



**Subject: Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review**

**To: Council**

**From: Corporate Services Department**

Report Number: 2024-93

Meeting Date: April 9, 2024

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**Recommendation:**

That Corporate Services Department Report 2024-93 be received; and

That Council approve the transfer of \$30,000 from the over/short reserve to the Council Composition and Ward Boundary review budget.

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**Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council increase the Council composition and ward boundary review budget to \$80,000.

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**Background:**

The last ward boundary review in the City of Port Colborne happened before the 2014 municipal election. The results of the 2014 ward boundary review were presented to Council at its regular meeting on June 10, 2013, by way of Report 2013-15. Council decided to refer Report 2013-15 to a Special Meeting on July 3, 2013, where Council resolved to maintain the City's current electoral system and the current composition of City Council.

A municipality should typically undertake a review of its ward boundaries every three to four election cycles to ensure the electoral system represents the principles of effective representation. Port Colborne did not initiate a ward boundary review before the 2018 or 2022 municipal elections. A review of the ward boundaries within the City before the 2026 municipal election is therefore in keeping with best practices.

Council approved the Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review in the 2023 budget. In February 2024, with the support of Financial Services, the Clerk's Division

initiated the request for proposal (RFP) process for the Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review project. Clerk's Division staff worked with the Finance Division and the Chief Administrative Officer to create the RFP and to score the proposals.

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### **Discussion:**

After the Clerk's and Finance Division and the Chief Administrative Officer scored the Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review proposals, staff identified the required budget for this project is \$80,000. Council approved \$50,000 in the 2023 budget; therefore, to continue with this project, a budget adjustment of \$30,000 is required.

As per the Purchasing Policy, when a project is likely to be 20% more costly than its approved budget, Council must approve the additional funding. Clerk's and Finance Division staff propose that Council approve funding the additional \$30,000 from the over/short reserve. The over/short reserve is the result of staff completing previously approved projects and closing the projects out under budget, and the reserve currently has \$114,000 available.

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### **Internal Consultations:**

Clerk's Division staff have worked with the Finance Division and the Chief Administrative Officer in preparing the request for proposals, scoring the proposals, and discussing budget implications.

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### **Financial Implications:**

In consultation with the Finance Division, Clerk's Division staff propose the budget adjustment of \$30,000 be funded and transferred from the over/short reserve, which currently contains \$114,000.

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### **Public Engagement:**

Public engagement will be incorporated throughout the Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review process.

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### **Strategic Plan Alignment:**

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar(s) of the strategic plan:

- Welcoming, Livable, Healthy Community
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**Conclusion:**

To ensure the effective representation of Port Colborne electors, Council had approved an undertaking to review the composition of Council and the ward boundary system in Port Colborne. Clerk's Division staff recommend that Council approve increasing the budget for the Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review project to \$80,000, with the transfer of an additional \$30,000 from the over/short reserve.

Respectfully submitted,

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**Report Approval:**

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.