

Greetings:

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the Phase 1 Recommendation put forth by the Governance and District Boundary Review Committee, which will be presented to Regional Council on Tuesday, June 22nd, 2010.

I must begin by acknowledging and congratulating you all on your tremendous efforts at addressing this challenge. Examining preferred governance models, reviewing other municipalities, and extensively consulting the public are three particular areas where our municipality has excelled, and for this the Chamber applauds you.

However, our position remains the same. If the size of council was reduced to 15 instead of 20, the resulting increases in efficiency and effectiveness would be far greater and immediately more noticeable.

As you well know, a reduced council size can help foster more focused and efficient council meetings, which will ultimately have a positive impact on both the people of our municipality and the way in which they are governed. However, reducing the size of one of Canada's largest councils by merely three councilors will surely not result in the level of positive and powerful change that was originally envisioned when this committee was created.

With respect to governance, public perceptions of how effectively tax dollars are being spent can play a large role in determining the degree to which citizens are satisfied with their municipal government. The Chamber would suggest that if council was to reduce its size by a greater margin – to 15 instead of 20 – the public would recognize and applaud this as a commendable effort. We are convinced this would also serve to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of council meetings, debates, decisions and best use of your time as councilors.

This is such a rare opportunity for our municipality. I would urge you to be courageous. Recommend a smaller council to the Utility and Review Board.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns as this process unfolds.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Valerie Payn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "V" and "P".

Valerie Payn
President & CEO