

Establishment of Ward Boundaries – Municipal Wards Commission

ISSUE

The most recent population data from eHealth Saskatchewan for the City of Saskatoon shows two civic wards that are outside of the acceptable variance allowed under *The Cities Act*. As there will be civic election in 2024 a review of ward boundaries must be undertaken.

BACKGROUND

Sections 57-62 of *The Cities Act* contain the rules for creating wards, as well as the requirement to maintain a uniform population in each ward where established. The *Act* requires that the population of each ward must not vary by more than 10% from the figure that is obtained by dividing the total population of the city by the number of wards into which the city is divided. Should a variance more than 10% be determined a Municipal Wards Commission is required to review the ward boundaries. While not applicable in this case, legislation also requires a review at least once every three election cycles. Ward boundary reviews must be completed no less than 180 days prior to a general municipal election.

Ward boundary reviews have been conducted for each of the last three elections, in 2012, 2016, and 2020. Past reports of the Municipal Wards Commission have noted the projected growth in several neighbourhoods and anticipated that further ward modifications would be required prior future municipal elections.

Pursuant to the *Act*, population is determined in accordance with the latest census taken pursuant to the *Statistics Act* (Canada) or by any other means that the Minister may direct. The 2021 Census indicates that Saskatoon's total population is 266,141 (increase from 247,201 in 2016). However, traditionally the City has utilized provincial health data which has been determined to be a more accurate and timely reflection of the population of Saskatoon. Utilizing eHealth data current to June 30, 2022 the City's Planning and Development Branch has determined the total population to be 285,445 (increase from 270,790 in December 2018).

A formal request has been made to the Ministry of Government Relations to utilize eHealth data as the Cities population for the purpose of a ward boundary review for the 2024 municipal election.

CURRENT STATUS

Based on this population data each of the ten wards in Saskatoon must have a population within +/- 10% of 28,545 (25,690 – 31,399). Current ward populations using the June 30, 2022 Saskatchewan eHealth population information show that Wards 2 and 7 are outside of the 10% variation limit.

WARD	2022 SK Health Population
1	26,082
2	25,188
3	29,653
4	27,674
5	27,128
6	28,917
7	31,718
8	29,938
9	27,913
10	31,324
TOTAL - City of Saskatoon	285,445
Population / 10 Wards	28,545
Allowable 10% variance	25,690 – 31,399

*A detailed breakdown by ward and neighborhood can be found as an attachment.

Pursuant to Section 58 of *The Cities Act*, City Council has established The Municipal Wards Commission Bylaw, 2002. Within this bylaw the Saskatoon Municipal Wards Commission is comprised of:

- a) a Judge of Her Majesty's Court of Queen's (King's) Bench for Saskatchewan presiding in the City of Saskatoon as designated by the Chief Justice of the Queen's (King's) Bench;
- b) a Professor or other member of the faculty of the Department of Political Studies, College of Arts and Science, University of Saskatchewan, as designated by the head of such Department; and
- c) the person who holds the office of City Clerk, The City of Saskatoon.

The members of the previous commission formed in 2019 prior to the last municipal election were the Honourable Justice Richard Danyliuk, Justice of the Court of King's Bench, the late Dr. Joseph Garcea, Political Studies, University of Saskatchewan, and Joanne Sproule, former City Clerk.

Administration has reached out to the Court of King's Bench and the University of Saskatchewan to confirm confirmations for the upcoming review.

Upon receipt of Ministerial approval to utilize the 2022 Saskatchewan Health Population information, the Municipal Wards Commission will undertake the process of reviewing the ward boundaries, which will include a public consultation process. The new wards will be established in 2023, to take effect for the 2024 civic election.

NEXT STEPS

The Municipal Wards Commission will file its report with Council upon completion of its review.

APPENDICES

1. Bylaw 8164 – *Municipal Wards Commission Bylaw, 2002*
2. Municipal Wards Commission - Establishment of Municipal Ward Boundaries - Effective November 9, 2020
3. Ward Boundaries Map 2020
4. eHealth Data - Population Distribution by Neighbourhood Ward

Report Approval

Written and Approved by: Adam Tittermore, City Clerk