Loyalist Township
Council Composition and
Ward Boundary Review 2024-25
Backgrounder

Discussion Paper A:
The Loyalist Electoral System

Background

Loyalist Township has retained Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. and Dr. Robert J. Williams, hereinafter referred to as the Consultant Team, to conduct a comprehensive and independent Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review.

The primary purpose of the study is to prepare Township Council to make decisions on whether to adjust the size and components of council and whether to maintain the existing ward configuration or to adopt an alternative.

Matters that are integral to a comprehensive review include the following:

- Are alternative ways to elect members of council permitted under Ontario legislation?
- Is the size of the Township Council consistent with its governing and representative responsibilities?
- Is it appropriate to consider dissolving the wards to elect all councillors at-large (in what the *Municipal Act* calls a "general vote" system) or to revise the ward configuration so that each ward elects the same number of councillors?
- If councillors will continue to be elected in wards, what guiding principles will be observed in the design of the wards?

The Loyalist Township Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review is premised on the legitimate democratic expectation that municipal representation in the Township on election day and throughout the term of Council will be effective, equitable, and an accurate reflection of the contemporary distribution of communities and people across the municipality.

Setting

Loyalist Township was incorporated on January 1, 1998, as an amalgamated municipality consisting of the former Village of Bath, the former Township of Amherst Island, and the former Township of Ernestown (through a Ministerial Restructuring Order dated January 7, 1997). The Order established a council composed of a mayor,

who is considered to be the head of council, and a deputy mayor, both of whom are elected by general vote and represent Loyalist Township on the Council of the County of Lennox and Addington, and five councillors elected in three wards that correspond to the pre-amalgamation municipalities[1].

The Amherst Island and Bath wards each elect one councillor, while the third ward (Ernestown) elects three councillors. The boundaries of the wards have not changed since 1998 while the population of the Township has increased by approximately 3,300 residents.

Topical Discussion Papers A to F

Discussion Papers will be available to residents, each addressing one of the topics to be considered in this review:

- Discussion Paper A – The Loyalist Electoral System
- Discussion Paper B – What is the Optimal Size for a Municipal Council?
- Discussion Paper C – The Component Parts of the Loyalist Township Council
- Discussion Paper D – The Method of Election for Councillors
- Discussion Paper E – Guiding Principles to Design Wards
- Discussion Paper F – Is a Ward Boundary Review Necessary?

[1] It should be noted that this arrangement implemented the Council structure recommended in the 1996 County of Lennox and Addington Restructuring Proposal. However, the Proposal called for the elimination of the wards before the 2000 municipal election in favour of the election of the five councillors at-large. That change did not take place.