

**Council and Ward Structure Review**  
**TERMS OF REFERENCE**  
**July 11, 2016**

**OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the review is to establish an effective and efficient model of elected representation within the Township of Rideau Lakes.

This shall include consideration of the number of wards, ward boundaries, the number of elected officials, and elections by ward and/or at large.

The ultimate goal is to establish a Council and ward structure that provides effective representation and enables the Township's strategic focus of progressive rural governance.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Overarching:

- 1) **Effective Representation:** Consider an overriding principle of effective representation as described by the 1991 Supreme Court of Canada decision Re Provincial Electoral Boundaries (Sask.) (the "Carter" decision), and subsequent Court and OMB decisions related to the matter.

Council Structure:

- 2) **Appropriate Constituent to Councillor Ratio:** Ensure Councillors can adequately and faithfully address the interests of their constituents in a meaningful and direct manner. Consideration should also include the rural municipal context, seasonal demands, future community change and demographic trends.
- 3) **Balancing Effective Governance with Council Costs:** Consideration should be given to a model that achieves effective governance, while balancing the current and future costs of Council administration and remuneration.
- 4) **Both Ward and At Large Systems May Hold Merit:** It is agreed that both a ward and an at large electoral system for Councillors should be investigated and considered (the Mayor is required to be elected at large under the Municipal Act).

Ward Structure:

- 5) **Representation by Population:** Consider an equitable distribution of constituents to Councillors. Some variation in the ratio is acceptable. This may include consideration of effective representation, geography, community characteristics, growth and community change and seasonal and other community interests.

- 6) **Population and Electoral Trends:** Plan and accommodate for increases or decreases in population to maintain a general equilibrium in a ward-based representation system over a 10 - 20 year horizon.
- 7) **Diversity of Inter-Township Needs, Assets and Interests:** Arrange ward boundaries to recognize the various local geographic needs, assets, histories and community interests, and pool these local attributes together on the basis of compatibility and interdependence to allow for effective representation.
- 8) **Geography and Ward Boundaries:** Utilizing geographical, topographical, historical and major manmade features to provide for easy understanding, visual representation and communication of ward boundaries. Ward boundaries shall not divide a legally conveyable lot of record. Ward boundaries should not divide lands designated for specific purposes where a contiguous nature is important (settlement areas, prime agriculture, aggregate designations etc.). Ward boundaries should support effective delivery of existing and potential future shared service models with neighbouring municipalities.

#### **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

1. Decreasing the number of elected officials
2. Increase the number of elected officials
3. Number of elected officials to remain status quo
4. Reconfiguration of existing ward system
5. Decreasing number of wards
6. Increase the number of wards
7. Ward system to remain as status quo
8. Dissolution of wards for at large system, or combination thereof
9. Any other option identified by the consultant

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### Council

- Approve Terms of Reference
- Award RFP for consulting services
- Members participate in the consultant led individual elected official interviews
- Monitor the public consultation phases of the review: Council will not participate as a body or as individuals in the public process and sessions; however, they may attend the community consultation meetings
- Decision maker on final recommendations

##### Consultant (subject to RFP approval/contract)

- Gather and review all pertinent background information, using, but not limited to, the RFP, Township documents, sector best practices and peer analysis
- Develop and implement a communication, consultation and public feedback solicitation plan that is appropriate for the rural/seasonal context
- Perform individual elected official interviews

- Develop detailed options, including related considerations and analysis under each option, based on research and professional opinion, giving meaningful consideration to input from elected officials and relevant data sources
- Perform community consultation meetings and solicit public feedback on options
- Present options to Council, along with outcome of feedback solicitation and professional analysis
- Recommend preferred option and alternative preferred option to Council
- Report to Council on implementation options, including direct implementation, a plebiscite or a question or by-law on the ballot. Consideration of administrative and statutory implications (election timelines, appeals etc.) shall be included
- Provide professional services at OMB, on an as needed basis

#### Chief Administrative Officer and Clerk

- Draft terms of reference for Council approval
- Develop and issue RFP
- Coordinate and administer the consultant's contract and services
- Gather and analyse background information in collaboration with the consultant to support the work of the consultant where and when prudent and/or cost efficient
- Approve the consultant developed communication plan, consultation strategy, and feedback solicitation strategy
- Support the provision of public notice and implementation of the communication plan where Township resources apply (website, Facebook etc.)
- Maintain a webpage on the review with support of IT
- Report status updates to Council, and coordinate the consultant's reports and attendance at Council, as required
- Implement the ultimate decision/direction of Council

#### **PROPOSED WORK PLAN**

Subject to the RFP, contract negotiations and approved alternative recommendations of the consultant, the work plan shall contain the following stages:

- Perform background research and data gathering to inform exercise, consultation and reports;
- Develop and implement a communication plan, including a contact database, and a public consultation and feedback solicitation plan;
- Perform individual elected official interviews (10) to solicit their input and ideas;
- Develop detailed options for consideration;
- Gain public feedback on the detailed options;
- Report to Council on options, along with public feedback and professional analysis.
- Provide recommendation to Council, including preferred and option and preferred alternative option;
- Outline implementation options and considerations to Council; and
- Council provides direction.

#### **GENERAL TIMELINES**

May - June 2016

- Approve Terms of Reference
- Issue RFP

#### July - August 2016

- Award RFP, enter into contract for services
- Approve communication, consultation and solicitation feedback plan
- Perform background research
- Elected official interviews

#### August - October 2016

- Develop detailed options report
- Community consultation meetings (August)
- Solicit public feedback on options

#### October – November 2016

- Report to Council reviewing detailed options, incorporating public feedback, considerations, and guiding principles.
- Consultant recommendation to Council of preferred option and preferred alternative option.
- Report on implementation options.

#### January – February 2017

- Council direction on preferred option and approach to implementation.

**NOTE: Implementation timelines will vary based on direction provided.** For a change to be effective for the 2018 election, implementation, and the resolution of any applicable appeals, will need to occur in advance of January 1, 2018.