

**COUNCIL COMPOSITION AND  
WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW**



# Haldimand County Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review Public Engagement Session #1

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**Jack Ammendolia**

Managing Partner  
Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

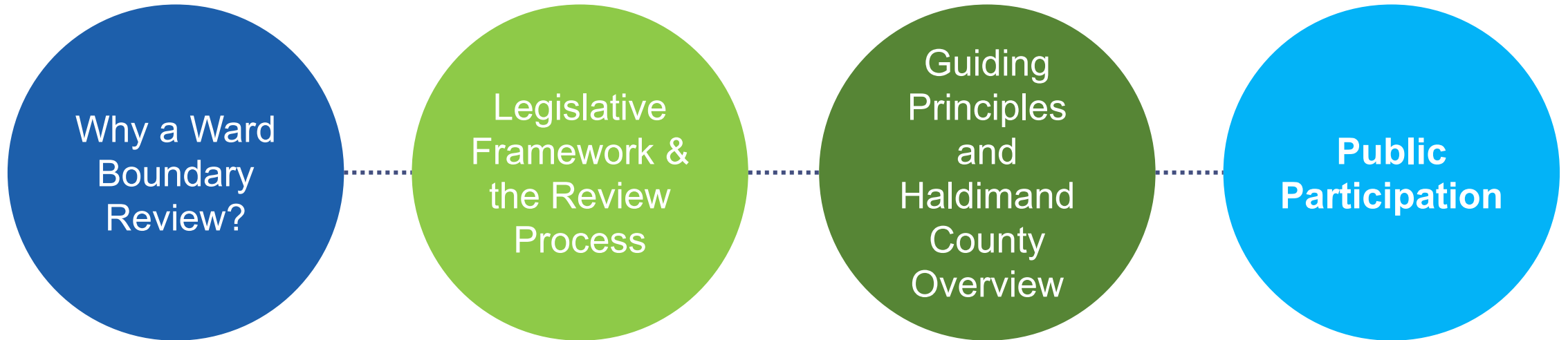
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**Dr. Robert Williams**

Public Affairs Consultant  
Municipal Electoral Systems Expert



## What Will Be Covered At This Open House?



# Context



**Haldimand County was established (Haldimand Act, 1999)**  
Six wards were established with a Mayor elected at large



**Minor Boundary Adjustments**  
Made to reflect changes related to urban boundary changes, largely unchanged



**2024 Ward Boundary Review**



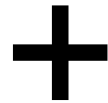
**Next Municipal Election**  
Any alternative system would be in effect for the October 26, 2026 Municipal Election

# Composition of Council

7-Member Council



**Mayor of Haldimand  
County**



**1 Councillor for Each Ward (x6)**



The Mayor is elected at-large.



The minimum size for council of a local municipality in Ontario is five (5), “one of whom shall be the head of council” (mayor).

# Context



## Composition of Council

- The minimum size for the council of a local municipality in Ontario is five, “one of whom shall be the head of council”
- No clear principles at play, no “standards” and no formulas to apply in determining the appropriate size of Council
- Haldimand County council is composed of 7 members, 2 above the minimum
- The composition of local councils in Ontario varies widely.

# Context

## Council Size



Municipality	2021 Population	Area (sq.km)	Council Members	Avg. Population per Member
Norfolk County*	67,490	1,597.68	9	7,499
Welland	55,750	81.16	15	3,717
Belleville	55,071	247.15	9	6,119
North Bay	52,662	315.53	11	4,787
<b>Haldimand County*</b>	<b>49,216</b>	<b>1,270.34</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7,031</b>
Cornwall	47,845	61.50	11	4,350
Woodstock	46,705	56.46	7	6,672
St. Thomas	42,840	35.61	9	4,760
Brant County*	39,474	817.66	11	3,589
<b>Average</b>	<b>50,784</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5,391</b>

\* Single-tier municipalities

Council Members include head of Council and Regional/County Councillors where applicable.

# Legislative Framework



## Ontario's *Municipal Act, 2001* authorizes a single-tier municipality to:

- define the size of the Council
- determine how Council (other than the Mayor) will be elected
- “divide or re-divide the municipality into wards or dissolve the existing wards”

## No stipulated schedule, standardized process or established criteria exist for electoral reviews in Ontario

- Each municipality must set its own terms, parameters, guiding principles, etc.
- A review is typically framed by established procedures and principles applied in several Ontario municipalities (and by the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT)) and judicial rulings on representation



# Guiding Principles to Design Wards



A **ward-based** electoral system should address these core principles/guidelines:

## REPRESENTATION BY POPULATION



Ensure that residents are equitably represented, have comparable access to their elected representative, and the wards have reasonably equal population totals.

## POPULATION AND GROWTH TRENDS



Take account of anticipated population growth in Haldimand County, specifically over a two-election cycle (2026, 2030) and beyond.

## GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION



Ward boundaries will be drawn impartially and with consideration for natural and man-made features within Haldimand County that may serve as effective internal boundaries.

## COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST



Consider residential and commercial clusters but also geographic, social, historical, economic, and/or cultural factors, including the identifiable rural and agricultural component of Haldimand County.

## ENSURING EFFECTIVE VOTER REPRESENTATION



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

# System Attributes: Wards or No Wards (At-Large)



The two systems offer alternative attributes:

- **Wards:** Councillors elected in specific areas, choices and responsibility clearer for electors, should reflect population distribution and community identities across the municipality
- **No wards:** all officials elected on the same basis
  - Must campaign across and represent all parts of Haldimand County – but no designated voices for particular parts of the municipality
  - Electors get to choose from among all candidates

# What Are We Trying to Figure Out?

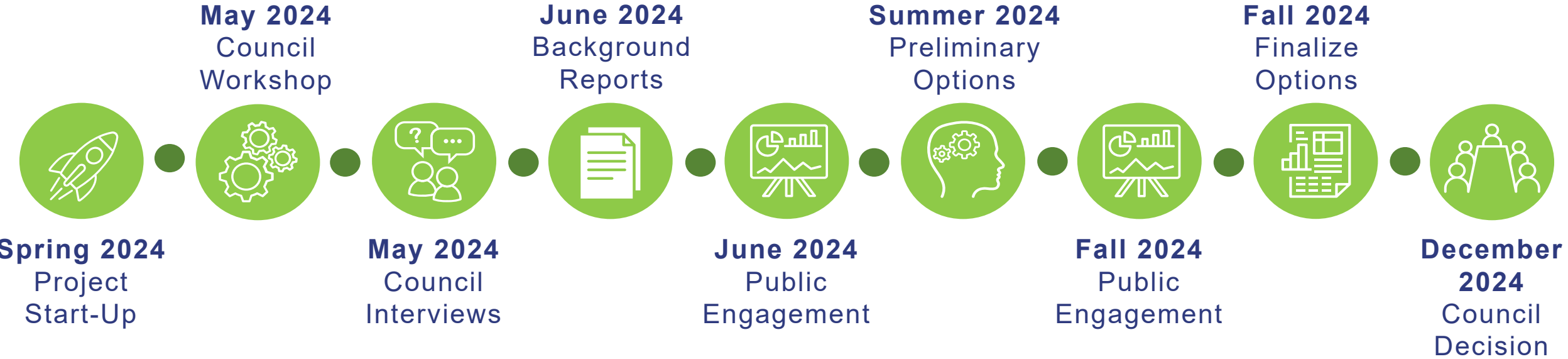


How well does the present electoral structure serve the citizens of Haldimand County?

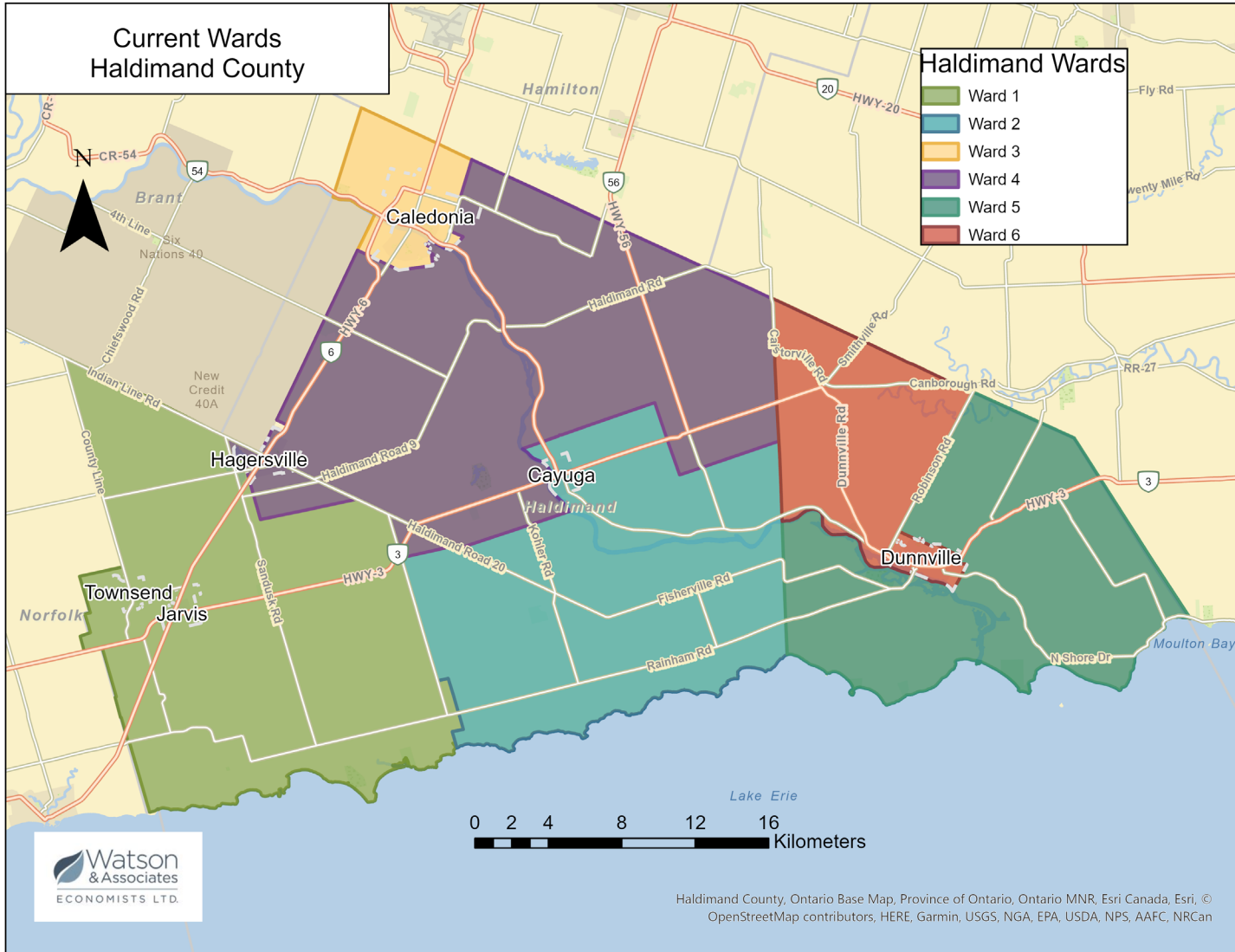
Does the present electoral structure provide fair and effective representation?

Would an alternative system provide better representation for the citizens of Haldimand County?

# Review Process



# Existing Ward System - Evaluation



## 2011 Population by Ward

Ward	Area (SqKm)	2011		
		Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	311.2	6,993	0.93	O-
Ward 2	252.7	6,205	0.83	O-
Ward 3	41.1	10,948	1.46	OR+
Ward 4	354.5	8,219	1.10	O+
Ward 5	210.3	5,433	0.73	OR-
Ward 6	100.5	7,079	0.95	O-
<b>Total/Average</b>	<b>1,270.3</b>	<b>44,876</b>	<b>7,479</b>	

## 2021 Population by Ward

Ward	Area (SqKm)	2021		
		Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	311.2	7,515	0.92	O-
Ward 2	252.7	6,732	0.82	O-
Ward 3	41.1	13,379	1.63	OR+
Ward 4	354.5	8,307	1.01	O
Ward 5	210.3	5,767	0.70	OR-
Ward 6	100.5	7,516	0.92	O-
<b>Total/Average</b>	<b>1,270.3</b>	<b>49,216</b>	<b>8,203</b>	

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

Haldimand County, Ontario Base Map, Province of Ontario, Ontario MNR, Esri Canada, Esri, © OpenStreetMap contributors, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NGA, EPA, USDA, NPS, AAFC, NRCan

# Existing Ward System - Evaluation



Principle	Does the Current Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle? <sup>[1]</sup>	Comment
<b>Representation by Population</b>	<b>No</b>	Two of the six wards exceed the $\pm 25\%$ range of variation.
<b>Protection of Communities of Interest</b>	<b>Partially Successful</b>	Only two of the six wards include coherent communities of interest.
<b>Consideration of Present and Future Population Trends</b>	<b>No</b>	Population growth will not overcome the existing population imbalance.
<b>Consideration of Natural and Physical Boundaries</b>	<b>Largely Successful</b>	Most boundaries are regular and/or visible lines. A significant natural boundary is not used.
<b>Effective Representation</b>	<b>No</b>	The relationships between constituents and councillors hinder the achievement of effective voter representation.

<sup>[1]</sup> The degree to which each guiding principle is satisfied is ranked as “**Yes**” (fully satisfied), “**Largely Successful**,” “**Partially Successful**,” or “**No**” (not satisfied).

# A Public Consultation Process



A municipal electoral system should be subject to a public consultation process to ensure the legitimacy of the recommendations placed before Council

Public engagement activities will be conducted aimed at both informing residents about the review and gathering informed evaluations about the existing system and (later) alternative designs. Several outlets have been designed for residents to safely participate in the review process

- ✓ Online & Print Engagement (website, social media, etc.)
- ✓ Survey
- ✓ In-Person & Virtual Open House Sessions
- ✓ Public Feedback Analysis
- ✓ Reporting

# Your Contribution to This Review: Background Materials

## WBR Webpage



## Background Reports

[www.haldimandcounty.ca/wardboundaryreview](http://www.haldimandcounty.ca/wardboundaryreview)



# Project Next Steps



Based on feedback from this public consultation, next steps will include:

- Preparing **alternative ward designs** that will be brought to a public consultation in **Fall of 2024**;
- Making **recommendations for a ward structure** that will accommodate growth and population for the next **two Municipal elections (2026 & 2030) and beyond**, if feasible (If existing ward configuration is determined to not meet the guiding principles);
- A **by-law to enact the new boundaries** would be brought to a later Council meeting for adoption (If Council approves a recommendation for a change to the present ward boundaries).



Questions?