ELECTIONS BC

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

Service Plan

2010/11 - 2012/13

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Harry Neufeld

Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

It is my pleasure to present Elections BC's Service Plan for 2010/11 – 2012/13 to the Legislative Assembly.

This plan provides an overview of the work, priorities and performance measures my office is committing itself to in the current fiscal year and the two following fiscal years.

Following the delivery of the 39th Provincial General Election and 2009 Referendum on Electoral Reform, my office undertook an audit of the management methods and processes used during those events. As a direct result of this review process, during fiscal 2010/11 Elections BC will focus on implementing lessons learned from the recent electoral events while ensuring electoral democracy in British Columbia continues to be delivered with efficiency and integrity.

While operating under significant fiscal restraints, Elections BC will continue work begun last year on updating the existing Electoral Information System and ensuring its continued functionality through the 2013 Provincial General Election. Fiscal pressures will limit other modernization initiatives, and the dedicated core of 44 staff in my office must prioritize their work in ways that ensure ongoing operational requirements are met and the organization stays ready to conduct on-demand electoral events.

My office has provided assistance and expert advice to the Task Force on Local Government Elections, which is scheduled to report its recommendations at the end of May 2010. The outcome of the Task Force's review has the potential to significantly impact the work and mandate of Elections BC. Contingency planning is underway and I am confident that, with the appropriate resources, my office can deliver on any additional legislated role the Task Force might recommend be assigned to Elections BC.

In addition to the ongoing operational and event-readiness work required under our existing mandate, my staff will examine alternative voting service models to ensure we stay cognizant of new approaches that increase efficiency and address changing voter expectations. As a learning organization, we will maintain close ties with jurisdictions across Canada and continue collaboration with other electoral agencies regarding innovations that offer solutions to keep our voting delivery models current.

This service plan outlines a continued approach for providing responsible electoral management for British Columbia. The plan relies heavily on the experience, dedication and creativity of the Elections BC team and their ability to introduce innovation without compromising the integrity of any feature of our electoral process.

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, referenda, initiative petitions and recall campaigns as detailed in provincial legislation.

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.

MANDATE

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

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.

ELECTIONS BC'S CORPORATE VALUES

- Accountability
- Impartiality
- Independence
- Integrity
- Transparency

By staying true to these corporate values Elections BC will earn and maintain the trust of its clients and stakeholders.

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 more than 37,000 temporary staff and election officials during major electoral events.

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 on-demand events, as well as leading the planning, preparation and administration of scheduled events.

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

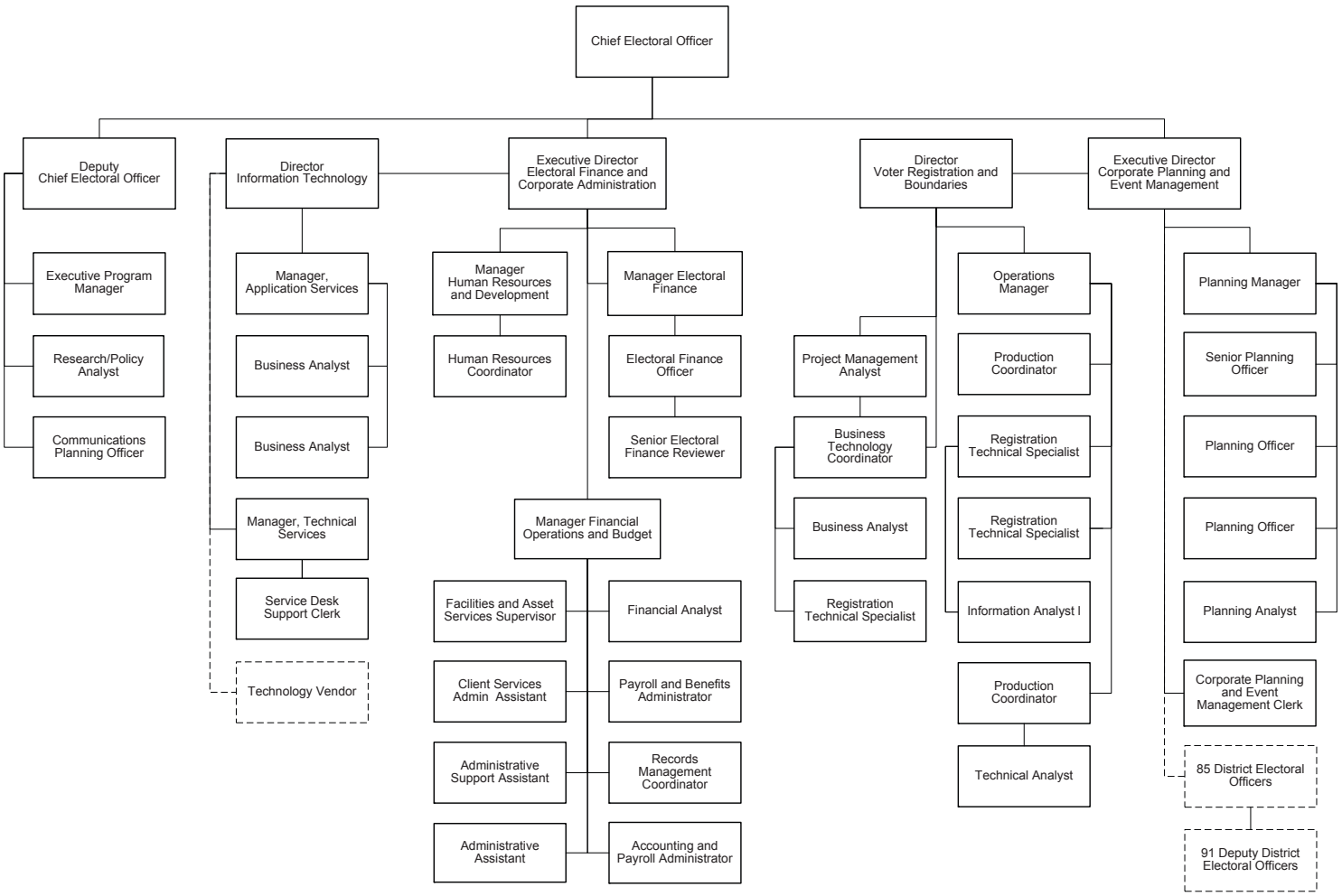
The Voter Registration and Boundaries program area is responsible for voter registration, including enumeration, management and maintenance of the provincial register of voters, maintenance of electoral district and voting area boundaries as well as the production of high-quality electoral data, reports, and other information services.

The Voter Registration and Boundaries program area is also responsible for providing a variety of products and reports 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, and reports regarding the quality of the voters list.

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

Following the successful administration of the 39th Provincial General Election and 2009 Referendum on Electoral Reform, Elections BC is now in a period of review, service delivery improvements, and preparation for and delivery of on-demand events.

Similar to other public agencies in British Columbia, Elections BC faces significant financial constraints in the coming years, which are reflected in the prudent nature of this service plan.

By identifying its strengths and following the established planning framework, Elections BC achieves a high level of administrative efficiency. This allows the organization to ensure continued delivery of the quality service expected by voters and other stakeholders.

The three years encompassed by this service plan will present additional challenges that will test the organization's ability to adapt. These challenges include potential mandate changes related to the work of the Local Government Elections Task Force, the first full door-to-door enumeration in over 20 years, an aging information technology infrastructure that must be maintained, and an increasing demand for a technologically advanced approach to electoral administration.

The priorities and strategies identified in this plan will ensure that Elections BC is able to meet the needs of an evolving electoral administration landscape in a manner that reflects the financial realities of today.

Planning context

Election administration is a specialized business which is generally only noticed during electoral events. This unique environment belies the demanding, on-going work Elections BC undertakes to be ready to administer a scheduled general election and on-demand by-elections, referenda and recall or initiative campaigns.

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

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

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 and performance measures

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

Performance indicators have, in some cases, been modified from the performance measures identified in previous years. These revised measures better reflect the organization's current focus and direction.

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

Objectives

Elections BC intends to:

- Ensure the ongoing functioning of critical information systems
- Maintain a sound infrastructure that meets organizational needs
- Ensure efficient and effective management of the voters list, address data and electoral geography

Elections BC has two performance measures for Goal 1

Elections BC will track voters list quality.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Voters list quality*					
Coverage	91%	92%	91%	91%	91%
Currency	86%	90%	83%	80%	86%
Net currency	78%	83%	76%	73%	78%

* 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.

Elections BC will measure the compliance of electoral finance clients in meeting filing requirements.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Filing compliance ratio*	99%	98%	98%	100%	98%

* The ratio is the total number of financing reports (such as annual reports and event-related reports) filed compared to the total expected by the filing deadline.

Goals, objectives and performance measures

GOAL 2: ENSURE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTORAL EVENTS

Objectives

Elections BC intends to:

- Ensure Elections BC maintains event readiness for scheduled and on-demand events
- Improve the voting process to better serve voters and realize efficiencies
- Improve the current model for election administration in the field

In addition to being ready to deliver both scheduled and on-demand events, Elections BC will measure performance for Goal 2 by reporting on the percentage of quality and performance goals achieved for each event.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Event goal performance ratio	N/A	N/A	New Measure	80%	80%

Goals, objectives and performance measures

GOAL 3: PROVIDE AN INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Objectives

Elections BC intends to:

- Provide high quality services to clients in a manner that is responsive to their needs

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.

In 2009/10, Elections BC surveyed voters following the 2009 General Election to measure service delivery quality.

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Actual	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Percentage average annual satisfaction score	81%	86%	80%	80%	80%

Goals, objectives and performance measures

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

Objectives

Elections BC intends to:

- Participate in, encourage and support partnerships and inter-jurisdictional cooperation

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

Performance Measure	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
Percentage calculated learning index* score for EBC's permanent staff	76%	80%	80%	80%	80%

* The learning index is an aggregate measure of Elections BC's participation in workshops, conferences, working groups, partnership projects, inter-jurisdictional learning and employee training.

2010/11 - 2012/13 "AT-A-GLANCE" PROJECT AND WORK DETAIL

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	
Business Enablers	Planning and delivering to plan, innovating and implementing lessons learned, earning and maintaining trust	
Goals	**1. Ensure ongoing support and enhancement of the electoral process**	**2. Ensure efficient and effective administration of the electoral process**
Objectives and Projects	**Ensure the ongoing functionality of critical information systems** Projects: ▪ Electoral Information System (EIS) slow renovation (part 1) ▪ EIS-Integrated Digital Electoral Atlas (INDEA) address synchronization ▪ Implement EIS releases ▪ INDEA sustainment ▪ Prepare outsourcing RFP and procure technology outsourcer ▪ Statistical reporting ▪ Strategic systems information plan	**Ensure Elections BC maintains event readiness for scheduled and on-demand events** Projects: ▪ 2013 General Election preparation ▪ Referendum ▪ By-election ▪ Initiative petition ▪ Recall petition ▪ District Electoral Officer (DEO) manual ▪ Door-to-door enumeration
	Maintain a sound infrastructure that meets organizational needs Projects: ▪ CEO transition documentation ▪ Develop client relations and correspondence tracking system ▪ Records management review ▪ Process documentation model	**Improve voting process to better serve voters and realize efficiencies** Projects: ▪ Voting modernization ▪ Report on recommendations for legislative change to enable voting modernization
	Ensure efficient and effective management of the voters list, address data and road network Projects: ▪ Replacement of integrated digital electoral atlas ▪ Adopt Digital Road Atlas 2 (DRA2) road network ▪ Review new multiple address change process ▪ Explore feasibility of new sources of voter information ▪ Review call centre registration technologies	**Improve the current model for election administration in the field** Projects: ▪ DEO desktop enhancement ▪ DEO communications technology ▪ DEO function and office redefinition ▪ DEO compensation, recruitment and training model ▪ Develop field support model ▪ DEO performance tracking
Work	▪ Maintain policies and procedures ▪ Maintain voters list and electoral geography ▪ Maintain IT infrastructure ▪ Develop and update geography products ▪ Legislation and legislative interpretation ▪ Receive and review annual financial reports ▪ Enforce legislation ▪ Election Advisory Committee liaison and consultation ▪ Manage records and dockets ▪ Manage warehouse ▪ Maintain risk management program ▪ Maintain corporate performance measurement program ▪ Enhance planning framework ▪ Prepare and maintain annual budgets ▪ Maintain and administer facilities ▪ Maintain register of filing entities ▪ Maintain intranet and internal communication tools ▪ Policy development	▪ Administer recall process (on-demand) ▪ Administer initiative petition process (on-demand) ▪ Deliver door-to-door enumeration ▪ Deliver by-election(s) (on-demand) ▪ Deliver referenda (on-demand)

Mandate	To administer the provincial electoral process in British Columbia in accordance with the *Election Act*, *Recall and Initiative Act*, *Referendum Act* and *Constitutional Amendment Approval Act*
Values	▪ Accountability ▪ Integrity ▪ Impartiality ▪ Transparency ▪ Independence

3. Provide an inclusive and accessible electoral process	**4. Be a learning organization that develops and shares best practices**
Provide high quality services to clients in a manner that is responsive to their needs Projects: ▪ Electoral finance client training strategies ▪ Online fillable recall and initiative forms ▪ Election finance procedures improvement ▪ Maintain/enhance public education programs ▪ Candidate services improvement	**Participate in, encourage and support partnerships and inter-jurisdictional cooperation** Projects: ▪ 2010 Conference of Canadian Election Officials ▪ Interjurisdictional event observation ▪ Civic engagement collaboration
▪ Prepare and deliver financial agent training ▪ Scan and post financing reports ▪ Issues management and media relations ▪ Maintain website ▪ Political party information sessions ▪ Ongoing voter education and awareness and school programs ▪ Review of voting area boundaries	▪ Ongoing liaison with electoral agencies ▪ Research and development ▪ Develop and maintain partnerships ▪ Develop and maintain staff ▪ New employee orientation ▪ Planning toolbox training ▪ Internal workshop program ▪ EPDP program

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 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 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 on-demand electoral events. This process has been followed for all electoral events since 2002.

The following pages provide a summary of the financial and human resources required by Elections BC for on-going operations, purchases of capital assets and the planning and preparation for electoral events. Following its rigorous planning framework, Elections BC will begin to plan and prepare during fiscal year 2010/11 for upcoming scheduled electoral events. Event budgets beyond fiscal year 2010/11 will be developed as part of that planning process.

Summary ongoing financial outlook

		2009/10 (budget) $	2010/11 (budget) $	2011/12 (planned) $	2012/13 (planned) $
	ONGOING OPERATING COSTS				
	Funding				
	Approved budget by SSCFGS	7,753,000	7,740,000	7,740,000	7,740,000
	Total funding for ongoing operating costs	7,753,000	7,740,000	7,740,000	7,740,000
Notes[1]	**Expenses for ongoing operating costs**				
1	Salaries and benefits	3,539,000	3,403,000	3,403,000	3,403,000
2	Amortization	596,000	578,000	687,000	663,000
3	Building occupancy charges	464,000	678,000	693,000	693,000
4	Office expenses and telecommunications	506,000	462,000	390,000	415,000
5	Corporate information systems	1,337,000	1,195,000	1,246,000	1,346,000
6	Event readiness	-	40,000	40,000	40,000
7	Address and boundary maintenance	432,000	425,000	425,000	425,000
8	Voters list maintenance	129,000	190,000	224,000	134,000
9	Political entity reporting	299,000	358,000	241,000	230,000
10	Officer salary and benefits	321,000	352,000	332,000	332,000
11	Voter education	130,000	59,000	59,000	59,000
	Total expenses for ongoing operating costs	7,753,000	7,740,000	7,740,000	7,740,000
	FULLTIME EQUIVALENTS (FTE)	44	44	44	44

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

	2009/10 (budget) $	2010/11 (budget) $	2011/12 (planned) $	2012/13 (planned) $
CAPITAL ASSETS				
Approved budget by SSCFGS				
Personal computer hardware and software	95,000	8,000	-	-
Mainframe/mini computer hardware and software	2,765,000	1,290,000	1,164,000	140,000
Office furniture and equipment	-			
Tenant improvements	-			
Operating equipment	-			
Total funding for capital assets	2,860,000	1,298,000	1,164,000	140,000
Expenditures for capital assets				
Personal computer hardware and software	95,000	8,000	-	-
Mainframe/mini computer hardware and software	2,765,000	1,290,000	1,164,000	140,000
Office furniture and equipment	-	-	-	-
Tenant improvements	-	-	-	-
Operating equipment	-	-	-	
Total expenditures for capital assets	2,860,000	1,298,000	1,164,000	140,000

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.

Glossary of terms

By-election

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

Electoral district

The province is 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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