



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** May 25, 2022
From: Jason Kita **File:** 01-0103-01/2022-Vol
Director, Intergovernmental Relations and 01
Corporate and Strategic Planning
Re: **Proposed New Federal Electoral District Boundaries - Richmond**

Staff Recommendation

That the information outlined in the report titled "Proposed New Federal Electoral District Boundaries – Richmond" dated May 25, 2022, from the Director, Intergovernmental Relations and Corporate and Strategic Planning, be received for information.

Jason Kita
Director, Intergovernmental Relations and Corporate and Strategic Planning
(604-276-4091)

Att. 5

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Policy Planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

At the General Purposes Committee meeting on May 16, 2022, the following referral motion was carried:

That staff take a look at the proposed changes to British Columbia's federal electoral district boundaries with respect to Steveston-Richmond East, and provide comments.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #5 Sound Financial Management:

5.4 Work cooperatively and respectfully with all levels of government and stakeholders while advocating for the best interests of Richmond.

This report is in response to the above referral motion.

Analysis

Background

The Constitution of Canada requires that federal electoral districts be reviewed after each decennial (10-year) census to reflect changes and movements in Canada's population. The current federal redistribution process began in October 2021 and is led by independent commissions working separately in each province to establish electoral boundaries. The Chief Electoral Officer is tasked with applying the representation formula found in the Constitution to determine the new allocation of seats. A representation order describing and naming Canada's future electoral districts is expected to be completed in September 2023. Changes to electoral districts will be applied in the first general election called at least seven months after the representation order is proclaimed and it is anticipated that these changes will not come into effect until April 1, 2024, at the earliest.

Proposed Changes for British Columbia

The 2022 Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of British Columbia (Commission) was established as an independent commission on November 1, 2021, pursuant to the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act* to reconfigure the boundaries of British Columbia's electoral districts for the election of members of Parliament. The increase in electoral districts by one from 42 to 43 is the result of increased population in the Province. The 2021 decennial census reports an increase of about 600,000 residents to a current population of 5,000,879. On the basis of 43 electoral districts, this translates into about 116,300 people per electoral district. This number is called the electoral quota.

The census information received in February 2022 records significant, but uneven, population growth in the Province. In some electoral districts, population has grown dramatically. In others, including some in the Lower Mainland, population has grown at a slower pace. Some of the fastest growing districts are ones that, even in 2012, were at the higher end of variance from the

electoral quota, a feature compounding the effect of the last 10 years' population growth. An established pattern of rapid growth between the North Shore and the Fraser Valley has continued. Population growth on Vancouver Island is concentrated in the southern portions and Nanaimo. Electoral districts in the Southern Interior, already on the high end, have experienced significant population growth.

Proposed Changes for Richmond

In the 2012 redistribution of electoral districts, Richmond was divided into the following two districts:

1. Richmond East (currently known as Steveston-Richmond East) – population 102,230 according to 2021 Census of Population.
2. Richmond West (currently known as Richmond Centre) – population 107,707 according to 2021 Census of Population.

With new growth in the region and to allow for Richmond to achieve the electoral quota of 116,300 people, a reconfiguration is being proposed for the two Richmond electoral districts. Please see **Attachment 1** for maps of the current Steveston-Richmond East electoral district and the proposed Richmond East electoral district and **Attachment 2** for maps of the current Richmond Centre electoral district and the proposed Richmond West electoral district. Under the previous 2012 redistribution of electoral districts, both Richmond districts would remain under quota, thus the reason for the proposed changes.

In order to achieve the electoral quota, the population of the new proposed electoral districts in Richmond are:

1. Richmond East (currently known as Steveston-Richmond East) – population 116,764
 - Key changes: elimination of the Steveston area, incorporation of areas in Delta (Tilbury, Annacis Island, Nordel, and area north of 72 Avenue west of 112 Street), and incorporation of areas in New Westminster located on Lulu Island.
2. Richmond West (currently known as Richmond Centre) – population 119,857
 - Key changes: incorporation of the Steveston area.

Considerations for Proposed Richmond East Electoral District

There are potential impacts and considerations for the proposed Richmond East electoral district and include, but are not limited to:

- Adding other municipalities to the Richmond East electoral district (City of Delta and City of New Westminster) may dilute the voice of Richmond residents on federal issues.
- Cities have different issues and priorities and these may not be addressed by a single Richmond East representative.
- This situation may be confusing for Richmond East voters. Richmond-specific electoral districts could promote consistent and focused federal representation on the wide variety of issues that affect the municipality.
- Adding smaller areas of other municipalities could introduce other goals and priorities that may not be relevant for Richmond.

- The electoral quota is 116,300 but there are several proposed electoral districts under the 116,300 population quota across B.C. (16 out of 43 electoral districts). Please see **Attachment 3** for a list of proposed electoral districts for B.C. and their 2021 population.
- At its meeting on May 16, 2022, the City of Delta Council passed a motion to express Delta's opposition to the proposed changes to Delta's electoral boundary and request that Delta remain as a single electoral district.

Alternative Proposed Option

Populations for the electoral districts are taken from the most recent census data (in this case, 2021 Census of Population) which determines population during a single point in time. Inevitably, some people are not counted for various reasons (their household did not receive a census questionnaire, they were not included in the questionnaire completed for the household, they may have been missed because they have no usual residence, etc.). To determine how many individuals were missed, Statistics Canada conducts postcensal coverage studies of a representative sample of individuals. Results of these studies in combination with the census counts are used to produce population estimates which take into account net undercoverage. Postcensal coverage study results are usually available two years after enumeration date. These will be used to revise and update the population estimates based on the 2021 Census results.

In past years, this net undercoverage ranges from 1% up to 5% in the Metro Vancouver region. Taking a conservative approach and factoring an undercoverage of 2.5% for the 2021 Census data, Richmond's total population would increase to 215,320. In addition to the undercoverage, Richmond is estimated to grow by 8.0% over the next five years, bringing Richmond's total population to 232,545. This total population estimation will occur very close to when any changes to the electoral boundaries will take place.

An alternative option in keeping Richmond as two distinct Richmond-only electoral districts is to take into consideration the conservative estimated undercoverage (2.5%) along with the estimated growth (8.0%). **Attachment 4** shows a map and population of the current electoral districts with 2021 Census data. **Attachment 5** shows a map and population of alternative electoral districts moving a small area of West Cambie from Richmond Centre to Steveston-Richmond East in order to balance the population of the two electoral districts. This map also shows the population in 2026 with the Census undercoverage and estimated growth added. Each electoral district is in-line with the electoral quota.

This option can be proposed to the Commission as an alternative.

Key Stakeholders

Affected neighbouring municipalities include City of Delta and City of New Westminster. The alternative option outlined above allows the City of Delta to add 15,701 back to their electoral quota and the City of New Westminster to add 10,983 back to their electoral quota.

Timeline

The main steps in the redistribution of federal electoral districts, as set out in the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, are outlined in below. They are currently in Step 5 – Public Hearings from May to October 2022.

Steps	Expected Timeline
1. Allocation of seats	Mid-October 2021
2. Establishment of commissions	November 1, 2021
3. Publication of census data	Mid-February 2022
4. Publication of commission proposals	April-August 2022
5. Public hearings	May-October 2022
6. Completion of the report	November-December 2022
7. Objections from MPs	March-May 2023
8. Commissions consider objections	May-June 2023
9. Representation order	September 2023
10. Boundaries established	April 2024

← They are here

Public Engagement

The Commission is required by the Act to hold sittings to hear comments and feedback by interested parties about the recommended changes to the boundaries of electoral districts. The Commission is scheduled to sit in Richmond at the Richmond Olympic Oval on Monday, September 12, 2022 at 7:00pm.

In addition, the Commission is accepting written comments until October 3, 2022.

The Federal Electoral Districts Redistribution 2022 website contains information on all the proposed new electoral districts and can be found at:

https://redecoupage-redistribution-2022.ca/index_e.aspx

Actions for Council's Consideration

Any or all of the following could be actions considered by Council:

- A letter be sent to the 2022 Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of British Columbia to express Richmond's opposition to the proposed changes to Richmond's electoral boundaries for Richmond East and Richmond West;
- The City of Richmond be represented at the Public Hearing on September 12, 2022 in Richmond and speak in opposition to the proposed changes; and/or
- A letter be sent to Richmond Members of Parliament stating Richmond's opposition to the proposed changes.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Should the proposed changes to Richmond's Federal Electoral Boundaries be approved, Steveston-Richmond East would become Richmond East and include areas of Delta and New Westminster as part of the new electoral district. If Council chooses, opposition to the proposed changes can be communicated to the Commission in writing and through the Public Hearing process.



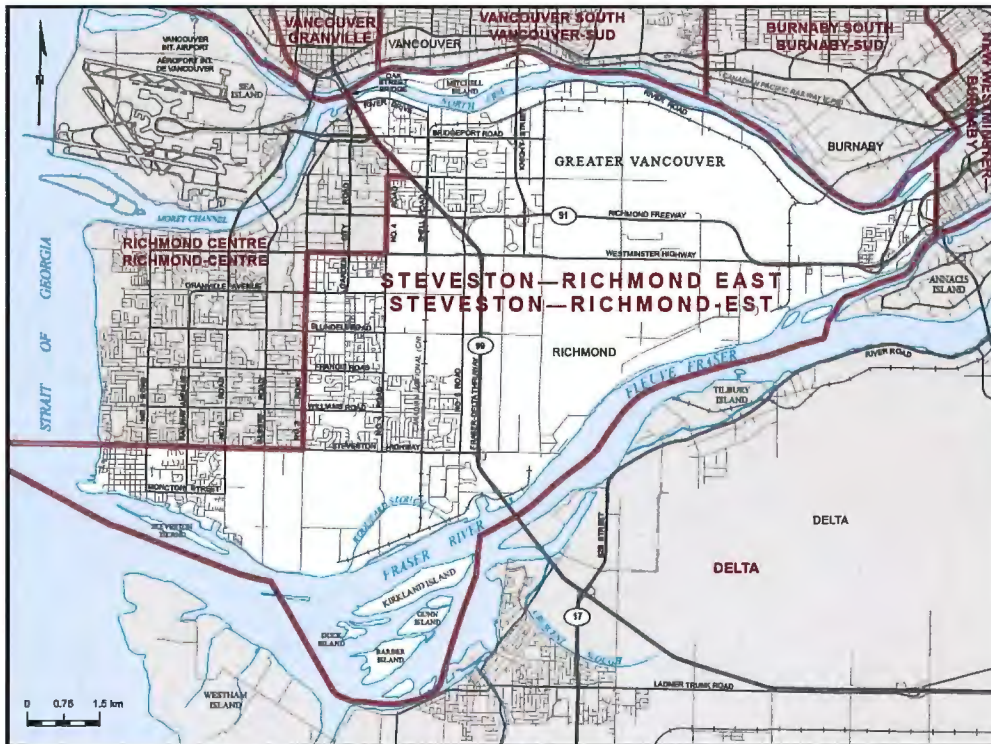
Jason Kita

Director, Intergovernmental Relations and Corporate and Strategic Planning
(604-276-4091)

- Att. 1: Current Steveston-Richmond East Electoral District Map and the Proposed Richmond East Electoral District Map
- 2: Current Richmond Centre Electoral District Map and the Proposed Richmond West Electoral District Map
- 3: Proposed Electoral Districts for B.C. and Populations
- 4: Current Electoral District Map with 2021 Census Population
- 5: Alternative Electoral District Map with 2021 Census Population and 2026 Population Estimate

Richmond Electoral Districts Current and Proposed

Steveston-Richmond East (current)



Richmond East (proposed)

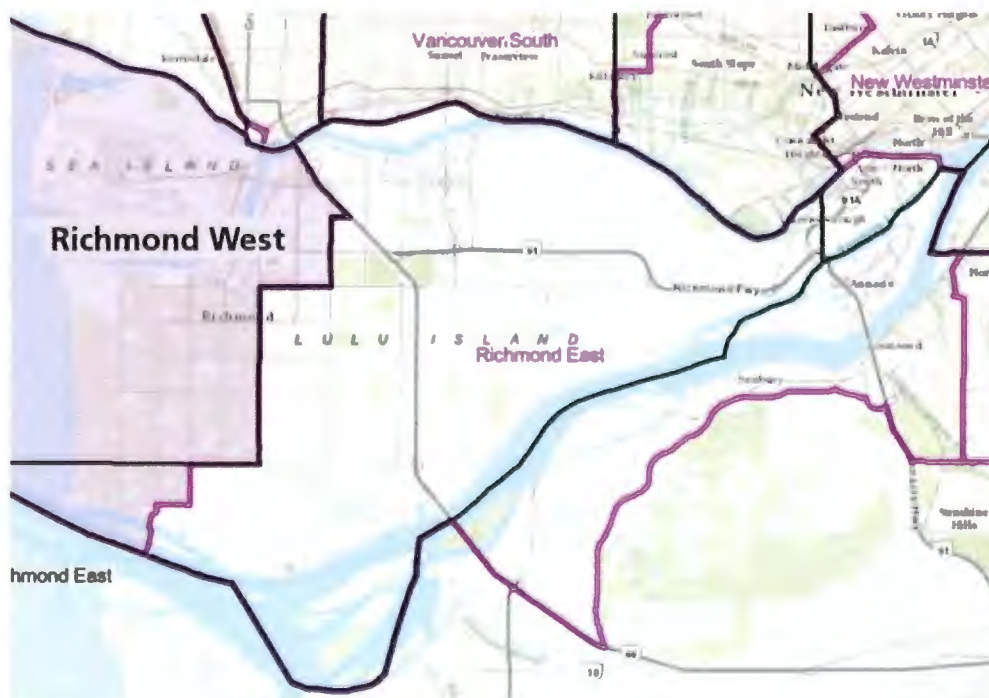


Richmond Electoral Districts Current and Proposed

Richmond Centre (current)



Richmond West (proposed)



Proposed Electoral Districts for B.C. and Populations

PROPOSED ELECTORAL DISTRICT NAME (CURRENT NAME)	POPULATION
Abbotsford	117,561
Burnaby North--Seymour	116,426
Burnaby South	116,391
Cariboo—Prince George	117,160
Coquihalla (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola)	110,776
Chilliwack (Chilliwack—Hope)	116,113
Cloverdale—Langley City	118,518
Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam	115,171
Courtenay—Alberni	123,827
Cowichan—Malahat—Langford	123,679
Delta	117,020
Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke	120,606
Fleetwood—Port Kells	116,776
Kamloops—Thompson—Lytton (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	115,087
Kelowna (Kelowna—Lake Country)	109,006
Kootenay—Columbia	111,821
Langley—Aldergrove	117,066
Mission—Maple Ridge (Mission--Matsqui--Fraser Canyon)	117,220
Nanaimo—Ladysmith	121,493
New Westminster—Bridgeview (New Westminster—Burnaby)	118,377
North Island—Powell River	126,130
North Okanagan—Shuswap	109,966
North Vancouver	114,310
Pitt Meadows—Fort Langley (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge)	116,538
Port Moody—Coquitlam	116,470
Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies	116,962
Richmond West (Richmond Centre)	119,857
Saanich—Gulf Islands	122,147
Skeena—Bulkley Valley	89,689
South Okanagan—West Kootenay	108,973
South Surrey—White Rock	115,956
Richmond East (Steveston—Richmond East)	116,764
Surrey West (Surrey—Newton)	115,780
Surrey Centre	117,715
Vancouver Centre	115,964
Vancouver East	115,759
Vancouver Granville	117,201
Vancouver Kingsway	117,209
Vancouver Quadra	115,873
Vancouver South	117,680
Victoria	123,482
West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	119,155
Vernon—Lake Country	111,205
TOTAL POPULATION	5,000,879



