

**Cape Breton Regional Municipality**

**Special Council Meeting**

**AGENDA**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2022**

**9:30 A.M.**

**Council Chambers  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall  
320 Esplanade, Sydney, NS**

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# Cape Breton Regional Municipality

## Special Council Meeting

Thursday, December 15, 2022

9:30 a.m.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

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#### **Roll Call**

1. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** (Motion Required)
2. **CBRM Governance and Boundary Review – Final Report:** John Heseltine, Stantec (See page \_\_4\_\_)

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

# CBRM Governance and Boundary Review

Final Report  
December 8, 2022



**CAPE BRETON**  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY





## **CBRM GOVERNANCE AND BOUNDARY REVIEW**

Final Report

December 8, 2022

Prepared for:  
Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Prepared by:  
Stantec Consulting Limited

Project Number:  
160410435

## CBRM Governance and Boundary Review

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Prepared by: **Original Signed By**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Heseltine, LPP MCIP

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\_\_\_\_\_  
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Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name



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**APPENDIX A BOUNDARY OPTIONS SURVEY RESULTS**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Stantec conducted the previous boundary review for the Cape Breton Region Municipality in 2010. The NSUARB approved a Council of 12 at that time. In 2014, CBRM submitted a “simplified application” to confirm its Council arrangements, which the Board also approved. The current study considers the performance of CBRM Council through comparison to similar Nova Scotia municipalities and consultation with Regional Council and CBRM residents. Applying the process recommended by the Utility and Review Board, Stantec has explored the preferred size of CBRM’s Council with Council members and residents. We have delineated boundaries for a range of Council size options preferred by residents and obtained the opinions of community members concerning those boundary proposals.

### 2 CURRENT GOVERNANCE

CBRM has the second largest Council membership among Nova Scotia regional and rural municipalities, the second most constituents per Council member, the 15th most land area per member, and the second most expenditure per member. Municipal population has fallen for many years, although the rate of decline has recently moderated. Our demographic projections, however, suggest population will continue to decrease by close to 6,000 people by 2031.

Council interviewees strongly favored maintaining their current membership. Apart from one interviewee who favored decreasing Council from the current 12 Councillors plus the Mayor and three who were unsure, nine preferred to maintain the current Council size. Community views expressed through an online survey that attracted 534 respondents were more mixed. While a substantial proportion favoured maintaining the Municipality’s current 12-member Council (17.7%), more favoured reducing the number of Councillors to six (25.4%). Substantial proportions of respondents also favoured eight (12.0%) or 15 or more Councillors (10.9%).

### 3 PAST BOUNDARY REVIEWS

CBRM has reviewed its Council size and electoral boundaries five times since the process that led to the creation of CBRM as Nova Scotia’s first regional municipality. From the first assessment undertaken in 1994 to determine the appropriate number of Councillors for the new regional government to the last review completed in 2016, the number of Regional Councillors has gradually been reduced from 20 to the current 12.



#### 4 BOUNDARY DELINEATION

With the approval of CBRM Council Stantec developed boundary scenarios for six, eight, and twelve electoral districts for presentation to the public in Phase 2. The scenarios were presented through a series of six public meetings distributed across the municipality and a second online survey. The public meetings were poorly attended but did provide some useful discussion on governance and boundary issues. The survey collected 644 responses.

The critical question in the survey asked respondents to indicate their preference among the three scenarios. Like the question concerning Council size, responses strongly favoured six districts over the other options offered, gaining support from 44.4% of respondents. The 12-district arrangement followed with 25.0%, eight districts was supported by 17.6%, and 9.9% said they did not like any of the options presented.

#### 5 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

**Based on foregoing research and analysis, we recommend that CBRM apply for approval of a Council of six members plus the Mayor to be elected from districts as presented in Figure 4-4 in this document or with reasonable modifications such as those outlined in preceding Section 5.2. As the recommendation is in accord with public input received and all districts as outlined meet the  $\pm 10\%$  parity criterion while, in our opinion, respecting community integrity to the degree possible, we do not anticipate any serious difficulty obtaining NSUARB approval.**



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Project Mandate

Pursuant to Section 369(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA), all Nova Scotia municipalities must “conduct a study of the number and boundaries of polling districts in the municipality, their fairness and reasonableness and the number of councillors” ... “in the years 2006 and every eighth year thereafter.” The current year, 2022, starts the fourth cycle since the adoption of the Act.

Stantec conducted the previous boundary review for the Cape Breton Region Municipality in 2010. The NSUARB approved a Council of twelve at that time. In 2014, CBRM submitted a “simplified application” to confirm its Council arrangements, which the Board also approved. The current study considers the performance of CBRM Council through comparison to similar Nova Scotia municipalities and consultation with Regional Council and CBRM residents. Applying the process recommended by the Utility and Review Board, Stantec has explored the preferred size of CBRM’s Council with Council members and residents. We have delineated boundaries for a range of Council size options preferred by residents and obtained the opinions of community members concerning those boundary proposals.

## 1.2 Study Process

Having completed many boundary review studies, Stantec staff are familiar with the specifications of the MGA as well as Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) 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 (number of electors, relative parity of voting power, population density, community of interest and geographic size). Just as



with determining the desired number of polling districts, public consultation is essential to a successful process of setting boundaries.<sup>1</sup>

Our proposal submitted to Cape Breton Regional Municipality on May 26, 2022, committed to adhere to these specifications. This Boundaries Report is the final project report. It incorporates key content from the Council Size Report completed in Phase 1, summarizing the results of our review of municipal council sizes in Nova Scotia as well as our consultations concerning the appropriate size of Regional Council with current Council members and CBRM residents, and our recommendations concerning council size that we carried forward to Phase 2 of the project. Following from the recommendation approved by Council, Stantec in Phase 2 has presented options for six, eight, or twelve electoral districts. We presented the proposals at six public meetings held within the Municipality and through a second public survey that asked CBRM residents to select the proposed boundary framework that they preferred.

### **1.3 Study Conduct**

CBRM notified Stantec of our selection to conduct an electoral boundary review via a letter emailed on June 3, 2022. During the following week, Stantec assembled data and mapping from our 2010 study for CBRM. From June 29 and July 13, 2022, Stantec interviewed twelve District Councillors, the Mayor, and CAO concerning their opinions on CBRM's governance and Council size. In consideration of input from Council members and municipal staff as well as the specifications of the RFP for this assignment, Stantec developed a questionnaire to explore public views on governance and Council size that was posted online from July 27, 2022, to August 22, 2022. In the same period, with the assistance of CBRM staff we scheduled and conducted a Council Size public meeting in Sydney on August 8.

As noted, Stantec produced a Council Size Report summarizing the results of all Phase 1 investigations and consultations. The report recommended that Council present options for six or twelve districts to the public, adding that consideration of eight districts would be appropriate if Council preferred. Council chose to go forward with all three options.

Phase 2 consultation included review of the three boundary scenarios with CBRM Council, a second online survey for district residents, and six public meetings distributed across the municipality as follows:

- Louisbourg Fire Hall, October 24, 1:00 to 4:00 pm
- Miners Forum Common Room, Glace Bay, October 24, 6:00 to 9:00 pm
- Boisdale Fire Hall, October 25, 1:00 to 4:00 pm
- Sydney Mines Firemans Club, October 25, 6:00 to 9:00 pm
- Big Pond Fire Hall, October 26, 1:00 to 4:00 pm

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<sup>1</sup> NSUARB, "Municipal Boundary User Guide," no date, p. 2,  
[https://nsuarb.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/nsuarb-222634-v1-user\\_guide\\_-\\_mb\\_reviews\\_.pdf](https://nsuarb.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/nsuarb-222634-v1-user_guide_-_mb_reviews_.pdf)



- Centre 200, Sydney, October 26, 6:00 to 9:00 pm.

In addition to the summaries of Council size benchmarking, past governance and boundary review presentations, and Phase 1 consultation, this Boundaries Report summarizes the boundary scenarios considered in Phase 2 and our related consultation processes. It concludes with a recommendation concerning the preferred electoral boundaries for the Regional Municipality.



## 2 CURRENT GOVERNANCE

There are no fixed rules for determining the number of members a municipal council should have. People who favour larger councils usually cite improved service from councillors who have fewer constituents and, therefore, more time to deal with individual constituent concerns as a key benefit. Many will also argue for more council members where a large geographic territory must be covered and will often add that more voices in council provide more scope for the expression of diverse interests, particularly interests associated with specific geographies. The arguments for smaller councils, by contrast, usually centre on efficiency. Excessive numbers of council members can extend council debates as each member seeks to have his or her say. Additional members also usually require more direct compensation and more municipal staff support, increasing municipal costs that taxpayers must cover.

### 2.1 Council Size

Under Nova Scotia's *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) councils must have a minimum of three members, exclusive of a mayor but inclusive of a warden. Regional municipalities like CBRM must elect a mayor as must towns, while rural may choose to have a mayor. Among 20 rural municipalities, the Counties of Colchester and Kings, and the Municipal District of Lunenburg are now led by mayors. Although towns may elect council members at large or from wards, the legislation requires rural and regional municipalities to elect councillors from districts, with only one councillor permitted per district.

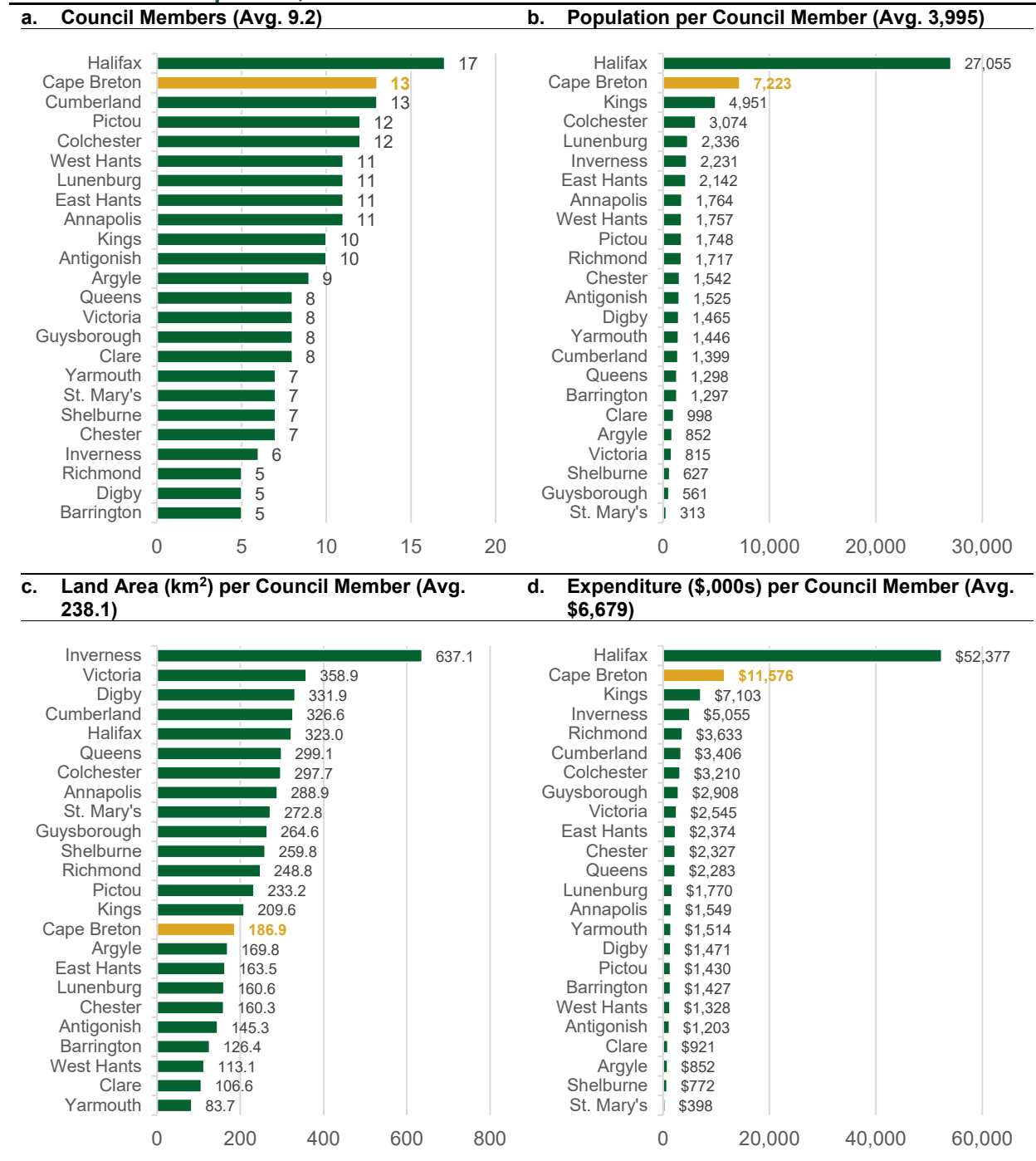
#### 2.1.1 NOVA SCOTIA BENCHMARKING

As our brief discussion of the pros and cons of larger and smaller councils suggests, key parameters against which council sizes are typically judged are the ratios of constituents and land area to councillors, and the cost of council. While there are no accepted benchmarks for judging council membership, comparison to other similar municipalities at least gives a measure of where CBRM stands.

CBRM currently has 12 Councillors plus a Mayor. The Municipality's Council membership, including the Mayor, ranks second among 24 regional and rural municipalities in Nova Scotia (**Figure 2-1a**). CBRM, of course, is the province's second largest regional municipality by population and has a much larger population than any of the province's 20 rural municipalities, which have an average of 9.2 members. It ranks second in terms of the number of constituents per Councillor, with 7,230 relative to an average of 3,995, which is skewed heavily by HRM, where the number of constituents per council member is 27,055 (**Figure 2-1b**).



**Figure 2-1 Council Size and Measures of Council Size, Nova Scotia Rural and Regional Municipalities, 2022**



Source: Stantec Consulting Limited



Although CBRM is also relatively large in terms of land area (2,430.1 km<sup>2</sup>), ranking eighth among the 24 municipalities considered, its larger Council membership places the Municipality 15<sup>th</sup> when ranked by land area per council member (**Figure 2-1c**). CBRM's position does not change when mayors are taken out of consideration and comparison is based on land area per councillor. While the average area served by a CBRM Councillor is 202.5 km<sup>2</sup>, six other municipalities with mayors also have larger average electoral district areas than **Figure 2-1c** suggests, and CBRM remains in 15<sup>th</sup> place.

By the final measure shown, expenditure divided by council representatives, CBRM ranks second only to HRM at \$11,567,072 or 73.2% more than the average of \$6,679,302 (**Figure 2-1d**). The numbers are, again, heavily skewed by HRM, which has a very large budget in comparison to the other Nova Scotia municipalities. The figure, nevertheless, suggests the CBRM Council members have significantly more responsibility than municipal representatives in the province's remaining regional and rural municipal units.

### **2.1.2 CURRENT AND FUTURE POPULATION**

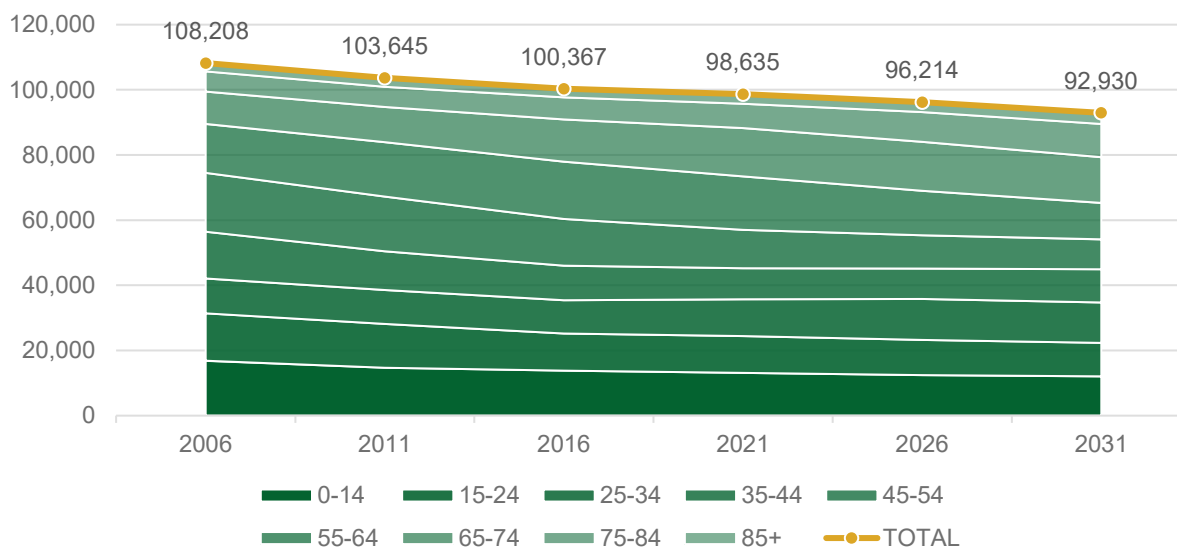
Population decline has been a long-standing concern for CBRM. As coal mines and the steel plant closed during the 1990s, local employment opportunities declined, and many residents left the region looking for work. Out-migration of young adults was particularly pronounced, exaggerating the aging of the region's population and the concomitant decline in its ability to reproduce. From 2006 to 2021, CBRM, including the First Nations communities of Eskasoni and Membertou, lost 9,843 residents or 9.1% of its population (**Figure 2-2**). The proportion of the population in the key family-forming group from 18 to 44 years of age decreased to 29.5% from 32.2%.

The region, nevertheless, benefitted from Nova Scotia's attraction for in-migration during the most recent census period from 2016 to 2021, losing only 1.7% of its population, the lowest decline of any five-year period this century and the region's best demographic result for more than 50 years. Critically, the proportion of the region's population between 18 and 44 increased from 28.9% to 29.5%.

While CBRM's modest rebound is positive, further population decline appears likely. Predictions to 2031 prepared by Stantec based on the age structure of the population and the recent population trend suggest population will continue to decline to 92,930 by 2031 a further reduction of 5,705 people (5.8%). While our calculations suggest the proportion of residents between 18 and 44 will rise back to 32.4% or roughly its 2006 level, stabilization of the region's population will likely require a longer period than the eight years to the next boundary review cycle.



**Figure 2-2 Population by Age Group, CBRM, 2006-2031**



Cohort	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
0-14	16,814	14,686	13,816	13,161	12,460	12,065
15-24	14,613	13,467	11,430	11,213	10,754	10,266
25-34	10,669	10,460	10,213	11,321	12,622	12,406
35-44	14,371	11,838	10,612	9,566	9,300	10,183
45-54	18,053	16,777	14,296	11,734	10,226	9,200
55-64	14,994	16,755	17,580	16,423	13,612	11,176
65-74	9,950	10,780	12,959	14,796	15,103	14,026
75-84	6,225	6,211	6,752	7,552	9,060	10,192
85+	2,519	2,671	2,709	2,869	3,078	3,415
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108,208</b>	<b>103,645</b>	<b>100,367</b>	<b>98,635</b>	<b>96,214</b>	<b>92,930</b>
<i>Change</i>	<i>-3.5%</i>	<i>-4.2%</i>	<i>-3.2%</i>	<i>-1.7%</i>	<i>-2.5%</i>	<i>-3.4%</i>

Proportions of Total Population						
0-17	19.9%	18.0%	17.0%	16.4%	16.1%	16.0%
18-44	32.3%	30.6%	28.9%	29.5%	30.9%	32.4%
45-64	30.5%	32.4%	31.8%	28.5%	24.8%	21.9%
65+	17.3%	19.0%	22.3%	25.6%	28.3%	29.7%

Source: Stantec Consulting Limited

## 2.2 Council Consultation

Between June 29 and July 13, 2022, Stantec interviewed the Mayor and 12 CBRM Councillors who together form Regional Council, as well as the Municipality's Chief Administrative Officer. Interviews were conducted using online applications or telephone. In general, Councillors favoured maintaining CBRM's current 12-member Council. They also expressed general satisfaction with their municipal role and most rated their experience in municipal governance highly. Overall, Councillors felt strongly that their



constituents should continue to have adequate access to Council and that representation of the distinct rural and urban interests should be maintained.

The Councillors, Mayor, and CAO indicated that the current Council has brought a new perspective because of the number of first term representatives. Although one Councillor is serving his eighth term, the next longest serving member is only on their third term, with seven Councillors as well as the Mayor serving for the first time. For five members, the 2020 cycle was the first time they offered for election. Only the longest tenured Councillor has ever been acclaimed. Eight interviewees considered their latest campaign competitive and called the margin of their electoral victory “close.”

Stantec asked Council members and the CAO to assess the influence of the number of members on Council’s current administrative capacity, efficiency, effectiveness, and collaboration. We also asked interviewees to comment on any perceived changes in the Council atmosphere during their service. We asked respondents to rate performance on a scale from one for Poor to five for Excellent. Responses given ranged from two to four with an average of 3.38. The most common response was four, which seven interviewees selected. Two respondents gave a rating of two and four assigned a three, with one individual choosing not to comment.

Many interviewees commented that Council seems to function well from their point of view with good representation, administrative capacity, and public accessibility. Several suggested, however, that the turnover from the 2020 election has forced a noticeable learning curve and adjustment in leadership style. Others noted increased demand for Council members due to improvements in public access through social media and other technologies and difficulty in fulfilling all necessary duties in part-time hours. The most critical individuals cited dysfunctionality, inexperience, contrasting leadership, and a division of perspectives.

Many interviewees gave very different interpretations of identical themes with some identifying Council strengths that others regarded as challenges. For example, while several Councillors stated the large number of first-time winners in the 2020 municipal election has brought a fresh perspective to the table, others remarked that the high turnover caused a steep learning curve that inhibited Council’s immediate effectiveness. Other strengths discussed by interviewees included diversity of backgrounds, constituent loyalty, a proportionate balance of urban and rural perspectives, open mindedness, professional passion, communication, unity, approachability, and proactive response to development. Conversely, when asked if they saw any significant issues with the current Council, interviewees identified communication, difficulty in district travel and accessibility, balance with permanent staff, unity, leadership, reactionary tendencies, limited municipal experience, and district-centered perspectives.

Stantec also discussed the influence of the number of representatives on Council/municipal operations with each Councillor, the Mayor, and CAO. On the whole, respondents felt that Council size is not a factor. Of nine who responded that the number of representatives does not affect Council/municipal operations, several remarked that the consensus-based system values multiple opinions. However, to this end, some added that a change in Council size could affect this response. Of the remainder who held



opposite beliefs, the common rationale was that the number of representatives reinforces what they consider to be disproportionate rural representation and that louder voices dictate the direction.

Council interviewees strongly favored maintaining their current membership. Apart from one interviewee who favored decreasing Council from the current 12 Councillors plus the Mayor and three who were unsure, nine preferred to maintain the current Council size. Supporters of the status quo cited the need for balanced rural and urban representation, inefficiencies among service jurisdictions (i.e., the Province of Nova Scotia is responsible for road maintenance and snow removal in much of rural CBRM), and the feeling that there was no apparent reason for change. Remaining interview subjects mentioned manageability, unification, and the promotion of 'regional thinking' as reasons to support or consider supporting a further decrease in Council size.

The few willing to speculate about reducing Council membership suggested nine members plus the Mayor would be sufficient. Others suggested a decrease to ten plus the Mayor but did not provide a rationale for their suggestion. No respondent advocated increasing Council size, although one said they would weigh the benefits due to the ongoing high workload. The three respondents who did not have a strong opinion in either direction spoke of their willingness to consider a decrease or the status quo, while another thought that districts should be based on a uniform population of 10,000 voters, meaning a reduction by roughly two members, although they allowed for flexibility to address the geographic size of districts.

Most respondents also strongly opposed Recommendation 5 of the CBRM Viability Report, which suggests considering a reduction in Council representation to three districts. Several believed that rural communities would be left out if the recommendation were implemented and more populous urban areas would dominate elections and municipal debate. Others were noncommittal but acknowledged that the three-district framework reflects the current organization of Public Works operations.

Some felt at-large representation could encourage a more regional perspective in municipal debate, but at large representation is not implied by the authors of the Viability Report, who make no reference to it or the need to amend the *Municipal Government Act*, which does not presently allow at large election of councillors in rural or regional municipalities. Some also cited difficulty in managing the ensuing workload in a part-time capacity as a concern. The two interviewees who favoured the recommendation thought that it would give residents more options to access their representative(s) and that it could lead to better, collective decision-making.

The final line of questioning addressed boundary issues for each Councillor's district as well as for other districts. One Councillor mentioned that boundaries should reflect CBRM and Provincial service boundaries as it presents complexity and confusion for both Council and residents otherwise. Two other Councillors thought those areas in which the street centerline acted as the district boundary was not intuitive and unnecessarily confusing. For example, Councillor MacDonald of District 5 stated that from the North End to Wentworth Park, both sides of the street are within District 5. However, this changes to only one side after the hospital but then returns to both sides of the street. Also, Champlain Avenue is in District apart from one house hidden behind the other homes on the street. Some other boundary issues



were expressed but none in particularly strong terms. Few interviewees had issues with other districts other than those covering particularly large land areas, which causes issues in political canvassing, and transportation in and around the district.

## **2.3 Community Consultation**

Engagement of community members involved two initiatives in the first project phase: an open public meeting and an online survey. Both were open to all interested persons in CBRM. The objective in both cases was to determine the views of residents and stakeholders on the appropriate size of Regional Council to narrow the options to consider in the second phase of the project. Investigations also included consideration of the three-district recommendation put forward in the Viability Study and related concerns with the number of councillors representing each district and the potential for at large election of some or all councillors.

### **2.3.1 COUNCIL SIZE PUBLIC MEETING**

August 8 at Centre 200 in Sydney. Attended by approximately 25 people of whom up to half were CBRM staff or Council members. Stantec provided display panels explaining the boundary and governance review process, providing our benchmarking assessment, and reporting preliminary results from the Council Size Survey. After allowing attendees time to read the panels and talk to representatives from Stantec and CBRM's Planning Department, Stantec made a formal presentation covering similar content as the panels. A question-and-answer session followed the presentation. Speakers expressed opinions concerning CBRM's current governance and asked a variety of questions concerning information provided on the panels and in our presentation.

Most questions and comments were process-oriented, concerning the consultation process and the NSUARB approval process. Some speakers also commented on their perceptions of the performance of the Municipality and the current Council. No questions raised specific boundary issues.

### **2.3.2 ONLINE COUNCIL SIZE SURVEY**

To assess Council size preferences among CBRM residents, Stantec developed a questionnaire survey for online posting based on previous questionnaires we have developed for the Council size component of past governance and boundary reviews. Given the terms of reference provided in CBRM's request for proposal for the assignment, we expanded the questionnaire to include additional questions concerning the recommendation in the Viability Study and related to concerns with the number of councillors to represent each district and the potential to include members elected at large on council.

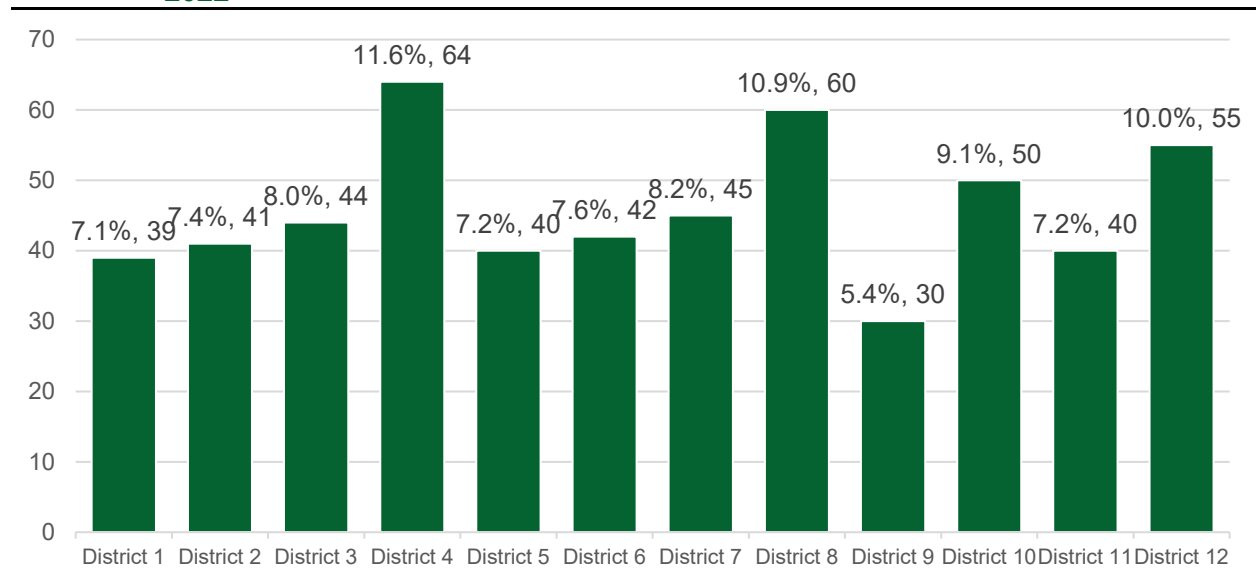
The survey was posted online on July 27, 2022, and was kept open until August 22, 2022. CBRM promoted its availability on the municipal website as did Stantec on the website we created for the project. Stantec also purchased Facebook advertising to increase awareness among community members who do not visit the municipal website. Our experience using Facebook on this project and similar projects in the past has been positive. It allows us to target advertising to municipal residents and



offer a direct link to the survey within each ad. A story on the study published in the Cape Breton Post after our public meeting and later reprinted in the Chronicle-Herald also raised public awareness.

**Appendix A** summarizes survey results. Over the period the survey was open, 558 individuals responded to its questions. Responses were well distributed across the municipality, according to answers to Question 2, with the lowest return from any district being 30 from District 9 (5.4%) and the largest being 64 from District 4 (11.9%). Most districts fell between 7% and 9% of all respondents (**Figure 2-3**).

**Figure 2-3 Survey Responses by Current Electoral District, CBRM Council Size Survey, 2022**



**Source** Stantec Consulting Limited

Men significantly outnumbered female respondents (57.8% v. 34.8%, with the remaining 7.4% preferring not to say). In terms of age, the largest group of respondents (27.1%) was between 55 and 64 years of age and 85.2% were between 35 and 74. Respondents were also generally familiar with municipal government. Of 535 who responded to Question 1 dealing with participation in past municipal elections, 78.3% said they voted in all three and only 3.0% stated they voted in none.

The third question asked respondents to rate the performance of Regional Council on a scale of 1 to 5 on which, 1 was Poor and 5 was excellent. The largest group of respondents (32.9%) chose the middle category or a rating of 3. Responses were however skewed to lower ratings with 51.0% rating Council with a 1 or 2, and just 16.1% giving scores higher than 3. The average rating was 2.4. When asked to identify the strengths of the current Council, the comments from more than half of respondents were negative, although some indicated they liked the Mayor or their current Councillor and several suggested that the largely new group was developing a new direction for the Municipality.

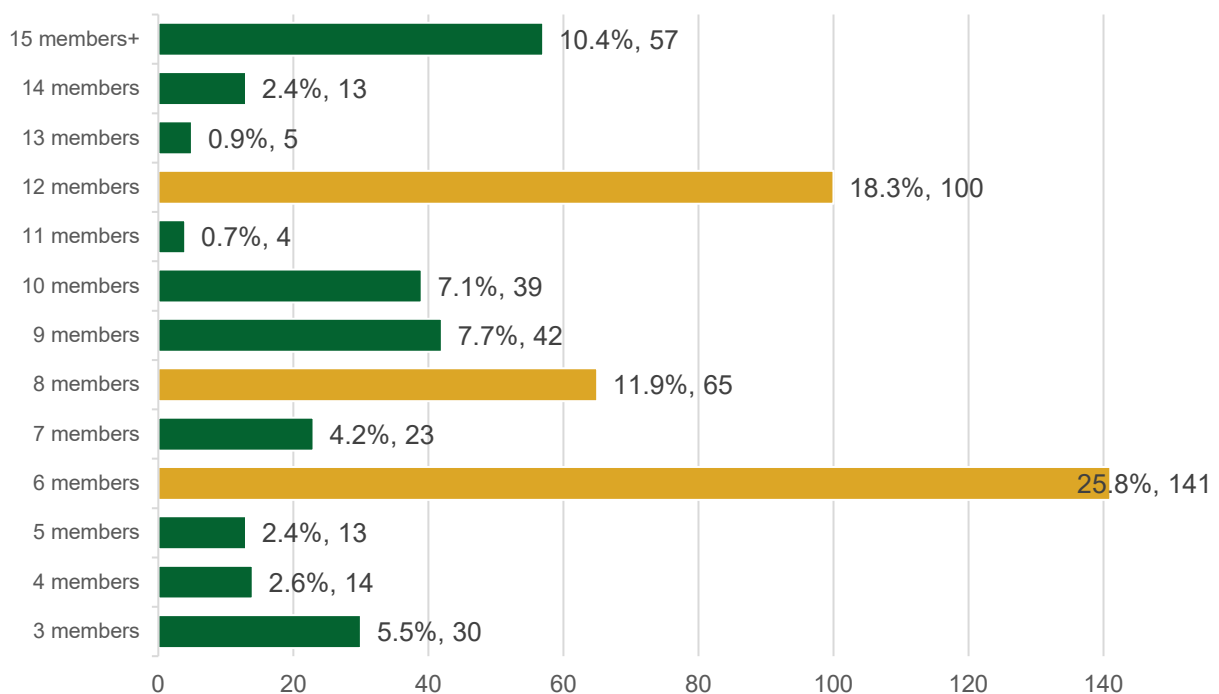


Question 5 asked respondents whether they felt the size of Council influences performances. Roughly two-thirds (67.1%) stated they believe the number of members is relevant. In responding to Question 6, a similar proportion (63.6%), however, said they did not believe the reduction of CBRM Council from 16 to 12 members brought about any change in their dealings with Council. The largest group who answered Question 7 (31.8%), furthermore, stated that changes to Council size and boundaries have had “no effect” on Council performance. A quarter (25.1%) indicated effects have been mixed, while 18.6% suggested Council had worsened and just 11.4% said it improved.

While the survey solicited comments concerning changes in Council behavior, responses were unfocused, emphasizing criticisms of Council that were largely unrelated to its membership. Comments with a clear connection to Council size tended to bring up traditional beliefs that smaller councils are more efficient, while larger councils allow councillors to better serve constituents, particularly in rural areas.

Question 9 addressed the core issue of the survey and the first phase of the governance and boundary review. It asked respondents to identify the number of members they would prefer to have on CBRM Council between three (the minimum permitted under Nova Scotia legislation) and 15 or more. The most popular single response was six, which a quarter of decided respondents (25.8%) supported. The current Council membership or 12 was the second most frequent choice (18.3%), eight was third (11.9%) and 15 or more came fourth (10.4%) (**Figure 2-4**).

**Figure 2-4 Council Size Preferences, CBRM Council Size Survey, 2022**



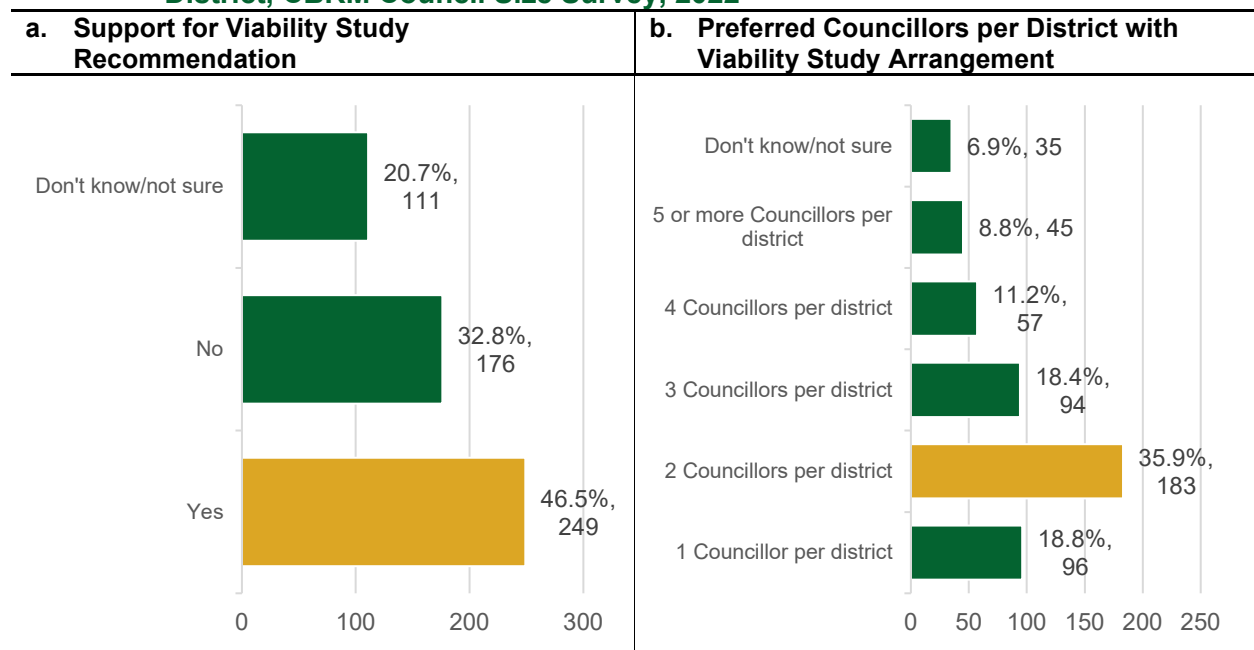
Source: Stantec Consulting Limited



Comments in response to follow-up Question 10 concerning the reasons for choosing a Council with three to eleven members suggested proponents of a smaller Council size felt a reduced Council would be more cost-effective and would take a more “executive” approach to municipal management. Some also cited the Municipality’s declining population. Respondents who would like Council numbers to be maintained, responded to Question 11, and generally appeared to be satisfied with current Council performance and concerned that a smaller number of representatives would compromise service to constituents. Respondents to Question 12 favoured enlarging Council. They were also concerned with service, but less satisfied with current performance. Many identified particular areas they thought could be better dealt with if the areas in question were more directly represented in a larger Regional Council.

Questions 13 and 14 dealt with the Viability Study recommendation to have only three districts and potential changes to the number of representatives per district. Respondents endorsed the recommendation by a margin of 46.1% to 32.4%, with 21.5% uncertain, and 4.1% skipping the question (**Figure 2-5a**). Only 18.8% would want the three districts to have only one Council member each, however, which the report implies would be its expectation given that it does not refer to the number of councillors to be elected (**Figure 2-5b**). The most preferred number of councillors was two, which 35.9% favoured. Two representatives per district was followed by three (18.2%) with declining numbers for larger numbers of councillors.

**Figure 2-5 Viability Study Recommendation and Preferred Council Representatives per District, CBRM Council Size Survey, 2022**



Source: Stantec Consulting Limited

Question 15 asked more generally interest in electing some or all CBRM Councillors at large. The question arose from discussion in connection with the Viability Study recommendation concerning mixing



at large with district-elected councillors to encourage a more regional view on Council, which the Viability Study's three-district arrangement also sought. Responses favoured at large election by a narrow margin over no at large election (40.4% to 38.3%). Additional responses, however, reinforced the preference for at large election with the remainder of respondents split among electing at least half of Council at large (8.5%), electing at least three Councillors at large (9.2%), and electing less than half of Council at large (3.7%). Some degree of at large election, therefore, was favoured by 61.7% of 520 respondents to the question.

Few respondents made concrete suggestions concerning their district boundaries in response to Question 16. Of 558, 116 did not answer the question (20.7%) and 292 responded with some version of "No" (52.3%). Of the remaining 150 (25.9%), 49 (9.2%) made specific suggestions relevant to their district while others made more general comments concerning boundaries (e.g., the districts are too big) and their views on municipal governance. Responses to Question 17 were, unsurprisingly, even less specific. Of 558 respondents, 155 (27.8%) declined to answer and 283 (50.7%) responded with no suggestions. Remaining suggestions were general comments concerning the size of districts, the need to reduce Council size, and similar matters. No respondent suggested a specific boundary adjustment.

## **2.4 Other Community Input**

While discussion of Council arrangements outside the survey and the public open house at Centre 200 was limited, Cape Breton University Political Science Professor Tom Urbaniak introduced an interesting alternative approach through a column in the *Cape Breton Post*. Professor Urbaniak suggested that CBRM should align its Council districts with the five provincial ridings within its municipal boundaries.<sup>2</sup> He recommended two Councillors should be elected from the four ridings completely within the Regional Municipality, while he suggested one could represent the Victoria The Lakes riding, which is split between CBRM and neighbouring Victoria County.

The proposal has clear merit insofar as it would align municipal representation with the Province's framework, which in theory should assist in coordinating service delivery. It might also help community members by reducing the number of political jurisdictions with which they have to familiarize themselves. A clear problem with the proposal is that the MGA, as mentioned, does not permit municipalities to elect two councillors from the same district.

An adaptation of Urbaniak's idea that would satisfy the MGA might be to divide the ridings in two reasonably equal parts to create "sub-districts" from which one Councillor would be elected. The number of electors in each Provincial riding is roughly equal within CBRM so that it should be relatively easy to create districts that would meet the  $\pm 10\%$  parity criterion employed by the NSUARB to ensure municipal districts have balanced populations as discussed below. It might, however, be difficult to respect communities of interest within ridings if municipal districts are to adhere strictly to riding boundaries.

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<sup>2</sup> Tom Urbaniak, "Align CBRM council seats with provincial ridings," *Saltwire*, August 16, 2022 (Updated: August 18, 2022).



A second issue raised at the Public Session at Centre 200 as well as in some responses to the online survey is representation for the large Indigenous population in the Municipality. First Nations members are concentrated on the Eskasoni and Membertou Reserves, which are, respectively, in current Districts 3 and 5. A model for separate representation of ethnic or racial communities has been established for some time in the District of Guysborough where the Municipality's District 2 has been developed to separately represent the African Nova Scotian communities of Lincolnville, Sunnyville, and Upper Big Tracadie. The Guysborough district is the only non-contiguous municipal electoral district of which we are aware in Nova Scotia because Sunnyville is well-separated from the other two communities.

Following Guysborough's approach, Eskasoni and Membertou might be combined in a single non-contiguous First Nations District. The number of electors in the proposed district would not be critical given that its primary purpose would be to represent the First Nations communities. Guysborough's District 2 has far fewer electors than the Municipality's other districts but has been repeatedly approved by the NSUARB in recognition of its special design.

Our understanding, however, is that Guysborough undertook considerable study before creating its special district. Taking the step for CBRM's Indigenous population will require consideration of general community support as well as support from the two Bands. It should also carefully assess the benefits and possible costs for the two Reserves, which receive most local services from the Government of Canada, and will be primarily interested in coordinating their actions with the Municipality and having a say in municipal actions that affect them.



### 3 PAST BOUNDARY REVIEWS

CBRM has reviewed its Council size and electoral boundaries five times since the process that led to the creation of CBRM as Nova Scotia’s first regional municipality. From the first assessment undertaken in 1994 to determine the appropriate number of Councillors for the new regional government to the last review completed in 2016, the number of Regional Councillors has gradually been reduced from 20 to the current 12.

#### 3.1.1 1994 BOUNDARY REVIEW

As part of the process of creating Nova Scotia’s first regional municipality, the appointed Co-ordinator applied to the NSUARB to determine the number of Councillors and the boundaries of the electoral districts for the new Cape Breton Regional Municipality. Based on the Board’s written decision, the Co-ordinator, “submitted three successive applications that gradually refined the polling district boundaries proposed by the Co-ordinator.”

Even after three iterations, the Board and the Co-ordinator disagreed on the number of districts required. Interestingly, the Board insisted 21 districts were required in opposition to the Co-ordinator’s proposal for 20. The Board felt an additional Council position was required to represent the rural area of the new municipality properly. The Co-ordinator did not want to accommodate the concern because the extra district would be more than 50% short of the average number of electors per district (see **Table 3-1**). The Board, which normally places a heavy emphasis on compliance with the voter parity criterion, over-rode the Co-ordinator’s reluctance saying that “this inequality is acceptable for purposes of electing the first Council for the new Cape Breton

**Table 3-1 Voters by Polling District, CBRM, 1994**

Polling District	Land Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Voters	Variation from Average	
			Number	%
1	441.9	2,926	-1087	<b>-27.1</b>
2	165.8	3,844	-169	-4.2
3	5.2	4,706	693	17.3
4	4.7	4,641	628	15.7
5	17.6	3,976	-37	-0.9
6	20.5	4,452	439	10.9
7	47.9	4,440	427	10.6
8	160.8	3,879	-134	-3.3
9	19.9	4,306	293	7.3
10	5.4	3,887	-126	-3.1
11	3.9	3,986	-27	-0.7
12	3.9	4,002	-11	-0.3
13	N/A	3,595	-418	-10.4
14	357.7	4,844	831	20.7
15	383.8	4,125	112	2.8
16	38.9	4,473	460	11.5
17	69.7	4,006	-7	-0.2
18	12.2	4,166	153	3.8
19	7.8	4,049	36	0.9
20	121.0	4,269	256	6.4
21	N/A	1,696	-2,317	<b>-57.7</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,888.4</b>	<b>84,268</b>		
Averages	99.4*	4,013		

\* Excluding Districts 13 and 21

Source Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board 1999



Regional Municipality,” adding “The Board is treating this as a special circumstance and one that is not engraved in stone.”

### 3.1.2 1999 BOUNDARY REVIEW

The 1999 boundary review downsized CBRM Council from 21 to 16 Councillors. A plebiscite had found 70% of eligible voters favoured reducing Council size. During the hearing, the Board heard several competing presentations supporting reductions to 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, and 15 polling districts. In response, a committee consisting of nine Councillors, the Mayor, and three citizens engaged in broader public engagement to arrive at the formal decision to recommend a Council of 16 plus the Mayor.

Of the 21 districts in CBRM approved in 1994, two were substantially outside the ±25% parity guideline that prevailed at the time (District 1 with 27.1% fewer voters than the average, District 21 with 57.7% fewer than the average). An additional six Districts were outside the ±10% range, which is now the standard, with one close to the 25% mark (District 14 at 20.7% above the average). The Board approved the large variation in District 21 during the 1994 amalgamation that the initially proposed 20 polling districts compelled too great a division of rural and urban voters. In addition, it was determined that the area of previous District 13 was too large. Therefore, the Board created an additional District that was permitted to stand despite its sizeable variation from the average.

The Committee noted difficulties to the Board in drawing boundaries that did not segment the 104 individual communities within the Regional Municipality; however, the 16 Districts it recommended all fit within the ±25% threshold (**Table 3-2**). While there was little debate over the boundaries of the 16 proposed districts (lettered A through P in the Board’s decision), debate occurred over slight adjustments to District D, F, and G due to their large geographic size. These concerns were reconciled due to the expansive unpopulated portions of the districts.

**Table 3-2 Voters by Polling District, CBRM, 1999**

Polling District	Land Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Voters	Variation from Average	
			Number	%
A (1)	123.9	4,349	-918	-17.4%
B (2)	12.8	5,764	497	9.4%
C (3)	9.6	5,339	72	1.4%
D (4)	525.8	4,041	-1,226	-23.3%
E (5)	77.3	4,983	-284	-5.4%
F (6)	356.5	5,033	-234	-4.4%
G (7)	1132.6	4,888	-379	-7.2%
H (8)	95.7	5,202	-65	-1.2%
I (9)	179.3	5,553	285	5.4%
J (10)	6.5	5,613	346	6.6%
K (11)	38.5	4,931	-336	-6.4%
L (12)	15.2	5,678	411	7.8%
M (13)	64.2	6,002	735	13.9%
N (14)	8.3	5,909	642	12.2%
O (15)	5.6	6,191	924	17.5%
P (16)	6.5	4,792	-475	-9.1%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,658.3</b>	<b>84,268</b>		
Averages	166.1	5,267		

Source Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board 1999



Shortly after being passed by CBRM Council, the consulting firm KPMG issued a report titled *Governance and Organizational Review of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality* recommending a Council between 8 and 10 elected representatives that was ultimately rejected. During the hearing, the Board commented that inadequate public consultation by KPMG led them to dismiss the consultant’s recommendation. However, the report and its recommendations remained open for witnesses to introduce.

While there were some proponents of an 8 to 10-member Regional Council, including the Mayor, its initial rejection by Council was again cited by the Board. Other parties, namely select Councillors and members of the public, expressed a preference for maintenance of the status quo since a reduction would mark a further departure from the combined 70 municipal representatives in existence prior to amalgamation.

In closing, the Board nevertheless approved the application to reduce CBRM Council size to 16. In its decision, the Board acknowledged concerns over geographic size; however, given that none of the polling district exceeded the 25% standard, the decision was made for a reduction consistent with the public opinion as expressed in the plebiscite.

### 3.1.3 2007 BOUNDARY REVIEW

In 2007, CBRM applied to maintain its Council size at 16 plus the Mayor based on the recommendation of its Boundary Review Committee, which was comprised of seven Councillors. The Board, however, also heard counterarguments supported by the Mayor and members of the public favouring reduction to eight Councillors. In their rebuttal to advocates for reduction, the Committee emphasized concerns with adequate representation and public access to Council members given the doubling of constituents per Councillor that would follow from the suggested reduction. They also expressed concern with Councillor workload and the blending of rural and urban interests within districts.

Although CBRM applied to maintain its Council membership, the lowering in 2004 of the parity standard from  $\pm 25\%$  to  $\pm 10\%$  of the average number of voters combined with shifts in population necessitated boundary adjustments. At that time, the Board also established that its previous standard of

**Table 3-3 Voters by Polling District, CBRM, 2007**

Polling District	Land Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Voters	Variation from Average	
			Number	%
1	1,047	5,631	164	3.0%
2	167	5,943	476	8.7%
3	7	5,238	-229	-4.2%
4	95	5,558	91	1.7%
5	51	5,137	-330	-6.0%
6	8	5,906	439	8.0%
7	50	6,046	579	10.6%
8	8	6,245	778	14.2%
9	5	6,104	637	11.7%
10	6	5,323	-144	-2.6%
11	70	5,333	-134	-2.4%
12	83	5,120	-347	-6.3%
13	754	4,448	-1,019	-18.6%
14	10	5,415	-52	-0.9%
15	12	5,553	86	1.6%
16	166	4,466	-1,001	-18.3%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,539</b>	<b>87,466</b>		
Averages	5,467			

Source Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board 2007



±25% would only to be permitted in exceptional cases that had to be justified by population density, communities of interest, or geographic size. Of the 16 polling districts in effect during the preceding 2004 election, five were outside the ±10% target: two by a substantial margin (Districts 13 at 18.3% and 16 at 18.1%), one by a more moderate discrepancy (District 8 at 14.4%), and two just outside the standard (Districts 7 at 10.6% and 9 at 11.7%) (**Table 3-3**).

The Board was critical of the application. It took issue with the scope and comprehensiveness of the Boundary Review Committee’s public engagement process and suggested Committee members had expressed partisan or personal views that discouraged contrary input from the public. Citing the approaching CBRM election in October 2008, the Board concluded that approving the application for 16 polling districts was necessary to avoid disrupting the electoral process and confusing voters. To address its concerns with the process, the Board directed CBRM to file another application no later than December 31, 2010, providing sufficient time for further study and consultation.

### 3.1.4 2010 BOUNDARY REVIEW

In 2010, the Municipality engaged Stantec to conduct its boundary review. Based on public input largely obtained through a telephone survey, Stantec recommended reducing the number of Councillors from 16 to 12. As summarized on the project blog site at the time, the Council Size survey conducted by the market research firm, The Marketing Clinic:

... contacted 809 residents from CBRM’s 16 Council Districts based on a quota sample that obtained at least 50 responses from each District. The key question in the survey asked how many members each respondent preferred to have on Regional Council. The most popular response (254 respondents or 33.8 per cent of 752 decided respondents) was 16 or the current membership of Council. A larger combined number (408 respondents or 54.2 per cent of decided respondents), however, chose between 8 and 12 Councillors.

Given a majority in favour of downsizing, we presented two boundary scenarios for twelve districts. The first, described as Option 1 in our report, followed the established approach of balancing polling districts among identified communities of interest within the municipality. Option 2 intentionally mixed communities of interest in districts that roughly radiated from the urban centre of the region so as to include urban, suburban, and rural components in most districts.

**Table 3-4 Voters by Polling District, CBRM, 2010**

Polling District	Land Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Voters	Variation from Average	
			Number	%
1	28	7,660	724	10.4%
2	115	7,297	361	5.2%
3	540	5,316	-1,620	-23.4%
4	1,021	5,683	-1,253	-18.1%
5	550	5,831	-1,105	-15.9%
6	35	7,447	511	7.4%
7	30	7,699	763	11.0%
8	33	8,117	1,181	17.0%
9	120	6,167	-769	-11.1%
10	6	7,544	608	8.8%
11	8	7,410	474	6.8%
12	54	7,065	129	1.9%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,539</b>	<b>83,236</b>		
Averages		6,936		

Source Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board 2011



Because maps illustrating boundary options could not realistically be presented through a telephone interview at the time, Stantec developed an online survey, which was promoted online through CBRM's website and the project blog site. As the avenues for promoting an online survey were not as well-developed at the time, The Marketing Clinic also contacted the 809 respondents to the Council Size survey by email and phone to notify them of the online boundaries questionnaire and encourage their response. The Marketing Clinic also issued two rounds of reminders.

The Boundaries Survey obtained 331 responses. The key question in the survey asked respondents to "Please indicate the District boundary option you prefer." Of the 331 respondents, 313 (95%) answered the question, with the following results:

- *Option 1* – I would like to see the current District boundaries adjusted for population changes. **80 respondents (25.6%)**
- *Option 2* – I would like to see District boundaries changed so that most districts will include a mix of urban, suburban, and rural areas. **124 respondents (39.6%)**
- *Existing* – I would prefer District boundaries to remain exactly as they are. **88 respondents (28.1%)**
- I don't like any of the options above. **21 respondents (6.7%)**.

As described in Stantec's 2010 report:

... responses require some interpretation. The option selected by the largest number of respondents was Option 2, which represents the most significant change from the existing boundaries used in the 2008 municipal election. Retention of the existing boundaries, however, was the second most popular choice, trailing by 36 respondents. Option 1, furthermore, is essentially a fine tuning of the Status Quo and it was not far behind with just eight fewer respondents endorsing it than maintaining the existing boundaries. The sum of respondents favouring the existing boundaries and Option 1 is 168 or 54 per cent of the 313 decided respondents to the question.<sup>3</sup>

On this basis, CBRM sought approval from the NSUARB for a Council of 12 members with boundaries developed for Option 1, and the Board approved the application. Although four of the 12 proposed districts fell outside the  $\pm 10\%$  parity criterion, the Board concluded "the present matter represents one of the exceptional cases which justifies a departure, in some districts, from the  $\pm 10\%$  variance which normally applies" (**Table 3-4**).

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<sup>3</sup> Stantec Consulting Limited, *Boundary Review Report -- CBRM Council Size and District Boundary Review*, October 2010, p. 3.4.



**3.1.5 2014 BOUNDARY REVIEW**

As CBRM had reviewed its boundaries at the Board’s direction between 2008 and 2014, the Municipality was permitted to submit a “simplified application” in 2014.

The Municipality’s application acknowledged that 2013 enumeration data showed that the number of electors in four of the twelve districts were more than ±10% from the average of all districts, but only one of these (District 3) was beyond the absolute threshold of ±25%. CBRM staff, who conducted the assessment, transferred the communities of Point Edward and Northwest Arm from District 4 to raise the number of electors in District 3 from 31.2% below the average to 25.9% less. While the adjusted district was still outside ±25% (**Table 3-5**), the Board accepted the Municipality’s proposal and approved the application. In its decision, the Board noted that no member of the public had expressed any objections to the Municipality’s boundary proposal. The approved districts are currently in place and were employed for municipal elections in 2016 and 2020.

**Table 3-5 Voters by Polling District, CBRM, 2014**

Polling District	Land Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Voters	Variation from Average	
			Number	%
1	153	7,084	453	6.8%
2	45	7,089	458	6.9%
3	44	4,915	-1,716	<b>-25.9%</b>
4	132	6,587	-44	-0.7%
5	824	7,248	617	9.3%
6	40	7,426	795	<b>12.0%</b>
7	37	5,457	-1,174	<b>-17.7%</b>
8	723	5,479	-1,152	<b>-17.4%</b>
9	47	7,224	593	8.9%
10	10	7,494	863	<b>13.0%</b>
11	6	7,713	1,082	<b>16.3%</b>
12	1,196	5,855	-776	<b>-11.7%</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3,257</b>	<b>79,571</b>		
Averages	501	6,631		

Source Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board 2011



## 4 BOUNDARY DELINEATION

Section 10 of the Nova Scotia *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) establishes the key governance parameters for municipalities in the province. The section requires that a municipal council have at least three members and that only “[o]ne councillor shall be elected for each polling district in a county or district municipality and in a regional municipality [like Cape Breton Regional Municipality].” In other words, Councillors in CBRM must be elected from defined geographic districts. Two councillors cannot be elected to represent a single district, nor can councillors be elected at large, both of which are permitted for Nova Scotia towns under the same section of the Act.

### 4.1 Boundary Criteria

Section 368 (4) of the MGA sets criteria that the NSUARB must consider in establishing the boundaries of polling or electoral districts within municipalities:

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.

Following is a summary of Stantec’s interpretation of each criterion and the relative importance we have observed that the Board places on each. Our interpretation is based on our review of past Board decisions and our direct experiences before the Board.

#### 4.1.1 NUMBER OF ELECTORS

The number of electors or eligible voters in individual districts is intertwined with following criteria, particularly voter parity. Certainly, the number of constituents needs to be sufficient to justify the creation of a district and should not be so large that it would be beyond the capacity of a councillor to deal with constituent concerns. The latter issue is however highly debatable given the wide disparity in the number of constituents served by councillors in Nova Scotia. CBRM Councillors serve an average of 7,825, which we have noted ranks second among rural and regional municipalities in Nova Scotia behind Halifax Regional Municipality, whose Councillors serve 28,746. Only CBRM, and Kings and Colchester Counties have more total population than a single typical HRM Councillor represents. The average CBRM Councillor serves more constituents than the total number of residents in seven Nova Scotia rural municipalities.

#### 4.1.2 RELATIVE PARITY OF VOTING POWER

Past NSUARB decisions have typically emphasized “voter parity,” which is easily quantified and assessed. The standard is applied to reflect the basic democratic principle that representation should be in proportion to population, commonly referred to as “rep by pop.” The Board currently requires the number of voters in each polling district to be within  $\pm 10\%$  of the average for all polling districts.



Since the early 1990s, the Board has gradually tightened this standard to the present level. At one time, it was only necessary for districts to be within  $\pm 33\%$  of the average and, until the turn of the current century,  $\pm 25\%$  was considered sufficient. The  $\pm 10\%$  criterion has been applied in boundary reviews since 2006. Nearly all boundary applications to the NSUARB that we have reviewed contain a table documenting the number of electors in each district within the municipality in question with the variance of each from the average. The Board is usually sympathetic to small variations above or below its criterion but requires a written justification to consider any significant discrepancy, with a larger proposed variance being viewed as a greater burden on the municipal unit to justify.

#### **4.1.3 POPULATION DENSITY**

The NSUARB is also mindful of population density and geographic area of each polling district. In sparsely populated areas, the Board recognizes that it may be difficult to achieve relative voter parity (i.e., to keep the number of electors in each district within  $\pm 10\%$  of the average of districts) without creating an extensive area in which disparate interests may be combined and which may be unreasonable for a councillor to serve. In many rural municipalities, for example, it is necessary to have at least one larger district to encompass lightly populated areas and the Board has tended to accept lower populations in such districts recognizing that meeting the parity standard would require coverage of an excessive land area. This is a notable feature in CBRM given its relatively dense urban core and more sparsely populated rural areas.

#### **4.1.4 COMMUNITY OF INTEREST**

The second most cited reason, in our experience, for having districts that vary beyond the Board standard is community of interest, as it is usually desirable to represent communities of interest within a single district. Communities of interest may be racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, economic, or geographic groups. Districts do not, however, normally represent a specific community of interest. They usually contain several. It is nevertheless considered desirable to keep identifiable, geographically defined interests together in a single district and not divide them among two or more districts where their influence may be diluted or distorted. Larger communities that have significantly more electors than the average district may have to be divided to maintain voter parity. Smaller communities may also have to be divided to achieve parity or address other criteria, but it is a necessary trade-off rather than a desirable outcome.

#### **4.1.5 GEOGRAPHIC SIZE**

The main issue in considering the geographic size or land area of a district is ensuring a cohesive territory and a manageable area for the serving Councillor. As noted, in relation to population density, above, the NSUARB has been willing to approve electoral districts that fall short of the  $-10\%$  voter parity standard where sparse populations require the excessive area to capture the necessary number of electors. In CBRM outlying rural Districts 3, 7, and 8 are notably larger than the remaining districts clustered around and near to Sydney Harbour.



#### 4.1.6 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

We consider several factors not explicitly identified in the MGA in drawing boundaries. To begin, it is desirable to have readily identifiable boundaries and avoid significant geographic barriers within districts. Distinct boundaries can be difficult to find. Roads, particularly limited access highways, often make excellent boundaries because they tend to be well known and very visible. On the other hand, lower order roads, particularly in undeveloped areas are useful, as are rivers, lakes, and inlets, which often separate communities, especially where there are no crossing links (e.g., bridges across water features or interchanges on highways). Where dividing physical features are absent, it is usually effective to draw boundaries in areas where population is sparse, and separation of communities can be avoided. In such situations, boundaries defined by topographic features such as ridges or, in the absence of such landmarks, by straight lines, serve well.

Electoral districts are also generally contiguous; that is, their territory is continuous and uninterrupted. District 2 in the Municipal District of Guysborough is the only exception we are familiar with in Nova Scotia. Its configuration is justified by the objective of ensuring representation for the separated African-Nova Scotian communities in Lincolnville, Sunnyville, and Upper Big Tracadie. We are not aware of another similar example among rural or regional municipalities in the province and consider contiguity to be an absolute objective for typical electoral districts.

Finally, although it is also not directly expressed in the legislation, it is beneficial for electoral districts to be internally connected. Roadways and equivalent transportation connections joining communities within a district (i.e., without departing to another district) promote communities of interest and facilitate the work of councillors who must travel among constituents in their district. They are also likely to be more convenient for electors when they travel to the polling station within their district on election days.

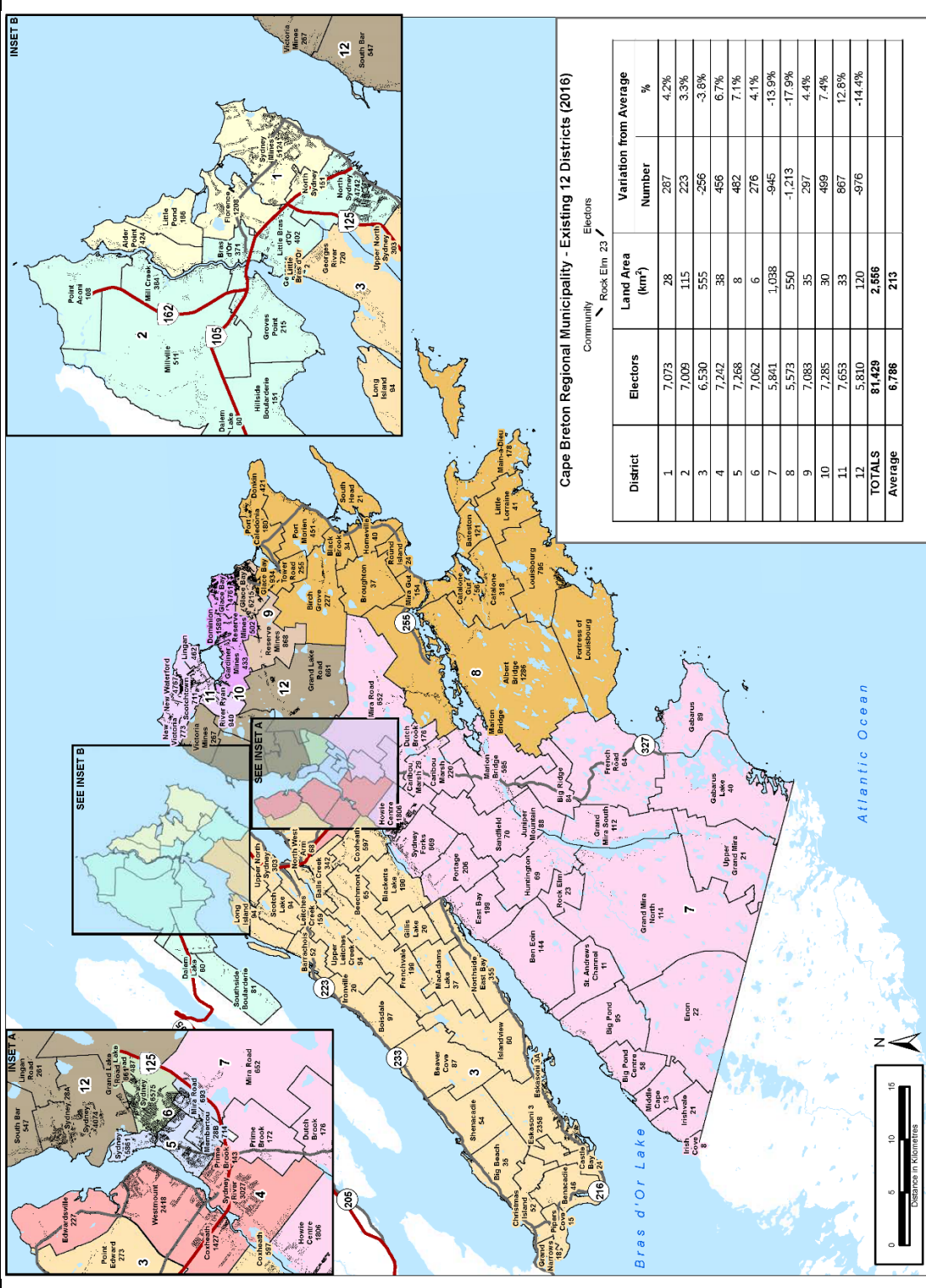
## 4.2 Proposed Boundary Scenarios

To close Phase 1, Stantec's Council Size Report presented Council with scenarios for 3, 6, 8, 12 and 15 districts. Among options presented in Question 9 of the Council Size Survey, 6, 8, 12, and 15 districts were the four most often selected (see **Figure 2-4**, above). Although the three-district scenario only ranked seventh, it was included because it reflects the configuration suggested by the Viability Study. While we offered five scenarios for Council's review, we recommended further consideration in Phase 2 should be narrowed to the six and twelve district choices. We also suggested that eight, which was the third choice, could also be considered. Council decided to put forward scenarios for 6, 8, and 12 districts.

Stantec used ArcGIS Pro's Build Balanced Zones tool to create all the potential boundary configurations. The districts are comprised of communities defined by the Province for the Nova Scotia Civic Address File (NSCAF) (**Figure 4-1**). We divided the communities only in exceptional cases. The districts have been designed to satisfy NSUARB criteria, particularly the requirement that the number of electors in each district should be within  $\pm 10\%$  of the average of all districts.



Figure 4-1 Current Electoral Districts and NSCAF Communities, CBRM, 2022



Source: Stantec Consulting Limited



**Figure 2-1**, above, illustrates the current district arrangement. The average area of each district is 213 square kilometres, and the average number of electors is 6,785 per district. Four districts (8, 9, 11, and 12) are outside the  $\pm 10\%$  parity criterion. District 8 has the largest variance from the average at 17.9%.

The proposed configurations are illustrated and described following. The boundaries were presented for review by CBRM Council, but no suggestions were made to change the configurations of any district. We have provided geographic names for each proposed district. The names are based on area descriptors or one or more prominent communities in the proposed district. They are provided to help readers locate each district and will not have any official importance following this study.

The  $\pm 10\%$  parity standard was a leading consideration in creating the proposed arrangements. The standard is met by all districts for scenarios involving six and eight districts. Two districts in the 12-district scenario exceed the Board's criterion, but the discrepancies are modest and, we believe, would be accepted by the Board.

#### **4.2.1 TWELVE-DISTRICT SCENARIO**

Twelve districts represent the status quo. It was the second most popular choice (17.7%) among respondents to Question 9. The average district size will not change; however, the number of constituents will increase because of changes in the numbers recorded by the Municipality's latest enumeration. The increase in numbers despite overall population loss is likely attributable to population aging and, possibly, increased registration by electors.

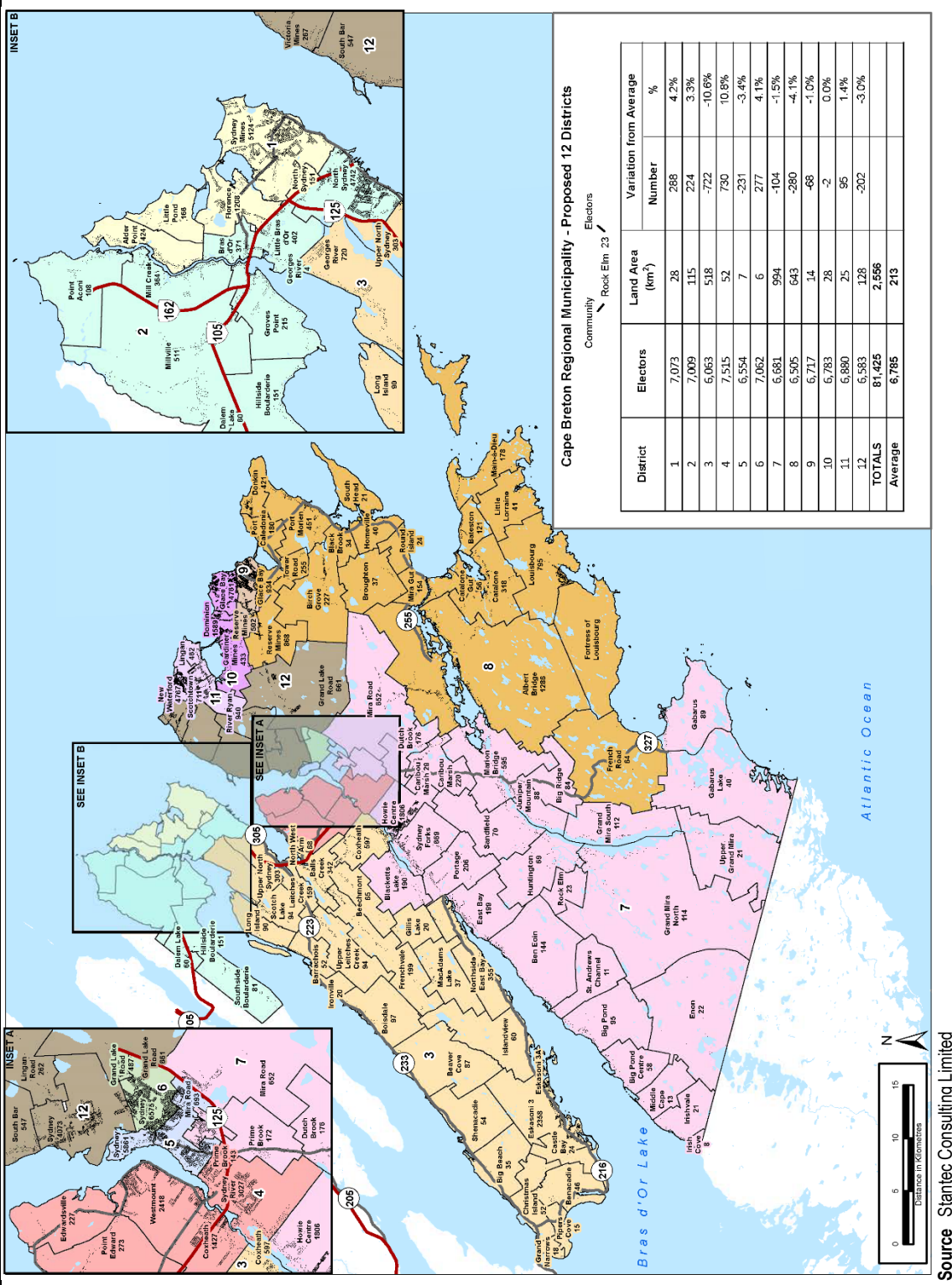
Proposed District 7 covering the south-central rural area of the municipality is the largest by area. It is 44 square kilometres smaller (4.2%) than current District 7 (**Figure 4-2**). Ten of the twelve proposed districts are comfortably with the  $\pm 10\%$  parity criterion. None of the ten, in fact is more than 5% from the average. Districts 3 and 4 are, however, 10.7% below and above the average, respectively. Both deviations are only marginally outside the parity criterion and would likely be acceptable to the NSUARB if a boundary adjustment cannot be made to bring them in line.

Changes to current district boundaries were modest. We were able to maintain the numbering of existing districts in the proposed scenario. Alterations included:

- Transfer of Point Edward (273 electors) from current District 3 to proposed District 4
- Transfer French Road (64) from current District 7 to proposed District 8
- Transfer of a small portion of Reserve Mines from current District 10 to proposed District 9
- To balance the addition to proposed District 9, the southern portion of Reserve Mines was transferred from current District 9 to proposed District 8
- Transfer of New Victoria (773) from current District 11 to proposed District 12.



Figure 4-2 Twelve-district Scenario, CBRM, 2022



Source Stantec Consulting Limited

We could not resolve the division of Glace Bay between Districts 9 and 10. Reserve Mines has been divided in a different manner to preserve the balance between the districts, but the separation of the community is not ideal in either case. Glace Bay alone falls 1,662 electors short of the 13,572 electors (12.2%) needed to form two average-sized districts. The variances would likely be tolerated by the Board with an explanation of the rationale, which would be based on community of interest; however, the challenge of redistributing 1,589 electors in Dominion and 1,370 in Reserve Mines to adjacent districts is significant.

The proposed districts in that area are, nevertheless, similar to the current district arrangement, which appears to have been serviceable since its adoption in 2012. Larger numbers of districts arguably provide balancing advantages by supporting a more refined community framework in which some intermediate-sized communities are more distinctly represented. It may also be possible to improve the boundaries through more detailed assessment.

#### **4.2.2 EIGHT-DISTRICT SCENARIO**

Eight Councillors was the third most popular Council size among respondents to Question 9 (12.0%). Like the six-district arrangement, it will increase the size of districts and the number of constituents to be served, although to a lesser degree. The area of districts will be 319 or 50% larger than the current 213 square kilometres and the average number of constituents per district will also increase by 50% from 6,785 to 10,178.

The largest proposed district is District 6, which is, again, the southeastern part of the municipality. The proposed district has an area of 1,536 square kilometres, which is 48.0% larger than current District 7 (**Figure 4-3**). Parity is improved with eight districts as delineated relative to the current and proposed six-district frameworks. The largest variation is just 6.8% for District 4, which covers the North End and Whitney Pier in Sydney. The remaining districts are all within  $\pm 4\%$  of the average and four are within less than  $\pm 2\%$ . On the other hand, increasing the number of districts from six requires the division of Sydney between Districts 3 and 4.

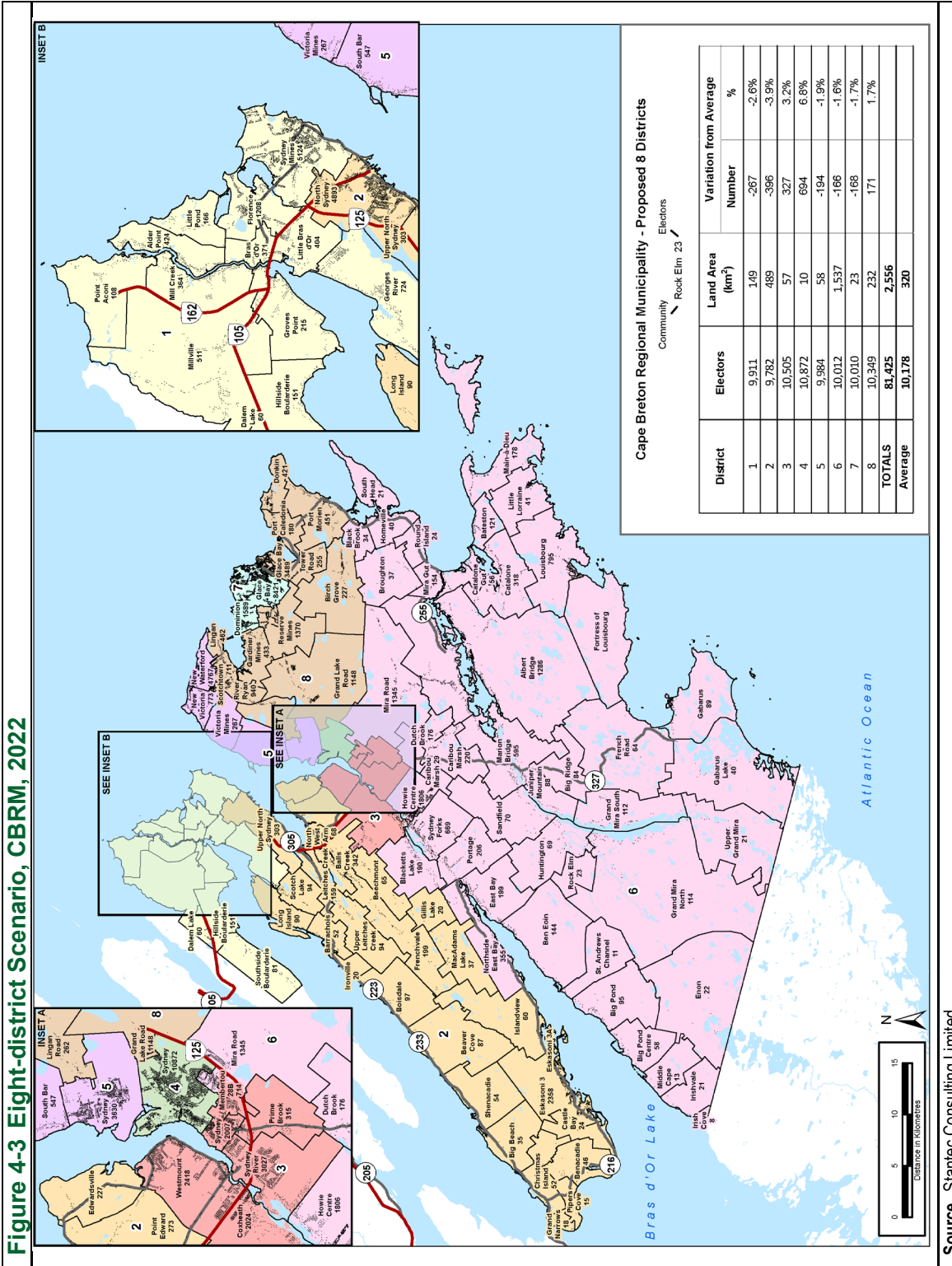
#### **4.2.3 SIX-DISTRICT SCENARIO**

Six Councillors received the most support of the potential Regional Council sizes offered to respondents to Question 9 (25.4%). The number is half the current number of Councillors, which obviously doubles the area of the required districts (to 426 square kilometres) and the average number of constituents to be served by each Councillor (from 6,785 to 13,571).

District 3, which encompasses the eastern portion of the municipality from Prime Brook to CBRM's southern border, is, by far, the largest district. It covers 63.5% of the Region's area and is 56.3% larger than Region's current largest district (District 7), which also covers the southeastern part of the Region (**Figure 4-2**, above). All districts meet the NSUARB's parity criterion. The largest variation is for District 3 and has 9.1% more electors than the average. It is closely followed by District 1 centred on New Waterford, which is 8.6% short.



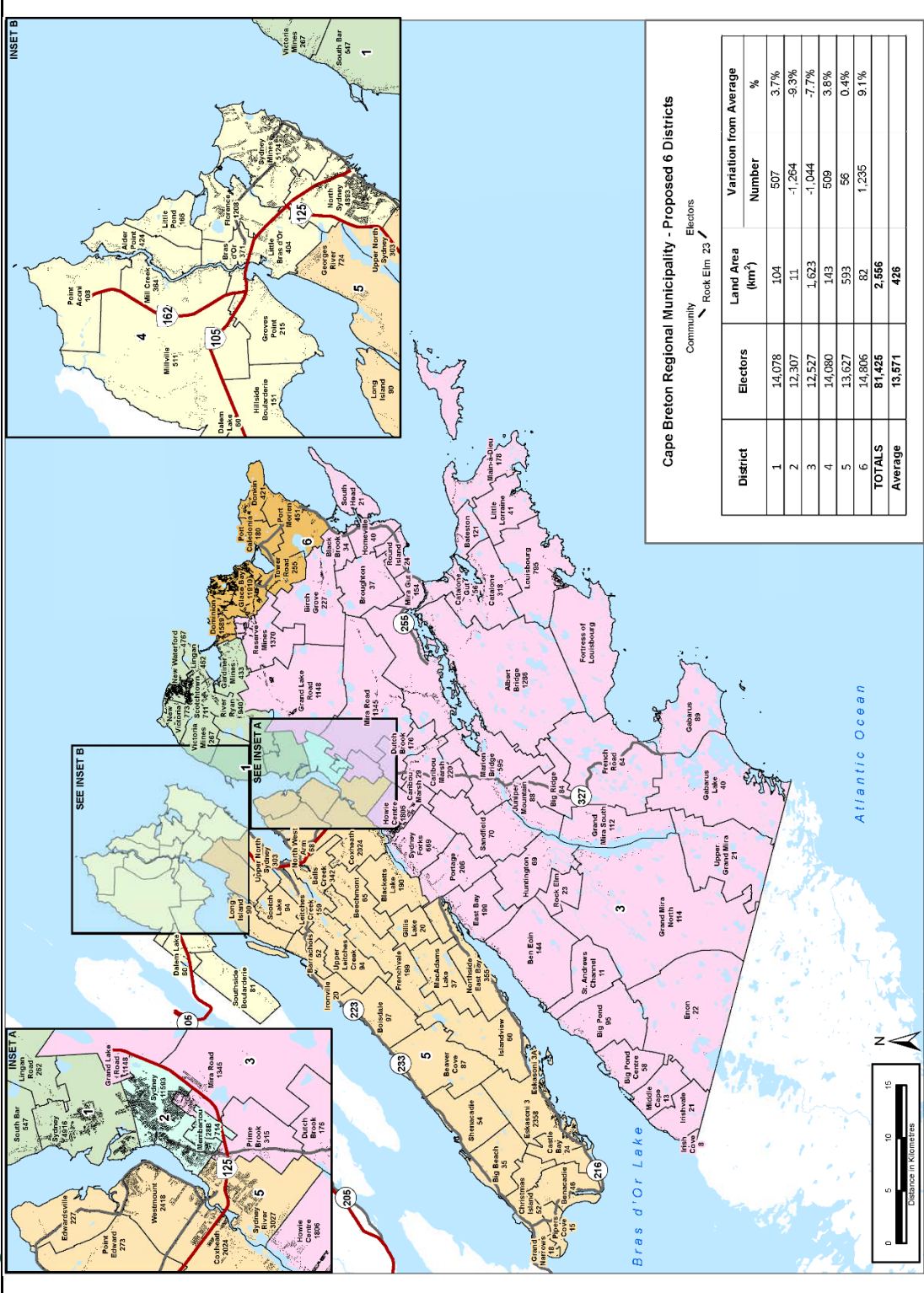
Figure 4-3 Eight-district Scenario, CBRM, 2022



Source: Stantec Consulting Limited



Figure 4-4 Six-district Scenario, CBRM, 2022



Source: Stantec Consulting Limited

## 4.3 Boundaries Consultation

As noted, the key consultation process in the second phase of the Boundaries and Governance Review, included a second online survey asking respondents for their preference between the scenarios for 6, 8, and 12, and to identify any concerns with the boundaries of the proposed districts. We also held six public meetings distributed across the region as described in **Section 1.3** above, at which we presented information on the review process and solicited feedback from attendees.

### 4.3.1 BOUNDARIES PUBLIC MEETINGS

Consultation meetings were held from Monday through Wednesday during the last week of October. On each day, Stantec conducted meetings in the afternoon and evening. Although weather presented no serious challenges over the three days, the six meetings were poorly attended. The first, in Louisbourg on the afternoon of October 24, attracted one community member, the second in Glace Bay that evening also drew just one person. No one attended the meeting the following afternoon in Boisdale and only one showed up for the evening session in Sydney Mines. On the last day, three community members came out to the afternoon meeting in Big Pond and five attended the evening event in Centre 200, as well as a member of the media.

In total, the six sessions attracted only eleven residents. Stantec's Project Manager and the Planning Department staff who assisted him at each session spoke individually with attendees at each event. Stantec also went through a presentation on the Governance and Boundary Review with the participants and responded to their questions and comments. None of the participants took a particularly strong stand in favour of either maintaining or reducing Council and none suggested any specific change to the boundaries presented in any of the three scenarios. The representation of larger rural districts was raised as a concern at most of the sessions, but other discussion mostly addressed broader municipal issues such as taxation and services.

### 4.3.2 ONLINE BOUNDARIES SURVEY

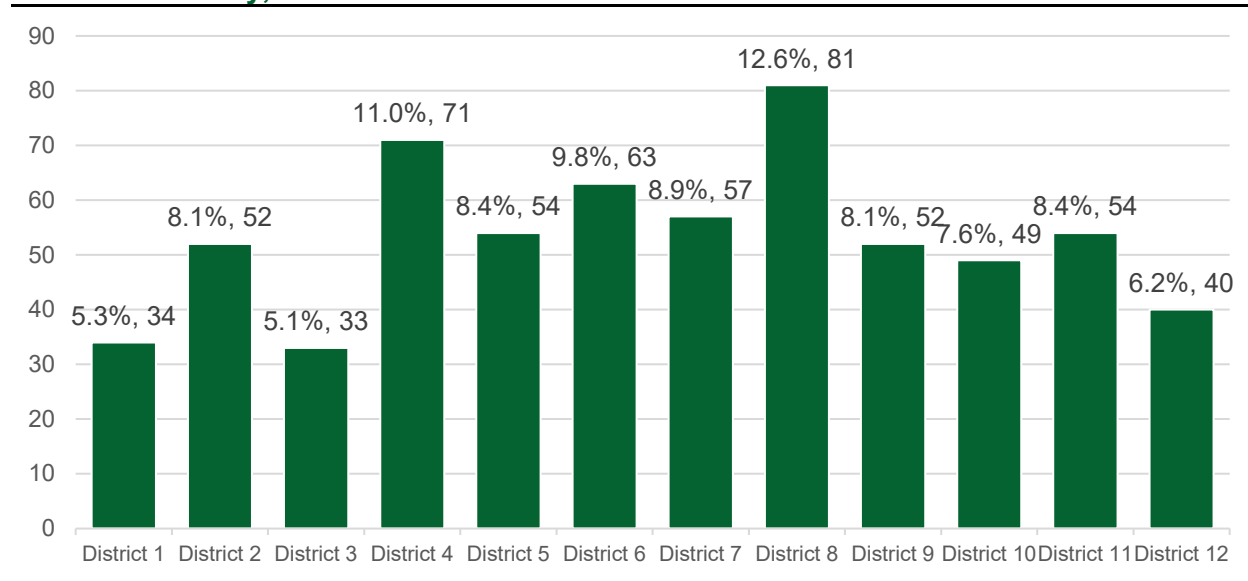
The Boundaries Survey was posted online on October 21, 2022. It was kept open to November 31. As with the Council Size Survey, it was publicized on the CBRM website through its connection to Stantec's project website where the link to the survey was prominently displayed at the top of the home page. The survey was also supported by Facebook advertisements that appeared in residents' Facebook feeds and were directly link to the online questionnaire. CBRM arranged additional advertising on radio and in local libraries, where print copies were made available for the duration of the survey for those without Internet access. Unfortunately, the libraries did not return any completed copies of the survey.

Ultimately, the survey attracted 644 responses. Respondents were predominantly between 35 and 74 years of age (81.9%). Just 13.5% were under 35 years and only 3.8% were over 75. They were 53.2% male and 41.4% female, with 5.4% of respondents not indicating their gender. They were well distributed across the municipality, although District 1, covering much of the Northside and areas immediately to the



west, and District 3, which covers the peninsula extending south from Sydney in the Bras d'Or Lakes and includes the Eskasoni Reserve, lagged considerably behind the other eleven districts. While District 1 accounted for just 5.3% of respondents to the question asking respondents to identify their district of residence and District 3 comprised only 5.1%, eight other districts ranged between 6.2% and 9.7%. Districts 4 (Sydney River and related suburban areas to the south and west of Sydney) and 8 (the northeast area of the region including Louisbourg) generated the most responses with 10.9% and 12.6%, respectively. (Figure 4-5)

**Figure 4-5 Survey Responses by Current Electoral District, CBRM Boundary Options Survey, 2022**



Source: Stantec Consulting Limited

Questions 3, 4, and 5, respectively, asked respondents to review the 6, 8, and 12-district scenarios and identify any concerns they might have with the proposed boundaries. Roughly one-third of respondents declined to answer the question in each case and similar shares expressed no concerns, although satisfaction was clearly higher for the 6-district arrangement than for the scenarios providing for larger councils. Much smaller proportions said they had concerns without specifying the nature of their concerns (i.e., responded “Yes” to the question without further elaboration). In each case, about 60% who answered the question detailed their concerns (Table 4-1).



**Table 4-1 Responses to Questions 3, 4, and 5, CBRM Boundary Options Survey, 2022**

Question	Responses (% of 644)	Breakdown of Responses		
		No Concerns	Unspecified Concerns	Concerns with Details
Question 3 (6 Districts)	446 (69.3%)	180 (40.4%)	27 (6.1%)	239 (53.6%)
Question 4 (8 Districts)	428 (66.5%)	127 (29.7%)	47 (11.0%)	254 (59.3%)
Question 5 (12 Districts)	409 (63.5%)	105 (25.7%)	42 (6.9%)	262 (64.1%)

Source Stantec Consulting Limited

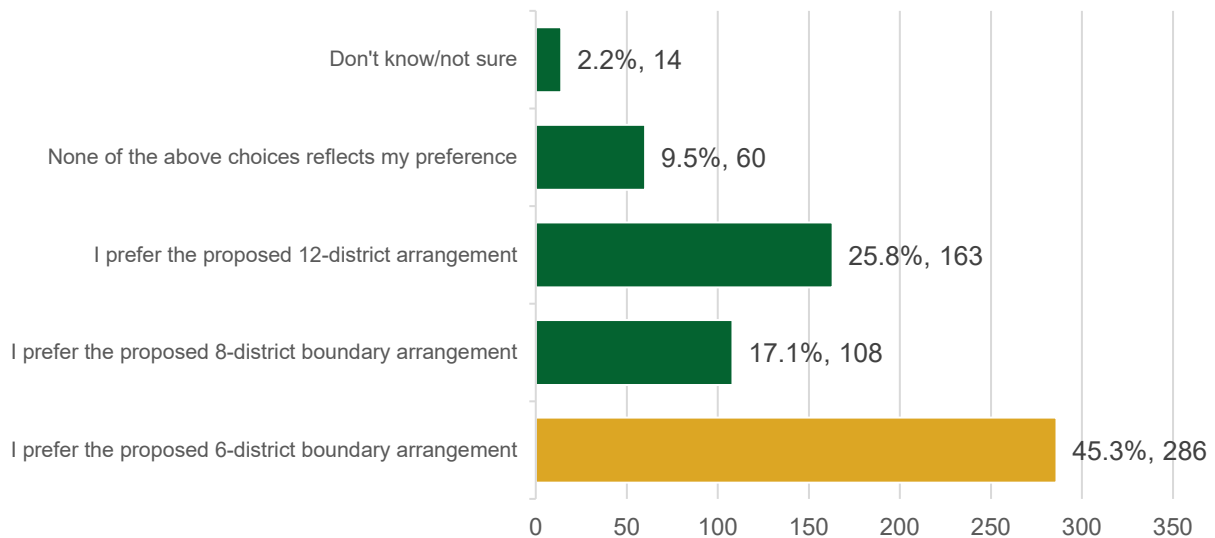
Although there were more than 200 detailed responses in each case, many returned to Council size or the number of districts, or to general concerns with municipal performance rather than addressing specific boundary concerns. Many objections to the 6-district proposal cited the size of some or all districts and/or the combinations of communities within the larger districts. Many comments concerning the 8-district option suggested that it did not go far enough to reduce council size and many comments dealing with 12 districts stated there were too many districts or that the districts were too small.

Many detailed comments in response to Question 3 dealing with six districts specified particular districts (i.e., proposed Districts 3, 4, and 5) that respondents considered too large. Some respondents also advocated combining Dominion, Reserve Mines, and Gardiner Mines in the same district; combining Howie Centre with Sydney River and similar suburban communities in proposed District 4; and incorporating all of Sydney, including Membertou, in a single district. The 8-district scenario, which Question 4 addressed, resolved issues with Dominion, Reserve Mines, and Gardiner Mines (Dominion is combined with Glace Bay in proposed District 7, while Reserve Mines and Gardiner Mines are together with communities bordering District 7 in proposed District 8); however, the arrangement was criticized for splitting New Waterford and Scotchtown in District 5 from Lingan in District 8. As with six districts, respondents criticized the division of Sydney and the combination of areas in the North End of Sydney with suburban communities stretching farther north to New Waterford. With 12 districts, the issues with Glace Bay and surrounding communities returned, which drew several comments. One respondent suggested Ball's Creek and Edwardsville should be included in proposed District 3 with Westmount, and Upper North Sydney and Georges River should be included in proposed District 2 with North Sydney.

Questions 6 was the central question of the Boundary Options Survey, like Question 9 in the Council Size survey. Like the question concerning Council size, responses strongly favoured six districts over the other options offered, gaining support from 45.3% of respondents. The 12-district arrangement followed with 25.8%, eight districts were supported by 17.1%, and 9.5% said they did not like any of the options presented (**Figure 4-6**).



**Figure 4-6 District Boundary Preferences, CBRM Boundary Options Survey, 2022**



Source Stantec Consulting Limited

The preference for the six-district arrangement was common across CBRM. The arrangement was the most favoured response in eleven of the Municipality's twelve current electoral districts. In Districts 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7, the option was preferred by a simple majority of respondents (i.e., by more than 50%) and in the remaining five it was the preference of at least 40%. The only districts in which respondents preferred another option were District 8, which covers the Northeast area of the municipality and includes Louisbourg, and District 11, centred on New Waterford (**Table 4-2**).

Most respondents (507 of 644 or 78.7%) gave reasons for their choice in answers to following Question 7. While some respondents stated that they considered boundary arrangements better in one scenario relative to the others, most returned to Council size to justify their choice. Those who favour twelve districts are apparently happy with the status quo. Many also suggested more Council members will accommodate diversity and differing viewpoints. Many noted, in this context, that it will better protect rural interests and better represent some smaller communities such as Dominion relative to Glace Bay. Some also observed that the areas of districts would be more manageable for Councillors and Councillors would be more responsive to citizen concerns.



**Table 4-2 Support for Boundary Options by Electoral District, CBRM Boundary Options Survey, 2022**

District	Preferred Option								TOTALS
	6-district		8-district		12-district		None		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
1 Sydney Mines	20	58.8%	3	8.8%	8	23.5%	2	5.9%	34
2 North Sydney-Boularderie No.	22	43.1%	6	11.8%	13	25.5%	9	17.6%	51
3 Bras d'Or	18	56.3%	4	12.5%	7	21.9%	3	9.4%	32
4 Westmount	39	57.4%	12	17.6%	12	17.6%	3	4.4%	68
5 Sydney Centre	25	47.2%	15	28.3%	10	18.9%	1	1.9%	53
6 Whitney Pier	32	50.8%	16	25.4%	8	12.7%	6	9.5%	63
7 CBRM South Central	28	50.0%	9	16.1%	12	21.4%	7	12.5%	56
8 CBRM East	20	25.3%	14	17.7%	35	44.3%	7	8.9%	79
9 Glace Bay So-Reserve Mines	22	42.3%	10	19.2%	14	26.9%	4	7.7%	52
10 Glace Bay No.-Dominion	21	45.7%	9	19.6%	13	28.3%	3	6.5%	46
11 New Waterford	19	35.8%	4	7.5%	23	43.4%	5	9.4%	53
12 New Victoria- Grand Lk. Rd.	17	42.5%	6	15.0%	7	17.5%	10	25.0%	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>45.2%</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>17.1%</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>25.9%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>630</b>

Source Stantec Consulting Limited

Many who supported six districts cited cost savings. Others indicated a preference for “less government,” and/or their belief that Council would be more efficient. Additional expectations included less fighting for budget shares among Councillors and a more regional approach. Some also stated that six is more appropriate to the population of CBRM and a smaller Council would encourage Councillors to devote themselves to the role full-time. Respondents preferring eight districts tend to favour downsizing but feel that six may be too much of a reduction. It also appealed to some who felt that the rough average of 10,000 constituents per Councillor was a good rule of thumb to apply.

Finally, comments from respondents who rejected the 6, 8, and 12-district boundary options offered suggest some were dissatisfied with specific boundaries. Others, though, indicated they were disenchanted with municipal government and/or the boundary review process. A small number indicated their Council size preference falls outside the range of options offered.



## 5 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our experience through multiple reviews of municipal governance and electoral boundaries, the most important consideration for decision-making is the style of governance desired by the community. For this assignment, we have investigated community views through interviews with Council representatives, public consultation meetings, and two questionnaire surveys. While we would like to see more public interest in consultation processes, we appreciate the participation more than 1,000 CBRM residents in the governance and boundary review process. We have relied on their expressed opinions to develop our recommendation below.

### 5.1 Consultation

Two online surveys conducted for this study drew substantial responses, although we recognize the number of respondents in both cases is a modest percentage of CBRM's population (less than 1% of electors). The numbers, however, are far more than we would expect to attract to an extensive and successful round of public meetings and certainly more than attended our program of six public sessions to discuss boundary options for this project.

Each of the two surveys posed a key question: how many Council members the respondent would prefer to have in the Phase 1 Council Size Survey and which of three boundary scenarios do you prefer for the Phase 2 Boundary Options Survey. In both cases, responses favoured a reduced Council of six plus the Mayor. For the Council Size Survey in which the survey asked respondents to select their preference from three to 15 or more, 25.8% of 558 respondents chose six in comparison to 18.3% for twelve, and 11.9% for 8. When the Boundary Options Survey narrowed choices to six, eight, or twelve districts, the proportion favouring six increased to 45.3% as opposed to 25.8% for twelve and 17.1% for eight.

The reduction in Council size will be substantial with half as many Councillors to serve constituents. It fits, however, with the downward trend in Council membership since the creation of CBRM. The current 13-member Council is just over half the size of the Municipality's original 1994 Council and there has been no apparent change in the quality of governance. It is notable the Viability Study suggested consideration of an even more radical reduction of Council representation to three districts, although the consultant report did not address the representation of those districts on Council.

Through the survey, residents have expressed their desire for a less costly and more efficient Council structure. Comments in response to open-ended questions in both surveys suggest a consensus among those who favour six districts and a Council of seven members. They expect cost reductions, although we would caution that they will be modest in the context of the Municipality's overall budget, more efficient decision-making, and a more regional approach to governance.

The change will not satisfy all constituents. Those who would prefer to stay at twelve members want a more direct relationship with their Council members. Rural residents, in particular, seem fearful that their concerns will not be heard in a smaller Council.



Respondents found flaws in all three boundary arrangements offered. The six-district arrangement requires the combination of varied communities. For some this is a positive that will force Councillors to reconcile urban, suburban, and rural priorities or encourage the collaboration of different communities within their districts. For others, notably rural residents again, there is concern that they will be ignored, and Councillors will focus on larger communities with more votes. With a larger Council it is possible to distinguish more communities; however, it is also necessary to divide some and the challenge of combining compatible communities is, perhaps, increased in a framework that suggests communities will have distinct representation.

## **5.2 Boundary Adjustments**

Although it is a large change, the public has indicated its desire to reduce the number of Councillors from twelve to six. We have, therefore, focused on reviewing boundaries for the six-district scenario. Key concerns expressed with the arrangement presented in the Boundary Options Survey were the desire to incorporate Membertou and suburban areas south of Sydney with Sydney, separating North Sydney from Eskasoni and communities on the Bras d'Or Lakes in District 3; and a desire among some residents to see Homeville, Round Island, Tower Road, Birch Grove, and related coastal communities south of Donkin in District 6 with Donkin.

The six-district scenario presented in **Figure 4-4**, above, and reproduced in **Figure 5-1** combines Membertou with the southern part of Sydney. Changes to the six-district arrangement Council may wish to consider include:

- *Move areas inside Highway 125 from proposed District 3 to proposed District 2* – The change will create a strong boundary for proposed District 2, which covers south Sydney. The District is 9.3% below the average number of electors and can accept additional numbers. Proposed District 3 covers the largely rural southeast portion of the Municipality and is 7.7% below the average and can lose up to 313 electors.
- *Move the communities Black Brook (34 electors), Homeville (40), South Head (21), and Round Island (24) from proposed District 3 to proposed District 6* – The shift will join the four communities noted to Glace Bay, Port Morien, and other communities with which some residents feel they have more affinity. Birch Grove (227) is part of this group but cannot be included if proposed District 3 which covers the rural southeast of the municipality is to stay above the parity standard. The change cannot be made in conjunction with the preceding suggestion to move areas from proposed District 3 to proposed District 2 because proposed District 2 will then fall short of -10%.
- *Move the community of Upper North Sydney (303) from proposed District 5 to proposed District 4* – Upper North Sydney has a clear connection to North Sydney in proposed District 4, which it abuts.



- *Move the community of Little Bras d'Or (404 electors) from proposed District 4 to proposed District 5 – Transferring Little Bras d'Or joins it with similar rural communities on the Bras d'or Lakes in proposed District 5 and balances the move of Upper North Sydney from proposed District 5 to proposed District 4.*

We do not feel any of these changes is essential. They would fine tune the proposed boundaries and address some comments from community members. It would be desirable to move Reserve Mines from District 3 to District 1 or District 6, but District 3 would be under -10% and either 3 or 6 would be over the standard.

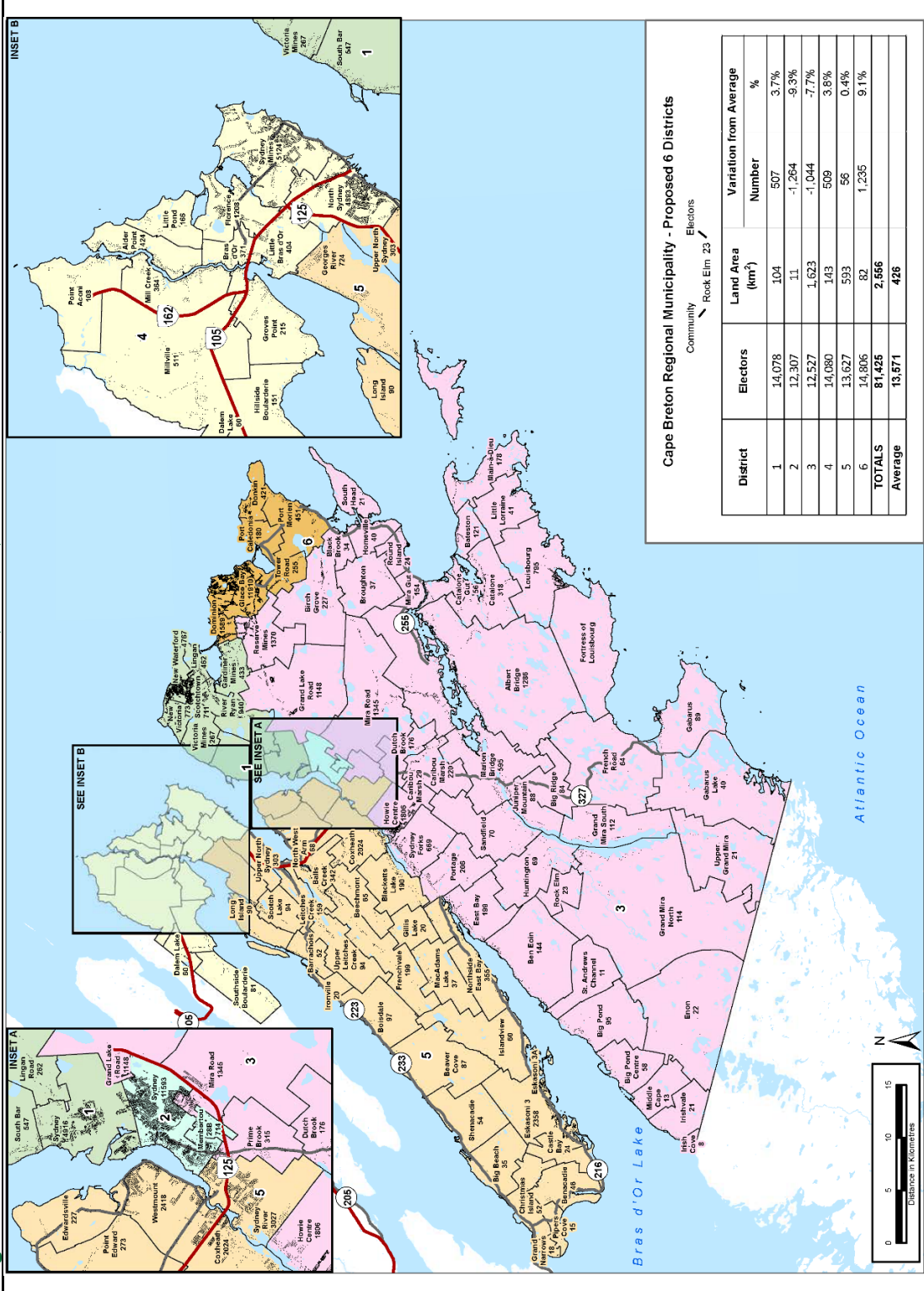
### **5.3 Recommendation**

Pursuant to the MGA, CBRM must apply to the NSUARB for approval of its governance and boundary arrangements by December 31, 2022.

In our opinion, **based on foregoing research and analysis, we recommend that CBRM apply for approval of a Council of six members plus the Mayor to be elected from districts as presented in Figure 5-1** or with reasonable modifications such as those outline in preceding **Section 5.2**. As the recommendation is in accord with public input received and all districts as outlined meet the  $\pm 10\%$  parity criterion while, in our opinion, respecting community integrity to the degree possible, we do not anticipate any serious difficulty obtaining NSUARB approval.



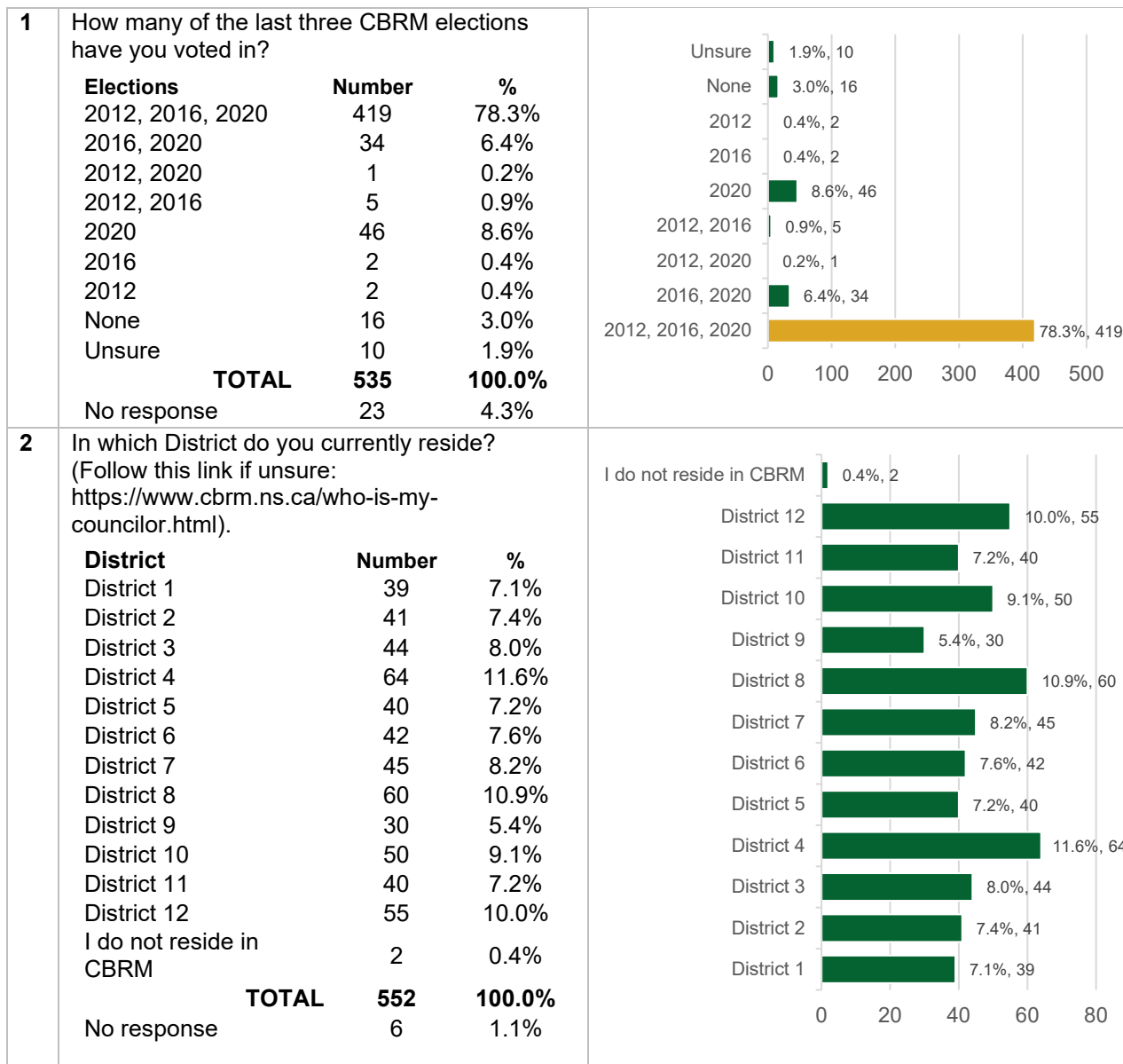
Figure 5-1 Recommended Electoral District Boundaries, CBRM, 2022



Source: Stantec Consulting Limited

# APPENDIX A COUNCIL SIZE SURVEY RESULTS 1



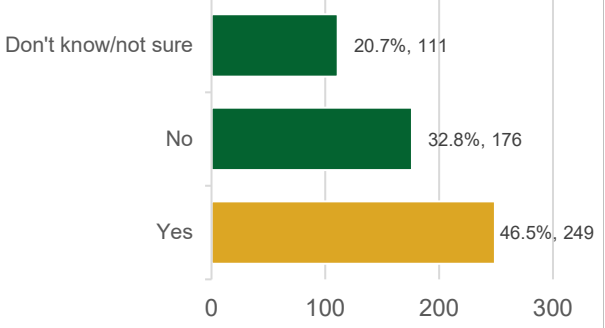
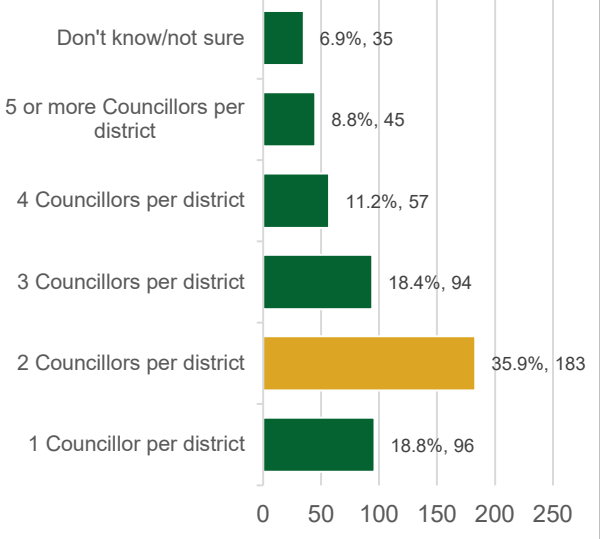


<p><b>3</b></p>	<p>How would you rate the performance of CBRM's current Council?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Rating</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>136</td> <td>24.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>147</td> <td>26.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>182</td> <td>32.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>69</td> <td>12.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>20</td> <td>3.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td><b>554</b></td> <td><b>100.0%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>No response</td> <td>4</td> <td>0.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average</td> <td>2.4</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Rating	Number	%	1	136	24.5%	2	147	26.5%	3	182	32.9%	4	69	12.5%	5	20	3.6%	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	No response	4	0.7%	Average	2.4		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Rating</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>136</td> <td>24.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>147</td> <td>26.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>182</td> <td>32.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>69</td> <td>12.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>20</td> <td>3.6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Rating	Number	%	1	136	24.5%	2	147	26.5%	3	182	32.9%	4	69	12.5%	5	20	3.6%
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<p><b>9</b></p>	<p>Please indicate the number of Council members you would prefer to have on CBRM Regional Council (the minimum Council size is three members).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3 members</td> <td>30</td> <td>5.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 members</td> <td>14</td> <td>2.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 members</td> <td>13</td> <td>2.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6 members</td> <td>141</td> <td>25.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7 members</td> <td>23</td> <td>4.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8 members</td> <td>65</td> <td>11.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9 members</td> <td>42</td> <td>7.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10 members</td> <td>39</td> <td>7.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11 members</td> <td>4</td> <td>0.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12 members</td> <td>100</td> <td>18.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13 members</td> <td>5</td> <td>0.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14 members</td> <td>13</td> <td>2.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15 members+</td> <td>57</td> <td>10.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td><b>546</b></td> <td><b>100.0%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>No response</td> <td>12</td> <td>2.2%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Number	%	3 members	30	5.5%	4 members	14	2.6%	5 members	13	2.4%	6 members	141	25.8%	7 members	23	4.2%	8 members	65	11.9%	9 members	42	7.7%	10 members	39	7.1%	11 members	4	0.7%	12 members	100	18.3%	13 members	5	0.9%	14 members	13	2.4%	15 members+	57	10.4%	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	No response	12	2.2%	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>15 members+</td> <td>57</td> <td>10.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14 members</td> <td>13</td> <td>2.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13 members</td> <td>5</td> <td>0.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12 members</td> <td>100</td> <td>18.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11 members</td> <td>4</td> <td>0.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10 members</td> <td>39</td> <td>7.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9 members</td> <td>42</td> <td>7.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8 members</td> <td>65</td> <td>11.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7 members</td> <td>23</td> <td>4.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6 members</td> <td>141</td> <td>25.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 members</td> <td>13</td> <td>2.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 members</td> <td>14</td> <td>2.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 members</td> <td>30</td> <td>5.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Number	%	15 members+	57	10.4%	14 members	13	2.4%	13 members	5	0.9%	12 members	100	18.3%	11 members	4	0.7%	10 members	39	7.1%	9 members	42	7.7%	8 members	65	11.9%	7 members	23	4.2%	6 members	141	25.8%	5 members	13	2.4%	4 members	14	2.6%	3 members	30	5.5%
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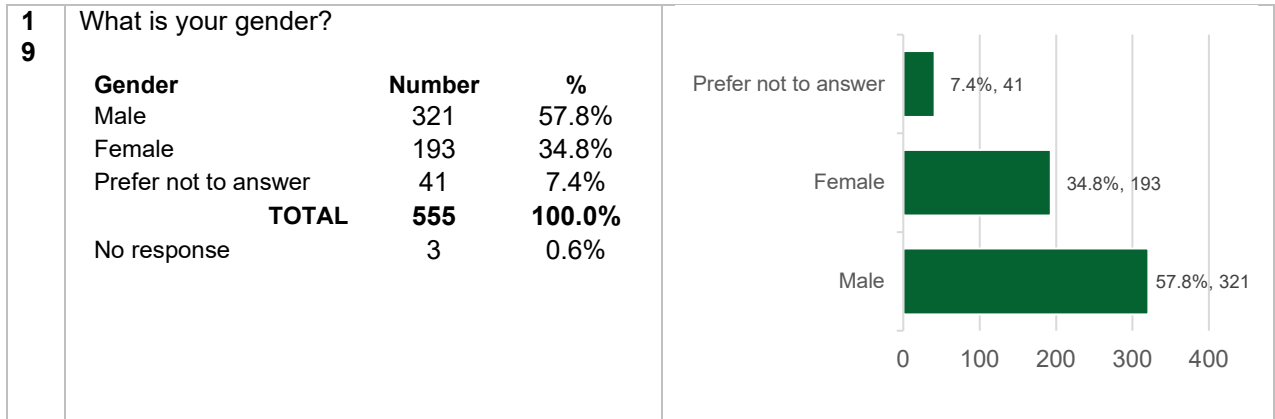
11	If your answer to Question 9 was 12, please explain why you think Council size should stay at 12 members? (if not applicable, please go to Question 13.)	Satisfaction with current Council performance. Concern with rural representation and the area that Councillors must serve.																																																
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1 3	<p>Do you support the governance model (i.e., three electoral districts) as proposed by the Viability Study?</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="272 751 808 961"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>249</td> <td>46.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>176</td> <td>32.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don't know/not sure</td> <td>111</td> <td>20.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td><b>536</b></td> <td><b>100.0%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>No response</td> <td>22</td> <td>4.1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Number	%	Yes	249	46.5%	No	176	32.8%	Don't know/not sure	111	20.7%	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	No response	22	4.1%	 <table border="1" data-bbox="857 657 1458 982"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>249</td> <td>46.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>176</td> <td>32.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don't know/not sure</td> <td>111</td> <td>20.7%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Number	%	Yes	249	46.5%	No	176	32.8%	Don't know/not sure	111	20.7%																		
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<p><b>15</b></p>	<p>Another alternative that has been discussed and would also require an amendment to the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> would be to elect some or all CBRM Councillors at large (i.e., through a vote of all municipal electors).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No Councillors should be elected at large</td> <td>207</td> <td>38.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Councillors should be elected at large</td> <td>219</td> <td>40.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Less than half of all Councillors should be elected at large</td> <td>19</td> <td>3.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>At least half of all Councillors should be elected at large</td> <td>48</td> <td>8.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No more than three Councillors should be elected at large</td> <td>51</td> <td>9.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td><b>544</b></td> <td><b>100.0%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>No response</td> <td>14</td> <td>2.6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Number	%	No Councillors should be elected at large	207	38.1%	All Councillors should be elected at large	219	40.3%	Less than half of all Councillors should be elected at large	19	3.5%	At least half of all Councillors should be elected at large	48	8.8%	No more than three Councillors should be elected at large	51	9.4%	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	No response	14	2.6%	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No more than three Councillors should be elected at large</td> <td>51</td> <td>9.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>At least half of all Councillors should be elected at large</td> <td>48</td> <td>8.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Less than half of all Councillors should be elected at large</td> <td>19</td> <td>3.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Councillors should be elected at large</td> <td>219</td> <td>40.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No Councillors should be elected at large</td> <td>207</td> <td>38.1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Number	%	No more than three Councillors should be elected at large	51	9.4%	At least half of all Councillors should be elected at large	48	8.8%	Less than half of all Councillors should be elected at large	19	3.5%	All Councillors should be elected at large	219	40.3%	No Councillors should be elected at large	207	38.1%																								
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**CBRM Governance and Boundary Review  
Appendix A Council Size Survey Results 1**



# APPENDIX B BOUNDARY OPTIONS SURVEY RESULTS



<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>How many of the last three CBRM elections have you voted in?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Elections</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2012, 2016, 2020</td> <td>387</td> <td>60.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016, 2020</td> <td>58</td> <td>9.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012, 2020</td> <td>5</td> <td>0.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012, 2016</td> <td>5</td> <td>0.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020</td> <td>111</td> <td>17.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016</td> <td>5</td> <td>0.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>1</td> <td>0.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>None</td> <td>37</td> <td>5.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unsure</td> <td>27</td> <td>4.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td><b>636</b></td> <td><b>100.0%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>No response</td> <td>8</td> <td>1.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Elections	Number	%	2012, 2016, 2020	387	60.8%	2016, 2020	58	9.1%	2012, 2020	5	0.8%	2012, 2016	5	0.8%	2020	111	17.5%	2016	5	0.8%	2012	1	0.2%	None	37	5.8%	Unsure	27	4.2%	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	No response	8	1.5%	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Unsure</td> <td>27</td> <td>4.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>None</td> <td>37</td> <td>5.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>1</td> <td>0.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016</td> <td>5</td> <td>0.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020</td> <td>111</td> <td>17.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012, 2016</td> <td>5</td> <td>0.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012, 2020</td> <td>5</td> <td>0.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016, 2020</td> <td>58</td> <td>9.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012, 2016, 2020</td> <td>387</td> <td>60.8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Number	%	Unsure	27	4.2%	None	37	5.8%	2012	1	0.2%	2016	5	0.8%	2020	111	17.5%	2012, 2016	5	0.8%	2012, 2020	5	0.8%	2016, 2020	58	9.1%	2012, 2016, 2020	387	60.8%																								
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		and 5 are too large, or that the voice of rural areas will be reduced.  Leading boundary concerns were expressed by several who want Sydney River and Membertou to be included with Sydney, Concerns about the compatibility of Eskasoni/Bras d'Or and North Sydney in District 3; and a desire among some residents to see Donkin, Morien, Homeville, Round Island, Tower Road, Birch Grove, and related communities in the same district.																		
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5	<p>Do you have any concerns with the boundaries in the proposed 12-district arrangement? (Click here to see a larger map image)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Responded</td> <td>409</td> <td>63.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>105</td> <td>25.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>42</td> <td>10.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Full comments</td> <td>262</td> <td>64.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No response</td> <td>235</td> <td>36.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Number	%	Responded	409	63.5%	No	105	25.7%	Yes	42	10.3%	Full comments	262	64.1%	No response	235	36.5%	<p>Many commenters criticized the number of districts rather than the boundaries. Many cited general objections to large councils such as the presumed cost and inefficiency, but at least 70 simply said twelve was just too many. More comments, however, address specific boundary concerns, largely because twelve districts require more division of communities. References to the division of Glace Bay and communities in the vicinity of Glace Bay such as Reserve Mines and Gardiner Mines were particularly notable. Some comments also criticized the separation of Membertou from Sydney.</p>
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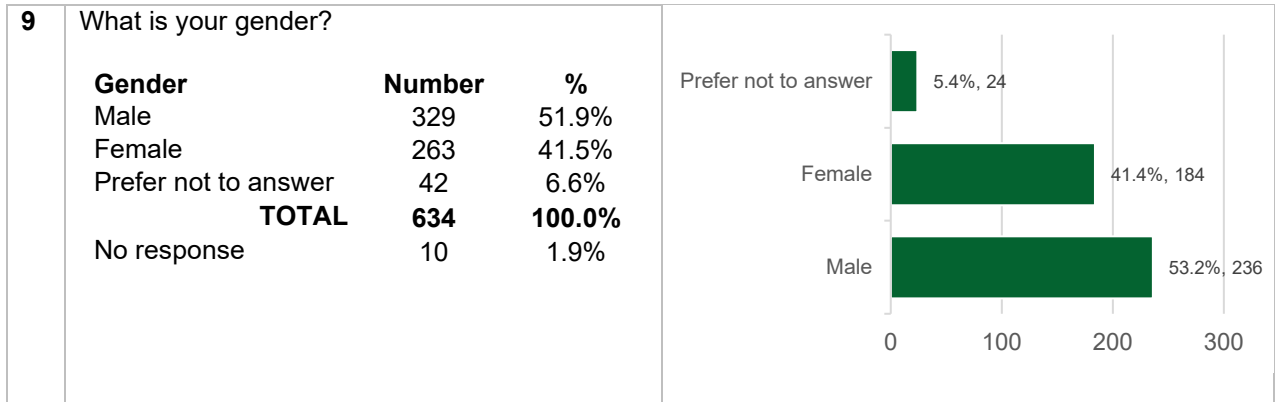


**CBRM Governance and Boundary Review**  
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<p><b>6</b></p>	<p>Please indicate which of the proposed boundary arrangements you prefer.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>I prefer the proposed 6-district boundary arrangement</td> <td>286</td> <td>45.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I prefer the proposed 12-district arrangement</td> <td>163</td> <td>25.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>None of the above choices reflects my preference</td> <td>60</td> <td>9.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I prefer the proposed 8-district boundary arrangement</td> <td>108</td> <td>17.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don't know/not sure</td> <td>14</td> <td>2.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td><b>631</b></td> <td><b>100.0%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>No response</td> <td>13</td> <td>2.4%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Number	%	I prefer the proposed 6-district boundary arrangement	286	45.3%	I prefer the proposed 12-district arrangement	163	25.8%	None of the above choices reflects my preference	60	9.5%	I prefer the proposed 8-district boundary arrangement	108	17.1%	Don't know/not sure	14	2.2%	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	No response	13	2.4%	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Don't know/not sure</td> <td>14</td> <td>2.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>None of the above choices reflects my preference</td> <td>60</td> <td>9.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I prefer the proposed 12-district arrangement</td> <td>163</td> <td>25.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I prefer the proposed 8-district boundary arrangement</td> <td>108</td> <td>17.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I prefer the proposed 6-district boundary arrangement</td> <td>286</td> <td>45.3%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Number	%	Don't know/not sure	14	2.2%	None of the above choices reflects my preference	60	9.5%	I prefer the proposed 12-district arrangement	163	25.8%	I prefer the proposed 8-district boundary arrangement	108	17.1%	I prefer the proposed 6-district boundary arrangement	286	45.3%																								
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