Hamilton Ward Boundary Review

Presentation of Findings and Recommendation to the City of Hamilton General Issues Committee

October 27, 2016
The City of Hamilton retained an independent consultant team led by Watson & Associates in association with Dr. Robert J. Williams, Trust Learning Solutions and ICA Associates to undertake a comprehensive Ward Boundary Review (WBR).

This WBR represents the first opportunity that the municipal representation needs of all residents of the amalgamated City are being considered collectively.
The 2015-2016 Hamilton WBR is premised on the legitimate democratic expectation that municipal representation in Hamilton will be:

- effective;
- equitable; and
- an accurate reflection of the contemporary distribution of communities and people across the City.
Guiding Principles

Hamilton’s WBR is 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; and
f. Effective representation.
Study Process

October 2015

**Phase 1**
Review data
Develop public engagement strategy
Gather information on the present ward system

**Phase 2**
Hold public information and engagement sessions concentrating on the existing ward structure and guiding principles (Round 1 Consultation)

**Phase 3**
Prepare Interim Report
Public consultations on preliminary options (Round 2 Consultation)

**Phase 4**
Prepare Final Report including final options
Present findings and recommendations to General Issues Committee

October 2016

We are here
Public Consultation

- Two rounds of public consultation.
- The purpose of the public engagement component was twofold:
  - to engage the people of Hamilton in a manner that provides valuable input to the study process; and
  - to ensure Council that ward boundary alternatives reflect municipal vision, principles of the Public Engagement Charter and community input.
Participants were invited to provide their input/opinions with regard to:

- key strengths and weaknesses of the current ward system;
- prioritization of the Guiding Principles; and
- preliminary alternative ward models.

The feedback and comments received from the public consultation are reflected in the analysis and have helped inform the findings and recommendations.
A Changing City and Considerations for Ward Boundary Design

Since 2001, Hamilton’s population has increased by 9%; do the ward boundaries reflect the changing nature of the City?

The population is expected to increase by 12% (68,000 people) over the next decade especially in the present Wards 11, 9 and 15; will the ward boundaries continue to reflect the changing nature of the City?
A Changing City and Considerations for Ward Boundary Design (Cont’d)

City of Hamilton - Population Balance by Ward

A Changing City and Considerations for Ward Boundary Design (Cont’d)

- Population Growth Trends and Shifts
  - former City of Hamilton vs. suburban population balance – population continues to shift towards suburban communities;
  - urban vs. rural population growth trends – Hamilton’s population increasingly urban;
  - west vs. east population balance – population and growth concentrated in the east side of the City.
A Changing City and Considerations for Ward Boundary Design (Cont’d)

Urban population clusters in Hamilton today are largely inter-connected.

City of Hamilton Urban Growth, 1971 to Present
Present Ward Structure

Provincial Regulation 448/00 following amalgamation established a system of 15 wards:

- 8 wards in the old City of Hamilton; and
- 7 wards in suburban/rural areas.
## Evaluation of Present System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Does Existing Ward Boundary Structure Meet Requirements of Principle?</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representation by Population</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Two above range, three below range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population and Electoral Trends</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Three above range, three below range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means of Communication and Accessibility</td>
<td>Partially successful</td>
<td>Generally clear markers with minor deficiencies; limited access highways divide five wards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical and Topographical Features</td>
<td>Largely successful</td>
<td>Two wards include neighbourhoods above and below Escarpment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community or Diversity of Interests</td>
<td>Partially successful</td>
<td>Very few communities of interest are divided internally, some groupings questionable (Wards 5 and 11 especially)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Representation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Significant dilution of representation (Wards 7 and 8), lack of coherence (Ward 11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Final Options

- **A 15-ward Option** that strives to optimize population parity (representation by population).
- **A 16-ward Option** that, through the addition of one ward, achieves a reasonable population balance by ward and preserves communities of interest, while finding better effective representation than a 15-ward Option.
15-Ward Option

A 15-ward Option which strives to optimize population parity (representation by population)
## 15-Ward Option Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Does Proposed Ward Boundary Structure Meet Requirements of Principle?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representation by Population</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>All wards within desired range of variation but three close to the bottom of the range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population and Electoral Trends</td>
<td>Largely successful</td>
<td>One ward below the range, all others within acceptable range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means of Communication and Accessibility</td>
<td>Partially successful</td>
<td>Generally clear markers; limited access highways cut through three wards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical and Topographical Features</td>
<td>Largely successful</td>
<td>Two wards on the western side include neighbourhoods above and below the Escarpment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community or Diversity of Interests</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Communities of interest not divided internally but some new groupings are proposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Representation</td>
<td>Largely successful</td>
<td>No significant dilution of representation but major growth forecast in two wards with large geographic areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A 16-ward Option achieves a reasonable population balance by ward and preserves communities of interest while finding better effective representation than a 15-ward Option.
### 16-Ward Option Evaluation

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<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representation by Population</td>
<td>Largely successful</td>
<td>One ward above the top of the range, three below the range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population and Electoral Trends</td>
<td>Largely successful</td>
<td>One ward just above the top of the range, two below the range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means of Communication and Accessibility</td>
<td>Partially successful</td>
<td>Generally clear markers; limited access highways cut through two wards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical and Topographical Features</td>
<td>Largely successful</td>
<td>Two wards include neighbourhoods above and below Escarpment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community or Diversity of Interests</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Communities of interest not divided internally but some new groupings to experience are proposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Representation</td>
<td>Largely successful</td>
<td>No significant dilution of representation and all wards are coherent collections of communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

- This Review suggests strongly that the existing ward boundary configuration does not meet the expectations of the Guiding Principles.
- This Review suggests that the City would be better served by an alternative ward boundary configuration as provided in the 15-ward and 16-ward Options presented here.
Conclusions (Cont’d)

- The two Options presented here successfully address shortcomings identified in the present system.
- The Options provide wards that are better balanced in population now and over the next three elections while accommodating a significant geographic community of interest (rural Hamilton) and the various emerging neighbourhoods across the City.
We recommend that Council consider the adoption of a new ward boundary structure for the 2018 election.

If Council moves forward with adoption of a new ward boundary structure, we have identified a 15-ward and 16-ward configuration for consideration.

If Council adopts a revised ward structure, a new by-law will be prepared by City staff and presented to Council at a later date.