



## Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission 2002/2003

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### The 2002/2003 Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission

#### Interim Report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta

#### Proposed Electoral Division Areas, Boundaries and Names for Alberta September 2002

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### Letter of Transmittal...

The Honourable Ken Kowalski  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
Room 325, Legislature Building  
10800 - 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Mr. Speaker:

We have the honour to submit to you our interim report in accordance with section 6(1) of the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act, S.A. 2000, c.E-3 as amended. This report sets out the areas, boundaries and names of the 83 electoral divisions we propose for Alberta, together with our reasons for the proposals, and includes the minority position of Ms. Bauni Mackay regarding the City of Edmonton.

The Commission was established March 25, 2002. We are required to submit our report within seven months of the date of our appointment. We have therefore completed our mandate in regard to section 6(1) of the Act.

Pursuant to section 8(1) of the Act, we will be considering any further representations made to us. We intend to hold an additional set of hearings during the second week of December 2002. We will provide our final report to you on or before March 25, 2003, as required by the Act.

Dated at Edmonton, Alberta, this 9th day of September, 2002.

Robert C. Clark, Chairman  
Glenn Clegg, Member  
Doug Graham, Member  
Bauni Mackay, Member  
Ernie Patterson, Member

## Acknowledgements...

A report such as this results from the combined efforts of a great variety of people.

The Commission acknowledges the advice and suggestions provided at the hearings and in written submissions from Albertans.

The Commission also wishes to acknowledge the support services provided by:

- O. Brian Fjeldheim, Bill Sage and the staff of Elections Alberta
- Bill Hyshka, Pamela Steppan and Todd Chorney of the Statistics section, Office of Budget and Management, Alberta Finance
- Ken Lowe, Kevin Tripp, Yves Laurent, Michael Currie and Robert Mason of the Resource Data Branch, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
- the Hansard staff of the Public Information Branch, Legislative Assembly Office
- the staff of the Air Transportation Service, Alberta Infrastructure and
- Teresa Griffiths and Doug Olthof for administrative support and Tom Forgrave for assembling this report.

### Futher Consultation

The Commission has found it very interesting and challenging to weigh the concerns and relevant factors put before it during the preparation of this interim report. The Commission is interested in receiving advice and suggestions on the electoral divisions proposed in this interim report.

Your submission will be most useful if it

- identifies the proposed electoral division that you are concerned about
- specifies your concerns
- proposes solutions to address your concerns
- reviews the effect of your solutions on neighbouring proposed electoral divisions

Please send written submissions by November 15, 2002, and indicate if you wish to appear and be heard at the public hearings which will be scheduled December 2002.

Send your submission to:

**Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission**  
Suite 100, 11510 Kingsway NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5G 2Y5  
Ph: 780 427 8779 Fax: 780 422 2900  
(For toll free service, dial 310-0000 and the number above)  
Email: [info@altaebc.ab.ca](mailto:info@altaebc.ab.ca)

## INTRODUCTION

### Establishing the Commission...

This Electoral Boundaries Commission was established on March 25, 2002. *Robert C. Clark, Alberta Ethics Commissioner* was appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council as Chair. Appointed as members, by the Honourable Ken Kowalski, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, were:

*Glen Clegg, Fairview*  
*Doug Graham, Calgary*  
*Bauni Mackay, Edmonton*  
*Ernie Patterson, Claresholm*

The Commission was appointed, and has carried out its work, under the provisions of the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act* (Revised Statutes of Alberta, 2000, Chapter E-3 as amended and referred to in this report as the *Act*). Also under the *Act*, O. Brian Fjeldheim, Chief Electoral Officer of Alberta, was responsible for providing advice, information and assistance to the Commission.

The first meeting of the Commission was held on Wednesday, March 27, 2002 and deliberations have continued

since then.

As required by the *Act*, the Commission held a series of public hearings across the province. Complete transcripts of the hearings are available on the Commission's website [www.altaebc.ab.ca](http://www.altaebc.ab.ca). A list of persons making presentations at the hearings is provided in [Appendix A](#). The Commission has considered the submissions made to it in writing and during the hearings and is now issuing its Interim Report. In a second series of public hearings to be held in late 2002, the Commission will receive comments on this report and will issue its Final Report by March 25, 2003.

In undertaking its work, the Commission has been guided by the requirements of the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act*, relevant decisions of the courts, advice received at the public hearings and in written submissions, and by common sense.

## The Law...

The *Act* (see [Appendix C](#)) directs the Commission to divide the province into 83 electoral divisions, with a population within 25% of the provincial average, in a way that will ensure effective representation for Albertans.

The relevant sections of the *Act* are:

*13 The Commission is to divide Alberta into 83 proposed electoral divisions.*

1990 cE-4.01 s13;1995 c10 s10

*15(1) The population of a proposed electoral division must not be more than 25% above nor more than 25% below the average population of all the proposed electoral divisions.*

To assist in ensuring effective representation, up to four special consideration electoral divisions may have populations as much as 50% below the provincial average:

*15(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), in the case of no more than 4 of the proposed electoral divisions, if the Commission is of the opinion that at least 3 of the following criteria exist in a proposed electoral division, the proposed electoral division may have a population that is as much as 50% below the average population of all the proposed electoral divisions:*

- (a) the area of the proposed electoral division exceeds 20,000 square kilometres or the total surveyed area of the proposed electoral division exceeds 15,000 square kilometres;*
- (b) the distance from the Legislature Building in Edmonton to the nearest boundary of the proposed electoral division by the most direct highway route is more than 150 kilometres;*
- (c) there is no town in the proposed electoral division that has a population exceeding 4,000 people;*
- (d) the area of the proposed electoral division contains an Indian reserve or a Metis settlement;*
- (e) the proposed electoral division has a portion of its boundary coterminous with a boundary of the Province of Alberta.*

The five "special considerations" are area, distance from the Legislature, no town of more than 4,000 population, presence of an Indian Reserve or Metis Settlement, and a portion of the division boundary contiguous with the boundary of the province.

The *Act* references the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantee of effective representation and lists factors which must be considered.

*14 In determining the area to be included in and in fixing the boundaries of the proposed electoral divisions, the Commission, subject to section 15, may take into consideration any factors it considers appropriate, but shall take into consideration*

- (a) the requirement for effective representation as guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,*
- (b) scarcity and density of population,*
- (c) common community interests and community organizations, including those of Indian reserves and Metis settlements,*
- (d) wherever possible, the existing community boundaries within the cities of Edmonton and Calgary,*
- (e) wherever possible, the existing municipal boundaries,*
- (f) the number of municipalities and other local authorities,*
- (g) geographical features, including existing road systems, and*
- (h) the desirability of understandable and clear boundaries.*

1990 cE-4.01 s16;1993 c2 s12;1995 c10 s12

Section 3 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* states: "Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in

an election of members of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly and to be qualified for membership therein."

The **Final Report of the Yukon Electoral District Boundaries Commission** (January, 2002) provides an excellent review of the relevant court decisions (see [Appendix D](#)).

In discharging its function, the Commission has been particularly mindful of the two leading cases in which the legal principles dealing with the issues it faces have been defined. They are *The Attorney General for Saskatchewan v. Roger Carter, Q.C.* [1991] 2 S.C.R., a decision of the Supreme Court of Canada; and *Reference re: Electoral divisions Statutes Amendment Act, 1993 (Alta.)* [1994] A.J. No. 768, DRS 95-02966, Appeal No. 9303-0228AC, a decision of the Alberta Court of Appeal. These two cases together define the principles of "effective representation."

The Supreme Court of Canada in *The Attorney General for Saskatchewan* case sets out the principles of effective representation and we quote pertinent passages from the majority decision of Madam Justice McLachlin, as follows:

*The framers of the Charter had two distinct electoral models before them—the 'one person-one vote' model espoused by the United States Supreme Court in Baker v. Carr, 369 U.S. 186 (1962), Karcher v. Daggett, 462 U.S. 725 (1983), and Kirkpatrick v. Preisler, 394 U.S. 526 (1969), and the less radical, more pragmatic approach which had developed in England and in this country through the centuries and which was actually in place. In the absence of any supportive evidence to the contrary (as may be found in the United States in the speeches of the founding fathers), it would be wrong to infer that in enshrining the right to vote in our written constitution the intention was to adopt the American model. On the contrary, we should assume that the goal was to recognize the right affirmed in this country since the time of our first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, to effective representation in a system which gives due weight to voter parity but admits other considerations where necessary....*

What is that tradition? It was a tradition of evolutionary democracy, of increasing widening of representation through the centuries. But it was also a tradition which, even in its more modern phases, accommodates significant deviation from the ideals of equal representation. Pragmatism, rather than conformity to a philosophical ideal, has been its watchword.

### C. The Meaning of the Right to Vote

It is my conclusion that the purpose of the right to vote enshrined in s. 3 of the Charter is not equality of voting power per se, but the right to 'effective representation.' Ours is a representative democracy. Each citizen is entitled to be represented in government. Representation comprehends the idea of having a voice in the deliberations of government as well as the idea of the right to bring one's grievances and concerns to the attention of one's government representative; as noted in *Dixon v. B.C. (A.G.)*, [1989] 4 W.W.R. 393, at p. 413, elected representatives function in two roles—legislative and what has been termed the 'ombudsman role'.

What are the conditions of effective representation? The first is relative parity of voting power. A system which dilutes one citizen's vote unduly as compared with another citizen's vote runs the risk of providing inadequate representation to the citizen whose vote is diluted. The legislative power of the citizen whose vote is diluted will be reduced, as may be access to and assistance from his or her representative. The result will be uneven and unfair representation.

But parity of voting power, though of prime importance, is not the only factor to be taken into account in ensuring effective representation. Sir John A. Macdonald in introducing the Act to re-adjust the Representation in the House of Commons, S.C. 1872, c. 13, recognized this fundamental fact (House of Commons Debates, Vol. III, 4th Sess., p. 926 (June 1, 1872)):

...it will be found that,... while the principle of population was considered to a very great extent, other considerations were also held to have weight; so that different interests, classes and localities should be fairly represented, that the principle of numbers should not be the only one.

Notwithstanding the fact that the value of a citizen's vote should not be unduly diluted, it is a practical fact that effective representation often cannot be achieved without taking into account countervailing factors.

The Court then went on to define some of the countervailing factors, as follows:

First, absolute parity is impossible. It is impossible to draw boundary lines which guarantee exactly the same number of voters in each district. Voters die, voters move. Even with the aid of frequent censuses, voter parity is impossible.

Secondly, such relative parity as may be possible of achievement may prove undesirable because it has the effect of detracting from the primary goal of effective representation. Factors like geography, community history,

community interests and minority representation may need to be taken into account to ensure that our legislative assemblies effectively represent the diversity of our social mosaic. These are but examples of considerations which may justify departure from absolute voter parity in the pursuit of more effective representation; the list is not closed.

It emerges therefore that deviations from absolute voter parity may be justified on the grounds of practical impossibility or the provision of more effective representation. Beyond this, dilution of one citizen's vote as compared with another's should not be countenanced. I adhere to the proposition asserted in *Dixon, supra*, at p. 414, that 'only those deviations should be admitted which can be justified on the ground that they contribute to better government of the populace as a whole, giving due weight to regional issues within the populace and geographic factors within the territory governed.'

...this is not to suggest, however, that inequities in our voting system are to be accepted merely because they have historical precedent. History is important in so far as it suggests that the philosophy underlying the development of the right to vote in this country is the broad goal of effective representation. It has nothing to do with specious arguments that historical anomalies and abuses can be used to justify continued anomalies and abuses, or to suggest that the right to vote should not be interpreted broadly and remedially as befits Charter rights...

I turn finally to the admonition that courts must be sensitive to practical considerations in interpreting Charter rights. The 'practical living fact,' to borrow Frankfurter J.'s phrase, is that effective representation and good government in this country compel those charged with setting electoral boundaries sometimes to take into account factors other than voting parity, such as geography and community interests. The problems of representing vast, sparsely populated territories, for example, may dictate somewhat lower voter populations in these districts; to insist on voter parity might deprive citizens with distinct interests of an effective voice in the legislative process as well as of effective assistance from their representatives in the 'ombudsman' role. This is only one of a number of factors which may necessitate deviation from the 'one person-one vote' rule in the interests of effective representation.

and in commenting on the boundaries set, the Court said:

The material before us suggests that not only are rural ridings harder to serve because of difficulty in transport and communications, but that rural voters make greater demands on their elected representatives, whether because of the absence of alternative resources to be found in urban centres or for other reasons. Thus the goal of effective representation may justify somewhat lower voter populations in rural areas. Another factor which figured prominently in the argument before us is geographic boundaries; rivers and municipal boundaries form natural community dividing lines and hence natural electoral boundaries. Yet another factor is growth projections. Given that the boundaries will govern for a number of years—the boundaries set in 1989, for example, may be in place until 1996—projected population changes within that period may justify a deviation from strict equality at the time the boundaries are drawn.

The Alberta Court of Appeal case cited above (*Reference re: Electoral divisions Statutes Amendment Act, 1993 (Alta.)*) dealt specifically with the situation in Alberta in the context of the Supreme Court of Canada decision and therefore was particularly pertinent to the Commission's task.

The principles were set down by the Alberta Court of Appeal as follows:

37. *In the 1991 Reference we offered this summary of constitutional rights held by all Albertans (Reference Re Electoral Boundaries Commission Act, Alberta, [1992] 1 W.W.R. 481 (Alta. C.A.)):*

- (a) the right to cast a ballot;
  - (b) the right not to have the political force of one's vote unduly diluted;
  - (c) the right to effective representation; and
  - (d) the right to have the parity of the votes of others diluted, but not unduly, in order to gain effective representation or in the name of practical necessity.
- [p. 486]

38. Before this panel, we heard no suggestions or a re-statement of these rules. The argument, rather, turned over what amounts to 'undue' dilution....

43. It is one thing to say that the effective representation of a specific community requires an electoral division of a below-average population. That approach invites specific reasons, and specific facts. The constitution of Canada is sufficiently flexible to permit disparity to serve geographical and demographic reality.

44. It is quite another to say that any electoral division, for no specific reason, may be smaller than average. In the 1991 Reference, we affirmed the first, not the second. We affirm again that there is no permissible variation if there is no justification. And the onus to establish justification lies with those who suggest the variation...."

64. With respect, this very natural concern of an elected official for the 'comfort zone' of a vocal portion of the electorate is not a valid Charter consideration. The essence of Constitutionally entrenched right is that it permits an individual to stand against even a majority of the people. Put another way, Canadians entrenched certain traditional rights for minorities in the Constitution because they do not trust themselves, in all times and circumstances, to respect those rights. The fact, then, that a significant number of Albertans do not like the result of an equal distribution of electoral divisions is no reason to flinch from insisting that they take the burden as well as the benefit of democracy as we know it.

76. ...That review must identify communities, in every sense of the word. It must look in depth at social history as well as demography and geography. Moreover, that review is unlikely to be effective unless the reviewer gives ordinary Albertans ample opportunity to come forward and describe the communities of interest they see in their lives. It is time-consuming and not inexpensive, but essential to a healthy democratic life.

*In summary*, the principles of effective representation seem to the Commission to be as follows:

1. The tradition of Canada is "effective representation," not absolute parity as in the U.S.
2. The process of achieving effective representation may involve diluting the political force of some votes but not unduly and not without reason.
3. The balancing of these interests is a delicate one, which involves an examination in depth of the social history, geography and demography of communities in every sense of the word.

The Commission has been guided by the principles set out by the Supreme Court of Canada and the Court of Appeal of Alberta. In being guided by these principles, it has been mindful of the principles of "effective representation" as opposed to absolute parity.

In determining these issues, the Commission has heard and read the representations and reviewed the circumstances of numerous groups and constituencies who made representations to us, which number exceeded 300.

We have reviewed numerous complex factors, including but not limited to those mentioned in the Court decisions, and including geography, demography and social history of the various areas and constituencies which we have visited.

## 2002 Canada Census Results...

In determining population, the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act* (Section 12(1)) requires the Commission to use "the most recent decennial census of population referred to in section 19(3) of the *Statistics Act* (Canada)" plus "the population on Indian Reserves that were not included in the census, as provided by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (Canada)".

The 2001 Canada Census resulted in an Alberta population of 2,974,807. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada indicated that 9,112 persons resident on Indian Reserves were not included in the census count. Therefore, the total Alberta population to be used by the Commission in recommending the boundaries of electoral divisions is 2,983,919.

The "provincial quotient", or the average population per electoral division, is

$$\frac{\text{Population}}{\text{\# Electoral Divisions}} = \frac{2,983,919}{83} = 35,951$$

The allowable range for standard electoral divisions under the Act is 44,939 to 26,963 (+/-25%). Any special consideration electoral division could have a population as low as 17,976 (-50%).

## THE ALBERTA CONTEXT Population Distribution...

During the period since the report of the 1995/1996 Commission, Alberta's robust economy has resulted in significant population growth. [Table 1](#) shows the population of the existing electoral divisions in 1996 and 2001.

During the ten year period, 1991 to 2001, the population increased in 68 of the 83 electoral divisions. The population growth was spread throughout the province. The cities of Calgary and Edmonton (40 electoral divisions) increased by 217,434 and the rest of Alberta (43 electoral divisions) increased by 211,707. *The significant factor for this Commission is that Calgary (21 electoral divisions) increased by 168,071 (39% of the total growth).*



At the time of the 2001 Canada Census, fifty-two percent of the population of the province was resident in Edmonton and Calgary. If one considers the electoral divisions within and adjacent to the two major cities as representing the "metropolitan community", nearly 66% of the population resided in the Calgary and Edmonton metropolitan electoral divisions.

Dr. Roger Gibbins, Canada West Foundation, told the Commission that the Calgary-Edmonton corridor is now "one of Canada's four metropolitan heartlands. The corridor not only joins the ranks of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver; it is also the fastest growing of the four.

A considerable number of submissions to the Commission indicated that this population concentration is giving rise to feelings of marginalization in areas of Alberta outside the corridor. This was reflected in the comment by the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties:

*"It seems that every few years, we're back trying to defend the right of rural citizens to have a meaningful voice in provincial decision making".*

This is particularly the case for residents in electoral divisions that are already geographically large.

Mr. Hudson Foley, speaking at the Slave Lake hearing, said:

We're looking at the erosion, basically, of the sparser populated areas with regard to political representation, and I think that all the best of intentions that have been discussed here today aren't really going to solve the problem. I know that you guys said right at the outset that you've got the act and the legislative laws of the land that you have to follow, but at the end of the day you're going to kind of curtail that with a bit of common sense. But I'm having a hard time understanding how that's going to resolve some of the issues we're dealing with, because as far as I can see, in the next go-round here we're going to be dealing with the exact same problem, if not worse. The way the current setup is, there's no denying the fact that the urban centres are definitely growing at an exponentially higher rate than any of the rural areas, and you're basically looking at a dying breed. I'm a young guy who is settling in northern Alberta, trying to make a living and raise a family, and there are getting to be fewer and fewer and fewer of us. There's no incentive for us. Whether you look at infrastructure, funding, or whatever the case may be, it's becoming less and less attractive for me and people like me to come north or into the rural areas and settle, because we're getting less and less representation. The driving force for any initiatives is going to be the urban centres with the higher ridings, and I guess it really worries me. It worries me and it worries me for my kids, because there seems to be this lack of understanding. It's never written down; it never seems to be right out in the open. While you're definitely dealing with different beasts in looking at our constituency versus, say, Calgary-Shaw, we are all Albertans and we are sharing the exact same problems. Our problems are theirs, and their problems are ours.

**TABLE 1 -POPULATION OF EXISTING ELECTORAL DIVISIONS**

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Electoral Division	1996*	2,001	%CH	Electoral Division	1996*	2,001	%CH
<b>CALGARY</b>				1 Athabasca-Wabasca	16,621	20,752	25
3 Calgary-Bow	32,611	35,147	8	2 Lesser Slave Lake	19,734	25,919	31
4 Calgary-Buffalo	34,639	37,807	9	43 Banff-Cochrane	28,664	48,517	65
5 Calgary-Cross	35,208	39,454	12	44 Airdrie-Rocky View	30,325	48,517	60
6 Calgary-Currie	34,774	34,694	0	45 Barrhead-Westlock	25,723	24,976	-3
7 Calgary-East	35,136	31,856	-9	46 Bonnyville-Cold Lake	27,647	29,002	5
8 Calgary-Egmont	33,057	36,603	11	47 Cardston-Taber-Warner	28,880	30,588	6
9 Calgary-Elbow	34,348	34,499	0	48 Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan	33,075	38,294	16
10 Calgary-Fish Creek	35,666	33,038	-7	49 Cypress-Medicine Hat	25,983	31,513	21
11 Calgary-Foothills	33,461	55,315	65	50 Drayton Valley-Calmar	25,763	28,149	9
12 Calgary-Fort	34,184	36,883	8	51 Drumheller-Chinook	24,610	25,062	2
13 Calgary-Glenmore	35,533	33,756	-5	52 Dunvegan	25,656	24,657	-4
14 Calgary-Lougheed	33,604	34,443	2	53 Fort McMurray	34,706	38,667	11
15 Calgary-McCall	34,384	48,756	42	54 Grande Prairie-Smoky	27,640	36,158	31
16 Calgary-Montrose	29,887	37,086	24	55 Grande Prairie-Wapiti	28,127	33,007	17
17 Calgary-Mountain View	32,117	32,529	1	56 Highwood	32,310	46,549	44
18 Calgary-North Hill	33,415	33,379	0	57 Innisfail-Sylvan Lake	28,496	37,378	31
19 Calgary-North West	32,453	62,849	94	58 Lac La Biche-St. Paul	27,531	32,278	17
20 Calgary-Nose Creek	34,583	55,393	60	59 Lacombe-Stettler	27,565	32,530	18

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21	Calgary-Shaw	34,216	82,516	141	60	Leduc	32,686	37,363	14
22	Calgary-Varsity	33,521	32,339	-4	61	Lethbridge-East	31,483	31,675	1
23	Calgary-West	33,998	50,524	49	62	Lethbridge-West	29,491	35,704	21
	<b>Total</b>	<b>710,795</b>	<b>878,866</b>	<b>24</b>	63	Little Bow	26,842	30,130	12
<b>EDMONTON</b>					64	Livingstone-Macleod	29,731	30,250	2
24	Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview	33,716	34,817	3	65	Medicine Hat	32,196	35,889	11
25	Edmonton-Calder	32,995	34,075	3	66	Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills	27,863	31,781	14
26	Edmonton-Castle Downs	33,275	37,570	13	67	Peace River	26,777	28,072	5
27	Edmonton-Centre	33,124	33,423	1	68	Ponoka-Rimbey	27,810	30,876	11
28	Edmonton-Ellerslie	31,361	32,280	3	69	Red Deer-North	29,976	31,283	4
29	Edmonton-Glengarry	32,328	34,584	7	70	Red Deer-South	28,169	36,424	29
30	Edmonton-Glenora	32,102	31,777	-1	71	Redwater	30,633	33,342	9
31	Edmonton-Gold Bar	32,827	31,344	-5	72	Rocky Mountain House	26,025	31,157	20
32	Edmonton-Highlands	33,654	32,039	-5	73	St. Albert	32,136	41,001	28
33	Edmonton-Manning	33,867	41,129	21	74	Sherwood Park	35,576	46,818	32
34	Edmonton-McClung	31,682	38,266	21	75	Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert	30,180	36,628	21
35	Edmonton-Meadowlark	31,353	34,646	11	76	Stony Plain	30,432	37,480	23
36	Edmonton-Mill Creek	31,271	42,217	35	77	Strathmore-Brooks	29,413	39,099	33
37	Edmonton-Mill Woods	30,476	30,699	1	78	Vegreville-Viking	27,606	27,931	1
38	Edmonton-Norwood	32,045	31,036	-3	79	Vermilion-Lloydminster	27,675	30,436	10
39	Edmonton-Riverview	32,180	32,267	0	80	Wainwright	28,714	28,908	1
40	Edmonton-Rutherford	34,736	34,470	-1	81	West Yellowhead	27,857	29,349	5
41	Edmonton-Strathcona	32,688	32,945	1	82	Wetaskiwin-Camrose	31,918	34,611	8
42	Edmonton-Whitemud	31,061	46,520	50	83	Whitecourt-Ste. Anne	26,998	31,412	16
	<b>Total</b>	<b>616,741</b>	<b>666,104</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>1,227,243</b>	<b>1,438,950</b>	<b>17</b>

\*The 1996 Populations are from the Final Report of the 1995/1996 Commission and are based on the 1991 Canada Census. "%CH" is the % change from 1991 to 2001.

Albertans increasingly live in areas of population concentration. Well over 2 million Albertans live in urban communities of 10,000 or more people. About 17% live in municipalities which have traditionally been considered "rural", 12 of which have populations greater than 10,000. These communities are spread throughout the province.

The Commission has noted that 76% of Albertans live in urban and rural municipalities with a population of at least 10,000. Only three percent live in communities of less than 1,000.

- 66% of Albertans live in municipalities with a population = / > 30,000
- 90% of Albertans live in municipalities with a population = / > 4,000

Several submissions urged the Commission to recognize the projected growth areas, or at least the known growth since the 2001 Canada Census. The Act requires the Commission to determine population using either the 2001 Canada Census information or a later, reliable province-wide census. Since there is no more recent province-wide census, the Commission has used the 2001 Canada Census in determining population.

As previously noted, the Act allows variations of up to +/- 25% from the electoral division average population of 35,951. In the extreme this would allow electoral divisions as low as 26,963 and as high as 44,939. The Commission established a target that variations should not exceed +/- 15% if at all possible.

In addition, up to four electoral divisions, which meet special conditions specified in the Act, may have populations as much as 50% below the average. These could have populations as low as 17,976. The Commission concluded that despite the legislative provisions, the potential range from 18,000 to 45,000 is too great.

The Commission has also noted that there are more Members of the Legislative Assembly representing the people who live in the major cities than there are members of their municipal councils.

### Effective Representation...

[Table 2](#) compares the population of the existing electoral divisions to the "quotient", the average population per



division of 35,951.

The Commission concluded, with regard to effective representation, that population density has a major impact on effective representation. In this regard, there appear to be three distinct types of electoral divisions: Major Cities, Urbanized (a population centre of 10,000 or more) and Rural.

The "Major Cities" group includes Edmonton and Calgary. Arising from the population density, the geographic area of electoral divisions in the two cities is relatively small. There is one municipality, one regional health authority and one of each type of school authority. Both cities are major regional service centres for a large area of the province, in which most provincial services are delivered including specialized services. Both major cities also tend to be the initial entry point both for Canadians from other parts of the country and for immigrants from other countries coming to Alberta. In both cities there are more MLAs than there are members of the city council.

**TABLE 2 - EXISTING ELECTORAL DIVISIONS COMPARED TO AVERAGE**

Electoral Division	Population	%AV*	Electoral Division	Population	%AV*
<b>CALGARY</b>			1 Athabasca-Wabasca	20,752	58
Calgary-Bow	35,147	98	2 Lesser Slave Lake	25,919	72
Calgary-Buffalo	37,807	105	43 Airdrie-Rocky View	47,335	132
Calgary-Cross	39,454	110	44 Banff-Cochrane	48,517	135
Calgary-Currie	34,694	97	45 Barrhead-Westlock	24,976	69
Calgary-East	31,856	89	46 Bonnyville-Cold Lake	29,002	81
Calgary-Egmont	36,603	102	47 Cardston-Taber-Warner	30,588	85
Calgary-Elbow	34,499	96	48 Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan	38,294	107
Calgary-Fish Creek	33,038	92	49 Cypress-Medicine Hat	31,513	88
Calgary-Foothills	55,315	154	50 Drayton Valley-Calmor	28,149	78
Calgary-Fort	36,883	103	51 Drumheller-Chinook	25,062	70
Calgary-Glenmore	33,756	94	52 Dunvegan	24,657	69
Calgary-Lougheed	34,443	96	53 Fort McMurray	38,667	108
Calgary-McCall	48,756	136	54 Grande Prairie-Smoky	36,158	101
Calgary-Montrose	37,086	103	55 Grande Prairie-Wapiti	33,007	92
Calgary-Mountain View	32,529	90	56 Highwood	46,549	129
Calgary-North Hill	33,379	93	57 Innisfail-Sylvan Lake	37,378	104
Calgary-North West	62,849	175	58 Lac La Biche-St. Paul	32,278	90
Calgary-Nose Creek	55,393	154	59 Lacombe-Stettler	32,530	90
Calgary-Shaw	82,516	230	60 Leduc	37,363	104
Calgary-Varsity	32,339	90	61 Lethbridge-East	31,675	88
Calgary-West	50,524	141	62 Lethbridge-West	35,704	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>878,866</b>		63 Little Bow	30,130	84
<b>EDMONTON</b>			64 Livingstone-Macleod	30,250	84
Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview	34,817	97	65 Medicine Hat	35,889	100
Edmonton-Calder	34,075	95	66 Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills	31,781	88
Edmonton-Castle Downs	37,570	105	67 Peace River	28,072	78
Edmonton-Centre	33,423	93	68 Ponoka-Rimbey	30,876	86
Edmonton-Ellerslie	32,280	90	69 Red Deer-North	31,283	87
Edmonton-Glengarry	34,584	96	70 Red Deer-South	36,424	101
Edmonton-Glenora	31,777	88	71 Redwater	33,342	93
Edmonton-Gold Bar	31,344	87	72 Rocky Mountain House	31,157	87
Edmonton-Highlands	32,039	89	73 St. Albert	41,001	114
Edmonton-Manning	41,129	114	74 Sherwood Park	46,818	130
Edmonton-McClung	38,266	106	75 Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert	36,628	102
Edmonton-Meadowlark	34,646	96	76 Stony Plain	37,480	104
Edmonton-Mill Creek	42,217	117	77 Strathmore-Brooks	39,099	109
Edmonton-Mill Woods	30,699	85	78 Vegreville-Viking	27,931	78
			79 Vermilion-Lloydminster	30,436	85

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Edmonton-Norwood	31,036	86	80 Wainwright	28,908	80
Edmonton-Riverview	32,267	90	81 West Yellowhead	29,349	82
Edmonton-Rutherford	34,470	96	82 Wetaskiwin-Camrose	34,611	96
Edmonton-Strathcona	32,945	92	83 Whitecourt-Ste. Anne	31,412	87
Edmonton-Whitemud	46,520	129	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,438,950</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>666,104</b>				

\*%AV means the population of the electoral division as a percentage of the electoral division average population of 35,951. This is often expressed in terms of the variation from average. For example, Calgary Shaw is 230% of the average population which means it is 130% above average. Athabasca-Wabasca is 58% of the average which means it is 42% below average.

The "Urbanized" group includes the electoral divisions in which there are communities with a population of 10,000 or greater. Generally, these electoral divisions include both an urban centre of population and a less densely populated area. The geographical area of these electoral divisions is larger than in the major cities and the division may include more than one of each type of local authority. Exceptions to this general description are the electoral divisions contained entirely within the medium-sized cities.

The "Rural" group includes the electoral divisions in which all the urban centres have less than 10,000 population. These electoral divisions generally include several urban centres of medium density population and a significant more sparsely populated area of farmland. The geographical area of these electoral divisions may limit the opportunities for interaction between the residents and the MLA and there may be several local authorities responsible for parts of the division.

[Table 3](#) groups the existing electoral divisions by four types: major cities, urbanized (electoral divisions including an urban centre of 10,000 or more population), rural and special.

Several submissions, particularly at hearings away from the major centres, emphasized the time spent by an MLA from a geographically large division in travelling has a negative effect on effective representation. Significant time may be required for travel within the division and to and from the division and the Legislative Assembly. Some estimated that MLAs spend up to 800 hours per year in such travel.

Former MLA Walter Paszkowski told the Commission at its Grande Prairie hearing:

*During my time in the Legislature I drove over a million miles by car. I flew commercially over a million miles and probably flew with the government plane somewhere close to what was traveled with commercial air. This of course consumes a great deal of the MLA's time, time Edmonton and Calgary MLAs can spend with their constituents. Travel in and out of Edmonton has become much more of a challenge by air with the almost closure of the municipal airport, and certainly the use of the International Airport is not conducive to rapid movement in and out...*

Submissions by people from the major centres noted that MLAs in these locations are faced with a great variety of special interest groups, of individuals with special needs, and with a variety of cultural and language traditions. While travel time may be less than in the geographically large electoral divisions, this diversity of interests poses challenges for effective representation.

Frequent reference was made in submissions to the difficulty faced by MLAs travelling throughout constituencies with large geographical areas or, conversely, the difficulty faced by constituents in travelling to see their MLAs. A 1999 poll by Environics West indicated that the most important ways that MLAs can make themselves available to their constituents are by participating in town hall meetings, attending community events, one-on-one meetings and telephone conversations. Roughly half the respondents in the poll were from Edmonton and Calgary, indicating that the desire for seeing the MLA in person is not just a rural phenomenon.

Submissions from MLAs and from the public both mentioned the increased workload in constituency offices. The suggested reasons for this include decreases in government local offices and limited contact numbers in telephone directories. In other words, the submissions suggested that government generally has become more distant and impersonal and the place for local, personal contact is the MLA's office. These submissions at least implied that more support staff should be available in the constituency offices and that improved staff compensation packages are desirable in some locations. (See "[Issues for Future Consideration](#)" section).

Some submissions suggested that MLAs from urban electoral divisions may have little understanding of rural issues, particularly since there are now many people in the major cities who do not have a farm background. MLAs addressing the Commission observed that they could not recall any issue that was decided on a purely urban/rural split.

LeRoy Johnson, MLA, Wetaskiwin-Camrose, observed to the Commission:

... when I hear things like one MLA is representing rural Alberta and another MLA is representing urban Alberta, I would like to say that I'm representing 'rurban' Alberta. I have two cities and I have a lot of rural Alberta here; that is, agricultural Alberta ... I think it is possible to represent both rural and urban Alberta as an MLA, and when I hear that one MLA can only represent urban Alberta or another MLA only represent rural Alberta, I don't really like to hear that, because I think that we as MLAs are here to form a government from Alberta. It is not a case of one side that is urban and another side that is rural coming to a table and fighting things out to see who has the greatest vote in the end. I should have a mind-set so that I have a good concept of what Alberta is like. That means I should have made up my mind what is good for Alberta, and that means both rural and urban ... if I'm going to do that, I have to be in contact with all of Alberta. So if I have many organizations that I have to be in contact with in my constituency and then also as an MLA have to be in contact with all of Alberta to know what's going on, that's a pretty horrendous job. I think it's important that the rural areas not be too large so that we do not have too many groups to represent because the more we have to represent, the narrower we would tend to be in our thinking that's in relation to the rest of Alberta, and I don't think that's good.

**TABLE 3 - EXISTING ELECTORAL DIVISIONS BY CATEGORY**

Electoral Division	Population	Electoral Division	Population		
<b>MAJOR CITIES</b>		<b>URBANIZED</b>			
<b>CALGARY</b>		44	Airdrie-Rocky View	47,335	
3	Calgary-Bow	35,147	43	Banff-Cochrane	48,517
4	Calgary-Buffer	37,807	46	Bonnyville-Cold Lake	29,002
5	Calgary-Cross	39,454	48	Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan	38,294
6	Calgary-Currie	34,694	49	Cypress-Medicine Hat	31,513
7	Calgary-East	31,856	53	Fort McMurray	38,667
8	Calgary-Egmont	36,603	54	Grande Prairie-Smoky	36,158
9	Calgary-Elbow	34,499	55	Grande Prairie-Wapiti	33,007
10	Calgary-Fish Creek	33,038	56	Highwood	46,549
11	Calgary-Foothills	55,315	60	Leduc	37,363
12	Calgary-Fort	36,883	61	Lethbridge-East	31,675
13	Calgary-Glenmore	33,756	62	Lethbridge-West	35,704
14	Calgary-Lougheed	34,443	65	Medicine Hat	35,889
15	Calgary-McCall	48,756	69	Red Deer-North	31,283
16	Calgary-Montrose	37,086	70	Red Deer-South	36,424
17	Calgary-Mountain View	32,529	73	St. Albert	41,001
18	Calgary-North Hill	33,379	74	Sherwood Park	46,818
19	Calgary-North West	62,849	75	Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert	36,628
20	Calgary-Nose Creek	55,393	77	Strathmore-Brooks	39,099
21	Calgary-Shaw	82,516	79	Vermilion-Lloydminster	30,436
22	Calgary-Varsity	32,339	82	Wetaskiwin-Camrose	34,611
23	Calgary-West	50,524	Existing 21		785,973
	Existing 21	878,866	<b>Average</b>		<b>37,427</b>
	<b>Average</b>	<b>41,851</b>	<b>RURAL</b>		
<b>EDMONTON</b>		45	Barrhead-Westlock	24,976	
24	Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview	34,817	47	Cardston-Taber-Warner	30,588
25	Edmonton-Calder	34,075	50	Drayton Valley-Calmar	28,149
26	Edmonton-Castle Downs	37,570	51	Drumheller-Chinook	25,062
27	Edmonton-Centre	33,423	52	Dunvegan	24,657
28	Edmonton-Ellerslie	32,280	57	Innisfail-Sylvan Lake	37,378
29	Edmonton-Glengarry	34,584	58	Lac La Biche-St. Paul	32,278
30	Edmonton-Glenora	31,777	59	Lacombe-Stettler	32,530
31	Edmonton-Gold Bar	31,344	63	Little Bow	30,130
32	Edmonton-Highlands	32,039	64	Livingstone-MacLeod	30,250
33	Edmonton-Manning	41,129	66	Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills	31,781
34	Edmonton-McClung	38,266	67	Peace River	28,072

35	Edmonton-Meadowlark	34,646	68	Ponoka-Rimbey	30,876
36	Edmonton-Mill Creek	42,217	71	Redwater	33,342
37	Edmonton-Mill Woods	30,699	72	Rocky Mountain House	31,157
38	Edmonton-Norwood	31,036	76	Stony Plain	37,480
39	Edmonton-Riverview	32,267	78	Vegreville-Viking	27,931
40	Edmonton-Rutherford	34,470	80	Wainwright	28,908
41	Edmonton-Strathcona	32,945	81	West Yellowhead	29,349
42	Edmonton-Whitemud	46,520	83	Whitcourt-Ste. Anne	31,412
	Existing 19	666,104		Existing 20	606,306
	Average	35,058		Average	30,315
Total - Existing 40		1,544,970	<b>SPECIAL</b>		
Major City Average		38,624	1	Athabasca-Wabasca	20,752
			2	Lesser Slave Lake	25,919
				Existing 2	46,671
				Average	23,336

## The Matrix...

The 1995/1996 Commission developed a "matrix" which it used to apply a variety of factors reflecting effective representation. The matrix took into account the following variables, each scored on a scale of 1 to 10:

- Geographic area
- Population
- Population density
- Number of households
- Elected/appointed Bodies, Indian Reserves and Metis Settlements, and
- Distance from the Legislature

The 2002/2003 Commission decided to build on and refine that matrix to assist in developing its recommendations.

Former MLA Walter Paszkowski outlined to the Commission the factors he thinks impact effective representation:

*I'd like to name 10 points that I consider as critical and important points in fair representation. The number of constituents is a critical factor. The number of groups you need to work with: municipalities, school boards, hospital boards, library boards, senior and youth groups, and recreation groups just as examples. The nature of the economy of the constituency - active, static, or failing - is a very critical factor. We dealt with some of those through the period of time when indeed local communities were in a failing mode, and it becomes very, very challenging to find solutions to their particular needs. The diversification of the economy: is the constituency a one-industry economy, or is it broad based through various types of activities? The services provided: here I refer to the infrastructure. Generally, the further north you go, the more recent the settlement and the less infrastructure there is in place for the constituents. The social demographics and geographical distances, or size of the constituencies. Physical geographical challenges: by that I refer to river crossings - how many river crossings are there in order to serve the entire constituency? - and the number of isolated communities and the difficulty of reaching those isolated communities. The location of the constituency to the Alberta Legislature is certainly very, very important. The 10th point is the density of population. Though there are many other factors, these are the ones that I consider very important.*

In reviewing the variables used in the 1995/1996 matrix, the 2002/2003 Commission considered that, given the submissions it had received, it would be useful to add variables related to the number of languages other than English spoken in the division and some social variable such as the number of persons receiving assistance under the various programs offered by the Province. In addition, the Commission considered that some indication of the number of non-profit organizations which an MLA would be required to maintain contact with would also be an indicator of representation challenges.

In the end result, none of these variables was added. Statistics Canada will not release mother tongue information (the indicator for the number of languages variable) from the 2001 census until December 2002. The Commission was informed that less than 50,000 of the nearly 3 million Albertans are recipients under social assistance programs. There also appeared to be no accurate records of the number of non-profit organizations active in each electoral division.

The absence of reliable information for these variables called into question the relevance of the matrix for urban electoral divisions. This led the Commission to decide that the matrix is most useful when it is applied to the four categories of electoral divisions - major cities, urbanized, rural and special.

The Commission also considered driving time in relation to the distance from the Legislature. For example, a southern Alberta MLA who has to drive through Calgary to get to Edmonton might face traffic delays which would make the trip longer or more difficult than for an MLA whose travel was mostly outside the major traffic congestion areas. Again, there appeared to be no accurate method of measuring this variable. During the hearings, some submissions suggested that air travel could offset the distance factor. Others suggested that, depending where an MLA lives, it could take as long to fly as to drive and the availability of scheduled airline service to most of Alberta would pose scheduling difficulties for the MLA.

In reviewing the 1995/1996 Commission's variables, the 2002/2003 Commission decided that since population was a standard requirement, it didn't need to be included in the matrix. The Commission also determined that the number of Albertans living in urban population centres of 1,000 or more affected the degree of difficulty in representing the electoral division. Therefore it decided to replace the population variable with a "rural/urban ratio" variable.

In the end result, the Commission decided to include the following variables in the matrix:

- Area of the division in square kilometres
- Density of population (people per square kilometre)
- Elected/Appointed Bodies, Indian Reserves and Metis Settlements - the number of local authorities in the division
- "Dependant" Population Proportion - the number of children (0-14 years old) and seniors (65+) compared to the total population with a higher ratio indicating a larger number of persons eligible to be dependent on various provincial programs.
- Distance to the Legislature measured as the distance from the Legislature to the geographic centre of the division.
- Rural/Urban Ratio - the number of people living in the rural areas of the division for every 100 people living in an urban centre of 1,000 or more

The way the matrix is structured, a higher score indicates greater difficulty in providing effective representation. A lower score indicates less difficulty.

The mean value for each variable has been determined and points have been allocated on the basis of deviation from the mean. A score of zero for any variable indicates that the division is within +/- 10% of the mean value. A score of +/- 1 indicates a deviation of +/- 10% up to 19% from the mean; a score of +/- 2 indicates a deviation of +/- 20% up to 29% from the mean; a score of +/- 3 indicates a deviation of +/- 30% or greater from the mean. Since there are six variables, each eligible for a maximum score of +/- 3, the maximum scores would be +/- 18.

A detailed description of the 2002/2003 matrix is provided [Appendix E](#).

The Commission believes that this matrix is statistically defensible and is understandable. While it is not a panacea and doesn't cover everything, it does provide a measure of difficulty of representation, particularly within the categories of electoral divisions which the Commission adopted.

[Table 4](#) shows the results of applying this matrix to the existing electoral divisions.

**TABLE 4 - 2002/2003 MATRIX APPLIED TO EXISTING ELECTORAL DIVISIONS**

Electoral Division	TOTAL	Electoral Division	TOTAL
<b><u>MAJOR CITIES</u></b>		<b><u>URBANIZED</u></b>	
<b>CALGARY</b>		43 Airdrie-Rocky View	3
3 Calgary-Bow	-9	44 Banff-Cochrane	10
4 Calgary-Buffalo	-12	46 Bonnyville-Cold Lake	12
5 Calgary-Cross	-10	48 Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan	-1
6 Calgary-Currie	-11	49 Cypress-Medicine Hat	8
7 Calgary-East	-9	53 Fort McMurray	-5
8 Calgary-Egmont	-9	54 Grande Prairie-Smoky	12
9 Calgary-Elbow	-9	55 Grande Prairie-Wapiti	8
10 Calgary-Fish Creek	-10	56 Highwood	12
11 Calgary-Foothills	-9	60 Leduc	-3

12	Calgary-Fort	-4	61	Lethbridge-East	-3
13	Calgary-Glenmore	-9	62	Lethbridge-West	-3
14	Calgary-Lougheed	-7	65	Medicine Hat	-2
15	Calgary-McCall	-3	69	Red Deer-North	-12
16	Calgary-Montrose	-9	70	Red Deer-South	-14
17	Calgary-Mountain View	-11	73	St. Albert	-15
18	Calgary-North Hill	-10	74	Sherwood Park	-10
19	Calgary-North West	-8	75	Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert	-5
20	Calgary-Nose Creek	-8	77	Strathmore-Brooks	13
21	Calgary-Shaw	-4	79	Vermilion-Lloydminster	11
22	Calgary-Varsity	-3	82	Wetaskiwin-Camrose	-5
23	Calgary-West	-9			

#### EDMONTON

24	Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview	-13
25	Edmonton-Calder	-9
26	Edmonton-Castle Downs	-13
27	Edmonton-Centre	-18
28	Edmonton-Ellerslie	-9
29	Edmonton-Glengarry	-15
30	Edmonton-Glenora	-15
31	Edmonton-Gold Bar	-14
32	Edmonton-Highlands	-15
33	Edmonton-Manning	-9
34	Edmonton-McClung	-11
35	Edmonton-Meadowlark	-15
36	Edmonton-Mill Creek	-12
37	Edmonton-Mill Woods	-15
38	Edmonton-Norwood	-15
39	Edmonton-Riverview	-15
40	Edmonton-Rutherford	-15
41	Edmonton-Strathcona	-18
42	Edmonton-Whitemud	-9

#### RURAL

45	Barrhead-Westlock	9
47	Cardston-Taber-Warner	16
50	Drayton Valley-Calmor	7
51	Drumheller-Chinook	16
52	Dunvegan	16
57	Innisfail-Sylvan Lake	5
58	Lac La Biche-St. Paul	12
59	Lacombe-Stettler	6
63	Little Bow	16
64	Livingstone-Macleod	10
66	Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills	8
67	Peace River	16
68	Ponoka-Rimbey	5
71	Redwater	3
72	Rocky Mountain House	12
76	Stony Plain	3
78	Vegreville-Viking	9
80	Wainwright	13
81	West Yellowhead	10
83	Whitecourt-Ste. Anne	9

#### SPECIAL

1	Athabasca-Wabasca	16
2	Lesser Slave Lake	16

## Proposed Distribution of Electoral Divisions...

Early in its deliberations, the Commission concluded that Albertans would be closely examining two major features to its recommendations: the distribution of electoral divisions between Edmonton, Calgary and the rest of the province; and, the boundaries and names of individual electoral divisions. The Commission was impressed by the advice of Jo-Ann Teed at the Calgary hearing, essentially that the Commission should decide what should be done before trying to do it, i.e. decide on the distribution before worrying about individual boundaries.

A cursory review of the 2001 population of the existing electoral divisions shows that, in the majority of cases, the constituencies which are significantly above average are in or adjacent to Calgary and Edmonton (see [Table 2](#)). Those which are significantly below average are outside the metropolitan regions. For the existing electoral divisions, the highest population is in Calgary Shaw (82,516 people, 230% more than the average) and the lowest is Dunvegan (24,657 people, almost 69% of the average). In fact, Dunvegan now has a lower population than the Lesser Slave Lake special division (25,919). The Athabasca-Wabasca special division has a population of 20,752 (about 58% of the average).

During the hearings and the course of its deliberations, the Commission heard and considered a variety of



alternative distributions of electoral divisions. These included: strictly applying the provincial average population per division with no variation; using the allowable +/- 25% variation to the full; using all four allowable special electoral divisions; and arbitrarily assigning electoral divisions to Edmonton and Calgary and the remainder to the rest of the province.

Considering the submissions it heard emphasizing community of interest, the Commission considered treating the electoral divisions within the corporate boundaries of the cities of Calgary and Edmonton and the electoral divisions immediately adjacent to these boundaries as groups, since there is a real community of interest among people residing in these electoral divisions. The Commission is aware that in the mid-1950s there was a move to include all the adjoining communities in the two major cities. That essentially happened in the Calgary area, but in the Edmonton area the metropolitan area was not included in that city's boundaries. Therefore, recognizing that such a grouping likely would be unpopular with the municipal authorities in the Edmonton area in particular, the Commission rejected this alternative.

The Commission eventually decided to use the four categories of electoral divisions described earlier: major cities, urbanized, rural and special.

The distribution of electoral divisions proposed by the Commission is:

cc

CATEGORY	Existing	Proposed	CATEGORY	Existing	Proposed
Calgary	21	23	Urbanized	21	21
Edmonton	19	18	Rural	20	19
Major Cities	40	41	Special	2	2

The population in each proposed new division is shown in [Table 6](#).

The variation of the electoral divisions from the provincial quotient is:

CATEGORY	LOW	HIGH
Major Cities	+0.9%	+11.2%
Urbanized	-15%	+19.5%
Rural	-15.5%	+4.1%
Special	-27.1%	-27.8%

Within the categories the variation of the electoral divisions from the category average is:

CATEGORY	LOW	HIGH
Major Cities	-5.6%	+6.0%
Urbanized	-14.2%	+20.5%
Rural	-12.6%	+11.4%
Special	-0.5%	-0.5%

In the Major Cities category, generally the electoral divisions with lower populations are areas where growth has occurred since the 2001 census or is occurring at present and the electoral divisions with higher populations are generally those where little growth has occurred or is likely to occur.

In the Urbanized category, the electoral divisions with lower populations are growth areas or, in the case of Vermilion-Lloydminster (-15% of the average) include rural areas with very low density population. The electoral divisions with high population are Wood Buffalo (+19.5%), where the submissions indicated that the people wanted their municipality included in one division, and St. Albert (+8.9%), intended to include the majority of the city in one division.

In the Rural category, the electoral divisions with low populations are generally those which might qualify as special electoral divisions with slightly different boundaries. Two of the proposed rural electoral divisions (Drumheller-Stettler [-15.5%], and West Yellowhead [-18.4%]) have populations more than 15% below but less than 25% below the provincial quotient. Although technically these do not need to be designated as special electoral divisions, similar factors justify the relatively large deviations from the average population per division. They satisfy the area requirement, satisfy the distance requirement from the Legislature Building, and have borders coterminous with provincial borders.

The Commission believes that these variations from the provincial quotient are justifiable under the Act and

conform to the factors cited by the Supreme Court of Canada.

There are two proposed special electoral divisions:

(a) *Dunvegan* (-27.8%): area exceeds the limits set out in 15(2) of the *Act*, the distance from the Legislature Building in Edmonton to the nearest boundary of the proposed electoral division by the most direct highway route is more than 150 kilometres; there is no town in the proposed electoral division that has a population exceeding 4000 people; an Indian Reserve is located within the division; and the proposed electoral division has a portion of its boundary coterminous with a boundary of the province.

(b) *Lesser Slave Lake* (-27.1%): area exceeds the limits set out in 15(2) of the *Act*, the distance from the Legislature Building in Edmonton to the nearest boundary of the proposed electoral division by the most direct highway route is more than 150 kilometres, Indian Reserves and Metis Settlements are included in the division.

This distribution involves the addition of two new electoral divisions within the City of Calgary and a new division in the heavily populated area surrounding Calgary. The addition of these electoral divisions is offset by the reduction of one division in the City of Edmonton, the reduction of one division in central Alberta and the merger of the former Fort McMurray division with a portion of the former Athabasca-Wabasca special division to form one new Wood Buffalo division.

One member of the Commission, Bauni Mackay, does not support this conclusion. Ms. Mackay disagrees with the removal of a division from Edmonton because she believes that doing so fails to acknowledge Edmonton's growth and the major role the city plays in the economic success and social growth of the province. [Appendix B](#) of this report provides the full text of Ms. Mackay's Minority Position.

The majority of Commission members noted that the application of the matrix generally has indicated that Edmonton electoral divisions (and the adjacent electoral divisions) are the easiest in the province to effectively represent, even with the inclusion of the "dependant" population proportion as one of the variables. The majority of the Commission has been guided not only by the matrix but also by all of the information provided in oral and written representations, and by its own judgement and research.

The Commission acknowledges the submissions stressing that urban ridings have their own challenges, such as a large number of linguistic and cultural communities and a disproportionate number of people dependent on social programs. There is no hard data currently available from the 2001 census to support these representations, other than the "dependant" population ratio that has been included in the matrix.

The Commission has also noted that these types of challenges are not confined to the major cities, or even to urban areas. Many rural electoral divisions have significant numbers of different linguistic and cultural communities, particularly First Nations and Metis groups. They may also have significant numbers of people dependent on social programs.

In light of all the information provided to it, the majority of Commission members believe that in the circumstances the loss of only one division in Edmonton is appropriate. This will still leave Edmonton electoral divisions, on average, about 1,200 below the Calgary average population per division.

**TABLE 6 - POPULATIONS OF PROPOSED ELECTORAL DIVISIONS**

	Population	% PA	% CA		Population	% PA	% CA
<u>MAJOR CITIES</u>				<u>URBANIZED</u>			
CALGARY				44 Airdrie-Chestermere (NEW)	37,329	3.8%	4.7%
03 Calgary-Bow	39,673	10.4%	5.3%	45 Banff-Cochrane	35,264	-1.9%	-1.1%
04 Calgary-Buffalo	39,357	9.5%	4.4%	47 Bonnyville-Cold Lake	32,729	-9.0%	-8.2%
05 Calgary-Cross	38,835	8.0%	3.1%	49 Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan	37,014	3.0%	3.8%
06 Calgary-Currie	39,961	11.2%	6.0%	50 Cypress-Medicine Hat	32,169	-10.5%	-9.8%
07 Calgary-East	39,528	9.9%	4.9%	54 Grande Prairie-Smoky	36,158	0.6%	1.4%
08 Calgary-Egmont	37,518	4.4%	-0.4%	55 Grande Prairie-Wapiti	33,007	-8.2%	-7.4%
09 Calgary-Elbow	38,285	6.5%	1.6%	56 Highwood	31,375	-12.8%	-12.0%
10 Calgary-Fish Creek	36,597	1.8%	-2.9%	60 Leduc	37,378	4.0%	4.9%
11 Calgary-Foothills	38,327	6.6%	1.7%	61 Lethbridge-East	34,684	-3.5%	-2.7%
12 Calgary-Fort	38,491	7.1%	2.1%	62 Lethbridge-West	32,695	-9.1%	-8.3%
13 Calgary-Glenmore	38,124	6.0%	1.2%	65 Medicine Hat	35,889	-0.2%	0.7%
14 Calgary-Hays (NEW)	36,707	2.1%	-2.6%	68 Red Deer-North	36,115	0.5%	1.3%

15	Calgary-Lougheed	38,273	6.5%	1.6%	69	Red Deer-South	36,424	1.3%	2.2%
16	Calgary-McCall	36,458	1.4%	-3.2%	72	Sherwood Park	37,051	3.1%	3.9%
17	Calgary-Mackay (NEW)	37,803	5.2%	0.3%	73	Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert	37,657	4.7%	5.6%
18	Calgary-Montrose	38,478	7.0%	2.1%	74	St. Albert	39,160	8.9%	9.8%
19	Calgary-Mountain View	39,361	9.5%	4.5%	76	Strathmore-Brooks	38,140	6.1%	7.0%
20	Calgary-North Hill	38,072	5.9%	1.0%	78	Vermilion-Lloydminster	30,573	-15.0%	-14.2%
21	Calgary-North West	37,471	4.2%	-0.6%	81	Wetaskiwin-Camrose	36,157	0.6%	1.4%
22	Calgary-Nose Hill	38,596	7.4%	2.4%	83	Wood Buffalo	42,971	19.5%	20.5%
23	Calgary-Shaw	36,258	0.9%	-3.8%		Urbanized TOTAL (21)	749,939	Average	35,711
24	Calgary-Varsity	38,456	7.0%	2.1%					
25	Calgary-West	38,237	6.4%	1.5%					
	TOTAL (23)	878,866	Average	38,212					

**EDMONTON**

26	Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview	37,797	5.1%	0.3%
27	Edmonton-Calder	35,939	-0.0%	-4.6%
28	Edmonton-Castle Downs	37,570	4.5%	-0.3%
29	Edmonton-Centre	37,030	3.0%	-1.7%
30	Edmonton-Ellerslie	35,707	-0.7%	-5.2%
31	Edmonton-Decore	35,570	-1.1%	-5.6%
32	Edmonton-Glenora	36,766	2.3%	-2.4%
33	Edmonton-Gold Bar	37,280	3.7%	-1.1%
34	Edmonton-Highlands	37,470	4.2%	-0.6%
35	Edmonton-Manning	37,410	4.1%	-0.7%
36	Edmonton-McClung	38,266	6.4%	1.5%
37	Edmonton-Jasper Place-Meadowlark	36,483	1.5%	-3.2%
38	Edmonton-Mill Creek	36,545	1.7%	-3.0%
39	Edmonton-Mill Woods	38,339	6.6%	1.7%
40	Edmonton-Riverview	37,312	3.8%	-1.0%
41	Edmonton-Rutherford	36,420	1.3%	-3.3%
42	Edmonton-Strathcona	36,798	2.4%	-2.3%
43	Edmonton-Whitemud	37,402	4.0%	-0.7%
	TOTAL (18)	666,104	Average	37,006
	Major Cities TOTAL (41)	1,544,970	Average	37,682

**RURAL**

46	Barrhead-Westlock-Athabasca	36,085	0.4%	7.4%
48	Cardston-Taber-Warner	31,755	-11.7%	-5.5%
51	Drayton Valley-Calmar	34,038	-5.3%	1.3%
52	Drumheller-Stettler	30,387	-15.5%	-9.5%
53	Foothills-Rockyview (NEW)	34,083	-5.2%	1.5%
57	Innisfail-Sylvan Lake	36,660	2.0%	9.1%
58	Lac La Biche-St. Paul	33,790	-6.0%	0.6%
59	Lacombe-Ponoka	36,494	1.5%	8.7%
63	Little Bow	34,217	-8.5%	-2.1%
64	Livingstone-Macleod	33,534	-6.7%	-0.2%
66	Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills	34,885	-3.0%	3.9%
67	Peace River	31,434	-12.6%	-6.4%
70	Redwater	33,332	-7.3%	-0.8%
71	Rocky Mountain House	33,121	-7.9%	-1.4%
75	Stony Plain	37,410	4.1%	11.4%
77	Vegreville-Viking	34,004	-5.4%	1.2%
79	Wainwright	31,348	-12.8%	-6.7%
80	West Yellowhead	29,349	-18.4%	-12.6%
82	Whitecourt-Ste. Anne	32,251	-10.3%	-4.0%
	Rural TOTAL (19)	636,857	Average	33,519

**SPECIAL**

01	Dunvegan	25,958	-27.8%	-0.5%
02	Lesser Slave Lake	26,196	-27.1%	0.5%
	Special TOTAL (2)	52,154	Average	26,077

"%PA" means % over/under the Provincial Average. "%CA" means % over/under the Category Average

The effect of this proposal will be to change the boundaries of every electoral division in the province except one. Consequently, the names of some electoral divisions have been changed to reflect the new alignment.

Among these, the Commission is proposing three new names, recognizing former mayors in Calgary and Edmonton:

*Calgary Hays* - would recognize Harry William Hays, who served as Mayor of Calgary 1959 to 1963 and later served as Canada's Minister of Agriculture and as a Senator,

*Calgary Mackay* - would recognize Donald Hugh Mackay who served as Mayor of Calgary 1950 to 1959 during a time of tremendous growth. He led the Calgary contingent to the 1948 Grey Cup which began the national festival associated with the game. He also popularized the white stetson as one of Calgary's symbols, and

*Edmonton Decore* - would recognize Laurence G. Decore who served as Mayor of Edmonton 1983 to 1988 and conceived the idea of Edmonton's Heritage Festival. He later served as Alberta's Leader of the Official Opposition.

**Applying The Matrix...**

[Table 7](#) reports the results of applying the matrix to the proposed electoral divisions. For a full description of the matrix, see [Appendix E](#).

The range of matrix scores for the existing and proposed electoral divisions by category is

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
<b>MAJOR CITIES</b>		
<b>Calgary</b>	-3 to -12	-3 to -12
<b>Edmonton</b>	-9 to -18	-9 to -17
<b>URBANIZED</b>	-15 to 12	-15 to 15
<b>RURAL</b>	+3 to +16	+3 to +17
<b>SPECIAL</b>	+16	+16

[Appendix F](#) provides the descriptions of the boundaries of the proposed electoral divisions.

[Appendix G](#) includes maps showing the proposed electoral divisions.

**TABLE 7 - MATRIX APPLIED TO PROPOSED ELECTORAL DIVISIONS**

	Total		Total
<b>MAJOR CITIES</b>		<b>URBANIZED</b>	
<b>CALGARY</b>		44 Airdrie-Chestermere	0
03 Calgary-Bow	-9	45 Banff-Cochrane	8
04 Calgary-Buffero	-12	47 Bonnyville-Cold Lake	12
05 Calgary-Cross	-10	49 Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan	-4
06 Calgary-Currie	-12	50 Cypress-Medicine Hat	11
07 Calgary-East	-9	54 Grande Prairie-Smoky	12
08 Calgary-Egmont	-7	55 Grande Prairie-Wapiti	10
09 Calgary-Elbow	-8	56 Highwood	0
10 Calgary-Fish Creek	-10	60 Leduc	-1
11 Calgary-Foothills	-6	61 Lethbridge-East	-4
12 Calgary-Fort	-6	62 Lethbridge-West	-3
13 Calgary-Glenmore	-9	65 Medicine Hat	-2
14 Calgary-Hays (NEW)	-9	68 Red Deer-North	-8
15 Calgary-Lougheed	-7	69 Red Deer-South	-14
16 Calgary-McCall	-3	72 Sherwood Park	-10
17 Calgary-Mackay (NEW)	-6	73 Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert	-5
18 Calgary-Montrose	-9	74 St. Albert	-15
19 Calgary-Mountain View	-11	76 Strathmore-Brooks	15
20 Calgary-North Hill	-9	78 Vermilion-Lloydminster	9
21 Calgary-North West	-9	81 Wetaskiwin-Camrose	-2
22 Calgary-Nose Hill	-9	83 Wood Buffalo	7
23 Calgary-Shaw	-3		
24 Calgary-Varsity	-9	<b>RURAL</b>	
25 Calgary-West	-6	46 Barrhead-Westlock-Athabasca	10
		48 Cardston-Taber-Warner	17
<b>EDMONTON</b>		51 Foothills-Rockyview (NEW)	6
26 Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview	-14	52 Drayton Valley-Calmar	9
27 Edmonton-Calder	-9	53 Drumheller-Stettler	15
28 Edmonton-Castle Downs	-14	57 Innisfail-Sylvan Lake	4
29 Edmonton-Centre	-17	58 Lac La Biche-St. Paul	13

30 Edmonton-Ellerslie	-9	59 Lacombe-Ponoka	5
31 Edmonton-Decore	-15	63 Little Bow	17
32 Edmonton-Glenora	-15	64 Livingstone-Macleod	11
33 Edmonton-Gold Bar	-15	66 Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills	9
34 Edmonton-Highlands	-15	67 Peace River	16
35 Edmonton-Manning	-9	70 Redwater	3
36 Edmonton-McClung	-10	71 Rocky Mountain House	13
37 Edmonton-Jasper Place-Meadowlark	-15	75 Stony Plain	3
38 Edmonton-Mill Creek	-11	77 Vegreville-Viking	6
39 Edmonton-Mill Woods	-15	79 Wainwright	13
40 Edmonton-Riverview	-15	80 West Yellowhead	11
41 Edmonton-Rutherford	-16	82 Whitecourt-Ste. Anne	9
42 Edmonton-Strathcona	-17		
43 Edmonton-Whitemud	-9		
		<b><u>SPECIAL</u></b>	
		01 Dunvegan	16
		02 Lesser Slave Lake	16

## Issues for Future Consideration...

Various issues were raised with the Commission, in both written and oral submissions, which are beyond its current terms of reference. The Commission consistently pointed this out but also undertook to raise these as matters the Legislative Assembly needs to consider.

### FUTURE TRENDS

If demographic projections are correct, by far the most significant issue for future Electoral Boundaries Commissions will be the urban/rural split. Projections reported to this Commission suggest that Alberta will have a population of at least 4 million by 2030, mostly in the Calgary/Edmonton corridor.

The Legislative Assembly decided to maintain the total number of electoral divisions at 83 for the current review. A few submissions to the Commission suggested that, in order to address the urban/rural split issue, this number should be increased.

However, many more submissions, particularly those sent in writing, suggested that the number of electoral divisions should be reduced, generally suggesting that in the order of 60 Members of the Legislative Assembly would be sufficient.

The combined effect of the projected population growth in the corridor and the same or a reduced number of electoral divisions is that there will be fewer and much geographically larger rural electoral divisions in the future. It was suggested to the Commission that the existing four northern electoral divisions (excluding Fort McMurray) cover 49% of the province's land area but only have slightly more than 3% of the population. This raises questions of how big the rural electoral divisions will be and how large a division can be before it involves so many non-common interests that it is both impossible for the disparate issues of the electors to be represented and for the MLA to represent them.

Some submissions suggested that the representation by population issue and the "rural alienation" issue might be addressed by introducing either proportional representation or a mixed system with some MLAs elected by division and some by proportional representation. The suggested advantage here, in addition to party representation in the Legislative Assembly more closely reflecting the popular vote, would be that the parties could ensure that all areas of Alberta were represented by the MLAs they would appoint under the proportional system.

Others suggested that Alberta might introduce a "second house" or senate. Former MP Jack Horner observed to the Commission:

*The Fathers of Confederation in 1867 created a Senate. The Senate was devised to more or less spread out the representation. Western Canada got 24 Senators. There wasn't anybody living out here, hardly, in 1867. That's 10 years after Palliser went through this area, so that gives you an idea of how many people were here. Not very many. But western Canada was given 24 Senators, equal to Ontario, equal to Quebec. Why? Because the Fathers of Confederation believed that there was an economic importance to that vast area, that they'd better take it into consideration ... Is there a parallel today in Alberta? I don't know whether you gentlemen saw this Western Producer last week. The report tells a tale of two Albertas. I won't say anything more than that, but there are*

really two Albertas: the vast area poorly represented because of numbers and the cities overly represented because of numbers ...

*While my recommendation to your commission may be beyond your means, it's not beyond your means to recommend to the government that the question be studied. My solution to the long-term solution of this problem is to reduce the number of MLAs from 83 to 63 and create a Senate of 10 from urban Alberta and 10 from country Alberta. The Senate would be the sober second thought. I wouldn't recommend that the Senate have legislative powers over the elected body, but it would provide the sober second thought. An effective Senate in my opinion would be one appointed by the Premier of senior people of economic benefit, as the Canadian Senate was supposed to be. You had to be over 34, and you had to have some economic value.*<sup>1</sup>

A different approach was suggested by Hudson Foley at the Slave Lake hearing when he said:

*... the biggest issue that I see in this province is that ... there seems to be this almost assumed position that when Edmonton and Calgary are looked at, there are no limits. No one sits back and says: well, with economic development, I think we're reaching our limit here. It's always like: well, it's getting hard for us to develop anymore in Calgary or Edmonton, so what can we take from northern or rural Alberta to make it work so that we can keep building more factories or more mills or more whatever the case may be in Edmonton or Calgary? We have to start looking at saying: "No. We've reached our limit here in outer Calgary. We can't look at shipping water down there." We can't look at any of these other types of options. We have to actually start looking at viable options and say: "No. We can't handle it in this area anymore. If you want to develop in Alberta, unfortunately you're going to have to look elsewhere other than Edmonton or Calgary, whether it's in northern Alberta or the rural areas or whatever the case may be, so that we can start spreading out these impacts: economic, environment, and otherwise." It just seems to be that that one is always kind of skirted around.*

The summary of submissions on this issue is that Alberta needs to "get outside the box" in considering representation by population and the appropriate variation. There need to be new and refreshing approaches to this issue which should avoid continued marginalization and separation of rural/urban. It was generally acknowledged that this broad discussion should take place outside the boundary review.

The Legislative Assembly needs to give priority to seriously considering how the urban/rural split issue will be addressed in the future. The Commission believes that this is an Alberta issue which will have to be addressed in the future.

#### CONSTITUENCY OFFICES

Despite the increasing availability of electronic communication modes, people want to be able to make personal contact with their MLA, or at least with someone who will review their documentation, and provide information and assistance in dealing with their issues. On a day-to-day basis, that contact happens through the constituency offices.

The major cities are magnets for people with social problems and for immigrants. The constituency offices in the major cities, although easily accessible to most constituents, face challenges related to language, culture, social problem caseloads and the ability to provide competitive compensation for staff. For example, MLA Brian Mason pointed out to the Commission that in Edmonton-Norwood

*residents there have family incomes 38 percent below the provincial average and therefore are more dependent on government services and therefore more dependent on the office of the MLA. By contrast, Edmonton-Whitemud residents have family incomes 56 percent above the provincial average. All other things being equal, it may be more difficult to effectively represent a constituency like Edmonton-Norwood than Edmonton-Whitemud, for example. The commission should therefore also take into account ethnic and linguistic diversity as well as the incidence of poverty and unemployment when establishing boundaries for electoral divisions.*

Another difference, pointed out to the Commission, is that local officials in the major cities tend to make direct contact with Ministers and senior appointed officials. The challenge for the urban MLA is to keep informed on the city's issues. In the rural areas the MLA is expected to make the contact with Ministers and senior officials. So the challenge for the rural MLA is to become an instant expert on a great variety of issues in order to present them to the Ministers. As Reeve Emma Hult of the County of Warner put it:

*Travel time for ... delegations wishing to make presentations to government is an added cost and a loss of effectiveness as well as timeliness. Rural municipalities then attempt to present issues at convention time, and as a municipality we've been faced with that many times. ... you do try to cram it in at convention time. It loses its effectiveness. It's not as timely. Rural communities have a strong grassroots involvement in government affairs and place great importance on maintaining contact with their MLA. This increases pressure on the workload of the rural MLAs to effectively represent the citizens.*



In the large rural electoral divisions, an issue may be the significant travel time imposed on the constituents to attend a constituency office, even if the office is located in the geographic centre of the division. Multiple constituency offices are required to provide reasonable opportunity of access for the residents of the large rural electoral divisions.

The Legislative Assembly should consider the resources allocated for constituency offices. One submission, by Bruce Rutley, speaking at the Peace River hearing, even suggested a method for calculating the budget entitlement:

*So basically the formula would read that the amount of money made available to a constituency office for its operations would be equal to the current funds, or whatever base fund the government feels is appropriate, multiplied by a ratio. The ratio is to take the ranking of the constituency association, divide it by the average of the matrix ranking, and that's the ratio. For example, Dunvegan has a ranking of 68. The current provincial average is 36. That's 1.88. Then in order to operate this constituency, a factor of the base times 1.88 would provide additional dollars to run a constituency. There are a number of ways in which you can cut that, but the concept is the important part for you to consider.*

This suggestion doesn't take account of the urban factors but does provide an example of the type of formula which could be developed to allocate constituency office budgets.

#### FREQUENCY OF REVIEW

*Sections 5(2) and 5(3) of the Act provide that*

*(2) Subsequent Commissions are to be appointed during the first session of the Legislature following every 2nd general election after the appointment of the last Commission.*

*(3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), if less than 8 years has elapsed since the appointment of the last Commission, the Commission is to be appointed*

*(a) no sooner than 8 years, and*

*(b) no later than 10 years*

*after the appointment of the last Commission.*

Some submissions suggested the Act should simply say that the review of division boundaries will take place after every decennial census.

<sup>1</sup> *NOTE: this is an excerpt from the Hansard of the Drumheller hearing. In fact, western Canada was not entitled to 24 senators until membership in the Senate was reconstituted in 1915.*

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