

Staff Report

Presented By: Morgan McCulloch, Deputy Clerk
Meeting Date: December 8, 2025
Subject: Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review Update
Attachment(s): FlashVote Survey Results

Recommendation

That Council receive the Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review Update report for information.

Report Summary

Included in the 2025 Business Plan was a Division Highlight to review the Ward Boundaries and Council Composition. Staff conducted a FlashVote to gauge the public interest in undertaking a further review of the Ward Boundaries and Council Composition.

Background/Analysis

On [August 14, 2023](#), Council received a report indicating that the Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review would be included as part of the 2024 Business Plan to retain a consultant to conduct the review.

At the 2024 Budget Considerations on November 29, 2023, Council moved the hiring of a consultant to low priority and indicated that staff could conduct preliminary research. It was suggested if the residents indicated a further review was required, the need for a Request for Proposal for a potential consultant would be determined at that time.

A FlashVote Survey was conducted from November 25, 2025, to November 27, 2025, to determine if a more extensive review was required. The survey asked questions about the current Ward Boundaries and Council Composition and if residents believed a change was required. There were 421 participants to the survey. The full survey and comments can be viewed on [FlashVote](#). The results are as follows, and attached:

Ward Boundaries

- 52% want to keep ward boundaries with 36% wanting the existing boundaries maintained and only 21% wanting boundaries to be reviewed

- 26% want to get rid of wards and have everyone vote on every candidate
- 17% are not sure/other

Number of Councillors in each of the 3 Wards

- 51% want to keep two per ward
- 12% want to increase councillors to three per ward
- 9% want to reduce councillors to one per ward
- 27% are not sure/other

Council Composition

- 43% want to keep Council at 9 members
- 17% want 7 to 8 members
- 15% want 5 to 6 members
- 13% want to have more than 9 members
- 13% are not sure

The 421 responses to this survey represent a statistically significant indication of community sentiment towards maintaining the status quo. Therefore, it is recommended that for the 2026 Saugeen Shores Municipal Election the Ward Boundaries and Council Composition remain the same.

It is recommended that staff organize another FlashVote survey in 2027 to gauge whether there is renewed interest in making changes. Should the 2027 FlashVote reveal a preference for change, Council could consider hiring an independent consultant in 2028 to conduct expanded public consultations and in-depth research, ultimately leading to a comprehensive report with recommendations for potential adjustments to Ward Boundaries and Council Composition. To preserve neutrality and fairness throughout this process, staff must maintain an unbiased, arm's-length approach.

Linkages

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 1: Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community
- Business Plan Alignment: Corporate Services Major Initiative

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

No costs or revenue is associated with this report.

Prepared By: Morgan McCulloch, Deputy Clerk

Reviewed By: Jim Bundschuh, Director, Corporate Services

Approved By: Kara Van Myall, Chief Administrative Officer