



What is the Electoral Boundaries Commission?

In BC, an independent Electoral Boundaries Commission is established after every second election to consult with the public, and to recommend adjustments to electoral boundaries and the number of Members elected to the Legislative Assembly. There are currently 79 electoral districts in BC, with one MLA representing each district; under the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act the commission has the authority to recommend up to 85 electoral districts and MLAs.

For the first time in history, a non-partisan electoral boundaries commission has been instructed to provide recommendations for not one but two sets of boundaries; one set under the current Single Member Plurality (SMP) electoral system, and a second set for the BC-Single Transferable Vote (BC-STV) electoral system, which was recommended by the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform in 2004. British Columbians will vote in a BC-STV referendum in conjunction with the May 2009 provincial election.

Who are the commissioners?

The three commissioners appointed under the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act are:

- **Mr. Justice Bruce Cohen, a judge of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, who acts as Chair,**
- **Stewart Ladyman, a retired educator who lives in Penticton, and;**
- **Harry Neufeld, the Chief Electoral Officer of British Columbia.**

Why Change Boundaries?

BC's population is growing; some communities are experiencing a rapid increase in population, some are growing at a slow and steady rate, while the number of people living in other areas is decreasing. The commission needs to consider these changes, and projections for population growth, in order to set boundaries that will ensure effective representation.

Why Develop BC-STV Boundaries?

The commission was asked to develop boundaries for the BC-STV system so voters will have an understanding of the size of electoral districts, and MLA representation within multi-member districts, when they vote in the BC-STV referendum in May 2009. If the proposed electoral system is supported by voters, the BC-STV boundaries will be used in the scheduled election of May 2013.

The Commission's Timetable

The commission is required to file a report with the legislature by August 15, 2007; and to file any amendments to the report by February 15, 2008.

What is SMP?

We currently elect one MLA for each electoral district using the Single Member Plurality system, also known as First-Past-the-Post system. The candidate with the most votes (a plurality of votes) wins the seat for the electoral district. The party with the most seats forms the government.

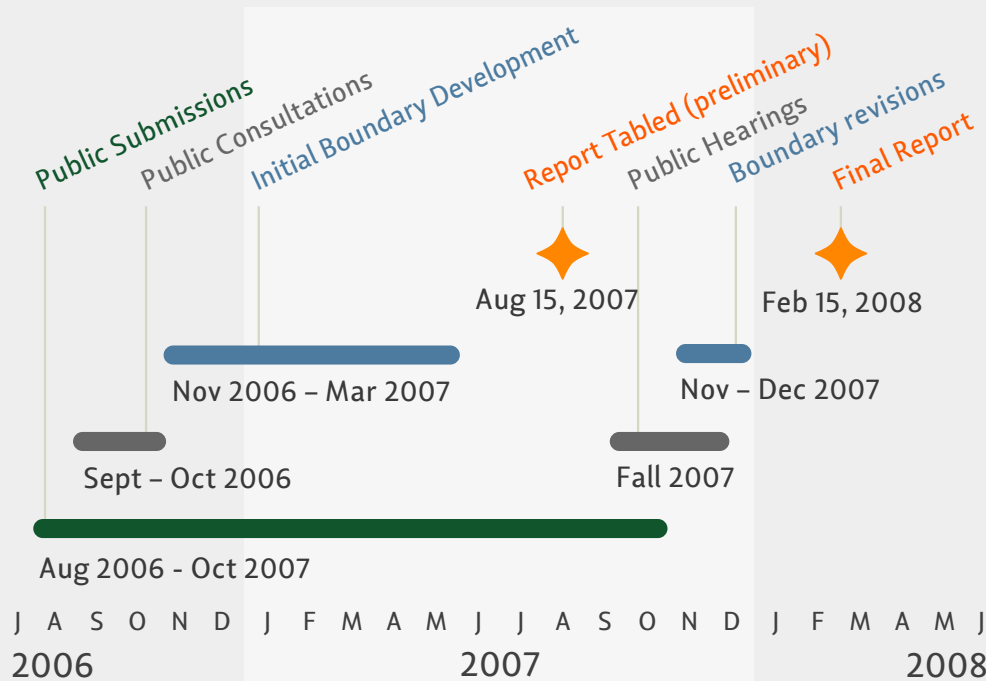
What is BC-STV?

Under the proposed BC-STV electoral system the same number of MLAs would be elected to the Legislative Assembly; each electoral district will have between 2 and 7 MLAs, therefore electoral districts will be larger. Electoral districts with a larger population would have more MLAs, but each MLA would represent approximately the same number of people. Voters would mark one ballot, but make multiple voting choices on the ballot. Voters would indicate their first, second, third or more preferences from the list of candidates in that electoral district. The counting of ballots considers these preferences.

Detailed descriptions of BC-STV and of how votes are counted are available through

- **Public libraries**
- **The Referendum Information website at www.gov.bc.ca/referendum_info**
- **The Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform website: www.citizensassembly.bc.ca.**

Electoral Commission Timeline



How Can I Get Involved?

The commission will be holding public consultation meetings in various communities, as well as with MLAs and political parties. Your views on boundary adjustments for the current electoral system, and suggested boundaries for the proposed BC-STV system, are welcome. You can get involved by:

- **Sending your comments through mail, e-mail or the commission's website. (Contact info listed on the back of this brochure).**
- **Attending an informal public consultation session in the fall of 2006**
- **Making a written submission by mail or through the commission's website**
- **Making an oral presentation to the commission at one of the public hearings scheduled for the fall of 2007; these hearings are an opportunity to make comments on the recommendations in the report.**

Schedules of all sessions and hearings will be advertised and listed on the commission's website. Information on how to make a written submission or oral presentation is available on the website or by contacting the commission office.