

REPORT

Office of the Mayor

To: Mayor Cote and Members of Council **Date:** May 30, 2022

From: Denise A Tambellini Intergovernmental
and Community Relations Manager **File:**

Item #: 2022-394

Subject: British Columbia Electoral Boundaries Commission Reform
Submission - May 2022

RECOMMENDATION

That Council accept this report for information on the submission to the British Columbia Electoral Boundaries Commission.

PURPOSE

This report will outline the work of and submission to the BC Electoral Boundaries Commission regarding the need for increased Provincial representation in New Westminster.

SUMMARY

The BC Electoral Boundaries Commission is working on the electoral district boundaries for the next two provincial elections in BC. These boundaries are important because each electoral district is represented by one elected representative in the BC legislature. Based on community feedback and the rapid growth and issues surrounding New Westminster and other urban cities, increased Provincial representation was requested.

BACKGROUND

The BC Electoral Boundaries Commission is an independent and non-partisan commission appointed to review provincial electoral district boundaries. The Commission makes proposals to the Legislative Assembly on the area, boundaries, and

names of electoral districts to be used in the next two provincial general elections. This ensures that each part of BC has effective representation.

The Legislative Assembly reviews the Commission's proposals and votes to approve them, reject them, or approve them with alterations. If the Commission's proposals are approved or approved with alterations, the government must introduce them as a Bill.

Under the [Electoral Boundaries Commission Act](#), a BC Electoral Boundaries Commission must be appointed within one year of General Voting Day after every second provincial general election. General Voting Day for the 2020 Provincial General Election was October 24, 2020. The three members of the current Commission (the "commissioners") were appointed on October 21, 2021.

The members of the current BC Electoral Boundaries Commission are:

- Justice Nitya Iyer of the Supreme Court of British Columbia (chair)
- Linda Tynan, Local Government Management Consultant, and
- Anton Boegman, British Columbia's Chief Electoral Officer

The Commission may recommend up to 93 electoral districts (there are currently 87 districts in the province).

The Commission wants to hear from British Columbians before publishing its preliminary and final reports. Reports can be made online at this site: <https://bcebc.ca/your-voice/> or in writing to info@bcebc.ca, or by mail to PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9J6.

The Commission is accepting input to help it prepare its preliminary report between now and 4:30 p.m. on May 31, 2022. The Commission's preliminary report is expected to be published in fall 2022.

ANALYSIS

Based on community feedback, along with demonstrated rapid growth of 11.2% over the last four years and an increase in complex urban issues in the city of New Westminster, the attached letter was provided to the BC Electoral Boundaries Commission from the Mayor (attachment 1) requesting increased Provincial representation for the city.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications for this report.

OPTIONS

1. That Council accept this report for information on the submission to the British Columbia Electoral Boundaries Commission; or
2. Council provide other direction.

CONCLUSION

The BC Electoral Boundaries Commission is working on the electoral district boundaries for the next two provincial elections in BC. These boundaries are important because each electoral district is represented by one elected representative in the BC legislature. Based on community feedback, along with demonstrated rapid growth and an increase in complex urban issues in the city of New Westminster, increased Provincial representation was requested. This report is presented for information.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1. Letter to the BC Electoral Boundaries Commission

This report was prepared by:

Denise A Tambellini Intergovernmental and Community Relations Manager

This report was approved by:

Denise A Tambellini Intergovernmental and Community Relations Manager

Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer