



ELECTIONS BC

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

Service Plan

2009/10 - 2011/12

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Harry Neufeld

Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

It is my pleasure to present Elections BC's Service Plan for 2009/10 – 2011/12 to the Legislative Assembly.

This plan provides an overview of the work, priorities and performance measures Elections BC commits itself to during the current fiscal year and the two that follow. This fiscal year the predominant focus for my office will be on concluding the implementation of new electoral district boundaries, conducting an enumeration of the province's estimated 3,200,000 eligible voters and administering the 39th Provincial General Election and the 2009 Referendum on Electoral Reform. However, the work of Elections BC in all three fiscal years will be significantly impacted by legislative changes that were introduced in 2008.

In addition to administering four electoral events, Elections BC will prepare a number of analysis reports during the 2009/10 fiscal year. These will include reports on the electoral boundary redistribution, the enumeration of voters, as well as formal Statements of Votes for both the election and referendum. Other reports on electoral administration matters and recommendations for legislative change will also be developed and tabled with the Legislative Assembly.

As our province faces increased fiscal pressures, Elections BC understands the coming years will feature significant budgetary constraints. The allocated resource levels will have a number of impacts on my office.

The planned redevelopment of the Electoral Information System outlined in the 2008/09 – 2010/11 Service Plan will not proceed. The current system will be maintained to ensure functionality through the 2013 Provincial General Election. Beyond that time, we are advised that maintaining the system will no longer be possible and that it will need to be replaced.

Plans for consolidating ongoing operations into one event-capable office have now been cancelled. Without expansion space, we will be required to find temporary space in added locations in order to conduct headquarters operations whenever an electoral event occurs.

As we await the outcome of the May 2009 Referendum on Electoral Reform, my staff also understand the need to be well-positioned to significantly adjust course should Elections BC be required to implement the BC-Single Transferable Vote electoral system by 2013.

Elections BC remains committed to maintaining a leadership position in electoral administration. This Service Plan outlines an ambitious and demanding program that will draw on the dedication, resourcefulness and considerable talents and skills of the Elections BC team.

Harry Neufeld
Chief Electoral Officer

The Organization

Elections BC is an independent, non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for conducting provincial general elections, by-elections and referendums and administering the initiative and recall processes as detailed in provincial legislation.

MANDATE

To administer the provincial electoral process in British Columbia in accordance with the *Election Act*, *Recall and Initiative Act* and *Constitutional Amendment Approval Act*.

VISION

To be leaders in electoral administration.

MISSION

To serve democracy in British Columbia through the fair and impartial administration of the provincial electoral process.

Core Program Areas

FOR OPERATIONAL PURPOSES, ELECTIONS BC IS DIVIDED INTO FIVE PROGRAM AREAS

- **Executive**
- **Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration**
- **Corporate Planning and Event Management**
- **Voter Registration and Boundaries**
- **Information Technology**

Executive

The Executive program area provides organizational leadership and is responsible for legislation, Orders and Regulations, compliance, enforcement and investigations, partnerships, inter-jurisdictional liaison and collaboration, reporting to the Legislative Assembly, communications and voter outreach, and public education programs regarding voter registration and the electoral process.

Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration

The Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration program area is responsible for political party and constituency association registration, campaign finance reporting, advertising sponsor registration and financial disclosure as well as conducting financial compliance reviews of political parties, constituency associations, candidates, advertising sponsors, leadership contestants and recall and initiative participants.

The program area is also responsible for corporate administration and human resource services for Elections BC's core group of 44 public service employees and up to 32,000 temporary staff and election officials during major electoral events.

Core Program Areas

Corporate Planning and Event Management

The Corporate Planning and Event Management program area is responsible for the effective and efficient planning and administration of provincial electoral events, including general elections, by-elections, referenda and recall and initiative petitions. This includes ensuring Elections BC is in a constant state of readiness for non-scheduled events, as well as leading the planning and preparation of scheduled events.

Corporate Planning and Event Management also manages Elections BC's District Electoral Officers, coordinates event support activities across other program areas and leads post-event evaluation and assessment.

Corporate Planning and Event Management is also responsible for the organization's strategic planning and development and maintenance of Elections BC's planning framework, risk management and performance measurement programs.

Voter Registration and Boundaries

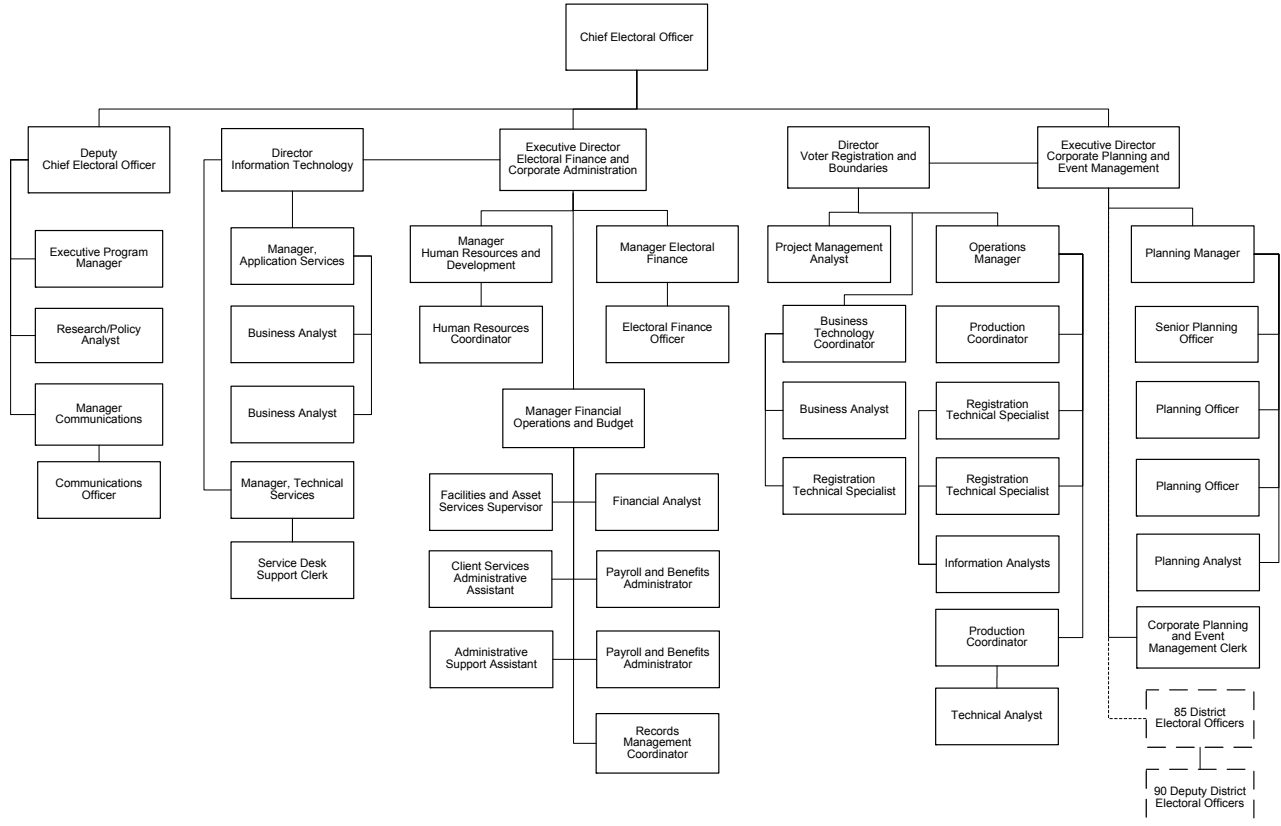
Voter Registration and Boundaries is responsible for voter registration, maintenance of the provincial register of voters, maintenance of electoral district and voting area boundaries as well as the production of high-quality electoral data, reports and maps.

The Voter Registration and Boundaries program area is also responsible for providing a variety of products necessary for the administration of electoral events including the provincial voters list, an address register, the integrated digital electoral atlas, electoral maps, street indexes and the Location Index.

Information Technology

The Information Technology (IT) program area provides information management systems, computer infrastructure and technical services for Elections BC. The program area leads IT planning, develops and implements IT policies, procedures and standards, implements corporate IT initiatives and performs systems operations, administration, security and maintenance.

Organization Chart



Strategic Context

Elections BC staff are in the midst of a period of unprecedented challenge. In 2009, unique circumstances have come together to result in four major electoral events for Elections BC to administer:

- **A redistribution of the province from 79 to 85 electoral districts**
- **An enumeration to encourage voters to register, update or confirm their voter registration**
- **The 39th provincial general election, with six more electoral districts**
- **A second referendum on electoral reform**

To achieve the necessary milestones in support of the May 12, 2009 General Election and Referendum on Electoral Reform, Elections BC's team of dedicated staff will:

- Finalize the redistribution of the province into 85 electoral districts.
- Conduct an enumeration of the province's 3,200,000-plus eligible voters between February 2, 2009 and April 21, 2009.
- Produce a high-quality voters list with a target of 90% of the province's eligible voters on the list and at least 80% of voter address records current.
- Recruit and train more than 32,000 temporary workers to deliver all of the activities associated with the May 12, 2009 election and referendum.

- Ensure an estimated 1,500 general voting places (schools, community halls, recreation centres, etc.), 200 advance voting locations and 90 district electoral offices are rented or arranged and ready to receive voters.
- Conduct an intensive public information campaign to provide voters with:
 - the information they need on voter registration, the candidates in their electoral district, voting opportunities and new voter ID requirements
 - details of advance voting opportunities and General Voting Day voting locations
 - timely reporting of voting results
- Conduct the four electoral events in an efficient and impartial manner.
- Perform compliance reviews on hundreds of election financing reports filed by candidates, registered political parties, constituency associations and election and referendum advertising sponsors.
- Conduct post-event reviews with staff and stakeholders and document lessons learned.
- Publish a series of event-related reports in accordance with s. 13 (1) (b) of the *Election Act*.

This demanding agenda is being carried out in an environment of significant legislative change and operational budgetary constraints.

Planning Context

The work of Elections BC, like other election management bodies, is generally only noticed during the election period. However, Elections BC maintains a demanding ongoing schedule of preparatory activities to ensure it is ready to administer both scheduled and unscheduled events.

Elections BC has established goals and objectives that provide the foundation for a well-performing organization, continual readiness for electoral events, efficient and inclusive administration of electoral events, and an organization that is well-prepared to meet the challenges of its mandate.

GOALS

Elections BC plans to fulfill its mission and vision by achieving four goals:

- 1. Ensure ongoing support and enhancement of the electoral process.**
- 2. Ensure effective and efficient administration of electoral events.**
- 3. Provide an inclusive and accessible electoral process.**
- 4. Be a learning organization that develops and shares best practices.**

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

GOAL 1: ENSURE ONGOING SUPPORT AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Maintaining organizational and systems readiness for fixed-date or unscheduled electoral events requires cross-program coordination and integration between electoral events and throughout the business cycle. Keeping the electoral and other information systems up to date, maintaining the policy and legislative framework, making ongoing investments in voter registration and recruiting appropriately skilled staff are critical to the success of Elections BC.

Objectives:

Elections BC's objectives are to:

- Produce quality and timely electoral information.
- Develop and maintain policy and legislative frameworks that permit innovation and facilitate compliance.
- Maintain a sound infrastructure that meets our organization needs.

Strategies:

Elections BC intends to:

- Maintain and improve the voters list and address register by:

- implementing data-quality standards and regular measuring of list quality against those standards
- expanding and enhancing of data access agreements
- reviewing, analyzing and improving data exchange and integration processes
- contacting voters directly and through mailings
- Work proactively and cooperatively with policy and legislative specialists to shape the development of legislation to improve clarity and simplify processes and services for voters and clients.
- Study and report on what is necessary for Elections BC to implement BC-STV, if voters choose that system in the 2009 Referendum on Electoral Reform.
- Monitor compliance and evaluate legislation and policy changes to address issues.
- Maintain a legislative interpretation compendium.
- Maintain the corporate risk management program.
- Research requirements and investigate options for electoral technology renewal.
- Review voting administration procedures to identify efficiencies and establish best practices.

Elections BC's performance measure for Goal 1 will be:

| Performance Measure | 2007/08 Actual | 2008/09 Forecast | 2009/10 Target | 2010/11 Target | 2011/12 Target |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Voters list quality* | | | | | |
| Coverage | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 |
| Currency | 75 | 82 | 80 | 78 | 78 |
| Net currency | 67 | 74 | 72 | 70 | 70 |

* Coverage is the percentage of voters on the list compared to the number of eligible voters in the province. Currency is the percentage of voters on the list at the right address. Net currency is the percentage of eligible voters on the list at the right address.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

GOAL 2: ENSURE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTORAL EVENTS

Electoral events give British Columbians the opportunity to participate in the democracy of their province. As custodian of that right, Elections BC must ensure the efficient and effective administration of electoral events through the implementation of redistributed electoral boundaries, the development of voters lists, organizational readiness and providing a wide range of opportunities for eligible voters to participate in events.

Objectives:

Elections BC's objectives are to:

- Maintain an appropriate level of readiness to administer all electoral events.
- Administer electoral events using detailed event plans created and delivered by Elections BC staff.

Strategies:

Elections BC intends to:

- Administer the redistribution, enumeration, election and referendum on electoral reform according to the approved event plans including:
 - communicating extensively with voters to inform them about electoral activities and encourage registration and voting
 - hiring and training over 32,000 election and voter registration officials
 - conducting voting and counting
 - reporting and publishing election results
- Reviewing legislated electoral finance disclosure and expense reports.
- Review event administration processes to improve planning and delivery of future electoral events.
- Conduct quarterly reviews to confirm by-election and recall and initiative petition event readiness.

Elections BC's performance measure for Goal 2 will be to establish and achieve event-readiness milestones.

| Performance Measure | 2007/08 Actual | 2008/09 Forecast | 2009/10 Target | 2010/11 Target | 2011/12 Target |
|--|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Percentage event-readiness milestones achieved on time | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

GOAL 3: PROVIDE AN INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE ELECTORAL PROCESS

This goal recognizes the need for the province's electoral processes to be inclusive and accessible for all of British Columbia's voters. Ensuring the organization makes information and services available that meet voters' needs is fundamental to the success of Elections BC and the province's democracy.

Objectives:

Elections BC's objectives are to:

- Provide high-quality services to clients in a manner that is responsive to their needs.
- Provide the public with easy-to-understand information and engaging materials about the electoral process.

Strategies:

Elections BC intends to:

- Consult with voters and other clients to identify ways to improve their experience with the electoral process.
- Develop and implement long-term public education strategies to engage voters and improve democratic participation.
- Hold structured annual meetings with all registered political parties to provide information, reinforce roles and gather feedback.
- Investigate options for developing new voting, counting and voting place procedures and using technologies to increase efficiency and provide better service to voters.

To measure its performance on Goal 3, Elections BC will conduct an annual survey of selected client groups to evaluate client response to specific programs or services.

| Performance Measure | 2007/08 Actual | 2008/09 Forecast | 2009/10 Target | 2010/11 Target | 2011/12 Target |
|--|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Percentage average annual satisfaction score | 96 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

GOAL 4: BE A LEARNING ORGANIZATION THAT DEVELOPS AND SHARES BEST PRACTICES

Elections BC is a highly focused and dynamic organization that maintains flexibility to respond to scheduled and on-demand electoral events. The organization is committed to the development and implementation of sound business and human resource policies and procedures that encourage best practices, partnerships with external clients and support for the organization's staff.

Objectives:

Elections BC's objectives are to:

- Participate in, encourage and support partnerships and inter-jurisdictional cooperation and collaboration.
- Encourage and support staff in professional development.
- Establish a learning culture that fosters innovation.

Strategies

Elections BC intends to:

- Expand and enhance partnerships with key stakeholders including data providers, municipalities and other electoral jurisdictions.
- Observe and learn from electoral events in other jurisdictions.
- Participate in Canadian electoral conferences.
- Host the 2010 national Conference of Canadian Election Officials (CCEO).
- Refine and maintain employee performance and development plans.
- Maintain and enhance the staff training program.

To measure its performance on Goal 4, Elections BC will encourage staff participation in a variety of educational activities.

| Performance Measure | 2007/08 Actual | 2008/09 Forecast | 2009/10 Target | 2010/11 Target | 2011/12 Target |
|---|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Percentage calculated learning index* score for EBC's permanent staff | 82 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |

* The learning index is an aggregate measure of Elections BC's participation in workshops, conferences, the CCEO Electoral Technology Committee, partnerships agreements, inter-jurisdictional sharing and employee training.

Financial Outlook

HOW WE ALLOCATE OUR RESOURCES

The activities of Elections BC are driven by the legislation it administers and the associated actions of its clients. The timing of by-elections, recall and initiative petitions and some other electoral events are not controlled by Elections BC.

In consideration of the unpredictable nature of the work of the office, both the *Election Act* and the *Recall and Initiative Act* establish that all necessary expenses required for the administration of those Acts must be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (SSCFGS) recognizes that the budget needs of Elections BC are sometimes demand-driven and has established

a process whereby the Chief Electoral Officer advises the Chair of the Committee in writing when additional funds are required to administer unscheduled electoral events. This process has been followed since 2002.

The following pages provide a summary of the financial and human resources required by Elections BC for ongoing operations, purchases of capital assets and the planning and preparation for scheduled electoral events. Following its rigorous planning framework, Elections BC continues to plan for upcoming electoral events beyond the four that are impending. Event budgets beyond fiscal year 2009/10 will be developed as part of that planning process.

Summary Ongoing Financial Outlook

| | 2008/09 (budget) \$ | 2009/10 (budget) \$ | 2010/11 (planned) \$ | 2011/12 (planned) \$ |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| ONGOING OPERATING COSTS | | | | |
| Funding | | | | |
| Approved budget by SSCFGS | 7,659,000 | 7,753,000 | 7,753,000 | 7,753,000 |
| Total funding for ongoing operating costs | 7,659,000 | 7,753,000 | 7,753,000 | 7,753,000 |
| Notes¹ Expenses for ongoing operating costs | | | | |
| 1 Salaries and benefits | 3,393,000 | 3,539,000 | 3,541,000 | 3,541,000 |
| 2 Amortization | 928,000 | 596,000 | 392,000 | 236,000 |
| 3 Building occupancy charges | 484,000 | 464,000 | 594,000 | 599,000 |
| 4 Office expenses and telecommunications | 358,000 | 506,000 | 503,000 | 495,000 |
| 5 Corporate information systems | 1,144,000 | 1,337,000 | 1,190,000 | 1,295,000 |
| 6 Event readiness | 48,000 | - | 3,000 | 10,000 |
| 7 Address and boundary maintenance | 289,000 | 432,000 | 479,000 | 579,000 |
| 8 Voters list maintenance | 256,000 | 129,000 | 192,000 | 139,000 |
| 9 Political entity reporting | 297,000 | 299,000 | 400,000 | 307,000 |
| 10 Officer salary and benefits | 312,000 | 321,000 | 329,000 | 330,000 |
| 11 Voter education | 150,000 | 130,000 | 130,000 | 222,000 |
| Total expenses for ongoing operating costs | 7,659,000 | 7,753,000 | 7,753,000 | 7,753,000 |
| FULLTIME EQUIVALENTS (FTE) | 44 | 44 | 44 | 44 |

1 See the following page for detailed information on notes 1 -11.

CAPITAL ASSETS

Approved budget by SSCFGS

| | | | | |
|---|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Personal computer hardware and software | 67,000 | - | - | - |
| Mainframe/mini computer hardware and software | 227,000 | 2,860,000 | 2,860,000 | 2,860,000 |
| Office furniture and equipment | - | - | - | - |
| Tenant improvements | - | - | - | - |
| Operating equipment | 10,000 | - | - | - |
| Total funding for capital assets | 304,000 | 2,860,000 | 2,860,000 | 2,860,000 |

Expenditures for capital assets

| | | | | |
|---|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Personal computer hardware and software | 67,000 | - | - | - |
| Mainframe/mini computer hardware and software | 227,000 | 2,860,000 | 2,860,000 | 2,860,000 |
| Office furniture and equipment | - | - | - | - |
| Tenant improvements | - | - | - | - |
| Operating equipment | 10,000 | - | - | - |
| Total expenditures for capital assets | 304,000 | 2,860,000 | 2,860,000 | 2,860,000 |

2009/10 Event-Related Funding Requirements

| | | 2008/09 | 2009/10 |
|-------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | (budget) | (budget) |
| | | \$ | \$ |
| Notes | | | |
| 12 | Electoral boundary redistribution | 2,142,000 | 44,000 |
| 13 | Enumeration | 2,828,000 | 568,000 |
| 14 | 2009 General Election | 5,897,000 | 32,224,000 |
| 15 | 2009 Referendum on Electoral Reform | 297,000 | 851,000 |
| | | 11,164,000 | 33,687,000 |
| | | 11,164,000 | 33,687,000 |

NOTES ON THE FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

1. Salaries and benefits of permanent employees.
2. Amortization for the Electoral Information System, the Recall and Initiative Verification System (RIVERS), Motor Voter System, Inventory Distribution System and other electoral event systems, office computer systems and furniture.
3. Rental charges for office and warehouse rent.
4. Office expenses, telephones, supplies, equipment, postage, courier, bank charges, staff training, travel, legal fees, statutory advertising.
5. Office-wide information systems costs, including maintenance of the Electoral Information System, e-mail, internet and network services.
6. Forms, guides and software maintenance to ensure constant readiness for recall petitions, initiative petitions and by-elections.
7. Maintenance and updating of address register, base map updates, electoral district and voting area boundary maintenance.
8. Voters list updates, voter registration, software subscriptions and voters list system maintenance.
9. Reviews of financial reports of political entities. Investigations of political entities, candidates and election advertising sponsors. Guides, forms, and training for political entities, financial agents and auditors. Registration and updates of political parties, constituency associations, advertising sponsors. Maintenance of scanning and financial report electronic disclosure system.
10. Salary and benefits of the Chief Electoral Officer.
11. Voter education programs, including school kits.
12. Implement new electoral district (ED) boundaries as established by the *Electoral Districts Act*. Establish and implement new voting area (VA) boundaries within the new electoral districts. Includes voter and geographic data conversion, accelerated production of electoral district and voting area maps, street index and conversion tables and geo-referencing addresses to electoral districts and voting areas.
13. Prepare and conduct an enumeration of eligible voters through mailing of province-wide enumeration notices, integrated communications activities and data updates from external sources and by visiting long-term care facilities and homeless shelters.
14. Plan, prepare and conduct the 2009 General Election. Includes District Electoral Officer and Deputy District Electoral Officer fees and training, election official fees, voting place and office rentals, information technology uplift, advertising, 1-800 call centre, development, preparation, printing and shipping of election materials, acquisition of office equipment, computers and supplies for district electoral offices and maintaining additional office space and temporary staff.
15. Plan, prepare and conduct the 2009 Referendum on Electoral Reform. Includes preparation, printing and shipping of referendum materials, advertising, election official fees and temporary staff.

Glossary of Terms

BC-STV

The BC-Single Transferable Vote is the electoral system proposed by the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. Under the system, each electoral district would elect between two and seven Members of the Legislative Assembly.

By-election

An election other than one conducted as part of a general election.

Electoral district

The province is geographically divided into electoral districts (constituencies or ridings), each returning one Member to the Legislative Assembly.

Enumeration

The registration of voters by residence-to-residence visitation or by another method directed or authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer.

General election

Elections called on the same date for all electoral districts in the province to elect all Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Initiative petition

A petition under the *Recall and Initiative Act* to have a proposed law introduced in the Legislative Assembly.

Initiative vote

If the Select Standing Committee on Legislative Initiatives refers a successful initiative petition and draft Bill to the Chief Electoral Officer, the Chief Electoral Officer must hold an initiative vote under the *Recall and Initiative Act*.

Recall petition

A petition under the *Recall and Initiative Act* to remove a Member of the Legislative Assembly from office between elections.

Redistribution

A process to change electoral boundaries to account for population changes and other concerns regarding fair and effective representation.

Referendum

If the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers that an expression of public opinion is desirable on any matter of public interest or concern, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may, by Regulation, order that a referendum be conducted under the *Referendum Act* or another Act. A referendum is binding on the government that initiated it.

Voters list

The voters list is prepared and maintained by the Chief Electoral Officer, and contains the names and residential addresses of registered voters in each electoral district.

Voting area

An electoral district is divided into voting areas for the purpose of assigning voters to voting places. A voting area is generally a geographic area containing no more than 400 registered voters.

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