



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)*

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 16th, 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 including subsequent population changes certified by the Minister ¹	Number of Directors (voting strength/5)	Voting Strength (population/ voting unit)
Cities:			
Kelowna	129,044	7	33
West Kelowna	32,655	2	9
Districts:			
Lake Country	12,922	1	4
Peachland	5,428	1	2
Electoral Areas:			
I - Central Okanagan East	3,824	1	1
J - Central Okanagan West	11,009	1	3
Totals:	194,882	13	52

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 / 194,882	4,000	* 7 of 13	33 of 52
Fraser Fort George	City of Prince George	74,003 / 94,506	4,000	4 of 14	19 of 30
Nanaimo	City of Nanaimo	90,504 / 155,698	2,500	8 of 19	37 of 68
qathet	City of Powell River	13,157 / 19,363	2,000	2 of 7	7 of 13
Strathcona	City of Campbell River	33,465 / 44,671	1,500	5 of 13	23 of 34
Thompson-Nicola	City of Kamloops	90,280 / 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
Total Regional Population:		199,721	213,835	228,966	245,189	262,581	281,230

Kelowna will need an 8th 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
Total Regional Population:		199,720	213,834	228,965	245,187	262,580	281,229

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 6,000:

Voting Unit (population) -	6,000	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	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
Total Regional Population:		199,719	213,832	228,964	245,185	262,577	281,226

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.

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
Total Regional Population:		199,720	213,833	228,965	245,186	262,578	281,228

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
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Total Regional Population:		199,719	213,833	228,964	245,185	262,577	281,226

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