



COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE OF REPORT February 10, 2015
MEETING TYPE & DATE Electoral Area Services Committee Meeting of
February 17, 2015
FROM: Community & Regional Planning Division
Planning & Development Department
SUBJECT: ELECTORAL AREA E/B BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT AND
STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION
FILE: 6480-20-E/2012

PURPOSE/INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to ensure that affected stakeholders are afforded ample opportunity to provide input to proposed Electoral Area boundary changes.

RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION

That CVRD staff undertake a comprehensive consultation process respecting a proposed boundary adjustment between Electoral Area E (Cowichan Station/Sahtlam/Glenora) & Electoral Area B (Shawnigan Lake) following the Cowichan-Koksilah OCP consultation process.

BACKGROUND

In 2014, the CVRD initiated a review of the Cowichan-Koksilah OCP. Based on public input, a Plan Area was established which included all of Electoral Area E, the part of Electoral Area F historically included in the Plan Area, and part of Electoral Area B. Respecting that many Electoral Area B residents north of the Koksilah River and in the Hillbank Road areas wish to join Electoral Area E through a formal electoral area boundary adjustment, the CVRD Board (September 10, 2014) directed staff to explore this possibility in conjunction with the OCP process:

1. *That the area specified for the Cowichan-Koksilah Official Community Plan include Electoral Area E in addition to lands within Electoral Area F and B as detailed in the staff report to EASC on July 22, 2014;*
2. *That during the Cowichan-Koksilah OCP review, a secondary analysis be undertaken with respect to the impacts of potential boundary adjustments between Electoral Areas E and B;*
3. *That Community and Regional Planning staff proceed with the OCP process as outlined in the staff report.*

While electoral area boundary adjustment was previously envisioned as a secondary process, there has been emerging pressure to make it a priority. On January 27, 2015, CVRD Planning & Development staff reported to the Electoral Area Services Committee and received the following direction:

THAT staff be authorized to prepare a request to the Province of British Columbia, respecting a proposed adjustment to the Electoral Area E (Cowichan Station/Sahtlam/Glenora) & B (Shawnigan Lake) boundaries in the area to the north of the Koksilah River, including such mapping and financial analysis that may be required in support of the application.

ANALYSIS

Staff have since examined BC Assessment Authority owner information in order to create a refined boundary map, to avoid splitting large property holdings among multiple electoral areas (attached). In addition, property values have been examined to determine that the converted assessed value of the lands subject to the proposed boundary adjustment is \$7,413,918, which represents 4.46% of Electoral Area B's total converted assessed value.

Prior to preparing a request to the Provincial Government to adjust the boundaries between Electoral Area E and Electoral Area B, it is incumbent upon the CVRD to demonstrate that:

- The proposed boundary adjustment is practical and resolves issues of access to services;
- The proposed boundary adjustment does not create financial hardships for affected property owners in Electoral Area B (Shawnigan Lake) and other electoral areas which participate in shared services with Electoral Area B (e.g. Kerry Park Recreation); and
- All affected stakeholders have been adequately consulted with ample opportunity to provide input; this includes consultation with First Nations.

An electoral area boundary change can be completed by the Province without a CVRD referendum or alternate approval process. However, the CVRD must demonstrate in its request to the Province that it has completed its due diligence in meeting the above-noted criteria. Further to this, staff have concerns with proceeding with a consultation process for the proposed Electoral Area boundary adjustment at the present time as:

- Members of the public may be confused about the purpose of consultation and whether it is to provide input to the OCP, which deals with planning and land use management, vs. the proposed Electoral Area boundary, which relates to political representation, the geographic location of voting stations and service provision; and
- There are insufficient resources within the Planning and Development Department to pursue concurrent consultation processes for the OCP and proposed Electoral Area boundary adjustment.

Given the factors noted, staff are recommending that a comprehensive consultation process be undertaken with respect to the proposed Electoral Area boundary adjustment following completion of the Cowichan-Koksilah OCP consultation process.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed boundary adjustment requires a detailed financial analysis to determine taxation impacts on Electoral Areas B and E in addition to other Electoral Areas which have service arrangements with Electoral Area B.

COMMUNICATION CONSIDERATIONS

It is anticipated that the consultation process for the proposed Electoral Area boundary adjustment would take 3-4 months to complete and involve, at a minimum, the following:

- CVRD Media Release
- Newspaper notification;
- Notification letters to affected property owners;
- CVRD web page – providing information about the proposed boundary change, process, and opportunities for input including an on-line comment form;
- Referrals (which may involve in-person meetings) to:
 - Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure;
 - Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations, Crown Tenures;
 - Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, Government Structure Branch;

- Cowichan Tribes;
- Malahat First Nation;
- Community meetings in all Electoral Areas that may be impacted financially by the proposed boundary adjustment.

STRATEGIC/BUSINESS PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

Consultation with affected stakeholders regarding a proposed electoral area boundary adjustment supports service excellence.

Prepared by:

Reviewed by:

AKjerulf MCIP RPP

Ann Kjerulf, Senior Planner

Mike Tippett, Manager

Ross Blackwell, General Manager

Corporate Services Review:

Mark Kueber, General Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Proposed Electoral Area Boundary Map

