



REGIONAL
DISTRICT
OF NANAIMO

Regional District of Nanaimo Board Voting Formula – Further Consideration

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Board support a change to the Regional District of Nanaimo Board Voting Formula.
2. That the Board provide direction on which voting formula option(s) the Board would like to further consider.
3. That the Board direct that letters regarding the voting formula option(s) that the Board would like to further consider be sent to the Mayor and Council of the City of Nanaimo, the City of Parksville, the District of Lantzville and the Town of Qualicum Beach seeking their input.
4. That the Board direct that Qualicum First Nation, Snaw-Naw-As First Nation and Snuneymuxw First Nation be informed of the proposed change in the Voting Formula Option and invite their comments.
5. That the Board approve the Voting Formula Engagement Plan Highlights included as Attachment No. 2.

BACKGROUND

At the March 3, 2026, Regional District of Nanaimo Committee of the Whole meeting (“COW”), the Board considered the report titled “Regional District of Nanaimo Board Voting Formula – Potential Options and Considerations” (Attachment No. 1).

The discussion included consideration of the following:

- The Regional District of Nanaimo Board voting formula (“voting formula”) is expected to no longer work after the 2026 Census;
- The voting formula is expected to no longer work if the proposed City of Nanaimo Boundary expansion to include Snuneymuxw First Nation reserve land proceeds which would leave the City of Nanaimo with no alternate director;
- The City of Nanaimo already experiences challenges with only one alternate director;
- Broad support for retaining the strength and composition of the current Board, with as close to status quo as possible;
- The current governance model is effective;
- Inclusive regional governance;
- Current non-voting Board member from Qualicum First Nation and potential for other First Nation Board members;
- Representation by population;
- Scalability to 2041;
- Population projections are only estimates and may not bear out;
- Other changes could impact the voting formula such as incorporation and/or further boundary changes;

- Fairness;
- Strength of Nanaimo’s number of directors in relation to other jurisdictions;
- Strength of Nanaimo’s voting strength in relation to other jurisdictions;
- City of Nanaimo’s participation in regional services, including Southern Community Transit and Southern Community Wastewater;
- Maintaining a voting strength of at least two weighted votes for all jurisdictions;
- Financial implications of larger or smaller number of Directors on the RDN Board;
- Board’s desire to inform and receive feedback from:
 - Municipal Councils,
 - First Nations, and
 - Constituents/public;

A further option was presented for the Board’s consideration during the COW after confirming with the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs that a divisor with a decimal could be used. This further option included a voting unit of 2600 and a divisor of 6.7. (See “Chart - Voting Unit 2600, Divisor 6.7” below.) This is just one option of many possible options using a divisor with a decimal, considered because it is the closest to ‘status quo’ that was identified. Please note that while the formula would use a decimal, the votes assigned to each Director would remain a whole number, with the votes being divided equally amongst the Directors for each jurisdiction consistent with current practice and statutory requirements.

Chart – Voting Unit 2600, Divisor 6.7

CURRENT Voting Unit: 2,500; divisor 5				2027 - Voting unit 2600; divisor 6.7					2041- Voting unit 2600; divisor 6.7				
	2021 Census	No. of Directors	Voting Strength	2026 projected population	No. of Directors	+/-	Voting Strength	+/-	2041 projected population	No. of Directors	+/-	Voting Strength	+/-
Nanaimo	99,863	8	40	116,200	7	-1	45	5	136,922	8	0	53	13
Parksville	13,642	2	6	15,653	2	0	7	1	17,535	2	0	7	1
Lantzville	3,817	1	2	4,245	1	0	2	0	5,002	1	0	2	0
Qualicum Beach	9,303	1	4	10,085	1	0	4	0	11,882	1	0	5	1
A	7,804	1	4	7,938	1	0	4	0	9,351	1	0	4	0
B	4,500	1	2	4,952	1	0	2	0	5,834	1	0	3	1
C	3,730	1	2	3,599	1	0	2	0	4,241	1	0	2	0
E	7,010	1	3	7,576	1	0	3	0	8,926	1	0	4	1
F	8,216	1	4	8,731	1	0	4	0	10,288	1	0	4	0
G	8,109	1	4	8,730	1	0	4	0	10,286	1	0	4	0
H	4,373	1	2	4,999	1	0	2	0	5,890	1	0	3	1
Totals:	170,367	19	73	192,708	18	-1	79	6	226,157	19	20	91	18

Comments below are comparisons of the 2027 and 2041 Board composition, (at projected populations for those years), with the current Board composition based on the 2021 Census.

Short-term (2027)

- Nanaimo loses 1 Director
- Nanaimo gains 5 votes and Parksville gains 1 vote
- Unweighted Corporate vote reduced from 19 to 18 Directors
- Increased voting strength for weighted corporate votes in Nanaimo and Parksville
- Increased voting strength for weighted participant votes in Nanaimo and Parksville

Long-Term (2041)

- Number of Directors consistent with current Board
- Nanaimo gains 13 votes
- Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Electoral Areas ‘B’, ‘E’, and ‘H’ gain 1 vote each
- Unweighted Corporate vote consistent with current Board
- Increased voting strength for weighted corporate votes in Nanaimo, Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Electoral Areas ‘B’, ‘E’, and ‘H’

- Weighted Corporate vote increases from 73 to 79
- Nanaimo has the ability to appoint 2 Alternate Directors
- Increased voting strength for weighted participant votes in Nanaimo, Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Electoral Areas 'B', 'E', and 'H'
- Weighted Corporate Vote increases from 73 to 91

The above option addresses the situation in which the City of Nanaimo would need to appoint more directors than their number of elected officials that is expected following the 2026 Census, and it remains scalable through 2041 based on population estimates. All other jurisdictions remain status quo in 2027. The impact to other jurisdictions in 2041 is the result of projected population growth. A change to the voting unit and divisor changes the number of Directors and the voting strength.

Snuneymuxw First Nation ("SFN") and the City of Nanaimo ("City") are seeking elector approval and provincial approval to initiate a municipal boundary change that would see Snuneymuxw reserve lands included within the City. Should the approvals be obtained and the boundary expansion proceed, the SFN population currently included in Electoral Area 'A' and Electoral Area 'C' would be shifted to the City. The Chart below "Chart – Voting Unit 2600, Divisor 6.7 – with City of Nanaimo Boundary Expansion" shows the current Board composition to the left, with the 2027 and 2041 using the voting unit of 2600, the divisor of 6.7 and including the population shift from Electoral Areas 'A' and 'C'.

Chart – Voting Unit 2600, Divisor 6.7 – with City of Nanaimo Boundary Expansion

CURRENT Voting Unit: 2,500; divisor 5				2027 - Voting unit 2600; divisor 6.7					2041- Voting unit 2600; divisor 6.7				
	2021 Census	No. of Directors	Voting Strength	2026 projected population	No. of Directors	+/-	Voting Strength	+/-	2041 projected population	No. of Directors	+/-	Voting Strength	+/-
Nanaimo	99,863	8	40	116,909	7	-1	45	5	137,758	8	0	53	13
Parksville	13,642	2	6	15,653	2	0	7	1	17,535	2	0	7	1
Lantzville	3,817	1	2	4,245	1	0	2	0	5,002	1	0	2	0
Qualicum Beach	9,303	1	4	10,085	1	0	4	0	11,882	1	0	5	1
A	7,804	1	4	7,615	1	0	3	-1	8,968	1	0	4	0
B	4,500	1	2	4,952	1	0	2	0	5,834	1	0	3	1
C	3,730	1	2	3,213	1	0	2	0	3,786	1	0	2	0
E	7,010	1	3	7,576	1	0	3	0	8,926	1	0	4	1
F	8,216	1	4	8,731	1	0	4	0	10,288	1	0	4	0
G	8,109	1	4	8,730	1	0	4	0	10,286	1	0	4	0
H	4,373	1	2	4,999	1	0	2	0	5,890	1	0	3	1
Totals:	170,367	19	73	192,708	18	-1	78	5	226,155	19	20	91	18

Comments below are comparisons of the 2027 and 2041 Board composition with the current Board composition based on the 2021 Census and including the impact of the proposed City of Nanaimo boundary expansion to include the Snuneymuxw First Nation within city boundaries. Changes that differ from the first Chart are in bold.

Short term (2027)

- Nanaimo loses 1 Director
- **Electoral Area 'A' loses 1 vote**
- Nanaimo gains 5 votes and Parksville gains 1 vote
- Unweighted Corporate vote reduced from 19 to 18 Directors
- Increased voting strength for weighted Corporate votes in Nanaimo and Parksville
- **Decreased weighted Corporate vote for Electoral Area 'A' from 4 to 3**

Long Term (2041)

- Number of Directors consistent with current Board
- Nanaimo gains 13 votes
- Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Electoral Areas 'B', 'E', and 'H' gain 1 vote each
- Unweighted Corporate vote consistent with current Board
- **Electoral Area 'A' weighted Corporate vote returns to 4**

- Increased voting strength for weighted participant votes in Nanaimo and Parksville
- **Decreased weighted participant vote for Electoral Area 'A'**
- **Weighted Corporate vote increases from 73 to 78**
- Nanaimo has the ability to appoint 2 Alternate Directors
- Increased voting strength for weighted Corporate votes in Nanaimo, Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Electoral Areas 'B', 'E', and 'H'
- **Electoral Area 'A' weighted participant vote returns to 4**
- Increased voting strength for weighted participant votes in Nanaimo, Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Electoral Areas 'B', 'E', and 'H'
- Weighted Corporate vote increases from 73 to 91

The above option still addresses the situation in which the City of Nanaimo would need to appoint more Directors than their number of elected officials that is expected following the 2026 Census and including the proposed boundary expansion, and it still remains scalable through 2041 based on population estimates. Electoral Area 'A' is reduced in voting strength from 4 to 3 weighted votes due to the population shift. All other jurisdictions remain status quo in 2027. The impact to other jurisdictions in 2041 is the result of projected population growth.

This report attempts to summarize the Board's discussion at the March 3, 2026 Committee of the Whole meeting. If correct, and should the Board so wish, the Board could consider the following resolutions in addition to the recommendations listed in this report:

That the Board direct that the City of Nanaimo, the City of Parksville, the District of Lantzville and the Town of Qualicum Beach be consulted regarding the Voting Formula Option with a Voting Unit of 2,600 and a divisor of 6.7;

That the Board direct that Qualicum First Nation, Snaw-Naw-As First Nation and Snuneymuxw First Nation be informed of the proposed change in the Voting Formula Option and invite their comments; and

That the public be informed of the proposed change in the Voting Formula Option with an opportunity to raise any comments or concerns with the Board.

Should the Board be supportive of a change in voting formula from 2500 to 2600 for the voting unit and from 5 to 6.7 for the divisor, or any other option for the voting formula that the Board may prefer, and subsequent to any responses being received to the letters issued to the municipalities and First Nations and any comments from the public, a report would be brought back to the Board to consider submitting a Proposal to the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs requesting a change to the Regional District of Nanaimo's voting formula.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The RDN Board Chambers, in its current configuration, accommodates seating for 19 Directors in the raised horseshoe area and is therefore fully utilized. With a change to the voting formula, the Board Chambers reconfiguration would not immediately be required. It may still be required to provide for inclusive participation of First Nations at the Board table. The Financial Plan includes \$500,000 for Board Chambers/Building Upgrades and Reconfiguration.

The base remuneration as of January 1, 2026, is \$25,456 for Municipal Directors and \$50,911 for Electoral Area Directors, and the additional meeting amount is \$150 for meetings in addition to four Board or Committee of the Whole meetings per month.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

Planning and Managing for Growth

REVIEWED BY:

- C. Crabtree, General Manager, Corporate and Transportation Services
- D. Holmes, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

1. Report to the COW titled “Regional District of Nanaimo Board Voting Formula - Potential Options and Considerations” dated March 3, 2026
2. Voting Formula Engagement Plan Highlights