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City of Kelowna

MEMORANDUM

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DATE: May 9, 2007  
FILE: 113-01  
  
TO: City Manager  
  
FROM: Boundary Extension Review Team  
  
RE: Westside Governance – Voting Process Upon Amalgamation

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Council rescind the resolution no. R344/07/04/02:

*THAT Council approve, subject to results of the consultation process currently underway with the citizens of Kelowna and if the Westside Governance Study Area voters favour amalgamation with the City of Kelowna, the Neighbourhood Constituency voting process for municipal elections in 2008 and 2011;*

*AND THAT the City of Kelowna create two neighbourhood constituencies, one for all municipal lands on the east side of Okanagan Lake bridge having eight elected Council representatives and one for the west side of Okanagan Lake bridge having two elected Council representatives;*

*AND THAT the Mayor be elected at-large by both neighbourhood constituencies;*

*AND THAT the voting process for the City of Kelowna revert to the At-Large system for the Mayor and all Councillors beginning in 2014;*

*AND THAT Council defer consideration to retain the ten Council representatives or to revert back to the current eight Council representatives for municipal elections beyond 2011;*

*AND THAT the Minister of Community Services be advised of the approved recommendations to facilitate development of the Supplementary Letters Patent for the City of Kelowna;*

*AND FURTHER THAT the Westside Governance Committee be advised of the approved recommendations and requested to add this information to their website and communication materials.*

AND THAT Council approve, should the Westside Governance Study Area voters favour amalgamation with the City of Kelowna on June 16, 2007, a mixed voting process for municipal elections in 2008;

AND THAT the City of Kelowna create two neighbourhood constituencies, one for all municipal lands on the east side of Okanagan Lake bridge having six (6) elected Council representatives and one for the west side of Okanagan Lake bridge having two (2) elected Council representatives;

AND THAT two (2) Council representatives and the Mayor be elected at-large by both neighbourhood constituencies;

AND THAT the voting process for the City of Kelowna revert to an at-large system for the Mayor and all Councillors beginning in 2011;

AND THAT a total of ten (10) Council representatives be retained for the 2008 and 2011 municipal elections only;

AND THAT the Minister of Community Services be advised of the approved recommendations to facilitate development of the Supplementary Letters Patent for the City of Kelowna;

AND FURTHER THAT the Boundary Extension Review Team be directed to host two information sessions within the Westside governance study area as soon as possible to ensure factual information is available to Westside voters regarding the amalgamation option.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

At the March 28, 2007 regular meeting, Council considered a number of voting system options for an amalgamated City and subsequently approved the creation of two neighbourhood constituencies with two (2) Council representatives elected from the Westside governance study area and eight (8) Council representatives elected from the existing City of Kelowna boundaries. The allocation was consistent with population percentages.

At the final meeting of the Westside Governance Committee on April 11, 2007, the following motion was passed unanimously:

*THAT the Westside Governance Committee request of the Minister of Community Services and the City of Kelowna that this proposal (Kelowna's Proposal) be reviewed with a view to reducing the transition period to four years from seven years and implementing one of the other mixed option proposals available to Kelowna Council which would provide the Westside electors a strong partnership in the expanded City. There mixed option proposals include, among others:*

- Two Neighbourhood Constituencies with two elected on the Westside, six elected on the Eastside and two others plus the Mayor elected at large; or*
- One Neighbourhood Constituency for the Westside with two Councillors and the remaining eight Councillors plus the Mayor elected at large.*

Further, at the April 10, 2007 Special Meeting of Council, knowing that the above resolution was forthcoming, the following motion was passed:

*THAT Council is open to considering other options should the Westside Governance Committee put forward a different structure for an expanded Kelowna Council, other than the neighbourhood constituency system that was approved by Council at its April 2, 2007 meeting.*

The City will also receive a letter from Ida Chong, Minister of Community Services (letter to be distributed at the May 14th Council meeting) encouraging Council to review its previous decision on representation and expressing her support for either of the 2 options outlined by the Westside Governance Committee.

While either of the two options presented are more difficult to explain and understand than an at-large or neighbourhood constituency system, it would not be implemented until the 2008 municipal election which provides ample time to educate the electorate.

The recommendation provides for the at-large election in 2011 to include 10 Council seats (plus Mayor) and is intended to provide an extended transition period before returning to 8 Council seats in 2014. It is recognized that there will be a number of plans and strategies in progress from the date of amalgamation to dates beyond the 5 year transition period and the retention of 10 Council seats will help facilitate this process. The associated administrative and space costs will be reduced in 2014 and beyond. The City of Vancouver is presently the only municipal government in British Columbia with more than 8 Council seats.

The City has been encouraged by the Ministry of Community Services (letter attached) to provide Westside governance study area residents with as much factual information regarding the potential impacts of an amalgamation as is reasonable to assist them in making their decision to remain unchanged, incorporate or join Kelowna. Meeting dates and spaces are currently being arranged.

#### **LEGAL/STATUTORY AUTHORITY:**

Local Government Act – Section 36.1

#### **LEGAL/STATUTORY PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS:**

Adoption of a bylaw under Section 36.1 will be required subsequent to a decision on amalgamation.

#### **INTERNAL CIRCULATION TO:**

City Clerk

#### **EXISTING POLICY:**

Presently, all Council members and the Mayor are elected at-large.

#### **FINANCIAL/BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS:**

Neighbourhood Constituency voting would increase the cost of municipal elections due to increased complexity in preparing for the elections (multiple ballot preparations, more complex programming for voting machines, etc.), the increased advertising and public notification that would be necessary to explain the process, likely increased staffing and

staff training costs, and other costs. Staff has not had an opportunity to estimate the actual dollar value, as compared to the increase that would occur simply by having the Westside area join Kelowna under an at-large election format as the City currently has.

**PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS:**

A Neighbourhood Constituency voting system would have personnel implications at election times.

**ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

AND THAT Council approve, should the Westside Governance Study Area voters favour amalgamation with the City of Kelowna on June 16, 2007, a mixed voting process for municipal elections in 2008;

AND THAT the City of Kelowna create one neighbourhood constituency for all Westside governance study area lands on the west side of Okanagan Lake bridge having two (2) elected Council representatives;

AND THAT eight (8) Council representatives and the Mayor be elected At-Large by both City of Kelowna residents and the neighbourhood constituency;

AND THAT the voting process for the City of Kelowna revert to an at-large system for the Mayor and all Councillors beginning in 2011;

AND THAT a total of ten (10) Council representatives be retained for the 2008 and 2011 municipal elections only;

AND THAT the Minister of Community Services be advised of the approved recommendations to facilitate development of the Supplementary Letters Patent for the City of Kelowna;

AND FURTHER THAT the Boundary Extension Review Team be directed to host two information sessions within the Westside governance study area as soon as possible to ensure factual information is available to Westside voters regarding the amalgamation option.

Considerations that were not applicable to this report:

**TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

**EXTERNAL AGENCY/PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Submitted by:

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P. Macklem, Director of Financial Services  
On behalf of the Boundary Extension Review Team

Cc: Director of Corporate Development      Director of Works & Utilities  
Communications Manager                      Director of Corporate Services



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May 8, 2007

Paul Macklem  
Director of Financial Services  
Chair, Boundary Extension Review Team  
City of Kelowna  
1435 Water Street  
Kelowna BC V1Y 1J4

Dear Paul:

During the Westside Governance Study (Study) process, the City of Kelowna (the City) did a very good job of ensuring residents of the City as well as residents of the Westside area received accurate information regarding the implications of the City expanding its boundaries to include the Westside. The participation of Mayor Sharon Shepherd, Councillor Robert Hobson and Councillor Colin Day on the Westside Governance Committee (the Committee) during the Study allowed for an open discussion of issues and assumptions associated with the boundary extension option.

Even though the Study is now complete and the Committee dissolved, I know that the City continues to review the impacts of the boundary extension option for residents on the Westside, if the Westside voters indicate a preference for joining the City in the June 16 referendum. Council has already committed to establishing a statutory reserve fund, a Westside Task Force and an advisory committee for infrastructure and service upgrades. In addition, I understand that Council will be reconsidering the electoral representation issue at its meeting on May 14, 2007.

Updated information will continue to be generated by the City as the restructure process moves to referendum. In order to build on the City's accessibility and openness to-date with information of importance for Westside residents, I would encourage the City to consider how to share up-to-date information with Westside residents. Ideally, this would be in a forum that provides an opportunity for residents to ask questions and clarify Council policy and commitment related to the option of joining the City.

Yours truly

Lois-Leah Goodwin  
Director, Intergovernmental Relations

Ministry of  
Community Services

Intergovernmental Relations and  
Planning

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