

Hamilton Ward Boundary Review

Public Information and Engagement Workshop

February 2016

Introduction

- What is a Ward Boundary Review (WBR)?
 - a task designed to develop units of representation that reflect the distribution of the inhabitants of a municipality for electoral purposes

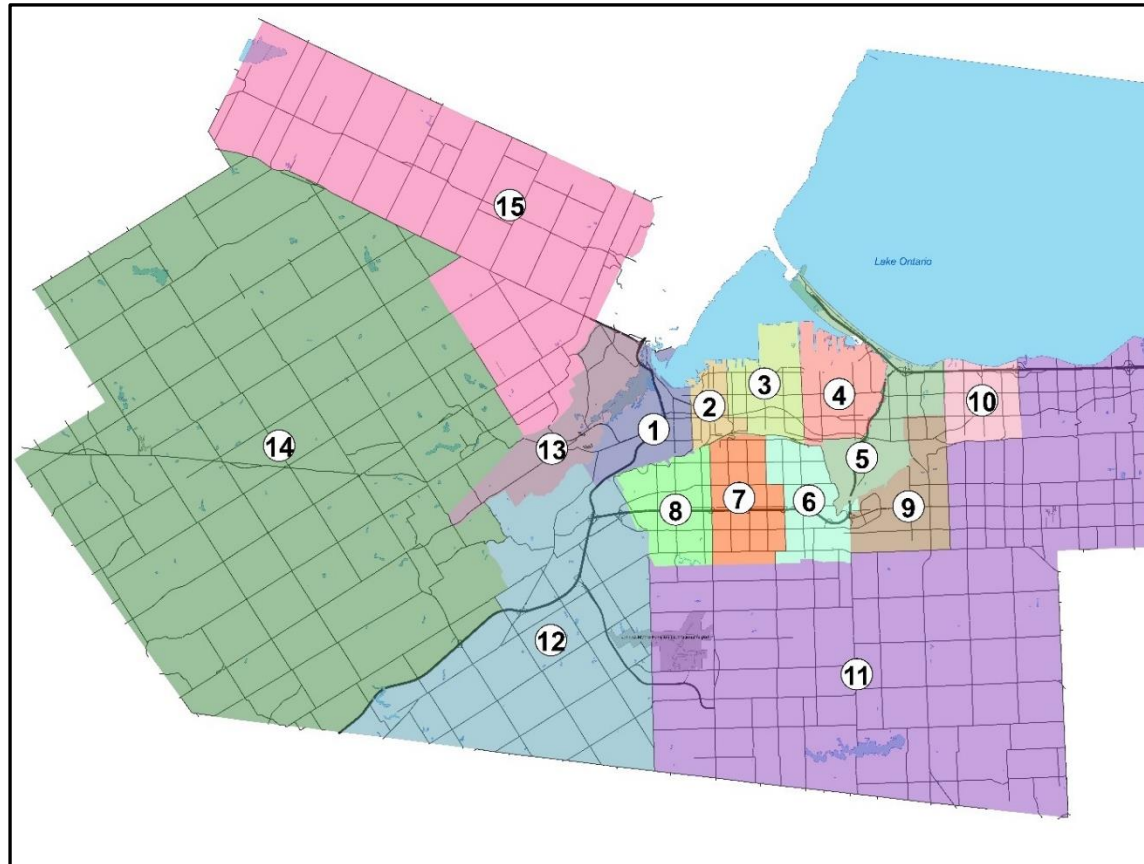
- Why are periodic WBRs important?
 - electoral arrangements need to be reviewed regularly to ensure that representation remains consistent with democratic values

Present Ward Structure

- *City of Hamilton Act, 1999* provided for 13 wards in the amalgamated municipality but Provincial Regulation 448/00 established a system of 15 wards
 - 8 wards in the old City of Hamilton continued in the new Council (boundaries established in 1985)
 - 7 wards in suburban/rural areas in the new Council
- ward boundaries reflect pre-amalgamation municipalities rather than population *per se*

Present Ward Structure (Cont'd)

- wards vary widely in terms of population, land area and land-use structure (e.g. urban vs. suburban vs. rural)

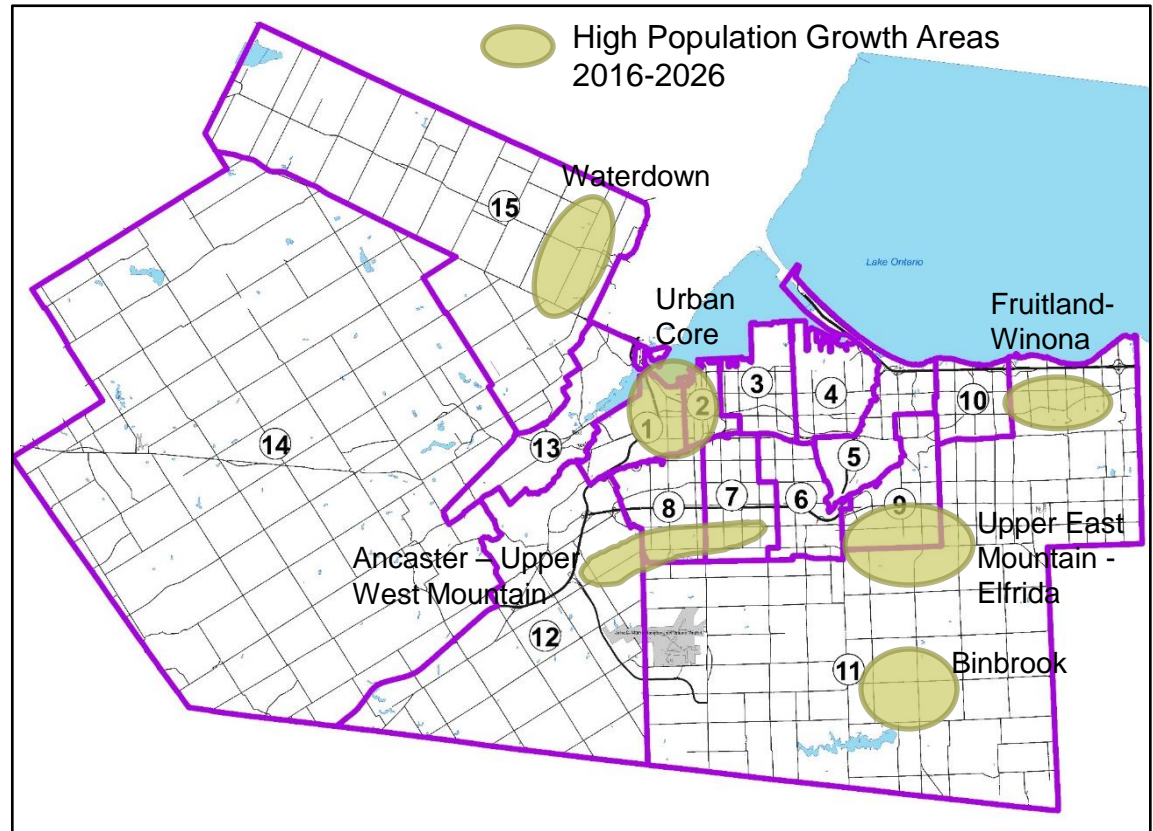


Present Ward Structure (Cont'd)

- *Since 2001, Hamilton has grown (population has increased by 9%) and it is important that the ward boundary structure reflects the changing nature of the City*
- *if “optimal” ward population today is $\pm 37,600$ and $\pm 25\%$ variation is acceptable,*
 - *two wards (7 & 8) > 25% above*
 - *three wards (10, 13, 14) < 25% below*

Forecast Population Growth

- Hamilton's population is expected to increase by 12% (68,000 people) over the next decade
- Highest population growth forecast in Wards 11, 9 and 15
- Imbalance in population by ward expected to worsen over time



Study Objectives

- The 2015-2016 Hamilton WBR is premised on the legitimate democratic expectation that municipal representation in Hamilton will be
 - effective
 - equitable
 - an accurate reflection of the contemporary distribution of communities and people across the City

Project Background

□ *Municipal Act*

- Section 217 authorizes Council to establish the number of councillors and to determine whether they “shall be elected by general vote or wards or by any combination of general vote and wards.”
- Section 222 (1) authorizes a municipality “to divide or redivide the municipality into wards or to dissolve the existing wards.”

Project Background (Cont'd)

- No stipulated schedule, standardized process or established criteria
 - each municipality must set its own terms of reference, parameters, guiding principles, etc.
 - Hamilton's review is framed by well-established procedures and principles applied in numerous municipalities across Ontario (and by the Ontario Municipal Board)

Guiding Principles

- Hamilton's WBR framed by six principles adopted by Council
(Clerk's Report CM15004, March 30, 2015):
 - a. Representation by population
 - b. Population and electoral trends
 - c. Means of communication and accessibility
 - d. Geographical and topographical features
 - e. Community or diversity of interests
 - f. Effective representation

Guiding Principles (Cont'd)

- a. Representation by population
 - seek equal number of constituents (parity) with a degree of variation acceptable
- b. Population and electoral trends
 - maintain a general equilibrium over the next decade
- c. Means of communication and accessibility
 - design wards around existing transportation and communications markers and networks where possible

Guiding Principles (Cont'd)

- d. Geographical and topographical features
 - design wards that recognize natural features
- e. Community or diversity of interests
 - draw ward boundary lines around communities of interest, not through them

Effective Representation

f. Effective representation

- consider overriding principle of effective representation “as described by the Supreme Court of Canada in its decision on the Carter case”
- a 1991 Court ruling on whether the design of electoral districts in a Province infringed on section 3 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (the democratic right to vote)

Effective Representation (Cont'd)

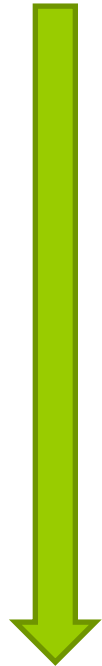
- deviations from “voter parity” sometimes necessary to give “citizens with distinct interests...an effective voice in the legislative process” and “effective assistance from their representatives”
- the “effective representation” principle may override the application of particular principles

Project Schedule

October 2015

Phase 1

- Review data
- Develop public engagement strategy
- Gather information on the present ward system



We are
here



Phase 2

- Public workshops (Rounds One and Two)
- Consultation sessions to look at the current wards and future options

Phase 3

- Prepare and present report on initial options to General Issues Committee

Phase 4

- Finalize report
- Report to be presented to Council

October 2016

Public Input and Participation

- two broad topics for public input and advice:
 1. the present ward system in Hamilton
 - *What are its strengths and weaknesses?*
 2. the future ward system in Hamilton
 - *Which guiding principles are most important?*

Next Steps

- March 2016
 - review advice from all 9 public meetings and public input submitted online
 - which principles seem most important?

- March-May 2016
 - develop preliminary options that reflect the community's advice on guiding principles

Next Steps (Cont'd)

- June 2016
 - consult with the public again on the options
- July-August 2016
 - revise options
- September 2016
 - submit report with recommendations to Council

Stay Connected

- Look for project updates on the study webpage:
www.hamilton.ca/wardboundaryreview
- Follow us on Twitter @cityofhamilton using #HamOntWBR