



Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission
March 22, 2010
100, 11510 Kingsway Ave
Edmonton, AB. T5G 2Y5

Dear Commission Members:

Re: Proposed changes to electoral districts

The Brooks & District Chamber of Commerce wishes to express our opposition to the proposed boundary changes to the electoral district our members reside in.

We strongly urge the Commission to reconsider the changes proposed to the current electoral district of Strathmore-Brooks, and leave the current constituency boundaries largely intact.

As per the considerations laid out in the mandate for your Commission:

1. Sparsity and density of population

With a target population of 40,880, the current population of the existing Strathmore-Brooks constituency at 41,757 is within 10.4% of that target.

Within the current geographical boundaries of this constituency, this additional population has not caused any undue hardship for our provincially elected representative.

The two major population centres in the current constituency (the City of Brooks and Strathmore) have similar populations and a similar mix of business sectors, and lend a nice geographical balance to the population in the existing constituency. Again this distribution pattern aids the communication with our provincial elected representative.

2. Common community interests and community organizations

Region wide organizations such as Grasslands FCSS, the Newell Regional Tourism Association and the Newell Regional Expo are examples of collaboration and partnership with the current municipal boundaries.

The primary trading pattern within the current electoral district follows an east-west pattern (like many other areas of rural eastern Alberta) along the TransCanada Highway.

3. Existing municipal boundaries

The County of Newell and the City of Brooks, along with numerous other organizations and associations including the Eastern Irrigation District, within the boundaries of these two municipalities, have been a leading example of how regional partnerships can work.

Projects like the regional water system (Newell Regional Services Corporation), and the new recreation and agricultural exhibition park (Centennial Regional Arena, Silver Sage Agribition Grounds) are examples of this. Regional cooperation, within the boundaries of the existing municipal boundaries, has also led to cooperation of an intermunicipal development plan, a new intermunicipal assessment review committee, and shared protective services.

4. Geographical features

The current Strathmore-Brooks constituency has natural borders on the north and south, with the Bow and Red Deer Rivers and these boundaries easily define our general east-west trading and social networking pattern also.

Changing the boundaries of the current Strathmore-Brooks constituency, and in particular having to work with three different provincially elected representatives in the region that is now the County of Newell and the Eastern Irrigation District would be a major detriment to the progress made in regional cooperation and partnerships. Not only would this change create a loss of momentum on many projects, but it would lead to confusion infrastructural and jurisdictional responsibilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to hear our concerns.

Kind Regards,

Reg Radke
President