

Subject: 2024 Ward Boundary Review

File Number: ACS2024-OCC-GEN-0016

**Report to Finance and Corporate Services Committee on 3 December 2024
and Council 11 December 2024**

Submitted on November 22, 2024 by Caitlin Salter MacDonald, City Clerk

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Ward: Citywide

Objet : Examen des limites de quartiers 2024

Numéro de dossier : ACS2024-OCC-GEN-0016

Rapport présenté au Comité des finances et des services organisationnels

Rapport soumis le 3 décembre 2024

et au Conseil le 11 décembre 2024

Soumis le 2024-11-22 par Caitlin Salter Macdonald, greffière municipale

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Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville

REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Finance and Corporate Services Committee recommend that City Council approve the ward boundary amendments set out in Documents 1, 2 and 3, and as described in this report, to take effect for the 2026 Municipal Elections.

RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des finances et des services organisationnels recommande au Conseil municipal d'approuver les modifications apportées aux limites de

quartiers, présentées dans les documents 1, 2 et 3, et comme il est décrit dans le présent rapport, que ces changements entrent en vigueur lors des élections municipales de 2026.

BACKGROUND

Legislative Framework for Ward Boundaries

The *Municipal Act, 2001* (the Act) provides much of the foundation for governance and authority for Ontario municipalities, including the statutory framework for the establishment of ward boundaries. Section 222(1) of the Act provides municipalities with the authority to establish and change ward boundaries through a process broadly outlined in the legislation.

The Act requires that municipalities establish their ward boundaries by by-law and prescribes deadlines for when a by-law must be in effect in order for ward boundaries to be used in a municipal election [Subsections 222(8) and 222(9) of the Act]. A by-law establishing new ward boundaries must be in force before January 1, 2026, for any ward boundary changes to be in effect for the 2026 Municipal Elections. If a by-law establishing new ward boundaries is appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT), the notices of appeal must be withdrawn, or the Tribunal must have issued an order to affirm or amend the by-law, before January 1, 2026.

Effective Representation

There are no statutory criteria to govern the establishment of ward boundaries. However, common law in Canada requires that the principle of “effective representation” be applied when reviewing ward boundaries. This principle is a key matter that would be considered by the OLT in the event of any appeal of a Council-approved by-law to establish ward boundaries. Among the components of effective representation to be balanced include voter parity, natural/physical boundaries, geographic communities of interest, ward history, and capacity to represent.

Previous Ward Boundary Review in the City of Ottawa

Ward Boundaries were most recently reviewed in 2020 ahead of the 2022 Municipal Election. On December 9, 2020, City Council approved the report titled, [Ottawa Ward Boundary Review 2020 – Recommendations Report](#). This comprehensive review adjusted multiple ward boundaries and created Ward 24 – Barrhaven East. The boundaries established in the 2022 review were designed to ensure effective

representation for three – possibly four – elections being 2022, 2026, 2030 and 2034.

In 2009, City Council directed a staff to undertake a minor ward boundary adjustment to redistribute lands known as the “Fernbank Lands,” which had been added to the Urban Growth Boundary in 2005, from a rural ward (Ward 21) to the adjacent suburban wards (Wards 6 and 23). The report titled, [2009 Ward Boundary Review – Fernbank Lands](#) was approved by City Council on June 24, 2009, and the new boundaries took effect for the 2010 Municipal Elections.

Boundary Adjustment – Ward 6 – Stittsville and Ward 21 – Rideau-Jock

On September 18, 2024, City Council approved Motion No. 2024-42-09, which directed staff to bring forward a report to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee no later than Q4 2024 to redistribute lands from Ward 21 – Rideau-Jock to Ward 6 – Stittsville in advance of the 2026 Municipal Elections, as follows:

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 222 of the Municipal Act, 2001 municipalities are authorized the power to divide or redivide a municipality into wards or to dissolve existing wards; and

WHEREAS a comprehensive review of ward boundaries was conducted in 2020, leading to the adoption of the Ward Boundaries and Council Composition By-law No. 2021-3 on January 27, 2021, which was in effect for the 2022 Municipal Elections; and

WHEREAS the current southern boundary for Ward 6 – Stittsville is a property line between Stittsville Main Street to the west and Shea Road to the east; and

WHEREAS a portion of the land between the Ward 6 – Stittsville southern border and Flewellyn Road within Ward 21 – Rideau-Jock is part of the new urban expansion area; and

WHEREAS established principles of ward boundaries include geographic communities of interest and physical boundaries;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that City Council direct staff to bring forward a report to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee no later than Q4 2024 that would enable the lands described in Document 1 to be redistributed from Ward 21 – Rideau-Jock to Ward 6 – Stittsville in advance of the 2026 Municipal Elections.

Boundary Adjustment – Ward 9 – Knoxdale-Merivale and Ward 24 – Barrhaven East

On October 30, 2024, City Council approved Motion No. 2024-45-08, which directed staff to bring forward a report to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee no later than Q4 2024 to redistribute lands from Ward 9 – Knoxdale-Merivale to Ward 24 – Barrhaven East in advance of the 2026 Municipal Elections, as follows:

WHEREAS in accordance with Section 222 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, municipalities are authorized the power to divide or redivide a municipality into wards or to dissolve existing wards, and

WHEREAS a comprehensive review of ward boundaries was conducted in 2020, leading to the adoption of the Ward Boundaries and Council Composition By-law No. 2021-3 on 27 January 2021, which took effect at the 2022 municipal elections, and

WHEREAS the current northern boundary for Ward 24 – Barrhaven East between Woodroffe and the Rideau River follows the NCC Greenbelt boundary, and

WHEREAS Fallowfield Road is a vital transportation corridor for Barrhaven residents, and

WHEREAS Longfields Drive between Woodroffe Avenue and Bill Leathem Drive is an important access route for Barrhaven East residents, and

WHEREAS established principles of ward boundaries include geographic communities of interest and physical boundaries,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that City Council direct staff to bring forward a report to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee no later than Q4 2024 that would change the northern boundary of Ward 24 – Barrhaven East east of Woodroffe Avenue as depicted in documents 1 and 2 in advance of the 2026 municipal elections.

From the Woodroffe/Fallowfield intersection heading east, follow the centre line of Fallowfield Road to the intersection at Prince of Wales Drive. Then follow the middle of the municipal right-of-way between 2501, 2747, and 2821 Prince of Wales Drive straight to the middle of the Rideau River. Then follow the existing boundary between wards 9 and 10 south to where the current boundary between wards 9 and 24 meet.

DISCUSSION

Boundary Adjustment – Ward 6 – Stittsville and Ward 21 – Rideau-Jock

On September 18, 2024, City Council approved Motion No. 2024-42-09, which directed staff to bring forward a report to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee no later than Q4 2024 to redistribute lands from Ward 21 – Rideau-Jock to Ward 6 – Stittsville in advance of the 2026 Municipal Elections.

Following Council approval, a letter was distributed by the Councillors of Wards 6 and 21 to the affected property owners advising of the proposed boundary adjustment and that a public meeting would be held to solicit feedback. On November 13, 2024, the Ward Councillors and staff met with residents at the CARDEL Recreation Complex to hear feedback on the proposed boundary adjustment.

Further to the feedback received, Councillors Gower and Brown are recommending revising the boundary adjustment set out in Motion No. 2024-42-09 to what is proposed in Document 1. The revised boundaries would keep the rural properties west of Poplarwood Avenue within Ward 21 – Rideau-Jock and redistribute the urban expansion area to Ward 6 – Stittsville, in keeping with the principles of effective representation. To ensure that clear geographical boundaries are used, a small number of residential properties located along Flewellyn Road between Poplarwood Avenue and Shea Road would be redistributed to Ward 6 – Stittsville, effective November 15, 2026.

Boundary Adjustment – Ward 9 – Knoxdale-Merivale and Ward 24 – Barrhaven East

On October 30, 2024, City Council approved Motion No. 2024-45-08, which directed staff to bring forward a report to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee no later than Q4 2024 to redistribute lands from Ward 9 – Knoxdale-Merivale to Ward 24 – Barrhaven East in advance of the 2026 Municipal Elections.

The proposed boundary, set out in Document 2, would move the boundary between Wards 9 and 24 from property lines between Woodroffe Avenue and the Rideau River to the physical boundary of Fallowfield Road, a major arterial road feeding into Barrhaven East. The boundary adjustment would redistribute approximately 10 residential properties at the intersection of Fallowfield Road and Merivale Road to Barrhaven East, along with a few commercial and residential properties along Prince of Wales Drive, to Barrhaven East. The boundary adjustment would also move the portion of Longfields Drive between Bill Leathem Drive and Woodroffe Avenue to Barrhaven

East.

Boundary Adjustment – Ward 11 – Beacon Hill-Cyrville and Ward 13 – Rideau-Rockcliffe

In reviewing the proposed boundary adjustments set out in Motion No. 2024-42-09 and Motion No. 2024-45-08, staff noted that a boundary line between Ward 11 and Ward 13 split a single commercial property in two. While the property address and the majority of the parcel of land is located within Ward 13, a small portion of the commercial property is located within Ward 11. As such, staff are recommending a minor boundary adjustment to ensure the entire property is located within Ward 13, as described in Document 3.

Next Steps

Should City Council approve the ward boundaries set out in Documents 1, 2 and 3, the City Clerk will bring forward a ward boundary by-law for enactment, to take effect for the 2026 Municipal Elections, as required by the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

Should Council enact a by-law to change the ward boundaries, there would be a 45-day period in which notices of appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) – setting out the objections to the by-law and the reasons in support of the objections – could be filed with the City. The City would be required to provide public notice specifying the last date for filing a notice of appeal within 15 calendar days after Council enacted the by-law.

Within 15 calendar days after the last day for filing a notice of appeal for the OLT, the City would be required to forward any notices of appeal to the OLT. The City is also required to provide any other information or material that the OLT requires in connection with the appeal.

The OLT would hear the appeal and may make an order affirming, amending or repealing the by-law.

In the event of an appeal, provided that any decision made by the OLT occurs before January 1, 2026, it is anticipated that the new ward boundaries would be in effect for the October 2026 Municipal Elections. If the OLT decision occurs after January 1, 2026 (and did not repeal the by-law), any new ward boundaries would come into force for the 2030 Municipal Elections.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The appeal process in respect of a by-law amending ward boundaries is set out above.

CONSULTATION

In accordance with Subsection 222(2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, the City is required to give notice of its intention to pass a ward boundary by-law and hold at least one public meeting to consider the matter. The December 3, 2024, meeting of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee would satisfy this requirement.

In addition, and as noted in this report, public consultation was undertaken on the proposed boundary adjustment between Wards 6 and 21.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – Ward Boundary Adjustment – Wards 6 and 21

Document 2 – Ward Boundary Adjustment – Wards 9 and 24

Document 3 – Ward Boundary Adjustment – Wards 11 and 13

DISPOSITION

Should City Council approve changes to the ward boundaries as set out in Documents 1, 2 and 3, staff will draft the required enacting by-law to be brought forward to City Council.

Should Council enact the ward boundary by-law, staff will undertake the required statutory steps described in this report, including providing public notice, receiving any notices of appeal, and forwarding said notices of appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). Legal Services would defend any OLT and/or court appeal relating to the enacting by-law.