

Report to Council



Date: February 8, 2021
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Regional District of Central Okanagan Voting Unit Values
Department: Office of the City Clerk

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Office of the City Clerk dated February 8, 2021 regarding Regional District of Central Okanagan Voting Unit values;

AND THAT Council supports the Regional District of Central Okanagan reviewing their assigned Voting Unit value and increasing it to 5,000.

Purpose:

To support direction to change assigned Voting Unit value for the City's Regional Board directors.

Background:

On November 25, 2019, the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) brought forward a [report](#) to the Regional Board about Voting Unit assignments to address governance and operational concerns associated with the Board structure. The current Voting Unit value is a population of 4,000.

The Regional Board passed a resolution authorizing the RDCO's Chief Administrative Officer to enter into discussions with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to review and amend the Voting Unit assigned to the RDCO. As part of this process, the RDCO is consulting with each member municipality to obtain Council resolutions supporting the review and indicating the Voting Unit value they support.

Discussion:

The City of Kelowna currently accounts for seven of 13 Regional Board directors and carries weighted and unweighted corporate votes on all matters Kelowna participates in. Weighted votes apply to certain decisions on operating services, entering into contracts, acquiring, expropriating, or disposing of property, financial plans, and borrowing and liabilities. Population and Voting Units are used to determine the number of votes each municipality is entitled to for weighted votes as well as the number of directors the municipality has for unweighted votes.

Kelowna has approximately two thirds of the RDCO's population. Based on growth projections, the number of City directors on the Board would increase to eight following the 2021 Census and to nine following the 2031 Census. A more detailed breakdown is shown in the table below.

Projected Number of Directors Based on Current Voting Unit of 4,000

Jurisdiction	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
Kelowna	7	8	8	9	9	10
West Kelowna	2	2	2	3	3	3
Lake Country	1	1	1	1	1	1
Peachland	1	1	1	1	1	1
Electoral Area East	1	1	1	1	1	1
Electoral Area West	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	13	14	14	16	16	17

This structure furthers Kelowna's majority on the Regional Board in the near- and long-term. Operationally, it leaves little to no ability to have alternate Directors from the City of Kelowna as the number of Directors increases.

The RDCO modelled the breakdown of Regional Board Directors at different Voting Units based on projected growth over the next 20 years. Based on these projections and the intent to address governance and operational concerns, a Voting Unit of 5,000 is recommended. This would immediately decrease the number of City directors on the Board to six, increasing back to seven following the 2026 Census and to eight following the 2041 Census. The projected breakdown is shown in the table below.

Projected Number of Directors Based on Potential Voting Unit of 5,000

Jurisdiction	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
Kelowna	6	6	7	7	7	8
West Kelowna	2	2	2	2	2	3
Lake Country	1	1	1	1	1	1
Peachland	1	1	1	1	1	1
Electoral Area East	1	1	1	1	1	1
Electoral Area West	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	12	12	13	13	13	15

A decrease to six Directors would result in the City accounting for half of the Regional Board Directors until 2027, a change from the current majority of 53%. The change would help to address operational concerns related to the City's ability to have alternate Directors. It is expected any change would come into effect following the 2022 election.

Conclusion:

Council is being asked to provide direction on the review of Voting Unit values and to indicate the Voting Unit value it supports. Based on the potential Voting Units and the projected population growth, staff recommend a Voting Unit value of 5,000. Although Kelowna would continue to be

underrepresented as it relates to population at the Regional Board level, this provides some flexibility for alternates, which is limited under the current structure.

Considerations applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Local Government Act s. 196 Composition and voting rights and s. 197 Municipal directors: number of directors and assignment of votes

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

A Provincial Order in Council would be required to amend the RDCO Letters Patent to change the Voting Unit Value.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Existing Policy:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

External Agency/Public Comments:

Communications Comments:

Submitted by:

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Approved for inclusion: S. Fleming, City Clerk

cc:

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