

Committee of the Whole (Working Session) Report

DATE: Tuesday, May 12, 2020

WARD(S): ALL

**TITLE: DIRECTION FOR WARD BOUNDARY AND COUNCIL
COMPOSITION REVIEW**

FROM:

Wendy Law, Deputy City Manager, Administrative Services and City Solicitor

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To provide committee with options for conducting a Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review. Information on the hiring of additional administrative staff is also provided to inform the Committee's deliberation on local council office support

Report Highlights

- The last Ward Boundary Review was conducted in 2016, at which time no changes were made to the ward boundaries.
- The City's existing ward boundaries were put in place by order of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) in 2009.
- Based on voter data from the 2018 Municipal Election, each local councillor currently represents an average of 40,451 electors.
- The electoral population of each Ward presently varies between 28,580 to 46,823. As such, Council direction is required on whether to conduct a Ward Boundary Review in advance of the 2022 election.
- Council directed staff in March 2020 to provide information on council composition.

Recommendations

1. That Committee provide direction on the following options:
 - a. Conducting a Ward Boundary Review only;

- b. Conducting a Ward Boundary Review together with a review of the current council composition; or
 - c. Not proceeding with a Ward Boundary Review at this time.
- 2. That Committee provide direction on additional administrative support for each local councillor.

Background

Section 222 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25, provides for the division of the municipality into wards or to redivide or dissolve existing wards. The City of Vaughan presently has five wards, the boundaries of which were established by order of the Ontario Municipal Board on November 24, 2009. Subsequent to the board order, the City conducted a ward boundary review in 2016 in response to a petition and subsequent legal action from electors on the 2009 boundaries. At its meeting on January 24, 2017, Council received the final report of the Ward Boundary Review Team and no further action was taken to adopt new ward boundaries at that time. Then-ongoing discussions regarding regional representation for the City of Vaughan at York Regional Council was a factor in Council's decision at that time.

At its meeting of March 11, 2020, Vaughan Council discussed the matter of increasing workload for local ward councillors as they considered York Regional Council's ongoing decision to increase the regional representation for Vaughan. Currently, the City of Vaughan has one Mayor, elected at-large; three local and regional councillors, elected at-large; and five (5) local councillors elected to represent one of the City's five (5) wards. Each local councillor's office includes one full-time executive assistant supported by part-time support staff to assist them. Council has indicated an interest in exploring the options to add an additional local councillor, or to add additional support staff for each local council office. Council directed staff to report on the costs of such options no later than May.

Previous Reports/Authority

[VAUGHAN WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW TEAM FINAL REPORT – RECOMMENDED WARD ALIGNMENT](#)

Analysis and Options

Ward Boundary Review

The current ward boundaries of the City of Vaughan were established by the Ontario Municipal Board using 2006 Census data which was considered during the 2009 Ward Boundary Review. These ward boundaries were presumed to ensure adequate representation through the 2010, 2014 and 2018 Municipal Election at the latest. As

evident in Table 1, the population of the City's current five wards is projected to continue to grow out of parity, with elector data in Table 2 derived from the 2018 Municipal Election validating that growing disparity between the ward populations.

Ward	2014	2018	2022	2026	2030
Ward 1	68,200	75,200	84,700	96,100	117,600
Ward 2	56,800	59,100	62,100	64,200	65,100
Ward 3	65,700	70,300	74,500	78,300	79,400
Ward 4	51,900	58,400	63,800	70,700	81,800
Ward 5	71,300	72,600	73,000	74,100	75,200
Average	62,800	67,100	71,600	76,700	83,800

Table 1: Forecast population by current ward, 2016 Ward Boundary Review Final Report
(Population figures are expressed as Total Population counted by Statistics Canada's Census plus the estimated Census Net Under-coverage)

Ward	2014 Electors	2018 Electors	Growth	2018 Total Electors Represented	2018 Deviation from Average
Ward 1	38,287	45,439	18.68%	22%	+11.61%
Ward 2	35,834	38,890	8.53%	19%	-3.93%
Ward 3	35,636	42,522	19.32%	21%	+4.99%
Ward 4	19,477	28,580	46.74%	14%	-34.39%
Ward 5	44,501	46,823	5.22%	23%	+14.60%
Average	34,747	40,451	15.17%	-	-

Table 2. VoterView Elector Data 2014 & 2018 Municipal Elections

Currently, local councillors for the City of Vaughan, on average, represent 40,451 electors. However, as outlined in Table 1 and Table 2, there is a growing deviation from that average amongst multiple wards. The accepted standard for representation by population in an urban environment is a +/-25% deviation. In Ward 4, at this time, that deviation is significantly higher at -34.39%. However, based on the longer term population growth estimates as shown in Table 1, with the existing five wards, by the 2030 Municipal Election, Ward 1 will be 33.6% above the average ward population. It is important to note also, that any decision to add local councillors to Vaughan Council would necessitate a Ward Boundary Review in order to redraw ward boundaries to account for an additional ward.

Ward Boundary Reviews are guided by a set of common and established legal principles emanating from the Carter Case before the Supreme Court of Canada. These guiding principles include:

- **Representation by population**, ensuring electors are comparatively represented on Council giving an equal voice, which is understood to be generally within +/-25% maximum deviation for the average ward population in urban areas;
- **Consideration of current and future population trends**, including changes in population from growth and development, aging communities, etc.;
- **Consideration of physical and natural boundaries**, including the way in which manmade and natural features such as highways, railways, river valleys, and farmland shape the community;
- **Consideration of communities of interest**, including settlement patterns and existing historical communities in the context of the broader municipality; and
- **Effective representation**, the overall objective of a ward boundary review, which seeks to establish fair and equitable representation based on the principles outlined above.

Proposed Ward Boundary Review Schedule

If approved, the Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review would be initiated in late May, with a target end-date of February 2021 to present the final option recommendation for Council consideration and approval. This timeline ensures that all decisions of Council respecting changes to both ward boundaries and council composition are made in time to take effect with the 2022-2026 Term of Council.



Options for Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review

The options available to Committee, for the conduct of the Ward Boundary Review include:

1. **Conduct a Ward Boundary Review.** Contracting consultants with expertise in electoral boundaries and council composition to review population data, local circumstances, geography, etc. and consult with the electorate to develop

recommendations for revisions and changes to the existing ward boundaries, and potential alterations to the size and structure of Vaughan Council. This approach would allow for an impartial third-party review of the existing ward boundaries and provide independent recommendations for Council's consideration. External consultants also provide the necessary qualifications and experience to conduct this work, which is absent amongst city staff due to the extremely specific nature of ward boundary and council composition work.

2. **Conduct a Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review.** Given the concerns raised about workload, Council may wish to direct that a council composition review be conducted at the same time as a Ward Boundary review. In addition to reviewing the existing electoral boundaries of the City as detailed in Option 1, such a review could give more detailed and thorough assessment of the appropriate number of local councillors for the City, giving consideration for the local needs and the best practices established amongst comparator municipalities. A Council Composition Review would allow for a review of the present composition in light of potential ward boundary changes, consider the addition of another local councillor, and how to incorporate the addition of another local and regional councillor into a revised ward and council structure.
3. **Not proceeding with a Ward Boundary Review at this time.** The existing five wards would be retained with the ward boundaries as established in the 2009 Board Order. The current nine-member Council would be retained in its current state (subject to the potential addition of a Local and Regional Councillor as a result of the ongoing Regional Council Composition Review).

Additional Administrative Support for each of the Five (5) Local Councillors

Council directed staff to provide information on the cost of adding additional full-time administrative staff to each local councillor to help management workload and address constituency business. The salary range for one full-time administrative assistant is \$69,373.00 to \$82,587.00, the addition of five administrative assistants to cover each local councillor's office would therefore be between \$346,865.00 and \$412,935.00. This cost could be offset if current part-time support staff positions were converted to a full-time administrative assistant position, if Council chooses to do so.

Council also directed staff to provide information with respect to adding a local councillor to council. The addition of one more local councillor would reduce the average representation per councillor to 33,709 electors using electoral population data from the 2018 Municipal Election. The cost to add one local councillor, including staffing and expenses for their office, would be approximately \$311,900.00.

Financial Impact

A capital budget of \$125,000.00 has been provided for in the 2020 Budget to support the completion of a ward boundary review. The capital funds approved for this project are supplied by the Election Reserve. A council composition review could be incorporated into the ward boundary review without significantly impacting the overall project budget as approved.

The addition of a sixth local councillor to Vaughan Council would cost approximately \$311,900.00 annually. If one additional administrative assistant is added to each local councillor's office, the annual cost with range between \$346,865.00 and \$412,935.00 to hire five administrative assistants – one for each local councillor.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

As part of its mandated review of regional council composition, York Regional Council has voted to add one member to represent the City of Vaughan, subject to the triple majority process. This would impact the existing composition of the City of Vaughan's nine-member local council.

Alterations to the City of Vaughan's ward boundaries would impact existing school board trustee boundaries for both York Region District School Board and York Catholic District School Board. Stakeholder consultations in respect to a Ward Boundary Review would include consulting the respective boards and their trustees.

Conclusion

The City's existing ward boundaries were established with an intent to ensure effective representation through to the 2018 Municipal Election at the latest. Demographic changes since the 2006 Census have altered the current makeup of the existing five wards, and a review and update to the existing boundaries may now be required to ensure comparable representation for Vaughan electors through the next two to three municipal elections. In light of recent recommendations by York Regional Council, there is also the potential for an additional local and regional councillor to be added to Vaughan Council.

As a result, staff seek direction on whether to conduct a Ward Boundary Review as well as a Council Composition Review, for Council's review and approval.

For more information, please contact: Evan Read, Manager, Elections and Special Projects, x8241

Attachments

N/A

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