Cote, Manager, Government Relations
- Stuart Dalgleish, Chief Operating Officer
- Jeannine Dryden, Leader, Election Services
- David Duckworth, Chief Administrative Officer
- Lorelei Higgins, Team Lead, Indigenous Relations Office
- Mary Kirk, Strategic Legislative Analyst
- Emily Laidlaw, Ethics Advisor
- Katarzyna Martin, City Clerk
- Ellen-Anne O'Donnell, Integrity Commissioner
- Anti-Racism Program
- City Clerk's Office
- Corporate Project Management Centre
- Customer Service and Communications, including the Engage Resource Team
- Partnerships Office

Ward Boundary Commission members

Jordan Pinkster
Chair

Jacqueline Peterson
Vice Chair

Jack Lucas
Member

Elise Bieche
Member

Karen Jiang
Member

Andrew Brouwer

Returning Officer's designate and a non-voting member on the Commission

Please see Attachment 1 for biographies of the Commission members.

Executive summary

In June 2023, Calgary City Council voted to establish a Ward Boundary Commission to review the effectiveness of the 14-ward system with no changes to the number of Councillors, and to review the *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy*. The Commission was directed to do a comprehensive public engagement to hear from Calgarians and impacted parties, and report back to Council with recommendations by September 2024.

The Commission formally began our work in January 2024. A variety of different inputs were considered for the development of this report including the changing nature of Calgary, the complexity of the role

of Councillors, and input from the public and interested parties. These factors, along with the expertise of Commission members, has helped shape the recommendations included within this report.

Calgary City Council last established a Ward Boundary Commission with a similar mandate in 2014. The previous Commission provided strong context and discussion topics that have been woven into this report. But we also must recognize that Calgary is a very different city today. From population changes to new economic realities, and other factors, much has changed in the last decade.

Calgary's population 2001-2023
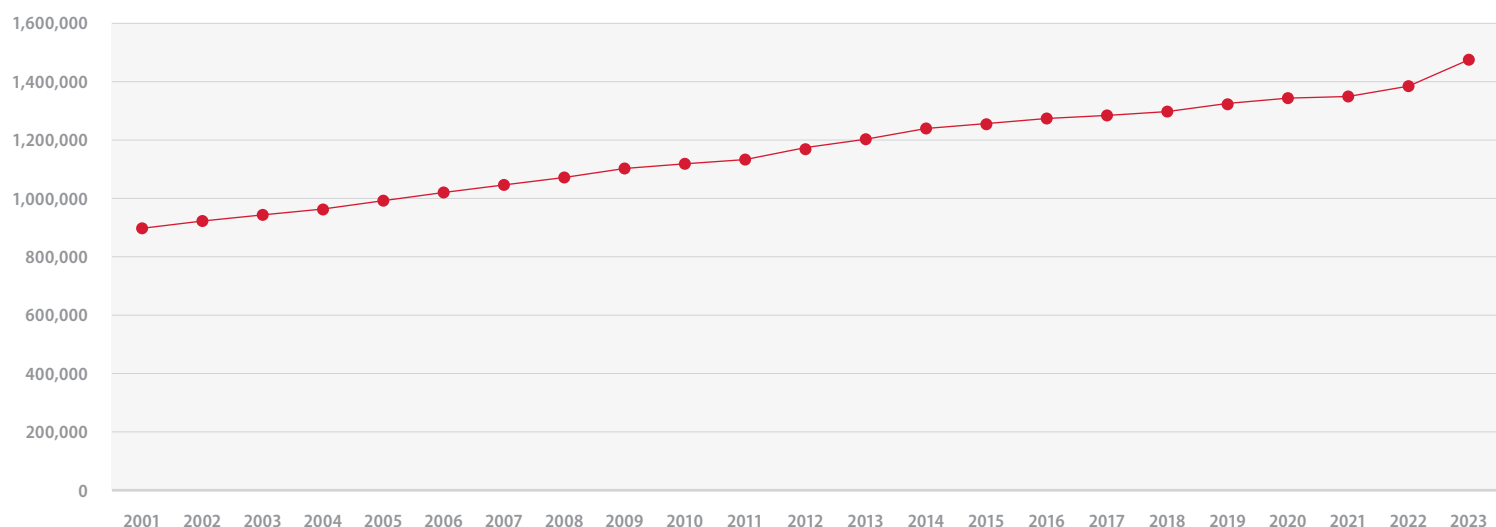
Population data source: Government of Alberta

In 2014, Calgary had a population of more than 1.2 million people with each Councillor representing an average of 85,000 residents. Today, Calgary is home to more than 1.5 million people and each Councillor represents an average of 107,000 residents. Planning for growth and ensuring that Calgary can continue to welcome new residents from all over the world is a foundational role of Calgary City Council.

Calgary has also seen massive shifts in the local economy in the last decade. Headwinds facing the oil and gas industry were a contributing factor to a hollowing out of Calgary's downtown core through the middle part of the last 2010s. This resulted in high unemployment rates, increased downtown office tower vacancies, and significant financial pressures on local government's revenue-generating capacity. Today, we are seeing an economy on the rebound in Calgary, but new pressures have emerged on how we protect our city against short-term economic shocks in the future.

As the city has changed, the role of Calgary City Council has become increasingly complicated. The public has greater demands on transparency and meaningful two-way communications, the nature of issues facing local government continue to evolve, and pressures from senior orders of government have a significant

impact on Council's consideration of major issues. Rising to these challenges is a balancing act between effectively representing local constituents, acting in the best interests of the city, and advocating to senior orders of government for financial and policy support as Calgary continues to evolve. These macro-level impacts helped shape the context for how the Commission evaluated the overall effectiveness of the 14-ward system.

The Commission also worked closely with The City of Calgary Engage Resource Team to build a comprehensive engagement program to gain insights and feedback from a variety of impacted parties across the city. Council approved the engagement strategy on January 30, 2024. The engagement plan included a mix of internal and external engagement activities.

The Commission's engagement activities began with meetings with every Council Member, their staff, and senior members of City of Calgary Administration. These discussions were helpful to better understand the variety of challenges facing Councillors, their staff, and the Administration that deliver on political direction. Councillors expressed concern with the balancing of their various duties, the ability for them to hire and retain staff, and their overall ability to effectively advocate on behalf of their

constituents. Councillors' staff expressed concerns about their overall employment structure, impacts on their mental health, and the tools provided to them to effectively support their Councillors.

The Commission also held targeted meetings and deployed online surveys with ethnocultural groups, community associations, business associations, and the Calgary school boards. These impacted parties expressed a desire to strengthen their relationships with Calgary City Council and find opportunities for further collaboration. There was a recognition that large turnover in the last municipal election has resulted in a reset for many relationships. This has presented continuity challenges and has left many groups feeling as though their roles are not clearly understood by Council and their staff.

The Commission also sought to hear from Calgarians more broadly on how they felt they could be better represented within the current political system. An engagement portal page was created on The City of Calgary website including a video introduction from the Commission Chair, information about the project's purpose, and a survey. The Commission also held five pop-up events across the city to invite Calgarians to discuss their concerns and provide feedback to the Engage Resource Team and members of the Commission. Through these various activities, the Commission heard from more than 1,000 people.

Feedback from Calgarians on what they expected of their Councillors was broken out into key themes including:

- Meaningful two-way communication with their elected representatives.
- Prioritization of constituents' wishes, concerns, and needs.
- Demonstration of good character, transparency, and integrity.
- Good financial stewardship.
- Focus on well-run City services.

Respondents were also asked to provide suggestions on how they could be better represented by their Councillors. Feedback themes included:

- Improvements to communications, engagement, and input-seeking activities.
- Stronger reflection of local priorities and perspectives on issues.
- Prioritization on fiscal responsibility and core municipal issues.
- Improvements to the transparency and accountability of Council.

Feedback from the engagement process played a pivotal role in the recommendations created by the Commission. An overview of the engagement activities can be found in the What We Heard Report which is included as a separate appendix in the Commission's cover report to Council (WBC2004-0979).

Through internal and public engagement, deliberation among Commission members and analysis of relevant research, the Commission developed 16 recommendations in five theme areas, intended to improve the effectiveness of Calgary's 14-ward system, outlined in the next section. Themes include:

Setting Council Members up for success: facilitating continuity, professional development and training

Elections are an important component of effective representation to keep elected officials accountable, but can have an impact on a political office's ability to respond to the needs of their constituents. This section explores ways to improve continuity, professional development and training opportunities for Councillors and their staff.

Maximizing impact: Building ward office capacity and resilience

Strong ward offices are a direct contributor to the overall effectiveness of a Councillor. This section explores support structures for political staff, and budget structures for ward offices.

Mechanisms for democratic accountability: Fostering effective representation

Calgarians place a high expectation on transparency and effective two-way communication with their elected leaders. This section explores tools to augment information sharing with members of the public.

Knowing your ward: Leveraging data to drive responsive decision-making

Well-informed Councillors are in a better position to strongly advocate for their constituents. This section explores the development of research and engagement tools to give Council a better understanding of local priorities and opinions on pressing issues.

Future Commission considerations, including recommendations related to the *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy*

Provincial legislation regarding the establishment of municipal political parties in Calgary may require deliberation from a future Ward Boundary Commission. This section provides a suggestion on work for a future Commission and provides input on the overarching policy that governs this work.

This set of recommendations is intended to provide a menu of options for Council's consideration. In keeping with Council's June 6, 2023 direction, Administration have consulted with the Commission to prepare their analysis of service and budget impacts. Their analysis is included as a separate appendix in the Commission's cover report to Council.

Ward Boundary Commission recommendations

Setting Council Members up for success: **Facilitating continuity, professional development and training**

Knowing your ward: **Leveraging data to drive responsive decision-making**

Maximizing impact: **Building ward office capacity and resilience**

Future Commission considerations, including recommendations related to the *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy*

Mechanisms for democratic accountability: **Fostering effective representation**

Setting Council Members up for success: Facilitating continuity, professional development and training

When Councillors are elected in Calgary, they are immediately thrust into one of the most challenging political roles in the country. Almost immediately, Councillors are called upon to help their constituents navigate City Administration and solve local problems. They need to make immediate decisions about their roles and priorities like deciding which committees they would like to be on and voting on mid-cycle budget adjustments less than a month after being sworn into office. At the same time, Councillors need to make important decisions about how they'll "staff up" their offices: the roles they need, the skills they need in each role, and how they'll manage their team. They also need to develop a schedule on community engagement and attendance at local events, build relationships with local provincial and federal political representatives, field media requests, and much more. This is an enormously challenging transition.

Detailed and intensive training is provided to Councillors as they begin their terms in office. Through our consultation with Councillors and senior Administration, it was clear that this onboarding is greatly appreciated, especially by newly elected Members of Council. Even so, we also see room for improvement in training and mentorship processes — improvements that, in the Commission's view, will equip Councillors to enhance their knowledge and skills in ways that will directly improve their ability to serve and represent their constituents. In addition, we see particular opportunities for training and mentoring processes for the staff who Councillors hire — staff who play a critical role in effective local representation.

Recommendation #1:

That Administration engage with Council Members' offices to prepare impartial administrative reference information before their term of office ends to support the transition and onboarding of newly elected Council Members. Reference materials could include the status of ongoing constituent issues, major projects and associated public consultation, and key internal and external contacts, among other things.

Elections are disruptive: new faces arrive, and old hands depart. Yet Calgarians rightly expect that Members of Council will continue to serve their needs, even early in their mandates. While core services are administered by the City of Calgary regardless of the election cycle, ward offices, especially newly elected offices, have little or no institutional memory for the roles they are stepping into.

Smooth transitions are not only important for good governance, they also matter for effective representation. When a new Councillor and their office gets up to speed more quickly, they are more effective problem solvers, policy makers, and advocates for their communities. Continuity and resilience ensure that residents have as little disruption to local representation as possible.

At the provincial and federal levels of government, incoming officials receive a robust transition binder shortly after an election.[1] The Commission recommends that Administration support the creation of a similar briefing template that would include information about ward projects and initiatives, stakeholders of note, and other relevant details as part of the onboarding process. Administration could consult with Councillors' staff before each election to fill in relevant details, clarifying that the documents would not contain sensitive political information or violate any *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP Act) requirements from the previously elected office. Instead, they would offer a factual overview of the most pressing issues in their ward. While these briefing materials will be most helpful for newly elected Councillors, there could also be value for re-elected members as they onboard new staff or share their ward-level priorities with other Councillors.

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1 David Zussman, *Off and Running: The Prospects and Pitfalls of Government Transitions in Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 2013); Graham White and David Cameron, *Cycling into Saigon: the Conservative Transition in Ontario* (UBC Press, 2001).

Recommendation #2:

That Administration review programming for Council's onboarding and continuous learning, with input from Council and their offices. Programming should include professional development and regular training offerings related to governance and financial stewardship, relevant municipal legislation, and constituency office leadership.

Recommendation #3:

That Administration review onboarding, professional development, and training programming for Council Members' employees, with input from Council and their offices. Programming should include professional development and regular training offerings related to conflict management, psychological safety, and anti-racism.

The Commission recognizes the importance of onboarding for Council Members. However, feedback from Members of Council indicated that the onboarding experience was one of "drinking from a fire hose" — too much content, too quickly. This limits the effectiveness of the onboarding process and puts newly elected representatives and their constituents at a disadvantage in terms of effective representation relative to their more experienced colleagues.

A comprehensive review should be conducted of the onboarding process. The review should consider the schedule and scope of content to ensure Councillors are well prepared to undertake their duties. Councillors' offices should provide input to guide the creation of an onboarding process that delivers maximum benefit to Members of Council. This could include management training, procedure and protocols, overview of responsibilities as mandated in the *Municipal Government Act*, and anti-racism training.

Recent provincial amendments to the *Municipal Government Act* require mandatory local government training. The Commission sees an opportunity for Administration to explore partnerships with Alberta Municipalities and/or post-secondary institutions to develop relevant training tools for Councillors. This could include training programs focused on corporate governance, human resources, and other specialized aspects of their duties.

When thinking of an elected representative in Canada, many will think of a specific individual: a Councillor, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, or a Member of Parliament. However, effective representation requires not only that these individuals be equipped to succeed in their roles, but that their support staff also be equipped for success. Solving a problem, responding to a constituent, or advocating on an issue has as much to do with Councillors' staff as with the Councillors themselves.

Onboarding and training Councillors' staff is difficult because, unlike their elected bosses, they are not all entering their roles at the same time. Regardless, professional development and training for Councillors' staff is critical. If we can identify ways to optimize onboarding for Members of Council, we should be able to use similar tools for Councillors' staff. This training could be in the form of online modules, regularly scheduled learning and training sessions, or peer-support programs to help build capacity and expertise among political staff.

> **"What makes a Councillor effective is understanding complex issues of city building, setting goals that are city wide, and understanding how these goals impact their wards."**
>
> **– What We Heard Report, 2024**

Maximizing impact:
Building ward office capacity and resilience

As an elected Member of Council, Councillors are expected to perform several roles and responsibilities with a finite number of resources at their disposal. At the same time, Calgarians have high expectations of their elected representatives. During the public engagement, contributors identified meetings and communications with residents, solving local problems, studying and developing policy, and advocating on behalf of Calgarians with other orders of government as important functions. Meeting these expectations is especially challenging in light of the geographic and population size of each Councillor's constituency.

To deliver on their mandates, Members of Council rely heavily on their staff and ward office resources. In numerous interviews, Councillors emphasized the critical role their staff play in their ability to govern, and that the supports and resources available to staff directly influence the Councillor's effectiveness as an elected representative and policymaker.

Despite widespread recognition of the important role played by Councillors' staff, Councillors' views diverged on the adequacy of existing ward resources and office budgets. Each ward has different physical and demographic characteristics, and each Councillor has different personal goals and obligations. Balancing the diversity of resourcing needs while ensuring fairness and equality among wards and Councillors was a recurring theme throughout the interview process.

Recommendation #4:

That Administration develop a mental health support strategy including readily available and easily accessible counselling support services for Council and their employees, with input from Council and their offices.

Councillors and their staff operate in a challenging work environment with limited resources. Many Councillors noted an increase in political divisiveness, toxicity and disrespect both within Council and in public interactions. In jurisdictions across the country, local elected representatives are resigning in the face of these mounting pressures and increasing experiences of online and in-person harassment and abuse.[2]

Burnout is a reality in these high-pressure jobs. Evaluating mental health supports available to Councillors and their staff is a starting point to improve working conditions in political offices. Inspiration could be taken from a variety of support structures that are provided to first-responders, 311 call centres, and other public facing departments within The City of Calgary. Improvements to mental health support for political offices should be expected to positively impact staff retention and effectiveness.

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2   The Current with Matt Galloway. *More Politicians Quitting Over Abuse.* (CBC Radio, April 25, 2024).

Recommendation #5:

That Administration prepare ward budget structure options for Council's consideration to respond to unique resource requirements among wards, while maintaining a base budget allocation per ward, with input from Council and their offices.

Individual Councillors face distinctive challenges in the areas of the city they represent. While all wards have roughly similar populations, differences in demographics and policy needs can shape demands on a Councillor and their office staff. Demands on Councillors' time and office resources may be shaped by several factors, including, but not limited to: number of community associations; the pace and character of local development; committee assignments; population demographics; business, commercial and industrial activities; local social issues like homelessness and addictions; and major infrastructure projects. Calgary's open-access data resources and dashboards — such as the 311 dashboard, development permits open dataset, and ward profiles database provide useful insights on the variance from ward to ward.

In our interviews, many Councillors acknowledged that wards in the inner core faced challenges that placed a greater strain on their staff and office resources. The Commission recommends that Council maintain a base office budget across all wards while evaluating options to provide additional resources for wards that may require further support to govern effectively. For instance, wards above an appropriate threshold could have access to an increased budget that would be equivalent to a part-time staff resource. Any criteria, scale or system developed should have fairness, transparency, equity and responsible spending as underlying principles.

Recommendation #6:

That Administration develop a human resources strategy for Council Members' offices to address Council Member employee environment gaps, with input from Council and their offices.

Councillors' staff are in a unique employment position. As private contractors for their Councillors, they are not fully incorporated into existing human resource and staff structures within The City of Calgary. Councillor's staff are often subject to poor job security, outdated job descriptions, limited opportunities for career advancement, and levels of compensation that may not match their skills and the overall demands of the job. In the Commission's discussions with Councillors' staff, it was acknowledged that there has been a reduction in available shared support services. Office administrative and IT support, communications, planning and human resources were identified as areas that could benefit from shared support.

The Commission recommends that Administration develop a human resources strategy for Council Members' offices that identifies and addresses employee environment gaps in a meaningful and sustainable way. Key priorities for this strategy should focus on giving Councillors the autonomy they require to run functional offices, while also ensuring that Councillors' staff have support structures in place to protect them in the workplace and that they are well equipped to support their Councillor.

City- wide comparison of population and ward budget by year

Population data source: Government of Alberta
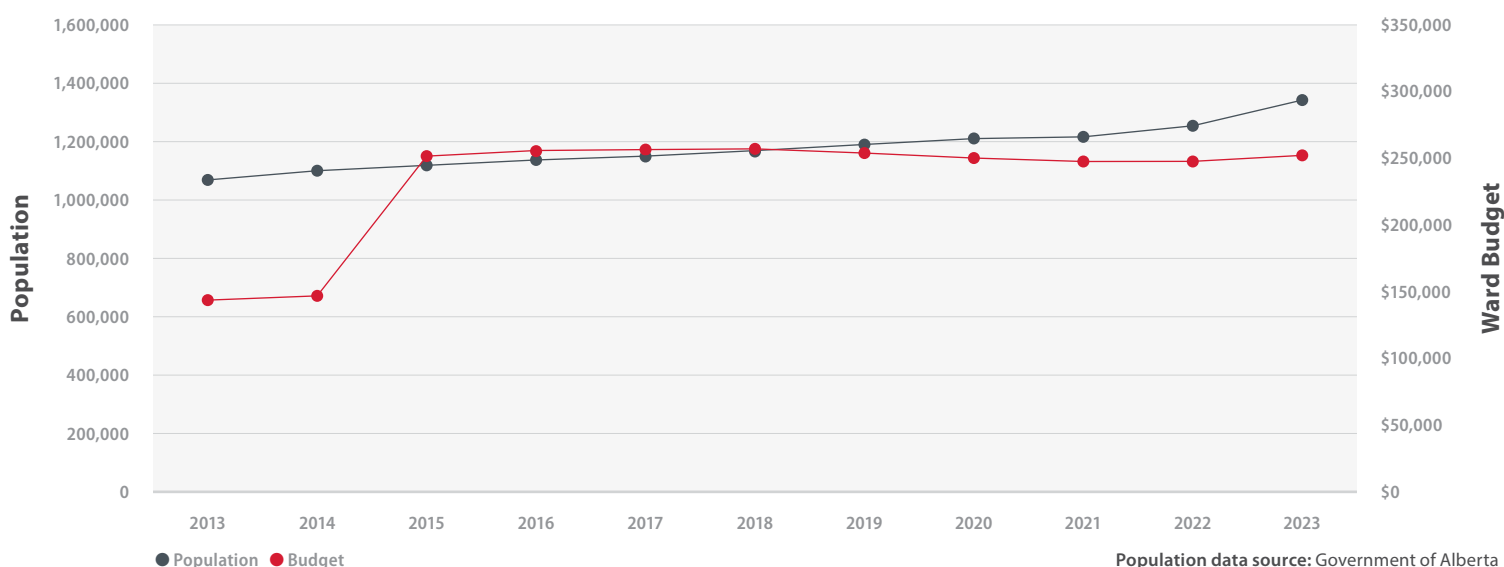
Mechanisms for democratic accountability: Fostering effective representation

Effective representation requires constituents to learn about their representatives' actions. This information is important for electoral accountability — when constituents know what their representatives are doing in office, they can incorporate this information into their decisions at the next election. That two-way communication must happen at all points of the political cycle. An informed public should have the opportunity to understand their representatives' reasoning and respond to their representatives' actions by communicating their support or opposition to their representative.

Unfortunately, creating the conditions for this ongoing communicative relationship between constituents and their representatives is an extraordinary challenge. While much of the public believes local government is important for their daily lives, recent research in Calgary shows that more than half of Calgarians do not know how their Councillor voted, even on very high-profile municipal issues.[3] We know that trust in municipal council has been declining in Calgary for many years[4] and our public engagement made it extremely clear that Calgarians are hungry for clear, open communication with their elected representatives. Moreover, our consultation with Calgary's Councillors reflected what many councillors across the country have reported to researchers: residents often struggle to keep track of what their councillors are doing on council, and what the responsibilities of their local municipal council are. This creates enormous frustration for Councillors and constituents alike.

Municipal government is increasingly complicated. Understanding how decisions are made, how institutions and governments work, and the roles and responsibilities of being a citizen in a democracy is not as straightforward as it needs to be. This also presents significant accessibility and equity challenges for elected representatives. The City's own Voting Equity Research conducted after the last municipal election in 2021 indicated some of the challenges facing new immigrants when voting in municipal elections. This is significant as 33 per cent of the City's current residents are immigrants.[5,6]

The Commission recognizes that some of these challenges and trends reach far beyond Calgary's borders and are not within the capacity of a single local government to fully address. However, we see an opportunity for Calgary's elected representatives and Administration to serve as an innovator in this area and to experiment with tools that may improve civic education and strengthen the mechanisms of communication and accountability that are at the heart of effective representation.

Recommendation #7:

That Administration support Members of Council to establish a consistent and user-friendly format for City of Calgary Council Member webpages to present their vote record and rationale by topic. As well, Administration should establish a link to Council Member vote records and rationale webpages from the Council and Committee meetings landing webpage.

Our research and interviews made it clear that many of Calgary's Councillors are working hard to communicate with their constituents. Some include information on their Councillor profile page on The City of Calgary website. Others include voting rationales on a personal website, on social media, or in community newsletters. These efforts are admirable, and surely appreciated by many constituents.

To maximize the value of these efforts, however, we see an opportunity for Councillors to work with their staff and City Administration to provide Calgarians with more easily accessible and consolidated information about Council votes and their rationales. From the Commission's engagement, there is a public expectation of a *consistent* user experience when constituents seek out information about their Councillor's voting choices. There is opportunity for a more streamlined and consistent approach that will allow constituents to access information about Councillors' voting decisions and their rationales from ward websites, the agenda and minutes webpage, the vote dashboard, and the open data Council and Committee votes dataset. Website update tools available to Councillors' staff could also be updated in this process; the Commission heard from several Councillors' staff that the current website update tools are often cumbersome.

The Commission encourages individual Councillors to share the "what and why" context on significant votes and for the public platform for these rationales to be standardized for all elected representatives. City Administration should explore improvements to website platforms where vote tally information is currently provided. New tools should be explored that are easy to navigate for end users, include translation and accessibility options, and easy to update and edit for ward offices.

3 McPherson, Carter et al. "Issue Accountability in Non-Partisan Municipalities: A Case Study." *Urban Affairs Review*, Forthcoming.

4 2024 Spring Survey of CalgariansThe City of Calgaryhttps://www.calgary.ca ' csc ' documents ' cit-sat

5 https://www.calgary.ca/election/what-we-do/voting-equity.html Access date August 1, 2024

6 https://www.calgary.ca/election/what-we-do/voting-equity.html Access date August 1, 2024

Recommendation #8:

That educational and communications programming be expanded to share clear information for the public about the roles and responsibilities of Council and local government, as well as opportunities for public participation in City decision making.

Effective civic education is an enormous challenge. Research from across Canada and other advanced democracies shows that busy citizens tend, on average, to know little about their governments or elected representatives — and even less about their local governments.[7] Moreover, despite the admirable intentions of many civic educators, generalized efforts to improve the public's knowledge of public policy and government processes are often ineffective.

What is clear — both from social science research and the Commission's own experience in civic education and communications processes — is that civic education efforts can be effective when focused on providing citizens with *concrete skills* that those citizens are *motivated* to learn.[8] To this end, we recommend that Council work with Administration to develop civic education resources that would improve council-constituent communication, empower Calgarians to engage effectively with local government, and contribute to civic trust.

"[…] it should be Councillors who go out of their way to engage with and potentially educate their constituents, not the other way around. I say this as a young person in my undergrad who knows many people my age who would benefit from getting to know their Councillor but lack the knowledge of what their issues are, where to go, who to talk to, etc."

– What We Heard Report, 2024

"There has to be more checks and balances on why/how Councillor vote on issues that may contradict the will of their constituents."

– What We Heard Report, 2024

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7   Gidengil, Elisabeth, Blais, André, Nevitte, Neil, and Nadeau, Richard. Citizens. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004; McPherson, Carter et al. "Issue Accountability in Non-Partisan Municipalities: A Case Study." *Urban Affairs Review*, Forthcoming. For more general comparative context, see Lupia, Arthur. *Uninformed Why People Seem to Know So Little about Politics and What We Can Do about It*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

8   For research-informed recommendations on effective civic education practices, see Lupia, Arthur. *Uninformed Why People Seem to Know So Little about Politics and What We Can Do about It*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Knowing your ward:
Leveraging data to drive responsive decision-making

Calgary's Councillors generally feel a strong responsibility to represent both the city as a whole and the distinctive priorities and needs of their ward constituents.[9] This combined representational focus — special attention to a specific geographic area, without forgetting the interests of the wider community — is one of the strengths of ward-based representation.

To make this system effective, Councillors need access to accurate and representative information about their constituents. In our interviews, many Councillors told us they have limited access to high-quality and representative information about residents in their wards. Moreover, our public engagement data made it abundantly clear that Calgarians feel a strong desire to feel heard by their local representatives. The more councillors know about their constituents, the better they will be able to reflect their constituents' needs and communicate about the actions they've taken in office.[10]

This need for high-quality information is especially pressing considering strong evidence that traditional forms of public engagement and public feedback are not representative of the wider public.[11] There is an awareness that the individuals who turn up at public hearings or town hall meetings are not a representative sample of the wider public. Many Councillors interviewed through our engagement process expressed a strong desire to understand the preferences and views of all Calgarians.

In many cases, high-quality ward-level data will more accurately reveal the issue preferences and priorities that Calgarians share across our diverse communities and wards. In some cases, however, ward-level information will clarify sharp differences in policy attitudes and service needs across wards. This is perfectly appropriate; indeed, this diversity is a critical reason for Calgary to maintain a system of single-member wards.

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9   This is a well-established pattern among Canadian ward councillors. See, for example, Koop, Royce, and John Kraemer. "Wards, At-Large Systems and the Focus of Representation in Canadian Cities." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 49, no. 3 (September 2016): 433–48; Blidook, Kelly, Royce Koop, and Jack Lucas. "Municipal Representation Style and Focus: Evidence from Canadian Mayors and Councillors." *Representation* 58, no. 4 (2022): 603–22.

10 In the absence of good information, elected representatives' perceptions of their constituents are susceptible to serious misperception and bias; see, for instance, Broockman, David E., and Christopher Skovron. "Bias in Perceptions of Public Opinion among Political Elites." *American Political Science Review* 112, no. 3 (August 2018): 542–63 as well as Pilet, Jean-Benoit, Lior Sheffer, Luzia Helfer, Frederic Varone, Rens Vliegenthart, and Stefaan Walgrave. "Do Politicians Outside the United States Also Think Voters Are More Conservative than They Really Are?" *American Political Science Review* 118, no. 2 (2023): 1037–45. The good news, however, is that elected representatives do *update* their perceptions when provided with good information; see Butler, Daniel M. "Can Learning Constituency Opinion Affect How Legislators Vote? Results from a Field Experiment." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 6, no. 1 (August 22, 2011): 55–83 and Pereira, Miguel M. "Understanding and Reducing Biases in Elite Beliefs About the Electorate." *American Political Science Review* 115, no. 4 (2021): 1308–24. For a Canadian municipal application of these findings, see Lucas, Jack. *Ideology in Canadian Municipal Politics*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2024.

11 For strong evidence on this point, see Einstein, Katherine Levine, David M. Glick, and Maxwell Palmer. *Neighborhood Defenders: Participatory Politics and America's Housing Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. For example, compare the support for rezoning reported in Strasser, 2024a with the more representative data reported in Strasser, 2024b.

Recommendation #11:

That Administration commission one to four citizens' assemblies per term, each focused on an important and high-profile policy challenge.

In governing one of Canada's largest cities, Calgary City Council regularly faces extremely complex and contentious policy challenges from debates to blanket rezoning, to major investments in city infrastructure, and everything in between. On these challenging and high-profile issues, it is especially important to find ways to move beyond unrepresentative and often polarizing public engagement, and to understand how Calgarians might think about an issue if given the opportunity to reflect and deliberate on the issue in the company of their peers.

One valuable tool for this reflective and deliberative work is the *citizens' assembly*. In a citizens' assembly, a group of residents, drawn by a random lottery process to ensure that the assembly's members are meaningfully representative of the wider public, meets to learn about an issue, deliberates on the issue, and makes recommendations. At their best, citizens' assemblies provide elected representatives with feedback from the public that is representative, informed, and deliberative.[13]

Municipal councils can, of course, choose to accept or reject a citizens' assembly's recommendations: this tool should be seen as a form of innovative public engagement and deliberation, rather than a replacement for council's legislative authority. They represent a mechanism for public engagement that encourages serious thinking, respectful discussion, and attention to the complexities of the policy challenges that cities face. Without denying the serious disagreements at the heart of many policy issues, citizens' assemblies would provide Calgary's Councillors with a form of public feedback that would supplement, and perhaps counterbalance, standard public engagement processes, while also demonstrating deep respect for the judgment and capability of ordinary Calgarians of many experiences and backgrounds.

Exploring citizens' assemblies

Citizens' assemblies have been used by municipalities across Canada to tackle important and challenging issues across many municipal policy domains. Here are just a few examples from the Canadian municipal experience.

On Vancouver Island, the municipalities of Victoria and Saanich have discussed municipal amalgamation for many years. This is a challenging issue that goes well beyond questions of costs and service provision and connects with residents' deeply held community identities. Victoria and Saanich commissioned a citizens' assembly to explore the costs and benefits of amalgamation and report their results to both councils.

In Ontario, choosing investments to create a well-integrated public transit network in the Greater Toronto Area has faced challenges. Recently, a set of citizens' panels met, deliberated, and proposed a plan to use a mix of revenue sources to fund the region's public transit needs.

Here in Alberta, citizens' assemblies are also common. In Lethbridge, a citizens' assembly was helpful for developing a compensation plan for the city's mayor and councillors. In Edmonton, a deliberative panel was involved in early decision-making about online voting. And here in Calgary, a citizens' assembly commissioned by the Chamber of Commerce made interesting and informed proposals about the city's fiscal future.

13 For more information on citizens' assemblies with a Canadian focus, see Fournier, Patrick et al. *When Citizens Lessons from Citizens' Assemblies on Electoral Reform*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Future Commission considerations

In our research and engagement processes, we encountered several topics that, in our view, should be priorities for Calgary's next Ward Boundary Commission. We encourage Council to include these topics in the next Ward Boundary Commission's mandate. As directed by Council, the Commission is also recommending several amendments to the *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy*. The proposed amendments focus on improving the effectiveness of future Commissions and clearing up several logistical and administrative challenges with the existing policy.

Recommendation #12:

That the next Ward Boundary Commission review and provide recommendations to Council on the representational and organizational considerations related to the introduction of political parties and slates. Their work should include consultation with 2025 General Election parties, slates and candidates, Administration, and other interested parties.

Our engagement with elected representatives, City Administrators, and the wider public in Calgary took place while the Government of Alberta announced and then passed legislation to enable political parties and slates in municipal elections in Calgary and Edmonton. As a result, we heard a great deal about this issue. The feedback that we received closely resembled the wider trends reported in media coverage as well as recent academic research on municipal political parties: specifically, a strong majority of the public and municipal elected representatives oppose the establishment of political parties at the municipal level.

Given the institutional changes being brought to The City of Calgary by the Government of Alberta, the partisan or non-partisan character of Calgary's municipal politics will ultimately be a decision made by the candidates who seek office in 2025 and the voters in that election. As a Commission, we believe it is neither appropriate nor desirable to make a recommendation on an issue that is beyond The City of Calgary's control and best left to the workings of local electoral democracy. If Calgarians oppose municipal political parties, then most candidates will continue to seek office as independent candidates and will receive support from voters for doing so.

Even so, should a large number of Councillors in 2025 be elected as members of political parties or slates, this could have important consequences for municipal governance, including policy agenda-setting, committee assignments, council staff organization, and budgeting. We also note that the Government of Alberta has repeatedly described its statutory amendment as a "pilot" to be explored first in Calgary and Edmonton before possible expansion elsewhere. For these reasons, we see an important need for in-depth and arm's-length reflection on the pilot of political parties in Calgary during the next Council term.

This expanded mandate may require that a future Commission begin its work earlier in the next term than would be the case if it were focused entirely on ward boundaries. Having experienced the consequences of the emerging statutory and regulatory changes, the next Commission will be better equipped to offer a judgment on their democratic consequences, and we believe that an arm's-length assessment of these consequences will offer valuable information in the leadup to the 2029 election. This review will clarify the benefits and drawbacks of the Government of Alberta's political parties pilot study for other communities across Alberta.

Policy considerations

The Ward Boundary Commission's mandate included a review of the *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy* ("the Policy"). The review included consultation with the City Clerk's Office, who led the 2020 minor review of ward boundaries.

Recommendation #13:

That the next Ward Boundary Commission consider opportunities for Council to share formal accountability for the unique representational needs of the downtown commercial core.

Recommendation #14:

That the name of future Commissions be referred to by their primary mandate (such as review of ward boundaries, number of Councillors or effectiveness of the ward system).

Calgary's downtown commercial core is a unique part of Calgary, containing the headquarters of many businesses, government and post-secondary institutions, community and social services organizations, arts and cultural centres, entertainment and event gatherings, retail businesses and public transportation serving the entire city. The downtown commercial core continues to attract new residents to high-density housing forms.

The features of the downtown core result in unique representational challenges for Council. At a minimum this includes additional time and preparations for members to represent The City at meetings of interested parties, or to attend to emerging or urgent issues. Historically, the downtown core has been represented by one or two Council Members. Downtown is currently represented by the Ward 7 Councillor.

Over time, proposals have been put forward to share Council representation of the downtown commercial core, including creation of pie-shaped wards. In October 1960, a vote of the electors was held to determine public preference for either pie-shaped or block-shaped wards, with block-shaped wards earning 57 per cent of the vote.[14]

The Policy sets out the criteria for the development of ward boundaries, including the requirement for wards to have relatively equal populations, in support of voter parity. The Policy also requires community boundaries to be contiguous with a ward, not to be split between wards. As a result, the current Policy does not support splitting the downtown commercial core between wards.

While ward structure change may not be possible, there may be other opportunities for Council to share formal accountability for the unique representational needs of the downtown commercial core, a matter recommended for consideration by the next Ward Boundary Commission.

Section 6.2.2.1 of the Policy provides for work related to ward boundaries (such as the current Commission's focus on the effectiveness of the 14-ward system) be undertaken by a Ward Boundary Commission. The naming of this Ward Boundary Commission resulted in some confusion with Calgarians on our function and responsibilities. If not focused on a review of ward boundaries, for greater clarity it is recommended that the Commission be referred to by its primary mandate.

For example, a future Commission with a similar focus could be called "Commission on Council Effectiveness" or "Commission on Ward System Effectiveness" in its enabling bylaw.

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14 Masson, Jack K., and Edward C. LeSage. 1994. *Alberta's Local Governments: Politics and Democracy*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press.

Recommendation #15:

That the *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy* (CP2019-04) be amended to provide that a Ward Boundary Commission be appointed to lead the review of all ward boundaries impacting communities, regardless of the number of wards requiring adjustment. Any ward boundary adjustments should continue to be led by the City Clerk's Office.

The *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy* **(CP2019-04) (the Policy)** provides that a Ward Boundary Commission is appointed when a city-wide review of ward boundaries is required [when eight (8) or more wards require adjustment, based on population deviation results, or where Council reviews its composition and results in associated ward boundary changes]. The City Clerk's Office leads minor reviews of ward boundaries [where seven (7) or fewer wards require adjustment based on population deviation results].

The 2020 minor review of ward boundaries was the first time the current version of the Policy was applied in practice. An imbalance of population was identified in Wards 3, 7 and 12, therefore, the City Clerk's Office led the review of ward boundaries with the public and Council. While only three wards required adjustment, in the end all wards except one were adjusted to balance population between wards. Even if seven (7) or fewer wards require adjustment based on population deviation results, most wards will likely be adjusted in the end. Given the scope of communities potentially impacted, it is recommended that a Ward Boundary Commission be appointed to lead the review of all ward boundaries impacting communities, regardless of the number of wards requiring adjustment. Appointing a Ward Boundary Commission with public members broadens perspectives and builds public trust and confidence in the review process.

The City Clerk's Office should continue to lead ward boundary adjustments, which occur because of annexation or development of a community that causes new homes or streets to be split by the existing ward boundary or other minor changes to align with community boundaries.

Recommendation #16:

That *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy* (CP2019-04) be amended to remove Section 6.1.2, "Total Electors," and that the next ward boundary commission examine the Policy criteria to ensure continued relevance.

Section 6.1.2 of the Policy provides that the total elector count is intended to be relatively equal between wards. This objective is difficult to address given the size of wards, settlement patterns of newcomers and households with persons under 18 years of age.

Moreover, Section 153 (a) of the *Municipal Government Act* provides that Members of Council "consider the welfare and interests of the municipality as a whole and to bring to Council's attention anything that would promote the welfare or interests of the municipality". Members of Council represent constituents, regardless of whether they qualify as an elector under the *Local Authorities Elections Act*.

It is anticipated that ward boundaries will be reviewed in the 2025 term of Council, because of significant population increases in recent years. As part of this work, it is recommended that the next Ward Boundary Commission examine the Policy criteria to ensure continued relevance.

Background

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) sets out specific roles and responsibilities of Council Members. Those responsibilities include considering the welfare and interests of the entire city, developing, and evaluating policies and programs, participating in council meetings and other meetings to which they are appointed, obtaining information about the operations and administration of the municipality, among other duties and functions.

The MGA authorizes Council to divide the city into wards and establish and adjust their boundaries through the passage of a bylaw. Wards are commonplace in many Canadian municipalities, and they serve as a system of representation for Calgary's communities, with relatively equal population counts in each ward in support of voter parity. Council adopted the current 14-ward system in 1976, with the current arrangement of boundaries set out in Bylaw 19M91, as amended. Each of the city's 14 wards is represented by one Councillor elected by ward. The mayor is elected city-wide representing all Calgarians.

The Policy (**Attachment 2**) sets out the criteria and process when making changes to ward boundaries. As well, the Policy sets out the role of a ward boundary commission, which is involved in leading a city-wide review of ward boundaries, or related responsibilities directed by Council, such as a review of Council composition and Council effectiveness.

In 2014, Calgary's population was 1.24 million. As a result, Council directed a ward boundary commission to review ward boundaries, as well as to identify the "ideal number of councillors". Council adopted the recommendation of the 2014 Ward Boundary Commission to keep the number of Councillors at 14, and to review the number of Councillors again, following the 2021 General Election.

In 2020, in keeping with the current Policy, a minor review of ward boundary changes to address population imbalances in Wards 3, 7 and 12 was undertaken, a process led the by Returning Officer as set out in the Policy. To adjust the population counts, parts of other wards were shifted. The minor review resulted in the current ward boundaries, adopted by Council in October 2020.

Responding to the 2014 Council direction to review the number of Councillors following the 2021 General Election, on June 6, 2019, Administration presented a report to Council with two options, Option A and Option B. Option A was to direct the recruitment of a ward boundary commission to review the effectiveness of the 14-ward system and potentially increase the number of Councillors in the 2025 General Election. Option B was to direct the recruitment of a ward boundary commission to review the effectiveness of the 14-ward system with no change to the number of Councillors. Options A and B also directed the ward boundary commission review and provide recommendations on the Policy, and that Administration prepare a service and financial impact analysis of the ward boundary commission's recommendation. Council adopted Option B, directing the mandate of the current ward boundary commission.

In the June 6, 2019 report to Council, an analysis of ward population deviations was also included. The mean ward population deviations were determined to be within acceptable Policy limits (i.e., plus or minus 15 per cent, and no more than plus or minus 25 per cent).

Due to recent annexations of land, first reading of a bylaw to adopt technical adjustments to ward boundaries was adopted by Council on July 16, 2024, a process led by the Returning Officer as set out in the Policy. The technical adjustments do not impact any communities or individuals, and changes are intended to ensure ward boundary maps are accurate for the 2025 General Election.

It is expected that due to population growth projections, a ward boundary commission will be required to lead a city-wide review of ward boundaries in the 2025 term of Council. Should Council adopt the recommendations of the current Commission, the next ward boundary commission will also consider the representational and organizational impact of municipal political parties and slates, as well as opportunities for Council to share formal accountability for the unique representational needs of the downtown commercial core.

Ward Boundary Commission mandate execution

Public engagement report to Council

Jan. 2024

Feb. 2024

Internal engagement

Mar. 2024

Internal and public engagement

Apr. 2024

May 2024

Engagement analysis

Jun. 2024

Jul. 2024

Draft report

Aug. 2024

Sep. 2024

Final report to Council
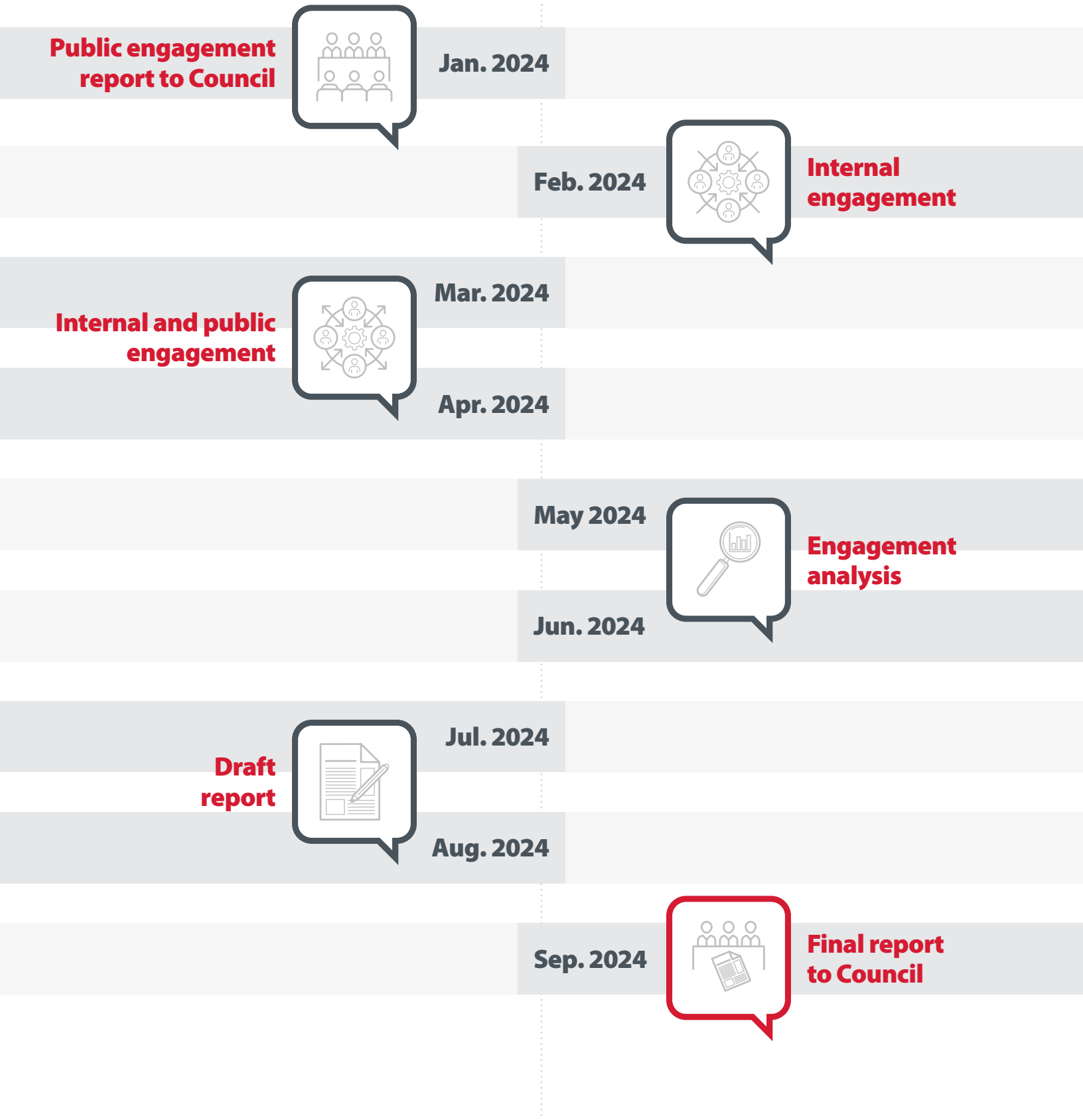
Ward Boundary Commission engagement

The public engagement plan and timeline was approved by Council at the 2024 January 30 Regular Meeting of Council. The Ward Boundary Commission conducted both internal and external engagement in February, March and April 2024.

Internal engagement included meetings with the following groups or individuals:

- Members of Council and their staff
- Former members of Calgary City Council
- Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) & CAO Office leadership
- Chief Operating Officer (COO)
- Ethics & Integrity Office
- Calgary Board of Education & Calgary Catholic School District
- Customer Service and Communications, including 311
- City Clerk's Office leadership
- Anti-Racism Team
- Indigenous Relations Office
- Government Relations Office
- Partnerships Office leadership
- Council Compensation Review Committee Chair

The Ward Boundary Commission worked with the Engage Resource Unit in Customer Service and Communications to plan and execute public engagement opportunities. Both online engagement and in-person opportunities were held to gather feedback from members of the general public. A comprehensive communications and advertising campaign was developed to cover a variety of communication channels.

Public engagement opportunities were advertised city-wide

Online engagement offered an opportunity to provide input for those who are not able to attend an in-person event; as well as information about engagement opportunities. Online questionnaires were designed for:

- General public
- Business owners/operators
- Representatives from:
  - Community Associations
  - Business Improvement Areas
  - Business associations
  - Ethnocultural associations
  - Volunteer and not-for-profit organizations

The Commission and the Engage Resource Unit hosted four 90-minute online workshops, one for each of these groups:

- Business Improvement Areas
- Ethnocultural associations
- Business associations
- Community Associations

In-person pop-up events were held in each quadrant of the city, as well as downtown. Details about the public and interested party engagement can be found in the What We Heard Report, which will be included as a separate appendix in the Commission's Cover Report to Council.

Engagement feedback themes

A summary of the common themes that were heard through engagement is in the table below.

Public	Members of Council	Council Staff
Communication	Know your ward	Unique wards, residents, and resource needs
Representation	Onboarding and orientation	Working environment, training and resources
Problem solving	Resourcing and capacity	Working with Administration
Character	Civic literacy	Incoming and external communications
Financial stewardship	Team building	
Electoral reform		

Attachment 1

Ward Boundary Commission member biographies

Jordan Pinkster

Jordan Pinkster has more than a decade of career experience in the areas of government relations, advocacy, and economic development. In his current role he is the external relations & communications officer with Platform Calgary. His previous work experiences include four years as a director with Global Public Affairs, four years as a chief of staff to a former member of Calgary City Council, and two years as the media and public affairs officer with the British Consulate General in Calgary. He holds a Bachelor of Arts with a major in policy studies from Mount Royal University.

Jacqueline Peterson

Jacqueline Peterson received her PhD from the University of Toronto (Political Science) in 2020. Her PhD research focused on inter-governmental relations, municipal finance and urban climate policy in Canada and the United States. Over the past decade, Dr. Peterson has published research on a variety of topics related to local government and has taught urban policy courses at the University of Calgary. Prior to beginning her PhD, Jacqueline previously worked for Calgary's Office of the Aldermen, the Alberta Legislature and Elections Alberta, the last of for which she completed an electoral district mapping exercise as a Returning Officer. She completed her masters' degree at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and received a BA from McGill University. Dr. Peterson currently works for a Calgary-based company supporting decarbonization efforts in the energy industry.

Jack Lucas

Jack Lucas is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Calgary. He holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Toronto (2014) and was an Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Alberta (2015). His research and teaching are focused on Canadian politics, with a particular focus on elections, political representation, and policy preferences in Canadian municipalities. He is Project Co-Director for the Canadian Municipal Barometer, an annual survey of municipal mayors and councillors. He has published more than 50 refereed books and articles, including Big City Elections in Canada (University of Toronto Press, 2021) and Ideology in Canadian Municipal Politics (University of Toronto Press, 2024).

Elise Bieche

Elise Bieche is a graduate of the University of Calgary with a Bachelor of Arts in Canadian History. Her career has spanned 20 years in the energy industry in roles related to sustainability, corporate responsibility and public policy. She has a deep commitment to volunteering in order to make a positive impact on her community. Her family has been defined by their engagement in the community association and how we interface with our city. Over the last three years she has taken in a new perspective on the city by enjoying the expansive pathway system on her bike. She has two daughters, both of whom have attended University of Calgary, she is happily unmarried to her best friend, Kurt.

Karen Jiang

Karen Jiang has worked in the public sector for nearly 20 years, providing objective advice to decision makers.

She has a lifelong passion to learn and promote good governance that support the ideals of a representative democracy.

Karen holds a Bachelor of Arts from Simon Fraser University, Master of Public Administration from Dalhousie University, is a Project Management Professional and with her spouse is raising two kids in the community of Tuxedo Park.

Andrew Brouwer

Andrew Brouwer (he/him) is the Returning Officer's designate and non-voting member of the Commission. Andrew serves as The City's Assistant Director, Elections and Strategic Engagement and Substitute Returning Officer accountable for elections, civic engagement and protocol, and strategic services to the City Clerk's Office.

Attachment 2

Ward boundary determination and review policy CP2019-04

Policy Title: Ward Boundary Determination and Review

Policy Number: CP2019-04

Report Number: C2019-1195, C2023-0496

Adopted by/Date: Council / 2023 June 6

Effective Date: 2019 October 22

Last Amended: 2023 June 6

Policy Owner: City Clerk's Office

1. Policy statement

1.1 A ward boundary maintains equitable representation by Councillors across the city of Calgary.

2. Purpose

2.1 To establish the criteria to be considered for City-wide Reviews, Minor Reviews and Adjustments for ward boundary changes.

2.2 To establish the threshold for City-wide Reviews, Minor Reviews and Adjustments.

2.3 To provide authorization and process to the Returning Officer to conduct a Minor Review or Adjustment.

2.4 To provide for the establishment of a Ward Boundary Commission ("Commission").

2.5 To establish and define the membership and terms of reference of the Commission.

2.6 To provide a method for Members of Council to provide feedback to the Ward Boundary Commission and/or the Returning Officer.

3. Definitions

3.1 "Adjustments": Adjustments occur as a result of annexation or development of a community that causes new homes or streets to be split by the existing ward boundary or other minor changes to align with community boundaries.

3.2 "Boards Commissions & Committees" means Boards, Commissions and Committees ("BCCs") as defined in Council Policy CP2016-03 *Governance and Appointments of Boards, Commissions and Committees*.

3.3 "City-wide Review": City-wide Reviews are undertaken by the Commission and occur when eight (8) or more wards require adjustment, based on deviation results, or where Council reviews its composition and results in associated ward boundary changes.

3.4 "Community Association Boundaries": The boundaries of a community as set by Community Associations (these may include multiple communities to form one larger Community Association Boundary).

3.5 Community District Boundaries: The boundaries of a community as set by The City.

3.6 "Elector" means an elector as defined by the *Local Authorities Election Act*, RSA 2000 c. L-21.

3.7 "Minor Review": When up to seven (7) or fewer wards require adjustment, based on deviation results.

3.8 "Organizational Meeting" means the annual organizational meeting of Council as defined in *The Procedure Bylaw* 35M2017 as amended.

3.9 "Ward Boundary Commission": Commission appointed by Council, to undertake City-wide Reviews to ward boundaries and provide recommendations to Council as set out in this policy.

4. Applicability

4.1 This Council policy applies to:

    4.1.1 Members of Council

    4.1.2 Returning Officer

    4.1.3 Ward Boundary Commission Members

5. Legislative authority

5.1 Pursuant to section 148 of the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000 c. M-26, a council may divide the municipality into wards and establish their boundaries and governance structure.

6. Procedure

6.1 Criteria for developing ward boundary recommendations

The criteria used when developing ward boundary recommendations in general order of priority are:

6.1.1 Total population

All calculations will be based on the total population from the most recent civic census. The total population is intended to be relatively equal between the wards and based on allowable deviation from the mean population.

6.1.2 Total electors

All calculations will be based on the total number of Electors from the most recent Provincial data. The total Elector count is intended to be relatively equal between the wards and based on allowable deviation from the mean total Elector count.

6.1.3 Deviation

The allowable deviation from the mean population or total Elector count is +/- 15%. The maximum allowed deviation is +/- 25%.

6.1.4 Natural or physical boundaries

Wherever possible, the ward boundaries will be easily identifiable to the public by utilizing natural or physical boundaries such as major roadways, escarpments, rivers, parks, etc.

6.1.5 Future growth

The potential for growth in each ward over the next ten (10) years will be considered.

6.1.6 Communities of interest

Wherever possible, ward boundaries will ensure communities with common interests or sharing a common roadway access are kept within the same ward.

6.1.7 Community district boundaries

Wherever possible, the ward boundaries and The City developed Community District Boundaries will coincide.

6.1.8 Community association boundaries

Wherever possible, Community Association boundaries will also be given consideration, but it must be noted that these boundaries are not controlled by The City and can change at the decision of the communities involved.

6.1.9 Historical ward boundaries (city-wide review)

Consideration of the historical ward boundaries in an area of the city will be given, however it is not mandatory that these boundaries be used.

6.1.10 Land use mix (city-wide review)

Wherever possible, efforts will be made to equalize the distribution of commercial, rural, industrial, institutional, and green space areas between the wards without pie shaped wards, in keeping with the October 19, 1960 City plebiscite.

6.1.11 Block shaped wards

Wards are to be relatively block shaped.

6.2 Responsibilities

6.2.1 Council

6.2.1.1 Give direction to the Commission to conduct a City-wide Review and any related matters (e.g., Council composition);

6.2.1.2 Give direction to the Returning Officer to conduct a Minor Review or Adjustment and any related matters (e.g., Council composition);

6.2.1.3 Inform the Returning Officer or Commission of desired recommendations during the consultation process; and,

6.2.1.4 Consider Returning Officer or Commission recommendations.

6.2.2 Ward Boundary Commission

6.2.2.1 Develop ward boundary scenarios and other matters directed by Council, in keeping with the criteria identified in this policy;

6.2.2.2 Recommend review timelines and a public and stakeholder engagement plan for Council's consideration;

6.2.2.3 Obtain public and stakeholder feedback on ward boundary scenarios and other matters directed by Council;

6.2.2.4 Provide Council with its recommendations; and,

6.2.2.5 Review this policy at the conclusion of a review and submit any recommendations for Council's consideration.

6.2.3 Returning officer

Post-election report

6.2.3.1 Generally within eighteen (18) months of a general election, provide a report to Council highlighting potential population and Elector count deviations (+/-) that may require ward boundary changes or may be impacted in the next general election; and,

6.2.3.2 Recommend a Minor Review or City-Wide Review to Council, in keeping with the criteria identified in this policy.

Minor reviews

6.2.3.3 Develop ward boundary scenarios and other matters directed by Council, in keeping with the criteria identified in this policy;

6.2.3.4 Recommend review timelines and a public and stakeholder engagement plan for Council's consideration;

6.2.3.5 Obtain public and stakeholder feedback on ward boundary scenarios and other matters directed by Council;

6.2.3.6 Provide Council with his or her recommendations; and,

6.2.3.7 Review this policy at the conclusion of a review and submit any recommendations for Council's consideration.

City-wide reviews

6.2.3.8 Report to Council, prior to appointment of the Commission, with recommendations on remuneration of Commission members; and,

6.2.3.9 Provide administrative and professional services to the Commission.

7. Amendments

Date of Council Decision	Report/Bylaw	Description
2023 June 6	C2023-0496	Rescind Schedule A: Ward Boundary Commission is now established by Bylaw 28M2023.

8. Reviews

Date of Policy Owner's Review	Description

Attachment 3

Ward Boundary Commission Bylaw 28M2023

Being a bylaw of The City of Calgary to establish a Ward Boundary Commission

WHEREAS Council has approved the *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy* (CP2019-94, the "Policy") to ensure a consistent approach to the review and adjustment of ward boundaries in the City of Calgary;

AND WHEREAS Council has considered report C2023-0496;

AND WHEREAS Council deems it necessary to establish a ward boundary commission to provide recommendations to Council regarding the composition of Council, Council effectiveness and the Policy;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CALGARY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

Short title

1. This Bylaw may be cited as the "Ward Boundary Commission Bylaw".

Definitions

2. (1) In this Bylaw,
    (a) "Commission" means the Ward Boundary Commission established by this Bylaw;
    (b) "Council" means the municipal council of The City;
    (c) "The City" means the municipal corporation of The City of Calgary;
    (d) "Policy" means the *Ward Boundary Determination and Review Policy* CP2019-94.

    (2) Any schedules attached to this Bylaw form part of the Bylaw.

    (3) If this Bylaw refers to any statute, regulation or bylaw, the reference is to the statute, regulation or bylaw as amended, whether amended before or after the commencement of this Bylaw, and includes reference to any statute, regulation or bylaw that may be substituted in its place.

Establishment

3. The Ward Boundary Commission is hereby established.

Mandate

4. (1) The mandate of the Commission is to:
    (a) review the effectiveness of the 14-ward system with no change to the number of Councillors;
    (b) review the Policy;
    and provide recommendations to *Council* with respect to the above.

    (2) The *Commission* will report to Council.

    ### Engagement

    (3) The *Commission* shall recommend review timelines and provide a public engagement plan for *Council's* consideration within the first three months of appointment of *Commission* members. The engagement plan will provide for consultation with Council and both school boards, the Calgary Board of Education and the Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School Division.

    (4) The *Commission* shall provide *Council* with a report outlining the timelines and engagement plan within the first three months of appointment of *Commission* members. The *Commission* may use The City's Engage Framework to guide the consultation process.

    ### Report deadline

    (5) The *Commission* shall report to Council with its final recommendations no later than the third quarter of 2024.

Composition of the Committee

5. (1) The Commission shall consist of 5 voting members as follows:
    (a) 1 person who understands The City from a political and organizational perspective, such as a former member of Council who has not sought election in the most recent election;
    (b) 2 electors with an interest and expertise in political science, public policy or urban issues; and
    (c) 2 residents of Calgary.

    (2) The Commission will include one non-voting member, being the Returning Officer or their designate.

Term

6. (1) Members will be appointed at the 2023 Organizational Meeting of Council for a term which commences November 1, 2023.

(2) Members' term will end at the date the final recommendations report is presented to Council.

Chair and Vice Chair

7. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be selected by the Commission members at the first meeting of the Commission from among the voting members.

Quorum

8. Quorum for the Committee is 3 voting members.

Meetings

9. (1) The *Commission* will meet monthly. Additional meetings may be scheduled at the call of the Chair. Meetings of the *Commission* may be cancelled at the call of the Chair.

(2) Notice of meetings must comply with the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c. M-26, sections 195 and 196(2).

(3) *Commission* meetings are open to the public; however, the *Commission* may use its discretion under section 197(2) of the *Municipal Government Act* to close all or part of its meetings to the public if a matter to be discussed is within one of the exceptions to disclosure in Division 2 of Part 1 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c. F-25.

(4) The *Commission* may also, by majority vote, permit public submissions on an item at a Commission meeting.

Remuneration

10. (1) Members of the *Commission*, other than the Returning Officer, shall receive a flat rate sum for remuneration for the work involved in the *Commission*. The Chair shall receive an additional sum for the work of the Chair.

(2) Out of pocket expenses for items such as parking shall be reimbursed.

(3) Remuneration for Commission members will be determined by Council based on the recommendation of the Returning Officer prior to the appointment of members.

Meeting support

11. The City Clerk's Office will provide legislative services for the Commission.

Vacancies

12. Vacancies on the *Commission* may be filled by resolution of *Council* at any time.

Governance

13. (1) The *Commission* shall act in accordance with Council Policy CP2019-04, Ward Boundary Determination and Review, Council Policy CP2016-03, Governance and Appointments of Boards, Commissions and Committees and the Procedure Bylaw 35M2017.

(2) Any records submitted to the *Commission* are governed by the applicable provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000 c. M-26 and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, RSA 2000, c. F-25.

(3) The *Commission* will act in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000 c. M-26, Code of Conduct for Citizen Members Appointed to Council Established Boards, Commissions and Committees applicable to the position held and any other relevant *Council* policies and in the best interest of The City taking into account the city as a whole, and without regard to the member's personal interests. They will consider all issues consistently and fairly, and in the light of all relevant facts, opinions and analysis of which the member should be reasonably aware. In addition, all members will endeavor to incorporate the following guiding principles into the oversight and guidance they provide regarding its mandate:

(a) Accountability;

(b) Citizen-centricity;

(c) Diversity;

(d) Inclusivity and authenticity;

(e) Neutrality;

(f) Respect;

(g) Responsiveness and commitment;

(h) Timeliness; and

(i) Transparency.

Coming into force

14. This Bylaw comes into force on the day it is passed.

Disestablishment and repeal

15. The Commission shall be disestablished, and this Bylaw repealed, upon the date the final recommendations report s presented to Council.

READ A FIRST TIME ON JUNE 06, 2023

READ A SECOND TIME ON JUNE 06, 2023

READ A THIRD TIME ON JUNE 06, 2023

Signed by
Jyoti Gondek,
Mayor

Signed on June 06, 2023

Signed by
Jeremy Fraser,
For City Clerk

Signed on June 06, 2023