

2020 Local Government Election – Establishment of Polls and Polling Places

ISSUE

Section 22(1) of *The Local Government Election Act, 2015* states that Council shall divide the municipality into as many polling areas as considered necessary for the convenience of voters, and name the polling place for each polling area so established.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That the division of the municipality into polling areas as outlined in Appendix 1 be approved, and
2. That the list of polling places as outlined in Appendix 2 be approved.

BACKGROUND

Updates to *The Local Government Election Act, 2015* and *The Local Government Election Regulations, 2015* came into effect in January 2020. In accordance with the legislation, a number of decisions related to the holding of a municipal election are required by City Council. This report outlines recommended polling areas and places for the 2020 local government election.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Due to growth in the city since the 2016 local government election as well as the ward boundary review undertaken in 2019 (required by legislation) poll locations were reviewed. Since the 2016 local government election, four new joint schools have been built and are operational in Rosewood, Hampton Village, Evergreen, and Stonebridge neighbourhoods.

Appendix 1 shows the city divided into 66 polling areas for the 2020 election. Appendix 2 lists the specific locations of each poll. For the most part, there is one poll located in each neighbourhood. The legislated criteria for establishing polling areas and places has been considered as outlined in the attachments.

Saskatoon Public Schools' boundaries were previously extended to include Whitecap Dakota First Nation. For trustee representation, the Saskatoon Public School Board has included Whitecap Dakota First Nation as part of ward 7. Whitecap Dakota First Nation voters for Public School Board Trustee **only** will vote at Poll No. 708, which is located at Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

IMPLICATIONS

The City's election program has taken an approach to provide one polling location in each neighbourhood, as is reasonably practicable. Some neighbourhoods have limited options for polling locations (i.e. no or few commercial spaces, churches, or civic facilities). As a result, some neighbourhoods will be voting at a polling location in an

adjacent neighbourhood. As seen in Table 1, as the city grows so does the number of polling locations. Reducing the number of polling locations could be seen as limiting access to voting.

An analysis was conducted on voter turnout for each polling location between the 2012 and 2016 elections. The decision to use proposed locations for 2020 came as a result of this analysis, as well as new neighbourhoods developed since 2016. Staffing models have been created based on voter turnout in both the 2012 and 2016 elections and election officials' feedback working the 2016 election.

Table 1. Poll location counts per election, 2000-2020.

Election Year	2000	2003	2006	2009	2012	2016	2020
No. of Polls	55	51	51	59	60	62	66

Following the 2020 election conclusion, an analysis will be conducted to compare voter turnout between 2016 and 2020. A review of the projected growth map will also be completed to envision polling locations for future election cycles.

NEXT STEPS

A comprehensive communication plan for all aspects of the 2020 municipal and school board elections is being developed with the Communications & Public Engagement division.

APPENDICES

1. Polling Areas
2. Polling Places

Report Approval

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