



ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW POLICY

Rural Municipality of Big Arm, No. 251 Electoral Boundary Review Policy

Last review date: May 9, 2022
Next review date: January 1, 2026

POLICY NUMBER

200-7 ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW POLICY

Purpose

- 1 This policy establishes how and when R.M. of Big Arm, No. 251 (the Municipality) determines and reviews its electoral boundaries.



Policy Statement

- 2 Council by resolution may divide the Municipality into voting subdivisions (Divisions) and, from time to time, alter the boundaries of those Divisions, as authorized by section 49.1 of the *Municipalities Act*, and the *Local Government Election Act*.
- 3 Equal and effective representation is fundamental to any democratic electoral system and is the Municipality's primary goal of an electoral boundary review.
 - (1) Equal representation is the principle that all votes count equally and therefore the population of each Division should be relatively equal.
 - (2) Effective representation helps ensure that Municipality residents have the ability to access an elected representative equal in strength to the rest of the population.
- 4 The Municipality is committed to designing clear, distinct, and easily identifiable electoral boundaries.



Policy

Criteria

- 5 The Municipality's electoral boundaries are reviewed and established based on the following criteria:



ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW POLICY

Population per Division

- (1) The optimum Population per Division is the primary factor in determining electoral boundaries. The Municipality's total population divided by the number of Divisions is the optimum Population per Division.
- (2) For the purpose of this policy, the Municipality's total Population is determined using the last Municipality census profile and/or the Federal Census official population list from Statistics Canada, whichever was completed most recently.
- (3) Additional factor to be considered to determine if variance in population is acceptable is the fact that seasonal populations do not utilize the facilities, infrastructure of the municipality on a 12-month basis and in fact have a permanent residence at an alternate location outside the municipality.
- (4) Given the natural geographic boundary created by Provincial Highway #2 which creates smaller Divisions on the easterly side of the municipality and larger divisions on the westerly side of the municipality and further, given the extensive infrastructure development in the form of bridges on the easterly side of the municipality and seasonal population fluctuations due to lake recreational activity;

Electoral boundaries are designed so the Population of each Division is within a range of $\pm 30\%$ from the optimum east of the natural divide of Provincial Highway #2 and Electoral boundaries are designed so the Population of each Division is within a range of $\pm 55\%$ from the optimum west of the natural Divide created by Provincial Highway #2.

Future Growth

- (4) Electoral boundaries are designed with the objective, wherever possible, to recognize how the timing of potential growth areas will affect population deviations.

Easily Identifiable Boundaries

- (5) Wherever possible, electoral boundaries are identifiable to the public by using major roadways and significant natural and man-made barriers such as the river, ravines, railways, etc.

Least Number of Changes

- (6) Electoral boundary proposals should involve the fewest changes possible to accomplish the required adjustments.



ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW POLICY

Communities of Interest and Diversity Within Divisions

- (7) Electoral boundaries are designed to ensure communities with common interests or sharing a common roadway access are kept within the same Division.
- (8) Where possible, the distribution of residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and green space areas between Divisions is taken into account so that each Division contains a mixture of these developments.
- (9) Where possible the optimum population per division should take into account the Municipality Plan, Intermunicipal Plans, and Area Structure Plans.
- (10) Where possible, the optimum Population per Division should respectively include both urban and rural areas.

Historical Divisional Boundaries

- (11) Consideration is given to the historical electoral boundaries within an area but it is not mandatory that these boundaries are used.

Frequency

- 6 A review of the electoral boundaries will be monitored on an ongoing basis, but at a minimum at least once every 4 years preferably prior to a general election, to ensure criteria of this policy are met. Said review is to be completed by a Committee appointed by council which is to include administration and council representatives.
- 7 Any revisions to the electoral boundaries must be completed at least one year before a Municipality general election commences.
- 8 Reporting of recommendations of reviews conducted are to occur within 3 months from the commencement of the review and the recommendations are to be made to council at a regular meeting.
- 9 Public consultation is to be an established part of the review process and public notice of the intent to engage in a review and public notice of the report prior to presentation to council is required.





ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW POLICY

References

Legal Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Local Government Election Act,</i>• <i>Municipalities Act,</i>
Related Plans, Bylaws, Policies, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• R.M. of Big Arm, No. 251 “Elections Bylaw
Related Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• N/A



Policy History

Amendment Date(s) – Amendment Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• N/A
Review Date(s) – Review Outcome Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• N/A



Definitions

8 In this policy:

- (1) “Council” means the duly elected Council of R.M. of Big Arm, No. 251;
- (2) “Municipality” means R.M. of Big Arm, No. 251;
- (3) “Division” means a municipal voting subdivision for the purpose of electing members of Council pursuant to the *Municipalities Act* and the R. M. of Big Arm, No. 251 “Election Bylaw”, as may be amended or replaced from time to time;
- (4) “Population” means the total number of people residing within a defined area; and
- (5) “R.M. of Big Arm, No. 251” means Rural Municipality of Big Arm, No. 251 as a municipal corporation and the geographical area within its jurisdictional boundaries, as the context requires.