

RM of Edenwold No. 158

# Division Boundary Alteration Policy



Approval Date: December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Takes Effect: December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022



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### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish regulations setting out the triggering events, manner, and frequency in which the Rural Municipality of Edenwold No. 158 (“the RM”) will review divisional boundaries
- Provide that each division of the RM has, as nearly as is reasonably practical, the same population or number of voters
- Promote transparency and accountability through the divisional boundary alteration process

### 2. Authority

Section 49.1(2) of the *Municipalities Act* provides Council with the ability to establish a policy setting out the manner in which it will review the divisions of the rural municipality.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all municipal employees and Councillors.

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Administrator (being the Administrator of the RM appointed pursuant to Section 110 of the *Municipalities Act*) is responsible for:

- Reviewing past divisional boundary alteration reports;
- Pursuant to this policy, determining when to begin the Division Boundary Alteration Report (“the Report”) process;
- Conducting population projections, land use analysis, and other research to make a recommendation on whether divisional boundaries should be altered or preserved;
- Presenting the Report and its recommendations to Council;
- Organizing, advertising, and hosting a public meeting to review Report recommendations;
- Organizing and promoting a public survey to gather public input;
- If divisional boundary alteration is recommended by a motion of Council, making submission to the Ministry of Government Relations;
- Responding to all questions and concerns posed by the Ministry of Government Relations; and
- Following Council’s decision to adopt or reject the Report’s recommendations, publishing the Report on the RM’s website for public review.

Employees (being employees of the RM) are responsible for:

- Assisting the Administrator by providing information to assist them in completing the Report.

The Reeve and Council of the RM are responsible for:

- Reviewing the Report and making a motion to either accept, amend, or reject the Report's recommendations.

## **5. Policies and Conditions**

### **5.1. Preface**

The RM of Edenwold No. 158 prioritizes transparency and accountability. As outlined in the Strategic Plan 2021-2026, the RM strives to uphold and enhance municipal governance by providing quality municipal systems and protocols. One way the RM supports municipal governance is through the regular review of divisional boundaries. By altering divisional boundaries in an expected and standard manner, residents, business owners, and other stakeholders can be confident their voices are fairly represented in Council.

This policy provides clear guidelines for the review and altering of divisional boundaries. Whether changing due to population growth or decline, transitions in land use, or other reasons, this document ensures division boundary alterations happen in a predictable and measured way after comprehensive review and public engagement.

### **5.2. Division Boundary Alteration Review Guidelines**

#### Responsibility

The Administrator is responsible for writing and presenting the Report pursuant to this policy. The Administrator may request the assistance of other employees to assist them in completing the Report. The Administrator will receive no additional remuneration for their involvement in writing the Report.

#### Frequency & Timeframe to Complete

The Administrator will begin a review of divisional boundaries because of specific events. The Administrator must present the Report to Council within 6 months of any event listed below. These include:

- After the publication of the Canadian Census Population and Dwelling Counts (for example: if Statistics Canada releases 2021 census data on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the Administrator must complete and present a Report before June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022);
- After a motion of Council to review divisional boundaries (for example: if Council makes a motion on March 14<sup>th</sup>, the Administrator must complete and present a Report before September 14<sup>th</sup>);
- After Community Planning issues a Certificate of Approval for a subdivision that the Administrator believes will add more than 15% to the population of one or more divisions; or
- After the RM issues a Development Permit for a building that the Administrator believes will add more than 15% to the population of one or more divisions.

In all cases where a Report is required due to a specific event, the Administrator will attempt to present the Report to Council at least 180 days before the next regularly scheduled municipal election or by-election.

### Divisional Demographics

To align with Section 49.1(2) of the *Municipalities Act*, the Administrator should, as nearly as is reasonably practical, maintain the same population in each municipal division. As such, each division should strive to meet the following parameters:

- Have a population that is within 15% of the mean population of all divisions;
- If a division has a population greater than 15% of the mean, it must shrink and give population to other divisions until the division has a population that is at most 15% greater than the mean;
- If a division has a population lesser than 15% of the mean, it must grow (or amalgamate with other divisions) until the division has a population that is at least 15% smaller than the mean;
- Subject to Council approval, the Administrator may increase the variance by up to 10% (allowing for a ratio of 25% rather than 15%) to ensure geographic congruity; and
- Subject to Council approval, the Administrator may decide divisional boundaries that, as nearly as is reasonably practical, maintain an equal combination of urban and rural voters.

For example: A municipality has 7 divisions, with populations of:

<b>Division 1</b>	<b>Division 2</b>	<b>Division 3</b>	<b>Division 4</b>	<b>Division 5</b>	<b>Division 6</b>	<b>Division 7</b>
170	325	310	295	600	235	500

The mean population of all divisions is 348. The 'greater than' and 'lesser than' ratios of 15% result in a minimum population of 296 and a maximum population of 400. Pursuant to this policy, Divisions 1, 4, and 6 are underpopulated, and Divisions 5 and 7 are overpopulated. To balance these values, the Administrator may suggest altering the divisional boundaries to create the following divisions:

<b>Division 1</b>	<b>Division 2</b>	<b>Division 3</b>	<b>Division 4</b>	<b>Division 5</b>	<b>Division 6</b>	<b>Division 7</b>
170+126	325	310	295+10	600-201	235+165	500-100

These changes would result in the following final division populations:

<b>Division 1</b>	<b>Division 2</b>	<b>Division 3</b>	<b>Division 4</b>	<b>Division 5</b>	<b>Division 6</b>	<b>Division 7</b>
296	325	310	305	399	400	400

### Report Content

The Report must include the following information:

- Reason for conducting a review of divisional boundaries;
- Estimated population in each of the current divisions;
- Estimated population growth over the next 5 years in each of the current divisions;
- Legal description of all divisional boundaries;
- Analysis of population, land use, and expected change in each division;
- Comparative analysis of population, land use, and expected change between divisions;
- Minimum of 2 divisional boundary alteration options;
- Analysis of divisional boundary alteration options accounting for population, land use, and expected change over the next 5 years;

- Public Engagement Plan (including at least 1 Open House and 1 Survey);
- 'What-we-Heard' Report summarising public engagement findings; and
- Recommendation for Council to either alter or preserve divisional boundaries based on the Report's analysis and findings.

#### Publication of the Report

No matter Council's final decision (whether to alter or preserve divisional boundaries), the Administrator must make the Report available on the RM's webpage for public review within 1 month of the date it is presented to Council. When the Report is made public, the Administrator may bring attention to its publication through a social media post, newsletter, or other communication.

#### **5.3. Council Motion to Alter Divisional Boundaries**

Pursuant to Section 49(4) of the *Municipalities Act*, Council must make a resolution requesting divisional boundary alteration to the Ministry of Government Relations. As such, following resolution, the Administrator must submit to the Ministry:

- The resolution of Council requesting the division boundary alteration;
- An explanation of the reasons for the request;
- A copy of the Report; and
- A map and description of each division, including the new divisional boundaries.