

## **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

### **EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 20, 2016**

Item 1, Report No. 33, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on September 20, 2016.

#### **1 VAUGHAN WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW TEAM PREFERRED WARD ALIGNMENT REPORT**

The Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the City Clerk, dated September 12, 2016, be approved;
- 2) That the consultants or staff, at no extra cost, be directed to provide the following additional information:
  1. How the projected average number of constituents per ward compares and will compare with selected similar municipalities in and beyond the GTA;
  2. What level of resources are provided to Ward Councillors in comparator municipalities, and will be most appropriate in Vaughan, in light of these levels, given the increased population projected in each ward;
- 3) That all projections used in the formulation of this report be posted to the Ward Boundary Review website, along with reference to any other alternative sources of such projections; and
- 4) That the following Communications be received:
  - C1. Presentation material entitled, *“Report on Preferred Ward Alignment”*, date September 12, 2016; and
  - C2. Maps entitled, *“Map of Preferred Ward Alignment – with Existing Wards Shown”* and *“Map of Preferred Ward Alignment”*.

#### **Recommendation**

The City Clerk recommends:

1. That the presentation by the Vaughan WBR Team be received;
2. That the Vaughan WBR Team’s “Report on Preferred Ward Alignment” set out at Attachment 1 be received; and
3. That any comments respecting the Vaughan WBR Team’s report be referred to the Vaughan WBR Team for further analysis.

#### **Contribution to Sustainability**

Effective representation is a key component of a sustainable governance structure. In considering the need to amend ward boundaries, balanced ward populations is one factor to consider in ensuring effective representation, however other factors must also be taken into account. Indeed, any ward boundaries which may be adopted by Council must adhere to the principles established by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Carter* (Reference Re: Provincial Electoral Boundaries (Sask.)), [1992] 2 S.C.R. 158, namely:

*Parity of voting power, though of prime importance, is not the only factor... in ensuring effective representation.*

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*Notwithstanding the fact that the value of a citizen's vote should not be unduly diluted, it is a practical fact that effective representation often cannot be achieved without taking into account countervailing factors. First, absolute parity is impossible. It is impossible to draw boundary lines which guarantee exactly the same number of voters in each district.*

*Secondly, such relative parity as may be possible of achievement may prove undesirable because it has the effect of detracting from the primary goal of effective representation. Factors like geography, community history, community interests and minority representation may need to be taken into account to ensure that our legislative assemblies effectively represent the diversity of our social mosaic. These are but examples of considerations which may justify departure from absolute voter parity in the pursuit of more effective representation; the list is not closed.*

Given that the population of Vaughan will continue to grow, it should also be noted that conducting frequent ward boundary reviews and continually adjusting the boundaries is not a sustainable activity. The frequency of these reviews must be balanced against the need to ensure stability in the City's governance structure. Frequent changes to ward boundaries may create confusion.

#### **Economic Impact**

Economic impact will vary depending upon the ward configuration and council size ultimately determined by Council.

#### **Communications Plan**

A public consultation process managed by the City's independent consultant is a key part of the Ward Boundary Review. The communications strategy has and will continue to involve newspaper publications, public meetings, a dedicated web page, social media and direct electronic communication, stakeholder meetings, website banners, digital signage, and printed posters displayed at City Community Centres and Vaughan Public Libraries facilities.

It is anticipated that Council's decision respecting the adoption of a ward boundary configuration will take place at its meeting to be held in January, 2017 following the completion of the consultation and analysis portion of the project.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to facilitate a presentation to Committee of the Whole (Working Session) by the City's independent ward boundary review consultant, and to provide for further analysis of any comments that may be made at Committee as part of the consultant's refinement of the proposed ward configuration.

#### **Background - Analysis and Options**

At its meeting of April 23, 2013, in adopting as amended Item 2 of Report No. 17 of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session) (entitled "Petition Re: Ward Boundaries") Council amongst other things approved:

*That Council commit to conducting a broad-based ward boundary review sufficiently in advance of the 2018 municipal election, to allow for broad public consultation, the collection of independent evidence on population growth, the development of a finite number of ward boundary proposals for consideration by the public, and ultimately a single proposed configuration that in itself will be the subject of public consultation and Council's consideration;*

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In April 2016, the City of Vaughan engaged an independent consultant team (the Vaughan WBR Team) to carry out a comprehensive ward boundary review. The Vaughan WBR Team is a partnership among the Canadian Urban Institute, Beate Bowron Etcetera, The Davidson Group and Hemson Consulting.

In keeping with Council's recommendations the Vaughan WBR Team was tasked with bringing forward a number of options for a re-aligned ward structure for Vaughan. To develop these options, the Vaughan WBR used population projections supplied by York Region, established a 'target year of 2022', aimed for a +/- 10% in voter parity and ensured that all options result in a ward structure that can last the City of Vaughan for the 2018, 2022 and 2026 municipal elections. All of the options that resulted meet the test of effective representation.

The three options developed by the Vaughan WBR Team were the subject of four community meetings, individual interviews with Members of Council, an online survey, and meetings with the York Region District School Board and the York Catholic District School Board. In addition, a questionnaire was used to seek participants' preferences on the options, and to obtain suggestions for refinements.

Attachment 1, The Vaughan WBR Team's "Report on Ward Alignment" contains greater detail on the consultation process, the optional configurations considered, and the preferred option being presented to Committee of the Whole (Working Session). A map of the preferred option is set out at Appendix F to the Vaughan WBR Team's report.

**Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)**

This report supports the goals established by Council in the Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map by facilitating the conduct of a ward boundary review, a specified priority of Council in the Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018).

**Regional Implications**

There are no regional implications directly associated with the adoption of this report, however it should be noted that the roles of *Local Councillors* and *Local and Regional Councillors* formed part of the discussions and context for the ward boundary review, and that a review of representation on Regional Council is currently being undertaken by the Region of York.

**Conclusion**

This report contributes to an independent ward boundary review being undertaken by the City's consultant. Comments made during consideration of this item at Committee of the Whole (Working Session) will be taken into consideration and may result in refinements to the consultant's proposed ward configuration.

**Attachment**

Attachment 1 Vaughan WBR Team "Report on Preferred Ward Alignment"

**Report prepared by:**

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(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)