



The Corporation of the TOWN OF MILTON

Report To: Council

From: Troy McHarg, Town Clerk

Date: December 12, 2016

Report No: CORS-079-16

Subject: Ward Boundary Review

Recommendation: **THAT the ward boundaries recommended by Watson and Associates Economists, Ltd. in association with Dr. Robert Williams in the report attached hereto as Appendix A, be adopted as the ward boundaries for the Town of Milton to come into effect for the 2018 elections;**

AND FURTHER THAT the Town Clerk be delegated any necessary authority and take steps deemed necessary to ensure the Town's interests are represented in any legal proceedings relating to Town Council's decision in this and any future ward boundary decision.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A ward boundary review was undertaken to facilitate the decision to add 2 members from the Town of Milton at Halton Region Council and the decision of Milton Council to reduce its size to 9 members through 4 wards for the 2018 elections.

This report seeks approval of new ward boundaries for the 2018 elections.

REPORT

Background

In anticipation of the Town of Milton receiving the necessary approvals to add 2 members to Halton Region Council for the 2018 elections, the independent, third-party of Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. in association with Dr. Robert Williams (Watson/Williams) were retained to undertake a process required to determine how to accommodate this change on Milton Council. Milton has now received approval for 2 additional members at Halton Council.

Phase 1 of this project was completed on June 27, 2016 as Council approved a 9 member Council to be elected in 4 wards.

Phase 2 is the subject of this report - that being the third-party review and recommendation for Milton's ward boundaries.



Discussion

Watson/Williams undertook the ward boundary review process which included:

- Public Notification (June – December) – notification to the public of this phase took various forms and included creation of a project webpage and news item on the website (ongoing since June), notification to participants in Phase 1 (June) that Phase 2 would commence in the fall, local newspaper articles (June and November), social media posts, including a boosted Facebook post (ongoing since October), and 2 advertisements in the local newspaper (November).
- Research (August-November) – background research, technical analysis, and interviews with members of Council. This formed the background and generation of preliminary options for public consultation.
- Public Consultation and Notification (November-December) – two public information sessions were held to gather feedback from the public and comments were welcomed from all at these meetings or those that filled out forms online for consideration by Watson/Williams prior to the development of the recommended option in the attached report. Members of the public also have the opportunity to provide feedback to Council regarding ward boundaries at the December 12 meeting.

Undertaking a ward boundary review is a significant municipal undertaking. In considering any final input from the public at tonight's meeting and the recommendation from Watson/Williams, Council should also be cognizant that any appearance of gerrymandering could lead to appeals to the OMB.

Implementation Activities and Timelines

Within 45 days of passage of a ward boundary by-law, the Minister of Municipal Affairs or any other person or agency may appeal to the OMB. Toronto recently estimated that it could take 8 to 10 months to conclude any appeals of its ward boundaries.

Ward boundaries must be in place and all appeals finalized prior to the end of 2017 in order for the boundaries to be in place for the 2018 elections.

After the period for appeals has concluded, implementation will commence with the following key activities:

- Redrawing ward maps
- Integrate into Milton's geospatial platform
- Review and redraw all voting subdivision boundaries based on the new ward boundaries



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- Notification to MPAC and school boards
- Provide final voting subdivisions to MPAC
- Undertaking communications through the 2018 election communication plan.

Financial Impact

The costs to defend any appeal of Council's decision are unknown at this time but would be reported to Council if incurred.

Respectfully submitted,
Troy McHarg
Town Clerk

For questions, please
contact:

Author Ext 2132

Attachments

Appendix A – Ward Boundary Review – December 5, 2016

CAO Approval
William Mann, MCIP, RPP, OALA, CSLA, MCIF, RPF
Chief Administrative Officer

Town of Milton
Council Composition and
Electoral Structure Review
Phase 2 - Ward Boundary
Review

In association with:

Dr. Robert J. Williams

December 5, 2016



Plaza Three
101-2000 Argentia Rd.
Mississauga, Ontario
Canada L5N 1V9

Phone: (905) 272-3600

Fax: (905) 272-3602

e-mail: info@watson-econ.ca

www.watson-econ.ca

 **Planning for growth**

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1. Study Overview

1.1 Terms of Reference

Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (Watson & Associates), in association with Dr. Robert J. Williams, was retained by the Town of Milton to conduct a Council Composition and Electoral Structure Review.

The study has been organized into two phases:

- Phase 1 – Council Composition Review; and
- Phase 2 – Electoral Structure Review.

Phase 1 – Council Composition Review examined the existing Council composition,¹ and presented and evaluated several alternatives for Milton Council to accommodate two additional Halton Regional Councillors in accordance with the Municipal Act. Council reached a decision on this matter in June, 2016.

Phase 2 of the study, which is presented herein, will be referred to as a Ward Boundary Review (W.B.R.). It explores alternative ward boundary options in the search for effective and equitable electoral arrangements for the Town of Milton, based on the guiding principles found in the Terms of Reference for the overall study.

1.2 Context

The basic requirement for any electoral system in a representative democracy is to establish measures to determine the people who will constitute the governmental body that makes decisions on behalf of electors. Representation in Canada is organized around geographic areas, units referred to as constituencies in the federal and provincial parliaments, and typically as wards at the municipal level, as is the case in the Town of Milton.

A ward boundary review is a task designed to develop such units of representation that reflect the distribution of the inhabitants of a municipality for electoral purposes. Since municipalities experience demographic shifts as a result of new residential development, intensification and changes in the composition of their population, electoral arrangements need to be reviewed periodically to ensure that representation

¹ The terminology used in the *Municipal Act* to mean the size of a municipal council.

remains fair and that electors have an opportunity to elect candidates they feel can truly represent them and their neighbours.

The Town of Milton's municipal Council is elected in a "double direct" system: the Town's representatives on Halton Regional Council are simultaneously elected to serve on Town Council, along with other Councillors who are elected to serve only on Town Council. From the time the Town was created in its present form in 1973 until the upcoming 2018 municipal election, Milton Town Council has been composed of a Mayor (elected at large) and two Regional and Town Councillors, and eight Town Councillors (all elected in wards). From 1973 to 1979 there were three wards that elected either two or four Town Councillors; after 1979, there were four wards each electing two Town Councillors. Following a W.B.R. in 2008/2009, Town Councillors were elected in eight single-member wards. Regional Councillors were elected over the years in various groupings of the wards used for Town Council elections. Milton's existing ward boundary structure is based on an eight-ward model. This is discussed further in section 5.

As a result of a reallocation of seats on Halton Regional Council in 2015-2016, Milton recently gained two seats on Halton Regional Council for the 2018 municipal election, meaning that the Town of Milton will now elect four Regional and Town Councillors. With a double direct election model in Halton, changing the upper-tier Council has implications for the lower-tier Council. Phase 1 of this study explored potential electoral arrangements to accommodate this new configuration. In June, 2016, Milton Town Council passed a motion to alter the composition of its Council to consist of the Mayor, the four Regional and Town Councillors, and four Town Councillors.¹ As a result, Milton Council will be reduced from eleven members to nine.² In the 2018 municipal election, one Regional and Town Councillor, and one Town Councillor will be elected in each ward, meaning that a four-ward arrangement will be required to accommodate this change.

Based on Council direction, the goal of Phase 2 of the study is to design an equitable and effective ward boundary structure for Milton based on a four-ward configuration.

The W.B.R. is premised on the legitimate democratic expectation that municipal representation in Milton will be effective, equitable and an accurate reflection of the

¹ In accordance with s. 217 of the Municipal Act.

² That decision followed the preparation of a Report to Council on Council Composition, the first phase of the present review. See *Town of Milton Council Composition and Electoral Structure Review – Phase 1* (June, 2016).

contemporary distribution of communities and people across the community. Given the diversity of the Town and unprecedented population growth trends, it will require some vision and new perspectives to achieve a viable system of representation.

1.3 Study Objectives

The primary purpose of the W.B.R. is to prepare Town Council to adopt a new ward boundary structure based on the outcome of the change in Regional Council composition and subsequent direction from Town Council to elect members of Council within a four-ward configuration.¹ The project has a number of key objectives in accordance with the project terms of reference, as follows:

- Develop a clear understanding of the present ward system, including its origins and operations as a system of representation;
- Conduct an appropriate consultation process to ensure community support for the review and its outcome;
- Identify plausible modifications to the present ward structure based on direction from Council from Phase 1 of study (i.e. develop a four-ward design); and
- Deliver a report that will set out recommended alternative ward boundaries to ensure effective and equitable electoral arrangements for the Town of Milton based on the principles identified.

1.4 Project Structure and Timeline

The W.B.R. commenced in June, 2016 and is anticipated to be completed in December, 2016.

Work completed has included:

- Research and data compilation;
- Interviews with the Mayor and Councillors;
- Consultation with representatives of school boards;
- Population and growth forecasting and data modelling to 2022;
- Development of four preliminary ward boundary alternatives;
- Public consultation on preliminary options;

¹ Municipal councils have the power to create, change and even eliminate ward boundaries for the purpose of electing municipal councillors as per the Municipal Act (sections 222 and 223).

- Finalization of option(s), development of recommendations, and preparation of a Final Report (this document constitutes the Final Report); and
- In collaboration with Communications staff at the Town:
 - A project web page was set up – see <http://www.milton.ca/en/townhall/CouncilcompositionReview.asp>; and
 - Study documentation and related materials posted on the project web page.

1.5 Public Consultation

The Milton W.B.R. incorporated a public engagement component which included two 3-hour public information sessions which were held on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at the Milton Sports Centre and Wednesday, November 16, 2016 at the Nassagaweya Community Centre in Brookville.

The purpose of the public open houses was to:

- Inform residents of Milton about the reason for the W.B.R. and the key factors that were considered in the review; and
- Engage the residents in a manner that provides valuable input to the development of an alternative ward boundary configuration based on a four-ward design.

Through the public consultation meetings, the public was provided with information and context with respect to the preliminary ward boundary alternatives. This was completed through a series of display boards and a presentation, and members of the Consultant Team were in attendance to respond to questions from attendees. Attendees were asked to comment on the preliminary options through a comment sheet, which was also made available through the project web page.

The public consultation achieved a high level of public engagement, as follows:

- Approximately 110 people attended the public meetings;
- 96 submissions were received of the feedback/comment form both through hard copy and online; and
- Numerous emails from the public were received.

The feedback and comments received through the consultation process are reflected in the analysis presented herein and have helped inform the findings and recommendations.

2. Guiding Principles for Milton's Ward Boundary Review

2.1 Overview of Guiding Principles

Milton's W.B.R. is framed by five guiding principles (as identified in the Terms of Reference for the study) established for developing the ward boundary alternatives.

- **Equitable representation by population** – To the extent possible, and bearing in mind the requirements for effective representation, wards should have reasonably equal population totals. Given the geography and varying population densities and characteristics in the Town, a degree of variation will be acceptable.
- **Communities of interest and neighbourhoods** – It is imperative to avoid fragmenting traditional neighbourhoods or communities of interest within the Town. Individual wards should, as far as possible, be cohesive units; that is, they should be areas with common interests that are associated with settlement patterns, neighbourhood amenities and community groupings (primarily social, historical and economic).
- **Consideration of present and future population trends** – The ward structure should accommodate for and balance future increases or decreases in population to maintain a general equilibrium among the wards, until the year 2022 (at minimum).
- **Consideration of physical features as natural boundaries** – Wards should have a coherent, contiguous shape and the boundaries should be straightforward and easy to remember. Where feasible, ward boundaries will use natural and man-made features that already serve as physical boundaries of identifiable communities.
- **Effective representation** – The specific principles are all subject to the overriding principle of “effective representation” as enunciated by the Supreme Court of Canada in its decision on the *Carter* case.

No ward system design can uniformly meet all of the guiding principles since some criteria may work at cross-purposes to one another. As well, the priority attached to certain principles makes some designs more desirable in the eyes of different observers.

Ultimately, the ward design adopted by Milton Town Council should be the one that best fulfills as many of the guiding principles as possible.

The following provides further discussion on the guiding principles.

Equitable representation by population

The concept of representation by population (“rep by pop”) has a long history in Canada, associated with the idea that elected offices in a particular jurisdiction are distributed in such a way that each one is associated with roughly the same number of people or of electors. The principle for this review is clear: “wards should have reasonably equal population totals.”

In the most significant judicial ruling on electoral representation in Canada, however, the majority of the Supreme Court understood that Canadian electoral law has never been driven by the need to achieve “full parity” in the population of electoral divisions.¹ The Court concluded that some degree of variation from parity would be acceptable and, at times, even necessary to achieve effective representation (a concept that will be discussed below). In other words, representation should at least be equitable (that is, fair) when it cannot be precisely equal.

In this review, a ward with a population within 25% above or below what will be called an “optimal” population in Milton will be considered acceptable in response to “geography and varying population densities and characteristics in the Town.” This is a rather generous range of tolerance from parity but is based on long-standing parameters for the federal redistribution process and will be discussed again below.

Communities of interest and neighbourhoods

As just discussed, electoral districts in Canada are not traditionally considered to be merely arithmetic divisions of the electorate designed to achieve parity of voting power. Rather, they are part of a system “which gives due weight to voter parity but admits other considerations where necessary” (*Carter* decision, page 35). One of the customary other considerations is “community of interest.” The rationale is that electoral districts should, as far as possible, be cohesive units and areas with common interests related to representation.

In the municipal context, “community of interest” is linked to “neighbourhoods” since the neighbourhood is the most identifiable geographic area in most people’s lives; it is

¹ *Reference re: Provincial Electoral Boundaries* (Saskatchewan) [1991] 2 S.C.R. 158. This is often cited as the *Carter* decision.

where they live. More importantly, the responsibilities of the municipality are also closely associated with where people live; roads and their maintenance, the utilities that are connected to or associated with their dwelling and the myriad of social, cultural, environmental and recreational services are often based on residential communities. Even municipal taxation is inextricably linked to one's dwelling. Identifying such communities of interest comes from the recognition that geographic location brings shared perspectives that should be reflected in the representational process.

In most municipalities, there are more communities of interest or neighbourhoods than there are electoral districts, so wards will of necessity have to be created by grouping together such building blocks for the purposes of representation. This principle addresses two perspectives: what is divided by ward boundaries and what is joined together. Alternative ward configurations will, therefore, be assessed in terms of how successfully they separate or assemble certain communities of interest into plausible units of representation. The first priority is that communities ought not to be divided internally; as a rule, lines are drawn around communities, not through them. Secondly, as far as possible, wards should group together communities with common interests that are "associated with settlement patterns, neighbourhood amenities and community groupings (primarily social, historical and economic)."

Consideration of present and future population trends

Population growth in Milton has been strong over the past decade and the Town is expected to continue to experience strong growth over the next 25 years. It is this absolute growth in population that led to the decision to adjust Milton's representation on Halton Regional Council to better reflect its relative magnitude compared to Oakville and Burlington.

This principle directs that proposed wards do not merely capture the present population distribution in Milton but address the municipality's future by giving some weight to projected population growth within the Town so as "to maintain a general equilibrium among the wards." That is, it encourages the design of wards that will not be out-of-date the day after they are adopted and that are able to absorb increases in population without producing an unacceptable imbalance in ward populations over at least the next two municipal elections (2018 and 2022).

Consideration of physical features as natural boundaries

This principle directs that ward boundaries should make use of permanent features of the natural or man-made environment (such as arterial roadways or rail lines) rather than create new, perhaps artificial, lines that may not be easily identified or widely

understood by residents. In addition, wards will be composed of areas that are bordering on one another despite sometimes being separated by such a physical feature. That is, wards should consist of contiguous geographic areas of the Town.

Effective representation

The concept of effective representation has become an integral part of the evaluation of electoral systems in Canada, dating from the 1991 *Carter* decision. The Court was asked to determine whether the variance in the size of voter populations permitted in legislation for certain types of provincial constituencies in Saskatchewan (in urban, rural and northern areas) infringed on the democratic right found in section 3 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (“Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in an election of members of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly and to be qualified for membership therein”).

The majority opinion concluded that the “purpose of the right to vote enshrined in s. 3 of the *Charter* is not equality of voting power *per se* but the right to ‘effective representation.’” It went on to state that since the purpose of a vote is to be represented in government (and not just to be able to cast a ballot on election day), “to insist on voter parity might deprive citizens with distinct interests of an effective voice in the legislative process as well as of effective assistance from their representatives in their ‘ombudsman’ role.” This may mean that, at times, voter parity may “prove undesirable because it has the effect of detracting from the primary goal of effective representation” and deviations from parity “may be justified on the grounds of practical impossibility or the provision of more effective representation” (*Carter* decision, page 33).

This perspective goes to the heart of an important question: what or who does a representative represent? What role is that individual representative expected to play as an elected official? How does the representative provide this “effective representation”? One implication of the phrase “effective representation” is that electoral arrangements themselves should take account of the potential responsibilities to residents by those who serve in an elected office.

The principles for this review, therefore, require that “effective representation” as developed in the *Carter* decision be given the highest priority (that is, it is “overriding”) in the design of wards in Milton. It also means, in simple terms, that some flexibility in the application of the four other principles can be tolerated in the quest for “effective representation.”

3. Milton's Existing Population and Forecast Growth

As previously discussed, one of the basic premises of representative democracy in Canada is the belief that the geographic areas used to elect a representative should be reasonably balanced with one another in terms of population. In order to evaluate the existing ward structure and subsequent alternatives in terms of representation by population in the existing year (2016), a detailed population estimate for Milton and its respective communities was prepared.

The Town of Milton is forecast to experience strong population growth and population shifts over the next 25 years. For this reason, it is important that this study assess the representation by population for both existing and future year populations. In accordance with the study terms of reference, the analysis considers representation of population over the next two municipal elections through 2022. As such, a population and housing forecast for Milton and its communities for the 2016 to 2022 period was generated.¹ The results of this analysis are discussed below.

3.1 Existing (2016) Population and Structure

Building on the 2011 Census data, a 2016 population estimate for the Town of Milton was generated based on 2011 through 2015 residential building permit activity and factoring in the decline in population in existing housing units. The Town's population in 2016 is estimated to be 104,250.²

The Town's 2016 population by community is presented in Figure 1. A map illustrating the location of Milton's urban communities is provided in Figure 2. As shown in Figure 1, 92% (population of approximately 96,000) of Milton's existing population is within the urban area compared to 8% within the rural area. Milton's largest urban communities by population include the Pre-HUSP Urban Area,³ Bristol and Sherwood with populations of 21,200, 45,800, and 27,150, respectively.

¹ The growth forecast presented in the Town's 2015 Development Charge Background Study prepared by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. forms the basis for the future year analysis presented herein.

² Excludes Census undercount of approximately 4%.

³ Depicts the extent of urban development prior to the implementation of the Halton Urban Structure Plan (HUSP) growth areas in the mid-2000s and generally reflects the built boundary at that time.

Figure 1 – Town of Milton 2016 Population by Community

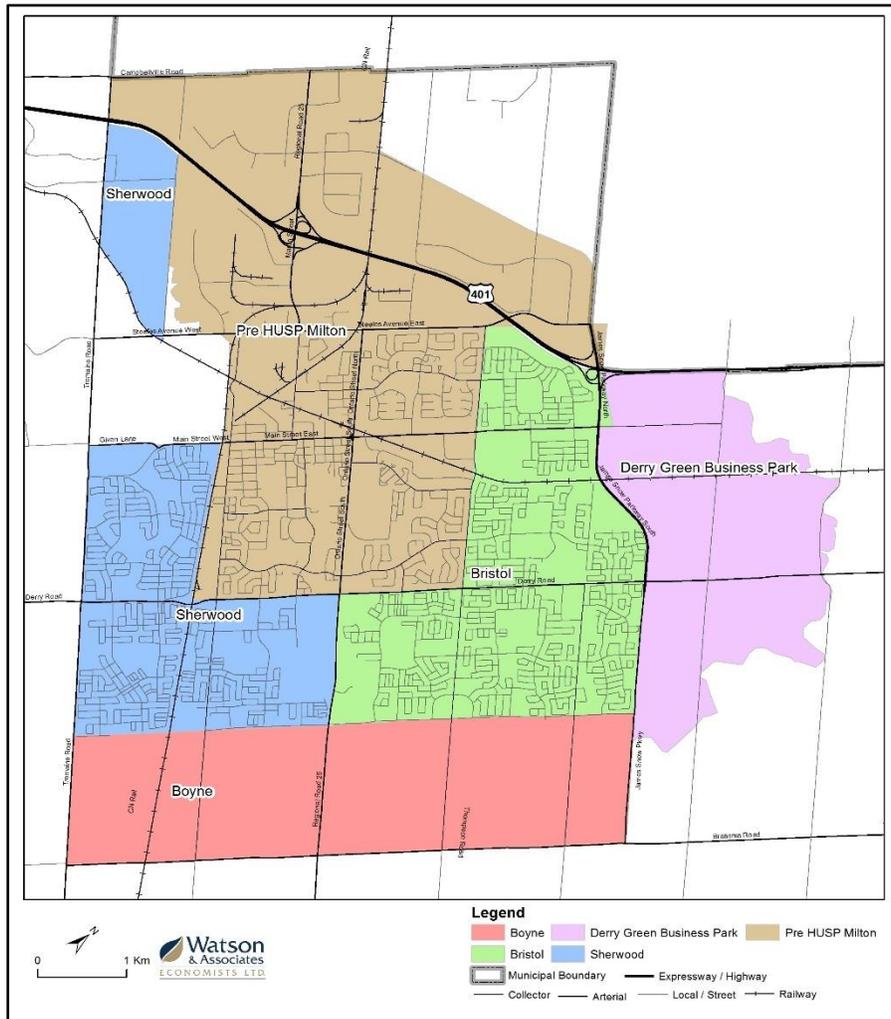
Community	2016 Population ¹	Share of Population
Pre HUSP* Urban Area	21,205	20%
Bristol	45,805	44%
Sherwood	27,155	26%
Boyne	1,815	2%
Urban - subtotal	95,980	92%
Rural	8,270	8%
Town of Milton	104,250	100%

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

1. Excludes Census undercount of approximately 4%

*Halton Urban Structure Plan (HUSP)

Figure 2 – Town of Milton Urban Communities



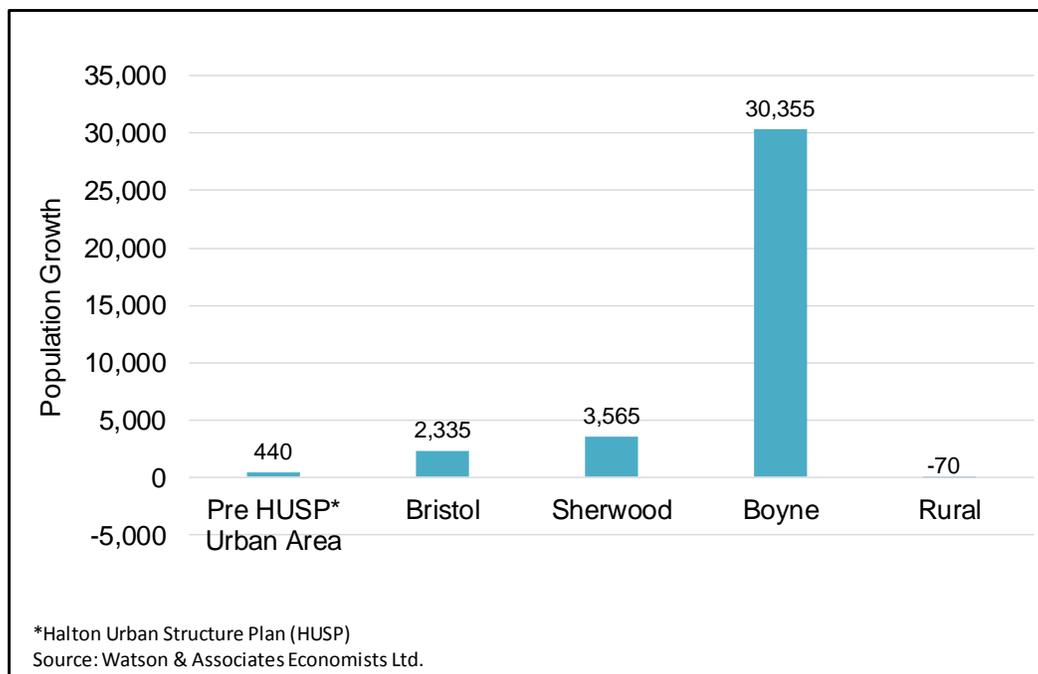
3.2 Forecast Population Growth, 2016 to 2022

In order to evaluate ward boundary alternatives in terms of representation by population over the next two municipal elections (i.e. 2018 and 2022), a detailed population forecast was developed for the Town and its communities.

Population growth over the 2016 to 2022 period was identified based on the population and household growth forecast prepared by Watson & Associates for the Town of Milton's 2015 Development Charge Background Study and a review of opportunities to accommodate future residential growth as well as consultation with Town Planning staff.

The Town is expected to experience strong population growth and shifts over the next six years. By 2022, Milton's population is expected to reach approximately 140,870,¹ an increase of 35%. The majority of population growth is anticipated to be accommodated in the community of Boyne which is expected to see an increase in population of 30,355, as illustrated in Figure 3. The communities of Bristol and Sherwood are expected to see moderate increases in population over the period. In comparison, the Town's rural area population is expected to see a slight decline in population.

Figure 3 – Forecast Population Growth by Community, 2016 to 2022



The 2022 forecast population by community is presented in Figure 4. As shown, over the forecast period, the Boyne community's share of Milton's population is expected to

¹ Excludes Census undercount of approximately 4%.

expand from 2% in 2016 to 23% in 2022. Further, the rural area's share of population is expected to decline to 6% from 8% in 2016.

Figure 4 – Town of Milton Forecast 2022 Population by Community

Community	2022 Population ¹	Share of Population
Pre HUSP* Urban Area	21,645	15%
Bristol	48,140	34%
Sherwood	30,720	22%
Boyne	32,170	23%
Urban - subtotal	132,675	94%
Rural	8,200	6%
Town of Milton	140,870	100%

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

1. Excludes Census undercount of approximately 4%

*Halton Urban Structure Plan (HUSP)

4. Milton – A Changing Municipality with Implications for Ward Boundary Design

Milton is undertaking a W.B.R. to ensure that the residents of the Town are represented equitably and effectively in the newly re-configured Council. It is important to recognize that municipalities are in a constant state of change, with respect to population growth and shifts, as well as demographic and socio-economic changes which influence the character of the neighbourhoods and communities within them.

Milton's diverse nature, origins and population growth trends, raise a number of opportunities and challenges with respect to ward boundary design. Key themes are discussed below.

Population Growth Trends

Milton is the fastest growing municipality in Canada. Over the 2011 to 2016 period, the Town's population has increased by 24%, increasing from 84,360 to an estimated

104,250.¹ The majority of population growth over the past five years has been in the Bristol and Sherwood communities.

As discussed in section 3, Milton's population growth is expected to accelerate, with the Town's population forecast to reach 140,870 by 2022, an increase of 35% from 2016, with much of the growth accommodated within one community (i.e. Boyne).

Achieving Population Parity by Ward within a Municipality without Population Uniformity

The guiding principles are clear: in an ideal scenario, the population of all wards would be close to parity. Pursuing such a strategy has spatial implications for the entire ward design in the sense that the overall distribution of population in Milton is concentrated in the eastern part of the municipality, within the urban core, and growth is shifting further south and east. The western part of the Town (including the former Township of Nassagaweya), conversely, is lightly populated and has limited population growth prospects.

Balancing Urban and Rural Communities of Interest

It is obvious that there is significant rural territory within present-day Milton and it surrounds the urban area on three sides. Rural and agricultural economic activity is important in these areas. Rural Milton, however, is also diverse in the sense that it includes a variety of forms of agriculture, as well as numerous conservation areas, parks and open spaces. The rural territory on the west side of the Town is expected to remain in rural form indefinitely due to its location in the Greenbelt and Niagara Escarpment; however, rural areas to the south and east are transitioning into new suburban communities. In the public consultation sessions, the value of this rural community of interest was asserted consistently and vociferously.

Rural Milton is, however, sparsely populated which makes the application of population parity a challenge. In this respect (as is the case in other municipalities with a significant urban population plus an extensive rural area), the *Carter* principles assume significance. In a large diverse municipality, strict application of population principles can lead to untenable wards. Conversely, a ward that is drawn around the former Township of Nassagaweya to the exclusion of all other parts of the Town (as in

¹ 2011 population based on 2011 Census. 2016 population estimate by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. Population excludes Census undercount of approximately 4%.

Preliminary Option A to be discussed below and the 2010 eight-ward design) with no regard to the population principle, is similarly problematic.

In all of the options developed in the Milton W.B.R., the two, large, remaining rural areas influence the mapping of wards and are treated as a clear community of interest within two of the four wards.

At the same time, relative population parity remains the primary condition for effective representation as a principle underpinning this W.B.R.: as Justice McLachlin wrote in *Carter*, “A system which dilutes one citizen's vote unduly as compared with another citizen's vote runs the risk of providing inadequate representation to the citizen whose vote is diluted” (page 32).

While she acknowledges that certain factors like geography, community history, and community interests may “justify departure from absolute voter parity” on the grounds of practical impossibility and that, therefore, there may be a smaller population represented in sparsely populated areas, “dilution of one citizen's vote as compared with another's should not be countenanced” (pages 33 to 34). To that end, the population principle for representation should be applied equitably to all residents of Milton not just to those in the urban area.

5. Considerations in Ward Boundary Design

5.1 Milton's Existing Ward Structure

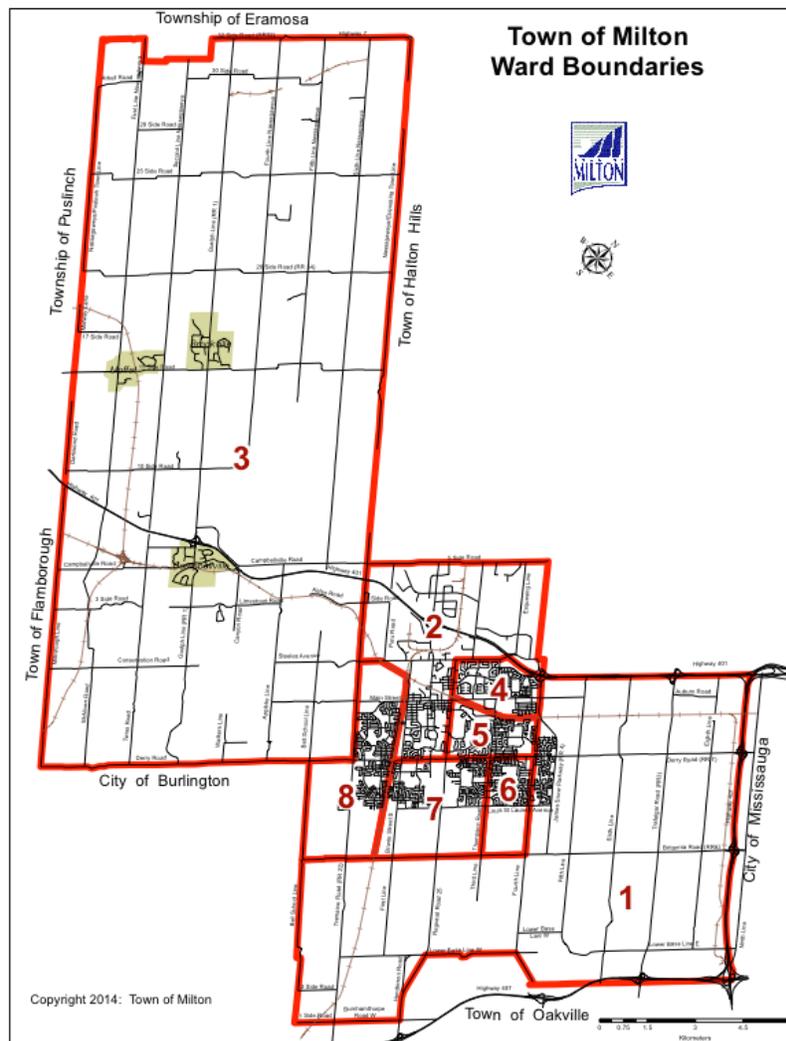
The current eight wards in Milton, which are illustrated in Figure 5, were developed through a process much like this one. A number of concepts for four wards and eight wards were the subject of public consultations and the responses collected at that time helped the consultant formulate the present model. Council accepted that recommendation, incorporating a small modification suggested by a member of the public. The eight wards were grouped together into two regional wards consisting of Wards 2, 3, 4 and 5 and Wards 1, 6, 7 and 8.

In most W.B.R.s, the existing wards are evaluated individually and collectively through the prism of the review's guiding principles, to determine where problems may need to be addressed and whether there are any features that should be retained. Since the pre-2010 four ward design is no longer viable (see discussion below) and the eight-ward design has been set aside because of the change in the composition of Milton Council,

should the development of new four-ward options proceed with a “clean slate”? A cursory examination of the patterns of settlement (past, present and future) in Milton and the transportation corridors within the Town (the major “natural features” used as boundaries) suggests that there are some inherent features of the community that have been – and will continue to be – important in any ward configuration.

There may also be some merit in trying to incorporate some former ward boundaries in new designs for the simple reason that frequent and widespread changes to electoral arrangements may cause confusion to many electors and could even discourage some people from voting at all. In that light, we ask whether the present wards could be grouped to discover a design that is compatible with the guiding principles, in particular the population forecasts.

Figure 5 – Current Town of Milton Wards



It is helpful to review the present wards in terms of the principles that were used to design them and to understand the expectations associated with them. All wards were drawn using straightforward and meaningful boundaries and, with one exception, all but one existing urban neighbourhoods were not divided (the exception being the use of Fourth Line as the boundary between Wards 1, 5 and 6 which separated parts of the Clarke and Beaty urban neighbourhoods). One ward (3) was created entirely outside the Urban Expansion Area and two others (1 and 2) combined a portion of the urban area with designated industrial and/or agricultural lands. As noted in the 2009 Final Report, “these [latter] districts are inevitably going to appear mismatched with adjoining residential communities” in whatever ward they are placed (page 12).

In terms of the original population distribution, it must also be recognized that three of the wards (2, 4 and 5) were understood at that time to be above optimal but that each of them consisted of neighbourhoods that were essentially built out at the time of the 2006 Census. These wards could be considered “old Milton.” Ward 3 was close to the bottom of the population range and the remaining four wards (essentially “new Milton”) were below the optimal size. Population forecasts for the individual wards were not available for the 2009 W.B.R. but the expectation – since borne out – was that the major growth areas in Milton would be in Wards 7 and 8 (and they are now indeed the wards with the largest populations), as presented in Figure 6. Some population growth has occurred in Ward 1 since the last review, resulting in a ward that covers a large rural territory but with a predominantly urban population.

Figure 6 – Town of Milton Existing Ward Population, 2016

Current Ward	2016	
	Population ¹	Variance
One	9,635	0.74
Two	10,750	0.82
Three	6,730	0.52
Four	13,975	1.07
Five	14,195	1.09
Six	11,820	0.91
Seven	18,415	1.41
Eight	18,735	1.44
Total	104,250	
Optimal Size	13,030	

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

1. Excludes Census undercount of approximately 4%

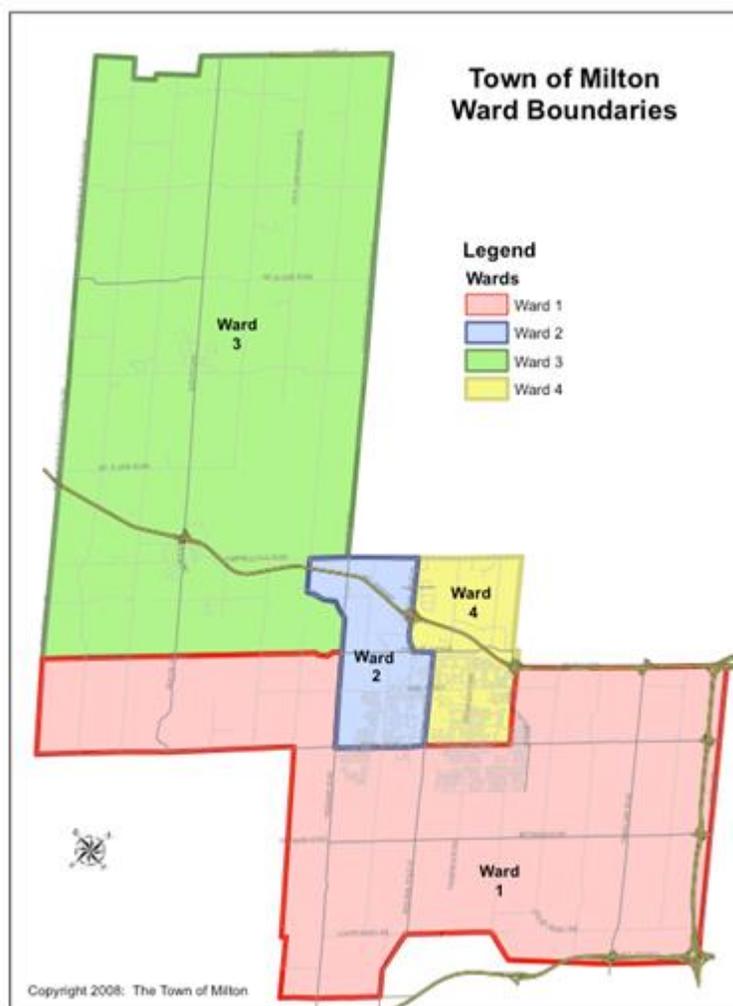
Population estimates for 2016 demonstrate that the expectation that the wards adopted in 2009 could be used for three elections (2010, 2014 and 2018) were optimistic. Only Wards 4 and 5 (together) and Ward 7 appear to have possible components of a four-ward configuration in 2016 but the former leaves a part of the Clarke neighbourhood detached and retaining the latter intact complicates the distribution of the rapidly growing population south of Britannia Road.

The eight-ward system allowed for a “dedicated” rural ward (Ward 3) and a second ward (Ward 1) that embraced the rural territory in the southern portion of the Town (albeit with some urban neighbourhoods, as noted above). As residential development moves south of Britannia Road into the present Ward 1 and employment lands development occurs to the east, the rural character of the ward is being superseded and the ward itself has become less distinctive.

This brief evaluation suggests that simply grouping the existing eight wards into four wards is not a ready-made solution to achieving equitable representation in Milton today.

5.2 Previous Four-Ward Model

Prior to the 2010 municipal election, Milton elected its Councillors in four wards, as shown in Figure 7. That configuration was derived largely from the boundaries of the former municipalities that were amalgamated in 1973 to form the Town of Milton. Ward 3 consisted of the former Township of Nassagaweya and Ward 1 consisted of territories transferred from the City of Burlington (part of the geographic Township of Nelson) and the Town of Oakville (part of the geographic Township of Trafalgar). Wards 2 and 3 were based on the former Town of Milton plus a small portion of the Township of Esquesing.

Figure 7 – Town of Milton Wards 1997 to 2006

These boundaries were set aside in the eight-ward system adopted for 2010 and would have limited relevance for the majority of residents of Milton today. That is, the wards do not reflect identifiable and coherent communities of interest in Milton.

Moreover, even by the time of the 2006 Census, the four wards were imbalanced since the population of Wards 1 and 4 were each about four times the size of the population of Ward 3. The disparity today is even more evident and the population imbalance is expected to worsen in the future, as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8 – Population of Former (pre-2010) Milton Wards, 2016 and 2022

Former Ward	2016		2022	
	Population ¹	Variance	Population ¹	Variance
1	49,620	1.90	82,795	2.35
2	20,215	0.78	22,210	0.63
3	5,680	0.22	5,630	0.16
4	28,735	1.10	30,235	0.86
Total	104,250		140,870	
Optimal Size	26,063		35,218	

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

1. Excludes Census undercount of approximately 4%

The concentration of growth in the then-Ward 1 since that time also strengthens the conclusion that the old four wards are not a ready-made solution to achieving equitable representation in Milton today.

Given the large scale of population growth in the Town, as discussed in section 3, the four wards used before the 2010 election cannot be seen as a plausible system of representation. The primary purpose of the W.B.R., therefore, is to prepare Milton Council to make a decision about a new ward boundary arrangement.

5.3 Preliminary Options

This Phase of the W.B.R. was built initially around four Preliminary Options for a four-ward system in Milton that were posted on the Town website and presented at two public consultations in November, 2016. Members of the public were invited to respond to them through feedback forms provided on paper at the two meetings and posted on the website. Other forms of written comments were also welcome.

The goal of this consultation was to hear from residents of Milton about the strengths and weaknesses of the concepts used to design the four preliminary options. For example, Preliminary Option A places a high priority on the community of interest principle as it applied to the rural northwest of the Town (primarily the present Ward 3) while Preliminary Option B is an attempt to create four wards around what appears to be a “natural” focal point (the intersection of Regional Road 25 (Ontario Street) and Derry Road) with the goal of a reasonable population balance by 2022. Preliminary Option C also uses Derry Road as a north-south divider but places the entire Main Street corridor starting at Bronte Street in a single ward that also embraces some employment areas to the north and east. Preliminary Option D adds lands in the

employment area north of Steeles Avenue (but very little population) to a rural northwest ward but places all of the employment lands on the east side of Town in a single ward.

Given the unique layout of the Town (in particular the relationship of the former Township of Nassagaweya to the major growth nodes as discussed in section 3), each of these four-ward designs has inherent limitations.

- Preliminary Option A includes a rural ward that was endorsed unequivocally and stridently by the many residents of the present Ward 3 who participated in the consultations, simply because in their opinion it preserves a rural community of interest; however, it is less than one-third of the population of an optimal ward and would be one-quarter or less of the population of any other ward by 2022.
- Preliminary Option B is a straightforward design that would utilize two linear (one east-west and one north-south) boundaries centred at Regional Road 25 and Derry Road to create four wards. The design would provide a good population balance for 2016 and 2022, but combines extensive rural territory with both old and new urban residential areas (Old Milton and part of the Scott Neighbourhood) and divides the Main Street corridor at Ontario Street.
- Preliminary Option C adds the Scott Neighbourhood to the Harrison Neighbourhood as in the present Ward 8, but fails to balance the population north of Derry Road in 2016 and south of Derry Road by 2022. The population of proposed Ward 1 is less than one-third of the optimal size for a Milton ward.
- Preliminary Option D includes the Scott Neighbourhood in a ward with more established neighbourhoods in the traditional centre of Town. The population of proposed Ward 1 is less than one-third the optimal size for a Milton ward.

The public response to these Preliminary Options was heavily skewed. Approximately 80% of the comments submitted to the consultants came from residents of the present Ward 3 and the vast majority of those responses endorsed Preliminary Option A, often as “the best of a bad lot.” The themes were consistent: the design “keeps the rural area intact as its own ward,” it is “important to me that rural Milton has distinct and separate representation on council” and, “We are unique and uniqueness must count for something.” Many of the comments objected to any inclusion of the existing employment area and/or “old Milton”, as presented in the other Preliminary Options, since adding any “urban population” to the proposed Ward 1 was seen as inevitably negating the voice of the rural community on Council. These perspectives assessed the Preliminary Options largely through the “community of interest” lens and rarely were other guiding principles mentioned.

It is notable that very few respondents apparently appreciated that in three of the Preliminary Options, the Ward 1 Councillors would have less than 10,000 constituents in 2022 while the other three Councillors would have three to five times as many. As a Ward 7 resident wrote, that arrangement would be “totally unfair to my ward.”

In addition, many of the submissions addressed matters outside the scope of the W.B.R., in particular the decision to change the size of Council (as was determined in Phase 1 of the study). While the Consultant Team acknowledges the sentiments related to the change from an eight ward to four-ward configuration, the W.B.R. was undertaken with the direction of Town Council to develop options based on a four-ward configuration.

The Consultant Team has concluded that the messages conveyed to them during the consultation process are unlikely to disappear with the submission of this report. The basic foundation for many of the assessments lies in the uneasy relationship between a large sparsely-populated area and new more densely populated and diverse urban districts. An equitable system of representation is essential to successful community-building across Milton in the light of this reality and the Option recommended in the next section is intended to contribute to that end.

6. Recommended Option

Based on public feedback on the Preliminary Options and further refinement, one potential final ward boundary configuration (Option) was developed and is presented herein. Overall, the Recommended Option is an adaptation of concepts found in the Preliminary Options with the highest priority placed on achieving equitable representation by population.

The Option is illustrated in Figure 9 with population by proposed ward summarized in Figure 10. The key features of individual wards are:

- Proposed Ward 1 based in Nassagaweya plus the industrial areas north of Steeles Avenue and the Scott neighbourhood. The latter is included to help balance the populations in the four wards.
- Proposed Ward 2 is the smallest in area and consists largely of older established neighbourhoods in central Milton. It begins above the optimal population for a ward in 2016 and remains within the range of variation (but below optimal) by 2022 in the face of significant growth to the south.

- Proposed Ward 3 covers the rural areas to the east and south of Milton's main residential communities plus the Clarke and Beaty neighbourhoods and is the largest by population in 2016. The forecast growth to 2022 is roughly equivalent to growth across the Town, so it remains within the range of variation but above optimal.
- Proposed Ward 4 is the smallest of the three urban wards by area and is the ward closest to optimal in 2016, but is forecast to grow into the most populous ward by 2022, exceeding the acceptable range of variation by a considerable margin.

The Recommended Option and the Guiding Principles

- **Equitable representation by population:** Given the distribution of population across Milton and the limitations imposed by population density in the northwest area of the Town, this Option can be said to have met this principle "to the extent possible."
- **Communities of interest and neighbourhoods:** No neighbourhoods are divided and the proposed Wards 2, 3 and 4 combine contiguous communities that are at similar stages of development. The transition between urban and rural areas in Milton is abrupt rather than gradual; however, the Scott neighbourhood is contiguous with the remainder of the proposed Ward 1 and arguably more oriented to it than the rest of Milton.
- **Consideration of present and future population trends:** Two of the proposed wards fall within the range of variation to 2022, while the proposed Ward 1 falls further below the range since it will not experience significant growth. The highest rate of population growth is forecast for the area south of Britannia Road and will fall largely in Ward 4 which is expected to increase the population in that ward beyond the range of variation by 2022.
- **Consideration of physical features as natural boundaries:** All proposed boundaries follow major transportation routes and are logical and easy to visualize.
- **Effective representation:** Since there are to be four wards but there are more than four "natural communities" in Milton, elected officials will need to be able to maintain contact with several interests within each ward. In this Option, two elementary characteristics at play in providing representation (area and population) tend to offset one another enhancing the potential for the residents of Milton to be represented effectively.

Figure 9 – Recommended Option

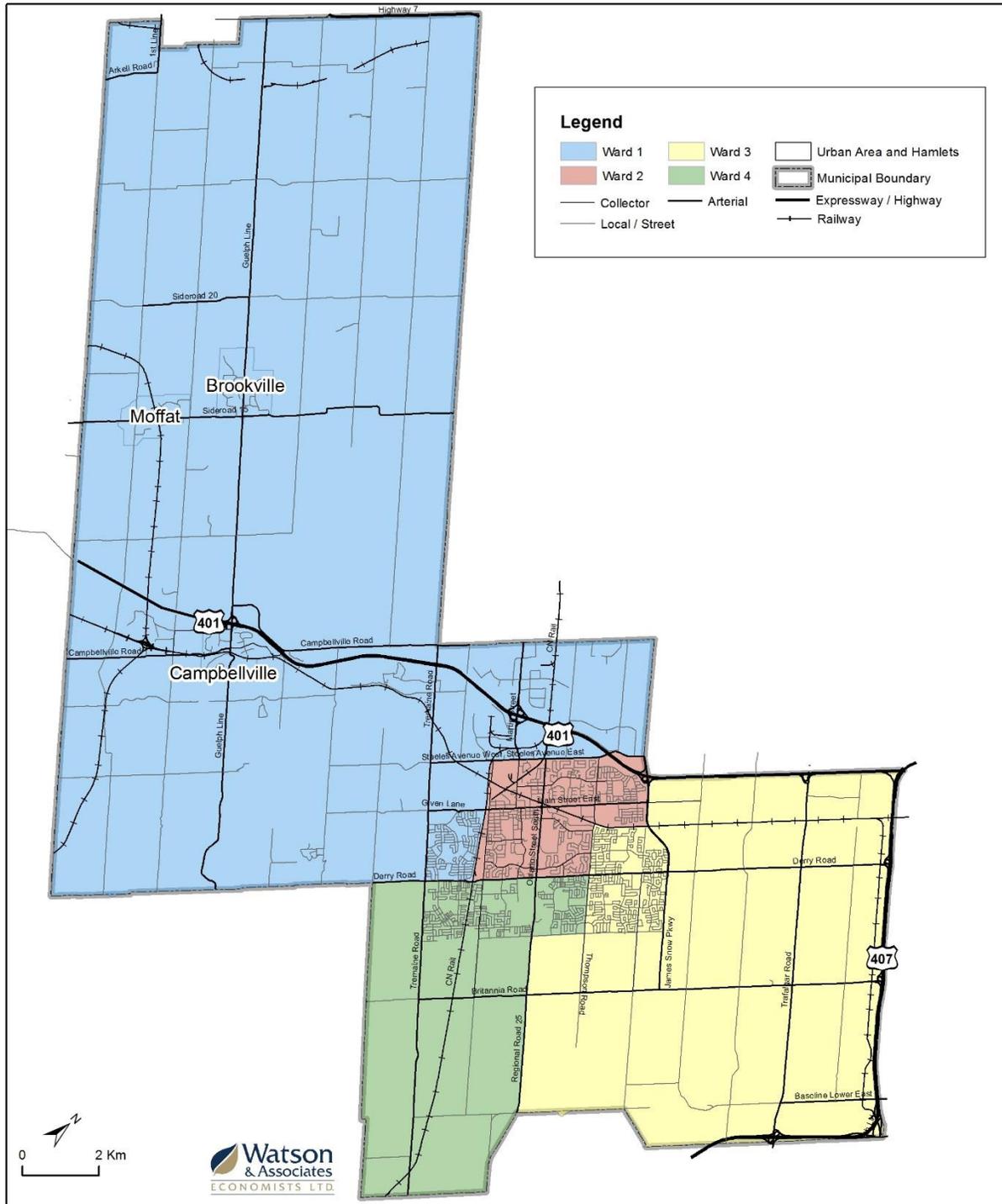


Figure 10 – Population by Proposed Ward

Proposed Ward	2016		2022	
	Population ¹	Variance	Population ¹	Variance
1	17,610	0.68	19,570	0.56
2	29,320	1.12	29,875	0.85
3	29,800	1.14	40,795	1.16
4	27,515	1.06	50,635	1.44
Total	104,250		140,870	
Optimal Size	26,063		35,218	

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

1. Excludes Census undercount of approximately 4%

The overall evaluation of the Final Option is summarized in Figure 11. As shown, the recommended option is largely successful at meeting the requirements of all five guiding principles.

Figure 11 – Evaluation Summary of Recommended Option

Principle	Does Proposed Ward Boundary Structure Meet Requirements of Principle?	Comment
Equitable representation by population	Largely successful	Proposed Ward 1 falls below optimal size but other three wards are within range.
Communities of interest and neighbourhoods	Yes	No neighbourhoods are divided.
Consideration of present and future population trends	Largely successful	Proposed Ward 1 falls below optimal size and Ward 4 is above the optimal size but other two wards are within range.
Consideration of physical features as natural boundaries	Yes	All boundaries follow major transportation routes; all boundary lines are clean.
Effective representation	Yes	Extensive rural area of proposed Ward 1 offset by lower than optimal population.

This review suggests that the Town of Milton would be well served by the recommended ward boundary option presented herein under the directed four-ward configuration. The recommended option provides for a good population balance now and over the next two elections while accommodating a significant geographic community of interest (rural Milton) and the various emerging urban communities. We recommend that Council adopt the recommended ward boundary option presented herein for the 2018 election.