2025 Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review

Municipality of Port Hope

Interim Report

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1. Background

The Municipality of Port Hope has retained Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. and Dr. Robert J. Williams, hereinafter referred to as the Consultant Team, to conduct a comprehensive and independent Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review (W.B.C.C.R.).

The primary purpose of the study is to prepare the Municipality of Port Hope Council to make decisions on whether to keep the existing electoral structure (i.e., the size of council or how the deputy mayor position is elected) or to adopt an alternative. This report includes preliminary observations on alternative options and configurations to elect Port Hope Council, based upon preliminary research and the first round of public consultation with the residents of the Municipality.

The review is premised on the democratic expectation that municipal representation in Port Hope would be effective, fair, and accurate in reflecting the contemporary distribution of communities and residents across the Municipality.

2. Study Objective

The project has several key objectives:

- Develop a clear understanding of the present electoral system, including its origins and operations as a system of representation;
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the present electoral system based on guiding principles adopted for the study;
- Develop and conduct an appropriate consultation process in accordance with Port Hope's public engagement practices to ensure community support for the review and its outcome;
- Prepare population projections for the development and evaluation of alternative electoral structures for the 2030, 2034, and future municipal elections, if plausible; and
- Deliver a report that recommends alternative council compositions, sizes, and ward boundaries based on the principles identified to ensure effective and equitable electoral arrangements for Port Hope.

In September 2025, the Consultant Team prepared a series of Discussion Papers that set out:

- The parameters and purpose for the review;
- The basic electoral arrangements in Port Hope;
- Council's legislative authority to change electoral arrangements in the Municipality; and
- An initial assessment of the Municipality's current ward boundary system.

Discussion Paper E provided a set of guiding principles that will inform the study and the work of the Consultant Team, as follows:

- Representation by population;
- Consideration of current and future population and electoral trends;
- Communities of interest; and
- Geographic and topographic boundaries.

Taken together, these principles will contribute to achieving the overarching principle of effective representation.

Each principle is described in detail in Discussion Paper E and can be found on the Municipality's web page.[1]

The purpose of this Interim Report is:

- To provide a summary of the work completed to date;
- To provide a summary of the information received from the public engagement sessions and tools, such as the survey and website;
- To receive feedback from Council in relation to potential changes to local composition (size and roles) that will provide direction on plausible alternative configurations to effectively represent Port Hope residents, and
- Outline the next steps for engagement for Council and the public's knowledge.

[1] https://engage.porthope.ca/ward-review

3. Project Structure and Timeline Update

Council passed a notice of motion directing staff to conduct a W.B.C.C.R in the summer of 2025. Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. was retained to complete the review, and the work completed to date includes:

- Research and data compilation.
- Interviews, presentations, and meetings with councillors, the mayor, and municipal staff.
- Online engagement platform with tools such as surveys, discussion and research papers, interactive maps, and informational videos.
- Public consultation, which involved both online platform tools and a strong in-person component with multiple sessions at venues across the Municipality. The initial engagement focused on the current council composition, size, deputy mayor election, and ward structure.

Interviews with staff, Council, and meetings with the clerk's office and other staff concerning this study were conducted virtually. The Consultant Team also conducted a presentation to Council on July 15, 2025, and a first round of public consultation in September 2025 (three live sessions at three locations across the Municipality). A second round of public consultation is slated for the end of 2025 and early 2026.

4. Existing Electoral Structure

The Municipality of Port Hope Council has seven members, including the mayor (elected at-large) and six ward councillors, elected across two wards (four elected in Ward 1 and two elected in Ward 2), who, except for the mayor, sit exclusively on the Port Hope Council. The present ward boundaries were approved in a Ministerial Order in 2000 as part of "a locally developed restructuring proposal." The two pre-amalgamation municipalities were divided into two wards, and the six council seats were divided between them unevenly (with the weighted vote provision) in what the consultant team has called the "founding compromise," and a form of "proportional equality" was adopted and remains in place.

The *Municipal Act, 2001*, establishes that the council of a "local municipality" must consist of "a minimum of five members, one of whom shall be the head of council" (subsection 217 (1) 1) and that the head of council (the mayor) "shall be elected by general vote" (subsection 217 (1) 3). Furthermore, the "members, other than the head

of council, shall be elected by general vote or wards or by any combination of general vote and wards" (subsection 217 (1) 4). With seven members, Port Hope has two Council members above the minimum of five required under the Act.

5. Existing Population and Forecast Growth in the Municipality of Port Hope

As previously discussed, a basic premise of representative democracy in Canada is the notion that the geographic areas used to elect a representative should be reasonably balanced with one another in terms of population. A detailed population estimate for the Municipality of Port Hope, including its constituent wards and communities, has been prepared to allow for the evaluation of the existing ward structure and subsequent alternatives in terms of representation by population. Using data from the most recent Census (2021) and the latest information available at the time of this study, population estimates for 2025 and projections for 2035 were prepared, consistent with the Municipality of Port Hope 2024 Development Charges Background Study. This estimate includes the population not captured by Census (i.e., Census undercount calculated at approximately 2.5%).

5.1 Existing Population and Structure

Consistent with the guiding principles, this study is required to consider both the existing and future ward population distribution. Another question this study aims to review is the composition (size) of the council. Currently, with a Municipality-wide population of 18,191 (as of 2025), each of the four Ward 1 councillors are collectively responsible for representing a total of 13,950 people, while the two Ward 2 councillors are responsible for collectively representing 4,250 people. As shown in Table 5-1, the 2025 population distribution is presented by ward.

The objective of population parity (every councillor generally representing an equal number of constituents within their respective ward) is the primary goal of an electoral redistribution with some degree of variation acceptable considering population densities and demographic factors across the Municipality. The indicator of success in a ward design is the extent to which all the individual wards approach an "optimal" size.

Optimal size can be understood as a mid-point on a scale where the term "optimal" (O) describes a ward with a population within 5% on either side of the calculated optimal

size. The classification "below/above optimal" (O+ or O-) is applied to a ward with a population between 6% and 25% on either side of the optimal size and is considered an acceptable variation. A ward that is labelled "outside the range" (OR+ or OR-) indicates that its population is greater than 25% above or below the optimal ward size. The adoption of a 25% variation has been established as part of the guiding principles for this study and has been commonly used for many ward boundary reviews around Ontario.

Based on the optimal and accepted percentage variances, it is important to note that the asymmetrical ward system Port Hope uses (i.e., four ward councillors in Ward 1 and two ward councillors in Ward 2) and the large degree of population difference between the two wards means that both wards fall outside the acceptable range of 25% (OR±) on either side of the spectrum (as outlined in Discussion Paper F). For example, Ward 1 has a population of 13,949 and Ward 2 has a population of 4,242, with the wards differing in absolute population by approximately 9,700 people.

Table 5-1
Municipality of Port Hope
2025 Population by Ward

Ward	Ward Population (2025)	Population Share	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	13,949	77%	1.53	OR+
Ward 2	4,242	23%	0.47	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	-
Average	**9,095**	-	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

5.2 Forecast Population Growth

A population and housing forecast for the Municipality was developed for the 2025–2035 period, aligned with the Municipality's 2024 Development Charges Background Study (DCBS). Based on the study and consultations with municipal planning and development staff, Port Hope's population is projected to exceed 21,000 by 2035, inclusive of the net Census undercount estimated at approximately 2.5%.

Population growth projections were analyzed at a sub-municipal level, incorporating data from building permits and planned development applications available at the time of the study. According to the 2024 DCBS, approximately 90% of the anticipated growth over the next decade is expected to occur within the urban boundary (current Ward 1), while the remaining 10% is projected for rural Port Hope (current Ward 2). It should be noted that discussions regarding the Ontario Power Generation (OPG) site and future growth needs are still ongoing and not considered at this time. If plans are approved and expected within the course of the study period (2025-2035), future considerations may need to be revisited. These results are summarized by the existing ward structure in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2
Municipality of Port Hope
2035 Population by Ward

Ward	Ward Population (2035)	Population Share	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	16,692	79%	1.58	OR+
Ward 2	4,575	21%	0.42	OR-
Total	**21,537**	-	-	-
Average	**10,768**	-	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

6. Public Consultation

The first phase of the W.B.C.C.R. incorporated a public engagement component that was delivered in-person and designed to:

- Inform the residents of Port Hope about the reasons for the W.B.C.C.R. and the key factors that were considered in the review; and
- Engage the residents in a manner that provides valuable input to the evaluation of the existing ward structure and the development of alternative ward boundaries.

Three in-person consultation sessions were conducted on the following dates:

- September 17, 2025 (Canton Community Hub)
- September 18, 2025 (Port Hope Public Library)
- September 18, 2025 (Jack Burger Sports Complex)

The Consultant Team's virtual W.B.C.C.R. informative presentation and other information about the review are available on the Municipality's website: https://engage.porthope.ca/ward-review (see Appendix B for more details).

Through the public consultation sessions, a survey, and the project website's online comment and feedback form, participants were invited to share their input and opinions regarding the following:

- Existing council composition – Is six local councillors and the mayor, for a total council of seven members, an appropriate number for a population of approximately 17,300?
- Existing ward structure – What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current ward structure? Is it fair that the two wards elect a different number of councillors?
- Deputy mayor – How should the Deputy Mayor be elected?
- Guiding principles – Which guiding principles should be given the greatest priority in the development of ward boundaries?

The feedback and comments gathered through the public consultation process are reflected in the analysis below and will help shape the initial ward configurations moving forward. While public input from consultation provides valuable insights into the review, it is not relied upon exclusively. The Consultant Team used the public input alongside its professional expertise and experience with W.B.C.C.R.s, as well as best practices, to guide the observations and direction in this report.

7. What We Heard

To encourage public participation in the W.B.C.C.R., the Municipality of Port Hope developed a project web page containing all necessary documents to help residents stay informed. Future communications could then direct people to this page through social media and other outreach methods. Members of the public could visit the site, learn about the study, download the discussion papers, and most importantly, they were

encouraged to complete a survey. The Consultant Team also created a whiteboard-style explainer video outlining the overall process of the W.B.C.C.R.

The public survey was a key tool for gathering input from as many residents as possible and provided some of the best high-level insights into the views and perspectives of Port Hope's residents. The participation rate was fairly high, with 261 people responding to some or all questions; a summary of these results can be found in Appendix A. The survey results tend to confirm what earlier research had begun to indicate:

- Half the survey respondents (50.57%) believe it is unfair that the two wards elect a different number of councillors. Meanwhile, 38.31% think it is fair, and 11.11% are unsure.
- When asked if electing the deputy mayor by a general vote (at-large) would give the Municipality stronger leadership, 42.15% of respondents responded that it would, while 27.59% of respondents believed that it would not provide stronger leadership, and 30.27% of respondents were unsure.
- Approximately 44.75% believed having six local councillors representing 17,294 constituents is appropriate. Among those who felt the council size was inappropriate, 18.78% preferred a smaller council, while 17.68% felt it was too small and wanted the council size increased. There was also a group of respondents who were unsure (18.78%).
- When asked whether the municipality should maintain its current asymmetrical ward system or adopt a symmetrical model where each ward elects one councillor, 43.7% of respondents preferred to keep the status quo, 27% supported a symmetrical system, and 29.3% were unsure. This means that approximately 56% of respondents are either open to change or undecided, indicating an opportunity for further education and engagement on the topic.
- Most importantly, for the next phase of the project, respondents' opinions were divided. Just over one-third of respondents (33.15%) prioritized the representation by population principle. In close second was the communities of interest principle, rated as the highest priority by 29.28% of respondents. The two remaining guiding principles were similarly valued: the consideration of current and future population and electoral trends principle was prioritized by 19.89%, while the principle of geographic and topographic boundaries was favoured by 17.68% of respondents.

The survey also included several questions that were not multiple choice and, instead, allowed respondents the opportunity to give longer, written responses about issues they considered important. In total, 119 respondents (46%) gave their views on what they regard as the strengths, and 126 respondents (48%) gave their views on what they regard as the weaknesses of the existing ward system. There were three major recurrent themes that arose in these responses.

First, many indicated that the existing asymmetrical system (four ward councillors representing Ward 1, and two ward councillors representing Ward 2) is an imbalance of representation, both geographically and population-wise, and is overall unfair. Conversely, some respondents viewed the current system as an advantage, noting that the wards maintain communities of interest (urban in Ward 1 and rural in Ward 2).

Second, similar to the first theme, some respondents believe that six is the right number of councillors. Tied to the first theme, some respondents would like to see a more balanced arrangement of the six councillors. Comparatively, some respondents would like to see a change in the composition size, whether by electing the deputy mayor at-large or reducing the number of councillors.

While the W.B.C.C.R. only concerns the current ward system and Council makeup, the Consultant Team understands that existing ward boundaries influence how certain services and taxes are allocated within the Municipality. This represents a third theme mentioned in the respondents' answers regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the current system, since many claimed that the ward system is imbalanced and unfair in relation to these arrangements. It should be noted, however, that through this review, the Consultant Team will not make recommendations regarding servicing and taxing allocations. The Consultant Team will only provide an alternative ward and council arrangement that could provide better representation for the Municipality of Port Hope.

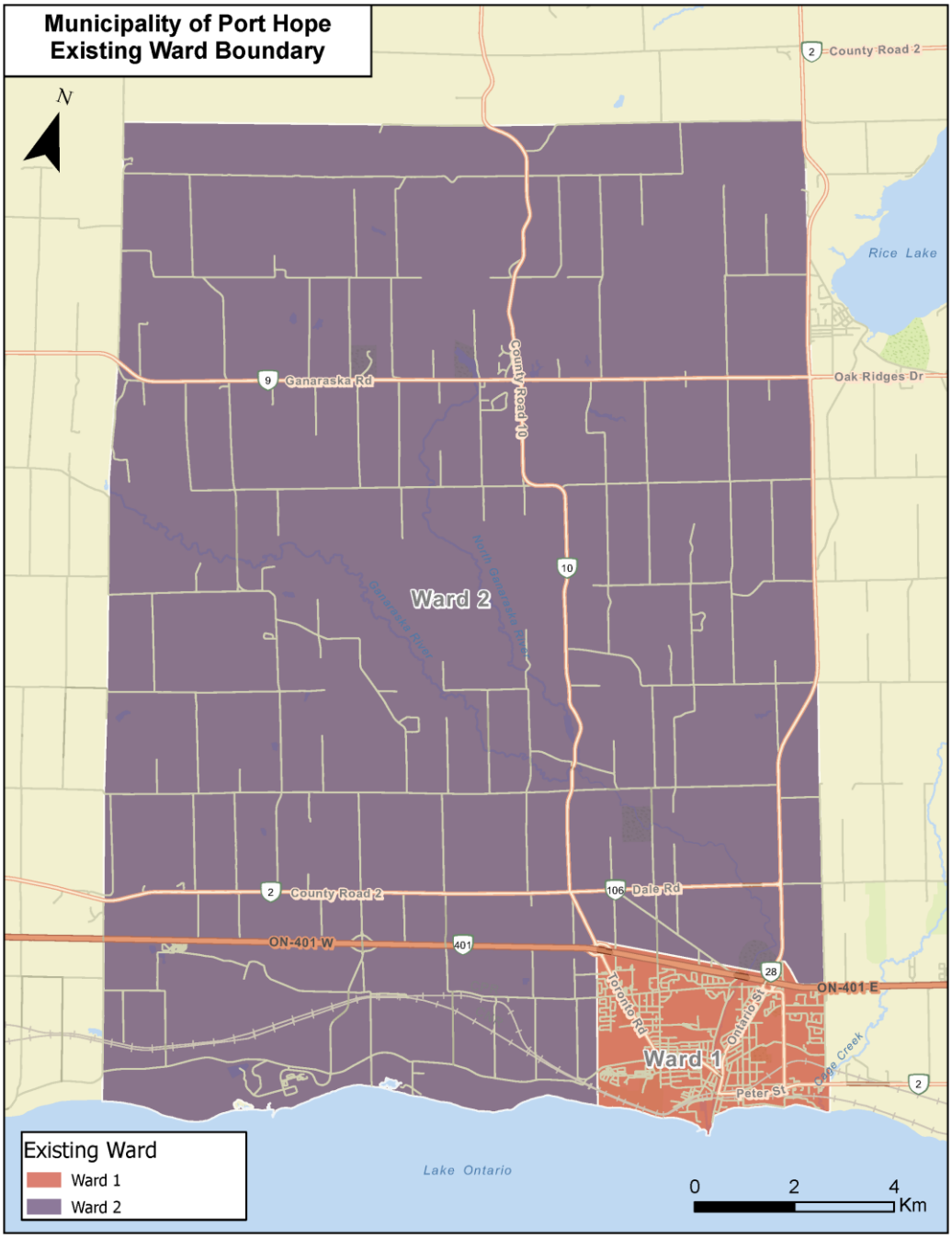
8. Evaluation of the Existing Ward Structure and Council Composition

A preliminary review of the current ward structure included in Discussion Paper F examined the wards based on the guiding principles. For reference, the existing wards are shown in Figure 8-1. The survey, conducted during the first phase of public consultation, asked respondents to evaluate the current wards' strengths and

weaknesses, as detailed in Chapter 7 of this report. These responses provide additional insight into that initial assessment.

This section revisits that evaluation, incorporating feedback received during consultation and addressing certain issues identified within parts of the existing ward system (shown in Figure 8-2).

Figure 8-1
Municipality of Port Hope
Existing Ward Structure



8.1 Representation by Population

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. This is the concept of representation by population ("rep by pop") or "one person, one vote" – where the vote of any one person carries roughly the same weight as that of any other person. In some places (such as parts of the United States), this principle of population parity is enforced rigorously – almost to the exclusion of any other factor – so that there is no noticeable variation in the population of electoral units within a particular jurisdiction.

In the Carter decision,[2] 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. The Court concluded that some degree of variation from parity ("relative parity") may be justified and, at times, even necessary "on the grounds of practical impossibility or the provision of more effective representation."

In a symmetrical ward system where each ward elects the same number of councillors (see Discussion Paper E), optimal size can be understood as a mid-point on a scale where the term "optimal" (O) describes a ward with a population within 5% on either side of the calculated optimal size which is identified by dividing the overall population of the municipality by the number of wards. The classification "below/above optimal" (O+ or O-) is applied to a ward with a population between 6% and 25% on either side of the optimal size. A ward that is labelled "outside the range" (OR+ or OR-) indicates that its population is greater than 25% above or below the optimal ward size. The adoption of a 25% maximum variation is based on federal redistribution legislation but is widely used in municipalities like Port Hope in the absence of any guidance in the *Municipal Act, 2001* or provincial regulations, where there are urban concentrations of different sizes, extensive rural territory, and areas with anticipated residential development.

Before developing possible alternatives to the current system in the ward boundary review phase, it is normally the practice of the Consultant Team to apply the same guiding principles to the current system to determine whether it is still viable and, if not, what shortcomings need to be considered in designing alternatives. As addressed in the Discussion Papers, Port Hope's wards are not directly comparable to one another

[2] Reference re: Provincial Electoral Boundaries (Saskatchewan) [1991] 2 S.C.R.

for several reasons: they were created with different ward magnitudes, they appear not to have been adopted with regard to "proportional equality" and population parity, and each includes a diversity of communities of interest, albeit drawn from the historical separate rural and urban settlements at the western end of Northumberland County.

Table 8-1
Municipality of Port Hope
Estimated Population by Existing Ward, 2025

Ward	2025 Total Population	2025 Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	13,949	1.53	OR+
Ward 2	4,242	0.47	OR-
Municipal-wide	**18,191**	-	-
Optimal Population	**9,095**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

The two existing wards in Port Hope provide neither population parity nor achieve the more complicated "proportional equality" and do not distribute the workload of all councillors equitably. Since the present wards in Port Hope do not meet the representation by population principle, this review will address this shortcoming by developing wards that place a higher priority on population parity.

8.2 Consideration of Current and Future Population Trends

Future population growth in Port Hope is expected to be concentrated in the Urban Settlement Area (90% of growth over the next 10-year period) and, to a lesser extent, rural Port Hope. Even modest growth in the Urban Settlement Area would widen the imbalance between the two wards, while new developments in Ward 2 will not resolve the imbalance. If left unchanged, the wards are not expected to achieve population parity over time and will thus fail to meet this principle as well.

Table 8-2 outlines the existing population by ward, as well as the projected population by ward.

Table 8-2
Municipality of Port Hope
Population Distribution in the Existing Wards in 2025 and 2035

Ward Number	2025 Total Population[1]	Variance	Optimal Range	2035 Population[1]	Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	13,949	1.53	OR+	16,962	1.58	OR+
Ward 2	4,242	0.47	OR-	4,575	0.42	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**9,095**	-	-	**10,768**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

These forecasts show that the population imbalance pattern in 2025 continues and is expected to worsen by 2036, with the gap between the wards increasing to over 12,300.

8.3 Consideration of Communities of Interest

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).[3] 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 frequently linked to "neighbourhoods" since the neighbourhood is the most identifiable geographic point in most people's lives; it is where they live. More importantly, the responsibilities of the municipality are closely tied to where people live. This includes roads and their maintenance, utilities connected to their dwellings, and a wide range of social, cultural, environmental and recreational services, which are often based on residential communities. Even municipal taxation is inextricably linked to one's dwelling.

[3] *Reference re Provincial Electoral Boundaries (Sask.)*, [1991], known as the Carter decision.

Identifying such communities of interest recognizes that geographic location brings shared perspectives that should be reflected in the municipal 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 aggregate 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.

As observed in this and the Discussion Papers, the two wards in Port Hope are purely embodiments of the pre-amalgamation Hope Township and the Town of Port Hope. Despite the historical identities that may be attached to these former municipalities, each one was, and continues to be, a collection of identifiable neighbourhoods and settlements rather than a homogenous and cohesive area. Within Ward 1, there are distinctive social and residential clusters, some east of the Ganaraska River and others to the west. Within Ward 2, there are agricultural areas but also small, distinct settlements like Welcome, Canton, Osaca, Elizabethville and Garden Hill.

Preserving the historical geographic entities as wards 25 years after being amalgamated into a single municipality, largely because they are familiar, may hamper the goal of providing equitable and effective representation for all residents, as discussed in relation to achieving population parity.

While the present wards capture the former community of interest symbolized by the two pre-amalgamation municipalities that long-time residents may value, as the Port Hope population and its economy grow and change, a ward system based on other common interests may now be more appropriate.

8.4 Consideration of Physical and Natural Boundaries

The boundaries for Port Hope's two wards are drawn along two features: Highway 401 and the former municipal boundary parallel to Bauch Road from Lake Ontario, which is extended north to Highway 401. The boundary lines themselves are clean, largely

recognizable, and long-standing markers. The present ward boundaries meet this principle.

8.5 Effective Representation

The guiding principles are subject to the overarching principle of "effective representation," meaning that, to the extent possible, each resident should have comparable access to an elected representative, and each councillor should speak on behalf of an equal number of residents. Deviations from population parity can be justified if they contribute to more effective representation.

Effective representation is not based on the performance of incumbent councillors. It is, rather, a concept that is premised on serving the ongoing relationship between residents and elected officials, not just on the way the resident is "counted" on election day, although that is an important component of a fair system of representation. The expectation should be that the wards are drawn to support the capacity of councillors to represent their constituents, rather than hindering councillors from performing those responsibilities. Are the individual wards plausible and coherent units of representation that a councillor can speak about clearly? Are they drawn in such a way that representatives can readily play the role expected of them? Do they provide equitable (that is, fair) access to councillors for all residents of the municipality?

Currently, the electoral structure in Port Hope presents challenges to achieving effective representation. The way councillors are elected results in notable disparities: some councillors represent significantly more residents than others, and the number of councillors a voter can elect varies depending on where they live. In some instances, the Ward 2 councillors may even have the opportunity to vote twice on the same issue. These inconsistencies mean that not all votes carry equal weight, and some residents have a stronger voice in Council decisions simply due to their location.

These realities undermine the principle of fair representation, where each councillor's vote should reflect a comparable number of constituents. While no ward system can perfectly meet every democratic principle, the most effective models strive to ensure that councillors represent similar population sizes and that all residents are meaningfully represented in local governance.

Importantly, small deviations from strict numerical equality may be acceptable if they contribute to a more equitable system overall. This approach is supported by the Carter decision, a key ruling in Canadian law, which emphasizes that fairness in representation is not solely about numbers, but also about ensuring that communities are genuinely and effectively represented.

Figure 8-2
Municipality of Port Hope
Present Port Hope Ward Configuration Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Current Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?[1]	Comment
Representation by Population	**No**	Both wards exceed the ±25% range of variation.
Consideration of Future Population and Electoral Trends	**No**	Population growth will not overcome the existing population imbalance.
Communities of Interest	**Partially Successful**	The two wards essentially preserve the historical pre-amalgamation municipalities that were dissolved more than 25 years ago. Each ward is itself a mix of distinctive communities.
Geographic and Topographic Boundaries	**Yes**	There are clear and recognizable boundaries.
Effective Representation	**Partially Successful**	The asymmetrical relationships between constituents and councillors hinder the achievement of effective representation; however, the current system does provide a distinct voice for both the rural and urban communities making this a partially successful configuration but with significant population discrepancies.

[1] The degree to which each guiding principle is satisfied is ranked as "**Yes**" (fully satisfied), "**Largely Successful**," "**Partially Successful**," or "**No**" (not satisfied).

8.6 Council Composition

While no ward design is likely to fully satisfy all guiding principles, the most effective configurations strive to maximize alignment, particularly with respect to representation by population and the broader goal of effective representation. Currently, the population imbalance between the two wards is substantial, with a variance exceeding 9,700 residents. This disparity has likely grown over time and is expected to worsen significantly as the Municipality approaches the 2030 municipal election.

Such a trend has important implications for councillor workload, responsiveness to constituents, and the overall quality of representation. Some residents may think that having four representatives is better than having one (or two), but such an arrangement means that four people, for example, are not dividing the response to contacts from constituents in Ward 1, but each may be involved and respond to the same 9,700 residents. This would be a questionable use of the time and commitment of part-time councillors that could be better handled in a ward configuration in which representation is allocated differently and would likely bring more personal connections between councillors and constituents.

In addition to assessing current ward boundaries and exploring alternative designs, the Consultant Team was also tasked with reviewing the composition of Council (i.e., the size). This broad topic was addressed during the first round of public consultation. As noted in the engagement summary (section 6), many community members expressed support for maintaining six local councillors, with 44.75% of survey respondents agreeing with this view.

Feedback was mixed, however. While a significant portion of residents felt it was unfair that the two wards elect a different number of councillors, many still supported retaining the asymmetrical system. Specifically, 51% of survey respondents believed the current arrangement was unfair, yet 44% preferred to keep it. Conversely, nearly 40% of respondents felt the system was fair, and 27.07% supported moving to a symmetrical council structure.

Determining the appropriate size of council is closely interconnected with several other structural considerations. These include the role of a deputy mayor, the potential for symmetrical ward designs, and the overall ward configuration itself. Each of these elements influences and is influenced by the others, which will need to be examined

collectively to ensure a cohesive and effective governance model, and is discussed in the next chapter.

9. Different Ways to Organize Council

The Consultant Team has identified several key considerations that warrant discussion due to their potential influence on the final council composition and ward boundary recommendations. The following section will explore these critical areas that will lead to example ward configurations that illustrate how these factors may shape the outcomes.

9.1 Deputy Mayor Selection

Since the *Municipal Act, 2001* makes no reference to the office of deputy mayor, it is up to each municipality to decide if the position is needed and how the office is to be filled. One of the directions to the Consultant Team was to consider the method of election for the deputy mayor in Port Hope ahead of a review of the deputy mayor's role.

In Northumberland County, all seven municipalities have a deputy mayor and in five cases the deputy mayor is elected by general vote. In Port Hope and Hamilton Township, however, the deputy mayor is chosen by Council after the election. None of the deputy mayors sits on Northumberland County Council.

The method of election for the deputy mayor has been under discussion recently in Port Hope where the deputy mayor used to serve for the full four-year term. The current procedural by-law states, however, that "Every Member of Council, with the exception of the Mayor, shall be the Deputy Mayor for a period of approximately eight (8) months consecutively during a four (4) year term of Council, on a rotating basis." In 2022, two members decided not to participate and, as a result, Council decided that four different councillors would each take turns as deputy mayor, one per year. The deputy mayor helps support the mayor and may take on extra duties, as directed by council.

The following chart sets out in general terms some of the considerations for retaining an appointed deputy mayor or moving to an elected deputy mayor. It does not consider the present rotational model used in Port Hope.

Table 9-1
Perceived Implications for Alternative Methods of Electing a Deputy Mayor

Selected by Council	Selected by General Vote
• Many residents are not well-informed about the expectations for a deputy mayor; members of council are better able to judge the qualities needed for the position. • The deputy mayor does not have the legislative authority vested in the mayor so they do not need public endorsement. • The selection of the deputy mayor by council is not an "all or nothing" situation; that is, those not selected to fill the office continue to serve on council. • Campaigning for the office across the entire municipality is potentially costly for candidates. • The deputy mayor would continue to be the point of contact for residents of one particular ward, and as a ward councillor would still be expected to pay close attention to issues that are ward-specific. • There is little apparent public pressure to make a change.	• The deputy mayor should have the confidence of electors across the whole municipality, not just in one ward. • Candidates for the office would enter the race expecting to serve the whole municipality, not later filling the role in addition to representing a ward. • The present arrangement only requires councillors to make their case to one another to win the position, so the selection may be based on personal relationships rather than demonstrated capacity. • An at-large election involving the entire community is clearly more democratic. • Establishing a separate elective office has implications for the overall size of council.

If there is widespread support in the community and Council for an elected deputy mayor in Port Hope, there would be an immediate impact on the composition of council: would the office of deputy mayor be an additional (that is, an eighth) member of council or would the number of ward councillors be reduced from six to five (leaving the Council the same size as it has been since 2001)? Both practices can be found across Ontario, and some ward boundary reviews conducted by the Consultant Team have resulted in an additional member of council, while others have not. In other words, there is no "right answer" but an answer that is right for the municipality in question.

Survey responses regarding the selection of the Deputy Mayor revealed mixed opinions. Both the survey and in-person public consultation sessions indicated some

support for electing the Deputy Mayor through a general (at-large) vote. Nearly half of survey respondents (42.2%) believed this approach would strengthen the Municipality's leadership. In contrast, 27.6% felt it would not lead to stronger leadership, while 30.3% were unsure. These results suggest a divided perspective and highlight the need for continued dialogue and education on the issue. The Preliminary Ward Examples found in this report include both possibilities for consideration.

9.2 Symmetrical vs. Asymmetrical Wards

So far, the distribution of population in Port Hope has been considered in aggregate terms: that is the way neighbourhoods, Settlement Areas and other population clusters are combined in the design of wards. This reflects the important principle of representation by population, which is a high priority in this review but, as already demonstrated, is complicated by the nature of the present two-ward system.

There is, however, another way to look at how residents are represented. This perspective is reflected in the political adage "one person, one vote," meaning that each elector should be equal to every other elector in the municipality in terms of the number of ballots they can cast in an election. In Port Hope, this is not the case because, while all electors are entitled to vote for a candidate for mayor, electors in Ward 1 have an additional four votes to cast, whereas those in Ward 2 only have two additional votes. "One person four votes, another person two votes" is clearly a misapplication of this fundamental democratic principle.

In the terminology used by the Consultant Team, an arrangement in which representation in the wards is unbalanced in this way is referred to as an asymmetrical electoral system: the assignment of council seats in the wards gives some electors a different number of votes in the same election. As explained in Discussion Paper A and earlier in this report, an asymmetrical ward system was an integral part of the amalgamated Municipality – a system that has been assessed as failing to provide effective representation to all residents of Port Hope. One way to address this shortcoming is to consider an electoral model that includes symmetrical wards; that is, wards that elect the same number of councillors, whether that is one, two, or three councillors.

Beyond the reason just addressed, there are other considerations. A symmetrical ward system would likely include wards that more closely meet the representation by

population principle, a cornerstone for effective representation. Wards that are designed to include similar population sizes will contribute to more balanced workloads for part-time councillors and would reduce the need for the present "weighted vote" system. A set of wards of the same magnitude can contribute to a better representation of the diverse communities within Port Hope rather than having to group them together in larger, less coherent wards. The present asymmetrical wards have created the perception of inequality since the system is based on only two component parts in which, ironically, the larger ward by population is underrepresented.

A key question in this review is whether the long-standing asymmetrical system is still supported simply because it is familiar or whether the guiding principles established for this review can point the way to more effective representation through symmetrical wards.

9.3 Size of Council

It's important to understand that the *Municipal Act, 2001* does not specify how council seats should be aligned in a ward system. Section 217 just says that local council members can be elected by a general vote, by wards, or by a mix of both. In Port Hope, councillors are elected by wards. Since 2001, Ward 1 has elected four councillors, while Ward 2 has elected two councillors. The *Municipal Act, 2001* does not forbid multi-member wards, and many Ontario municipalities use them, so it is worth considering whether Port Hope should modify its multi-member ward system as part of a new electoral setup. In most of the following examples, however, the Consultant Team has assumed a single-member ward system and contemplated a two-member ward system in the three ward configurations.

We begin first with the issue of what a smaller or larger council would provide for the Municipality. With a council of six plus the mayor, members of Port Hope Council will have had ample opportunity to understand how a council of this size operates. The mayor is elected at-large and does not represent a specific ward.

While the size of the council may be unchanged, larger, or smaller in the examples described in Section 10, having only those elected in wards (in addition to the mayor and potentially others) serve on Port Hope Council would change the dynamics of the council in ways that current members must consider. Table 9-2 and Table 9-3 provide

comparisons of council sizes with other municipalities within Northumberland County and similar-sized municipalities in Ontario, based on 2021 Census population data.

Table 9-2
Population and Council Members, Northumberland County

Municipality	2021 Population	Area (sq.km)	Council Members*	Persons per Member	Wards/ At-Large
Township of Alnwick/Haldimand	7,473	398.3	5	1,495	At-large
Municipality of Brighton	12,108	223.2	7	1,730	At-large
Town of Cobourg	20,519	22.4	7	2,931	At-large
Township of Cramahe	6,509	202.22	5	1,302	At-large
Township of Hamilton	11,059	256.03	5	2,212	At-large
Municipality of Port Hope	17,294	**278.8**	7	2,471	2 Wards (2 + 4)
Municipality of Trent Hills	13,861	513.85	7	1,980	5 Wards (5 x 1)
Average	**12,689**	**270.7**	**6**	**2,017**	-

*Includes the head of council and a deputy mayor elected at-large except for the Township of Hamilton and the Municipality of Port Hope, where the deputy mayor is appointed by the Council from among its members.
Source: Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population.

Table 9-3
Population and Council Members, Other Ontario Area Municipalities
(Population 15,000 to 20,000)

Municipality	2021 Population	Area (sq.km)	Council Members*	Persons per Member	Wards/ At-Large
Township of West Lincoln	15,454	387.0	7	2,208	3 Wards
Municipality of North Perth	15,538	493.1	10	1,554	3 Wards (3+3+2)
Town of Saugeen Shores	15,908	170.2	9	1,768	6 Wards
Town of Bracebridge	17,305	615.2	9	1,923	5 wards + 3 at-large
Town of Midland	17,817	35.33	9	1,980	At-large
Town of Petawawa	18,160	164.7	7	2,594	At-large
Municipality of North Grenville	17,964	351.9	5	3,593	At-large
Town of Pelham**	18,192	126.3	7	2,599	3 Wards
Average	**17,042**	**293.0**	**8**	**2,277**	-

* Includes the head of council and some directly elected deputy mayors implicit in the composition of council (Thames Centre, St. Clair, Severn, Mississippi Mills, Clearview, West Lincoln, North Perth, and Midland). In Pembroke, Petawawa, and North Grenville, the at-large councillor with the most votes serves as the deputy mayor. The Town of Saugeen Shores elects both a deputy mayor and vice-deputy at-large.
** A Regional councillor, who does not sit on Town Council, is also elected in Pelham.
Source: Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population.

The Consultant Team can point to several distinct advantages of having more or the same number of councillors, for example, having more councillors available to shoulder legislative responsibilities and potentially to reduce the constituency workload for each councillor, which may make them more responsive to constituents. A larger council, however, may also take more time to make decisions because there are more voices to be heard during deliberations. As well, there would likely be additional short-term capital costs to modify Council chambers and an ongoing modest budget increase for council salaries. Another consideration, though, is the fact that councillors in Port Hope are perceived to be part-time (and are paid accordingly), so a smaller council could

make it less likely to attract candidates who are employed full-time in addition to carrying out their council responsibilities.

Table 9-4 provides information on the various advantages and disadvantages of both a larger and smaller council. There is no distinct "optimal" size for a municipal council, but there are several advantages and disadvantages, which are highlighted in the table below.

Table 9-4
Advantages and Disadvantages of Council Size

	Smaller Council	Larger Council
Advantages	• Debate and decision-making can be completed in a more timely manner • Clearer lines of accountability for residents	• More members available to serve on various agencies, boards, and commissions • Ability to represent a more diverse range of interests, communities, and demographics within the Municipality • May allow for the formation of specialized committees, improving focus and expertise on specific issues • Legislative workload is more dispersed, allowing councillors to be more accessible and responsive to residents
Disadvantages	• Larger, more complex wards for each councillor to represent • A larger workload for each councillor • Less diversity of perspectives, reducing the ability of Council to represent the full range of community interests and demographics • Decision-making may be dominated by a few voices, reducing inclusivity and transparency	• Debate and decision-making can take more time • It may be more difficult for staff to interpret Council direction • Possibility of redundancy, overlapping responsibilities and inefficiencies

These are, of course, general comments about the size of municipal councils and should be kept in mind as the C.C.W.B.R. proceeds. What the right council size is for Port Hope, however, is the most important question. In the following table (Table 9-5), the Consultant Team explores various council size options, using the Municipality's 2025 population estimate of 18,191 to demonstrate the size of various ward options.

Table 9-5
Council Size Options for Port Hope

Ward Configuration	Council Size	2025 Estimated Optimal Population Per Councillor	Notes
3 Wards, 2 Councillors Per Ward	Seven members • six councillors • the mayor elected at-large	3,032	Retains current size of council and deputy mayor could be appointed within elected council members.
	Eight members • six councillors • the deputy mayor elected at-large • the mayor elected at-large		Increases council size by one by identifying a deputy mayor to be elected at-large along with the mayor. Ward councillor numbers remain the same at six.
5 Wards, 1 Councillor Per Ward	Six members • five councillors • the mayor elected at-large	3,638	Decreases current size of council by one and deputy mayor could be appointed within elected council members.
	Seven members • five councillors • the deputy mayor elected at-large • the mayor elected at-large		Maintains current size of council by decreasing councillors by one and by identifying a deputy mayor to be elected at-large along with the mayor.
6 Wards, 1 Councillor Per Ward	Seven members • six councillors • the mayor elected at-large	3,032	Retains current size of council and deputy mayor could be appointed within elected council members.
	Eight members • six councillors • the deputy mayor elected at-large • the mayor elected at-large		Increases council size by one by identifying a deputy mayor to be elected at-large along with the mayor. Ward councillor numbers remain the same at six.

The Consultant Team has assessed ward boundary options with varying numbers of councillors but has limited that analysis to Council increasing or decreasing by 1. If Council is contemplating a different size, it would be helpful to provide feedback to the

Consultant Team. Later in this report, examples are presented to show how different ward boundary configurations might change with different council sizes.

The goal of this exercise is to provide Council with additional information to help limit the options and arrangements related to council size. Achieving an ideal population per ward is important, but if designing that number of wards is not practical, considering the guiding principles, it is crucial to inform Council of this. A summary of the different configurations is included below.

The Consultant Team has completed a high-level analysis of three-ward, five-ward, and six-ward systems as part of the work to date. All suggest an increase in the number of wards, depending on the size of the council. Both the three-ward and six-ward configurations have six councillors, with the expectation that two councillors would be elected per ward in the three-ward configurations and one councillor per ward in the six-ward configurations. The five-ward configuration considers a reduction in the number of councillors to five, with one councillor elected per ward.

Starting with a three-ward option. In some ways, this could be seen as a “minimal change” since it keeps the current total of six councillors, simply adding one more ward. Simultaneously, it addresses the problem of the asymmetrical system, with each ward electing two councillors. It provides familiarity to residents and does not adjust the existing rural/urban configuration, as it maintains the existing Ward 2. It can perhaps be seen as a transitional governance model that still retains some aspects of the existing system, while moving to a symmetrical number of councillors.

A six-ward model could also maintain the current council structure of six local councillors while offering different areas the chance to elect one councillor per ward to represent them. This model also has examples that contemplate the existing rural and urban ward split, but in this case, it assigns four wards to the urban area and two wards to the rural area. Other examples focus on six wards that provide better population balance and start to blend some urban and rural areas.

A five-ward model would contemplate reducing the number of councillors by one member. Similar to the six-ward model, this would provide the opportunity for different areas to elect one councillor per ward to represent them. Also similar to the other models, examples have been prepared both contemplating the existing urban and rural ward boundary lines and those with a blending of areas.

For all configurations, it is important to note, as mentioned above, that prioritizing population parity will require a mix of urban and rural areas due to the sometimes sparse population in rural regions and the higher density within urban areas.

Additionally, each configuration can be considered with the election of the deputy mayor as a separate position or with a status quo deputy mayor position (or some other form of selection).

The Consultant Team considers a three-ward, five-ward, and six-ward system to be viable options for the Municipality of Port Hope. The issues described earlier with a two-ward asymmetrical system are likely to worsen over time as more residential development takes place in urban Port Hope. Some of these options would require population growth over several election cycles to reach parity. They might be necessary in the future as growth increases in certain parts of the Municipality. These options would remain available for future Councils if they choose to pursue them.

At this point, however, the three-ward, five-ward, and six-ward options best account for a system that considers and balances the guiding principles used in this study. The Consultant Team has presented examples that maintain and use the current urban and rural boundary divisions, while also offering several examples that aim to focus more on population parity among the various wards.

The Consultant Team has prepared detailed maps with associated population projections for each example presented.

10. Preliminary Ward Configuration Examples

Considering the three themes in section 9, the Consultant Team has developed various alternative ward configurations. Some examples maintain the existing urban-rural boundary lines and focus more on the community of interest guiding principle, while other examples are focused more around achieving population parity amongst the wards.

The urban-rural configuration examples were developed by analyzing the two areas independently, with a focus on balancing populations within each, both urban and rural, rather than across the Municipality. When these configurations are combined to form complete ward systems, population parity between individual wards is not always achieved; however, parity is maintained within the urban and rural areas separately.

The Consultant Team has prepared urban-rural ward examples for three-ward, five-ward, and six-ward configurations.

If population parity across the entire Municipality is determined to be the primary objective, then the rural and urban areas must be integrated to achieve that goal. To support this approach, the Consultant Team has also developed ward configuration examples for three, five, and six wards that demonstrate how full municipal parity can be achieved.

10.1 Three-Ward Urban-Rural Configurations

10.1.1 Three-Ward Urban Example 1

The Three-Ward Urban Example 1 illustrates an east-west division of urban Port Hope. The boundary between Ward 1 and Ward 2 follows Victoria Street North southward to Jocelyn Street, then east along Jocelyn Street before cutting south through Port Hope's Monkey Mountain Park to Highland Drive. From there, the boundary proceeds east along Highland Drive to Cavan Street, then south along Cavan Street to Barron Street, and east on Barron Street to the Ganaraska River. It then follows the river south to the waterfront.

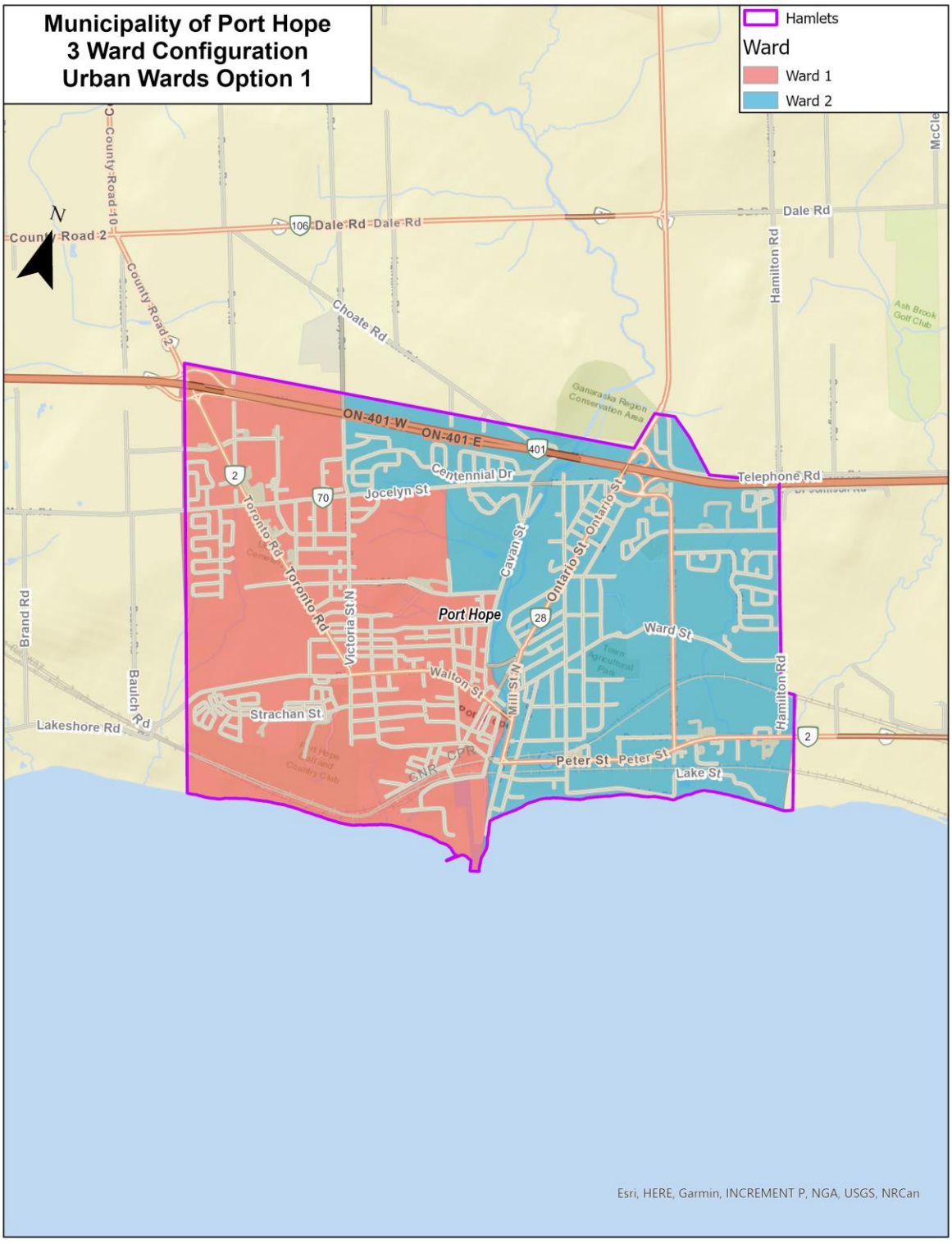
When analyzing the urban wards separately from the entire Municipality, the two wards are fairly evenly distributed population-wise for 2025 and 2035, with both wards within a 25% variance of the optimal population now and in the future.

Table 10-1
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Urban Example 1 – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	6,474	0.93	O-	9,070	1.07	O+
Ward 2	7,474	1.07	O+	7,892	0.93	O-
Total	**13,949**	-	-	**16,962**	-	
Average	**6,974**	-	-	**8,481**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-1
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Urban Example 1



10.1.2 Three-Ward Urban Example 2

The Three-Ward Urban Example 2 provides a more balanced distribution of population within urban Port Hope. The boundary between the two wards follows Victoria Street North southward to Ridout Street/Walton Street, then eastward and northward along Mill Street to Ward Street, and finally east along Ward Street to the eastern municipal boundary. This results in an L-shaped Ward 1 that keeps the waterfront communities together by grouping them with the western part of urban Port Hope.

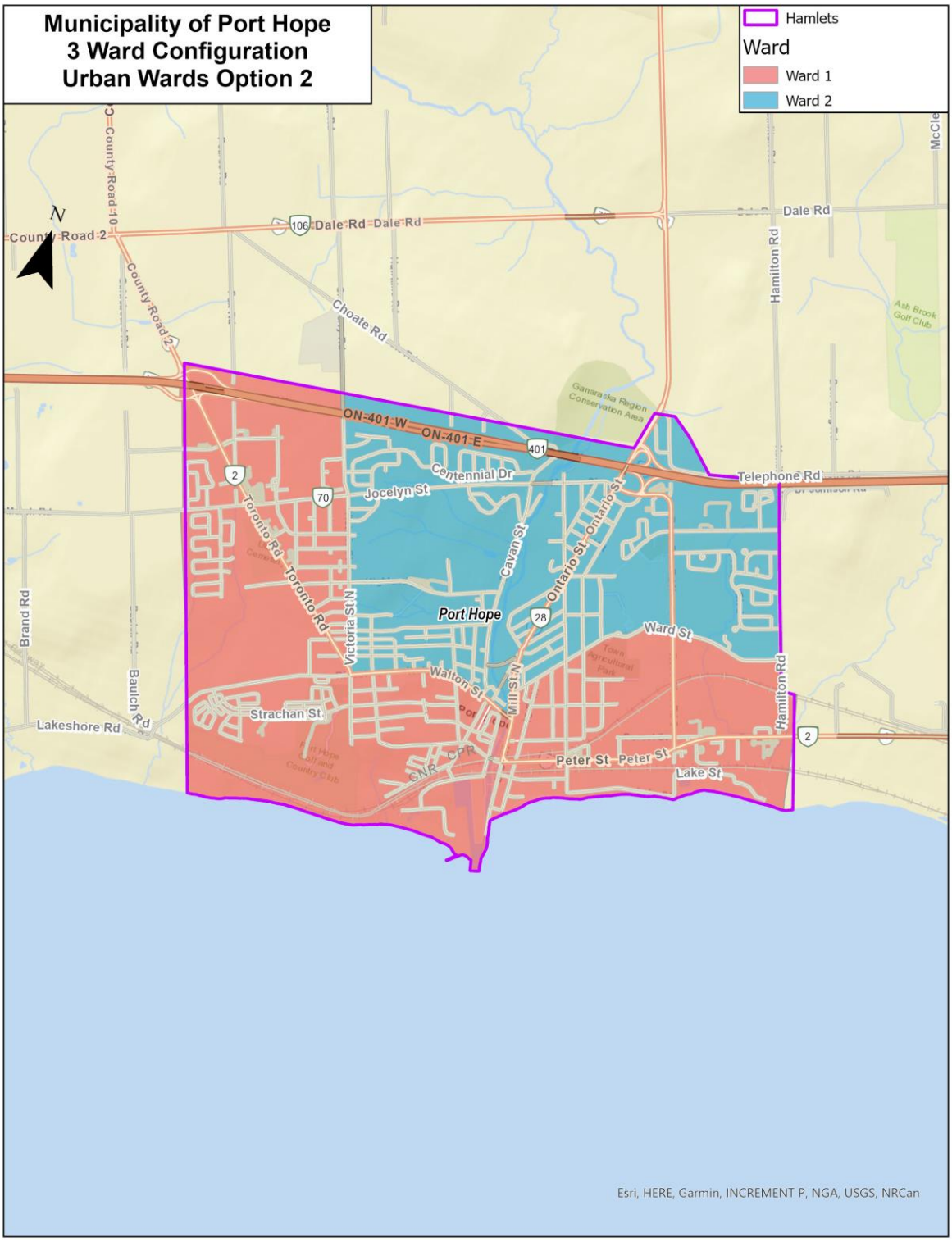
When the urban wards are analyzed independently from the rest of the Municipality, the two-ward configuration shows a more balanced population distribution for both 2025 and 2035 compared to the Three-Ward Urban Example 1. In this scenario, both wards remain within the acceptable ±25% variance of the optimal population, now and out 10 years.

Table 10-2
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Urban Example 2 – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	6,367	0.91	O-	8,962	1.06	O+
Ward 2	7,582	1.09	O+	8,000	0.94	O-
Total	**13,949**	-	-	**16,962**	-	
Average	**6,974**	-	-	**8,481**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-2
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Urban Example 2



10.1.3 Three-Ward Rural Example 1

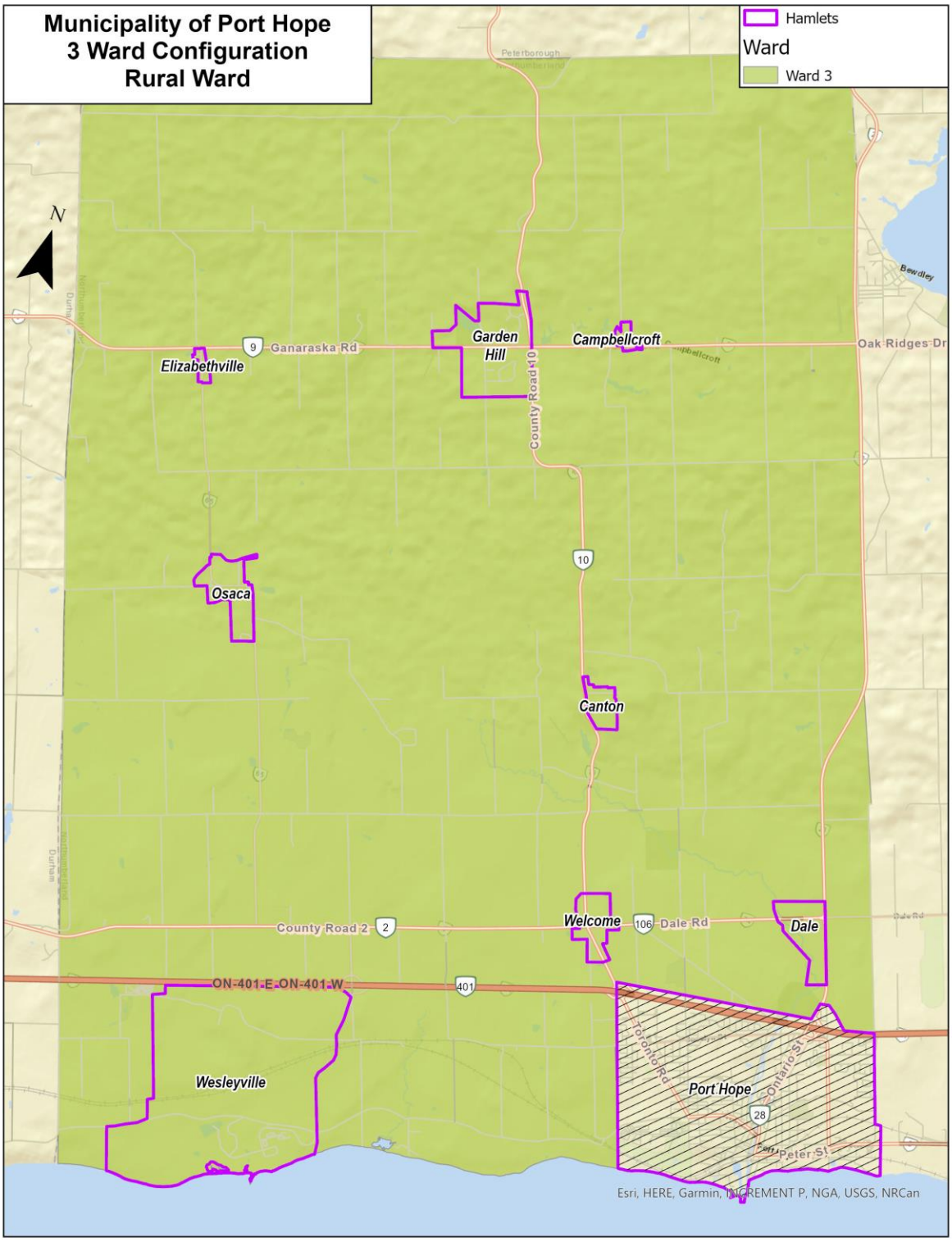
The Three-Ward Rural Example maintains the existing Ward 2, a single ward capturing the entirety of rural Port Hope, which includes rural communities from Garden Hill in the north to Wesleyville in the south.

Table 10-3
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Urban Rural – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 3	4,242	1.00	O	4,575	1.00	O

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-3
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Rural Example



10.1.4 Three-Ward Urban-Rural Combinations

When combining the different urban and rural examples to examine them at the municipal level, it is evident that population parity is not achievable. With a three-ward system being made up of one rural ward (Ward 3 in the examples below), and the urban area consisting of two wards (Wards 1 and 2 in the examples below), the rural population of 4,240 in 2025 is only 70% of the optimal (or average) population of the entire Municipality, falling outside the acceptable 25% range.

By 2035, this situation worsens as the population drops to 64% of the optimal target, due to limited growth in rural areas, keeping the overall population relatively stable while urban wards expand.

Table 10-4
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Urban Example 1 + Rural Combined

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	6,474	1.07	O+	9,070	1.26	OR+
Ward 2	7,474	1.23	O+	7,892	1.10	O+
Ward 3	4,242	0.70	OR-	4,575	0.64	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**6,064**	-	-	**7,179**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Table 10-5
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Urban Example 2 + Rural Combined

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	6,367	1.05	O+	8,962	1.25	O+
Ward 2	7,582	1.25	OR+	8,000	1.11	O+
Ward 3	4,242	0.70	OR-	4,575	0.64	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**6,064**	-	-	**7,179**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-4
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Urban-Rural Combinations – Evaluation Table

Preliminary Option	Council Composition	Representation by Population	Consideration of Future Population and Electoral Trends	Communities of Interest	Geographic and Topographic Boundaries	Effective Representation
Existing	2 wards 6 councillors	No	No	Partially Successful	Yes	Partially Successful
Urban Example 1 + Rural Example	3 wards 6 councillors	Partially Successful	Partially Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful
Urban Example 2 + Rural Example	3 wards 6 councillors	Partially Successful	Partially Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful

Levels of evaluation for how the Guiding Principles are met

Yes	Largely Successful	Partially Successful	No

Higher Rating **Lower Rating**

Figure 10-4 presents the evaluation of each three-ward configuration at the municipal level. While the population principle is only partially met when assessed across the

entire Municipality, each option demonstrates strong population parity when viewed separately within the urban and rural areas.

10.2 Five-Ward Urban-Rural Configurations

10.2.1 Five-Ward Urban Example 1

The Five-Ward Urban Example 1 divides urban Port Hope into three wards. The waterfront communities are located within Ward 2, while Ward 1 and Ward 3 create an east-west division of central and northern urban Port Hope.

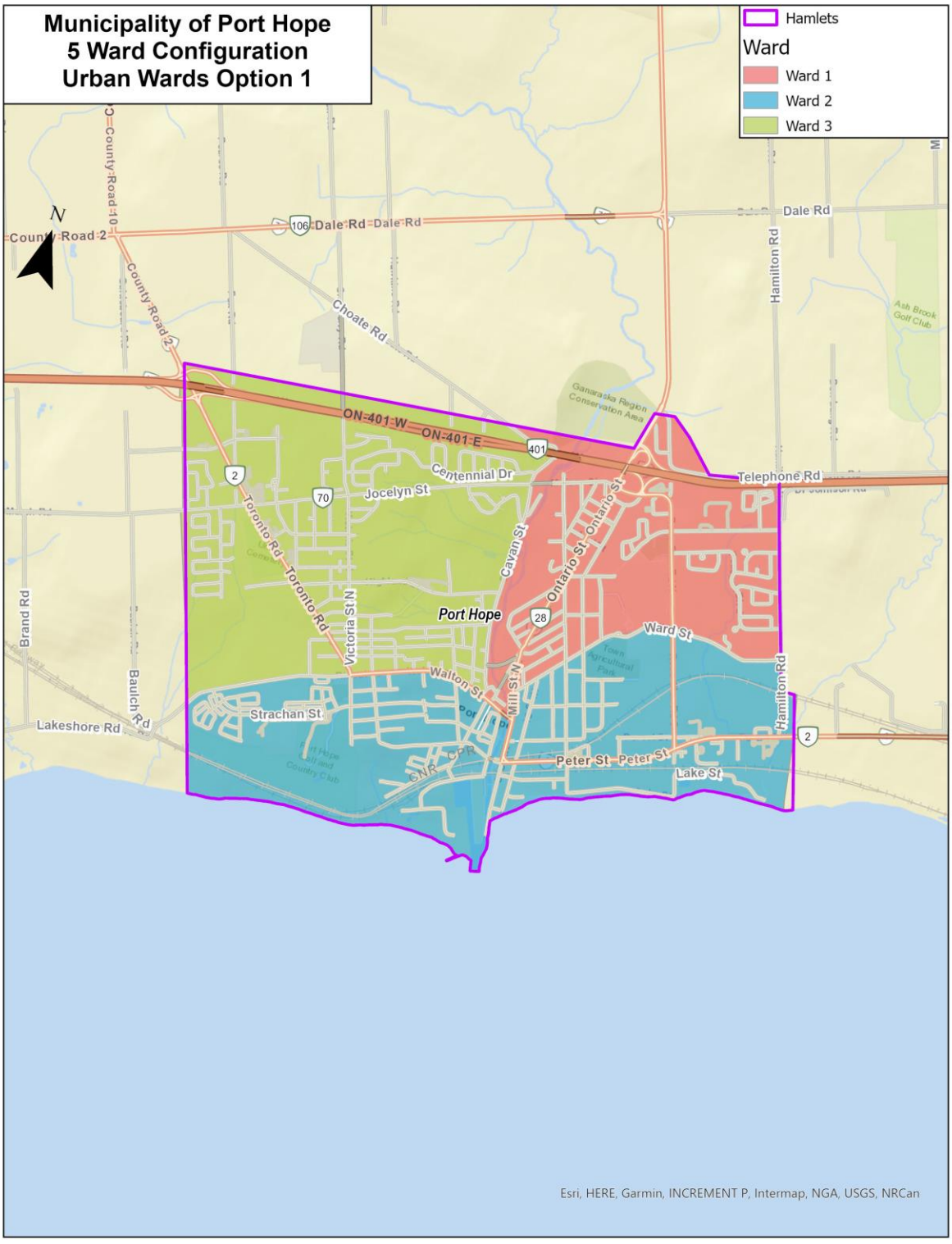
By 2025, Ward 1 is within the optimal range, while Ward 2 is slightly under but within 25%. Ward 3 is also within a 25% variance above the optimal range and approaching that threshold. By 2035, population growth balances the wards, with Ward 3 reaching parity, Ward 2 remaining within 25% above the optimal population, and Ward 1 being below the optimal but still well within the 25% range.

Table 10-6
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Urban Example 1 – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	4,578	0.98	O	4,982	0.88	O-
Ward 2	3,666	0.79	O-	6,103	1.08	O+
Ward 3	5,705	1.23	O+	5,877	1.04	O
Total	**13,949**	-	-	**16,962**	-	-
Average	**4,650**	-	-	**5,654**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-5
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Urban Example 1



10.2.2 Five-Ward Urban Example 2

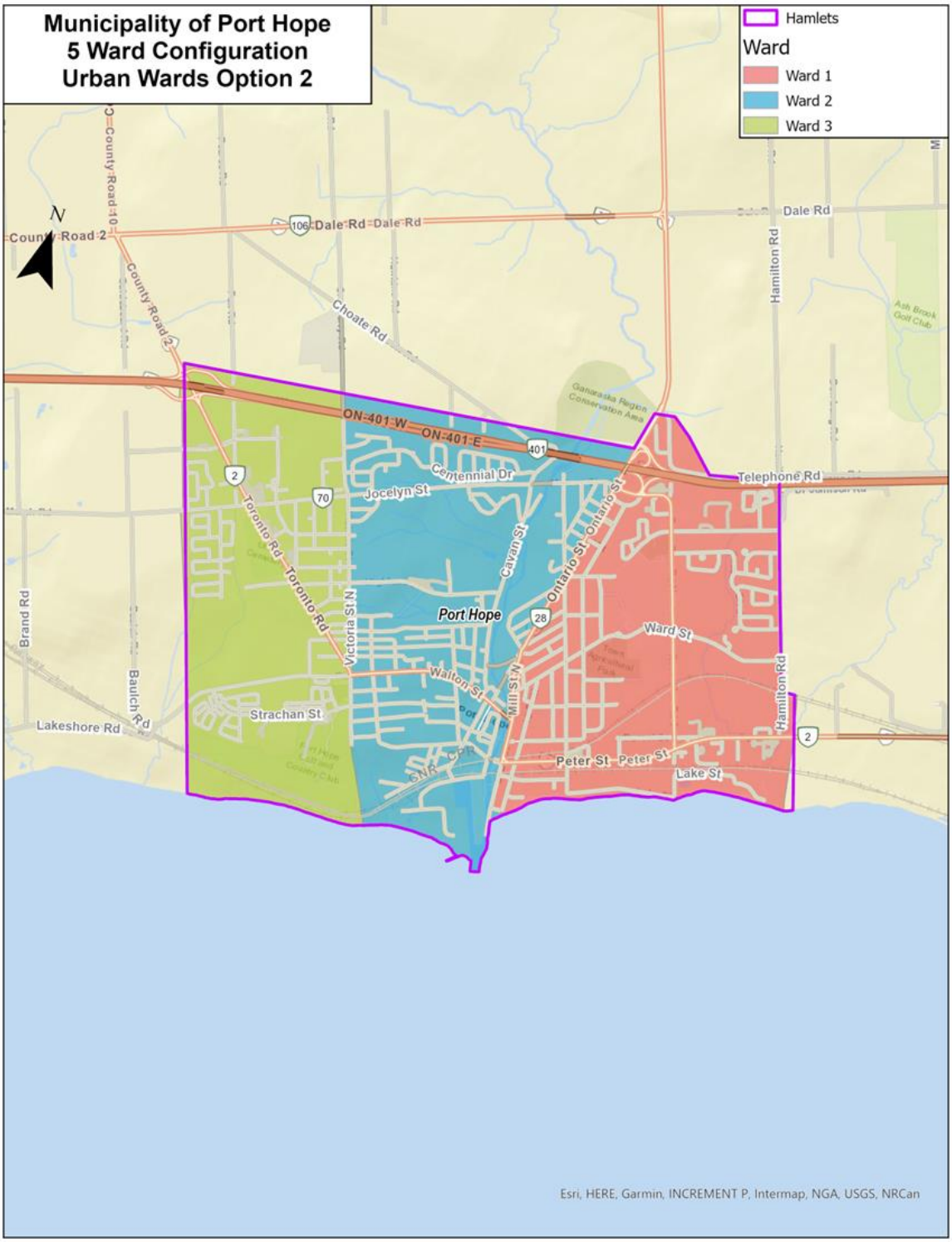
The Five-Ward Urban Example 2 also divides the Port Hope urban area into three wards. This layout features three "strip" wards that extend north and south from the waterfront to the northern urban boundary. Ward 1 includes everything east of Ontario Street and Mill Street North up to the waterfront, while Ward 3 covers everything west of Victoria Street North to the waterfront. Ward 2 consists of the area between Wards 1 and 3. By 2025, all wards stay within a 25% variance of one another, and they continue to do so by 2035.

Table 10-7
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Urban Example 2 – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	5,063	1.09	O+	5,228	0.92	O-
Ward 2	5,048	1.09	O+	5,312	0.94	O-
Ward 3	3,838	0.83	O-	6,421	1.14	O+
Total	**13,949**	-	-	**16,962**	-	-
Average	**4,650**	-	-	**5,654**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-6
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Urban Example 2



10.2.3 Five-Ward Rural Example 1

The Five-Ward Rural Example 1 splits the existing Ward 2 (rural Port Hope) into two wards. The boundary dividing the wards follows the Ganaraska River from the western municipal boundary to Bickle Road. It then goes east along Bickle Road, turns into Line Road 4 to Highway 28, and then proceeds south on Highway 28 to Oughs Road, finally heading east to the municipal boundary.

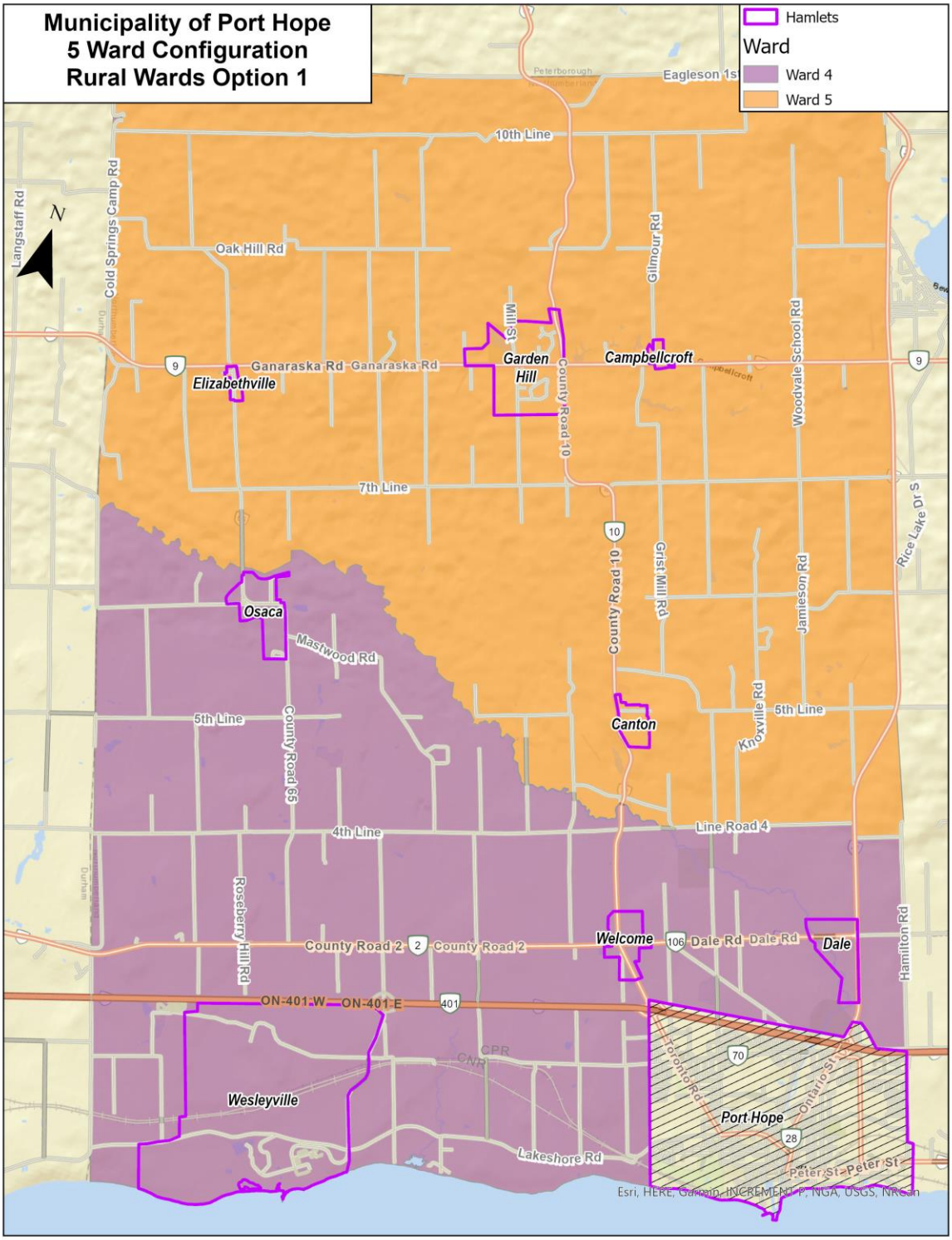
Looking at the two rural wards separately from the urban Port Hope, the population is not evenly distributed. Both wards, however, are within a 25% range of the ideal population of 2,121 in 2025 and 2,288 in 2035.

Table 10-8
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Rural Example 1 – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 4	1,735	0.82	O-	1,991	0.87	O-
Ward 5	2,507	1.18	O+	2,585	1.13	O+
Total	**4,242**	-	-	**4,575**	-	-
Average	**2,121**	-	-	**2,288**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-7
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Rural Example 1



10.2.4 Five-Ward Rural Example 2

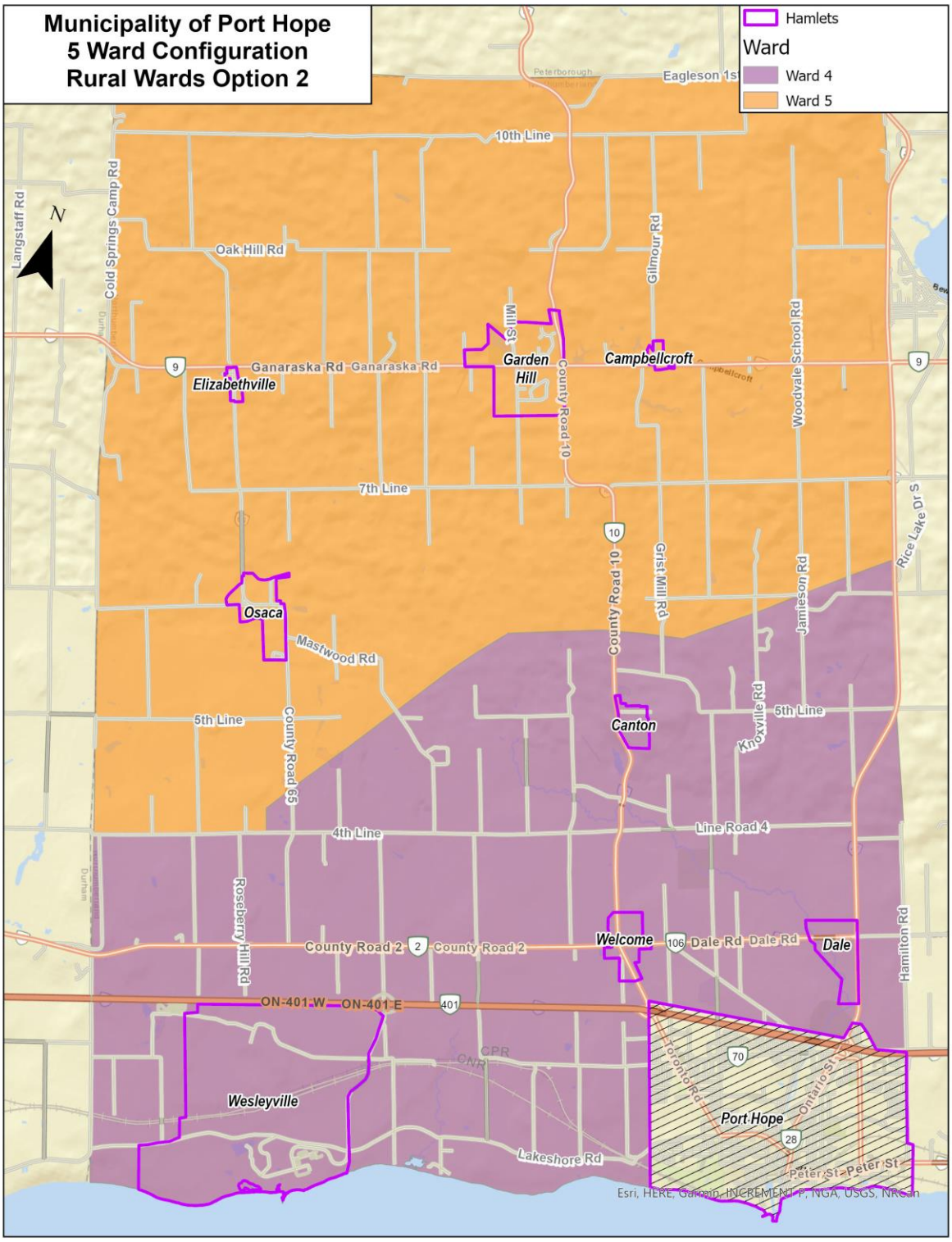
The Five-Ward Rural Example 2 also splits the existing Ward 2 (rural Port Hope) into two wards. The boundary dividing the wards in this example runs along 4th Line from the western municipal boundary to the Hydro Right of Way, then follows the Hydro Right of Way to the eastern municipal boundary. This option distributes the population quite evenly between the two wards, with both falling within the 5% optimal range for 2025 and 2035.

Table 10-9
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Rural Example 2 – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 4	2,093	0.99	O	2,188	0.96	O
Ward 5	2,149	1.01	O	2,387	1.04	O
Total	**4,242**	-	-	**4,575**	-	-
Average	**2,121**	-	-	**2,288**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-8
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Rural Example 2



10.2.5 Five-Ward Urban-Rural Combinations

Combining the urban and rural examples at the municipal level reveals that achieving population parity becomes more difficult. In the five-ward system, which consists of two rural wards (Wards 4 and 5) and three urban wards (Wards 1, 2, and 3), the difference between urban and rural population shares continues to diminish. Nonetheless, the rural share remains below the ideal ward size and is outside the acceptable ±25% variance range in both wards.

By 2035, this imbalance is expected to worsen, with the rural population projected to account for approximately 21% of the total municipal population, distributed across two of the five wards. As a result, the distribution of the population between urban and rural areas does not align with the overall goals for balanced representation.

Table 10-10
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Urban Example 1 + Rural Example 1 Combined

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	4,578	1.26	OR+	4,982	1.16	O+
Ward 2	3,666	1.01	O	6,103	1.42	OR+
Ward 3	5,705	1.57	OR+	5,877	1.36	OR+
Ward 4	1,735	0.48	OR-	1,991	0.46	OR-
Ward 5	2,507	0.69	OR-	2,585	0.60	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,638**	-	-	**4,307**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Table 10-11
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Urban Example 1 + Rural Example 2 Combined

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	4,578	1.26	OR+	4,982	1.16	O+
Ward 2	3,666	1.01	O	6,103	1.42	OR+
Ward 3	5,705	1.57	OR+	5,877	1.36	OR+
Ward 4	2,093	0.58	OR-	2,188	0.51	OR-
Ward 5	2,149	0.59	OR-	2,387	0.55	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,638**	-	-	**4,307**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Table 10-12
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Urban Example 2 + Rural Example 1 Combined

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	5,063	1.39	OR+	5,228	1.21	O+
Ward 2	5,048	1.39	OR+	5,312	1.23	O+
Ward 3	3,838	1.05	O+	6,421	1.49	OR+
Ward 4	1,735	0.48	OR-	1,991	0.46	OR-
Ward 5	2,507	0.69	OR-	2,585	0.60	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,638**	-	-	**4,307**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Table 10-13
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Urban Example 2 + Rural Example 2 Combined

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	5,063	1.39	OR+	5,228	1.21	O+
Ward 2	5,048	1.39	OR+	5,312	1.23	O+
Ward 3	3,838	1.05	O+	6,421	1.49	OR+
Ward 4	2,093	0.58	OR-	2,188	0.51	OR-
Ward 5	2,149	0.59	OR-	2,387	0.55	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,638**	-	-	**4,307**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-9
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Urban-Rural Combinations – Evaluation Table

Preliminary Option	Council Composition	Representation by Population	Consideration of Future Population and Electoral Trends	Communities of Interest	Geographic and Topographic Boundaries	Effective Representation
Existing	2 wards 6 councillors	No	No	Partially Successful	Yes	Partially Successful
Urban Example 1 + Rural Example 1	5 wards 5 councillors	Partially Successful	Partially Successful	Yes	Yes	Largely Successful
Urban Example 1 + Rural Example 2	5 wards 5 councillors	Partially Successful	Partially Successful	Yes	Yes	Largely Successful
Urban Example 2 + Rural Example 1	5 wards 5 councillors	Partially Successful	Partially Successful	Yes	Yes	Largely Successful
Urban Example 2 + Rural Example 2	5 wards 5 councillors	Partially Successful	Partially Successful	Yes	Yes	Largely Successful

Levels of evaluation for how the Guiding Principles are met

Yes	Largely Successful	Partially Successful	No

Higher Rating **Lower Rating**

Figure 10-9 presents the evaluation of each five-ward configuration at the municipal level. While the population principle is not met when assessed across the entire Municipality, each option demonstrates strong population parity when viewed separately within the urban and rural areas and has been deemed partially successful for each.

10.3 Six-Ward Urban-Rural Configurations

10.3.1 Six-Ward Urban Example 1

The Six-Ward Urban Example 1 divides the urban area of Port Hope into four wards. Ward 1 functions as an eastern ward, with the boundary between it and Wards 2 and 3 following Highway 28/Ontario Street to Hope Street, then south along Hope Street to the waterfront. Ward 2 serves as a central ward, with its eastern boundary along Ontario Street and Mill Street, extending westward along Walton Street and Ridout Street to Victoria Street North, then along Victoria Street North to the northern urban boundary. Ward 3 encompasses the western and central waterfront neighbourhoods, using Walton Street and Ridout Street as most of its northern boundary, then heading north along Mill Street North and Ontario Street to Hope Street, and following Hope Street to the waterfront. Ward 4 functions as a western ward, with its boundary between it and Wards 2 and 3 following Victoria Street south to Ridout Street and Lakeshore Road, then westward to the western urban boundary.

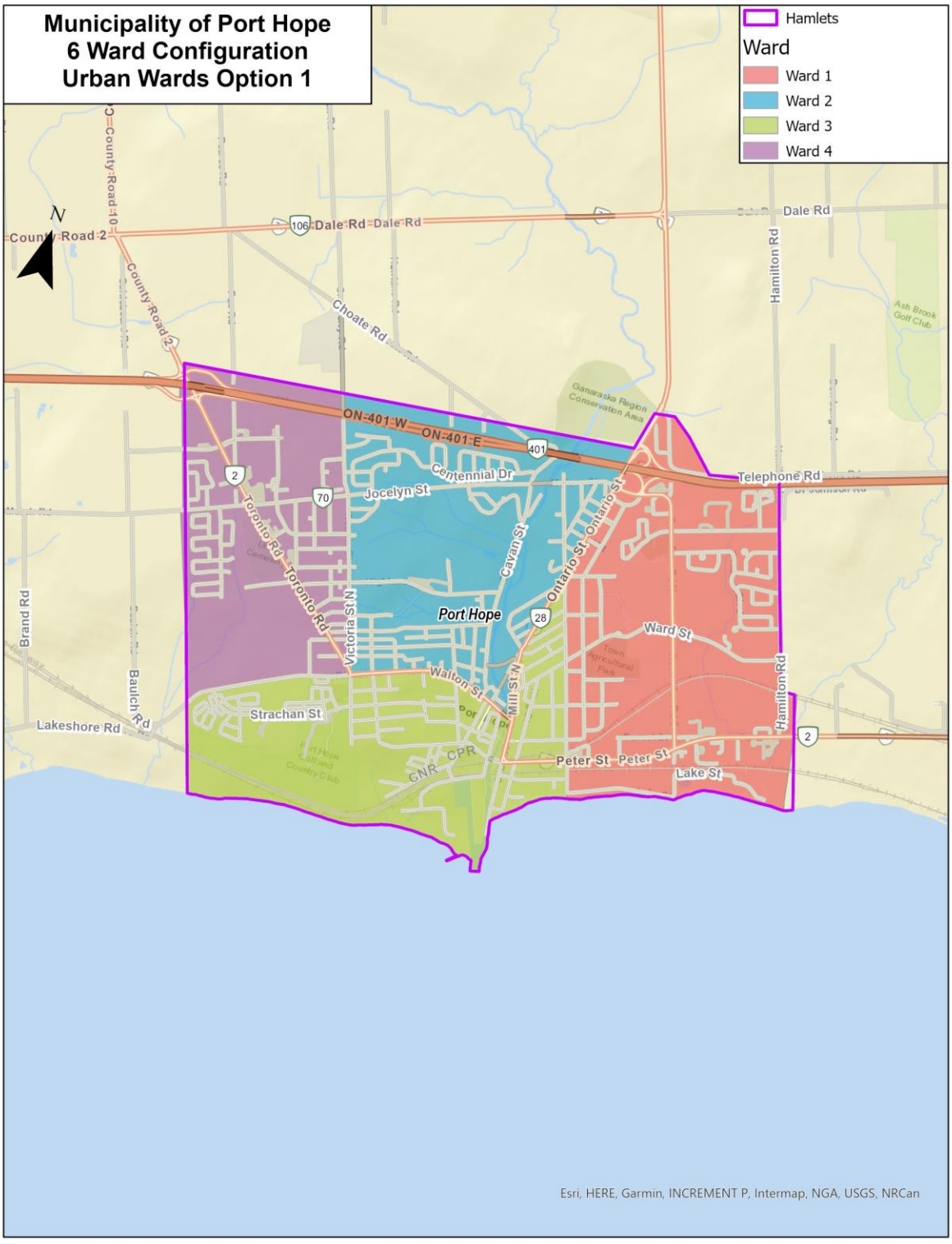
In 2025, the population is fairly evenly distributed across the four urban wards, with Ward 4 slightly below the 25% variance threshold. Ward 3 falls within the optimal range, and Wards 1 and 2 are also within the 25% variance. By 2035, growth in Ward 3 north of the golf course is expected to push its population well outside the 25% variance range, reaching nearly 6,000 residents. Meanwhile, Ward 4 will also drop outside the variance range on the lower end, with only 2,859 residents. Ward 2 is projected to grow to parity, while Ward 1 will continue to stay within the 25% variance.

Table 10-14
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Urban Example 1 – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	3,780	1.08	O+	3,939	0.93	O-
Ward 2	3,954	1.13	O+	4,213	0.99	O
Ward 3	3,514	1.01	O	5,950	1.40	OR+
Ward 4	2,701	0.77	O-	2,859	0.67	OR-
Total	**13,949**	-	-	**16,962**	-	-
Average	**3,487**	-	-	**4,240**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-10
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Urban Example 1



10.3.2 Six-Ward Urban Example 2

The Six-Ward Urban Example 2 also divides urban Port Hope into four wards. The first notable difference between this example and the Six-Ward Urban Example 1 is that Ward 3 keeps the waterfront neighbourhoods within a single ward. Ward 1 is largely similar to the first example, following the same dividing lines and now bordered by the CN railway on the south between it and Ward 3. Ward 2 now follows Jocelyn Street in the north and includes the area between Mill Street North/Ontario Street, Hope Street, and the CN railway. Ward 4 is also similar to the first example, but now covers the area north of Jocelyn Street/Motson Street.

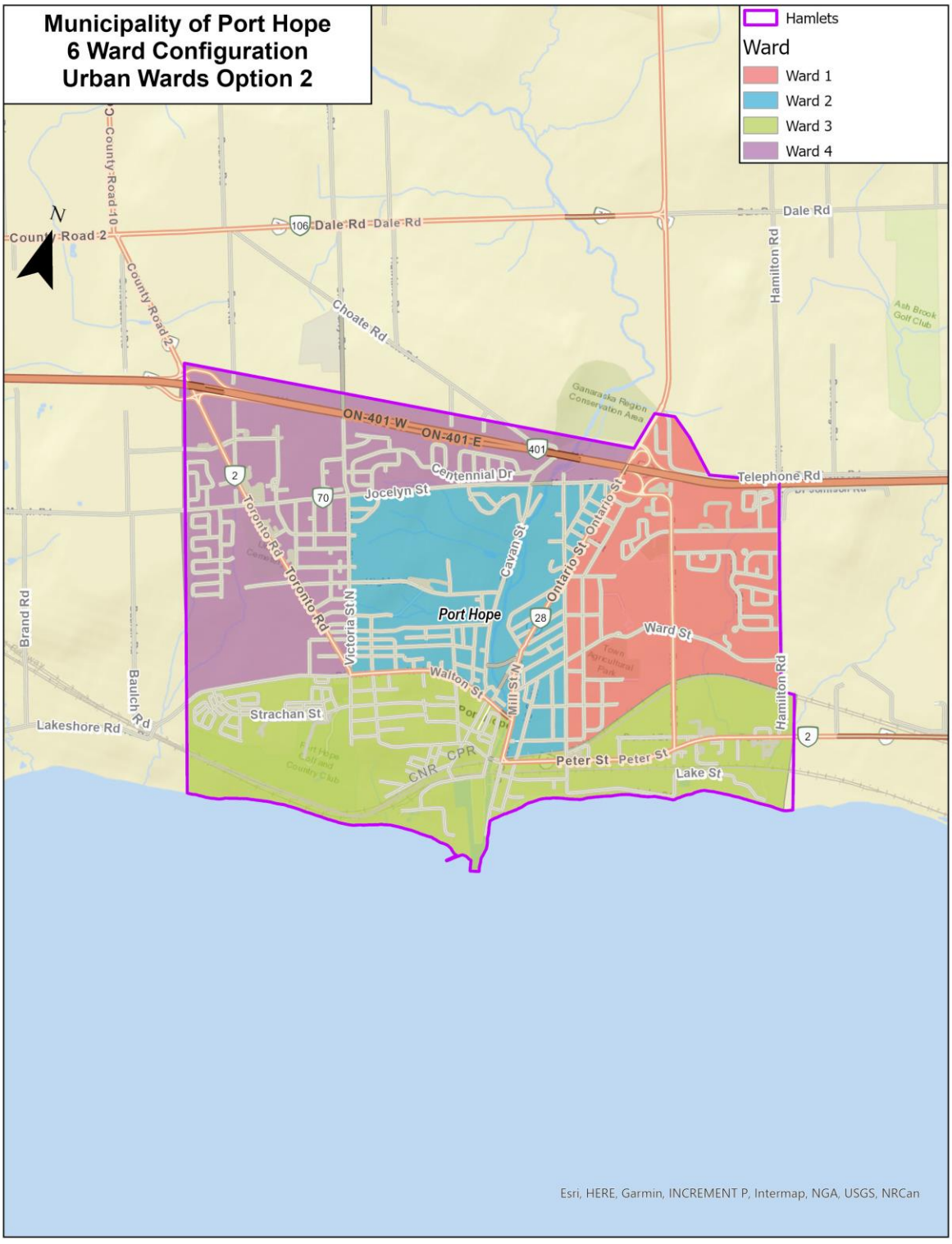
In this example, Ward 1 is within parity for 2025, and the remaining wards are within a 25% variance. Unlike the first six-ward example, by 2035, Ward 2 and Ward 4 have grown into parity, while Ward 1 and Ward 3 remain within 25%.

Table 10-15
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Urban Example 2 – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	3,543	1.02	O	3,701	0.87	O-
Ward 2	3,845	1.10	O+	4,104	0.97	O
Ward 3	2,627	0.75	O-	5,059	1.19	O+
Ward 4	3,934	1.13	O+	4,098	0.97	O
Total	**13,949**	-	-	**16,962**	-	-
Average	**3,487**	-	-	**4,240**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-11
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Urban Example 2



10.3.3 Six-Ward Urban-Rural Combinations

For the Six-Ward Rural Examples, please see the Five-Ward Rural Examples above, as they are the same. Only the urban configurations have changed, adding an additional fourth urban ward.

When the urban and rural examples are combined and assessed at the municipal level, it again becomes difficult to achieve full population parity. Nevertheless, as the ward populations in urban Port Hope get smaller with the additional wards, population parity does get better. In the six-ward system, which comprises two rural wards (Wards 5 and 6) and four urban wards (Wards 1 through 4), the gap between urban and rural population shares continues to narrow. Over the 10-year horizon, however, continued growth within the urban area results in rural ward configurations that fall below the optimal population size, moving outside the acceptable range for balanced representation by population. Also important to note is that while the percentage ranges of some of these populations are outside the acceptable range, the absolute differences between the ward populations are not extreme in most instances.

Table 10-16
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Urban Example 1 + Rural Example 1 Combined

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	3,780	1.25	O+	3,939	1.10	O+
Ward 2	3,954	1.30	OR+	4,213	1.17	O+
Ward 3	3,514	1.16	O+	5,950	1.66	OR+
Ward 4	2,701	0.89	O-	2,859	0.80	O-
Ward 5	1,735	0.57	OR-	1,991	0.55	OR-
Ward 6	2,507	0.83	O-	2,585	0.72	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,032**	-	-	**3,589**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Table 10-17
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Urban Example 1 + Rural Example 2 Combined

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	3,780	1.25	O+	3,939	1.10	O+
Ward 2	3,954	1.30	OR+	4,213	1.17	O+
Ward 3	3,514	1.16	O+	5,950	1.66	OR+
Ward 4	2,701	0.89	O-	2,859	0.80	O-
Ward 5	2,093	0.69	OR-	2,188	0.61	OR-
Ward 6	2,149	0.71	OR-	2,387	0.67	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,032**	-	-	**3,589**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Table 10-18
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Urban Example 2 + Rural Example 1 Combined

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	3,543	1.17	O+	3,701	1.03	O
Ward 2	3,845	1.27	OR+	4,104	1.14	O+
Ward 3	2,627	0.87	O-	5,059	1.41	OR+
Ward 4	3,934	1.30	OR+	4,098	1.14	O+
Ward 5	1,735	0.57	OR-	1,991	0.55	OR-
Ward 6	2,507	0.83	O-	2,585	0.72	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,032**	-	-	**3,589**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Table 10-19
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Urban Example 2 + Rural Example 2 Combined

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	3,543	1.17	O+	3,701	1.03	O
Ward 2	3,845	1.27	OR+	4,104	1.14	O+
Ward 3	2,627	0.87	O-	5,059	1.41	OR+
Ward 4	3,934	1.30	OR+	4,098	1.14	O+
Ward 5	2,093	0.69	OR-	2,188	0.61	OR-
Ward 6	2,149	0.71	OR-	2,387	0.67	OR-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,032**	-	-	**3,589**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-12
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Urban-Rural Combinations – Evaluation Table

Preliminary Option	Council Composition	Representation by Population	Consideration of Future Population and Electoral Trends	Communities of Interest	Geographic and Topographic Boundaries	Effective Representation
Existing	2 wards 6 councillors	No	No	Partially Successful	Yes	Partially Successful
Urban Example 1 + Rural Example 1	6 wards 6 councillors	Largely Successful	Partially Successful	Largely Successful	Yes	Largely Successful
Urban Example 1 + Rural Example 2	6 wards 6 councillors	Partially Successful	Partially Successful	Largely Successful	Yes	Largely Successful
Urban Example 2 + Rural Example 1	6 wards 6 councillors	Partially Successful	Partially Successful	Largely Successful	Yes	Largely Successful
Urban Example 2 + Rural Example 2	6 wards 6 councillors	Partially Successful	Partially Successful	Largely Successful	Yes	Largely Successful

Levels of evaluation for how the Guiding Principles are met

Yes	Largely Successful	Partially Successful	No

Higher Rating **Lower Rating**

Figure 10-12 presents the evaluation of each six-ward configuration at the municipal level. While the population principle is only partially met when assessed across the entire Municipality, each option demonstrates strong population parity when viewed separately within the urban and rural areas.

10.4 Municipal-Wide Parity

If achieving municipal-wide population parity and a system that better reflects a balanced application of the guiding principles is a desired outcome, then, from a population perspective, wards will need to blend both rural and urban areas of the Municipality to reach this goal. The Consultant Team has provided examples of population parity for three-ward, five-ward, and six-ward configurations.

10.4.1 Three-Ward Population Parity Example

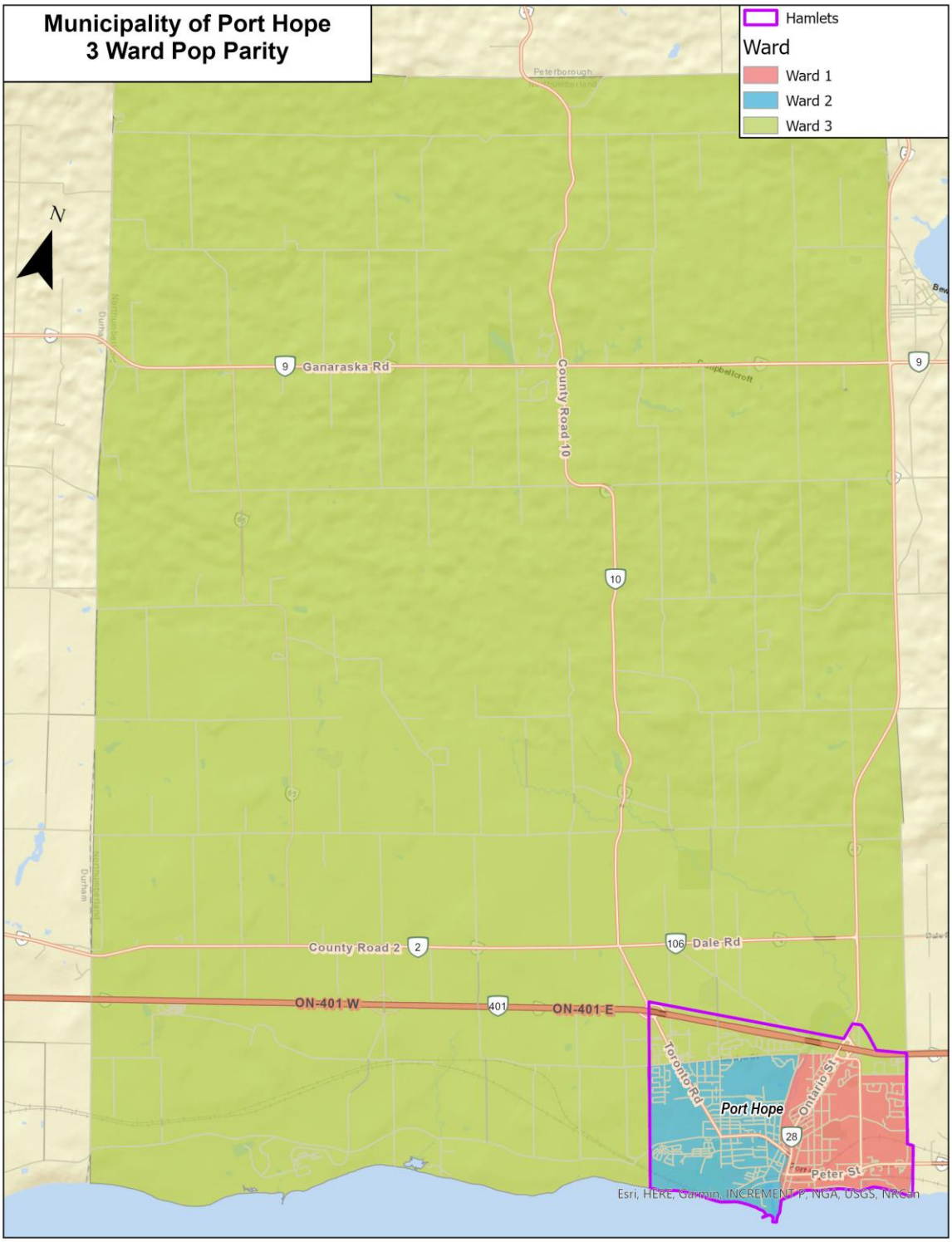
The Three-Ward Population Parity Example includes two exclusively urban wards and a third ward that combines the rural area with a portion of the urban population. This blended approach helps offset the population deficit in the rural area by incorporating additional residents from within the urban boundary.

Table 10-20
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Population Parity Example – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	5,980	0.99	O	6,391	0.89	O-
Ward 2	6,191	1.02	O	8,639	1.20	O+
Ward 3	6,020	0.99	O	6,507	0.91	O-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**6,064**	-	-	**7,179**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-13
Municipality of Port Hope
Three-Ward Population Parity Example



10.4.2 Five-Ward Population Parity Example 1

The Five-Ward Population Parity Example includes three exclusively urban wards, one ward that combines the rural area with a portion of the urban population, and one ward that is entirely rural. This blended approach helps offset the population deficit in the rural area by incorporating additional residents from within the urban boundary, while maintaining the northern rural communities within a single ward.

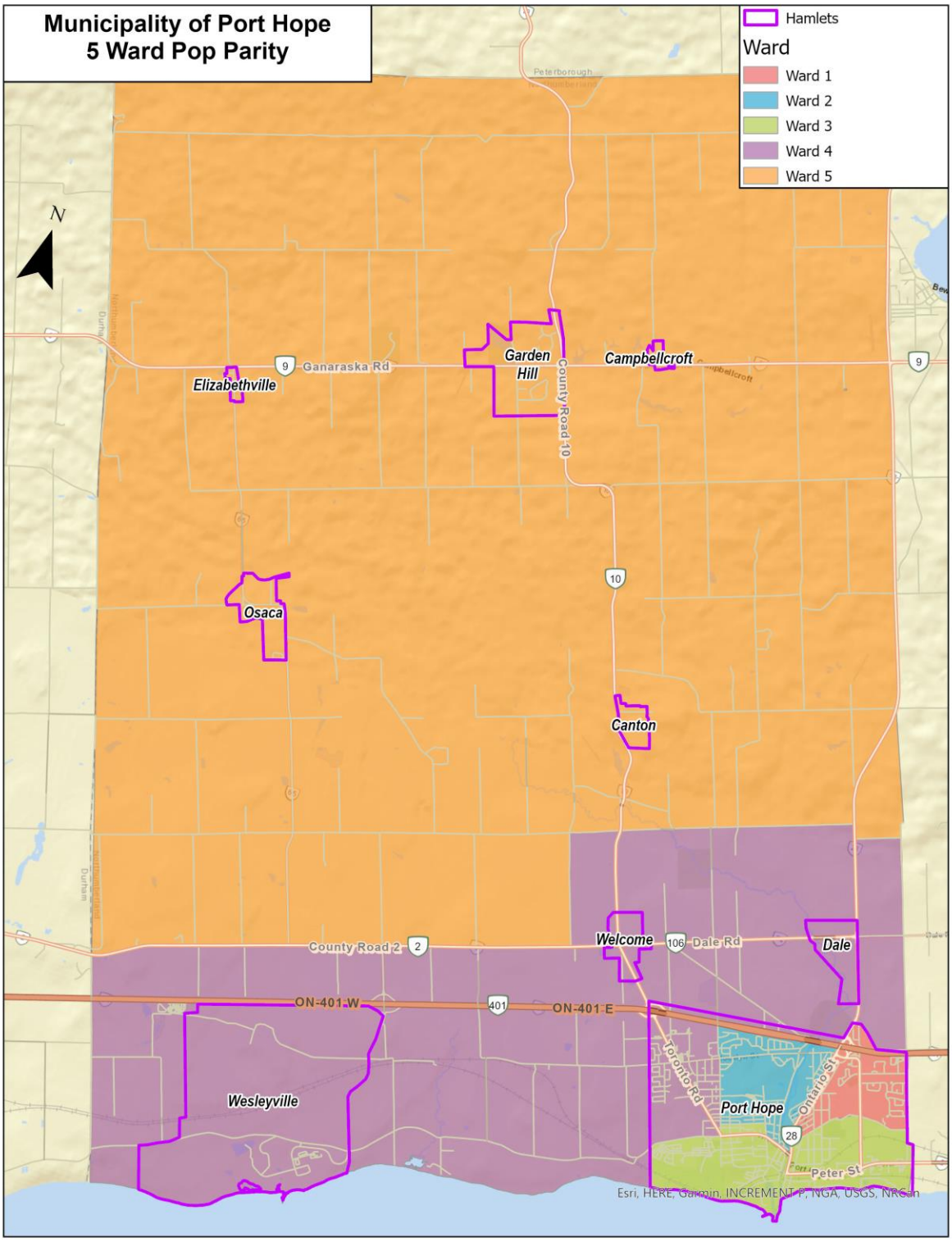
As growth continues to occur unevenly across the municipality, however, particularly with significant development projected in Ward 3 and limited growth in other areas, the population parity across wards becomes increasingly imbalanced over the 10-year horizon.

Table 10-21
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Population Parity Example – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	3,628	1.00	O	3,787	0.88	O-
Ward 2	3,572	0.98	O	3,829	0.89	O-
Ward 3	4,015	1.10	O+	6,453	1.50	OR+
Ward 4	3,726	1.02	O	3,974	0.92	O-
Ward 5	3,250	0.89	O-	3,494	0.81	O-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,638**	-	-	**4,307**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-14
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Population Parity Example



10.4.3 Five-Ward Future Population Parity Example

The Five-Ward Future Population Parity Example features three exclusively urban wards, one ward that blends the rural area with a portion of the urban population, and one ward that is entirely rural. This configuration helps offset the rural population deficit by incorporating additional urban residents, while preserving the northern rural communities within a single ward.

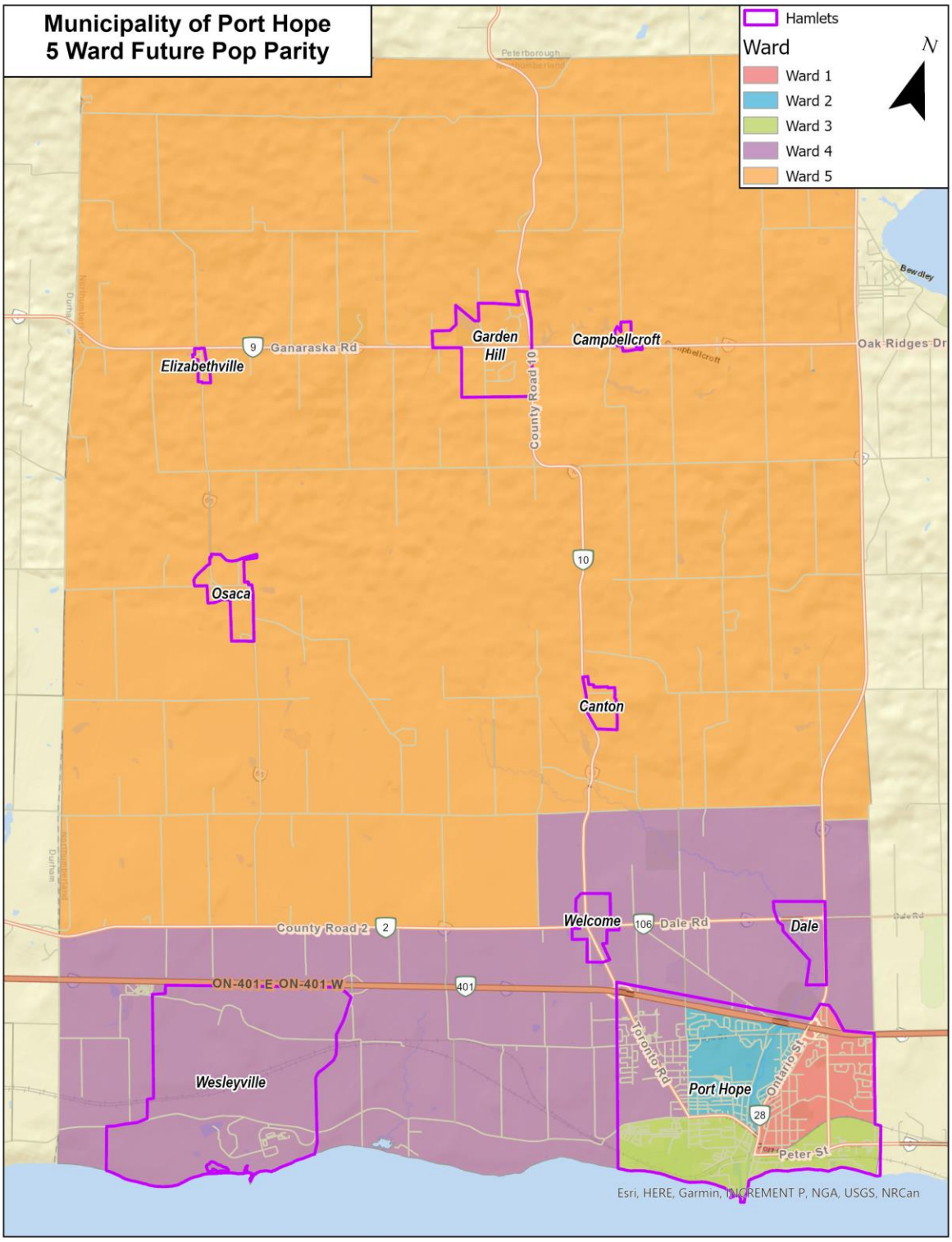
This option is designed to address and balance long-term growth rather than current conditions. As growth continues to occur unevenly across the municipality, particularly with significant development projected in Ward 3 and limited growth in other areas, the population parity across wards gradually shifts. Over the 10-year horizon, Ward 3 transitions from below the optimal population range to above it, while still remaining within the acceptable ±25% variance threshold.

Table 10-22
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Future Population Parity Example – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	4,667	1.28	OR+	4,831	1.12	O+
Ward 2	3,921	1.08	O+	4,180	0.97	O
Ward 3	2,627	0.72	OR-	5,059	1.17	O+
Ward 4	3,726	1.02	O	3,974	0.92	O-
Ward 5	3,250	0.89	O-	3,494	0.81	O-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,638**	-	-	**4,307**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-15
Municipality of Port Hope
Five-Ward Future Population Parity Example



10.4.4 Six-Ward Population Parity Example

The Six-Ward Population Parity Example includes four exclusively urban wards, one ward that combines the rural area with a portion of the urban population, and one ward that is entirely rural. This blended approach helps offset the population deficit in the rural area by incorporating additional residents from within the urban boundary, while maintaining the northern rural communities within a single ward.

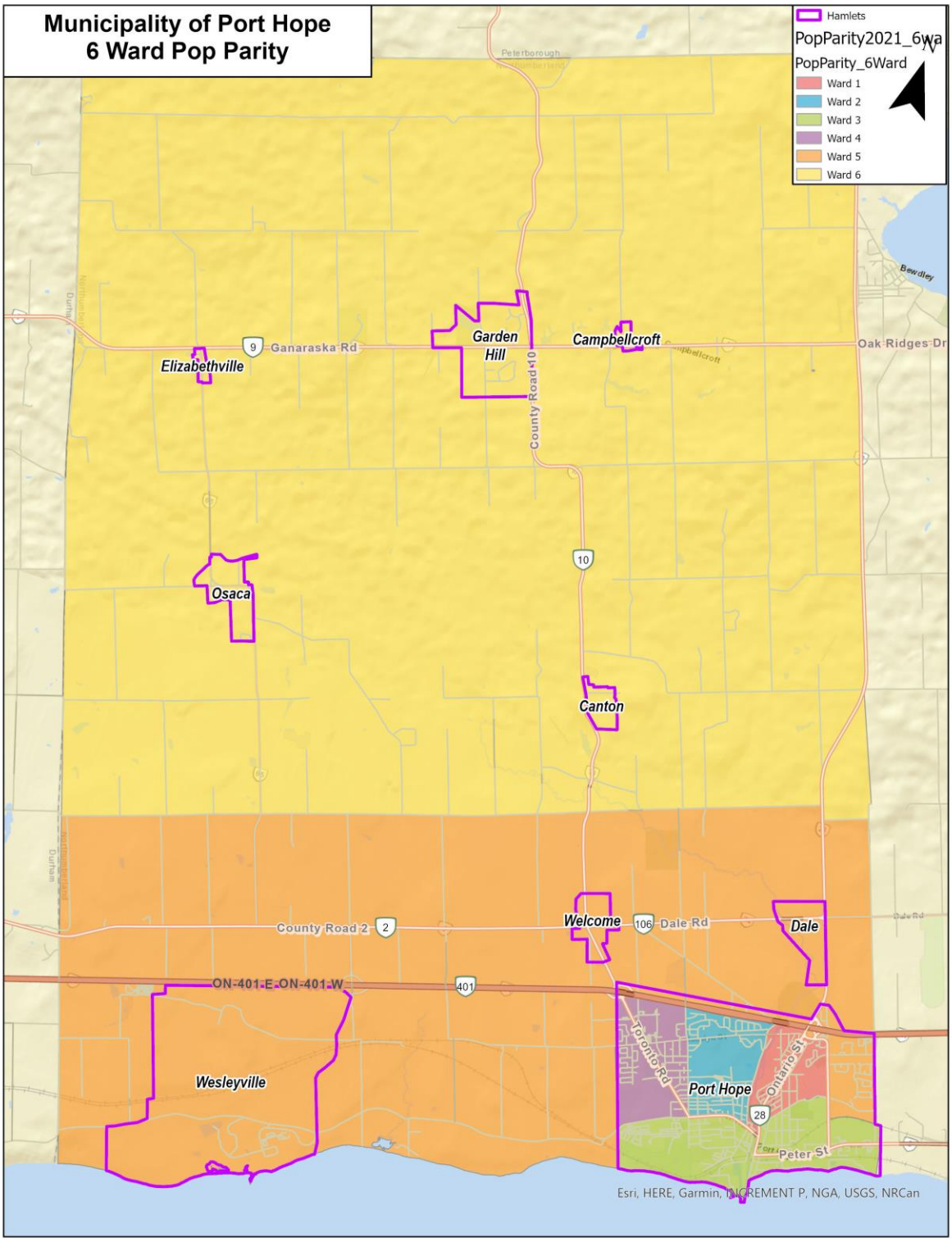
As growth continues to occur unevenly across the municipality, particularly with significant development projected in Ward 3 and limited growth in other areas, the population parity across wards becomes increasingly imbalanced over the 10-year horizon.

Table 10-23
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Population Parity Example – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	2,997	0.99	O	3,355	0.93	O-
Ward 2	2,973	0.98	O	2,986	0.83	O-
Ward 3	3,614	1.19	O+	6,051	1.69	OR+
Ward 4	2,701	0.89	O-	2,859	0.80	O-
Ward 5	2,900	0.96	O	3,037	0.85	O-
Ward 6	3,006	0.99	O	3,248	0.90	O-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,032**	-	-	**3,589**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-16
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Population Parity Example



10.4.5 Six-Ward Future Population Parity Example

The Six-Ward Future Population Parity Example includes four exclusively urban wards, one ward that blends the rural area with a portion of the urban population, and one ward that is entirely rural. This configuration helps offset the rural population deficit by incorporating additional urban residents, while preserving the northern rural communities within a single ward.

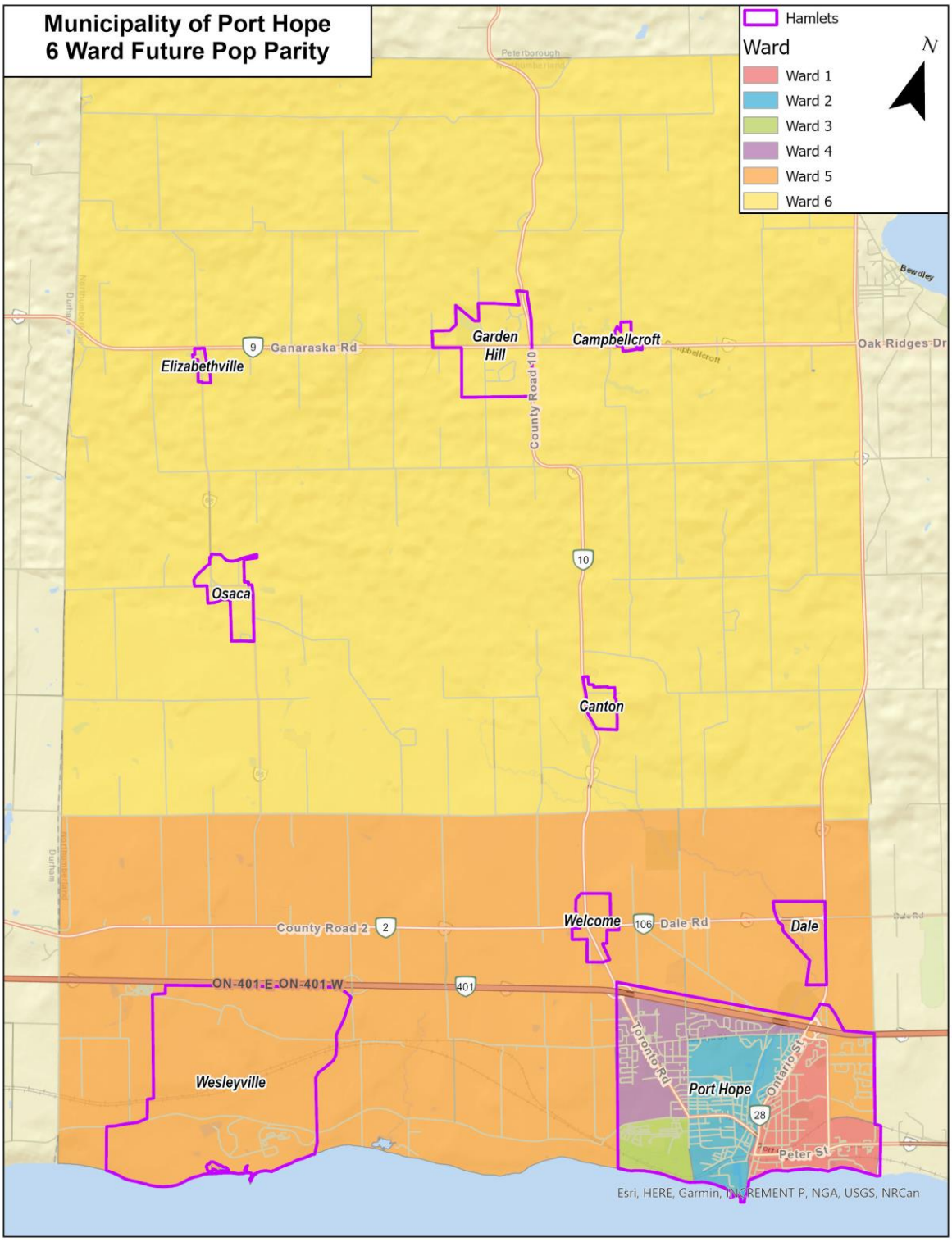
This option is designed to reflect and accommodate long-term growth rather than current population distribution. As growth continues to occur unevenly across the municipality, particularly with substantial development projected in Ward 3 and limited growth in other areas, population parity across wards is expected to shift. Over the 10-year horizon, Ward 3 moves from well below the optimal population range to within it by 2035, while Wards 2 and 4 fall into population parity throughout the same period.

Table 10-24
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Future Population Parity Example – Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2025 Population	2025 Population Variance	2025 Optimal Range	2035 Population	2035 Population Variance	2035 Optimal Range
Ward 1	3,437	1.13	O+	3,556	0.99	O
Ward 2	3,811	1.26	OR+	4,069	1.13	O+
Ward 3	1,136	0.37	OR-	3,562	0.99	O
Ward 4	3,901	1.29	OR+	4,064	1.13	O+
Ward 5	2,900	0.96	O	3,037	0.85	O-
Ward 6	3,006	0.99	O	3,248	0.90	O-
Total	**18,191**	-	-	**21,537**	-	-
Average	**3,032**	-	-	**3,589**	-	-

[1] Population includes a net Census undercount of approximately 2.5%.
Note: Numbers may not add precisely due to rounding.
Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2025.

Figure 10-17
Municipality of Port Hope
Six-Ward Future Population Parity Example



10.4.6 Population Parity Evaluations

Figure 10-18 provides a snapshot of how the different population parity examples adhere to the guiding principles.

Figure 10-18
Municipality of Port Hope
Population Parity – Evaluation Table

Preliminary Option	Council Composition	Representation by Population	Consideration of Future Population and Electoral Trends	Communities of Interest	Geographic and Topographic Boundaries	Effective Representation
Existing	2 wards 6 councillors	No	No	Partially Successful	Yes	Partially Successful
3-Ward Population Parity Example	3 wards 6 councillors	Yes	Largely Successful	Partially Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful
5-Ward Population Parity Example	5 wards 5 councillors	Yes	Largely Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful
5-Ward Future Population Parity Example	5 wards 5 councillors	Partially Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful
6-Ward Population Parity Example	6 wards 6 councillors	Yes	Largely Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful	Largely Successful
6-Ward Future Population Parity Example	6 wards 6 councillors	Partially Successful	Yes	Largely Successful	Partially Successful	Largely Successful

Levels of evaluation for how the Guiding Principles are met

Yes	Largely Successful	Partially Successful	No

Higher Rating **Lower Rating**

10.5 Summary

The Consultant Team has set out reasons why it has concluded that the current ward system in Port Hope is inadequate in the short term and does not fully provide for effective representation when considering future population growth and all the guiding principles. The Consultant Team, therefore, recommends that considering alternative designs could better accommodate population change within the Municipality and protect communities of interest, both existing and future.

Designing an electoral system that will deliver effective representation to a changing community requires some accommodation: designs that put an emphasis on representation by population today can hinder fair representation for residents who will locate in growing parts of the Municipality in the coming decade. Designs that place a priority on grouping selected neighbourhoods can result in the over- or under-representation of the residents of those communities around the council table.

The examples provided in this report provide a spectrum of potential alternatives, including the possibility of changing the composition of Council from the present six councillors to five and a change to three 2-member wards, or five or six single-member wards. The different examples place varying emphasis on certain guiding principles and attempt to apply them to the present and future Port Hope community. Some examples include minimal changes to the present ward configuration, while others may be seen as drastic.

Both perspectives should figure into Council's eventual decision: what is the best way to elect municipal councillors in 2030 and beyond?

10.6 Further Considerations

The examples presented herein are **preliminary**; they reflect the application of the core principles for this review to the distribution of population and communities within Port Hope. The purpose of this report is to stimulate discussions in Port Hope and encourage residents to consider their preferred ward boundary configurations for the Municipality. The options included are deliberately called "examples" since much of the next phase of this review involves gathering the perspectives of residents on these alternatives.

11. Next Steps

While the interim report provides a valuable starting point for guiding the next phase of discussion, more engagement is needed to ensure meaningful community ownership of the Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review process. The report represents just one component of the broader analysis being undertaken by the consultant team. It is important to note that a final report, including refined ward boundary options, is anticipated to be presented to Council following the conclusion of the second round of community engagement.

The examples in this report are preliminary and are meant to help illustrate some of the topics raised in this report. The examples demonstrate how the core principles of this review apply to Port Hope's population and communities.

At this stage, the Consultant Team is seeking discussion and feedback from Council on several key issues regarding how Council is structured.

1. Council Composition
    - Should there be an at-large deputy mayor elected, or should that position be selected in the same way as it is now?
2. Council Size
    - Should Port Hope's Council remain the same size?
      Currently, there are seven members:
        - The mayor (elected at-large)
        - Six ward councillors elected (four in Ward 1 and two in Ward 2)

- Should the Council increase or decrease in size?
  If so, an increase could result from adding a separate deputy mayor position or by adjusting the number of ward councillors.

Overall, what size feels **right** for Port Hope Council?

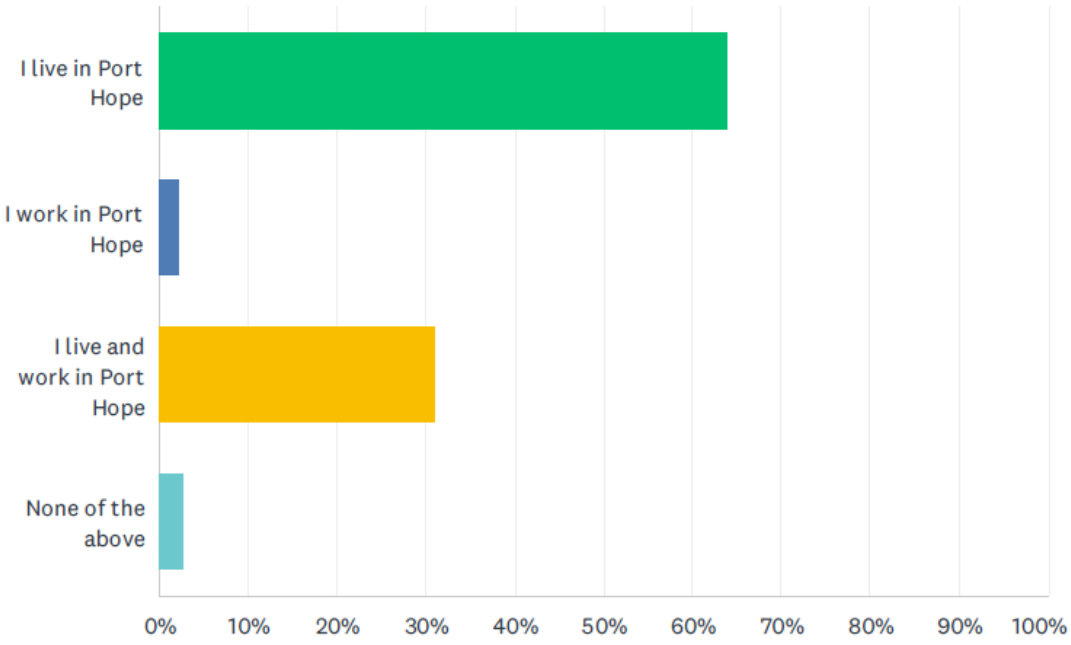
Council feedback now will not lock the Council into a final decision. It simply helps define which configurations should be explored in the next round of public consultation. Any direction at this point is only meant to guide the review and all options can be considered through the next round of engagement if council deems them as plausible alternatives. The status quo will also remain an option throughout this process.

The Consultant Team will utilize Council's insights to develop ward boundary and council composition options for public engagement. Providing guidance now will make the next round of consultation more meaningful for residents, enabling them to give feedback on practical alternatives to the current system.

Appendix A
Survey Results (Phase 1)

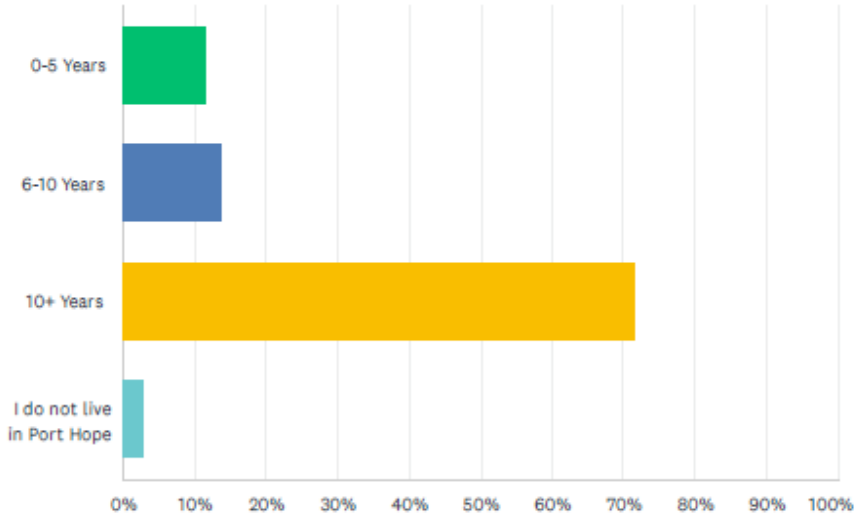
Q2 What best describes you?

Answered: 261 Skipped: 0



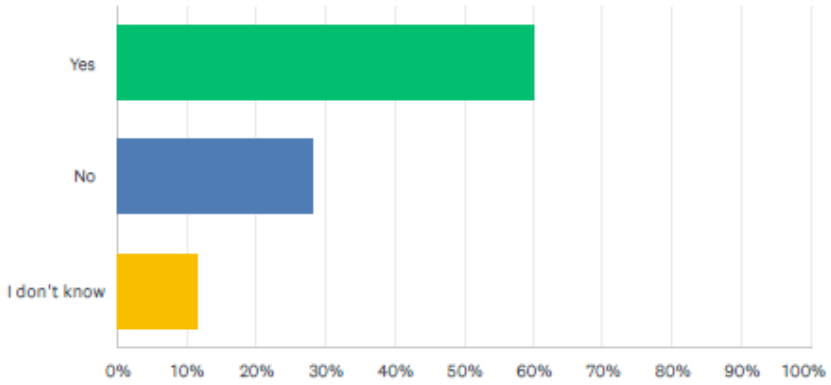
Q3 How long have you lived in Port Hope?

Answered: 261 Skipped: 0



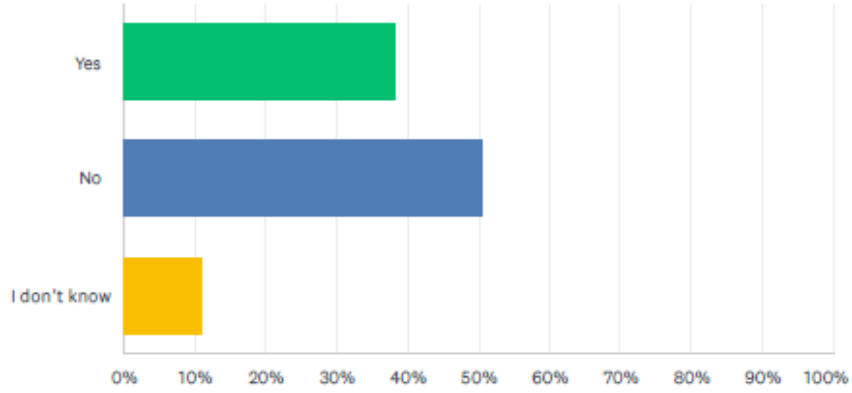
Q6 Do you think electing council members in two wards (current system) is a fair and effective way to represent residents of Port Hope?

Answered: 261 Skipped: 0



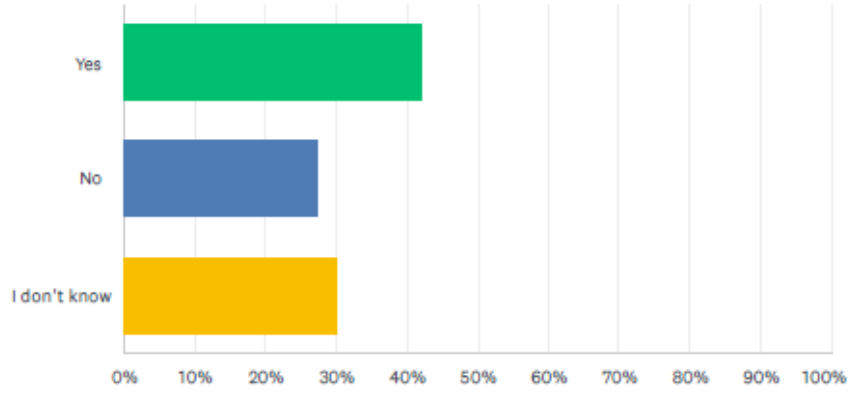
Q7 Do you think it is fair that different wards elect a different number of councillors (i.e. the current system)?

Answered: 261 Skipped: 0



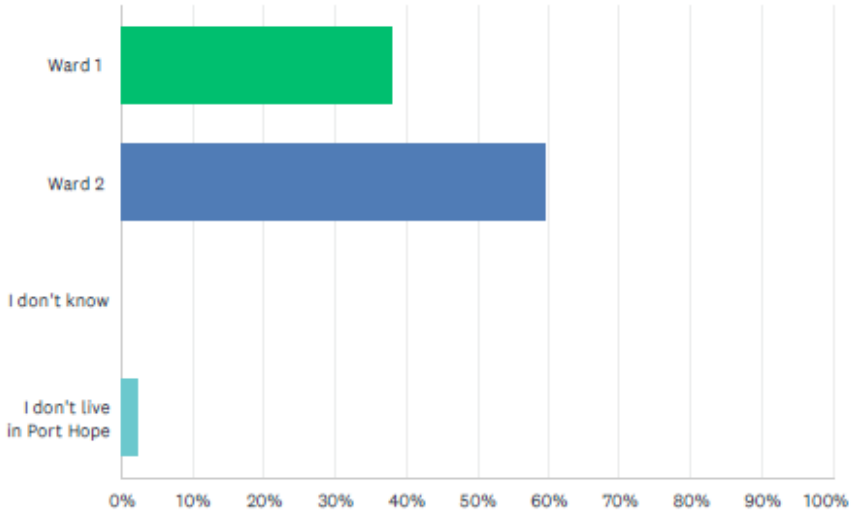
Q8 Would electing the Deputy Mayor by a general vote (at-large) give the Municipality a stronger leadership?

Answered: 261 Skipped: 0



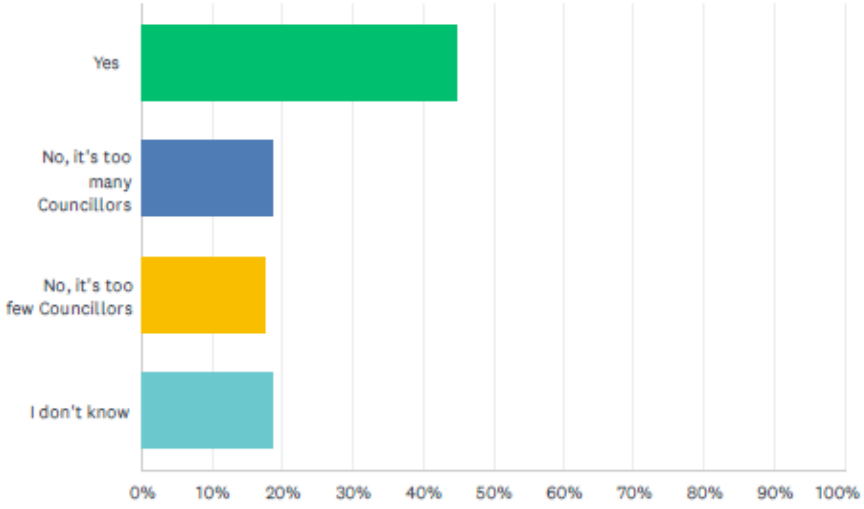
Q9 Which ward do you live in? (See map below or view our interactive map)Interactive Map

Answered: 248 Skipped: 13



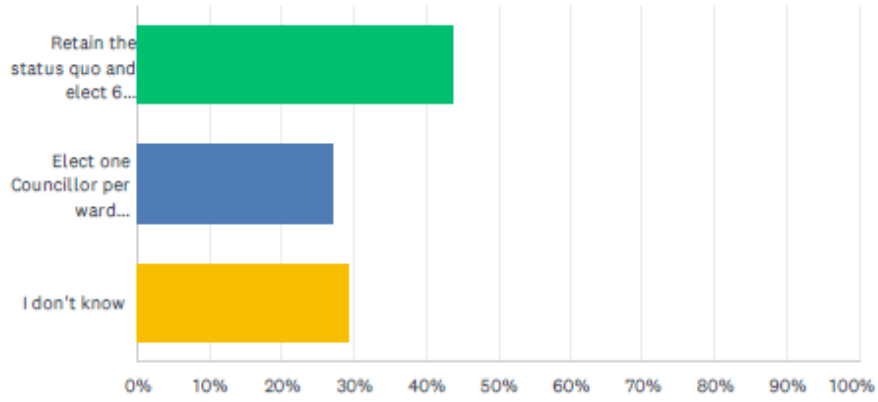
Q12 With six Local Councillors representing 17,294 constituents, do you think six Local Councillors is the appropriate number?

Answered: 181 Skipped: 80



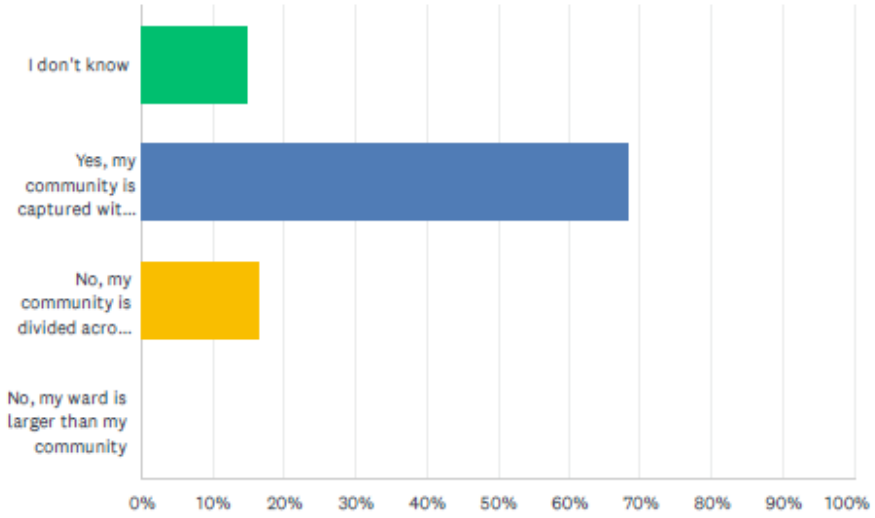
Q13 Should the Municipality:

Answered: 181 Skipped: 80



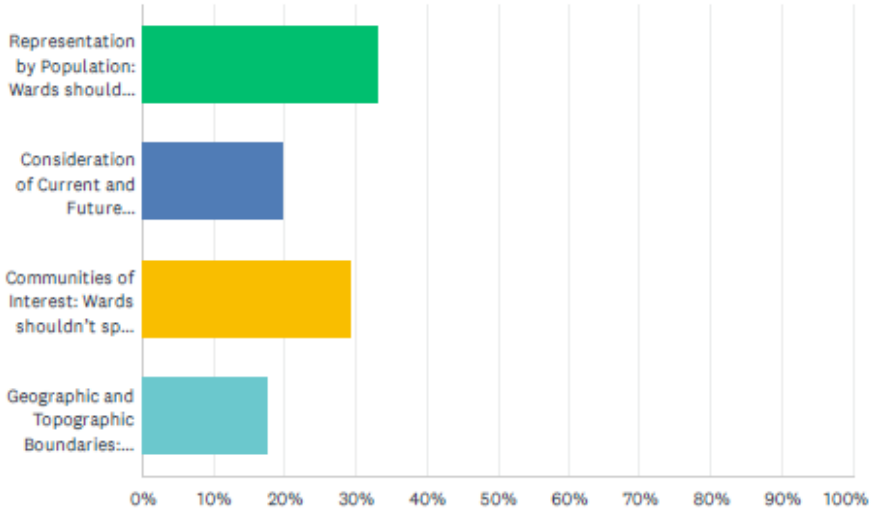
Q14 Is your community captured within the ward you live in?

Answered: 181 Skipped: 80



Q18 Please indicate the ONE guiding principle that should be given the highest priority to ensure effective representation:

Answered: 181 Skipped: 80



Appendix B
Public Consultation Poster Boards

WELCOME

Municipality of Port Hope
Ward Boundary & Council Composition Review

How many local councillors should Port Hope have?

Where should ward boundaries be drawn and why?

Process

Review Current System

Think about the Guiding Principles

What is the Ideal Outcome?

Provide Feedback at the Survey

Watson & Associates ECONOMISTS LTD.

MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

WARD BOUNDARY & COUNCIL COMPOSITION REVIEW

Process

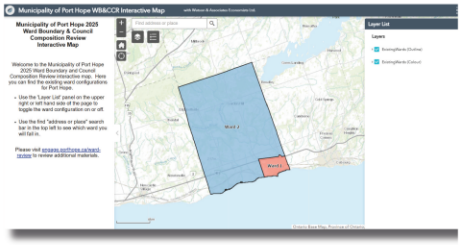
- Review Current System
- Think about the Guiding Principles
- Examine the Preliminary Options
- Provide Feedback at the Survey

Watson & Associates ECONOMISTS LTD.

Review the Materials

Found on the project page

www.engage.porthope.ca/ward-review



Open Houses

Public Engagement #1
September 17
6:00-8:00PM
Canton Hub lobby
September 18
2:00-4:00PM
Port Hope Public Library
6:00-8:00PM
JBSC lobby
More engagement opportunities to come!

Have Your Say

SCAN ME

Project Overview and Objectives

The Municipality of Port Hope has retained Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. and Dr. Robert J. Williams to undertake the 2025 Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review.

The primary purpose of the review is to prepare the Council to make decisions about whether to maintain the existing council composition (size) and ward structure or to adopt an alternative arrangement.

Key Objectives Include:

- Develop a clear understanding of the present ward system, including its origins and operations as a system of representation;
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the present ward system on the basis of identified guiding principles;
- Conduct an appropriate consultation process to ensure community support for the review and its outcome;
- Identify plausible modifications to the present ward structure; and
- Deliver a report that will set out recommended alternative ward boundaries to ensure effective and equitable electoral arrangements for the Municipality of Port Hope, based on the principles identified.

Municipality of Port Hope
2025 Ward Boundary Council Composition Review

engage.porthope.ca/ward-review

MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

WARD BOUNDARY AND COUNCIL COMPOSITION REVIEW

Project Timeline

July 2025
Project Initiation, Information Gathering and Research

July 2025
Council Workshop

July-August 2025
Interviews with the Mayor & Members of Council

September 2025
Webpage Launch

September 2025
Public Engagement Opportunity #1

September-October 2025
Existing Population & Growth Forecast

October-November 2025
Development of Preliminary Ward Boundary Alternatives

November 2025
Preliminary Options Report

To Be Determined
Public Engagement Opportunity #2

To Be Determined
Final Option Report

Learn more!
SCAN ME

- ★ **More engagement opportunities in the future!**
- ★ **Check the website for more dates and times!**

www.engage.porthope.ca/ward-review

Watson & Associates ECONOMISTS LTD.

Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.
In association with Dr. Robert J. Williams
Public Information Session I 2025

Municipality of Port Hope
2025 Ward Boundary Council Composition Review

engage.porthope.ca/ward-review

MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

WARD BOUNDARY AND COUNCIL COMPOSITION REVIEW

Existing Ward System

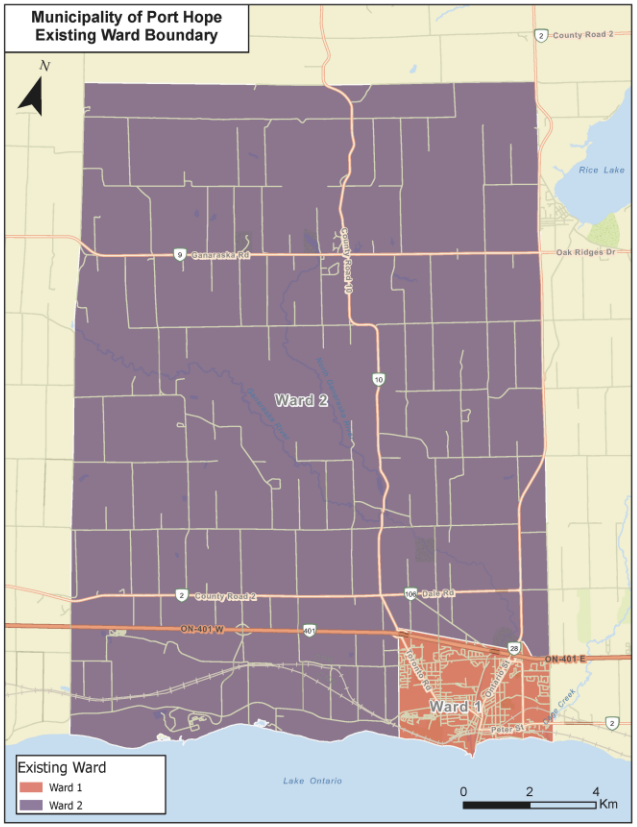
Principle	Does the Current Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?[1]	Comment
Representation by Population	No	Both wards exceed the ±25% range of variation.
Consideration of Future Population and Electoral Trends	No	Population growth will not overcome the existing population imbalance.
Communities of Interest	Largely Successful	The wards essentially preserve the historic pre-amalgamation municipalities that were dissolved more than twenty-five years ago.
Geographic and Topographic Boundaries	Yes	Clear and recognizable boundaries.
Effective Representation	No	The relationships between constituents and Councillors hinder the achievement of effective representation

The degree to which each guiding principle is satisfied is ranked as:

- "**Yes**" (fully satisfied);
- "**Largely Successful**";
- "**Partially Successful**"; or
- "**No**" (not satisfied)

O	±5% of the Optimal (Average) Population
O-	±5%-25% of the Optimal (Average) Population
OR-	>±25% of the Optimal (Average) Population

Ward	Number of Councillors	2021 Census Population	2021 Population Variance by Ward	2021 Optimal Range
Ward 1	4	13,194	1.53	OR+
Ward 2	2	4,100	0.47	OR-
Total/Average	**6**	**17,294**	**8,647**	



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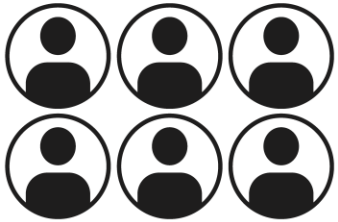
Current Council Composition

Mayor, Head of Council
Elected at-large

+



6 Ward Councillors
Elected by ward to serve on Local Council

- 4 Councillors elected for Ward 1
- 2 Councillors elected for Ward 2*
- Deputy Mayor Position rotates through interested ward Councillors**

*In certain circumstances there is a weighted vote applied.
**First term of council to rotate. The rotating arrangement is subject to change.

Population per Council Size Comparison

Northumberland County

Municipality	2021 Population	Area (sq.km)	Local Council Members	Avg. Population per Member
Alnwick/Haldimand	7,473	398.3	5	1,495
Brighton	12,108	223.2	7	1,730
Cobourg	20,519	22.4	7	2,931
Cramahe	6,509	202.22	5	1,302
Hamilton	11,059	256.03	5	2,212
Port Hope	**17,294**	**278.8**	**7**	**2,471**
Trent Hills	13,861	513.85	7	1,980
Average	**12,689**	**270.7**	**6**	**2,017**

Other Ontario Area Municipalities

Municipality	2021 Population	Area (SqKm)	Council Members	Persons per Member	Wards/ At-Large
Municipality of Thames Centre	13,980	434	5	2,796	3 Wards
City of Pembroke	14,364	14.32	7	2,052	At-Large
City of Kenora	14,967	211.7	7	2,138	At-Large
Township of St. Clair	14,659	618.6	7	2,094	2 Wards (3+2)
Township of Severn	14,576	523.1	7	2,082	5 Wards
Town of Mississippi Mills	14,740	511.2	7	2,106	3 Wards (2+2+1)
Township of Clearview	14,814	556.4	7	2,116	5 Wards
Municipality of West Nipissing	14,583	1,956	9	1,620	8 Wards
Township of West Lincoln	15,454	387	7	2,208	3 Wards
Municipality of North Perth	15,538	493.1	10	1,554	3 Wards (3+3+2)
Town of Saugeen Shores	15,908	170.2	9	1,768	6 Wards
Town of Bracebridge	17,305	615.2	9	1,923	5 wards + 3 at-large
Town of Midland	17,817	35.33	9	1,980	At-large
Town of Petawawa	18,160	164.7	7	2,594	At-large
Municipality of North Grenville	17,964	351.9	5	3,593	At-large (most votes= DM)
Town of Pelham	18,192	126.3	7	2,599	3 Wards
Average	**15,814**	**448.1**	**7.4**	**2,201**	-

Guiding Principles

The following principles will be used to evaluate the existing ward structure and subsequent alternative options:

REPRESENTATION BY POPULATION
Wards should have about the same number of people so that everyone's vote counts approximately equal. A small difference is okay—up to 25% more or less than the "ideal" number—but big differences can be unfair. This also helps make sure councillors have similar workloads.

CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE POPULATION TRENDS
Accommodating for and balancing future increases or decreases in population growth/decline to maintain a general equilibrium in the representation by population.

GEOGRAPHIC AND TOPOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES
Utilizing geographical and topographical features to provide boundaries for wards. Consider features that form a natural boundary within Port Hope.

COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST
Consider traditional neighbourhoods and settlement patterns, and community groupings in specific geographic locations. Where possible, ward boundaries should not fragment a community.

EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION
The four articulated principles contribute to achieving the over-arching principle of effective representation.