



MUNICIPAL CLERK'S OFFICE

TO: Council
DATE: October 27, 2020 **DIVISION:** All
FILE: N/A
SUBJECT: *Electoral Boundaries and Council Composition Bylaw C-8077-2020*

DIRECTION:

The *Municipal Government Act* states that Council may pass bylaws to specify the number of councillors comprising Rocky View County Council, divide Rocky View County into divisions, establish the boundaries of each division, and provide for the number of councillors to be nominated and elected in each division, as well as directing another title appropriate for the Chief Elected Officials (currently referred to as the Reeve and Deputy Reeve).

On January 28, 2020, Council approved a Terms of Reference for an Electoral Boundary and Governance Review to review the County's governance structure to consider a mayor-at large model and the number and shape of the County's divisions in accordance with Electoral Boundary Review Policy C-702.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to propose Electoral Boundaries and Council Composition Bylaw C-8077-2020 which:

- 1) Divides the County into seven electoral divisions;
- 2) Requires that one councillor represent each of the seven electoral divisions;
- 3) Requires that candidates for the office of councillor be nominated and elected for each division; and
- 4) Requires that one councillor be appointed by Council to the office of Chief Elected Official and one councillor be appointed by Council to the office of Deputy Chief Elected Official from amongst the councillors; and
- 5) Changes the title of the Chief Elected Official from "Reeve" to "Mayor" and Deputy Chief Elected Official from "Deputy Reeve" to "Deputy Mayor."

In accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, bylaws to change the number of councillors or to amend the electoral boundaries must be advertised and allow for a 60 day petition period after the last date of which the proposed bylaw is advertised. Based on these criteria, the Chief Administrative Officer has not received a petition regarding the proposed bylaw.

Based on the timelines and the petition period requirements outlined in the *Municipal Government Act*, a decision on Electoral Boundaries and Council Composition Bylaw C-8077-2020 must be made by Council at the October 27, 2020 meeting in order for the changes to be in effect for the next general election on October 18, 2021 (which has a nomination process starting on January 1, 2021).



If Electoral Boundaries and Council Composition Bylaw C-8077-2020 is defeated, this will mean the next general election will default to the current electoral boundaries and the opportunity to change the electoral boundaries will not come into effect until the 2025 general election. An additional effect of not passing the Bylaw may cause further delay on a decision of the County's Specialized Municipality status application currently with the Province.

Approving Electoral Boundaries and Council Composition Bylaw C-8077-2020 means the number of Council representatives will decrease from nine division to seven divisions and significant changes to the current electoral boundaries. Additionally, approval of Electoral Boundaries and Council Composition Bylaw C-8077-2020 establishes the Chief Elected Officials as the Mayor and a deputy as Deputy Mayor; both with an appointment term of one year as per the Procedure Bylaw. Any changes to the appointment term of the Mayor or Deputy Mayor positions will require additional separate amendments to the Procedure Bylaw.

Should Council request to have a title of the Chief Elected Officials be changed to Mayor and Deputy within this Council's term, Council may change the title through a motion arising.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

Administration recommends approval in accordance with Option #1.

HISTORY:

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|---------------------------|---|
| July 9, 2019 | Council approved Electoral Boundary Review Policy C-702 to establish how and when the County determines its electoral boundaries. |
| September 10, 2019 | Council directed Administration to retain an independent consultant to conduct a comprehensive electoral boundaries and governance review based on a public participation engagement strategy to inform and listen/learn from the public that includes an online questionnaire and a Council workshop. |
| November 26, 2019 | Council approved a budget adjustment of \$100,000 to retain an independent consultant to conduct the review. |
| January 28, 2020 | Council approved the Terms of Reference for an Electoral Boundaries and Governance Review to be conducted by an independent consultant (Attachment 'C'). Administration retained ISL Engineering and Land Services Ltd. (ISL) along with subconsultants Transitional Solutions Inc. (TSI) and Metro Economics to conduct an independent and objective review of the County's electoral boundaries and governance structure. |
| April 8 – 29, 2020 | Public participation online survey collection period. |
| May 19, 2020 | Council Workshop conducted by consultants. |
| June 18, 2020 | Council Workshop conducted by consultants. |
| June – August 2020 | Based on research and analysis, workshop feedback and online survey results, consultants work on a recommendation to be presented to Council on October 27, 2020. |



August 11 and 18, 2020 As per the *Municipal Government Act*, the proposed bylaw was advertised for two consecutive weeks after which a legislated 60-day petition period occurred.

BACKGROUND:

Rocky View County's last major electoral boundary review was conducted in 2000 by the Alberta Treasury Board. Since 2000, the County's total estimated population increased by 48 percent (28,441 to 42,291).

In 2010, a minor electoral boundary adjustment was made to divisions 7 and 8 in accordance with the Bearspaw Area Structure Plan. Since 2010, the County has gone through four annexations (Crossfield 2010, Airdrie 2011, MD Bighorn 2012, and Tsuut'ina 2015) that have affected the County's electoral boundaries, but none of these are reflected in the current electoral boundaries bylaw.

Based on Electoral Boundary Review Policy C-702, the optimum population per division should be the primary factor in determining electoral boundaries. The optimum population of each division should be within ± 25 percent of the population average, which is determined by dividing the County's total population by the number of divisions. Under the current electoral boundaries, using the 2018 municipal census data, divisions 1, 3, 4, and 6 do not meet the optimum population requirement to be within ± 25 percent of the population average of 4,523 residents.

DISCUSSION:

The work undertaken by the consultant as directed in the approved Terms of Reference included a best practices review of comparable Alberta municipalities, a population analysis to determine the current demographic context in the County, a population projection to determine anticipated demographic change in the County, spatial analysis, Council workshops and the development and implementation of a public participation survey.

The public participation survey was conducted online for 21 days from April 8 through April 29, 2020. A total of 379 respondents completed the survey, representing one percent of eligible voters.

Based on the research, analysis and general feedback gathered by the consultant, the scope of the review narrowed to consider a recommendation of a governance structure consisting of one councillor elected for each division, an appointed Chief Elected Official (currently referred to as the Reeve) and for Council to change the Chief Elected Official's title from Reeve to Mayor, as the title "Mayor" is a more familiar term publically for advocacy reasons.

With this scope, the consultant provided the most robust recommendation that accommodates future population growth while balancing that growth with effective representation of residents (Attachment B).

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

The annual estimated cost to support one councillor position annually is an estimated \$108,000 (\$432,000 over four years) which includes salary and benefits, travel and subsistence, conference / training fees, community outreach, a phone and a tablet. Over a four-year electoral term, decreasing from nine councillor positions to seven councillor positions equates to an estimated cost savings of \$864,000 for the County.



OPTIONS:

- Option #1: Motion 1: THAT Bylaw C-8077-2020 be given first reading.
- Motion 2: THAT Bylaw C-8077-2020 be given second reading.
- Motion 3: THAT Bylaw C-8077-2020 be considered for third reading.
- Motion 4: THAT Bylaw C-8077-2020 be given third and final reading.

- Option #2: THAT alternative direction be provided.

Respectfully submitted,

Concurrence,

“Kent Robinson”

“Al Hoggan”

Executive Director

Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment ‘A’ – Electoral Boundaries and Council Composition Bylaw C-8077-2020
- Attachment ‘B’ – ISL Recommendations Report
- Attachment ‘C’ – Electoral Boundary and Governance Review Terms of Reference