



**REGION OF WINDSOR AND WEST HANTS MUNICIPALITY
CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

Meeting Agenda

Monday, February 25, 2019 – 6:00 p.m.

West Hants Council Chambers, 76 Morison Drive



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- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
 - 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – Additions and/or Deletions
 - 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – February 4th, 2019
 - 4. DELEGATIONS / PRESENTATIONS (if any)**
 - (a) Governance Review / Council Size – Staff Report**
 - i. Stantec Report**
 - ii. Professor Jamie Baxter Report**
 - 5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**
 - (a) Project Workplan & Schedule - Update**
 - (b) RFP's / Studies - Update**
 - (c) Communications Interim Support - Update**
 - (d) Project Administrator – Update**
 - (e) Co-ordinators Report**
 - 6. NEW BUSINESS**
 - (a) Rural Representation Committee**
 - (b) Happy Community Funding Request**
 - (c) Budget Update**
 - 7. BILL 55, SECTION 12 ITEMS**
 - 8. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**
 - 9. Correspondence**
 - (a) February 20, 2019 – Councillor Jennifer Daniels**
 - 10. IN-CAMERA (if any)**
 - 11. NEXT CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING DATE(S) & ADJOURNMENT**



**CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE OF THE REGION OF WINDSOR AND WEST HANTS
MUNICIPALITY
RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

To: Members of the Transition Committee

Submitted by: _____
Louis Coutinho, CAO, Town of Windsor

Martin Laycock, CAO, Municipality of West Hants

Date: 25 February 2019

Subject: Council Size Report

Origin:

The *Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act* was passed by the Province of Nova Scotia on October 11, 2018, and the Town of Windsor and the Municipality of the District of West Hants have agreed to join to consolidate into a single municipality.

Legislative Authority:

- Section 10(1) of the *Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act* requires the Co-ordinator to "apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for a determination of the number of councillors and the boundaries of the polling districts in the Regional Municipality.
- Municipal Government Act 368;
- Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board Rules of Practice and Procedure Respecting Municipal Government Act Proceedings.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that:

...the Co-ordinating Committee accept the recommendation of the February 21, 2019 Stantec report and move forward with the assessment of scenarios for nine and eleven districts in Phase 2 of the Governance study.

Background:

The determination of council size and boundaries is a critical early requirement of the municipal consolidation process. Polling districts must be determined so that potential candidates for council positions may submit their nomination papers for the first Regional Municipal Council election scheduled for March 7, 2020. Working backwards from that date and including the NSUARB process scheduled dates (June 24-25, 2019), a decision must be made on council size at the earliest date possible. The Co-ordinating Committee meets on 25 February 2019.

The Committee has the benefit of two very detailed studies to help them with decision-making and the Committee is encouraged to read these reports in detail as they both provide detail on all of the issues and considerations that need to be evaluated in arriving at a decision. The two reports referred to are (1) Stantec: *Windsor-West Hants Governance Review-- Council Size Report dated February 19, 2019* (2) Dr. Baxter: *Report to the Co-Ordinating Committee on Council Size and Polling Districts for the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality*

Discussion:

The Committee has two very robust reports to rely on for facts and information on how decisions have been made in the past and this Committee is fortunate to have this research to be able to make an informed decision.

Dr. Jamie Baxter's report provides background context and analysis on the two key questions of institutional design for establishing a new regional municipality. First, what the optimal size for the new regional council should be, and secondly, addressing the applicable considerations for appropriate geographic boundaries. Dr. Baxter's findings are very valuable and provide the context and rationale that the Committee will need when making its decision.

Stantec has delivered its report and recommendations on council size following its consultation with the public. The surveys conducted are designed to give the Committee a feel for what the interested members of the community think.

(1) *Windsor-West Hants Governance Review-- Council Size Report dated February 19, 2019*

Stantec has submitted its report and it is enclosed for the Committee's study and evaluation.

They undertook five public meetings with the assistance of municipal staff from Windsor and West Hants. These were held at the following locations:

- Tuesday, January 29, Avondale Community Hall
- Wednesday, January 30, Brooklyn Civic Center
- Thursday, January 31, South West Hants Fire Hall, Vaughan
- Tuesday, February 5, Windsor Community Center
- Thursday, February 7, Falmouth Community Hall

The survey was primarily done online. Concerns arose that it did not adequately reflect those with little or no access to the internet for a variety of reasons. As a result, 5100 paper copies of the surveys were produced and distributed in the rural communities. These copies were either hand-delivered or provided at a variety of locations. All told, there were 609

completed online surveys. An additional 136 hard copies of the surveys were collected and inputted by Stantec.

(2) "Report to the Co-ordinating Committee on Council Size and Polling Districts for the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality" undertaken by Dr. Jamie Baxter, Law School Dalhousie February.14, 2019

Professor Baxter was requested by the Co-ordinator to undertake a literature review of Council size as it relates to amalgamated municipalities. In his review the Professor examined the following materials:

- legislation relevant to the Nova Scotia Utility & Review Board's (UARB) determination of council size and polling district boundaries in cases of regional consolidation;
- the UARB's past decisions upon applications to establish or revise council size and polling district boundaries for the three pre-existing regional municipalities in Nova Scotia: Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Halifax Regional Municipality, and the Region of Queens Municipality;
- reports submitted to the UARB in support of the above applications and;
- relevant Canadian and comparative research literature on municipal council size and the distribution of polling districts.

Additionally, Dr. Baxter makes some observations on what "style of council" the Committee will be looking for in the future Regional Municipality. Thus, depending on whether the Committee wishes to see a Council that operates like a Board of Directors or a Board of Management will make a difference in the decision. This may impact on the desired council size. Dr. Baxter states "The relevant statutory criteria for determining the optimal council size and distribution of polling districts are quite broad, and they offer precious little insight into how to address the trade-offs inherent in key decisions around the institutional design of municipal governance. While there are numerous factors that might bear on such decisions, this report proposes that, in the context of regional consolidation, council size and the distribution of polling districts should be addressed as issues of fundamental balance between sets of competing but legitimate values or aims."

Policy Implications:

Professor Baxter's very detailed report is an excellent document and is an insight into some noticeable rationales or goals for regional consolidation emerging from the various studies and reports published on the topic in Nova Scotia. Dr. Baxter also notes that the NSUARB has maintained something of a strict separation between balancing "representation" with "governance" on one side, and "community" with "regional" interests on the other. He views that a clear understanding of these different goals remains crucial for analyzing how the issues of council size and polling district boundaries have been approached in past cases of municipal modernization.

Stantec's report provides the Committee with the results of the survey which is a good barometer based on responses from approximately 740 people. Stantec makes some

observations that the results are a canvas of the population rather than a poll and there is a lot of detail on the survey response within the Stantec Report.

Staff advises that the policy framework has been followed and the information provided to the Co-ordinating Committee is fair and balanced and has all the ingredients to allow the Committee to make a decision reasonably expeditiously.

Alternatives:

- Adopt the approach recommended in the Stantec study (ie. direct the consultant to prepare scenarios for 9 and 11 districts in Phase 2 of the Governance study);
- Choose a specific council size (9, 11, or otherwise) and direct the consultant to prepare scenarios for that particular council size. The Committee should provide rationale for deviating from the Stantec recommendation should it choose to do so;
- Choose another combination of council sizes (ie. other than those recommended in the Stantec report) and direct the consultant to prepare scenarios for those particular council sizes. The Committee should provide rationale for deviating from the Stantec recommendation should it choose to do so.

Attachments:

1. Stantec: Windsor-West Hants Governance Review-- Council Size Report dated February 19, 2019
2. Jamie Baxter: Committee on Council Size and Polling Districts for the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality
3. Dr. Jamie Baxter CV

Report Prepared by: _____
Louis Coutinho, CAO, Windsor

Report Reviewed by: _____
Martin Laycock, CAO, West Hants



102-40 Highfield Park Drive, Dartmouth, NS B3A 0A3

Windsor-West Hants Governance Review

Council Size Report

Windsor-West Hants Co-ordinating Committee

February 21, 2019





Windsor-West Hants Governance Review

Council Size Report

February 21, 2019

Prepared for:
Windsor-West Hants Co-ordinating
Committee

Prepared by:
Stantec Consulting Ltd.

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Windsor-West Hants Governance Review: Executive Summary

Introduction

Under Section 10(1) of the *Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act*, the Co-ordinator is responsible to submit an application "to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for a determination of ... the number of councillors and the boundaries of the polling districts in the Regional Municipality." This study has been undertaken to assist the Co-ordinator to fulfil that requirement.

The Board has well-established guidelines and priorities concerning the determination of council size and delineation of related boundaries. The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB or the Board) User Guide for boundary reviews has prescribed a two-step process for the conduct of polling district boundary reviews. The phases and their scope, as outlined in the Board's user guide, are as follows:

- **Phase 1 – Number of Councillors**
- **Phase 2 – Boundaries and Polling Districts**

This Council Size Report completes Phase 1.

Background Review

The Town of Windsor has had a council of five including the Town's Mayor since it reduced from seven members in 1997. The Municipality of the District of West Hants had a council of nine from at least 1994 until the NSUARB determined in 2016 that its membership should be increased to ten to ensure proper representation of the Town of Hantsport, which became part of West Hants on its dissolution on July 1, 2015.

Rural and regional municipalities in Nova Scotia currently average one councillor per 240.8 km². West Hants council members each currently cover a relatively modest 124.4 km² on average. Population is usually more strongly emphasized when assessing council size but is distorted by the regional municipalities of Halifax and Cape Breton. Rural municipalities distinct from the regional municipalities have one council member per 1,695 residents, which West Hants approaches at 1,537 constituents per councillor.

Public Consultation

NSUARB guidelines and past Board decisions have reinforced the Board's emphasis on public consultation. Stantec investigated public opinion on council size through a program of consultation meetings distributed throughout Windsor and West Hants and an online survey. Hard copy survey questionnaires were also made available at Windsor Town Hall and the West Hants municipal office, as well as at the public meetings. In response to concerns expressed by public meeting participants, The Co-ordinating Committee decided to distribute hard copy questionnaires to rural areas presumed to have inferior Internet access.

Stantec undertook five public meetings with the assistance of municipal staff with Windsor and West Hants. Participants in the first two meetings in Avondale and Brooklyn expressed concerns with the access of rural residents to the online survey because of poor Internet connections in outlying communities. The Co-ordinating Committee decided to directly distribute hard copy surveys to areas of concern.

Close to 100 residents attended the meetings. The sessions publicized the study and provided opportunities for Stantec's consultant to explain the governance study and obtain the views of residents. The survey, however, provided more specific information from a wider range of residents. Eventually, 609 completed surveys were submitted online and another 139 hard copy surveys were collected directly from residents.

The key question asked respondents how many council members including the mayor they would prefer to represent residents of the new Regional Municipality. The most frequent response was ten, which was favoured by 23.2% of 740 respondents to the question who expressed a preference. The second choice was twelve, which was selected by 21.8%. Fully, 88.5% of responses fell between seven and 13, and 61.5% were accounted for by ten through twelve.

Respondents who chose very small council sizes (i.e., six or fewer) and provided comments on their choice emphasized efficient decision-making more than any other factor. Those preferring a council of 13 or more stressed representation, particularly representation of rural interests.

Among respondents espousing a council of ten to twelve, priority shifted more clearly to representation. Many recognized that a council of ten or more would provide two positions for Windsor and one for Hantsport, leaving six to eight positions for West Hants. Even within this group, a significant number of respondents expressed a desire for efficiency recognizing that even a council of twelve represents a reduction relative to the 15 political representatives currently serving Windsor and West Hants as separate municipal units.

Recommendation

Based on our assessment of all input from consultation to date, **we recommend the assessment of scenarios for nine and eleven districts in Phase 2 of this Governance Study.**

1. Introduction

Pursuant to the *Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act* passed by the Province of Nova Scotia on October 11, 2018, the Town of Windsor and the Municipality of the District of West Hants have agreed to consolidate into a single municipality. Under the terms of the Act, which is also referred to as Bill 55, the two current municipal units become Nova Scotia's fourth regional municipality on April 1, 2020.

The Act requires the Province to appoint a Co-ordinator to chair a Co-ordinating Committee to oversee the consolidation of the two municipal units. The appointed Co-ordinator is Kevin Latimer, Q.C. Pursuant to the Act, the Committee consists of Mayor Anna Allen and Deputy Mayor Laurie Murley of the Town of Windsor and the Warden Abe Zebian and Deputy Warden Paul Morton of the Municipality of the District of West Hants.

1.1. Project Background

Under Section 10(1) of the *Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act*, the Co-ordinator is responsible to submit an application "to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for a determination of ... the number of councillors and the boundaries of the polling districts in the Regional Municipality." This study has been undertaken to assist the Co-ordinator to fulfil that requirement.

The determination of council size and boundaries is a critical early requirement of the municipal consolidation process. The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB or the Board below) has set aside June 24 and 25 to hear an application from the Co-ordinator.

Review of governance arrangements is a well-established process for Nova Scotia municipalities. All municipal units are required under the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) to review governance arrangements on an eight-year cycle, which began on the passage of the MGA in 1999. Subsequent reviews have been required for 2008 and 2016, and will be required again in 2024. Reviews are also normally required in the event of significant structural changes to municipalities. Several reviews were required over the past six years as five towns dissolved in the province, including the Town of Hantsport, which joined West Hants on its dissolution.

While the process and aspirations of municipal consolidation differ from dissolution, changes to governance requirements are similar. Two municipalities are becoming a single municipal government. The combined municipal populations require new governance arrangements to ensure fair and equitable representation of all residents on the council of the new entity. Consideration should also be given to the objectives of combining the two municipal units.

1.2. Project Process

While the consolidation of the Town of Windsor and the Municipality of the District of West Hants is being guided by special legislation rather than the MGA, Bill 55 requires the Co-ordinator to apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board in the same manner as councils must under the MGA.

The Board has well-established guidelines and priorities concerning the determination of council size and delineation of related boundaries. The NSUARB User Guide for boundary reviews has prescribed a two-step process for the conduct of polling district boundary reviews. The phases and their scope, as outlined in the Board's user guide, are as follows:

- **Phase 1 – Number of Councillors** – ... the desired style of Council, the governance structure of Council, and a determination of an effective and efficient number of councillors. The style of government is a question which should not be decided by council until adequate public consultation has occurred respecting the expectation of its constituents. The size of council and its governance structure is a matter which can then be determined by Council in an informed debate.
- **Phase 2 – Boundaries and Polling Districts** – ... the task becomes one of distributing the polling districts to satisfy the objectives listed in s. 368(4) of the Act. Just as with determining the desired number of polling districts, public consultation is essential to a successful process of setting boundaries.¹

Stantec's proposal submitted to the Municipality of the District of West Hants on November 29, 2018, committed to adhere to these specifications. This Council Size Report completes Phase 1. It summarizes the results of our research and extensive consultation concerning the most appropriate council size for the new Regional Municipality. It provides the foundation for the assessment of polling districts to be undertaken in Phase 2. Much of its content will be retained in the Boundary Review Report that will complete the governance review project at the close of the second phase.

1.3. Study Conduct

Stantec Consulting Ltd. was notified of our selection to carry out the governance study on December 17, 2018. Although a formal project initiation meeting could not be scheduled until January 7, 2019, we began research work immediately. In addition to making a presentation on the governance review process at the Co-ordinating Committee Meeting on January 10, Stantec prepared for consultation initiatives over the next two weeks.

On January 17, we initiated an online survey to investigate public opinion concerning council size. Our first public consultation meeting was scheduled for January 29 and four additional meetings were held over the course of two weeks concluding on February 7. Results of the survey were reported and updated at successive public meetings. Concerns with the availability of the survey to rural residents expressed at the first two public meetings led the Co-ordinating

¹ NSUARB, "Municipal Boundary User Guide," no date, p. 2, https://nsuarb.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/nsuarb-222634-v1-user_guide_-_mb_reviews_.pdf

Committee and the municipalities to distribute hard copy surveys directly through municipal councillors to households in Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7.

Following consideration of the current report by the Co-ordinating Committee, Stantec will proceed to the conduct of Phase 2. A second round of five public meetings has been scheduled and advertised to consider district boundary options for potential council sizes approved by the Co-ordinating Committee. The first meeting will take place on March 5. All meetings should be complete by March 14, although a snow date has been provided on March 19 if weather requires.

Stantec is expected to submit its final report summarizing Phase 2 research and consultation and recommending polling district framework for the new Regional Municipality by March 20. The report will be considered by the Co-ordinating Committee on April 1. Following the Committee's consideration of the report recommendation, the Co-ordinator will make application to the NSUARB for a council size and polling district boundary arrangement for the first election for the new Regional Municipality to be held in March 2020.

2. Background Review

The consolidation of Windsor and West Hants will create a new municipality in a different category. The regional municipality that will take the place of the current town and rural municipal district will have the same basic governance structure although legislation prescribes certain features that differ. While the new structure is an opportunity to rethink local governance, current council arrangements in Windsor and West Hants, as well as among municipal units across Nova Scotia provide the context for considering the direction for the new Regional Municipality.

2.1. Past and Current Council Size

All Nova Scotia municipalities are governed by a municipal council led by a mayor elected at large or a warden elected by councillors from among themselves following their election from a district framework. Under the MGA, councils must have a minimum of three members, exclusive of a mayor but inclusive of a warden. Towns and regional municipalities must elect a mayor. Rural municipalities have traditionally been led by a warden; however, the MGA in 1999 introduced the option of electing a mayor instead. Among 21 rural municipalities, the Counties of Colchester and Kings, and the Municipal District of Lunenburg are now led by mayors.

Rural and regional municipalities are required to elect councillors from districts, with only one councillor permitted per district. Towns may elect members at large or from wards. Only Truro, New Glasgow, and Stellarton among Nova Scotia's 26 towns elect councillors from wards, in each case choosing two councillors from each ward.

2.1.1. Town of Windsor

Windsor currently has a five-member Council consisting of a Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and three Councillors. All Town Councillors are elected at large.

The current council size was adopted in 1997 following the Town's application at that time to reduce its number of councillors from six to four.² The NSUARB approved applications by the Town in both 2007 and 2015 to maintain its Council at five members.

2.1.2. Municipality of the District of West Hants

West Hants residents are currently represented by a council of ten that has been in place since the Municipality took in Hantsport following the dissolution of the Town in 2015.

² Re: Town of Windsor, 2007 NSUARB 13, p. 3.

Stantec reviewed past decisions concerning governance arrangements in West Hants as part of our work for the 2014 governance study required by the Town of Hantsport's prospective dissolution. Before the addition of Hantsport to the Municipality, West Hants Council consisted of nine councillors from at least 1994, the earliest NSUARB decision concerning the Municipality that we reviewed.

Stantec's 2014 report, which was prepared before West Hants agreed to join with Hantsport, recommended that in the event the two units combined, the municipal council should continue to have nine members with Hantsport and Mount Denson forming a new district to be called District 8. The existing nine West Hants districts were to be replaced by eight new districts with reconfigured boundaries.

On the dissolution of the Town of Hantsport, the former Town's Mayor was added to West Hants Council to represent the community's interests. In preparation for the October 2016 municipal election, the Municipality applied to the NSUARB to reduce its council to nine and adjust its boundaries as recommended by Stantec. The Board heard the application on February 25, 2016.

The Think Hantsport Innovative Development Association (THIDA) argued at the NSUARB hearing that the Stantec study dealt with two potential destinies for the Town and did not fully consider the concerns of community in the context of union with West Hants. They contended that West Hants should have engaged the community in specific consultation related to its application as opposed to simply adopting Stantec's rationale and recommendation.³

The Board agreed with the sentiments THIDA expressed:

The Board finds, in the circumstances, that the Municipality should have given greater consideration to the former town of Hantsport as being a strong community of interest. This does not mean it should always be considered as such for future polling district boundary reviews. At the very least this should have been re-examined by the Council before submitting the Application. To inform Council's discussion, some form of an additional study should have been conducted.⁴

Given that the Board did not consider time was available to conduct the kind of engagement it saw as necessary, it determined that it should chose between the application made by the Municipality and THIDA's proposal "that there should be 10 councillors and that the former Town of Hantsport [should] have its own polling district" based on THIDA's contention "that the former Town is a community of interest."⁵

The Board determined that Hantsport was indeed a community of interest and chose to approve the Council of ten that currently governs West Hants. The prevailing districts in West Hants were retained and Hantsport became the tenth district, although the number of eligible voters or electors in the former town was -26% less than the average number of electors in each municipal polling district. The variance is far beyond the $\pm 10\%$ target sought by the NSUARB and slightly beyond the maximum variance that the Board general suggests as tolerable;

³ Re: Municipality of the District of West Hants, 2016 NSUARB 44, p. 5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

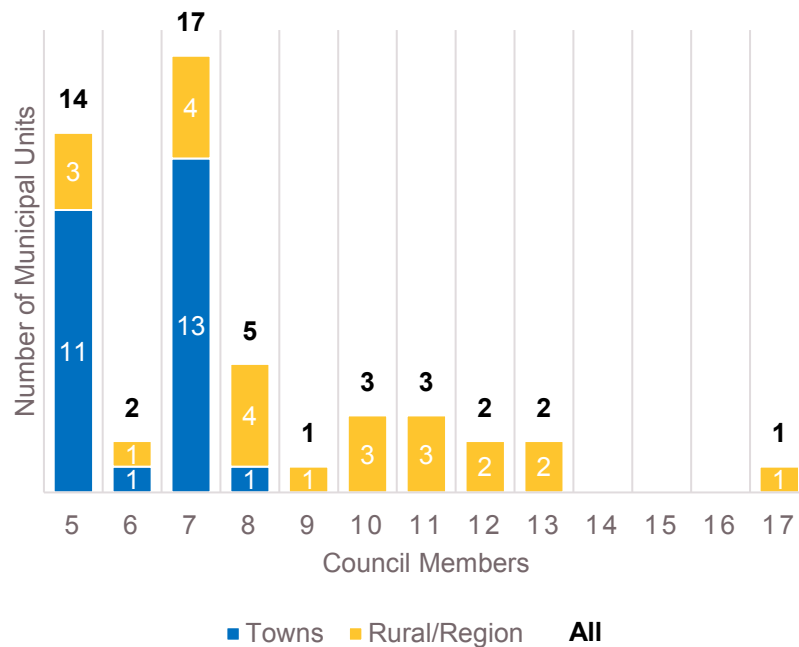
⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11. Following submissions from both THIDA and the Municipality of the District of West Hants in March 2016, the Board rendered its decision on April 16, 2016, leaving just over four months before the standard deadline for nominations on the second Tuesday in September.

however, the Board deemed it to be “a reasonable variance” in consideration of the circumstances.⁶

2.2.Nova Scotia Council Sizes

Nova Scotia municipal councils range in size from five to 17 members, including the mayors in municipal units where one is elected. Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) has the largest council. Many municipalities have councils of five including the municipal districts of Barrington and Digby, the County of Richmond, the Town of Windsor, and ten other towns. Towns, for the most part have councils of five or seven. The Town of Pictou has a six-member council and the Town of Bridgewater has eight, which is the largest town council in the province. With ten members, the Municipality of the District of West Hants Council is just above the median council size for rural and regional municipalities. Twelve municipalities in the group have councils with eight or fewer members, twelve have nine or more (Figure 2-1).

Figure 2-1 Council Sizes by Number of Municipal Units, Nova Scotia, 2019

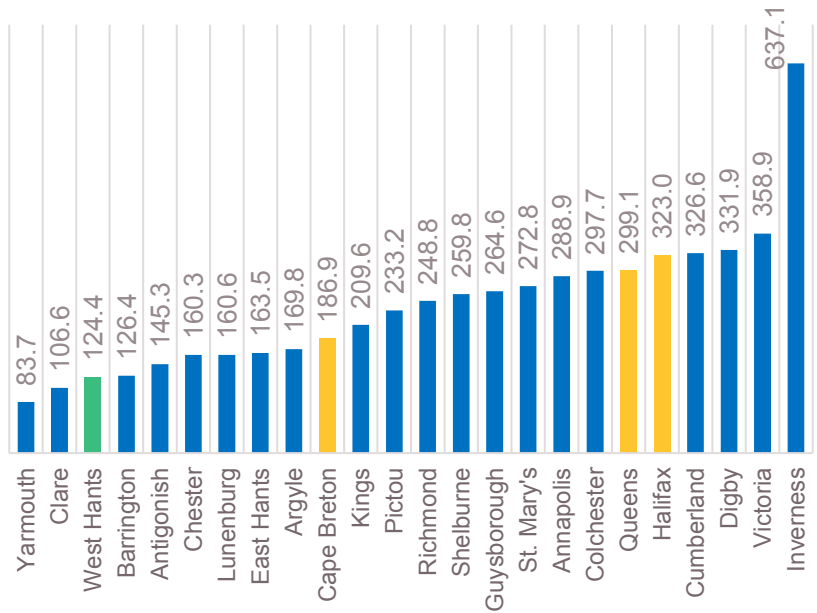


Source Stantec Consulting Ltd.

The size of rural and regional municipal councils is often assessed in relation to the land area and the population to be served in each municipal unit. There is little variation in the land area of towns and, as the foregoing figure illustrates, modest variation in their sizes. Focusing on rural and regional municipalities, the average area served by regional and rural councillors in Nova Scotia is currently 240.8 km² per council member. Councillors in West Hants, which is currently a rural municipality, each represent 124.4 km² on average (Figure 2-2, which shows West Hants in green, other rural municipalities in blue, and the three current regional municipalities in yellow).

⁶ Ibid., 00. 12-13.

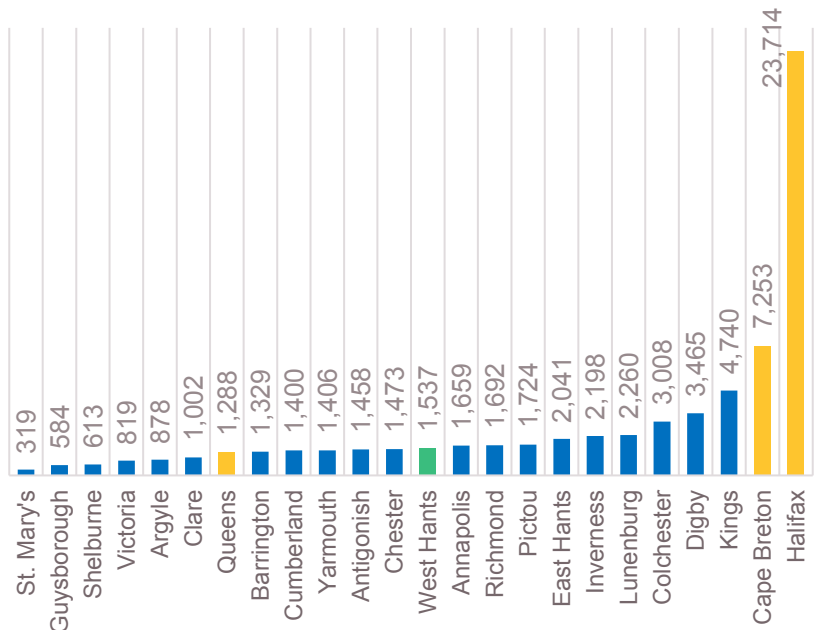
Figure 2-2 Council Members by Land Area (km²), Nova Scotia Rural and Regional Municipalities, 2016



Source Stantec Consulting Ltd.

More emphasis is normally placed on the number of constituents served in any case. The average for rural and regional municipalities of 2,828 people per council member is heavily skewed by HRM, where the average councillor serves 23,714, or more than the combined population of Windsor and West Hants. The average for rural municipalities is 1,695, which West Hants approaches at 1,537 constituents per councillor (Figure 2-3).

Figure 2-3 Council Members per Capita, Nova Scotia Rural and Regional Municipalities, 2016



Source Stantec Consulting Ltd.

3. Public Consultation

As noted above, the NSUARB guidelines and past Board decisions have reinforced the Board's emphasis on public consultation. Stantec investigated public opinion on council size through a program of consultation meetings distributed throughout Windsor and West Hants and an online survey. Hard copy survey questionnaires were also made available at Windsor Town Hall and the West Hants municipal office, as well as at the public meetings. In response to concerns expressed by public meeting participants, The Co-ordinating Committee decided to distribute hard copy questionnaires to rural areas presumed to have inferior Internet access.

3.1. Consultation Meetings

Stantec undertook five public meetings with the assistance of municipal staff with Windsor and West Hants. The municipalities arranged the necessary venues to meet Stantec's requirements. Locations and dates were as follows:

- Tuesday, January 29, Avondale Community Hall
- Wednesday, January 30, Brooklyn Civic Center
- Thursday, January 31, South West Hants Fire Hall, Vaughan
- Tuesday, February 5, Windsor Community Center
- Wednesday, February 6 (snow date for the first four meetings), West Hants Municipal Office, Windsor
- Thursday, February 7, Falmouth Community Hall
- Wednesday, February 13 (snow date for February 7), West Hants Municipal Office, Windsor.

Meetings were advertised on the strongerregion.ca website maintained by the Co-ordinating Committee, as well as on the web sites and social media pages of both municipalities. They were also listed at the end of the online survey questionnaire and a formal advertisement was placed in the Advertiser Journal on January 22 and 29, and February 5, and the Valley Harvester on January 31 and February 5.

The weather cooperated throughout. Meetings took place as scheduled and neither snow date was required. The meetings were reasonably well attended relative to our experience with other governance review processes, particularly processes in which multiple local meetings were provided. In some past cases, local meetings have drawn no attendance or too few attendees to allow group dialogue but all sessions for this review attracted enough to facilitate healthy discussions.

Venues were opened for all meetings at 6:00 pm as indicated in advertisements. Attendees were encouraged to read four posters prepared by Stantec to explain the governance review process and provide background concerning the council size review. Stantec's Project Manager was available during this period to talk with attendees and assist with their questions.

Stantec's Project Manager made a presentation at each session beginning at 7:00 pm, also as advertised. The presentation covered similar content to the posters, although material derived from the online survey was updated for each successive meeting as we received more responses. Given the manageable number of participants at each session, audience members were permitted to ask questions during the presentation. Generally, presentations including questions and answers took about one hour. Stantec's Project Manager solicited additional questions and comments after each presentation until all audience members declined to provide further input.

3.1.1. Avondale Meeting

While 16 people were present at the meeting in Avondale, we were told only six were members of the local community. Others included municipal staff helping Stantec's Project Manager and political representatives monitoring the process. Some municipal staff and representatives were present at each session to provide support and observe.

Questions during the presentation were diverse. While some inquiries concerned council size and boundary issues, one participant raised strong concerns about the effectiveness of only five meetings to reach rural residents. He expressed particular concern with the absence of a meeting in any community on the shore north and east of Summerville, although Stantec's Project Manager noted that a second phase meeting was scheduled to be held in the elementary school in Summerville.

Another respondent reinforced the concern with rural input from the perspective of the online survey. She said that Internet service is inferior in rural areas and in some locations such as the shore area above Summerville is not available at all. She suggested that the survey should have been mailed out to all residents. Stantec's Project Manager promised to relay her views to the Co-ordinating Committee, which he did the following morning.

3.1.2. Brooklyn Meeting

The meeting in Brooklyn was the best attended of the five sessions. Municipal staff said 37 residents were present in addition to about a dozen municipal staff and council members, including the Co-ordinator, who observed the meeting. The large group resulted in lively discussion.

For the second time, a great deal of the dialogue focused on the online survey and its availability. Although survey response up to that relatively early point was good (approximately 250), many participants contended it is insufficient from a population of roughly 19,000. Most of these participants asserted that the survey should have been mailed out to give all residents an equal chance to respond.

Many participants expressed concerns with rural input. Several reflected long-term concerns with the attention given to rural Nova Scotia and the representation of rural interests on the prospective regional council. They felt that administration of the survey online reflected this bias as rural residents do not have equivalent access to the Internet, which would bias the results of the survey. In the same light, several also suggested that there are not enough

meetings scheduled in the rural area, again noting the shore area to the north and east of Summerville lacks access to the Internet and other information sources. The Co-ordinator and municipal staff attending the session discussed the issues raised following the meeting and decided to respond to the concerns raised by looking into the possibility of distributing hard copy surveys to homes in key rural districts.

3.1.3. Vaughan Meeting

Nine residents attended the meeting in Vaughan. Attendance may have been influenced by an incident on Highway 101 during the evening rush hour, which disrupted the commute for many travelling home to West Hants. In contrast to the preceding two meetings, discussion was on point throughout. Participants asked a variety of questions concerning council size and explored the potential influence of the council size decision on boundary definition.

3.1.4. Windsor Meeting

According to Town staff assisting Stantec, 24 residents attended the Windsor meeting. Roughly ten municipal staff and council members attended, and the Co-ordinator was present again as an observer.

Input from the audience focused on council size issues. Former Town Mayor, Paul Beazley, inquired about potential approaches to boundary delineation, suggesting the possibility of creating polling districts that radiated from the town to include urban, suburban, and rural areas in each district or, at least, in several districts. Mr. Heseltine responded that a scenario based on a similar concept had been developed for the consideration of the public in CBRM when he did the boundary review there in 2011. It was not the approach selected in that situation, but Mr. Heseltine acknowledged that it was worthy of consideration and West Hants was generally well-configured to support the approach.

3.1.5. Falmouth Meeting

Roughly 15 people attended the final Phase 1 public consultation meeting in Falmouth. Ten appeared to be residents as opposed to municipal or political representatives. The group included some knowledgeable participants including Tom Calkin, who led the Avon Region Coalition, which made the initial application to consolidate Windsor and West Hants, and at least three other individuals who attended previous meetings.

Stantec's Project Manager had the opportunity to talk about council size issues before beginning his presentation. He asked several attendees the number of council members they would prefer and their reasons for favouring their choices, which provided some interesting insights. One suggested seven in the interest of efficiency; another felt ten would be appropriate as it is workable with the current West Hants Council; and one favoured twelve so as to incorporate two councillors from Windsor and one from Hantsport on the regional council.

Dialogue during the presentation continued to focus on council size and boundary issues. One of the repeat participants had pressed for mailing out the survey at the first meeting held in Avondale. She inquired about the approach to distributing hard copy surveys. Stantec's Project Manager said that hard copy questionnaires were being distributed through municipal councillors. In response to a request for more detail, Warden Zebian said that councillors were delivering questionnaires door-to-door themselves or through helpers. Although the participant still felt time should have been taken to formally mailout surveys

through Canada Post, she appeared to view the response to her original concern positively.

3.1.6. Written Submission

Stantec received only one written submission through the course of the five public sessions. The document came through Tom Calkin, Chair of the Avon Region Citizens Coalition (ARC), which was the original advocate of the consolidation of Windsor and West Hants. The report provided was ARC's application for consolidation, which we understand was prepared in 2016. On the subject of governance, the application includes a detailed critique of council leadership by a warden and advocacy of leadership by a mayor elected at large and voting on all council motions in keeping with the requirement of the MGA for regional municipalities.⁷

3.2. Online Survey

The online survey was posted on January 17 and was kept open until February 13, 2019. Although response was good from the outset of posting the survey online, concerns with online access in rural areas led the municipalities and the Co-ordinating Committee to distribute hard copy questionnaires door-to-door in Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7. Hard copies were also made available at the five consultation meetings and could be picked up at Windsor Town Hall or the West Hants Municipal Building.

3.2.1. Questionnaire Content

The questionnaire employed for the survey has been used for several previous boundary review projects conducted by Stantec. It is a simple questionnaire consisting of eight questions that most respondents complete within two minutes. **Appendix A** includes the hard copy version of the survey. The online survey included an initial question that asked whether respondents live in Windsor or West Hants for the purpose of screening out non-residents. The question was not necessary in hard copy surveys. References to question numbers below refer to the hard copy survey and are one number less than the numbering used online.

The next two questions are largely included to introduce the subject matter the survey addresses (i.e., municipal governance and council size) in preparation for Question 3, which asks for the respondent's council size preference. Question 1 inquiring about voting in recent municipal elections also gave us a gauge of the familiarity of respondents with municipal governance, particularly in Windsor and West Hants. Question 2 concerning expectations of a small versus a large council introduced factors that are often considered to be influenced by council size.

Question 2 provides context for considering the central question in the survey instrument – Question 3, which asks how many members including the mayor the respondent would prefer to have on the regional council. The question was compulsory in the online version of the survey. The following question asked the respondent to elaborate on their choice.

⁷ ARC - Avon Region Citizens, Application for a Preliminary Order of Amalgamation of the Municipality of the District of West Hants and the Town of Windsor, undated, pp. 8-9.

3.2.2. Survey Interpretation

The survey conducted is not a poll. The method of distributing the survey – online and by direct handout – cannot obtain a representative sample. Respondents, by definition, are individuals interested in the governance study and the issue of council size. Residents with less interest in these issues who do not want to take the time to access and complete the survey excluded themselves. The numbers summarized below do not reflect the views of this second, less interested group, who would be solicited through a properly conducted telephone sample and are clearly a significant proportion of the local population.

The results are better interpreted as a canvas of the population, similar to the results of a vote to elect a political representative. The survey allowed us to reach considerably more residents than were likely to attend our public consultation sessions regardless of the number and location of such meetings. It also obtained structured quantifiable information, which is difficult to draw in an orderly manner from audience members at a meeting.

We did not restrict the number of times the survey could be filled out from the same computer. While Survey Monkey, by default, limits each IP address to one response, we chose to remove the restriction to facilitate access to the survey, although we were aware that it would make it easier for a person to abuse the survey by making multiple responses.

To reduce this possibility, Stantec reviewed sorted survey responses by IP address and date/time to identify any bulk responses from the same address or in a close time period. Although our observation of data trends indicated a concentration of responses from one community over a two-day period, we did not find any evidence of the same response originating from one source. While the community in question produced more than 50 responses in a short period, the responses in question came from varied IP addresses.

3.2.3. Survey Response

Overall survey response was very good. At the close of the online survey at midnight on February 13, 2019, 609 completed surveys were received (including roughly 20 completed on print questionnaires received at the public sessions by Stantec), which exceeds the best overall response to a governance-related survey that we have conducted.⁸ Another 139 hard copy surveys were collected directly from residents who received them through the municipal offices of either Windsor or West Hants, or through their municipal councillors.

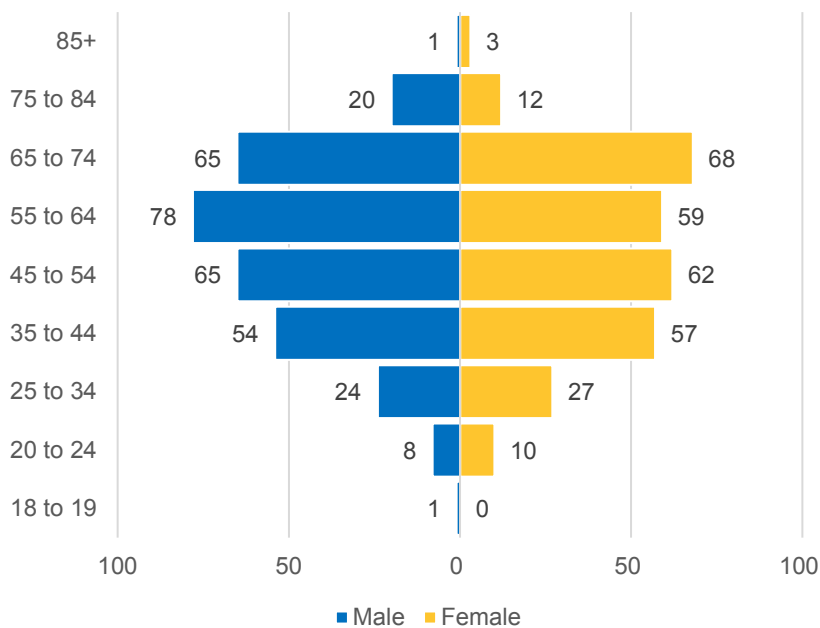
The majority of respondents were male (51.2% of those who identified their gender). All respondents were 18 years of age or over but, for the most part they were between 35 and 75 years of age (80.0%). Although **Figure 3-1**, shows only four respondents over 85 years, there were six as two did not identify their gender. They all responded to the print survey as opposed to online.

⁸ The survey URL was accessed 688 times. Some accesses were by Stantec in order to enter roughly 20 hard copy surveys received at public meetings. Of 79 surveys that were not completed, 11 were individuals who indicated they did not live in either Windsor or West Hants and were therefore excluded from the survey. The remaining 68 entered the survey but then left. Roughly half of these were apparently confused by the survey because they returned later (usually very soon after) and completed the questions. Another portion did not return.

Notwithstanding concerns with Internet access in rural areas expressed at public meetings, responses were also well-distributed. Of 51 named communities in West Hants, at least one online response was received from 50 based on responses to Question 5. Riverside in District 1 was the only community not identified and it is possible residents identified themselves with the abutting community of Summerville, which generated a disproportionate number of responses.

The hard copy surveys distributed by councillors went to rural districts that participants in consultation sessions contended did not have equivalent Internet access to “urban” areas such as Windsor, Falmouth, and Three Mile Plains. The communities that contributed the most responses through this outreach were Brooklyn (25), Summerville (18), Cambridge (9), Ellershouse (9), Centre Burlington (8), Cheverie (7), and Union Corner (5). Remaining responses covered a wide range of mostly rural communities. Three responses came from Windsor through the Town Hall and one came from Three Mile Plains.

Figure 3-1 Age-Sex Distribution of Respondents, Windsor-West Hants Council Size Survey, 2019



Source Stantec Consulting Ltd.

Stantec was not involved in developing the approach to this additional distribution. Based on results from all survey responses, the additional surveys addressed the concern expressed at the initial public meetings that the shore area in District 1 would be underrepresented because of Internet access concerns. Communities in District 1 and District 3 accounted for the bulk of responses received on print surveys distributed through the councillors.

Ultimately, these districts generated significantly more responses than we would have expected relative to their shares of electors as did several other districts. As **Table 3-1** illustrates, responses from Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, and 9 exceeded the proportion of voters residing in those areas according to 2016 enumeration data. Falmouth, which is partially in District 8 but largely in District 9, produced by far the most responses of any community in the region.⁹ The share of responses from District 1 was more than double its share of electors and the share in District 9 also considerably exceeded the expected percentage.

3.2.4. Survey Results

The core questions in the survey were Questions 1 through 4, which solicited opinions concerning council size. Question 3 was unquestionably the central question and was compulsory for respondents who filled out the survey online. A “Don’t know/Not sure” option was provided for those who were not comfortable specifying a size but only four respondents took it. Question 4, which was open-ended, was also a valuable source of detailed opinions on council size preferences.

Question 1 – Participation in Municipal Elections

Survey respondents clearly had an established interest in municipal politics. Of 724 respondents to Question 1, 603 stated they voted in at least one previous election in Windsor or West Hants. Close to half (46.4%) voted in 2008, nearly two-thirds (61.3%) in 2012, and 81.2% in 2016.

Question 2 – Expectations of Council Size

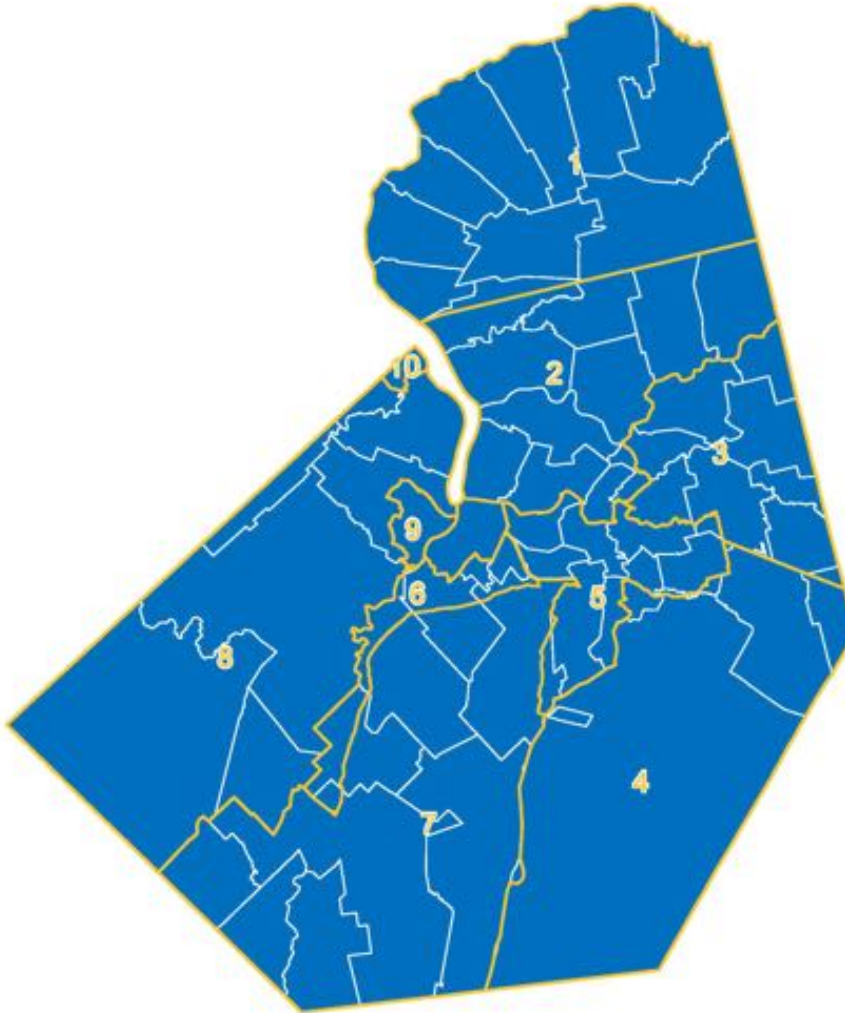
As noted, the key purpose of Question 2 was to introduce some of the leading factors that respondents might take into account when considering what council size to enter in response to following Question 3. The factors, which are raised in literature on council size as well as discussions we have had with members of this public in past consultations, are cost, service to residents, council interaction, and council effectiveness.

We have asked the question in previous surveys with the advantage of having an existing council size to provide a context to establish the meanings of “large” and “small.” In the case of the yet to be established regional council, we could not provide a benchmark, which some participants in the consultation sessions criticized.

With this reservation, respondents indicated more positive expectations of a “small” council with respect to three of the four factors. Respondents placed the strongest emphasis on cost savings, which 59.0% felt would be more likely with a small council (**Figure 3-2**). Past surveys have obtained similar results.

⁹ For communities that cross district boundaries such as Falmouth, Lower Burlington (Districts 1 and 2), Newport Corner (Districts 4 and 5), and Leminster (Districts 7 and 8), allocated survey responses to each district based on the share of electors in those districts. For example, 1,299 of 1,789 or 72.6% of electors within the NSCAF boundary for Falmouth are with District 9. Stantec, therefore, allocated 72.6% of 150 responses (i.e., 109) received from Falmouth to District 9. Some error may also be attributable to inaccurate identification of some communities by some respondents relative to NSCAF boundaries.

Table 3-1 Respondents by Town of Windsor and West Hants Polling Districts, Windsor-West Hants Council Size Survey, 2019

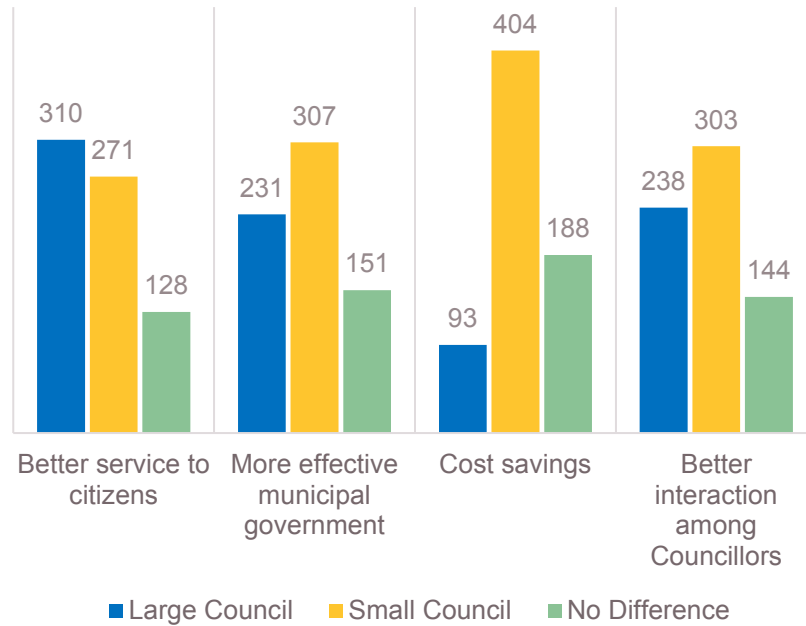


District	Responses			% of Responses			Electors
	Online	Print	All	Online	Print	All	
1	55	42	97	9.2%	35.3%	13.5%	6.0%
2	44	20	64	7.3%	16.8%	8.9%	7.3%
3	42	30	72	7.0%	25.2%	10.0%	8.3%
4	40	12	52	6.7%	10.1%	7.2%	7.9%
5	37	11	48	6.2%	9.2%	6.7%	7.0%
6	45	0	45	7.5%	0.0%	6.3%	10.4%
7	42	1	43	7.0%	0.8%	6.0%	10.0%
8	75	0	75	12.5%	0.0%	10.4%	9.9%
9	109	0	109	18.2%	0.0%	15.2%	8.5%
10	29	0	29	4.8%	0.0%	4.0%	6.0%
Windsor	81	3	84	13.5%	2.5%	11.7%	18.8%
TOTALS	599	119	718	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Town of Windsor and the Municipality of the District of West Hants

The margins in favour of a small council were close for effective municipal government (44.6%) and council interaction (44.2%). Respondents anticipated better council service to residents from a large council with 43.7% expecting more from a large council and 38.2% endorsing a small council. Later responses to the print survey, tended to favour a large council in response to this question. Those responses swung the response to a result more in-line with previous surveys of this type that we have conducted where respondents usually favoured a larger council with respect to expectations of service.

Figure 3-2 Expectations of Council Size, Windsor-West Hants Council Size Survey, 2019



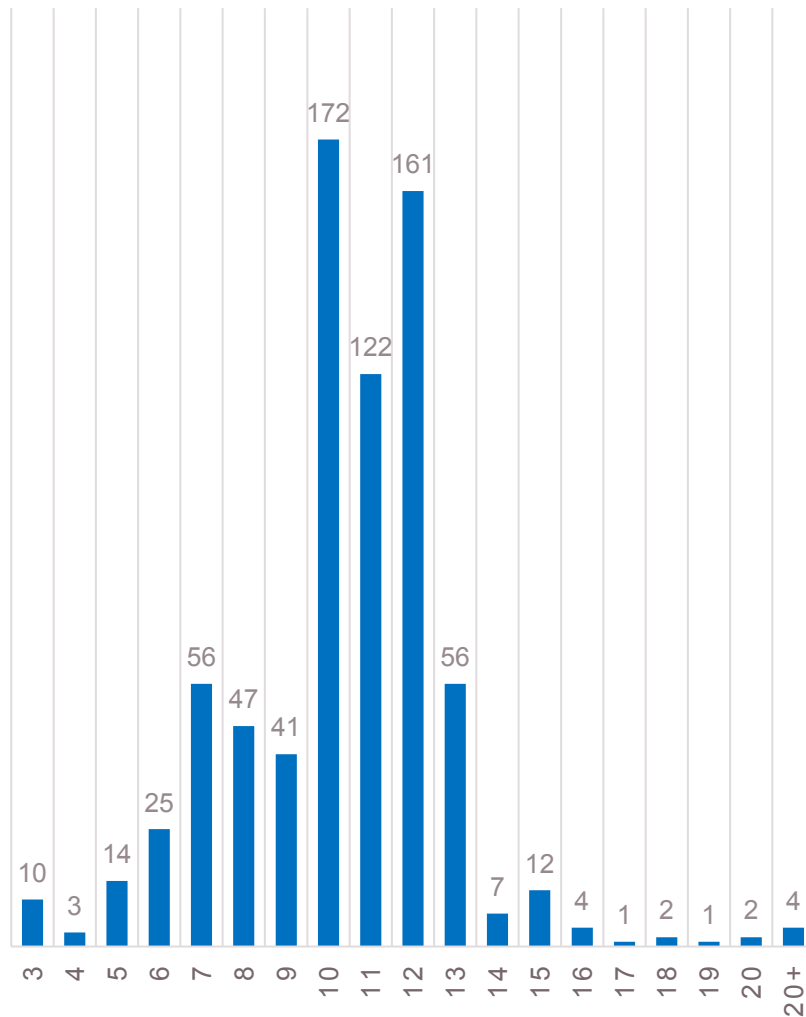
Source Stantec Consulting Ltd.

Question 3 – Preferred Council Size

The most preferred council size including the mayor was ten, which was favoured by 23.2% of 740 respondents to the question who expressed a preference. The second choice was twelve, which was selected by 21.8% (**Figure 3-3**). Councils of ten and twelve exchanged the lead position over the course of data collection for the survey. At the outset, ten was the most popular choice but later respondents tended to favour larger council sizes. Close to the end of the survey and immediately before the final public session, twelve briefly overtook ten, although later responses restored ten to the leading position. In the same context, eleven rose to become the third choice, overtaking seven.

Fully, 88.5% of responses fell between seven and 13, and 61.5% were accounted for by ten through twelve. Interestingly, eleven was the most popular answer among respondents to the print survey, accounting for 39.3% of that subset of respondents. In the overall survey, a significant group (19.5%) endorsed a council of seven to nine, although many more favoured the range of larger councils from eleven to thirteen (45.8%). The average of all responses was 10.4 council members including the mayor.

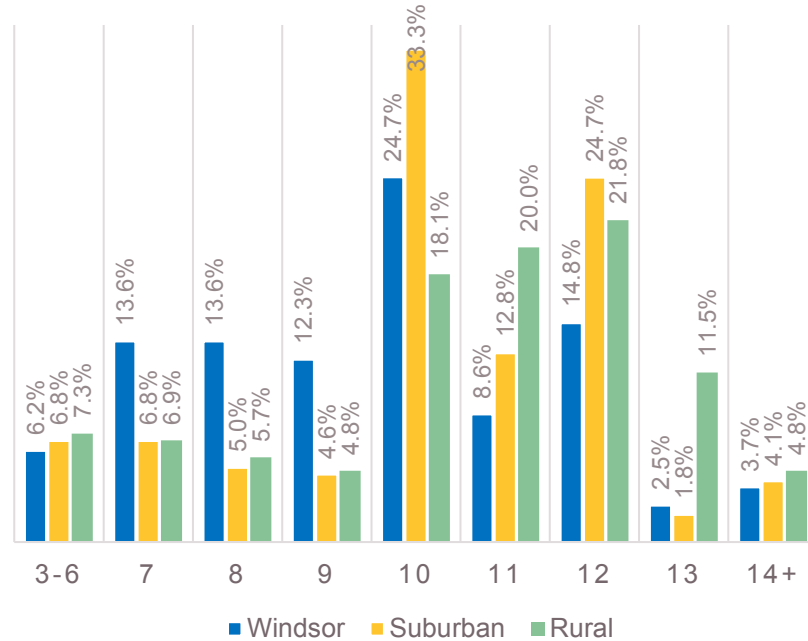
Figure 3-3 Preferred Council Size, Windsor-West Hants Council Size Survey, 2019



Source Stantec Consulting Ltd.

Figure 3-4 illustrated the breakdown among the Town of Windsor, other serviced areas (i.e., Hantsport, Falmouth, Currys Corners, Garlands Crossing, and Wentworth Creek), and remaining rural areas of West Hants. The three distributions suggest a stronger preference for a larger council among rural residents than serviced area and Windsor residents, but not particularly pronounced. The average response of Windsor residents was 9.6 council members, for residents of other serviced areas 10.3. In rural areas the average was 10.6. Notable differences between the areas are the large proportion in Windsor who favour a council of seven to nine and a significant group of rural residents who would prefer a council of 13 (11.5%). While, the range from eleven through twelve accounted for just less than half of Windsor respondents (48.1%), clear majorities favoured it in the other serviced areas (70.8%) and rural areas (59.9%).

Figure 3-4 Council Size Preference by Area, Windsor-West Hants Council Size Survey, 2019



Source Stantec Consulting Ltd.

Question 4 – Rationale for Council Size Preference

Stantec examined all 478 comments in response to Question 5 taking into account the preferred council size chosen and the community of the respondent. Respondents who chose very small council sizes (i.e., six or fewer) emphasized efficient decision-making more than any other factor. Those preferring a council of 13 or more stressed representation, particularly representation of rural interests. Their comments tended to be negative toward consolidation, which most appeared to consider a threat to rural interests.

Some within the larger group who preferred a council of seven to twelve expressed similar concerns with efficiency and representation as well as support for and opposition to the consolidation initiative; however, many introduced more detailed breakdowns of how council seats should be distributed among the leading communities. Those favouring seven to nine council members emphasized efficient decision-making but also suggested that the ratio of population to council members was realistic and manageable. In this range, respondents suggested one councillor would be sufficient for Windsor and the remainder would serve West Hants.

Among respondents espousing a council of ten to twelve, priority shifted more clearly to representation. Many recognized that a council of ten or more would provide two positions for Windsor and one for Hantsport, leaving six to eight positions for West Hants. Even within this group, a significant number of respondents expressed a desire for efficiency recognizing that even a council of twelve represents a reduction relative to the 15 political representatives currently serving Windsor and West Hants as separate municipal units.

Question 8 – Final Comments

Only 142 respondents chose to add final comments at the end of the survey. Most reinforced views expressed in response to Question 5 and offered opinions concerning consolidation. Several addressed the representation of specific communities and two from Hantsport expressed their desire that Hantsport continue to be recognized in a separate district without Mount Denson.

4. Recommendation

Council sizes from ten through twelve were clearly favoured by respondents to our survey of residents. Even in the Town of Windsor, which clearly has the largest constituency preferring a smaller council, nearly half of residents expressed preferences between ten and twelve, and the majority (54.3%) favour a council of ten or more. While there are very clear shortcomings with the representativeness of the survey, all significant sub-groups that we have examined favoured a council in the same range. In areas outside of Windsor the majority generally favoured a larger council.

While direct consultation with residents at meetings cannot be expected to extract clear opinions concerning council numbers, the input of meeting participants was not at odds with survey results. Unquestionably, speakers who were most supportive of consolidation expressed the hope that a smaller council would be adopted to reflect their aspirations for a unified municipality; however, more expressed concern for representation of existing communities. Several, in fact, gave specific breakdowns of their expectations for Windsor, Hantsport, and West Hants that would typically require a council of ten or eleven members in addition to a mayor.

While the portion of the community most supportive of consolidation appears to favour a smaller council, they are clearly a minority. Only 20.9% of survey respondents expressed a preference for a council of nine or fewer. Input at the public sessions aligns with the survey result: select participants spoke for a smaller council in the interest of focused and efficient decision-making but they were outnumbered by speakers more concerned with representation.

A council of ten received the most support among survey respondents with 23.2% favouring the number. A council of twelve was however a close second with 21.8%. The third most popular response, eleven, fell between the two.

Question 4 asked respondents to indicate their preferred council size including the mayor. The responses ten and twelve, therefore, correspond to nine or eleven districts. Based on our assessment of all input from consultation to date, **we recommend the assessment of scenarios for nine and eleven districts in Phase 2 of this Governance Study**. Given the expressed concern for representation of established communities through the same consultation, we anticipate structuring district options around the current district structure with the addition of the Town of Windsor.

Appendix A Council Size Survey Questionnaire



Windsor-West Hants Governance Review

About this Survey

The Municipality of the District of West Hants and the Town of Windsor will be consolidating into a new Regional Municipality April 1, 2020.

Stantec Consulting Limited has been engaged by the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Co-ordinating Committee to help determine the appropriate size of the new council and the electoral boundaries of the new Regional Municipality.

As part of this process, we are asking residents to take part in this short survey. These results, along with information obtained from residents at public meetings starting in late January, as well as consultation with the existing Councils and staff, will provide the basis for the recommendation that Stantec Consulting will be submitting to the Co-ordinating Committee for review.

The Co-ordinating Committee will then present the preferred council size and boundary arrangement to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for consideration. This will be one of many factors that will determine the structure and governance of the new Regional Municipality.

We appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey and helping us to become a stronger region.

Please drop your completed survey off at either:

- Windsor Town Hall, 100 King St., Windsor
- West Hants Municipal Office, 76 Morison Drive, Windsor

For further information, please contact:

John Heseltine, LPP MCIP

Stantec Consulting Ltd.

102-40 Highfield Park Drive, Dartmouth NS B3A 0A3

Phone: (902) 481-1477

John.Heseltine@stantec.com

This survey is also available online through <https://strongerregion.ca/> and the websites maintained by the Town of Windsor and the Municipality of the District of West Hants.



Windsor-West Hants Governance Review

Consolidation and Council Size

1. Please indicate if you voted in any of the past three municipal council elections in either the Municipality of the District of West Hants or the Town of Windsor. [CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY]

- 2008 2012 2016
 I did not vote in any of these elections

2. Please indicate whether you would expect a large or small council to have the following benefits for the new Regional Municipality.

	Large Council	Small Council	Won't make any difference
Better service to citizens	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More effective municipal government	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost savings	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better interaction among Councillors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. West Hants currently has ten council members serving 15,368 residents; Windsor has five council members serving 3,648. The new Regional Council will include a Mayor and will serve 19,016 residents.

Please indicate the number of Council members, including the Mayor, you feel should represent the residents of the new Regional Municipality (the minimum Council size is three members plus the Mayor).

4. Why did you choose that number as the number of council members you would prefer for the new Regional Municipality?



Windsor-West Hants Governance Review

Some Information About You

5. What community do you live in?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Ardoise | <input type="radio"/> Hantsport | <input type="radio"/> St. Croix |
| <input type="radio"/> Ashdale | <input type="radio"/> Hillsvale | <input type="radio"/> St. Croix 34 |
| <input type="radio"/> Avondale | <input type="radio"/> Kempt Shore | <input type="radio"/> Summerville |
| <input type="radio"/> Belmont | <input type="radio"/> Leminster | <input type="radio"/> Sweets Corner |
| <input type="radio"/> Bishopville | <input type="radio"/> Lower Burlington | <input type="radio"/> Three Mile Plains |
| <input type="radio"/> Bramber | <input type="radio"/> Mantua | <input type="radio"/> Union Corner |
| <input type="radio"/> Brooklyn | <input type="radio"/> Martock | <input type="radio"/> Upper Burlington |
| <input type="radio"/> Cambridge | <input type="radio"/> McKay Section | <input type="radio"/> Upper Falmouth |
| <input type="radio"/> Centre Burlington | <input type="radio"/> Mill Section | <input type="radio"/> Upper Vaughan |
| <input type="radio"/> Cheverie | <input type="radio"/> Mosherville | <input type="radio"/> Vaughan |
| <input type="radio"/> Cogmagun | <input type="radio"/> Mount Denson | <input type="radio"/> Walton |
| <input type="radio"/> Currys Corner | <input type="radio"/> Newport Corner | <input type="radio"/> Wentworth Creek |
| <input type="radio"/> Ellershous | <input type="radio"/> Newport Station | <input type="radio"/> Wile Settlement |
| <input type="radio"/> Falmouth | <input type="radio"/> Panuke Lake | <input type="radio"/> Town of Windsor |
| <input type="radio"/> Garlands Crossing | <input type="radio"/> Pembroke | <input type="radio"/> Windsor Forks |
| <input type="radio"/> Greenhill | <input type="radio"/> Poplar Grove | <input type="radio"/> Woodville |
| <input type="radio"/> Gypsum Mines | <input type="radio"/> Riverside | |
| <input type="radio"/> Hants Border | <input type="radio"/> Scotch Village | |

Other community (please specify)



Windsor-West Hants Governance Review

6. What is your gender?

- Female Male Prefer not to answer

7. Which category below includes your age?

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 14 years or less | <input type="radio"/> 25 to 34 years | <input type="radio"/> 65 to 74 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 15 to 17 years | <input type="radio"/> 35 to 44 years | <input type="radio"/> 75 to 84 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 18 to 19 years | <input type="radio"/> 45 to 54 years | <input type="radio"/> 85 years or more |
| <input type="radio"/> 20 to 24 years | <input type="radio"/> 55 to 64 years | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to answer |

Upcoming Public Meetings

We appreciate your help with the Governance Review and encourage you to attend one of the following public meetings planned to discuss the size of the future Regional Council for Windsor and West Hants. Each meeting will begin with an open house from 6:00 to 7:00 pm followed by a presentation at 7:00 pm:

- **Tuesday, January 29** - Avondale Community Hall, 50 Avondale Cross Rd, Avondale
- **Wednesday, January 30** - Brooklyn Civic Center, 995 Hwy 215, Brooklyn
- **Thursday, January 31** - South West Hants Fire Hall, 1884 Hwy 14, Vaughan
- **Tuesday, February 5** - Windsor Community Center, 78 Thomas Street, Windsor
- **Wednesday, February 6** (snow date for the 1st 4 meetings) - West Hants Municipal Office, 76 Morison Road, Windsor
- **Thursday, February 7** - Falmouth Community Hall, 147 Falmouth Back Rd, Falmouth
- **Wednesday, February 13** (snow date for February 7) - West Hants Municipal Office, 76 Morison Road, Windsor

8. If you have any further thoughts about the size of the council for the new Regional Municipality or any related issue, please share them with us here.



Design with community in mind

Report to the Co-ordinating Committee
in relation to
Council Size and Polling Districts for
the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality

Submitted by
Dr. Jamie Baxter, , M.A., J.D., LL.M., J.S.D
Assistant Professor
Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia

February 19, 2019

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Executive Summary

On April 1, 2020, the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality (hereafter, “WWH”) will join the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Halifax Regional Municipality and Region of Queens Municipality as the one of only four regional municipalities in Nova Scotia. It will also be the first such regional consolidation to take place in the province in over twenty years.

The purpose of this report is to provide background context and analysis on two key questions of institutional design for WWH. First, what is the optimal size for the new regional council? Second, what are the appropriate geographic boundaries for the municipality’s polling districts? How these two questions are approached and answered may have consequences for the functioning and long-term success of the new regional municipality—and, to the extent that WWH serves as a model for other regional consolidations, may influence future municipal reforms across the province.

In reaching a decision on these two issues for WWH, the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board will have a deeper set of precedents to draw on than it did when determining council size and polling districts for earlier regional consolidations. By mapping the relevant statutory provisions and the Board’s emerging analytical framework for determining these issues, this report provides a basis to better understand the available choices between larger and small councils and the different approaches to establishing district boundaries. Both of these inquiries are described in this report as an exercise in balancing competing but legitimate sets of values and goals.

The report’s main recommendations can be summarized in three points. First, consistent with past cases of regional consolidation and with the need to balance effective representation and effective governance, the new regional council for WWH should likely be smaller in size than the combined councils of the Town of Windsor and the Municipality of the District of West Hants. Second, in establishing polling district boundaries, community of interest factors play an important role—but in the unique context of regional consolidation, those factors will also need to be weighed against demands to advance regional interests. Third, determinations of council size and polling districts should be based on a close consideration of how these two institutional features relate to one another and how they may or may not change and evolve over time in the dynamic context of municipal reform.

While Nova Scotia has a long history of studying municipal reforms, much has changed since calls for “modernization” emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s and since the last round of regional consolidations in the mid-1990s. This report builds on those past studies by surveying the recent law and academic research on council size and polling districts. It then synthesizes the available material for application to WWH within the broader context of municipal reform in Nova Scotia.

1. Introduction

At the request of the Councils of the Town of Windsor and the Municipality of the District of West Hants, the Minister of Municipal Affairs introduced Bill 55 to the provincial legislature on September 25, 2018. The *Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act* (the “Act”) received royal assent on October 11, 2018.¹ Section 3 of the Act consolidates the Town of Windsor and the Municipality of the District of West Hants into the new Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality (“WWH”) effective April 1, 2020. WWH is only the fourth regional municipality created in Nova Scotia and the first such regional consolidation in the province in the past two decades.

The Co-ordinating Committee overseeing the consolidation is chaired by a Co-ordinator appointed under the Act by the Governor in Council. Section 10 of the Act requires the Co-ordinator to apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board [the “Board”] to determine the number of councillors and the geographic boundaries of the polling districts for the new regional municipality.

1.1. Mandate

On January 21, 2019, the Co-ordinator requested a written report to inform the Co-ordinating Committee about approaches to determining the council size and polling district boundaries for WWH. The report was to be conducted in parallel with a Governance Review, including public consultations, completed by Stantec. The Co-ordinator asked that the report:

- provide an understanding of approaches taken to determining council size and polling district boundaries in previous similar Nova Scotia cases before the Board, including approaches taken by associated studies submitted to the Board in support of those applications; and
- include an overview of the current literature on creating effective representation at the local government level.

This is the report submitted to the Co-ordinating Committee in fulfillment of the Co-ordinator’s request.

1.2. Scope of Report

This report is based on a review of the following materials:

- legislation relevant to the Board’s determination of council size and polling district boundaries in cases of regional consolidation; and
- the Board’s past decisions upon applications to establish or revise council size and polling district boundaries for the three pre-existing regional municipalities in Nova Scotia: Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Halifax Regional Municipality, and the Region of Queens Municipality;
- reports submitted to the Board in support of the above applications;

- relevant Canadian and comparative research literature on municipal council size and the distribution of polling districts.

By way of background, additional materials related to the broader context of municipal reform and restructuring in Nova Scotia were also reviewed. Apart from a few cases of particular relevance, the Board's decisions on council size and polling districts upon application by municipal councils under section 369 of the *Municipal Government Act* (the "MGA") were not reviewed for the purposes of this report.²

2. Regional Consolidation in Nova Scotia

Changes in the structure of municipal government in Nova Scotia have long shaped how local communities govern themselves and how those communities connect with and relate to one another. In the early colonial history of the province, these changes were driven by the global forces of war, international migration, and British imperialism, as Loyalist settlers from New England challenged the centralizing tendencies of municipal administration under the British and brought with them new ideas about the value of self-governance and local control.³ Since the mid-twentieth century, shifting demographics and economic conditions, the changing scope and complexity of local services, and the introduction of new technologies have all combined to create new pressures for municipal reform.⁴

How municipal governments should be restructured to respond to these pressures has been a much-studied topic in Nova Scotia over the last half-century or more. In 1967, the Pictou County Municipal Coordination Study considered several alternatives for structural reform across the six existing municipal units in Pictou County.⁵ Just four years later, the Royal Commission on Education, Public Services and Provincial-Municipal Relations (the Graham Commission) began an exhaustive review of municipal boundaries and financing. As recently as 2014, the Report of the Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy (the Ivany Report) recommended that the provincial government initiate a review of current municipal government structures to improve "efficiency, cost effectiveness and community engagement."⁶ The intervening years of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century produced several additional studies and reports on the topic.

These studies are perhaps most remarkable for their consistency in recommending a reduction in the number of municipal units through some form of amalgamation. Likely the most influential has been the report of the province's Task Force on Local Government in 1992, which identified five "critical regions" as a "first priority" for structural reform.⁷ Rejecting the two-tier model that had been taken up in parts of Ontario and the Western provinces, the Task Force recommended that Nova Scotia pursue single-tier, regional-level consolidations of existing city-county units—with the county-level serving as the preferred scale for reorganization.⁸

In the wake of the Task Force report, the provincial government initiated regional consolidations in the two most populous regions in the province by way of special legislation,⁹ creating the Cape Breton Regional Municipality ("CBRM") in 1995 and the Halifax Regional Municipality ("HRM") a year later. The Region of Queens Municipality ("Queens") was also created in 1996, consolidating the town of Liverpool and the Municipality of Queens County—although this restructuring was unique in that local officials initiated the consolidation rather than have it

imposed by the Province.¹⁰ Historians have noted that the primary motivations varied for each of these three regional consolidations. The changes in Cape Breton were an attempt to address the financial viability of the nine municipalities comprising the new regional government, while in Halifax the rationales included cost savings, unsustainable economic competition between the four former municipalities, and problems with a new provincial service exchange initiative. The Queens consolidation stood apart as an amalgamation of town and rural areas with a much smaller population, where economies of scale and a shared identification as a community of interest were central features.¹¹

Despite the introduction of new permanent legislation to create additional regional municipalities in 1996,¹² no further regional consolidations had been initiated until the *Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act* was enacted in October 2018.

2.1. Functions of Local Government and Objectives for Reform

In part, what makes local governments unique from other levels of government in Canada is their dual identity as both service providers and vehicles for democratic expression. In its 1992 report, the Task Force on Local Government identified four key functions of local government in Nova Scotia that together capture this dual identity. Local governments are:¹³

- a provider of services based on local needs and desire;
- a forum for local citizens to make decisions on the way they want to live;
- a forum for the resolution of conflicting views within local communities;
- a representative of the community to lobby on its behalf.

In whatever way municipal government is structured or restructured, its institutional features should be designed to reflect these key functions. The Provincial-Municipal Fiscal Review, published in 2014, put forward the view that any structural reforms to municipal government should seek to achieve the following objectives:¹⁴

- democracy—reforms “should uphold transparent, accountable, accessible, and representative municipal government”;
- equity and fairness—reforms “should support a reasonably comparable standard of public services across Nova Scotia municipalities at reasonably comparable levels of taxation, and support a system where citizens receive best value and are taxed according to the services they have access to”;
- viability and capacity—reforms “should ensure that municipalities have sustainable resources to support their long-term viability”;
- efficiency and effectiveness—reforms “should encourage efficient and effective decision-making” by local government.

While each of these objectives is legitimate, they necessarily give rise to internal trade-offs that are made “real” at the level of institutional design. The balancing of those trade-offs is discussed in detail in Part 4, below.

2.2. Rationales for Regional Consolidation

The several reports on municipal restructuring in Nova Scotia that have emerged over the past half-century contain an extensive analysis of the rationales for regional consolidation and other forms of municipal amalgamation. Likewise, a considerable research literature exists, both in Canada and in comparative jurisdictions, on the topic of municipal government restructuring. This report focuses on just two aspects of institutional design within this broader context of reform—namely, council size and the distribution of polling districts in a new regional municipality. Nevertheless, a determination of these two issues will necessarily be influenced by those goals or rationales for regional consolidation that are deemed most important.

Four prominent rationales for regional consolidation emerge from the various studies and reports published on the topic in Nova Scotia:

- efficiency—restructuring at the regional level may help municipalities to reduce costs and capture economies of scale, resulting in the more efficient delivery of municipal services and more efficient decision-making;
- regional planning—reorienting planning aims and processes at the regional level can address problems of wasteful competition between municipalities for development, and may drive municipal decision-makers to adopt broader policy orientations that are more appropriate to scale of municipal challenges and opportunities;
- bargaining power—“scaling-up” local governance through consolidation can put regional municipalities in a stronger position to advocate for regional interests to senior levels of government, and to negotiate with potential investors or industry actors for economic development opportunities on more favourable terms;
- equity—combining service delivery across municipal governments may not only improve efficiency, but may also help to make service delivery more uniform and consistent, thereby improving equity among citizens within a region.

An evaluation of these rationales lies outside the scope of this report. Nor does the report engage with an assessment of alternatives to regional consolidation. But a clear understanding of the different goals above is crucial for analyzing how the issues of council size and polling district boundaries have been approached in past cases of regional consolidation. The report returns to these themes in Parts 3 and 4 below.

3. Statutory Framework and Case Law

The first goal of this report is to understand how the Board has determined council size and polling districts in past cases similar to WWH. This section introduces the relevant statutory framework and outlines the Board’s general analytical framework for determining the issues of council size and the boundaries of polling districts. The section concludes by summarizing how the Board determined these issues in the three prior cases of regional consolidation in Nova Scotia, including subsequent adjustments to council size and district boundaries in those regional municipalities over time.

3.1. Statutory Framework

Section 10(1) of the *Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act* (the “Act”) requires the Co-ordinator to “apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for a determination of ... the number of councillors and the boundaries of the polling districts in the Regional Municipality.”¹⁵ The Act, however, is silent on the criteria to be applied by the Board in making these determinations.

Special legislation in prior cases of regional consolidation in Nova Scotia also lacked specific criteria to guide the Board’s decisions about council size and polling districts.¹⁶ In both the HRM and Queens cases,¹⁷ the Board relied, by analogy, on the statutory provisions requiring periodic reviews of these issues in all local governments in Nova Scotia pursuant to the *Municipal Boundaries and Representation Act* (the “MBRA”).¹⁸ In 1998, the MBRA provisions—including the requirement for an octennial review of council size and polling districts and criteria to guide those determinations—were subsequently incorporated into the MGA.¹⁹

The Board’s reliance on the MBRA in its decisions in the HRM and Queens cases is significant for WWH for two reasons. First, it suggests that the criteria for determining council size and polling districts now set out in section 368 of the MGA will be persuasive factors for the Board. Second, it suggests that the more general analytical framework the Board has developed in its section 369 jurisprudence since the early 2000s will likely guide the Board in determining council size and polling districts for WWH.

Sections 16(2) and 17 of the MBRA, which were relied on by the Board in the HRM and Queens cases, read as follows:²⁰

16(2) In settling and determining the number and boundaries of wards and polling districts and the number of aldermen or councillors for each ward or polling district, the Board shall give consideration among other things to population density, community of interest and geographic size of wards and polling districts. [emphasis added]

[...]

17 During the year 1987 and during each sixth year thereafter the council of each municipality other than a city or town shall cause a study to be made of the number and boundaries of the then existing polling districts in the

municipality and the fairness and reasonableness of the number of polling districts and of the number of councillors to be elected from each, and before the end of the year in which the study is made shall make an application to the Board either for confirmation of or approval of changes in the number and boundaries of polling districts and the number of councillors to be elected from each polling district. [emphasis added]

When the new MGA was enacted in 1998, it incorporated the requirements for periodic review formerly found in the MBRA. Section 369 of the MGA now reads:

369(1) In the year 1999, and in the years 2006 and every eighth year thereafter the council shall conduct a study of the number and boundaries of polling districts in the municipality, their fairness and reasonableness and the number of councillors.

(2) After the study is completed, and before the end of the year in which the study was conducted, the council shall apply to the Board to confirm or to alter the number and boundaries of polling districts and the number of councillors.

Subsection 368(4) of the MGA establishes the general powers of the Board upon a municipality's application to determine council size and polling districts:

368(4) In determining the number and boundaries of polling districts the Board shall consider number of electors, relative parity of voting power, population density, community of interest and geographic size. [emphasis added]

The specific factors identified in this provision are discussed in more detail below.

3.2. The Board's Analytical Framework

In the course of reviewing municipal applications respecting changes in council size and polling district boundaries under section 369 of the MGA, the Board has developed a general analytical framework that incorporates—but is not limited to—the factors listed in subsection 368(4). Based on the precedent established in the HRM and Queens consolidation cases, it is likely that the Board will apply this general framework when determining the council size and polling districts for the Region of Windsor and West Hants.

In 2004, HRM applied to the Board under section 369(1) to confirm its preexisting council size and the boundaries of its polling districts.²¹ Following its decision on the municipality's application, the Board established a two-step framework to guide municipal applications addressing council size and polling districts in future cases. At the first stage, the Board instructed municipalities to address the appropriate size of the municipal council. At the second stage, once council size has been determined, the Board instructed applicants to address the appropriate distribution of polling districts.²²

3.2.1. Step One: Council Size

When determining the size of council at the first stage, the Board will consider the following factors:²³

- the desired style of council;
- the governance structure of council; and
- the effective and efficient number of councillors.

The first two of these factors—the desired style of council and its governance structure—are not mentioned in the MGA. Instead, these factors appear to precede, and establish the relevant context for, applying the section 368 factors in order to determine “the effective and efficient number of councillors” for a municipality.

In describing the “desired style of council”, the Board referred to citizens’ expectations about the manner in which they engage with councillors and the extent to which councillors are directly accessible to their constituents. The Board distinguished between two styles of council on these grounds: a “board of directors” style and a “board of management” style.²⁴ While the Board did not elaborate on these two models, it appeared to have in mind the contrast between a council that is delegated relative autonomy to act on behalf of—but at a step removed from—its constituents, and a council whose immediate decisions are informed by its constituents and whose members are therefore directly accessible to municipal citizens. Party submissions in subsequent Board decisions have compared these styles as, alternatively, “board of directors” versus “ombudsman” models,²⁵ and as “executive” versus “direct accessibility” models.²⁶ The choice between these styles of governance has been described as the “social compact” between council and its citizens.²⁷ The Board noted that the style of council was a factor that should be based directly on the expectations of constituents as expressed through consultation.²⁸

In describing the “governance structure of council” component of its framework, the Board referred to features of municipal governance that are likely to affect citizens’ representation by, and access to, their councillors. Here, the Board appeared mainly to have in mind features such as the community councils that play a “critical role” in the governance of a regional municipality like HRM and serve as an important conduit for citizen participation and input. Presumably, structural features specific to other municipalities that affect the nature of representation or the delivery of municipal services would also be relevant to this component of the analysis—such as mayoral versus warden systems,²⁹ or the number of councillors elected per ward.³⁰

Based on these first two components of the Board’s framework, it is clear that the application of the statutory criteria in subsection 368(4) of the MGA should be sensitive to the diverse contexts of local governance. Those contexts will legitimately be informed by both citizens’ expectations, by features required under statute (e.g., the mayoral system for regional municipalities), and by other institutional decisions properly made by council (or, in the present case, by the Coordinating Committee).³¹

There is, however, uncertainty about the extent to which these first two factors are binding on the Board. In *Richmond County (Municipality) v. Nova Scotia (Attorney General)*, the municipality

sought judicial review of the Board’s decision to reduce its council from 10 members to 5, arguing that the Board failed to consider the style of governance desired by the municipal council’s constituents.³² The Court of Appeal found that the Board’s “guidance” in describing this component of the framework did not act as a fetter on the Board’s jurisdiction to determine the size of council using the explicit statutory criteria found in subsection 368(4).³³

The final factor at the first step of the Board’s analysis—“the effective and efficient number of councillors”—presumably refers directly to the criteria listed in subsection 368(4) of the MGA, interpreted in light of the desired style of council and its governance structure. The statutory criteria primarily relevant to determining council size are: the number of electors, population density, and the geographic size of the municipality.

3.2.2. Step Two: Polling District Boundaries

In *Re (Halifax Regional Municipality)*, 2004 NSUARB 11, the Board addressed four factors listed in section 368(4) of the MGA relevant to determining polling districts at the second stage of analysis: relative parity in voting power, community of interest, geography, and population density.

The MGA does not describe how the four factors might interrelate to one another, but the Board has gone some distance toward clarifying this relationship in its case law. In its decisions on polling districts in both the HRM and Queens consolidation cases, the Board was careful to note the “paramount importance” of relative parity of voting power.³⁴ The central concern is that, when the voter-to-councillor ratio in one district exceeds that of any other district, each elector’s vote in the former will be proportionally less influential in determining electoral outcomes and in public decision making.

In *Reference re Provincial Electoral Boundaries*, Justice McLachlin described relative parity of voting power as one of the conditions for effective representation.³⁵ The importance of this principle as a baseline for determining polling boundaries was emphasized again in the final report of Nova Scotia’s Provincial Electoral Boundaries Commission in 1992, noting that “criteria such as geography or community interest may be used to temper the idea of the ‘relative parity of voting power’, but they do not supplant or eliminate that concept.”³⁶

In past cases of regional consolidation, the Board applied a threshold for variance from average voting power parity for each proposed district at ± 20 -25 percent. More recent Board decisions on polling district distribution pursuant to section 369 of the MGA have narrowed the expected baseline threshold for variance in relative voter power parity to ± 10 percent, requiring that variance in excess of this threshold “must be justified in terms of the criteria identified in section 368(4)” —namely, the number of electors, relative parity of voting power, population density, community of interest and geographic size.³⁷ Furthermore, “[t]he more the variance exceeds 10 percent the greater and more detailed the justification the Board will expect.”³⁸

At the same time, the Board has also been clear that polling district boundaries themselves cannot be established arbitrarily but should seek to encompass “common interests”—however this might be defined.³⁹ Communities of interest, likely in combination with geography and population density, therefore appear to form the basis for actually mapping district boundaries,

while relative parity in voting power sets a strong outside constraint on the degree to which districts can vary in population. Nevertheless, the broad interpretation given to “community of interest” by the Board lends this criterion considerable flexibility and ambiguity, leading to uncertainty about when certain interests might “trump” others if they come into conflict with one another.

3.2.3. Relationship Between Steps One and Two

While the Board has been clear that it wants municipalities to address steps 1 and 2 of its framework in serial order, the two inquiries are clearly interrelated. For example, the size of council (and therefore the number of polling districts in a system of single-district representation) will establish parameters for drawing district boundaries. In some cases, what appears to be an optimal council size will make it impossible to establish polling districts that fall within the variance thresholds for voting power parity or meet the other criteria established by the Board.⁴⁰ In these circumstances, the Board has demonstrated some degree of flexibility in adjusting council size at the margins on the basis of factors such as community of interest— while nevertheless continuing to demand that municipalities follow the general instruction to address these issues in discrete stages, at least as a first attempt.

3.3. Prior Cases of Regional Consolidation

Below is a summary of the Board’s reasons and conclusions on the issues of council size and polling districts in the three prior cases of regional consolidation in Nova Scotia (CBRM, HRM, and Queens). The summary includes both the Board’s initial determinations on these issues at consolidation, as well as subsequent revisions to council size and polling districts upon application by each of the regional municipalities under section 369 of the MGA. Table 1 shows how council size has changed in each of the regional municipalities over time since before consolidation in 1995-1996.

	CBRM	HRM	Queens
Before consolidation (total)	70	60	16
After consolidation (1995/96)	21	23	9
1999	16	23	9
2004	16	23	9
2011	12	16	7

Table 1: Council Size in Nova Scotia’s Regional Municipalities, Pre-consolidation to 2011

3.3.1. Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM)

The consolidation of Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) encompassed the area of the former Cape Breton County, amalgamating eight separate municipal units that contained a mix of urban, suburban and rural populations. The region contained 13 percent of the total provincial

population at the time of consolidation, second in size only to the region of Halifax County. Since the mid-1960s, “industrial” Cape Breton had been experiencing declining economic prospects, out migration, and an aging population.⁴¹

Prior to consolidation, Cape Breton County’s eight municipalities included a total of 70 councillors, a total population of 120,098 and a voting population of 83,769. Voter-per-councillor ratios varied across these pre-existing municipalities from 155:1 to 2,222:1.

Charles Campbell, the regional Co-ordinator, issued his Interim Report on the consolidation to the Minister of Municipal Affairs in July 1993. Campbell proposed establishing a new regional council of 20 councillors. In proposing a council of this size, the Co-ordinator was primarily concerned to “balance the goals of effectiveness and representation.”⁴² Campbell’s view was that large councils tended to be unworkable, a problem which itself would impair effective representation of councillors’ constituents. He was also concerned that “there is a tendency ... for very large councils to be unduly concerned with neighbourhood issues, of importance to the individual councillors, and not sufficiently directed to the needs of the region as a whole.”⁴³ This conclusion was based in part on Campbell’s understanding of the experiences of other large cities in the Atlantic region and across Canada which, in his view, favoured “smaller, more workable councils.”⁴⁴

On the question of polling districts, the Co-ordinator noted that the geography of the new regional municipality and large variation in the geographic size of polling districts across the former municipal units created challenges in maintaining relative parity in voting power while ensuring that councillors on the new council could effectively represent their constituents.⁴⁵ Campbell was sensitive to the need not to divide communities of interest, but also recognized that reinforcing the boundaries of prior municipal units could divide communities of interest in some cases while protecting them in others. Accordingly, “[m]any living on the boundaries of cities and towns have more in common with the urban units than with those who shared the same councillor but were of a more rural bent.”⁴⁶ But Campbell also recognized that public perception played an important role, noting that simply creating polling districts to ensure that they each include some mix of urban, suburban and rural could divide these interests and pit them against one another, leading to political dysfunction. In Campbell’s view, the inevitable contest between these interests would be more appropriately played out within the council itself, rather than within particular polling districts.⁴⁷ Finally, the Co-ordinator noted that polling districts should not be split by major geographic barriers, which could impair access to elected officials.⁴⁸

After a preliminary hearing on these issues, the Board requested that the Co-ordinator file a revised application to address problems with one of the proposed districts. The Board ultimately settled on a council of 21 members, resulting in an average voter-per-councillor ratio of 3,989:1. While the Co-ordinator had set an ambitious goal for variance in voting power to within ± 10 percent of the average,⁴⁹ the Board ultimately rejected this proposal based on its concerns about geographic size and about reinforcing pre-existing divisions between rural and urban voters.⁵⁰ The Board allowed a number of districts to vary within ± 20.9 percent,⁵¹ noting that “[i]t would not be inappropriate if the small urban polling districts exceeded +10 percent while the large rural polling districts exceeded -10 percent.”⁵² In one “special circumstance”, the Board allowed a district to vary by -54.7 percent.

In 1999, just five years after the creation of the new CBRM, the regional council applied to the Board under section 369 of the MGA to reduce its size from 21 members to 16 members. That application was accepted by the Board. In 2011, the regional municipality applied to maintain its *status quo* size of 16 councillors, but the size of council was again reduced by the Board, creating a new council of 12 members. This most recent reduction resulted in a voter-per-councillor ratio of 6,936:1.⁵³ Following the reduction of council size to 12 councillors in 2011, the variation in voting power between districts was reduced considerably—to a range between -25.9 percent to +16.3 percent.⁵⁴

3.3.2. Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)

The area formerly encompassed by Halifax County is the largest urbanized area in Nova Scotia. The former municipalities of Halifax City, Dartmouth, Bedford and Halifax County—an area covering nearly 1.5 million acres—were consolidated to create the Halifax Regional Municipality in 1996.

Prior to consolidation, the four former municipal units were governed by a total of 60 councillors and comprised of 45 different wards. The population of the new regional municipality when it was created was 330,846, with a total voting population of 249,510. Voter-per-councillor ratios in the former units varied from 1,936:1 (in Bedford) to 9,538:1 (in Halifax City).

C. William Hayward, the Co-ordinator for the HRM consolidation, submitted his Interim Report on the consolidation to the Minister of Municipal Affairs in July 1993. Echoing many of the same ideas and much of the same language as the Campbell report, Hayward's report recommended a new council size of 20 members and, in making this recommendation, sought to "balance the goals of effectiveness and representation."⁵⁵ Likewise, Hayward's report mirrored many of the considerations in the Cape Breton report—however, the former recommended a broader range for the variance in average in voting power of ± 20 percent (compared to ± 10 percent), noting that ± 30 percent may be justified in unusual cases.⁵⁶

The Board ultimately determined that the new regional council should be slightly larger, at 23 members, resulting in an average voter-per-councillor ratio of 10,337:1. In rejecting the smaller proposed council size, the Board emphasized that a municipal councillor, "particularly in a rural area, is expected to perform a wide variety of activities for his or her constituents. For many people in rural areas, this is their one contact with all levels of government."⁵⁷ The Board also expressed the concern that district sizes for the new regional municipality remain proportionally smaller in population than in federal or provincial ridings, and proportional to the voter-per-councillor ratios in other Nova Scotia municipalities.⁵⁸ In determining polling districts, the Board accepted a variance in average voting power of ± 25 across districts and the final districts approved by the Board all fell within this range (between -21.6 percent to +23.8 percent).

The size of HRM's council remained unchanged until 2011, when the Board ordered a reduction in the size of council to 16 members—notwithstanding the regional council's request to maintain the *status quo*. This resulted in an average voter-per-councillor ratio across the regional municipality of 20,664:1. Following this reduction in council size, the variation in voting power between districts narrowed to between -20.7 percent and 13.0 percent.⁵⁹

3.3.3. *Region of Queens Municipality (Queens)*

The consolidation of the Town of Liverpool and the Municipality of the County of Queens that produced the new Region of Queen Municipality in 1996 differed from the consolidations in Cape Breton and Halifax in a few important respects. First, the Queens consolidation did not include a major urban centre but was instead the product of amalgamating a town and rural area with a much smaller population.⁶⁰ This feature places the Queens case closer to the social, economic and demographic context of WWH. Second, the Queens consolidation was not mandated by the Province—as it had been for CBRM and HRM—but was initiated locally.⁶¹

Nevertheless, despite this context, the mayor, warden and the respective councils of the two pre-existing municipalities apparently ran “into difficulty in agreeing on how best to implement” the consolidation.⁶² As a result, two independent, local business persons—Harold Dobson and James Sapp—were asked to undertake a study of municipal reform for Queens and to provide a “blueprint” for the consolidation. The total voting population over the area of Queens County at consolidation was 9,404. The Town of Liverpool had 6 councillors and an average voter-per-councillor ratio of 385:1, while Queens County had 10 councillors an average ratio of 730:1.

In addressing the question of council size, Sapp and Dobson took their cue from the Task Force on Local Government’s emphasis on balancing “citizen accessibility” with “cost-effective service delivery”⁶³—although the report itself offers little insight into how the authors used this principle to arrive at their preferred council size. Sapp and Dobson argued that a ± 20 percent requirement should guide assessment of polling districts based on voting power parity.

Based on Sapp and Dobson’s study, the Co-ordinator for the Region of Queens recommended to the Board that the new regional municipality have a council size of 9—resulting in an average voter-per-councillor ratio of 1,044:1—a recommendation that was supported by a majority of councillors and citizens who gave evidence before the Board.⁶⁴ The Board approved a council of 9 councillors, as well as the recommended polling district boundaries based primarily on community of interest and geographic factors. The Board’s determination of 9 polling districts produced districts with variation in relative parity of voting power between -22 percent to +23 percent.

In 2011, the Region of Queens Municipality applied to reduce the number of councillors and polling districts to 7, based primarily on concerns about a projected decline in population in the region.⁶⁵ This application was accepted by the Board, yielding a new average voter-per-councillor ratio of 1,167:1.⁶⁶ Following the reduction in council size, the variation in voting power between districts narrowed dramatically, to between -2.66 percent to +3.51 percent.⁶⁷

4. Synthesis of Cases and Academic Research

The relevant statutory criteria for determining the optimal council size and distribution of polling districts are quite broad, and they offer precious little insight into how to address the trade-offs inherent in key decisions around the institutional design of municipal governance. While there are many factors that might bear on such decisions, this report proposes that, in the context of regional consolidation, determining council size and the distribution of polling districts can be addressed as an exercise in balancing two respective sets of competing but legitimate values or aims.

The “optimal” council size for WWH primarily engages the balance between what researchers have called *representation* and *governance*—that is, between council’s ability to provide effective political representation on the one hand and effective municipal governance or legislative functionality on the other. Likewise, the question of district boundaries engages the balance between *community* and *regional* interests—that is, between demands by existing communities of interest for political recognition on the one hand and imperatives for regional planning and policy making on the other. While these are certainly not the only questions of balance that might be relevant to the Board’s determinations, they are arguably the most salient and those best informed by the existing body of available research.

4.1. Council Size

As the Board’s analytical framework recognizes, any determination of an “optimal” council size for WWH will necessarily be context specific. As an early study on the question of council size observed, “there is neither an abstract optimal size for a national, state, or city legislature nor an accepted formula for establishing legislative size, because decisions on size involve fundamental matters of representation, governmental effectiveness, political accountability, and the competitiveness of the city’s political system.”⁶⁸

The optimal council size for WWH will turn on how best to navigate the several trade-offs between effective “representation” and effective “governance”. The Board recognized as much in its initial determination of council size for the new Region of Queens Municipality when it observed that its decision “must balance both the number of voters a councillor will represent and the maximum number of councillors who can effectively work as a council.”⁶⁹ As the Task Force on Local Government noted, “[t]he reorganization of any system of local government must always balance the requirements of accountability and accessibility with those of efficiency and economy.”⁷⁰

4.1.1. Representation

Effective political representation refers to a councillor’s ability to effectively represent the views and interests of their constituents. In 1992, the Task Force on Local Government included two important functions of local government as (1) a forum for decisions about how local citizens want to live and (2) a forum for the resolution of conflicting views.⁷¹ To fulfill the first of these functions, municipal councillors must be well-informed about their constituents’ views and accountable for representing those views accurately and zealously. To fulfill the second of these functions, the council as a whole must be comprised of a enough districts to capture a range of

constituencies that bring a sufficient diversity of views and interests to the council table. In general, larger councils will be more representative in terms of both of these functions.

It is important to note that the quality of democratic representation in any municipality will be defined, in part, by the expectations of its citizens—that is, what the Board has called the “desired style of council.”⁷² “Executive” or “board of directors” models of council representation are premised on the assumption that councillors enjoy relative autonomy to interpret and represent their constituents’ wishes once they have been elected. In this model, elections represent a kind of delegation of authority and discretion to councillors to act on their constituents’ behalf. Alternatively, “direct accessibility” models of council assume that councillors must continually seek input from, adapt to, and respond to their constituents’ views throughout the election cycle. The latter model will generally require that citizens have regular access to their councillors, and that councillors have the capacity to respond to their citizens concerns on an individualized basis. As the Board noted in its initial determination for HRM, “[a] municipal councillor, particularly in a rural area, is expected to perform a wide variety of activities for his or her constituents. For many people in rural areas, this is their one contact with all levels of government.”⁷³ To the extent that the “executive” and “direct accessibility” models are ideal types, any actual council will in practice likely operate somewhere on a spectrum between them.

Three of the statutory factors in section 368(4) of the *MGA* speak directly to the question of effective political representation: the number of electors in the municipality, its population density, and its geographic size. The greater the number of constituents each councillor represents, the less accessible they may be (in terms of time and workload) and the less “fine-grained” will be the views of each district represented at council. Geography may also play a significant role. In reviewing the council size of the Halifax Regional Municipality in 2011, the Board observed:⁷⁴

[T]he issue of geographic size, in addition to the other factors, is clearly a relevant point for the Board to consider. In this proceeding, HRM's geographic size, with large sparsely populated rural areas, is a factor which tempers, to some extent, the desirability of a small council size. If this factor had not been present in this proceeding, the Board would have seriously considered a much smaller council.”

While the density and geographic size of a councillor’s district may have a direct impact on that councillor’s ability to meet constituents face-to-face or to establish proximate constituency offices, some of that impact may be mitigated if technologies (e.g. email, social media) provide effective means of communication. Access to such technologies themselves, however, may turn on variables such as socio-economic status and demography.

The degree of a council’s “representativeness” is difficult to measure. As a result, relatively little empirical research is available to test the idea that larger councils are more representative compared to smaller councils. One approach has been to focus on citizens’ subjective experiences of access to councillors before and after municipal reforms. Kushner and Siegel (2003) gathered interview and survey data in three Ontario municipalities following regional consolidation.⁷⁵ The three consolidations ranged in context, from a voluntary merging of two

small village with a township to a large-scale, mandatory amalgamation of a central urban area with a county and its 21 municipal units. The researchers found that councillor workloads in each of the regional municipalities were either not affected or increased after amalgamation, but they also found that these changes did not negatively impact most councillors' perceived ability to be accessible to their constituents.⁷⁶ In all three regions studied, the majority of residents surveyed reported no difference in the accessibility of their councillors after amalgamation—although a “sizeable minority” (from 11 to 34 percent) thought that access had diminished.⁷⁷ While studies such as these offer a window into peoples' experiences of representation, any general lessons should be drawn with caution. As Kushner and Siegel (2003) note, citizens' responses on the issue of accessibility after consolidation appeared to be influenced by their prior beliefs about the benefits or drawbacks of consolidation in the first place.⁷⁸

Other studies have addressed the relationship between council size and representativeness by evaluating the diversity of council itself as a proxy for the diversity of interests or views that it represents. In their study using a large dataset from Danish municipal elections, Kjaer and Elklit (2014) find that larger councils have a positive effect on the number of women represented on council—but only to a point, as this effect largely disappears at council sizes over 11 individuals.⁷⁹ These findings suggest that setting council size “too low” in some circumstances may have adverse consequences for the representation of underrepresented or marginalized voices within the municipality.

4.1.2. Governance

Effective governance refers to council's ability to function well in its legislative and administrative roles by reaching sound policy decisions and delivering municipal services in ways that minimizes costs. Two types of costs are most significant to the issue of governance: *decision costs* and *administrative costs*.

Decision costs are incurred by councillors in reaching decisions together about the governance of the municipality. Smaller councils are generally “considered more efficient internally as fewer people participate in the political discussion and fewer compromises are needed.”⁸⁰ Where council is comprised of many councillors, each representing different constituencies and interests, the time and resources needed to give voice to those different interests and to reach final decisions on matters of law and policy may be onerous or, in the extreme, debilitating if they impair decision-making and render council ineffective.⁸¹ Decision costs speak to the “balance between representing the voices of many while retaining the ability to govern.”⁸² As expert testimony in a recent section 369(1) application by the Cape Breton Regional Municipality put it, the prospect of higher decision costs in larger councils raises the question, “is the political system one in which the municipality can get the job done?”⁸³ As the authors of the 1967 Pictou County Municipal Consolidation Study recognized, to a certain extent and in some contexts, the ability to “get the job done” amounts to a prerequisite for effective representation.⁸⁴ In order for a municipal council to provide good representation to its citizens, it must be able to function effectively.

A second category of decision costs is related to the potential for collective action problems in deciding on council's appropriate level of public expenditures. Political scientists have suggested that larger councils—all else equal—may spend more on public works projects (such as parks)

for reasons that are not driven by citizens demands or an evaluation of the cost consequences of these projects.⁸⁵ According to this view, for any given municipality, an increase in electoral districts reduces each district's *relative* contribution to public projects. This, in turn, may cause each councillor to internalize a smaller share of the overall cost burden on their ward as a whole, causing them to advocate for larger projects and higher expenditures.

Administrative costs refer to the financial costs of council operations relative to its size. A number of specific administrative costs have, in theory, been linked to larger municipal councils. The first set of costs is straightforward: each councillor undoubtedly represents a fixed expenditure in terms of salary, office space, staff support, etc. Reducing the number of councillors may reduce some of these costs. Second, even if a portion of the cost savings from reducing council size is reallocated to higher salaries for the remaining councillors, the result may be more qualified candidates and consequently higher productivity in delivering good governance.⁸⁶

There are, however, also competing administrative costs potentially associated with smaller municipal councils.⁸⁷ Greater “professionalization” may occur in municipalities where the number of councillors is reduced, because the remaining councillors require proportionally more staff resources to support their work.⁸⁸ Moreover, councillors in municipalities with smaller councils may have proportionally higher campaign expenditures.⁸⁹

Like effective representation, it is difficult to measure the actual decision costs associated with smaller or larger councils. But the financial cost savings of reducing council size have received some limited attention in the context of research on Canadian local government. In their study of three municipal consolidations in Ontario, Kushner and Siegel (2003) find that the costs of council administration (councillor salaries plus expenditures), decreased in two of the three cases studied, while costs actually increased slightly in a third case in the period immediately following consolidation.⁹⁰ But the researchers also found that, where financial costs decreased, these savings represented less than 1 percent of total municipal expenditures.⁹¹

In a quantitative analysis of council expenditures after structural reforms in HRM, Toronto and Quebec City, Meloche and Kilfoil (2017) find evidence that council expenditures dropped when council size was reduced.⁹² At the same time, this study found that scale of cost reductions was proportionally less than the reduction in the number of councillors. In Halifax following the downsizing of council in 2011, council size decreased by approximately 20 percent, while council expenditures dropped by only 10 percent.⁹³ These results—corroborated by a large-sample analysis of fifty-one Quebec municipalities with populations over 20,000⁹⁴—suggest that cost savings tend to be offset, to a degree, by greater “professionalization” of municipal administration through the use of more staff resources. The research on this issue was apparently anticipated by the Board in its decision to reduce the size of HRM's council in 2011. The Board concluded that:⁹⁵

[P]otential cost savings are not a material factor in assessing the request by those seeking to reduce the size of HRM's council. Any reduction would likely cause support costs for the remaining councillors to rise and negate some of the savings occasioned by the reduction in council size.

While there is evidence to support the argument that reducing council size leads to administrative cost savings, municipalities should not expect to realize the full savings from downsizing. This appears to hold true even in the context of regional consolidations where, as a consequence of amalgamation, some aspects of municipal bureaucracy will presumably be combined and streamlined.

4.2. Polling District Boundaries

As with council size, the determination of polling district boundaries at the second stage of the Board's analysis engages a balance between competing values or outcomes—that is, between giving political recognition to existing and historical communities of interest on the one hand and imperatives for regional planning and policy making on the other. In addition, as the Board has made clear, this balance must be guided or circumscribed by the requirement that polling district boundaries maintain relative parity of voting power within acceptable limits.

4.2.1. Community of Interest

Community of interest is a factor set out explicitly in section 368(4) of the MGA. Community of interest has been described as a “sense of common purpose” that links municipal residents of a geographic area together.⁹⁶ The Board has identified several factors that could serve as a nexus for such common purposes: history; recreational issues; tax rates (including area rates); services (water and sewer); fire protection service areas; traffic infrastructure and patterns; planning boundaries; language; ethnic origin; school districts; and shopping patterns and business centres.⁹⁷

While section 368(4) addresses community of interest as just one among several factors, it is clear that this criterion plays a prominent role in establishing ward boundaries, especially at the outset of a regional restructuring. A report for the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing in 1991, cited by the Board in initial determination of polling districts for HRM, said the following:⁹⁸

The rationale of the principle of community of interest is that electoral districts should be more than arbitrary, random groupings of individuals. They should be, as far as possible, cohesive units, areas with common interests related to representation. Existing districts and municipal boundaries should be respected where possible. The outer borders of the district should not divide distinct communities and neighbourhoods. Unrelated and geographically isolated areas should not be artificially attached to districts with whose "core" population they share no significant links.

4.2.2. Regional Interests

The Royal Commission's commitment to preserving communities of interest and its perspective that district boundaries should not “artificially” combine “unrelated” areas and community populations exposes a significant tension with another goal of regional consideration—namely, to reduce inter-municipal competition and promote new forms of collective action and policy

making at the regional level. The determination of polling district boundaries therefore imports a crucial decision or balancing act around the question of what *scale* is most appropriate to define or measure the primary interest(s) represented in a new regional municipality.

In its decision establishing polling districts and council size for HRM, the Board observed: “[m]any people anticipated that a regional government in the Halifax metropolitan area would lead to a reduction in the parochial attitudes which have hindered co-operation between the four municipal units.”⁹⁹ Quoting from the Metro Halifax Chamber of Commerce, the Board noted:¹⁰⁰

A regional perspective offers a focused decision-making process based on cooperation. Cooperative coordination on regional issues such as transportation, water and sewer treatment, policing, economic development, industrial parks, and so on, enables decisions to be made that balance a range of considerations, rather than pitting one area against another. Also, a single decision-making body is capable of considering local concerns within a broad regional perspective. The status quo—protecting what we have at the expense of others must be replaced with the view that we will all do better if we work together ... a single decision-making body offers a single "point of entry" for decisions on regional issues. Municipal representation based on population distribution will deemphasize the former political boundaries and encourage communities to focus on the new regional vision.

Likewise, in determining the polling districts for the new CBRM, the Board made explicit its desire to set district boundaries that combined urban and rural electors formerly organized into separate municipal units. The Board expressed the view that “it is not necessary or desirable to have polling districts in urban areas which do not extend beyond the former town or city boundaries.”¹⁰¹ On this point:¹⁰²

The Co-ordinator expressed the view that the polling districts should be designed to encourage the new councillors to think regionally, rather than to treat their mandate as simply to advance the local interests of the former municipal units. By their very nature and history the existing communities will retain their present specific identities. However, for purposes of electing representatives to the new Council there is a deliberate attempt to have the polling districts extend beyond traditional municipal boundaries.

At the same time, the Board recognized that when creating new districts with the intention of capturing both rural and urban voters, it must be careful not to skew representation too far in favour of one constituency or the other. As the Board observed, “[t]his is a new form of government for the area. It is necessary that rural voters be fairly represented, particularly given their location in relation to where the offices of the new Municipality will likely be located. Rural voters must be assured a voice in this new form of municipal government.”¹⁰³

4.3. Linking Council Size and Polling Districts

In establishing its two-stage framework to first determine council size and then determine polling district boundaries, the Board has maintained something of a strict separation between balancing

“representation” with “governance” on one side, and “community” with “regional” interests on the other. But these two inquiries rarely, if ever, take place in strict isolation from one another.

For example, in its decision to downsize CBRM’s regional council in 2011, the Board linked the size of council directly to the goal of grouping together rural and suburban voters toward encouraging “regional thinking”.¹⁰⁴

The encouragement of a more regional perspective on CBRM Council is part of the maturation of the Municipality as a regional government. Some Councillors have suggested that it is time to reinforce regional identity over local communities. Reduction in the number of Council representatives will likely necessitate the combination of areas of former towns that have so far remained distinct within the Council District structure used in CBRM. As noted previously, it will also likely require the incorporation of some suburban lands into the two largely distinct rural districts within the municipality.

Likewise, Muzzio and Tompkins (1989) have noted that the goal to increase effective political representation by creating a larger council may be in tension with promoting regional interests:¹⁰⁵

Increasing the size of the council is likely to affect the balance between the legislator's district-service function and his or her larger policy-making role. If smaller districts result in a greater focus on local and parochial matters and interests and if homogeneity in district opinion offers members less room to compromise on the legislative floor, the development of a broader policy perspective in the council may be retarded.

The point here is that, from a holistic perspective, the value of promoting regional interests might be directly affected by the choice of council size. There are likely other examples illustrating how council size and polling districts are interrelated in complex ways. Although the two inquiries are largely isolated from one another under the Board’s current approach, it may be necessary to gain a better understanding of how council size and polling district determinations affect one another in order to achieve the best balance between—as well as within—these issues.

4.4. A Dynamic Perspective

A further challenge is to place the determination of council size and polling district boundaries for WHH in a dynamic, forward-looking perspective. The approach to balancing and weighing the factors described above assumes, to some extent, a static analysis of the relevant goals and interests. This approach might be appropriate if council size and polling boundaries are expected to remain fixed over the long-term. The three precedents for regional consolidation in Nova Scotia (CBRM, HRM and Queens), however, suggest that these structural aspects of local governance can, and often do, change and adapt over time.

From a dynamic perspective, the basic questions before the Board are therefore not only about the “optimal” size of council or distribution of polling districts, but also about (1) the best way to accomplish these goals and (2) the extent to which “optimality” can be identified from the outset,

under the conditions of uncertainty that inevitably attach to moments of significant institutional change.

For example, in its decision to reduce the size of regional council in CBRM in 2011, the Board was aware that the "[r]eduction of Council to 12 members will obviously continue a progression that has been underway since the formation of CBRM."¹⁰⁶ The Board went on to observe that encouraging "a more regional perspective on CBRM Council is part of the maturation of the Municipality as a regional government."¹⁰⁷ While the processes and goals of "maturation" in WWH may look different than they have in CBRM, the Board's approach to these issues recognizes that the institutional design of the new regional municipality is, inevitably, an ongoing and dynamic process. Below is a brief sketch of the main considerations that influence this dynamic perspective.

4.4.1. *Lock-In*

Researchers who study political institutions (e.g., legislative bodies) have come to recognize that "lock-in" or "path dependence" can help to explain why these institutions are "sticky" and difficult to change—even when better alternatives are available and well known.¹⁰⁸ The problem of lock-in arises because people who work within existing institutions—as well as those within broader institutional networks—gradually adapt to and gain a vested interest in the *status quo*, making it very costly to "switch" to a new structure. Even when a better alternative comes along, the costs of making this switch deter people from taking action.

But while lock-in can sustain institutional inertia over long periods of time, research has also shown that sometimes "windows of opportunity" open up where the costs of transition to a new institutional arrangement decrease and change becomes possible. That new arrangement will then generate its own sources of lock-in going forward.

The creation of a new regional municipality—possibly linked with changing economic and social conditions—may present one such window of opportunity, to the extent that it disrupts some of the normal costs and benefits of working under the *status quo*. This suggests that the moment of consolidation is a unique opportunity to make ambitious change before the window of opportunity closes. At the same time, there are risks involved because once the new structure is set it is likely to exert a heavy influence over future attempts to adjust and adapt.

4.4.2. *Buy-In*

One example of balancing opportune and incremental changes can be found in the Board's decision to reduce the size of CBRM's council in 2011. The Board's expert, Dr. Williams, observed that there is likely to be an important relationship between reducing council size and maintaining pre-existing communities of interest:¹⁰⁹

One of the hallmarks of amalgamated municipalities is a sharp reduction in the number of elected officials in the new unit; one of the less noticeable characteristics is the tendency to tolerate patterns of representation - at least at the outset - that accommodate the pre-amalgamation units in some way.

... [M]any amalgamated municipalities, for political and other reasons, keep some of those lines in place because it makes it a little more palatable to start with.

This example highlights the importance of securing “buy-in” from constituents and community leaders at the outset of consolidation—and of using buy-in as an additional factor in determining polling districts toward the goal of establishing a strong political foundation for future reforms down the road. Research has found that buy-in may be especially important in circumstances where a regional consolidation is driven wholly or in part by senior government and/or municipal officials. Rosenfeld and Reese (2005) note that lack of local support in some “top-down” amalgamations can lead to a more protracted transition process “because there is no political buy-in on a larger scale.”¹¹⁰ The fact that the consolidation of the Town of Windsor and the Municipality of the District of West Hants is a response by the provincial government to requests from both Councils forms an important part of this context for WWH.

4.4.3. Uncertainty

Not only might decision makers be prevented by lock-in from simply implementing what they perceive to be an optimal set of reforms, they might face considerable uncertainty about the end goal of reform and/or about the necessary components needed to achieve the end goal. According to Muzzio and Tompkins (1989):¹¹¹

[A]ny changes in basic governmental structures in a complex sociopolitical system will likely produce effects that are unforeseen or unintended by policy-makers. How changes in council size will ultimately affect both internal dynamics and constituent representation cannot be predicted with certainty. Alterations in the size of the body will have effects in combination with other changes. The core values will be influenced by myriad structural, political, economic, demographic, social, and other changes. Moreover, the consequences of changes in council size are unlikely to be immediately evident; for instance, incumbent leaders will probably continue to hold sway for a time, whatever the size of the body.

These aspects of uncertainty serve as another potential justification for determining institutional design features like council size and polling districts in an incremental fashion, to the extent that this is possible, by integrating new information and experience as time goes on.

4.5. Summary

The statutory factors listed in subsection 368(4) of the MGA for determining council size and polling district boundaries provide a starting for addressing these issues, but it is also necessary to understand the precise relationships between these different factors. Those relationships can be addressed as tensions or balancing between competing but legitimate values or aims. At the first step of the Board’s analytical framework, the “optimal” council size engages a balance between effective representation and effective governance. At the second stage, the allocation of polling districts requires a balance between community and regional interests. At the same time, these questions of balance must be approached from a dynamic perspective and with the expectation of

continued change and adaptation over time, taking into account the challenges and opportunities presented by institutional lock-in, constituent buy-in, and the inevitable uncertainty attached to moments of institutional change.

5. Recommendations

In light of the functions of local government, the general objectives for municipal reform, and the rationales for regional consolidation discussed above (see Sections 2.1 and 2.2), the following seven recommendations summarize the findings of this report.

- A regional council smaller in size than the combined councils of the Town of Windsor (5 councillors) and the Municipality of the District of West Hants (10 councillors) is consistent with prior cases of regional consolidation in Nova Scotia and is likely necessary to achieve the appropriate balance between representation and governance in the new regional municipality.
- An upper limit on the size of the regional council should be based on serious attention to the decision costs associated with larger councils. The evidence linking smaller council sizes to a reduction in administrative costs is mixed—although regions with smaller populations may be better placed to realize some administrative efficiencies from a smaller council.
- A lower limit on the size of the regional council should be sensitive to citizen expectations about the desired style of council, but also to the potential impacts of council size on underrepresented groups—especially when the anticipated size is at the smaller end of the spectrum.
- Using community of interest factors to draw polling district boundaries, while important, cannot avoid the fundamental question of *whose* interests are to be prioritized through consolidation (e.g. regional, community, rural, urban).
- Despite the merits of keeping the questions of council size and polling district boundaries separate from one another, the two inquiries are clearly interrelated and should be approached as such when balancing the different factors at play.
- While council size and the distribution of polling districts are key decisions that will shape a new regional municipality, there may be other features of institutional design (e.g., community councils or citizens advisory bodies) that play an important role in determining representation, effective governance, and the weight that different interests receive in public decision making. Consistent with the Board’s analytical framework, final determinations of council size and polling districts should take these features into account along with the other factors in play.
- A dynamic perspective is essential for recognizing the opportunities and constraints related to institutional change in the context of regional consolidation. While consolidation may open a window of opportunity for ambitious change in the short term, this must be weighed against the value of incremental change to attract buy-in and deal with uncertainty when appropriate.

6. Conclusion

This report has provided an understanding and synthesis of how the Board has approached the issues of council size and polling district boundaries in previous cases similar to WWH, and it has integrated insights from the current research literature on creating effective representation at the local government level. In doing so, the report builds on the several past studies and reports that have addressed these issues in the context of municipal reform in Nova Scotia.

The creation of WWH represents a unique moment in the history of municipal reform in the province. Being the first such regional consolidation in Nova Scotia in over two decades, WWH helps to draw into focus lessons learned from past experiences (in Nova Scotia and abroad) as well as persistent challenges around how to design “optimal” institutions for local governance.

A desk study of this kind of course has its own limitations, and the findings from this report will ultimately supplement information gathered through important public consultations being undertaken concurrently by Stantec with WWH citizens. While different people may take different views on the “optimal” size of council and the appropriate distribution of polling districts, there is little doubt that these issues will have a lasting impact on the success of WWH as a region. These issues—including how they are approached, as well as what is determined—may also have a lasting impact on the future trajectory of municipal reforms in Nova Scotia, making the regional consolidation of WWH a unique opportunity to lay groundwork for the future.

¹ SNS 2018, c 26.

² SNS 1998, c 18 at s 369(1).

³ Elizabeth Mancke, *The Fault Lines of Empire: Political Differentiation in Massachusetts and Nova Scotia, 1760-1830* (New York: Routledge, 2005)

⁴ Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, “The Provincial-Municipal Fiscal Review: Consultative Report” (2014) Province of Nova Scotia Draft Paper at 7.

⁵ Institute of Public Affairs, *Pictou County Municipal Coordination Study, Phase 2: Recommendations* (Halifax: Dalhousie University, 1996), vol 2 (Lawrence E Sandford).

⁶ Nova Scotia, The Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy, *Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians* (Halifax: One Nova Scotia, 2014) (Ray Ivany) at 50.

⁷ Nova Scotia, Task Force on Local Government, *Task Force on Local Government Report to the Government of Nova Scotia* (Halifax: Minister of Municipal Affairs, 1992) at 27-30. The five critical regions identified but he Task Force were: Cape Breton County, Pictou County, Halifax County, Colchester County, and Kings County.

⁸ *Ibid*, at 32-33.

⁹ *Cape Breton Regional Municipality Act*, SNS 1994, c 3; *Halifax Regional Municipality Act*, SNS 1995 c 3.

¹⁰ *Queens Regional Municipality Act*, SNS 1995 c 9; Dale Poel, “Municipal Reform in Nova Scotia: A Long-Standing Agenda for Change” (2005) in Joseph Garcea and Edward LeSage, eds, *Municipal Reform in Canada* (Oxford University Press, 2005) 174 at 177.

¹¹ Poel, “Municipal Reform”, *ibid* 177-78.

¹² *Regional Municipalities Act*, SNS 1995-96, c 16.

¹³ Nova Scotia, Task Force on Local Government, *Task Force on Local Government Report to the Government of Nova Scotia* (Halifax: Minister of Municipal Affairs, 1992) at 7.

¹⁴ Nova Scotia, Steering Committee of the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal Review, *The Provincial-Municipal Fiscal Review, Part 1: The Current State of Municipal Governments in Nova Scotia* (Halifax: Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, 2013) at 6.

¹⁵ *Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act*, SNS 2018, c 26 at s 10(1).

¹⁶ See, e.g., *Halifax Regional Municipality Act*, SNS 1995 c 3. See also, *Re: Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARMB-95-04, [1995] NSURBD No 64 at 5.

¹⁷ *Re: Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, *ibid* at 5-6; *Re: Queens (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARMB-95-05 at 7.

¹⁸ RSNS 1989, c 298. The Board noted its uncertainty in both cases as to whether the new regional municipalities would be subject to such period reviews going forward, but this did not deter the Board from relying on the cited provisions. These provisions were not relied on by the Board in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality cases: *Re: Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARMB-94-05: October 28, 1994; *Re: Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARMB-94-05: December 1, 1994.

¹⁹ *Municipal Government Act*, SNS 1998, c 18 at ss 368-369.

²⁰ *Municipal Boundaries and Representation Act*, RSNS 1989, c 298, ss 16(2), 17. *Re: Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARMB-95-04, [1995] NSURBD No 64 at 6; *Re: Queens (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARMB-95-05 at 7.


²¹ *Re Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, 2000 NSUARMB 44.

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- ²² *Ibid* at paras 106, 111.
- ²³ *Ibid* at para 108.
- ²⁴ *Ibid* at para 31.
- ²⁵ *Re Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, 2011 NSUARB 110, 2011 CarswellINS 510 at para 72.
- ²⁶ *Richmond County (Municipality) v Nova Scotia (Attorney General)*, 2016 NSCA 11 at para 31.
- ²⁷ *Ibid* at paras 31, 33, 35.
- ²⁸ *Re Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, 2004 NSUARB 11, 2004 CarswellINS 233 at para 109.
- ²⁹ *Municipal Government Act*, SNS 1998, c 18 at ss 11-12.
- ³⁰ *Ibid* at s 10.
- ³¹ *Re Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, 2004 NSUARB 11, 2004 CarswellINS 233 at paras 109-110.
- ³² *Richmond County (Municipality) v Nova Scotia (Attorney General)*, 2016 NSCA 11 at para 31.
- ³³ *Ibid* at para 37.
- ³⁴ *See e.g., Re: Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-95-04, [1995] NSURBD No 64 at 6-8.
- ³⁵ [1993] 1 SCR 319. For the Board's discussion of this case in the Queens decision, see *Re: Queens (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-95-05 at 7-8.
- ³⁶ *Re: Queens (Regional Municipality)*, *ibid* at 9, citing Provincial Electoral Boundaries Commission Report on Effective Political Representation in Nova Scotia at 16.
- ³⁷ *Re Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, 2004 NSUARB 11, 2004 CarswellINS 233 at para 112.
- ³⁸ *Ibid*.
- ³⁹ *Re: Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-95-04, [1995] NSURBD No 64 at 9-10.
- ⁴⁰ *See, e.g., Re: Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-94-05: October 28, 1994 and *Re: Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-94-05: December 1, 1994.
- ⁴¹ Nova Scotia, *Interim Report of the Municipal Reform Commissioner: Cape Breton County (Industrial Cape Breton)* (Halifax: Department of Municipal Affairs, 1993) (Charles A Campbell) at 2-3.
- ⁴² *Ibid* at 49.
- ⁴³ *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid* at 50.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid* at 51.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid* at 52.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid* at 53.
- ⁴⁹ *Re: Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-94-05: October 28, 1994 at 3, 9.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid* at 15 and *Re: Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-94-05: December 1, 1994 at 3.
- ⁵¹ *Re: Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-94-05: December 1, 1994 at 5.
- ⁵² *Re: Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-94-05: October 28, 1994 at 16.
- ⁵³ *Re Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, 2011 NSUARB 110, 2011 CarswellINS 510 at 5.
- ⁵⁴ *Re Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, 2015 NSUARB 69, 2015 CarswellINS 270 at 4.
- ⁵⁵ Nova Scotia, *Interim Report of the Municipal Reform Commissioner: Halifax Metro Region* (Halifax: Department of Municipal Affairs, 1993) (C. William Hayward) at 53.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid* at 57.
- ⁵⁷ *Re: Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-95-04, [1995] NSURBD No 64 at 11.

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- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁹ *Re Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, 2015 NSUARB 148, 2015 CarswellNS 475 at 4.
- ⁶⁰ Dale Poel, “Municipal Reform in Nova Scotia: A Long-Standing Agenda for Change” (2005) in Joseph Garcea and Edward LeSage, eds, *Municipal Reform in Canada* (Oxford University Press, 2005) 174 at 178.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid* at 177; *Queens Regional Municipality Act*, SNS 1995 c 9.
- ⁶² Nova Scotia, *A Blueprint for Unitary Government for Queens County* (Queens County, 1995) (James Sapp & Harold R. Dobson) at 3.
- ⁶³ *Ibid* at 15.
- ⁶⁴ *Re: Queens (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-95-05 at 6.
- ⁶⁵ *Re: Queens (Regional Municipality)*, 2011 NSUARB 149, 2011 CarswellNS 655 at para 5.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid* at para 7.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁸ Douglas Muzzio, & Tim Tompkins, “On the Size of the City Council: Finding the Mean” (1989) 37 *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 83 at 83.
- ⁶⁹ *Queens Regional Municipality*, NSUARB-MB-95-05, Page 10
- ⁷⁰ Nova Scotia, Task Force on Local Government, *Task Force on Local Government Report to the Government of Nova Scotia* (Halifax: Minister of Municipal Affairs, 1992) at 31.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid* at 7.
- ⁷² *Re Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, 2004 NSUARB 11, 2004 CarswellNS 233 at para 108.
- ⁷³ *Re: Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-95-04, [1995] NSURBD No 64 at 11.
- ⁷⁴ *Re Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, 2011 NSUARB 119, 2011 CarswellNS 518 at 35.
- ⁷⁵ Joseph Kushner and David Siegel, “Effect of Municipal Amalgamations in Ontario on Political Representation and Accessibility” (2003) 36(5) *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 1035.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid* at 1041-1043. Changes in council size ranged from -26 percent to -850 percent.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid* at 1050.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁹ Ulrik Kjaer and Jørgen Elklit, “The Impact of Assembly Size on Representativeness” (2014) 20(2) *Journal of Legislative Studies* 156.
- ⁸⁰ Jean-Phillip Meloche and Patrick Kilfoil, “A Sizeable Effect? Municipal Council Size and the Cost of Local Government in Canada” (2017) 60 *Canadian Public Administration* 241 at 245. *See also*, Kjaer and Elklit, “Impact of Assembly Size on Representativeness” at 157.
- ⁸¹ Nova Scotia, *A Blueprint for Unitary Government for Queens County* (Queens County, 1995) (James Sapp & Harold R. Dobson) at 15.
- ⁸² Leah Brooks, Justin Phillips and Maxim Sinityn, “The Cabals of a Few or the Confusion of a Multitude: The Institutional Trade-off Between Representation and Governance” (2011) 3(1) *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 1 at 1.
- ⁸³ *Re Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, 2011 NSUARB 110, 2011 CarswellNS 510 at para 64.
- ⁸⁴ Institute of Public Affairs, *Pictou County Municipal Coordination Study, Phase 2: Recommendations* (Halifax: Dalhousie University, 1996), vol 2 (Lawrence E Sandford) at 22-23. This sentiment was also reflect in Nova Scotia, Task Force on Local Government, *Task Force on Local Government Report to the Government of Nova Scotia* (Halifax: Minister of Municipal Affairs, 1992) at 31-32: “The Task Force sought for a simple, readily understood system that would improve actual accessibility simply because it was more effective...”

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- ⁸⁵ Jean-Phillip Meloche and Patrick Kilfoil, “A Sizeable Effect? Municipal Council Size and the Cost of Local Government in Canada” (2017) 60 *Canadian Public Administration* 241 at 242.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid* at 246.
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid*.
- ⁸⁸ Robert Bish, *The Cost of Municipal Elected Officials in the Capital Region of British Columbia* (Victoria: Local Government Institute, School of Public Administration, University of Victoria, 1999).
- ⁸⁹ Jean-Phillip Meloche and Patrick Kilfoil, “A Sizeable Effect? Municipal Council Size and the Cost of Local Government in Canada” (2017) 60 *Canadian Public Administration* 241 at 246, citing Robert Bish and Josef Filipowicz. *Governing Greater Victoria: The Role of Elected Officials and Shared Services* (Vancouver, BC: Fraser Institute, 2016).
- ⁹⁰ Joseph Kushner and David Siegel, “Effect of Municipal Amalgamations in Ontario on Political Representation and Accessibility” (2003) 36(5) *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 1035 at 1040-41.
- ⁹¹ *Ibid*.
- ⁹² Jean-Phillip Meloche and Patrick Kilfoil, “A Sizeable Effect? Municipal Council Size and the Cost of Local Government in Canada” (2017) 60 *Canadian Public Administration* 241.
- ⁹³ *Ibid* at 261-2.
- ⁹⁴ A threshold of 20,000 population was selected by the researchers because, below this threshold, most councils showed little variation from the average number of 7 councillors: *ibid* at 249.
- ⁹⁵ *Re Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, 2011 NSUARB 119, 2011 CarswellNS 518 at 37.
- ⁹⁶ Nova Scotia, *A Blueprint for Unitary Government for Queens County* (Queens County, 1995) (James Sapp & Harold R. Dobson).
at ii.
- ⁹⁷ *Re Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, 2004 NSUARB 11, 2004 CarswellNS 233 at para 113.
- ⁹⁸ *Re: Halifax (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-95-04, [1995] NSURBD No 64 at 9-10.
- ⁹⁹ *Ibid* at 3.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁰¹ *Re: Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, NSUARB-MB-94-05: October 28, 1994 at 12.
- ¹⁰² *Ibid* at 10.
- ¹⁰³ *Ibid* at 3.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Re Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, 2011 NSUARB 110, 2011 CarswellNS 510 at 11.
- ¹⁰⁵ Douglas Muzzio, & Tim Tompkins, “On the Size of the City Council: Finding the Mean” (1989) 37(3) *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 83 at 91.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Re Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, 2011 NSUARB 110, 2011 CarswellNS 510 at 11.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁰⁸ Paul Pierson, “Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics” (2000) 94(2) *American Political Science Review* 251.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Re Cape Breton (Regional Municipality)*, 2011 NSUARB 110, 2011 CarswellNS 510 at 16.
- ¹¹⁰ Raymond Rosenfeld and Laura Reese, “Local Government Amalgamation From the Top Down” in Jered Carr and Richard Feiock, “City-County Consolidation and its Alternatives: Reshaping the Local Government Landscape” (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2004) 219 at 224.
- ¹¹¹ Douglas Muzzio, & Tim Tompkins, “On the Size of the City Council: Finding the Mean” (1989) 37(3) *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 83 at 90.

Dr. Jamie Baxter

 (902) 494-7113

 jamie.baxter@dal.ca

 6061 University Ave, Halifax NS

CONTACT

Room 326, Weldon Law Building
Schulich School of Law
Dalhousie University
6061 University Avenue
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H4R2
e: jamie.baxter@dal.ca
p: (902) 494-7113

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

PROPERTY & LAND USE
INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS
FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL LAW
ACCESS TO JUSTICE

EDUCATION

YALE LAW SCHOOL
Doctor of the Science of Laws
June 2013 – April 2018

YALE LAW SCHOOL
Master of Laws
September 2012 – May 2013

FACULTY OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Juris Doctor (Honours)
September 2007 – April 2010

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
Master of Arts
September 2005 – August 2006

ARTS & SCIENCE PROGRAMME, MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
Bachelor of Arts & Science (Honours)
September 2001 – April 2005

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

SCHULICH SCHOOL OF LAW, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
Assistant Professor
July 2014 –

SCHULICH SCHOOL OF LAW, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
Schulich Fellow
July 2013 – May 2014

FEDERAL COURT OF CANADA
Law Clerk
August 2011 – July 2012

DEPARTMENT OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE & RESOURCE ECONOMICS,
UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
Lecturer
September 2010 – December 2010

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (CONTINUED)

ZBOGAR ADVOCATE

Student at Law

July 2010 – August 2011

ENVIRONMENT AND LAND TRIBUNALS ONTARIO

Researcher

July 2010 – August 2011

ORKIN BARRISTERS

Summer Law Student

May 2009 – August 2009

FACULTY OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Borden Ladner Gervais LLP Research Fellow

May 2008 – August 2011

APPALACHIAN CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

Canada-U.S. Fulbright Scholar

September 2006 – May 2007

COURSES TAUGHT

SCHULICH SCHOOL OF LAW, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

Property in its Historical Context

2013/14 –

Planning Law

2014/15 –

Legal Ethics and Professional Responsibility

2014/15 –

Dalhousie Law Journal Editorial Assistantship Course

2016 (Winter)

DEPARTMENT OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL AND RESOURCE ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

Land Economics

2010 (Fall)

PUBLICATION RECORD

[R] = Peer-reviewed

BOOK MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Inalienable: Leadership, Land and the Political Economy of Property
(University of British Columbia Press)

LAW JOURNAL ARTICLES

“Leadership, Law and Development” (2018) *Law and Development Review* (forthcoming) [R]

“Storytelling, Social Movements, and the ‘Evolution’ of Indigenous Land Tenure” (2015) 18(2) *Australian Indigenous Law Review* 64 [R]

“From Integrity Agency to Accountability Network: The Political Economy of Public Sector Oversight in Canada” (2015) 46(2) *Ottawa Law Review* 231 [R]

“No Lawyer for a Hundred Miles? Mapping the New Geography of Access to Justice in Canada” (2014) 52 *Osgoode Hall Law Journal* 9 (with Albert Yoon) [R]

“Property, Information and Institutional Design” (2013) 8(2) *Journal of Aboriginal Economic Development* 55 [R]

“Legal Institutions of Farmland Succession: Implications for Sustainable Food Systems” (2013) 65 *Maine Law Review* 382

“Ontario’s Administrative Tribunal Clusters: A Glass Half-Full or Half-Empty for Administrative Justice?” (2012) 12 *Oxford University Commonwealth Law Journal* 157 (with Lorne Sossin) [R]

“‘Formalizing’ Land Tenure in First Nations: Evaluating the Case for Reserve Tenure Reform” (2009) 7(2) *Indigenous Law Journal* 45 (with Michael Trebilcock); reprinted as “International Perspectives on First Nations Land Tenure Reform” in Jerry White, Dan Beavon, and Peter Dinsdale, eds, *Aboriginal Policy Research Volume 10: Voting, Governance and Research Methodology* (Toronto: Thompson Educational, 2011)

“Examining the Consequences and Character of Heir Property” (2009) 68 *Ecological Economics* 2344 (with B. James Deaton and Carolyn Bratt) [R]

BOOK CHAPTERS

“Cities in a Time of Uncertainty: Food and Canadian Municipal Law” in Heather McLeod-Kilmurray, Nathalie Chalifour & Angela Lee, eds., *Food Law in Canada* (Markham: Carswell, in press) (with Jessica Rose)

“Indigenous Land Rights and the Politics of Property” in Angela Cameron, Sari Graben, Val Napoleon, eds., *Indigenous Peoples and Real Property: Beyond Privatization* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, in press) [R]

“Towards a Better Understanding of Heirs on Heirs Property” in Ann Carpenter and Cassandra Johnson Gaither eds., *Heirs' Property in the South: Fostering Stable Ownership to Prevent Land Loss and Abandonment* (Ashville, NC: Southern Research Station as a General Technical Report, in press) (with B. James Deaton)

“Recovering Farmland Commons” in Megan Bailey & Jessica Duncan, eds., *Sustainable Food Futures: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2017)

“Access to Justice” in Woolley et al., eds., *Lawyers’ Ethics and Professional Regulation*, 3rd ed. (Markham: LexisNexis, 2017)

“The Ontario Civil Legal Needs Project: A Comparative Analysis of the 2009 Survey Data” in Michael Trebilcock, Tony Duggan and Lorne Sossin, eds., *Middle Income Access to Justice* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012) (with Michael Trebilcock & Albert Yoon)

COMMISSIONED REPORTS

The Geography of Civil Legal Services in Ontario: Report of the Mapping Phase of the Ontario Civil Legal Needs Project (Toronto: Law Society of Upper Canada, 2011) (with Albert Yoon)

RESEARCH GRANTS

GRANTS AWARDED

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH COUNCIL, INSIGHT DEVELOPMENT GRANT (\$68,000)
Farmland Commons: An Institutional Analysis
2016 – 2018

CANADIAN INSTITUTES FOR HEALTH RESEARCH, CAFÉ SCIENTIFIQUE GRANT (\$3,000)
Access to Justice and Health
2012

CANADA-U.S. FULBRIGHT FELLOWSHIP (\$15,000)
Heirs Property in Appalachian Kentucky
2006 –2007

GRANT APPLICATIONS - NOT AWARDED (INVITED CO-APPLICANT)

CITY | FOOD | WORK: A New Urban Cohort to Monitor the Health Impact of Emerging Policy Action on Food. Nominated Principal Applicant: Catherine L. Mah. Co-Principal Applicants: Leah Cahill, Julie Brimblecombe, Kent Mullinx. Co-Applicants: Jamie Baxter, Alison Blay-Palmer, Chris Buse, Donald Cole, Brian Cook, Rebecca Hasdell, Irena Knezevic, Charles Levkoe, Brian Lo, Emma McMahon, Leia Minaker, Anna Peeters, Nathan Taylor, Emile Tompa, Michael Widener, Jason Wu, Yanqing Yi. Collaborators: Linda Best, Sara Kirk, Leticia Smillie. CIHR Institute of Public and Population Health Institute Community Support—Planning and Dissemination Grants, Building Healthy Cities. Requested: \$10,000. February 1, 2018 - January 31, 2019.

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

CONFERENCES, PANELS AND WORKSHOPS ORGANIZED

“Agricultural Law in Canada”, November 1, 2017, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law, Ottawa (with Genevieve Grossenbacher, USC Canada, in collaboration with *Taking Stock: the 2nd Annual Conference on Food Law & Policy in Canada*)

“Farms, Fisheries and Food: Canada’s Next Generation of Food Production” Policy Matters Speakers Series, MacEachen Institute for Public Policy and Governance, Dalhousie University, Halifax October 3, 2017

The Future of Food Law and Policy in Canada, November 3-4, 2016, Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University, Halifax (with Glenford Jameson, G.S. Jameson and Co.)

Rebecca L. Sandefur, “Bridging the Gap: Rethinking Outreach for Greater Access”, F.B. Wickwire Memorial Lecture in Professional Responsibility and Legal Ethics, Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University, March 10, 2015

“Does Your Health Depend on Your Access to Justice?” Canadian Institutes for Health Research Café Scientifique, Toronto, January 31, 2013 (with Aaron Orkin)

PRESENTATIONS

[I] = Invited

Closing Keynote Address, Food Law Innovations: 3rd Annual Canadian Food Law & Policy Conference, Laval University, Quebec City, September 27, 2018 [I]

“Leadership, Law and Development” Law and Development Course (podcast), Dalhousie University, Halifax, Summer 2018

“City Power and City Planning: Locating Canadian Municipal Law in ‘Local’ Food Systems Governance” Urban Food Systems and Policy: Connecting Research and Practice, Faculty of Law, McGill University, June 18, 2018 [I]

“Food Policy and Food Insecurity” Panel, Meal Exchange, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, March 19, 2018 [I]

“Leadership, Law and Development” Faculty Seminar, Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University, Halifax, November 16, 2017

“Building Food Law in Canada: Lessons from the History of Agricultural Law” Taking Stock: 2nd Annual Canadian Food Law & Policy Conference, Ottawa, November 1, 2017

Panel Commentator, “Look and See” Devour! Food Film Festival, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, October 27, 2017 [I]

“Governing Farmlands” Global Lands and Resources Colloquium, University of Oklahoma College of Law, Norman, Oklahoma, October 21, 2017 [I]

“Indigenous Land Rights and the Politics of Property” International Meeting on Law & Society, Mexico City, Mexico, June 22, 2017

“Governing Farmland Commons” Nova Scotia Institute of Agronomists Annual Meeting, Truro NS, April 26, 2017

“Knowledge Commons: Some Legal Groundwork for Open Science” Open Seas Symposium, Halifax, NS, March 20, 2017 [I]

“Governing Farmland Commons” The Future of Food Law in Canada, Halifax, November 3, 2016

“Regulating Uber for Innovation” Halifax Regional Municipality Legal Services, Halifax, October 28, 2015 [I]

“Indigenous Peoples and the Environment” Aboriginal Peoples and the Law: We are All Here to Stay, Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice Annual Conference, Saskatoon, October 16, 2015 [I]

“Idle No More and Indigenous Land Rights”, Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn, Millbrook First Nation, October 5, 2015 [I]

“Legal Education and Ideas About Access to Justice” Panel, Canadian Association of Law Teacher, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, June 2, 2015

“Collective Actions: New Logics from the Digital Age of Property Transitions” Association of Law, Property and Society Annual Conference, University of Georgia, Athens GA, May 3, 2015

“The New Geography of Access to Justice in Canada: Implications for Legal Ethics” Canadian Association for Legal Ethics Annual Conference, University of Western Ontario Faculty of Law, London, October 24, 2014

“The New Politics of Property in Land”, Association of Law, Property and Society Annual Conference, University of British Columbia Faculty of Law, Vancouver, May 2, 2014

“The Geography of Access of Justice in Canada”, Access to Justice Committee, Law Society of Upper Canada, Toronto, January 8, 2014

“Some Skepticism About Bright-Line Rules”, Yale Law School 3rd Annual Doctoral Students Conference, New Haven, December 6, 2013

“Catastrophe and the Law”, Schulich School of Law Mini-Law Public Lecture Series, Halifax, Nova Scotia, November 20, 2013

“Implementing a Tribunal Excellence Framework: Comparative Lessons”, Canadian Council of Administrative Tribunals Annual Conference, Toronto, May 28, 2013 (Panel with Philip Bryden and Michael Gottheil)

“From Integrity Agency to Accountability Network”, Yale Law School Graduate Works in Progress Seminar, New Haven, April 25, 2013

“Farmland Succession and Sustainable Food Systems”, Food Law Colloquium, University of Maine Law School, Portland, Maine, February 23, 2013

“Culture, Institutions and Economic Development: Applications to Native Americans”, Property and Environment Research Center, Bozeman, Montana, December 9-11, 2012 (Invited roundtable participant)

“Access to Justice as a Social Determinant of Health”, Health Promotion Ontario Annual Conference, Ryerson University, Toronto, September 27, 2012 (with Aaron Orkin)

“A Comparative Analysis of the Ontario Civil Legal Needs Survey”, Middle Income Access to Justice Colloquium, University of Toronto, February 10, 2011 (with Albert Yoon and Michael Trebilcock)

“International Perspectives on First Nations Land Tenure Reform” Aboriginal Policy Research Conference, Ottawa, March 9, 2009

RESEARCH WORKSHOPS

Land Claims Agreement Coalition Research Planning Conference: Making Treaties Work for Future Generations, December 7-8, 2015, Ottawa

Workshop on Research Design for Causal Inference, Northwestern University School of Law, July 13-17, 2015, Chicago

TEACHING HONOURS

Dalhousie Award for Excellence in Education and Diversity (Nominee)

2017-2018

Hanna & Harold Barnett Award for Excellence in Teaching First Year Law (Nominee)

2016-2017

Hanna & Harold Barnett Award for Excellence in Teaching First Year Law (Nominee)

2015-2016

ACADEMIC HONOURS

Schulich Fellowship, Schulich School of Law

2013-2014

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Doctoral Fellowship, Yale Law School

2013

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Joseph-Armand Bombardier Graduate Scholarship (declined)

2013

Law Foundation of Ontario Award in Support of Public-Interest Law Career

2010-2011

Aboriginal Policy Research Conference, Best Graduate Student Paper

2010

Borden Ladner Gervais LLP Research Fellow, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto
2008

Laskin Prize in Constitutional Law, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto
2007

Canada-U.S. Fulbright Fellowship
2006-2007

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE WITHIN DALHOUSIE

Member, Research Committee, MacEachen Institute for Public Policy and Governance
2017 –

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE OUTSIDE DALHOUSIE

Scientific Committee Member, Food Law Innovations: 3rd Annual Canadian Food Law & Policy Conference,
Laval University, Quebec City
2018

Board Member, Ecology Action Centre
2017 -

Editorial Board Member, Journal of Rural Social Sciences
2016 –

Expert Advisor, Membertou First Nation Internal Watercourses Working Group
2017 –

Steering Committee Member, Halifax Food Policy Alliance
2016 –

Peer Reviewer

Queen's Law Journal (2014); Canadian Bar Review (2015); Osgoode Hall Law Journal (2016); University of New Brunswick Law Journal (2016); Canadian Journal of Social Policy (2016); Dalhousie Law Journal (2016); Indigenous Law Journal (2017); University of Ottawa Press (2017); Queen's Law Journal (2017); University of British Columbia Law Review (2017); Canadian Food Studies (2018); Canadian Journal of Law and Society (2018); Ottawa Law Review (2018)

Invited Expert, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Eastern Canada First Nation Outreach Session, Montreal
June 1, 2017

Invited Participant, Advisory Panel for Canada's Science Review Roundtable, Halifax
October 17, 2016

External Assessor, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Insight Grants Program
2015; 2016

CO-ORDINATOR'S STATUS REPORT
December 4, 2018 – February 4, 2019

CO-ORDINATOR'S STATUS REPORT
December 4, 2018 - February 4, 2019

I. GOVERNANCE

- Co-ordinator appointment - December 4, 2018;
- Co-ordinating Committee up and running:
 - Meetings - December 13, January 10, February 4;
 - Agenda packages - strongerregion.ca;
 - Meeting Minutes - strongerregion.ca;
- Co-ordinating Committee "Terms of Reference" - approved February 4, 2019.

II. BUDGET/FUNDING

- Budget / March 31, 2019 - approved January 10, 2019;
- Provincial funding commitment April 2019 - March 2020 / confirmed February 4, 2019.

III. WORKPLAN

- Governance Review:
 - Startec Council size consultations complete;
 - Startec Council size report complete;
 - Professor Jamie Baxter study complete;
 - NSUARB hearing dates reserved - June 24 & 25, 2019;
 - Election Readiness Project Schedule - complete.
- Project RFP's / Studies:
 - Governance review / awarded (Startec);
 - HR analysis / issued - January 8 / due - February 21, 2019;
 - CAO executive search / issued - January 23 / due - February 21, 2019;
 - Asset Management / issued - February 6 / due - March 7, 2019;
 - Communications / issued - February 6 / due - February 28, 2019.
- Co-ordinating Committee / DMA Working Group:
 - Meetings: December 11 & 17, 2018; January 3, 11, 18, & 25, 2019; February 1, 2019.
- Project Workplan / Schedule:
 - Draft presented - February 4, 2019;
 - Final Workplan / Schedule due - March 2019.

IV. RESOURCES / PERSONNEL

- Interim Communications Support / PR Hive retained;
- Project Administrator / pending;
- Governance / literature review - Professor Baxter retained.

V. OUTREACH / COMMUNICATIONS

- Dalhousie University - Investigating opportunities for collaborative activity;
- Media / Hants Journal - media (attached).

Transition committee kicks off consolidation for Windsor, West Hants

Colin Chisholm (colin.chisholm@hantsjournal.ca)

Published: Dec 14, 2018 at 5:20 p.m.



Members of the Windsor-West Hants Transition Committee, include, from left: West Hants deputy warden Paul Morton, Windsor Mayor Anna Allen, transition co-ordinator Kevin Latimer, West Hants Warden Abraham Zebian and Windsor deputy mayor Laurie Murley. - Colin Chisholm

WENTWORTH CREEK, N.S. - The newly established transition committee, made up of members of Windsor and West Hants councils, as well as a transition co-ordinator, held its inaugural meeting inside West Hants council chambers Dec. 13.

Windsor Mayor Anna Allen and deputy mayor Laurie Murley joined West Hants Warden Abraham Zebian and deputy warden Paul Morton in representing the two municipal units

and Kevin Latimer, appointed by the councils and approved by the province, will chair the committee as transition co-ordinator.

They have a lot to consider in the weeks and months ahead, as the town and municipality work toward merging in 2020 via special legislation passed by the province.

Several members of the public as well as councillors from both units were in the gallery to watch the proceedings.

Latimer said he's been interested in, and working in, the municipal government field for approximately 25 years, primarily in the legal sector.

"I enjoy that area of work and I've recognized the need to reform and have spoken and written about it for some time," Latimer said. "When this opportunity became available to play a part in this project, I thought it was a great opportunity to help out."

Latimer is also a managing partner at Cox and Palmer, a law firm in Halifax, where he also resides.

He said the Windsor-West Hants amalgamation debate first came to his attention when the application was submitted to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

"To work effectively, you have to be organized and think ahead, thinking about where you want to go and figure out where the trouble spots are," he said. "What's important here is the recognition on the part of the province and the two municipalities on having a good work plan that will allow us to identify the things that need to be done."

Much of the initial meeting was focused on setting the framework for how the process will flow — scheduling, calendars and goals were top of mind for the committee as things ramp up.

Committee members also agreed that transparency and openness would be the goal of the process, and legal or personnel issues the committee will discuss will likely require in-camera, private discussion.

He said he's already received a lot of support from West Hants and Windsor staff as well as the provincial Department of Municipal Affairs, which, he says, views this project as a priority.

Latimer said he's aware that there are concerns and frustrations from residents regarding this process, but the committee will remain committed to obtaining feedback from the public.

"I understand those concerns. Any time you go to do something new, there are going to be those who are enthusiastic, those who are on the fence, and those who are opposed," he said.

"I think that knowing those voices are there is important, and I think it's important that these voices are heard," he said.

"Having said that, the province has passed the legislation, the outcomes and the result of the project are clear. As a committee we have a job to do."

The transition committee approved an RFP as well, granting Startec \$37,000 to conduct a boundary review study, which will be submitted to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

Those funds will come from the transition funding from the province, with work beginning in January and ending by April of 2019.

That study will include at least eight public meetings, where residents will be able to have input on what they'd like to see the boundaries look like.

"The more public participating there is in the process, the better a position this committee will be in," he said. "We'll come up with a product at the end of the day that will meet the interests of the citizens."

Future meetings will likely deal with other RFPs that the committee regards as top priorities, including a communications plan, an inventory of the two units' assets and human resources analysis.

Those RFPs are already in the draft stage, according to chief administrative officers (CAOs) for both units.

"I know we have a lot of work to do, but I'm excited to be a part of this," he added.

The committee agreed to meet on a fairly regular basis, possibly twice a month. Schedules will be coordinated by the two CAOs.

The next transition committee meeting is slated for Jan. 10.

The transition committee also approved the municipality's purchase of several parcels of land from the province, however, Zebian remained mum about the reasoning behind the land purchase.

Zebian said, due to Bill 55, the transition committee had to approve the purchase as it deals with the operational reserves.

However, the PIDs in questions appear to be adjacent to the existing landfill site.

Public meetings, survey planned to help determine electoral boundaries for combined Windsor-West Hants region

Colin Chisholm (colin.chisholm@hantsjournal.ca)

Published: Jan 15 at 5:28 p.m.



Members of the Windsor-West Hants Co-ordinating Committee, include, from left: West Hants deputy warden Paul Morton, Windsor Mayor Anna Allen, transition co-ordinator Kevin Latimer, West Hants Warden Abraham Zebian and Windsor deputy mayor Laurie Murley. - Colin Chisholm

WINDSOR, N.S. – During the second Windsor West Hants Co-ordinating Committee meeting, which took place in Windsor council chambers, details on how the public would be polled on electoral boundaries became a bit clearer.

Although, some details are still being worked out.

John Heseltine, the project manager in charge of the Stantec study on the new region's boundaries, spoke to the committee and members of the public on how the process would unfold.

Boiled down, the intent is to get feedback from the public on what they'd like to see in terms of the number of councillors and a general sense of the boundary lines, take that to the committee and then go through the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for approval, as they ultimately have the final say on what the boundaries will look like.

Heseltine has worked on approximately a dozen other boundary reviews, which every municipality with electoral boundaries is mandated to do every eight years. He worked on the dissolution of Hantsport.

"The process we're following is quite set," Heseltine said in his presentation to the committee on Jan. 10.

The first phase of the Stantec study will be to determine the preferred size of the new council and the number of districts.

Currently, the Municipality of West Hants has 10 districts, including a warden, which is appointed by council, while the Town of Windsor elects four councillors and a mayor at large, meaning there are no districts within the town limits.

"There's lots of avenues for public input," Heseltine said, adding that at least 10 public meetings and an online survey will be conducted over the next three months. Those public meetings will be held throughout Windsor and West Hants.

Kevin Latimer, the transition co-ordinator and chairman of the co-ordinating committee, said "what we're about here is different than (a dissolution or boundary review), in the sense that we're really building a new regional municipality from scratch," rather than re-orienting existing boundaries.

He added that this process isn't entirely new, with three other regional municipalities being created over the last few decades, including Halifax Regional Municipality, Region of Queens Municipality and Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

Read More:

[Transition committee kicks off consolidation](#)

[Legislature passes Windsor-West Hants consolidation bill](#)

Depending on community feedback, there may be one or more options for the new council's size for the co-ordinating committee to deliberate on. For example, one scenario may have 10 districts, another scenario may have 15, and so on.

Phase two is all about looking at those new boundaries and how they should fit within the population – so Stantec will need to establish how many councillors there will be before this process can begin.

Heseltine said the process is heavily determined by mapping and population distribution, using data from voter lists, which includes civic addresses.

"A key consideration (of electoral district boundaries) is to create electoral districts that are balanced in terms of the number of constituents," he said. "We already have that data and have plotted out some of it."

Heseltine said he's not concerned about the shortness of the deadline to obtain public feedback.

"We've done these in less than three months before," he said. "We're hoping to complete the first phase by the middle of February this year. We're aiming to finish by the end of the month of March."

The survey, which will be posted online in the coming weeks, will take approximately five minutes to fill out, he said.

The co-ordinating committee will vote on the recommendations brought forward by Stantec and submit that to the UARB for approval.

Generally the UARB requires electoral districts to have a similar population distribution, plus or minus 10 per cent, unless special designation is given to a community of interest, which is what happened to Hantsport after the community dissolved its charter and joined West Hants.

The Valley Journal-Advertiser has asked for specific locations, dates and times for the public meetings, but has not heard back as of press time.

Co-ordinator clarifies role

Latimer also made a presentation to the co-ordinating committee, clarifying the committee's mandate and role as the new regional municipality takes shape.

"Under the legislation, the co-ordinating committee is responsible for designing and implementing the administrative structure of the new regional municipality," he said.

"Part of that responsibility is to try and see things through the lens of the best interests of that new regional municipality. It's important to have a future, forward-looking gaze," he said.

"The co-ordinating committee has all of the powers of the regional municipality until the new council takes office in 2020, which I think is significant," he added. "For the things that need to be done, the legislation makes it clear that the co-ordinating committee has a responsibility to make sure it happens."

The transition co-ordinator will decide any tie votes on the committee, giving him the most power if, say, the Windsor and West Hants members of the committee find themselves at an impasse.

The co-ordinating committee, which is comprised of two representatives from the Town of Windsor council, two from West Hants' council, and the co-ordinator, has a fairly ambitious agenda and mandate, with the end goal of merging the two units into one by April 1, 2020.

The committee will also interview and select a CAO for the new regional council by Jan. 1, 2020, although Latimer suggested hiring them earlier to ensure they can hit the ground running.

Until a different name is selected by the incoming council, the area will be known as the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality.

The election of the new, regional municipality's councillors and mayor is scheduled to take place on March 7, 2020.

The co-ordinating committee also approved the Town of Windsor's funding application requests on two major infrastructure projects, previously approved by the town council.

The next co-ordinating committee meeting is set for Jan. 24 at the West Hants council chambers.

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$$a \cdot (x_1, \dots, x_n) = (ax_1, \dots, ax_n), \quad a \in \mathbb{R}, (x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \mathbb{R}^n.$$

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UPDATE - Windsor, West Hants begin survey rollout for council size, boundaries

Colin Chisholm (colin.chisholm@hantsjournal.ca)

Published: Jan 27 at 6 a.m.



Members of the Windsor-West Hants Co-ordinating Committee, include, from left: West Hants deputy warden Paul Morton, Windsor Mayor Anna Allen, transition co-ordinator Kevin Latimer, West Hants Warden Abraham Zebian and Windsor deputy mayor Laurie Murley. - Colin Chisholm

WINDSOR, N.S. – Residents of Windsor and West Hants will soon be asked to give their thoughts on where the electoral boundaries should lie in a combined municipality, and just how many councillors should represent them.

Five public meetings pertaining to the size of council — the number of councillors citizens will be voting for in the next election — begin on Jan. 29 in Avondale and wrap up on Feb. 7 in Falmouth.

The next slate of public meetings revolves around the district boundaries and the communities those councillors will ultimately represent.

There will be 10 meetings in total, split between council size and boundary layout, spread out across Windsor and West Hants.

All meetings start with an open house at 6 p.m., followed by a presentation at 7 p.m.

Residents will be asked for their opinions on what they're like to see in terms of the new council's size and how the district boundaries should be laid out.

Council size meetings:

Jan. 29

Avondale Community Hall

50 Avondale Cross Rd., Avondale

Jan. 30

Brooklyn Civic Centre

995 Hwy 215, Brooklyn

Jan. 31

Southwest Hants Fire Hall

1884 Hwy 14, Vaughan

Feb. 5

Hants County War Memorial Community Centre

78 Thomas St., Windsor

Feb. 6

Snow date for the first four meetings if missed

West Hants Municipal Office

76 Morison Dr., Wentworth Creek

Feb. 7

Falmouth Community Hall

147 Falmouth Back Rd., Falmouth

Feb. 13

Snow date for Feb. 7 meeting if missed

West Hants Municipal Office

76 Morison Dr., Wentworth Creek

District boundaries meetings:

March 5

Three Mile Plains Community Hall

4474 Hwy 1, Three Mile Plains

March 6

Hantsport Baptist Church Hall

28 Main St., Hantsport

March 7

Dr. Arthur Hines Elementary School

75 Musgrave Rd., Summerville

March 13

Ardoise Community Recreation Centre

3 School House Rd., Ardoise

March 14

Hants County War Memorial Community Centre

78 Thomas St., Windsor

March 19

Snow date

West Hants Municipal Office

76 Morison Dr., Wentworth Creek

An online and mail-in survey is also being conducted in tandem.

Paper copies of the survey are available at both the Windsor Town Office at 100 King St., Windsor or the West Hants Municipal Office at 76 Morison Dr., Wentworth Creek.

Read More:

- Transition committee kicks off consolidation process
- Legislature passes consolidation legislation
- Residents of Windsor or West Hants can fill out the survey here

Feedback from the residents of the region will be compiled into a report by Stantec Consulting, which is conducting the governance review, and will present its findings to the Windsor West Hants Co-ordinating Committee.

One or more recommendations will be considered by the co-ordinating committee to vote on. Or, the committee may chose their own model and submit that to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board, which ultimately decides on electoral boundaries.

Stantec will present its recommendations on potential council size to the co-ordinating committee in February. The recommendations will be based on survey responses, input from the public meetings and consultation with the current councils and staff.

The co-ordinating committee will determine a potential council size or sizes to be used in the boundary determination phase.

The new electoral boundaries will be used in the March 7, 2020 municipal election, which will decide the new council for a combined Windsor-West Hants municipality.

The new municipal government will take effect on April 1, 2020.

Public meetings continue as province commits an additional \$1 million towards Windsor-West Hants consolidation

Colin Chisholm (colin.chisholm@hantsjournal.ca)

Published: Feb 07 at 12:22 p.m.

Updated: Feb 07 at 12:23 p.m.



John Heseltine, with Startec, hosted a public meeting at the Hants County War Memorial Community Centre in Windsor. - Colin Chisholm

WINDSOR, N.S. — The consolidation process, that will eventually bring the municipality of West Hants and the Town of Windsor into one domain by April 2020, continues to march

along, with public meetings being held across the region to get resident's feedback on what they'd like to see their new council will look like.

The first phase of those meetings dealt with the size of a new combined council, which is the number of councillors that will represent the population of the region. However, the turnout of those meetings has been relatively tepid.

At the Windsor meeting on Feb. 5 at the Hants County War Memorial Community Centre, outside of councillors and officials from both municipal units, approximately 25 people attended.

Kevin Latimer, the transition coordinator with the Windsor West Hants Coordinating Committee, is overseeing the consolidation. He said it's important to get community feedback at every opportunity.

"An important part of the thinking behind the legislation is that the solution for the new regional government would be made here in Windsor-West Hants," Latimer said during the meeting in Windsor.

"In the way the process has been designed, it's going to provide opportunities from beginning to end for citizens to participate in creating this new municipality."

He said that determining the new council's size and polling districts, with community input, is an important step in establishing the new municipal government.

An online and mail-in survey is also being circulated to get feedback from residents.

However, the Valley Journal-Advertiser has tested the online Survey and has verified that anyone can answer the survey without having to verify their identity or address, and they can take the survey as many times as they like, which may call into question the validity of the data.

Read More:

- Public meetings, survey planned to determine electoral boundaries for Region of Windsor - West Hants
- Coordinating Committee kicks off consolidation for Windsor, West Hants



Kevin Latimer, the transition coordinator with the Windsor West Hants Coordinating Committee, is helping oversee the consolidation of the two municipal units.

- Legislature passes Windsor-West Hants consolidation bill

Latimer said it's critical to keep the focus on communication with the community as the process continues.

"There's no script that you can pull off the shelf for something like this that will be successful in every case and everywhere," he said. "We're going to try some things here that will be successful and some things that won't be the first time out. The important thing is to continue to listen and learn from that."

West Hants Warden Abraham Zebian said during the coordinating committee meeting on Feb. 4 that he was concerned about the lack of outreach in the community regarding the public meetings and the survey, saying he's hoping the next slate of public meetings will be better advertised.

More provincial funding

The Province of Nova Scotia has also allocated an additional \$1 million towards pre-consolidation costs, in addition to the previously announced \$500,000 towards the project.

Latimer said it's another sign that the province is committed to the modernization of municipal government.

"The fact that they've come back at this stage, arguably early, with this funding support tells me that they're committed to this process."

The funding will be used specifically for initiatives to help the consolidation project along, such as studies, communications staff and other costs.

The coordinating committee is expected to have all of the new funding budgeted for within the next two months, Latimer said.

Future provincial funding to deal with infrastructure or the rebranding needs of a new municipality hasn't been announced by the province at this point.

"There will be another opportunity for discussion around actual consolidation costs as we move through this," Latimer said.

"The success of this at the end of the day is going to depend on citizen engagement," he added.

Public engagement

The focus of the Feb. 5 meeting and the other public meetings up to that point have focused on the size of a new council.

Laurie Card, a resident of Wentworth Creek just outside of Windsor, said he's personally in favour of a smaller council, which he says would be more efficient.

"I've lived the experience, when you get a large group together, it's hard to get much done," he said. "By the time everyone expresses their opinion, it takes forever."

He also said alliances and voting blocs could form if there's a large number of councillors, but if it's smaller there might be more need for compromise and working together.

Card said he's planning to fill out the survey online and attend future public meetings.

Susan Burgess, also from Wentworth Creek, said she's glad the consolidation process includes public feedback, but she added that she hopes that feedback will actually be considered rather than being tossed aside.

She said she would like to see a future council have between seven and nine councillors, including the mayor.

"The more people you have the more opinions and discussion; it's much more efficient with fewer people," she said.



John Heseltine, with Stantec, hosted a public meeting at the Hants County War Memorial Community Centre in Windsor.

Ken Swan, a resident of Windsor, said he's happy with the process so far.

He's planning to come out to the second phase of these meetings as well, which deal with the electoral districts.

"The districts have to be fair with the amount of people," Swan said. "My personal opinion, I think the town, which has five council (members), should go down to two."

Swan said he was also in favour of a smaller council.

John Heseltine, director of the governance review with Stantec, said the process is going fairly smoothly so far, but added that he'd like to see higher turnouts at the meetings.

"The past couple of meetings have been getting better, focusing more on the council size issue," Heseltine said. "Early on there was concern about access to the online survey and other issues."

In a memo to the coordinating committee on Feb. 4, Heseltine also said that some residents were also more concerned about the potential impacts of amalgamation, rather than with the size of a new council.

He added that response levels to the online survey are generally healthy so far.

The election for the new combined council will take place in March 2020.

Once consolidated in 2020, the Region of Windsor — West Hants will be the fourth regional municipality in Nova Scotia, including Halifax Regional Municipality, Cape Breton Regional Municipality and the Region of Queens Municipality.

Second Phase

The second phase meetings, which will deal with electoral district boundaries are as follows

-
Tuesday, March 5, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Three Mile Plains Community Hall

4474 Hwy 1, Three Mile Plains

-
Wednesday, March 6, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Hantsport Baptist Church Hall

28 Main St, Hantsport

-
Thursday, March 7, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Dr. Arthur Hines Elementary School

75 Musgrave Rd, Summerville

-
Wednesday, March 13, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Ardoise Community Recreation Centre

3 School House Rd, Ardoise

-
Thursday March 14, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Windsor Community Center

78 Thomas Street

Windsor

Tuesday March 19, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

snow date

West Hants Municipal Office

76 Morison Road Windsor



**CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE OF THE REGION OF WINDSOR AND WEST HANTS
MUNICIPALITY
RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

To: Members of the Co-ordinating Committee

Submitted by: _____
Martin Laycock, Chief Administrative Officer, West Hants

Date: February 25, 2019

Subject: Happy Community Project Proposal

Origin:

November 2018 Barry Braun, of the Happy Community Project, approach the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of West Hants regarding a joint funding opportunity with the Province.

Legislative Authority:

Municipal Government Act, Power to expend money, Section 65 (k) & (m)

Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act Section 7 (2)

Recommendation:

It is recommended that:

...that the Co-ordinating Committee support the Happy Community project proposal as attached to the February 25, 2019 Co-ordinating Committee report and commit funds for the project of up to \$10,000, subject to approval of Provincial funding.

Background:

The Happy Community Project is a proprietary process that has been operating in Windsor and West Hants for seventeen months. In that time, it has initiated and developed seven major projects that have had the impact of engaging 600 citizens in work or supporting roles for the projects and reaching 5000 citizens (40% of the adult population) in active conversation or participation in their community.

Barry Braun has been spearheading the work of the Happy Community Project in the region and approached the West Hants CAO in November 2018, outlining an opportunity to leverage \$50,000 of funding from the Province with a Municipal investment of \$10,000. The work to develop a project proposal to be presented to both the Municipality and the Province took place over the course of the last three months.

Discussion:

The attached project proposal takes into consideration the consolidation of Windsor and West Hants as an opportunity to build social capital and sustainable community-based development between the two units. Social capital is a debated term, however it typically involves building reciprocity, sharing and trust within a social group and is an important factor in sustainable development. Mr. Braun developed the attached project proposal in the hopes that community led projects will be developed in an effort to build the social capital of the two units. This approach moves beyond the typical consolidation approaches by recognizing and building on social and community aspects.

As the proposal outlines, the intent is to create a cultural shift within the community of Windsor/West Hants from a conflictive, fear based and scarcity mindset to a mindset of shared optimism, trust and sense of responsibility to the wellbeing of fellow citizens. The project proposes to use Happy Community Project methodologies that will lead to sustainable community-based development through increased economic prosperity and opportunities, improved social capital, and will bridge the urban and rural divide faced by Windsor and West Hants. To achieve this, the project will engage citizens and facilitate community identified and led initiatives to create and strengthen social connections.

This project proposal and request for support was originally presented to West Hants Council in early February, however the motion to support the project did not pass.

Financial Implications:

There is strong indication of financial support for this project from the Province; however, the Province requires the Municipal financial support to move this forward. Should the Committee choose to support this initiative, the Province has indicated that all funds be distributed through the West Hants Municipality to the Happy Community Project non-profit organization (Friends of the Happy Community Project) as a means of maintaining effective controls.

The financial contribution for the Co-ordinating Committee is expected to be \$10,000. There was an anticipated start date of February 2019, however this was pushed back until March/April 2019.

Attachments:

- Happy Community Project Proposal

Report Prepared by: _____
Martin Laycock, Chief Administration Officer

Report Reviewed by: _____
Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk



The Windsor / West Hants Project

Nov 1, 2018

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Executive Summary

The Happy Community Project

The Happy Community Project is a trademarked and proprietary process that has been operating in Windsor and West Hants for thirteen months. In that time, it has initiated and developed 7 major projects that have had the impact of engaging 600 citizens in working on or supporting the projects and 5000 citizens (40% of the adult population) in active conversation or participation in their community.

As Windsor and West Hants go through the amalgamation process, there is an opportunity to build on this to bring the community together as one. The proposed project has two main goals:

- 1. Strengthen and create social connectedness across diversity**
- 2. Turn social connectedness into a culture of trust and self-reliance**

The 4 - point strategy for reaching these goals is:

1. Initiate a constant stream of events, conversations, town hall meetings that happen on a weekly basis
2. Provide leadership, process, infrastructure and guidance to community project initiators and leaders that result in successful projects that meet goals. Details are in the body of this proposal.
3. Constant daily communication that:
 - a. shares opportunities for citizen involvement on many channels including social media, email, print and public announcements.
 - b. Constant daily communication that amplifies the community story by illustrating citizen-led experiences that are consistent with the objectives.
 - c. Celebrate and recognize citizen led initiatives that strengthen social connectedness across diversity and turn social connections into actions of taking care of each other.
4. Measure and transparently report results using scientifically validated tools:
 - a. The Sense of Community Index research tool licensed to Happy Community Project by Community Science and developed into an online app by Happy Community Project.
 - b. Anecdotal stories tested against public opinion for their veracity.

Our budget for doing this \$60,000 - \$10,000 from the municipality and \$50,000 from the Province of Nova Scotia. The Happy Community Project will be overseen by the Friends of the Happy Community Project – a federally incorporated not-for-profit whose directors are Dr Will Webster, Dr Dawn Henwood and Jason Craig. Barry Braun will manage the Happy Community Project.

The Project

Create a cultural shift within the community of Windsor / West Hants from a conflictive, fear based and scarcity mindset to a mindset of shared optimism, trust and sense of responsibility to the wellbeing of fellow citizens. Our 12 month \$60,000 project proposes to use Happy Community Project methodologies that will lead to sustainable community-based development through increased economic prosperity and opportunities, improved social capital, and will bridge the urban and rural divide faced by Windsor and West Hants.

The Challenge

Windsor / West Hants has a long history of creating divisiveness between the two communities. Historically this has left a scar on the two communities that has resulted in underperformance both economically and socially. There has developed a culture that manifests itself as – if I can't have it, then you can't have it either.

Yet Windsor / West Hants represents a huge opportunity to be a dynamic, socially and economically vibrant community. It is rich in historical, cultural, educational, infrastructure and economic resources and it enjoys the geographic advantage of being only 20 minutes from the outskirts of HRM and 20 minutes from Wolfville.

The biggest limiting factor is a deeply rooted cultural divide between urban and rural that once released, represents huge potential for being a community of wellbeing, prosperity and resiliency.

The Opportunity

There is an opportunity to bridge the two communities as one. We are at a sensitive time as the two communities are coming together as one regional government and there is a window of opportunity to create a sense of community and bridge the gap between urban and rural as they go through this process.

We believe that the Happy Community Project can play a central role in knitting the two communities together as one.

The Happy Community Project has a track record within the community of bridging gaps between factions. Under their process, the two communities have come together to share experiences and joint ownership of things like the Avon Community Farmers Market, community gardens, community breakfast, Movies in the Park and at shared community events like a community picnic and the Corn Boil Challenge.

They have enjoyed the support of other key organizations within the community such as The Family Resource Centre, Hants Learning Network Association, the Windsor Rotary, New Boundaries, Mathew 25 Foodbank, The Gladys Manning, The Windsor Elms and Dykeland Lodge.

The Happy Community Project has been recognized for its expertise by institutions like Dalhousie University, St Mary's University, Acadia University, Yale University, The Happiness Research Institute and the Nova Scotia Legislature, and they are regularly featured in the main stream press for their accomplishments. Some of the recognition is shown in Appendix A

The Happy Community Project has established itself as a neutral organization with a single agenda – to build and strengthen the social capital of the community. Its goal is to strengthen social connectedness across the diversity of the community and create a greater sense of belonging.

The community citizens have looked to the Happy Community Project for leadership on such things as creating the farmers market, Movies in the Park and revitalizing the Makers space. The Makers Space deserves special mention because it had become a social and cultural gathering space that was becoming an anchor to the community. It was first initiated out of Happy Community Project town hall meetings in Nov 2017. The Happy Community Project provided Makers with ongoing support until its closure in Sep 2018. It was recognized as one of the best Maker Spaces anywhere, but unfortunately did not have a sustainable financial model. In the culture of “We should...” developed by the Happy Community Project, a strong team of community leaders has been coming together to revitalize the Makers Space. These leaders have continued to look towards the Happy Community Project for advice, logistics support and leadership.

Out of initiatives like these has come a desire in the community to find more ways to be one community.

In our informal polling of the community there is a reoccurring theme – the community citizens want to let go of their divisive ways and come together as one and the Happy Community Project has a process that can facilitate this.

The Happy Community Project Process

Why is it important

A community of citizens who are confident they can proactively make difference without fear of repercussion to themselves personally, expresses its initiative in surprising and creative ways.

A trusting community releases the potential of the community. It is the foundation on which confidence, creativity and initiative are built that result in economic and social wellbeing and resiliency.



Before Barry Braun brought the concept and idea of the Happy Community in Windsor, Windsor was a town with low energy, searching itself and trying to define itself as a town. Since the Happy Community Project, there is a new life and buzz in Windsor, where people are proud to say they are from here and where people are trying hard to make Windsor the best town in this province. The best: All of this change in less than a year. Happy Community Project really works.

Dominic Kimm July 2018



“Talk about making positive ripples! I've never heard so much positive chatter about Windsor in my whole life. I love it.”

Adrienne Wood – community leader and business person – Windsor NS

The Overall Objective of the Happy Community Project

The purpose of the Happy Community Project is to create a culture where:

- Citizens take greater self responsibility for the well being of their community
- Founded on a culture of trust between citizens
- Who are strongly socially connected across their diversity

In our modern world – these objectives run counter to the narrative that citizens are exposed to every day. The narrative is:

- our government knows best and will enforce their knowing with regulations and laws that restrict citizens from taking actions independently and

— if anything goes wrong, someone needs to be blamed either as a lawsuit or a criminal action. This narrative creates a culture of fear.

This creates a culture of fear and impotence often expressed as “they should...”

Fortunately, there exists enough common sense amongst citizens who have a desire to contribute meaningfully to their community that there is an opportunity to shift the culture from fear to trust and from impotence to agency.

But shifting culture is not simple. It defies top down, strong procedural processes which are the normal blunt instruments used by bureaucracy. Instead it is a nuanced, organic process that always starts where people are, incrementally shifts their collective beliefs through their personal experiences and develops the stories that are built up around their collective experience.

The Process is Founded on Four Principles

1. The Happy Community Project turns “they should...” into “we will...”

Most citizens want to make a difference in their community, but in our high stress, busy, modern, risk averse world, people want to do it on their own terms. The traditional way of creating top down organizations that direct the activities of ‘volunteers’ is no longer as appealing as it was. Instead, citizens want to make the kind of difference that is important to themselves while choosing the time and money commitments that make sense to them.



2. The foundation for self-reliant, wellbeing, resilient communities are strong social connections across diversity

Research shows us (Appendix B) that social connectedness is the foundation for mental well being, creativity and innovation. When a community has strong social connectedness, it also has the foundation for trust, optimism and releasing creative energy.

3. Meaningful Social Connections are made when people do things together.

The best way for people to build social connectedness is do things together.

The Happy Community Project process causes or enables citizens to initiate and then support ongoing projects where people can repeatedly do things together. We provide background infrastructure support, leadership and guidance that develops leadership and ownership within the community. It is normal for citizens to initiate, launch and manage major projects that provide sustained opportunities for citizens to 'do' things together.

4. All voices have influence.

We create environments where citizens have equal voice and community decisions are made through collaboration. We are very careful to reflect the voices of citizens in our stories and trust the wisdom of the community as to what will be the best solutions.

The Process Strategy – How We Do This

The process strategy provides enough citizens with experiences that the community can reach a tipping point for shifting culture. These experiences demonstrate to citizens that making social connections across diversity develops well founded trust and a sense of agency. With our guidance, citizens can create a new community narrative that shifts the culture towards greater self reliance and confidence in taking care of each other.

Our strategic goals are:

- CREATE STRONG SOCIAL CONNECTIONS ACROSS DIVERSITY
- DEVELOP CULTURAL MEMORY
- CREATE SUSTAINABLE SELF-RELIANCE

The strategy details are:

CREATE STRONG SOCIAL CONNECTIONS ACROSS DIVERSITY

- Initiate and/or support ongoing projects that provide opportunities for people to do things with each other and in the process build social connectedness
 - Examples are – farmers market, makers space, welcome newcomers, community breakfasts, movies in the park, community events
 - How we do this:
 - Hold town hall meetings to catalyze ideas
 - Provide process to community leaders on how to manage projects for success

- Help projects find and engage the community help support to implement projects (both material and people)
- Provide technical support in professional communications, leadership, project management, community relations, marketing support, professional oversight

DEVELOP CULTURAL MEMORY

- Help develop a compelling story for the community that engages community members in action activities within the community
 - Examples are: we are community where lots of things are happening, people want to live here and are excited about our future because we are a community that looks out for each other and helps each other.
 - How we do this
 - Through many small and large group conversations – listen to the language the community members use that describes how they want to be within the context of the Happy Community Project
 - Tell this story every day on many channels of communication – public presentations, small group meetings and through exemplifying it on social media and email
 - Celebrate successes of citizens who have initiated projects and done other acts that are consistent with the story
 - Challenge people to reach out across their differences
 - Generate activities where people develop the experience of helping each other
 - Provide leadership support and coaching to guide project leaders to be consistent with the new community narrative and therefore reinforce the new cultural story

CREATE SUSTAINABLE SELF-RELIANCE

- Develop the capacity of the community to self sustain building social connections and actions of taking care of each other.
 - Examples of this: Community members spontaneously come up with ideas for and implement projects independently that build social connectedness and a culture of taking care of each other. This is exemplified in projects like Movies in the Park, Play Café and Revival of Makers. These initiatives emerge because they have developed the confidence of “We can do this” from experiencing the many other projects that have emerged.
 - How we do this:
 - We remove risk and barriers
 - Our cultural biases are towards risk averseness. These are reinforced by news and political statements that assert why it is risky to do things including helping neighbours. We provide an

alternative narrative and logic that resonates with the community.

- Provide an overarching framework of providing legal liability protection (Liability insurance) to give community members confidence they are protected from legal consequences.
- Negotiate with political leaders at the municipal and provincial government to lower regulatory barriers that discourage community engagement in initiating community projects and reaching out to neighbours with support.
- We develop skills
 - Provide training to community leaders through our Happy Community Project Leadership Program. This training develops skills for project leaders on how to engage fellow community members.
 - Provide leadership and expertise to project leaders as they deal with new challenges
 - Example the right kind of behavior in everything we do:
 - Make decisions in a collaborative environment
 - Model story telling
 - Take bold, confident actions that come from collaborative decisions
 - Stand up for right when barriers are raised
 - Notice and reach out to help
 - Make social connections when the opportunities arise
- We create confidence
 - We demonstrate by example what happens when you stand up for right and model the behavior.
 - We develop confidence that we will stand by them if and when difficulty arises.
 - Provide a progressive lighter touch to emerging projects in leadership and other professional support services as the community develops greater skill and confidence. Projects often do require ongoing oversight to help them avoid missteps and pitfalls.
 - It requires sustained effort to develop the cultural mindset of self-reliance (We should instead of they should) and to develop the mindset that 'we are allowed to and can'. We reinforce this mindset with a constant stream of messages and experiences.
 - Provide on going confidence to community members through hand-holding, advice and positive support and recognition for their efforts.

What the Happy Community Project Process Isn't

Changing culture does not lend itself to a linear process with a clear – well defined starting spot and a first this step, then next step process. Community social systems are complex systems with unexpected inputs leading to unpredictable opportunities. The Happy Community Project process takes advantage of the opportunities and challenges that arise within an ongoing dynamic. It is a process that consistently adheres to principles and has a well-developed tool set that is used as situations require. And it is a process that always focuses on objective and goals of creating a culture of social connectedness across diversity, trust and self reliance.

For example, in Windsor under the support of the Happy Community Project, Windsor developed a Makers space that was recognized as one of the best in class. However, it prematurely shut down. The community has spoken out that it wants a Makers space which can also serve as a community gathering place. It has also looked to the Happy Community Project to provide guidance and leadership. The Happy Community Project is playing a strong role in creating a space where a new community leadership can emerge to guide it back into success.

If there were a heavy-handed procedural process imposed, it would have led to greater conflict within the community and a failure for any hope of revitalizing. Although the process is still in early stages, it is well on its way to providing yet another experience of what can come from self-reliance and trust.

The Happy Community Project sees this as an opportunity to unify the community around a common cause and has helped create a narrative that reinforces the importance of social connectedness, trust and taking care of each other.

Our process is a continuous process of creating, recognizing and supporting opportunities where more citizens can:

- Make stronger social connections across diversity,
- Develop a culture of trust, and
- Gain confidence in their own self-reliant agency.

How we know it works

The outcomes we use to know we have succeeded

- Typically 50 to 70 people join our community meetings and between 200 and 500 people participate in community events like community breakfasts, farmers market and community picnic. These are considered to be strong turnouts by community leaders. Our social media regularly gets between 600 and 1000 likes, shares and comments each month. Over 3000 people are following us on social media which represents more than 50% of the households in the community. Many More people (over 600) are engaged in doing active things within and for their community.
- Sense of Community Index moves (described below)
- More projects are spontaneously initiated
- The anecdotal stories of what people say change
- Testimonials from community members on what they notice.

How do we measure success?

We have two ways of measuring success. Anecdotal stories tested in the forum of public opinion.

1. Anecdotal stories tested in the forum of public opinion

We regularly collect the stories of success and publish them in the court of public opinion. The public are quick to judge the stories as valid representation of their personal experience and comment on it. If the stories represent their experience, we get lots of validation, if the stories do not represent their experience, they tell us loud and clear.

2. Scientific Measurement

Dr William Webster (Retired Dean of Health Professions at Dalhousie) scoured the research literature for the best available tool to measure the objectives of the Happy Community Project. His recommendation is to use a well validated and frequently used measurement tool, the Sense of Community Index Tool. (See Appendix B for Abstract and Citation)

We have been licensed to use this tool by [Community Science](#) – an organization of community researchers. We have built the tool into the Happy Community Project app which we are now ready to launch. The app will give a baseline statistic for the communities Sense of Community which consists of 4 factors:

- Reinforcement of Needs
- Membership
- Influence
- Shared Emotional Connection

We can use this baseline data and compare it to later data collection to note the differences in sense of community.

The tool was developed by [Dr David Chavis](#) and has been validated over many uses in many different communities.

Conclusion

The Happy Community Project has proven that it has the process for being able to increase social capital by shifting cultural norms to a more responsible, self-reliant, and trusting mindset of looking out for fellow citizens. This process uses scientifically validated tools to measure that these shifts actually occur.

The proposed project can succeed in creating a less conflictive culture of scarcity and fear and a more resilient culture of trust and mutual support. To accomplish this, the project requires financing as described in the budget below.

The Budget

Community Project Budget 12 months

Revenue		
Municipality		10,010
Prov Govt Grant		50,000
Total Revenues		60,010
Expenses		
Direct Costs		
Community Leader		15,680
Leadership Discretionary Budget		5,000
Training		4,000
Total Direct Community Costs		<u>25,680</u>
HCP Support Services		
Communications		7,680
Professional Support Services		14,750
Measurement		4,900
Overhead		8,000
Total Expenses		<u>60,010</u>

All funds are payable to Friends of the Happy Community Project – a registered not-for-profit.

How the Budget is used

Direct Costs

Community Leader \$15,680

To change culture is an effortful process. It requires a trusted member of the community with strong collaborative leadership skills who embraces the principles of the Happy Community Project. This person will be actively engaged in reaching out to other thought leaders and citizens, leading community meetings and events, sharing the community story, gathering information to be celebrated through social media and looking for opportunities to demonstrate the experience of community members reaching out to help each other.

This position is a 1/3 time position of 700 hours @ \$20/hour = \$14,000 + 12% benefits

Leadership Discretionary Budget \$5,000

There are opportunities to support community initiatives such as small seed funding for community-initiated projects, and cover incidental expenses such as posters, banners, float construction for parades etc. These funds are allocated for the discretion of the Community Leader with oversight by the directors of the Friends of the Happy Community Project.

Community Leader Training \$4,000

The Community leader will receive a minimum of 40 hours of onboarding training which includes applying the principles of the Happy Community Project, conducting collaborative leadership meetings, guidance principles for successful projects and how to trouble shoot and intervene, running a successful community meeting, how to use social media for community engagement, recruiting Core group members, engagement with bureaucracy and government officials.

This training comes with a proprietary well documented 80 page procedural manual the community leader can refer to on an ongoing basis. \$3,000

We also hold community leadership training programs for project leaders (Happy Community Project Leadership Program). The objective of these programs are to increase skill levels of project leaders to engage fellow citizens in their projects. These programs involve four – 2 hour

training sessions and are conducted 3 times a year. The curriculum includes – How to motivate citizens to act, the expert use of social media for engagement (2 sessions), and creating a compelling story. \$1,000

Happy Community Project Support Services

Communications \$7,680

Cultural change happens through repetitively hearing the same basic principles many times in many ways. We post on social media channels at least once every day, put out email blasts, professionally create and distribute community posters, hold community town hall meetings, deliver power point and multimedia presentations, create and distribute video. These are all done strategically to reinforce an overarching story that gets presented on multiple channels and in multiple ways. In this way, the overarching story is integrated into the community story resulting in a shift in cultural bias.

The story we present includes the ideas of citizen responsibility, opportunity to reach out to fellow citizens, trust and celebration of behavior that examples citizen engagement.

Our budget is \$640/month.

Professional Support Services \$14,750

Our experience says the success of the project depends on the community leader having access and utilizing support services and guidance on an ongoing basis. This support comes in the form of coaching, hand holding through new and difficult situations, recognizing pitfalls early, technical support for email campaigns and social media and live presentations, providing website maintenance, event planning support, access to a library of templates and support materials as required, providing collaborative project tools, professional help in graphic design as required. Community Leaders have responsive support access as they need it, plus regular check in and coaching sessions at least weekly.

Estimated time hours 225 @\$50 = \$11,250

We provide infrastructure support for the community leader and individual project leaders. These include blanket liability insurance access, a vehicle for making grant applications without having to set up a separate not-for-profit, technology support for accessible interactive community events tv screens, web site maintenance.

Total Infrastructure support = \$3,500

Measurement of Results \$4,900

We have developed an app for applying the Sense of community Index measurement tool under licence from Community Science. This tool measures citizen engagement and belonging within their community.

Administering the Sense of Community Index three times per year = \$2,400

The best way of knowing whether the community has shifted their cultural beliefs is listen to the stories they tell about their community and then validate these stories by sharing them broadly within the community. We collect stories and share them on an ongoing basis.

Collecting anecdotal stories and testing them against public opinion = \$2,500

General Overhead

Overhead Expenses \$8,000

Liability Insurance

Telephone

Web services

Internet

Bookkeeping

Accounting

Legal

Administration

Project Management Details

Start Date February 4, 2019

End Date January 31 2020

Project Goals and Outcomes

- The community of Windsor and West Hants consolidates around a common cause – we are all for a common outcome that gives us a new identity of togetherness, optimism, and pride.
- The Sense of Community measurement has a statistical significant increase from a baseline measurement – eg moves from 5 to 7 on a 10 point scale.
- Community Turnout at community events has a 20% increase – eg community breakfast from 300 last year to 360.
- At least 5 new project initiatives are launched by community citizens that provide opportunities for citizens to make and strengthen social connections
- Community embraces the idea of citizen responsibility for taking care of each other – particularly increased citizen support for caregivers such as parents and relatives taking care of ill.

Project Activities to achieve goals

Hire a part time Community Leader

February 2018 – hire a part time community leader who is a trusted member of the community and has the skills to hold community town hall meetings, support the creation of community events, gather community citizens into working committees that create community events, provide leadership and guidance to community project leaders, hold small community gatherings, collect anecdotal stories and generally seek out opportunities to develop initiatives that achieve the goals.

Train the Community Leader

February 2018 – familiarize the leadership candidate with philosophy and process of the Happy Community Project – both as formal training, and on the job training. Provide candidate with operations manual.

Hold Community Town Hall meetings

Hold at least 6 townhall meetings throughout the year (3 in spring, 3 in fall). Purpose of the townhall meetings is to develop ideas and support citizens to implement project ideas that

- Increase social connectedness
- Increase participation rate in supporting caregivers
- Discover and implement a common cause that the community can rally behind

Create Community Events

A major community happening happens weekly

- Hold 3 major community events that enable community members to do things together and therefore increase community participation, and increase social connectedness. Goal is each event attracts a minimum of 400 citizens
 - February/March – My Community Kitchen Party where every community hall in the county is encouraged and supported to hold a community kitchen party of their own design – all kitchen parties would be on the same date. eg Mar 1 in Ardoise, Three Mile Plains, Cheverie, Scotch village etc.
 - May – Greatest Community Picnic Ever
 - September – Corn Boil Challenge
- Hold 6 Town hall meetings
- Community Breakfast every month
- Farmers Market weekly from May to October
- Welcome Newcomers weekly
- Community Garden and farm have kickoff, harvesting and putting to bed community events

Initiate Community Projects

Initiate 5 new projects that are grass root led and supported by community members. Examples might be Paly Café, Welcome Newcomers, Revitalize Makers, Food Hub.

Continue to support existing projects with leadership, process, logistics and marketing support. Examples, Farmers Market, Christmas Market, Community Garden, Community Farm, Ellershouse Breakfast,

Develop Community Bulletin Board

Develop an interactive community bulletin board accessible on smart phones, tablets and computers and also accessible in interactive screens in public spaces so that all citizens can post events and see what is going on in their community without having to own or be technological literate.

Create Three Video Documentaries

Create at least three video documents that capture the progress of the Happy Community Project and the thoughts of citizens on how the Happy Community Project is affecting their community.

Distribute these video documentaries on social media for community feedback.

Communicate Constantly and Effectively

Post on social media every day

- Events and activities that promote social connections and citizen engagement in supporting caregivers
- Stories of things that have happened within community that reinforce to idea of social connectedness and citizens taking care of each other
- Forums for community commentary and suggestions for how their community can be or is becoming more socially connected, well being and resilient
- World thought leaders who support the idea of collaboration, community social connectedness and citizen responsibility

Distribute Posters

All significant events have posters printed and distributed throughout the community.

Create Community Electronic Bulletin Board

Develop an electronic bulletin board that is interactive and accessible to all citizens of the community.

Post community events for all citizens to have easy access to information on what is going on in their local area.

Initiate Small Community Gatherings

Participate in small community conversations at least monthly – coffee shop and kitchen meetings on a regular basis to spread the story and get community feedback on progress of meeting social connection and citizen engagement goals

Measurement Activities to measure goal progress

Collect Anecdotal stories

On-going process of collecting stories from citizens on their experiences in their community in regards to developing a common cause for the community, sense of citizen responsibility towards each other, optimism and pride in community

- Collect anecdotal stories of citizens experience with their community and the Happy Community Project.
- Publicly share these stories with the community and look for feedback that validates the stories as general consensus and acceptance.
- Compare stories over time to note shift in cultural beliefs.

Apply Sense of Community Index tool

February 2019 - Launch Sense of Community Index tool to establish baseline measurement.

June 2019– Redo the Sense of Community Index tool to establish progress

January 2020 – redo the Sense of Community Index tool to measure annual change

Appendices

Appendix A – Recognition



Nova Scotia House of Assembly Sixty-Third General Assembly First Session

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

Published by Order of the Legislature by Hansard Reporting Service

March 5, 2018

Resolution No: 924

Page No: 2469

By: **Mr. Chuck Porter** (Hants West)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Happy Community Project in Windsor-West Hants, founded by Barry Braut, is only a few months old but has already provided positive results for the community; and

Whereas when the Ellershouse community breakfast, one of the largest in West Hants, was expected to shut down due to an aging volunteer population, Happy Community Project volunteers immediately came to its rescue; and

Whereas the Happy Community Project also has plans to revitalize the Windsor Farmer's Market, create a community kitchen/food hub, develop a cultural social hub, implement a "Welcome Newcomers" project, initiate the "Tour de Hants" and much more;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Happy Community Project for making ideas a reality and for building stronger connections within our community.

* Mr. Chuck Porter, MLA
Hants West

June 30, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

Through my work as a community builder and as an Associate Professor I have the privilege of meeting many wonderfully inspiring and compassionate people. Among other things, I work on social movement learning; shared actualization; food and wellbeing; along with rural sustainability, vibrancy, prosperity and resiliency. Through a radio interview I was doing with CBC on the topic of envisioning our best future for 2017, I heard from one of the listeners, Barry Braun. Barry indicated that our interests overlap and shared how we might harness some synergies in our work of building more inclusive, engaging and vibrant communities.

Barry Braun is the initiator of, among other great social innovations, the **Happy Community Project**. Barry speaks the language of 'community building' and more importantly, he lives it. It is Barry's passion to bring community members together to get to know, help, love and to include each other. He's singing my song.

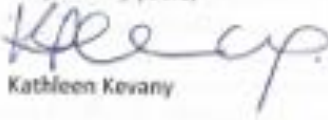
It is my pleasure to provide this letter of support for the unfolding work of the **Happy Community Project** and Barry Braun's vision and leadership. Since I met Barry in February of 2017, I have found him to be someone who is a passionate advocate and community leader who strives to be strategic and effective in addressing social and economic concerns. He is cognizant of needing to genuinely and effectively engage the local leaders so they can inspire the participation of other community members. The **Happy Community Project** facilitates the gathering of change agents and community animators who work together playfully to create more opportunities for all community members to meet one another, build local capacity and together make substantial differences in their shared quality of life.

In the brief months I have known Barry, I have benefitted from watching Barry guide these emerging community efforts and capture the voices of the community and encourage their grassroots efforts. Barry is an energetic community leader and a friendly and inspiring agent of change. He ably connects people and helps them find ways and places to invest their talents through his stimulating conversations on community empowerment. Barry appears to live by a strong vision for healthy and active communities that share joyful spaces where people can connect and help each other to thrive.

I am grateful to have met Barry and to be inspired by his determination and passion for kinder and more inclusive and playful communities. In addition to being fun and cheerful, he leads with integrity. He encourages shared responsibility and leadership. The **Happy Community Project** appears to be growing in momentum and with pride. People are feeling heard and included and it is making a difference. It is an initiative that I believe deserves further attention and study to assess the impact and ripple effect from this social innovation.

If I can provide further information, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Respectfully yours,



Kathleen Kevany

*Associate Professor
Director of the Rural Research Centre*

Dalhousie University
56 Rock Garden Road
kkevany@dal.ca

Faculty of Agriculture
Truro, Nova Scotia
902.986.8477 (cell)

Humanities House
B2N2B5
902.893.6725 (office)

Barry Braun

From: Kathy Monroe <kmonroe@eastlink.ca>
Sent: December 7, 2017 6:22 PM
To: Barry Braun
Subject: Happy Community recommendation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Barry,

I would like to offer my recommendation for you to freely use when sharing your program with other communities. I met you several months ago when you sought to share your Happy Community concept/program with the residents of Windsor/West Hants. I saw your genuine desire to aid communities to achieve their highest potential.

I have attended all three of your community meetings and have been genuinely impressed by the results you are already realizing. Your guidance has kept this process moving forward and I believe it is quite remarkable that results are already being realized by your efforts. I am hopeful that your guidance will have a lasting positive effect on this community.

As a municipal councillor, I see no better program available to empower and engage a community in a common goal of achieving a more robust social network for its citizens. Your guidance has been truly magical and I genuinely look forward to seeing this program continue here.

I will also share that I witnessed the power of this program on the night of the initial community meeting. During our small group break-out session, we were each afforded the opportunity to recommend a concept intended to improve/unite our community. In listening to those at my table, I kept focusing on how it was obvious that one location could fill the void of many of the identified needs. This discussion led to the identification of a prime location for this opportunity. Within days, we had met the owner of this property and shared our dream for Makers, an art market and creation space. This business is now due to open in spring 2018. This will become a community gathering space where we provide training in any of a number of creative genres. We are intending to use this space as a multi-generational exchange of knowledge. So, from a personal experience, I benefited from Barry's efforts and am now actively participating in the development of this new business. We have high hopes that this will fill a large void within our community and will create the opportunity for greater growth for our citizens.

So, in summary, if you are looking to turbo-charge your community engagement, I would highly recommend Barry's program. He is a wonderful advocate for growth for communities. Should you have any questions, I would be happy to field all calls.

And, keep your eyes on Windsor/West Hants, for we are evolving into an entirely new community right now...this is an exciting time for us...thanks to Barry!

Kind regards,
kathy

Kathy Monroe
H-902.757.0185
B-902.757.3138
www.walfacepointfords.com



THE TOWN OF WINDSOR
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

20 December 2017

Mr. Barry Braun
Barry@happycommunityproject.com

Dear Barry:

As promised, I brought forward your proposal on the *Happy Community Project* to our Committee of the Whole meeting last week. Council members stated that what you are doing in the community is wonderful and while your services and programs were not solicited by our Town, your efforts and volunteerism are commendable.

In your own methodology, you are seeking volunteers to step up in the community and pick up efforts on a whole range of things. I will note for you that my Council did this too in early January this year when we had about 60 people in the Community Centre ready to roll up their sleeves on council and citizen priorities.

You asked the Town for a letter of support. On behalf of Council, I am happy to give you this letter of support on the magnificent initiative and engagement with citizens from Windsor and West Hants. I hope it continues to be successful and that volunteerism sustains itself through the coming months.

I cannot financially commit the Town to any expenditures or promises until this matter comes before us during the 2018 / 2019 Operating Budget discussions next year. As noted by a member of Council, there may be a need to seek proportional cost sharing with the neighbouring municipality rather than a 50/50 split. I would encourage you to fill out a Grant Application from the Town as this is the only way council can support such an initiative. The amount that we can support you with will also be reviewed at budget time.

Thank you Barry for your efforts in our community. We are proud of citizens like yourself who step up to make the community a better place to live.

Sincerely,

Anna Allen, Mayor

Cc: Members of Council

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Dr Laura Santos – Expert in happiness from Yale University:

“I love the idea of the Happy Community Project because it embodies so much of what research tells us.”

Appendix B

Research shows social connectedness creates wellbeing and resiliency

Two of hundreds of articles supporting the importance of social connectedness for well being and resiliency



Article

Does Social Connectedness Promote a Greater Sense of Well-Being in Adolescence Over Time?

[Paul E. Jose](#)

[Nicholas Ryan](#)

[Jan Pryor](#)

First published: 27 February 2012

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2012.00783.x>

Cited by: [59](#)

This longitudinal study was supported by a grant from The Foundation for Research in Science and Technology to the first and third authors. We thank Jo KleeB for input in measure design and methodology; the school principals for allowing us to access students in their schools; and the adolescents for their continued willing participation.

[Read the full text](#)



[TOOLS](#)

[SHARE](#)

Abstract

This longitudinal study was designed to investigate whether or not social connectedness predicts psychological well-being over time. Structural equation modeling was used to examine the temporal relations between these constructs assessed yearly for 3 years for a sample of 1,774 10- to 15-year-olds (at Time 1). Results indicated that global connectedness (i.e.,

connectedness combined across the domains of family, school, peers, and neighborhood) predicted well-being, but no reciprocal relation was found. However, reciprocal relations were revealed by analyses that examined connectedness at the domain level, that is, for family and school contexts. The results suggest that youth who reported higher levels of social connectedness at one point in time would subsequently report higher well-being (i.e., life satisfaction, confidence, positive affect, and aspirations).



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Journal of Aging Research

Volume 2012, Article ID 173247, 9 pages

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1155/2012/173247>

Research Article

The Importance of Social Connectedness in Building Age-Friendly Communities

[Charles A. Emler](#)¹ and [Joane T. Mocerri](#)²

¹Social Work Program, University of Washington Tacoma, Tacoma, WA 98401, USA

²Nursing Program, University of Washington Tacoma, Tacoma, WA 98401, USA

Received 11 May 2011; Revised 13 July 2011; Accepted 30 September 2011

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to further elucidate the importance of social relationships and social connectedness with aging in place and in developing elder-friendly communities. The process used in this study was inclusive of younger adults (age 40–65) as well as older adults (65+) in order to further understand how they envision a community that could support their own aging in place. A community forum, using the

World Café format, was conducted in order to engage community members, 40 years and older, in conversation about the importance of social connectedness in elder-friendly communities. A second purpose of this forum was to obtain data on what would keep aging boomers in their community as they age. Three major themes emerged from qualitative analysis of the forum: social reciprocity, meaningful interactions, and structural needs/barriers. The results of this study reinforce the importance of social connectedness in creating and maintaining elder-friendly communities for older adults, as well as soon-to-be retired individuals, wishing to maintain life connectedness to their community. The study suggests the possibility of using more nontraditional research techniques (such as the World Café process) for gathering community level data.

Health & Place

[Volume 18, Issue 2](#), March 2012, Pages 286-295



Community resilience and health: The role of bonding, bridging, and linking aspects of social capital

Author links open overlay panel [Wouter Poortinga](#)

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2011.09.017> Get rights and content

Abstract

The current study draws on data from the 2007 and 2009 Citizenship Survey collected in England ($n=17,572$) to explore the role of social capital in building community resilience and health, using the bonding, bridging, and linking social capital framework of [Szreter and Woolcock \(2004\)](#). The results show that the indicators of the different types of social capital are only weakly interrelated, suggesting that they capture different aspects of the social environment. In line with the expectations, most indicators of bonding, bridging, and linking

social capital were significantly associated with neighbourhood deprivation and self-reported health. In particular bonding and bridging social cohesion, civic participation, heterogeneous socio-economic relationships, and political efficacy and trust appeared important for community health after controlling for neighbourhood deprivation. However, no support was found for the hypothesis that the different aspects help buffer against the detrimental influences of neighbourhood deprivation.

Revisiting the Sense of Community Index: A confirmatory factor analysis

[Patricia L. Obst](#)

[Katherine M. White](#)

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Cited by: [58](#)

Abstract

The Sense of Community Index (SCI) is one of the most commonly used measures of Psychological Sense of Community (PSOC). There is much discussion in the literature as to the validity of the scale as a measure not only of overall PSOC, but also of the dimensions (Membership, Influence, Needs Fulfillment, and Emotional Connection) theorized by McMillan and Chavis (1986) to underlie the construct. The current paper examines the factor structure of SCI in a study ($N = 219$) that examines multiple community memberships, including neighborhood, student, and interest group communities. Data was analyzed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The results showed that the SCI, in its original factor structure, did not adequately fit the data. The scale was revised, therefore, using CFA indicators, to produce a new four-factor structure based on the same items. This revised model was tested and found to display adequate fit indices to the data in all three communities. The results of the study provide empirical support for retaining measures that encapsulate the four dimensions of PSOC. © 2004 Wiley Periodicals, Inc. *J Comm Psychol* 32: 691–705, 2004.

Appendix C - The Anatomy of a Project

Time Line	Movies in the Park Project
	<p>Creating the Environment.</p> <p>There are lots of great ideas, but many of these ideas stay as a secret and uninitiated passion. It takes an environment where the person suggesting the idea will feel the risks of failure are low and that they will have the support they need to succeed.</p>
Jan 2018	<p>Laura Meldrum had silently watched other projects succeed over a 5 month period. She recognized that these projects were complicated and difficult to implement - projects like the Farmer's Market and the Ellershouse Breakfast. She watched our news feeds and our presence in these other projects and how they succeeded. This watching from a distance gave her the confidence to reach out with her idea.</p> 
May 2018	<p>At last Laura reached out and announced her secret passion - she wanted to create a Movie in the Park.</p>
	<p>Designing the project to succeed.</p>
May 15, 2018	<p>Laura made a tentative announcement in social media that she had an idea for Movies in the Park. She wanted to have a family place where her kids could go and that she could show them what community involvement looked like.</p>
May 18, 2018	<p>The Happy Community Project reached out to Laura and discovered that she had little project management or leadership skills, but she did have passion and determination. We offered the help of The Happy Community Project and she was tentative but grateful that we did.</p>
May 22	<p>We set her up with a Group Facebook Page and helped her start building a community. We set her up to do a community poll to determine if there was enough interest for her project. We got a very strong response to her idea.</p>

Time Line	The next step was to surround the project with other committed helpers.
Jun 10	Together, we were able to recruit three others who could give her skills, time and moral support. We helped her leadership team set simple goals and create a plan.
Jun 10 to Jun 20	<p>We developed a simple project planning document with Laura, minimizing the complications. For example, we showed her that she did not need a formal legal organization to hold movies in the park, she could do it under our umbrella. This would reduce administration and give her the liability insurance she would need to hold events on public property.</p> 
	<p>Developing confidence and finding the resources</p>
Jun 20- July 6	Laura did the research and discovered she would need a licensing fee to hold a movie in a public space. In order to minimize the complications, we provided the initial licensing fee under the condition that future movies would have to be funded from her own efforts.
Jul 10 to Jul 20	The Happy Community Project helped her navigate the municipal government where she needed permits for holding movies in the town park
July 16	Laura found, projector and sound system from people in the community who offered her support. She announced a date for the Movie in the Park
July 21	Happy Community Project does a promotion campaign for the Movie in the Park
July 21	<p>The Happy Community Project conducted a poll of the community which movie they wanted to watch on Facebook</p> <p>It had rained the day before and the ground was wet – we provided tarps for people to sit on.</p>
July 22	The first Movie is shown using a white sheet as a screen. 80 people showed up and donated enough for Laura to purchase a proper screen.

Time Line	
Aug 4	<p>Donor donates enough money for Laura to screen a second movie on Aug 4</p> <p>Second movie is screened and more donations come in.</p>
Aug 4 to Sep 8	<p>Building Sustainability</p> <p>In total, Laura showed 4 movies, and attracted about 500 people to her events. It has become a family and date night for the community who go not just for the movie, but for the experience of sharing with their neighbours. As people put their blankets on the ground, they look for places where they can overlap them with other members of the community who they have never met before. From infants to great grandmothers have enjoyed the experience of sharing with their fellow citizens.</p> <p>Laura has the confidence, team and means to continue Movies in the Park. With guidance and support from the Happy Community Project, Laura has raised enough funds to show at least 10 movies in 2019.</p>
Sep 11 to Oct 5	<p>Laura participated in the Happy Community Project Leadership Program which helped her develop community engagement skills.</p>

Results for Movies in the Park

- 500 people came from the community to share the experience
- Although we can't put an accurate number on this, we bore witness to new social connections being made as people settled in next to each other
- Movies in the Park was liked on social media more than 250 times
- Movies in the park became a high awareness in the community (greater than 50%) and was a constant stimulus for community conversation for 2 months.
- Another local not-for-profit, Integrity Cheer Empire All Stars, used the opportunity of the Movies in the Park to raise funds by holding a concession stand.
- Movies in the Park has become financially self-sustaining
- Laura has developed new confidence and leadership skills
- The pride of the community has risen because they see the self-reliance and initiative of fellow citizens
- A new source of family entertainment and social activity has been added to the assets of the community

Watch the short Youtube video where Laura bares testimony to the support she received.

<https://youtu.be/6P6ElvQbt-A>

Appendix D Certificate of Incorporation

 Innovation, Science and
Economic Development Canada
Innovation, Sciences et
Développement économique Canada
Canada

Certificate of Incorporation **Certificat de constitution**
Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act *Loi canadienne sur les organisations à but non
lucratif*

FRIENDS OF THE HAPPY COMMUNITY PROJECT
Corporate name / Dénomination de l'organisation

1094872-1
Corporation number / Numéro de
l'organisation

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the above-named corporation, the articles of incorporation of which are attached, is incorporated under the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*.

JE CERTIFIE que l'organisation susmentionnée, dont les statuts constitutifs sont joints, est constituée en vertu de la *Loi canadienne sur les organisations à but non lucratif*.


Virginie Ethier
Director / Directeur

2018-08-16
Date of Incorporation (YYYY-MM-DD)
Date de constitution (AAAA-MM-JJ)



Budget to Actual Variance Report Year to Date
Town of Windsor & Mun. of West Hants - Co-ordinating Committee
February 20, 2019

Description	2018/19 Budget	2018/19 Actual	2018/19 YTD Variance \$	2018/19 YTD Variance %
<i>Request for Proposal (RFP)</i>				
Boundary Review	\$ 38,615.00	\$ 501.84	\$ 38,113.16	1.30%
Human Resources	\$ 75,000.00		\$ 75,000.00	0.00%
Asset Management	\$ 37,500.00		\$ 37,500.00	0.00%
Communications	\$ 18,750.00	\$ 2,940.55	\$ 15,809.45	15.68%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>\$ 169,865.00</u>	<u>\$ 3,442.39</u>	<u>\$ 166,422.61</u>	
<i>RFP Accruals</i>				
HR RFP	\$ 50,000.00		\$ 50,000.00	0.00%
Asset Management	\$ 112,500.00		\$ 112,500.00	0.00%
Communications	\$ 56,250.00		\$ 56,250.00	0.00%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>\$ 218,750.00</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 218,750.00</u>	
<i>Administration</i>				
Transition Coordinator	\$ 37,500.00	\$ 31,578.54	\$ 5,921.46	84.21%
Administration Support (0.6 FTE)	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 7,900.00	7.06%
Supplies	\$ 10,000.00		\$ 10,000.00	0.00%
IT Support	\$ 25,000.00		\$ 25,000.00	0.00%
Regulatory	\$ 7,500.00		\$ 7,500.00	0.00%
Legal	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 2,377.05	\$ 7,622.95	23.77%
Misc. Expenses	\$ 12,885.00	\$ 2,898.91	\$ 9,986.09	22.50%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>\$ 111,385.00</u>	<u>\$ 37,454.50</u>	<u>\$ 73,930.50</u>	
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 500,000.00</u>	<u>\$ 40,896.89</u>	<u>\$ 459,103.11</u>	

February 20, 2019

To Kevin Latimer
Transition Coordinator

Dear Mr. Latimer,

On November 13, 2018, West Hants council created a Rural Representative Committee (RRC). This committee was created in order to identify and address concerns from rural residents in West Hants during the consolidation process and in the long term, ensure representation in the new regional government. This committee is comprised of three rural councillors and four rural citizen members. One councillor will be a member of the Transition Committee and act as liaison.

The Committee will identify obstacles that may impact rural residents, identify solutions, determine how they can be measured and ensure accountability. By engaging in this grassroots approach, utilizing local knowledge and resources, will help manifest a successful consolidation process and stronger communities.

I am fortunate in the coming year to be part of this committee and act as liaison. I will be looking to the Transition Committee as well, to identify and communicate any challenges you may foresee so that the RRC can evaluate and explore ways to mitigate these challenges for the rural communities. In turn, the RRC will report back to the Transition Committee for consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Daniels
Municipality of West Hants
District 7