



# Regional Board Report

**TO:** Regional Board

**FROM:** Brian Reardon  
CAO

**DATE:** November 19, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Request for Direction—Regional District of Central Okanagan Voting Unit Review

**Voting Entitlement:** *(All Directors - Unweighted Corporate Vote - Simple Majority - LGA 208.1)*

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**Purpose:** To seek Board direction confirming its wish to review the RDCO Voting Unit with a view of changing the composition of the Regional Board.

## **Executive Summary:**

At the January 16, 2019 Strategic Planning Workshop the Regional Board identified several issues it wished to address during its 2018 – 2022 term. One of those issues was the review of the Board composition and Voting Unit assigned to the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO). Currently, the Voting Unit value for RDCO is a population of 4,000 with a divisor of 5.

The concern expressed by some Board members was the City of Kelowna has 7 of 13 representatives on the Board creating a situation where one jurisdiction in the RDCO carries the weighted and unweighted corporate vote on all matters, excluding services Kelowna does not participate in. This is less than optimal from a governance perspective and creates operational challenges for City of Kelowna Council members. Based on current growth projections for our region, this disparity will worsen in the years ahead.

Should the Board wish to review the voting unit with a view of changing the composition of the Regional Board, a motion supporting the staff recommendation below would be in order.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** the Regional Board authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to enter discussions with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing to review and amend the Voting Unit assigned to the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Reardon".

Brian Reardon, CAO

## Background:

At the January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Strategic Planning Workshop the Regional Board identified several issues it wished to address during its 2018 – 2022 term. One of those issues was the review of the Voting Unit assigned to the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) through Letters Patent.

RDCO's current Director representation and voting strength is as follows:



### Regional District of Central Okanagan

(incorporated August 24, 1967)

Voting Unit: 4,000 population

|                           | 2016 Census<br>including<br>subsequent<br>population<br>changes<br>certified by the<br>Minister <sup>1</sup> | Number of<br>Directors<br>(voting<br>strength/5) | Voting Strength<br>(population/<br>voting unit) |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Cities:</b>            |  |  |   |
| Kelowna                   | 129,044  | 7  | 33  |
| West Kelowna              | 32,655   | 2  | 9   |
| <b>Districts:</b>         |  |  |   |
| Lake Country              | 12,922   | 1  | 4   |
| Peachland                 | 5,428  | 1  | 2   |
| <b>Electoral Areas:</b>   |  |  |   |
| I - Central Okanagan East | 3,824  | 1  | 1   |
| J - Central Okanagan West | 11,009   | 1  | 3   |
| <b>Totals:</b>            | <b>194,882</b>   | <b>13</b>  | <b>52</b>                                       |

Populations certified as necessary by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing under sections 196 and 197 of the *Local Government Act* as per the definition in the Schedule to the Community Charter.

Effective November 1, 2017.

These population figures are to be used only in the determination of voting strength and Director representation.

1. Population includes people residing on Indian Reserves and boundary extensions to December 31, 2016.

The number of directors on a regional district board and the voting strength of each director are based on population, and the voting unit / divisor specified in the regional district's letters patent. Population is determined by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing based on the most recent Census data and adjusted in accordance with the *Local Government Act* and the *Community Charter*.

The Voting Unit is the number to which each municipality and each electoral area is entitled when deciding on matters requiring a weighted vote pursuant to the *Local Government Act*. The Voting Unit values vary significantly throughout the Province and range from 600 (Mt. Waddington RD) to 20,000 (Metro Vancouver). The Voting Unit value for the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) is 4,000. A divisor of 5 is used consistently throughout the Province.

The number of votes (voting strength) to which each municipality, electoral area or Treaty First Nation is entitled for the purposes of weighted voting is determined by dividing the population figure by the voting unit number. Weighted voting is used by regional district boards for financial decisions and decisions about the administration and operation of services. The purpose of voting strength in regional districts is to ensure balanced representation and voting that reflects the relative strength of interest that a jurisdiction has in the matter being voted on.

There are 27 regional districts in British Columbia. When regional districts were first created in the early to mid-1960's their composition was structured to achieve the balanced representation mentioned above. However, over the years, some jurisdictions have grown disproportionately faster than their neighbours. As a result, there are municipalities in 6 regional districts that have the majority vote on matters requiring a weighted corporate vote decision.

The table below illustrates who those 6 regional districts are and their respective composition:

| Regional District  | Largest Municipality   | Population           | Voting Unit | # of Directors | Voting Strength |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Central Okanagan   | City of Kelowna        | 129,044 /<br>194,882 | 4,000       | * 7 of 13      | 33 of 52        |
| Fraser Fort George | City of Prince George  | 74,003 /<br>94,506   | 4,000       | 4 of 14        | 19 of 30        |
| Nanaimo            | City of Nanaimo        | 90,504 /<br>155,698  | 2,500       | 8 of 19        | 37 of 68        |
| qathet             | City of Powell River   | 13,157 /<br>19,363   | 2,000       | 2 of 7         | 7 of 13         |
| Strathcona         | City of Campbell River | 33,465 /<br>44,671   | 1,500       | 5 of 13        | 23 of 34        |
| Thompson-Nicola    | City of Kamloops       | 90,280 /<br>132,663  | 3,250       | 6 of 26        | 28 of 52        |

The Regional District of Central Okanagan is the only regional district in British Columbia with their largest municipality having the ability to control matters requiring both a weighted and unweighted corporate vote. From a governance perspective, this is less than optimal.

Should the Board wish to address this issue, it will need to have its Voting Unit increased. The following 5 tables illustrate the impact of increasing the Voting Unit in increments of 500.

## Current Voting Unit of 4,000:

| Voting Unit (population) -        | 4,000         | Projected Census Year Population |                |                |                |                |                |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Jurisdiction                      | Growth Rate % | 2016                             | 2021           | 2026           | 2031           | 2036           | 2041           |
| Kelowna                           | 1.34%         | 131,654                          | 140,714        | 150,398        | 160,749        | 171,811        | 183,635        |
|                                   | #Directors    | 7                                | 8              | 8              | 9              | 9              | 10             |
| West Kelowna                      | 1.60%         | 33,751                           | 36,539         | 39,557         | 42,824         | 46,362         | 50,191         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 2                                | 2              | 2              | 3              | 3              | 3              |
| Lake Country                      | 1.40%         | 13,356                           | 14,317         | 15,348         | 16,453         | 17,637         | 18,907         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Peachland                         | 0.50%         | 5,610                            | 5,752          | 5,897          | 6,046          | 6,198          | 6,355          |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Electoral Area East               | 1.10%         | 3,954                            | 4,176          | 4,411          | 4,659          | 4,921          | 5,198          |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Electoral Area West               | 1.60%         | 11,383                           | 12,323         | 13,341         | 14,443         | 15,636         | 16,928         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| <b>Total Regional Population:</b> |               | <b>199,721</b>                   | <b>213,835</b> | <b>228,966</b> | <b>245,189</b> | <b>262,581</b> | <b>281,230</b> |

Kelowna will need an 8<sup>th</sup> Director following the next Census in 2021. Kelowna and West Kelowna will get an additional Director following the 2031 Census. The number of Directors from the other jurisdictions remains unchanged from today.

## Optional Voting Unit of 4,500:

| Voting Unit (population) -        | 4,500         | Projected Census Year Population |                |                |                |                |                |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Jurisdiction                      | Growth Rate % | 2016                             | 2021           | 2026           | 2031           | 2036           | 2041           |
| Kelowna                           | 1.34%         | 131,654                          | 140,714        | 150,398        | 160,749        | 171,811        | 183,635        |
|                                   | #Directors    | 6                                | 7              | 7              | 8              | 8              | 9              |
| West Kelowna                      | 1.60%         | 33,751                           | 36,539         | 39,557         | 42,824         | 46,362         | 50,191         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 2                                | 2              | 2              | 2              | 3              | 3              |
| Lake Country                      | 1.40%         | 13,356                           | 14,317         | 15,348         | 16,453         | 17,637         | 18,907         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Peachland                         | 0.50%         | 5,610                            | 5,752          | 5,897          | 6,046          | 6,198          | 6,355          |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Electoral Area East               | 1.10%         | 3,954                            | 4,176          | 4,411          | 4,659          | 4,921          | 5,198          |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Electoral Area West               | 1.60%         | 11,383                           | 12,323         | 13,341         | 14,443         | 15,636         | 16,928         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| <b>Total Regional Population:</b> |               | <b>199,720</b>                   | <b>213,834</b> | <b>228,965</b> | <b>245,187</b> | <b>262,580</b> | <b>281,229</b> |

Would result in Kelowna reducing by 1 Director immediately but adding an additional Director following 2021, 2031, and 2041 Census. West Kelowna would add 1 Director following 2036 Census. The number of Directors from the other jurisdictions remains unchanged from today.

## Optional Voting Unit of 5,000:

| Voting Unit (population) -        | 5,000         | Projected Census Year Population |                |                |                |                |                |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Jurisdiction                      | Growth Rate % | 2016                             | 2021           | 2026           | 2031           | 2036           | 2041           |
| Kelowna                           | 1.34%         | 131,654                          | 140,714        | 150,398        | 160,749        | 171,811        | 183,635        |
|                                   | #Directors    | 6                                | 6              | 7              | 7              | 7              | 8              |
| West Kelowna                      | 1.60%         | 33,751                           | 36,539         | 39,557         | 42,824         | 46,362         | 50,191         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 2                                | 2              | 2              | 2              | 2              | 3              |
| Lake Country                      | 1.40%         | 13,356                           | 14,317         | 15,348         | 16,453         | 17,637         | 18,907         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Peachland                         | 0.50%         | 5,610                            | 5,752          | 5,897          | 6,046          | 6,198          | 6,355          |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Electoral Area East               | 1.10%         | 3,954                            | 4,176          | 4,411          | 4,659          | 4,921          | 5,198          |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Electoral Area West               | 1.60%         | 11,383                           | 12,323         | 13,341         | 14,443         | 15,636         | 16,928         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| <b>Total Regional Population:</b> |               | <b>199,720</b>                   | <b>213,833</b> | <b>228,965</b> | <b>245,186</b> | <b>262,578</b> | <b>281,228</b> |

Would result in Kelowna reducing 1 Director immediately but adding an additional Director following 2026 and 2041 Census. West Kelowna would add 1 Director following 2041 Census. The number of Directors from the other jurisdictions remains unchanged from today.

## Optional Voting Unit of 5,500:

| Voting Unit (population) -        | 5,500         | Projected Census Year Population |                |                |                |                |                |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Jurisdiction                      | Growth Rate % | 2016                             | 2021           | 2026           | 2031           | 2036           | 2041           |
| Kelowna                           | 1.34%         | 131,654                          | 140,714        | 150,398        | 160,749        | 171,811        | 183,635        |
|                                   | #Directors    | 5                                | 6              | 6              | 6              | 6              | 7              |
| West Kelowna                      | 1.60%         | 33,751                           | 36,539         | 39,557         | 42,824         | 46,362         | 50,191         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 2                                | 2              | 2              | 2              | 2              | 2              |
| Lake Country                      | 1.40%         | 13,356                           | 14,317         | 15,348         | 16,453         | 17,637         | 18,907         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Peachland                         | 0.50%         | 5,610                            | 5,752          | 5,897          | 6,046          | 6,198          | 6,355          |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Electoral Area East               | 1.10%         | 3,954                            | 4,176          | 4,411          | 4,659          | 4,921          | 5,198          |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Electoral Area West               | 1.60%         | 11,383                           | 12,323         | 13,341         | 14,443         | 15,636         | 16,928         |
|                                   | #Directors    | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| <b>Total Regional Population:</b> |               | <b>199,719</b>                   | <b>213,833</b> | <b>228,964</b> | <b>245,185</b> | <b>262,577</b> | <b>281,226</b> |

Would result in Kelowna reducing 2 Directors immediately but adding an additional Director following 2021 and 2041 Census. The number of Directors from the other jurisdictions remains unchanged from today.

## Optional Voting Unit of 6,000:

| Voting Unit (population) -        | 6,000      | Projected Census Year Population |                |                |                |                |                |
|-----------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                   |            | Jurisdiction                     | Growth Rate %  | 2016           | 2021           | 2026           | 2031           |
| Kelowna                           | 1.34%      | 131,654                          | 140,714        | 150,398        | 160,749        | 171,811        | 183,635        |
|                                   | #Directors | 5                                | 5              | 6              | 6              | 6              | 7              |
| West Kelowna                      | 1.60%      | 33,751                           | 36,539         | 39,557         | 42,824         | 46,362         | 50,191         |
|                                   | #Directors | 2                                | 2              | 2              | 2              | 2              | 2              |
| Lake Country                      | 1.40%      | 13,356                           | 14,317         | 15,348         | 16,453         | 17,637         | 18,907         |
|                                   | #Directors | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Peachland                         | 0.50%      | 5,610                            | 5,752          | 5,897          | 6,046          | 6,198          | 6,355          |
|                                   | #Directors | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Electoral Area East               | 1.10%      | 3,954                            | 4,176          | 4,411          | 4,659          | 4,921          | 5,198          |
|                                   | #Directors | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| Electoral Area West               | 1.60%      | 11,383                           | 12,323         | 13,341         | 14,443         | 15,636         | 16,928         |
|                                   | #Directors | 1                                | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              | 1              |
| <b>Total Regional Population:</b> |            | <b>199,719</b>                   | <b>213,832</b> | <b>228,964</b> | <b>245,185</b> | <b>262,577</b> | <b>281,226</b> |

Would result in Kelowna reducing 2 Directors immediately but adding an additional Director following 2026 and 2041 Census. The number of Directors from the other jurisdictions remains unchanged from today.

Changes to the Voting Unit require an amendment to the Letters Patent that originally created the regional district and those amendments must be approved by the Province Governments' Lieutenant Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing.

There are two key questions that staff are looking for direction on:

1. Does the Board wish to review the RDCO Voting Unit with a view of changing the composition of the Regional Board?
2. If the answer to question No. 1. is yes, then does the Board have a preferred Voting Unit value it wishes to have the Lieutenant Governor in Council approve?

The answers to these questions will provide the clear direction staff will need should the recommendation in this report be approved by the Board.