

# Council Governance Model Survey



# The Assignment

## Exploration of Mayor System

**Resolution Number** REG2025-11-26-008 **Moved By**  
Councillor Phil Mooney **Seconded By** Councillor Daniel  
Muise

That Council asks the eligible electors in the Municipality if they want to elect the head of Council. Further, if the eligible electors indicate they want to elect their head of Council, that Council proceed to undertake a boundary review considering a mayor elected at large and 6 district Councillors, retaining the Council size of 7.

**Motion Carried**



# The Process & Results

# Timeline

Survey Eligible  
Electors

Complete

Procure  
Consultant to  
perform  
Boundary Review  
– Effective Date  
October 2028

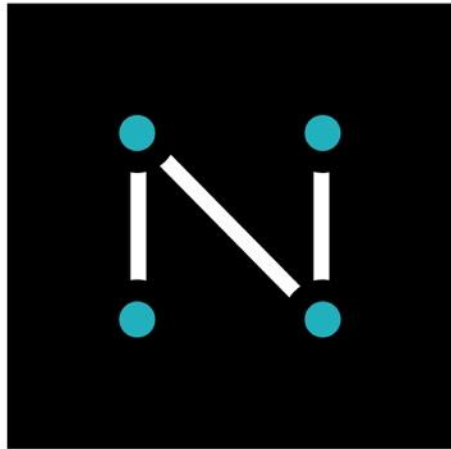
Spring/  
Summer  
2026

Fall  
2026

File Boundary  
Review with  
Regulatory Board

Winter  
2026

Update Election  
Material in  
preparation for 2028  
General Municipal  
Election



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# Governance Structure Report

March 2026

Prepared for:





# Background and Purpose

## Background

- Council for the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth (MODY) is exploring the potential transition from a Warden-based governance system to a Mayoral system. To support this consideration, Narrative Research was commissioned to conduct a brief survey of households in the Municipality to understand preferences between the two governance models.

## Purpose

- The overall purpose of this research is to understand whether MODY households would prefer a Mayoral or Warden governance system model. This research will assist MODY to determine which governance model to use in the future.
- Narrative Research conducted the survey on behalf of the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth in March 2026.
- All households of the Municipality were invited to take part in an online study, and details of the research methodology employed are outlined on the next page.



# Methodology



## Mode

Online survey



## Audience

Adult (18+) members of households in the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth (MODY)



**415** completed surveys



## Data Collection Dates

March 2-18, 2026



## Average Completion Time

2 minutes



## Sampling/Administration

Each MODY household was provided a Survey Access Card via either Canada Post's Neighbourhood Mail Program (4,222 households with B5A Forward Sorting Area/FSA postal code) or via Addressed Mail (600 households with a B0W FSA) via Canada Post. Each Survey Access Card contained a unique 'single use' survey code as well as a QR code (and URL) for the online MODY Survey.



## Weighting

The survey results were statistically weighted by age and gender based on the actual population of the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth. The collected survey responses closely matched the actual proportions of households in terms of region (i.e., B5A versus B0W), so there was no need to weight the survey data in terms of region.



## Response Rate

**8.6%** (415 surveys completed from the 4,822 survey cards distributed)



## Margin of Error

No margin of (sampling) error is attributed to the survey results, given that all households in MODY were provided an opportunity to complete the questionnaire (i.e., no sampling occurred).



## Notes

Table references presented in the report refer to the detailed tabular results.



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# Survey Results



# Preferred Governance Model

*A Mayoral governance system model is most appealing to MODY households, preferred by more than two to one.*

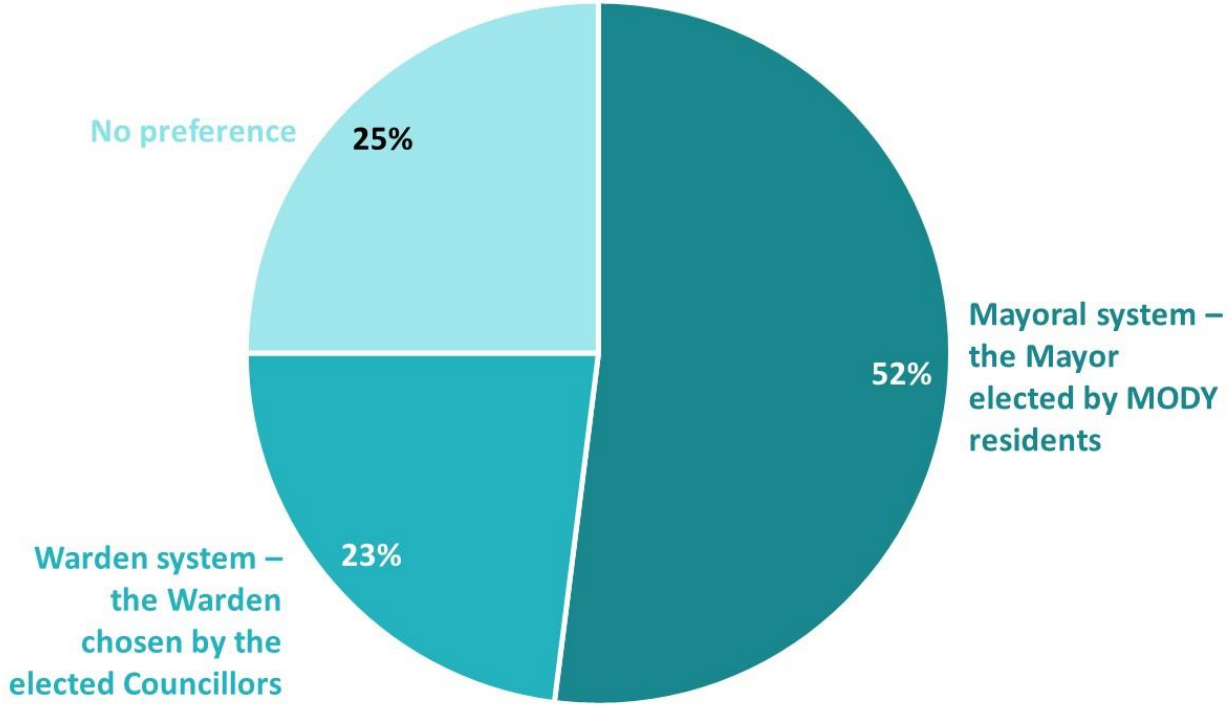
In the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth (MODY), the head of Council currently is a Warden. After each Municipal election, the Warden is chosen by Councillors from among the Councillors chosen in the election. A new proposal being discussed is to change to having a Mayor who would be directly elected by MODY residents to lead Council. (Table 3)

MODY households were asked which model of governance they would prefer going forward. One-half of households **prefer a mayoral system**, in which the Mayor is elected by residents. One-quarter **prefer the warden system**, where the Warden is selected by elected Councillors, while another one-quarter have **no preference**.

There are not notable differences in support for either governance model across age groups or in terms of a comparison of B0W and B5A Forward Sorting Area/FSA postal codes. In terms of gender, women are more likely than men to express no preference (32% vs. 18%).

When the *no preference* response option is removed from the results, what is left are the preferences of households between the Mayoral and Warden options. Seven in ten households prefer the **Mayoral System**, while three in ten prefer the **Warden System** (69% and 31%, respectively) (n=314).

## Preferred Governance Model



Q.3: Which governance model do you prefer for MODY going forward? (n=415)



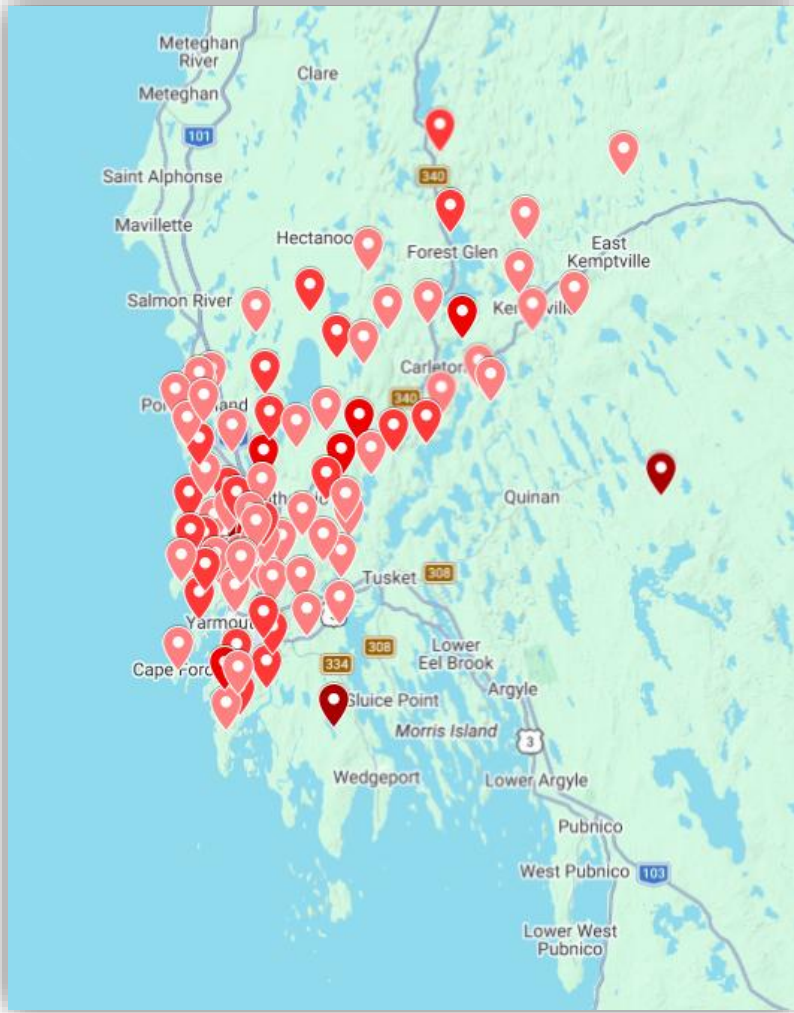
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# Survey Response Distribution

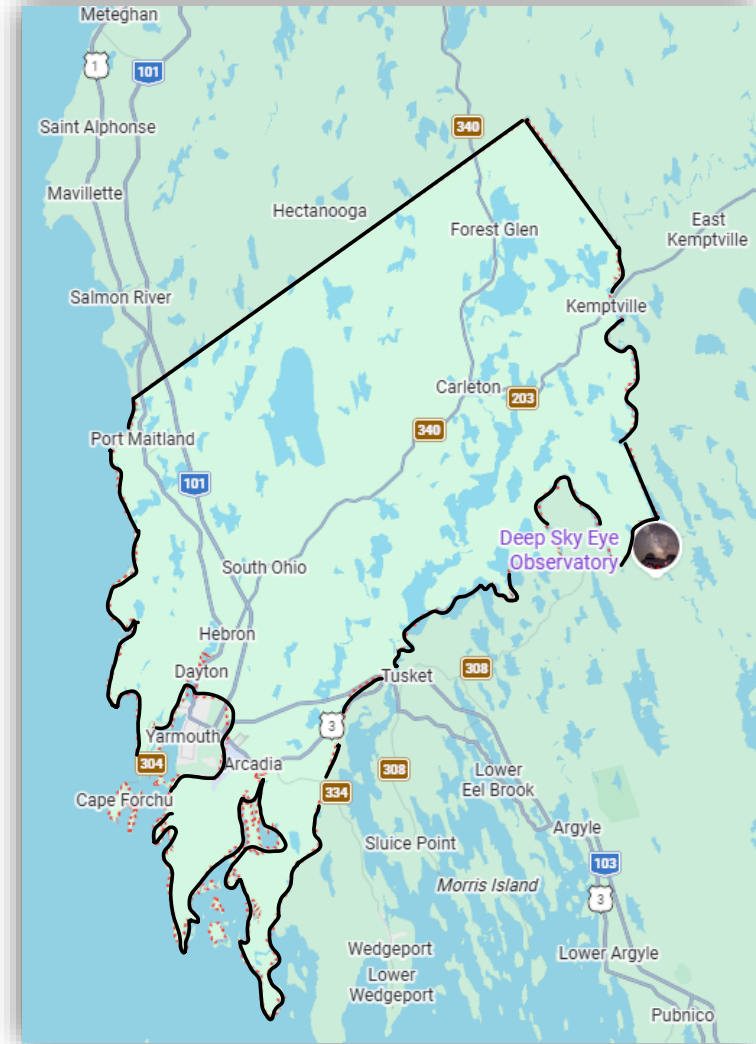


# Survey Response Distribution

Overall, survey responses are drawn from across the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth.



The map to the left displays the distribution of survey responses by postal code, with each point representing a specific postal code area. Lighter red points indicate fewer survey responses from that postal code, while darker red points indicate a higher number of survey responses. Postal codes cover broad geographic areas, whereby the pinned points in the graphic represent an approximation of each postal code location, rather than precise residential locations of survey respondents.



The map to the right outlines the approximate boundaries of the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth, indicated by the solid black boundary line. It is evident from the two maps on this slide that the distribution of survey responses (left graphic) aligns well with MODY's actual geographic boundaries (right graphic).



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Every insight tells a story.

# Next Steps Council Resolution

Council will need to budget for the boundary review.

**Whereas** Council has a duly moved and adopted resolution regarding the preferences of eligible electors with respect to the governance model of Council-either Mayor or Warden; AND

**Whereas** the results of the survey of eligible electors demonstrate a more than 2 to 1 preference for electing a Mayor at large; AND

**Whereas** the Council have committed by way of its November 2025 resolution to undertake a boundary review restructuring the Council to a Mayor and six (6) Councillors retaining a Council of seven (7);

**THEREFORE** be it resolved that the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth issue a Request for Proposals to undertake a boundary review, in accordance with Provincial Legislation & Regulation; AND

**Further** that \$35,000 be appropriated in the 2026-27 operating budget for the review; AND

**Further** that the Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to issue the procurement as soon as practically possible.

