

Returning Officer Report to  
Regular Meeting of Council  
2025 July 29

ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
C2025-0643

## Repeal of Early Voting Hours Bylaw for Separate School Elections

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council give three readings to proposed Bylaw 34M2025, which repeals Bylaw 29M2007.

### PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

At the 2021 June 21 Combined Meeting of Council, Council passed Bylaw 52M2021, amending Bylaw 29M2007. This amendment authorized voting stations to be open before 10 a.m. on Election Day for Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School Division (“separate school”) elections in the City of Airdrie (“Airdrie”), Town of Cochrane (“Cochrane”) and City of Chestermere (“Chestermere”) for the 2021 General Election.

### RECOMMENDATION:

That Council give three readings to proposed Bylaw 34M2025 (Attachment 1) to repeal Bylaw 29M2007 (Attachment 2).

### CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

The City Solicitor and General Counsel was consulted in preparing this report.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Under the *Local Authorities Election Act* (“the Act”), The City of Calgary (“The City”) and the Board of Trustees of the separate school have an agreement that makes The City responsible for administering separate school elections.
- The separate school’s jurisdiction includes Calgary, Airdrie, Cochrane, and Chestermere.
- The Act requires voting stations to be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day. Despite this, the Act allows an elected authority to pass a bylaw before June 30 in an election year to open voting stations earlier than 10 a.m. on Election Day.
- This authority may be exercised either by:
  - The elected authority itself (i.e., the separate school), or
  - The authority responsible for administering the election under an agreement (i.e., The City of Calgary).
- For the 2025 General Election, the Board of Trustees of the separate school passed early voting hours Bylaw No. 191-2025 (Attachment 3). As a result, Bylaw 29M2007 is now obsolete.

### DISCUSSION

Prior to the 2025 General Election, Bylaw 29M2007 allowed voting stations for separate school elections in Airdrie, Cochrane, and Chestermere to open before 10 a.m. on Election Day. These hours aligned with the early voting schedule set by Airdrie, Cochrane, and Chestermere for their municipal council elections in the 2021 General Election, ensuring uniform voting hours across all elections in each municipality on Election Day.

For the 2025 General Election, the Board of Trustees of the separate school passed Bylaw No. 191-2025 (Attachment 3), allowing separate school election voting stations to open at the same

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time as those in Airdrie, Cochrane, and Chestermere for their municipal council elections on Election Day. This change renders Bylaw 29M2007 obsolete.

**EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public engagement was undertaken        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public/interested parties were informed | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public communication or engagement was not required |

The Substitute Returning Officer engaged in discussions with representatives of the separate school.

**IMPLICATIONS**

**Social, Environmental or Economic**

Not applicable.

**Service and Financial Implications**

No anticipated financial impact.

**RISK**

If Bylaw 29M2007 remains in effect, there is a risk that it could create uncertainty regarding the authorized early voting hours for separate school elections in Airdrie, Cochrane, and Chestermere on Election Day. To mitigate this risk, Bylaw 29M2007 is recommended to be repealed.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed Bylaw 34M2025
2. Bylaw 29M2007
3. Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School Division Bylaw No. 191-2025
4. Presentation

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Katarzyna Martin, Returning Officer	Law, Legislative Services and Security	Approve
Jill Floen, City Solicitor and General Counsel	Law, Legislative Services and Security	Consult

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