



2024 Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review

City of Burlington

Preliminary Options Report

January 31, 2025

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1. Background

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

The study aims to provide Burlington Council with the necessary information to decide whether to retain the current council composition and ward boundaries or implement changes. This report presents preliminary observations on alternative ward boundary design options. This review is grounded in the democratic principle that municipal representation in Burlington should be effective, equitable, and reflective of the City's neighbourhood communities.

In the Interim Report, the Consultant Team provided a summary of work completed to date and a summary of the information received from the public engagement sessions and tools, such as the survey and project page on Burlington's Get Involved platform. The report also requested direction from Council on the next steps of the study, specifically in relation to the current representation principles that see all councillors sit on both Regional and City Council with all councillors elected in wards.

The intention of the present report is to provide alternative ward boundary configurations following the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole (December 2, 2024) that "the Consultant Team [is] to investigate and recommend council composition and ward boundary options where all councillors are local and regional councillors, as it relates to the legislative services department report [CL-27-24](#)."^[1]

2. Review of Existing System and Guiding Principles

A preliminary evaluation of the existing ward structure was included in [Discussion Paper E](#), and a comprehensive evaluation of the existing ward structure can be found in the [Interim Report](#).

^[1] City of Burlington Committee of the Whole December 2, 2024, Meeting Minutes, Item 8.3.



Figure 2-1
Existing Ward Structure

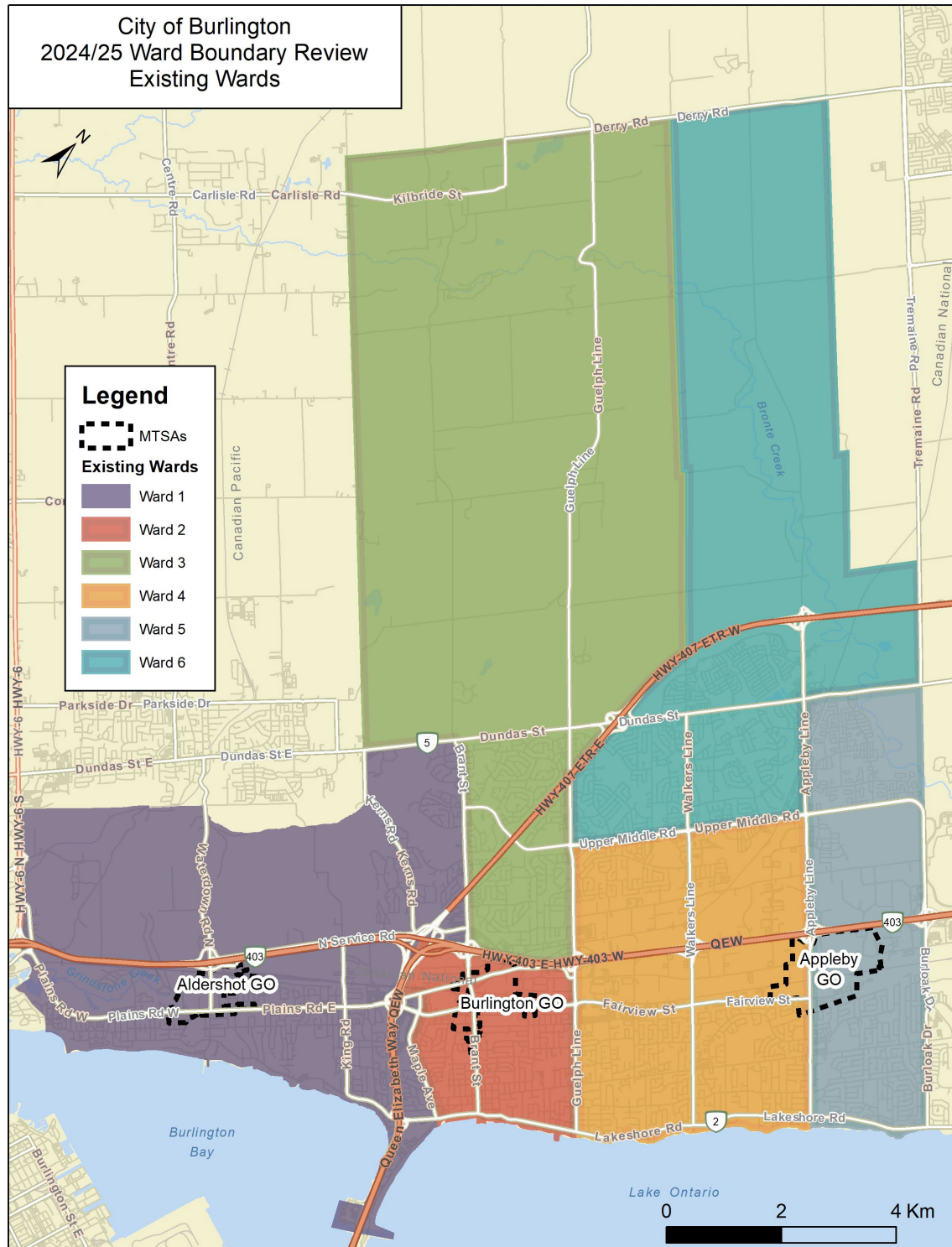




Figure 2-2
City of Burlington
Population by Ward (2021, 2025, and 2035)

Ward	2021 Total Population			2025 Total Population			2035 Total Population		
	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	28,542	0.92	O-	30,099	0.92	O-	38,515	1.04	O
Ward 2	26,785	0.86	O-	29,240	0.89	O-	34,599	0.93	O-
Ward 3	23,692	0.76	OR-	24,402	0.75	OR-	24,510	0.66	OR-
Ward 4	36,441	1.17	OR+	37,641	1.15	OR+	39,526	1.06	O+
Ward 5	36,049	1.16	OR+	37,075	1.13	O+	45,923	1.24	OR+
Ward 6	35,439	1.14	O+	37,828	1.16	OR+	39,806	1.07	O+
Total/Average	186,948	31,158		196,286	32,714		222,880	37,147	

Source: Derived by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. from the draft population projections – 2024 Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

[Discussion Paper D](#) provided an evaluation of the current ward system, and the analysis revealed aspects that fall short in some regard of meeting the ward boundary principles set out for the C.C.W.B.R. The Consultant Team determined that the current system was successful in respecting communities of interest and, therefore, somewhat successful in providing for effective representation. The current population disparities between the wards, however, posed a challenge in providing for effective representation. As mentioned earlier, three of the wards are outside the acceptable range of variation ($\pm 15\%$), with the difference between the greatest and least populated wards being approximately 13,000 residents. These disparities are expected to worsen over time, as the City's population grows (with an estimated range of 20,000 residents by 2035), and development around urban transit corridors continues to intensify.

In terms of the overarching principle of effective representation, Burlington's present wards come close to achieving effective representation in 2025. Population imbalances undermine the achievement of this principle over the next decade, however, and in a few cases could have an impact on the capacity of some councillors to serve residents.

[Discussion Paper E](#) concluded that a C.C.W.B.R. was necessary.

Utilizing the feedback received through the various engagement activities, members of the public have confirmed many of the initial perceptions, which were discussed in the [Interim Report](#). Overall, the present wards still constitute a plausible system for the 2026 municipal election, but the same cannot be said about its capacity in the future.



It is possible to meet all these shortcomings by redividing the municipality to provide better, more effective representation through the application of the complete set of guiding principles, as will be demonstrated below. Figure 2-3 provides a summary evaluation of the current wards through the lens of the guiding principles.

Figure 2-3
City of Burlington
Present Burlington Ward Configuration Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Current Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	No	Three wards are outside the acceptable range of variation; the difference between the largest and smallest wards is 12,944 residents.
Future Population Trends	No	The population disparity between the present wards will likely increase as development in and around urban transit corridors intensifies.
Communities of Interest	Largely Successful	Current ward boundaries comfortably contain single, identifiable communities of interest, although much of the rural population of the City is spread throughout three wards.
Geographic Representation	Largely Successful	The most significant physical barrier (the Q.E.W.) is used inconsistently.
Effective Representation	Partially Successful	Effective representation is hindered by uneven population distribution that is expected to worsen over time.

The degree to which each guiding principle is satisfied is ranked as “Yes” (fully satisfied), “Largely Successful,” “Partially Successful,” or “No” (not satisfied).



3. Overview of Council Composition and Direction from Council

In the Interim Report, the Consultant Team asked, “should all local councillors also be Regional councillors?” Since Burlington Council does not have the legislative authority to change the number of Regional Councillors (at present, six), the implication of Council’s direction to maintain the present configuration for this review is that all “re-divisions” will involve six wards.

4. Preliminary Ward Boundary Configurations

The evaluation of the current ward system in Burlington suggests that there are identifiable shortcomings when assessed against the guiding principles for this review. Council could still choose to retain the status quo by turning down all recommended options for an alternative ward configuration. That decision, however, could result in a petition submitted under section 223 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*. The analysis presented herein suggests that it would be difficult for the City to defend the existing ward system before the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT), particularly in addressing future growth.

Building on its assessment that the present wards fall short of meeting the guiding principles for effective representation in Burlington, the Consultant Team has prepared seven preliminary options for consideration at this stage of the C.C.W.B.R. As the analysis will show, keeping the identifiable communities of interest intact and grouping them with others that are similar and connected, creating wards with roughly equal populations, and providing for effective representation throughout Burlington poses a challenge. While no one alternative is likely to be judged as completely successful in meeting all the guiding principles, the options presented in this report may place greater emphasis on certain principles over others, while recognizing that each “blend” addresses the goal of effective representation in its own way.

At the time of preparing this report, the Consultant Team used the draft population projections from the 2024 Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study in the analysis of the existing ward configuration and the development of the preliminary alternative ward boundary configurations. These population projections are not finalized and could change. The Consultant Team recommends that the City continue to monitor population and elector numbers to ensure equitable representation by population across



the wards. If population projections aren't realized or growth patterns are different from estimates, another review may be required at some point in the future.



4.1 Preliminary Option 1 – Minimal Change

This first option can be considered a “minimal change” option since it preserves much of the existing ward map, targeting certain challenges around current and future population disparities identified above. Preliminary Option 1 retains three largely rural wards and three lakefront wards, as found in the current map. The most notable change occurs in the area between Upper Middle Road and the lakefront, where the present Wards 3, 4, and 5 are modified to improve the 2025 and 2035 population distribution by adding population from the present Ward 5 living south of New Street to the proposed Ward 4 and including the northwest corner of the present Ward 4 to the proposed Ward 3. The other three wards are largely maintained with minor adjustments to the boundary between the present Wards 1 and 2 around the junction of the Q.E.W. and Highway 403, and the placement of the entire Brant Hills community in the proposed Ward 3.

Since Burlington communities are largely confined within a perceptible arterial road network that has formed the basis of the present wards since 2006, Preliminary Option 1 essentially proposes to move only one of those visible “blocks” (bounded by Upper Middle Road, Walkers Line, Highway 403, and Guelph Line) to another ward while using a material feature (New Street) and a natural feature (the Tyandaga Golf Course) to contribute to better meet other guiding principles. The Q.E.W. and Highway 403 divide some wards, as is the case in the current wards. The planned Major Transit Station Area (M.T.S.A.) at the Appleby GO site will have an impact on two wards (proposed Wards 4 and 5), but the Aldershot and Burlington M.T.S.A.s are each located in a single ward.

This option provides familiarity to residents and retains most of the existing ward characteristics that work well, while addressing some of the issues raised in the evaluation. Population distribution is adequate but not perfect in the short term, with the present Ward 1 continuing to remain on the low side of the acceptable population range. Ward 6 is outside the optimal population range in 2025 but evens out by 2035. Population parity in this option improves with future population growth by 2035, with the population of two wards forecast to be within 5% of optimal. This could be considered an option that the City can grow into over time, accepting slight population disparities in the short term for more long-term parity.



Figure 4-1
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 1 – Minimal Change
Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2021 Total Population			2025 Total Population			2035 Total Population		
	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	25,053	0.80	OR-	25,914	0.79	OR-	33,890	0.91	O-
Ward 2	27,732	0.89	O-	30,243	0.92	O-	36,044	0.97	O
Ward 3	33,296	1.07	O+	34,835	1.06	O+	34,930	0.94	O-
Ward 4	35,519	1.14	O+	36,724	1.12	O+	38,610	1.04	O
Ward 5	29,909	0.96	O	30,742	0.94	O-	39,599	1.07	O+
Ward 6	35,439	1.14	O+	37,828	1.16	OR+	39,806	1.07	O+
Total/Average	186,948	31,158		196,286	32,714		222,880	37,147	

Source: Derived by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. from the draft population projections – 2024 Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.



Figure 4-2
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 1 – Minimal Change

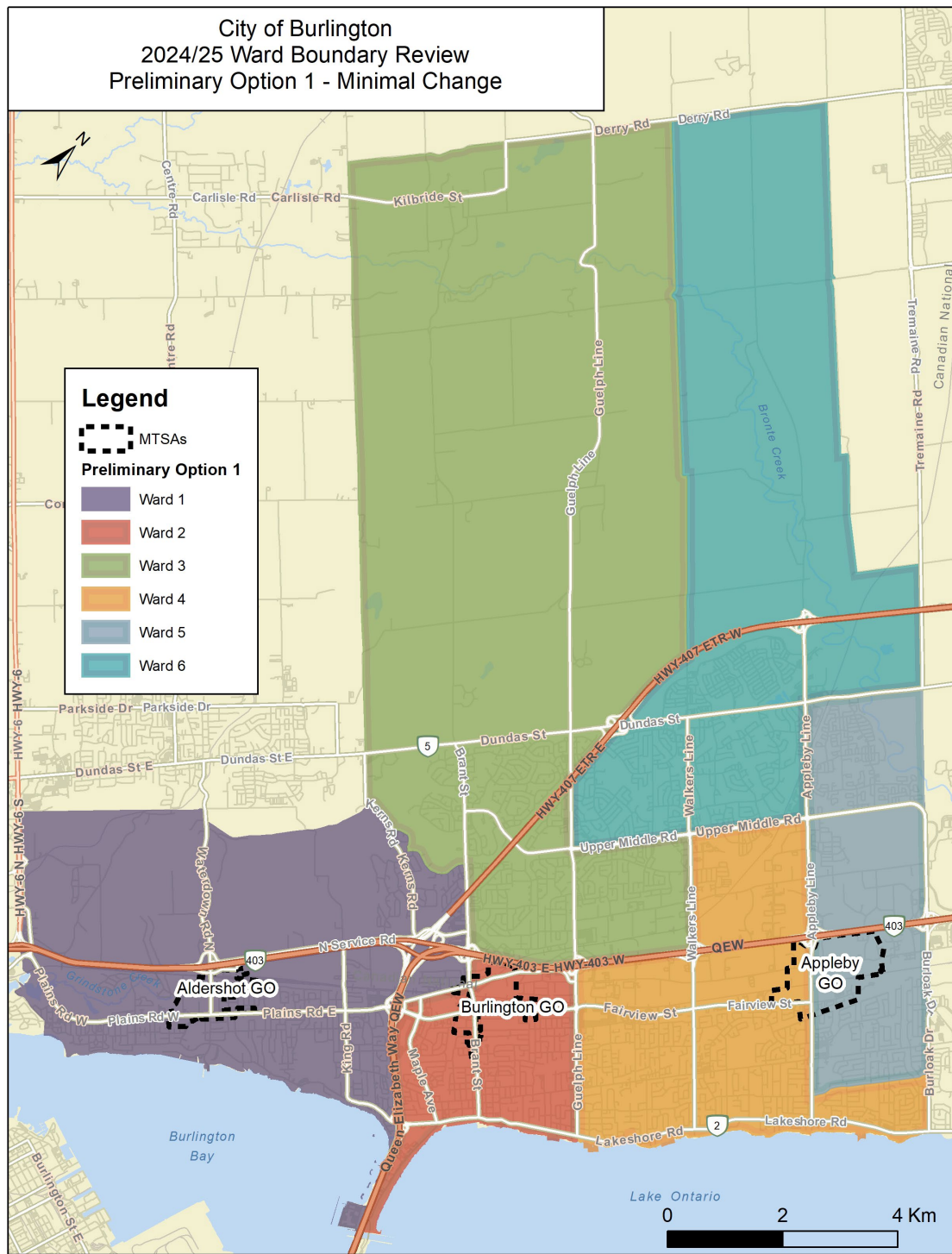




Figure 4-3
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 1 – Minimal Change
Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	Largely Successful	One proposed ward falls below the 15% population variation; five wards are within the range.
Future Population Trends	Yes	All proposed wards are within 10% of optimal.
Communities of Interest	Largely Successful	Proposed ward boundaries respect identifiable communities of interest, although the rural population of the City is spread throughout three wards.
Geographic Representation	Yes	Most boundaries are along the City's perceptible arterial road network.
Effective Representation	Yes	The option respects the strengths of the present system while providing for better population parity over the next three elections.

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



4.2 Preliminary Option 2 – 2035 Population Parity (v1)

This option looks to provide population parity for 2035 while still maintaining some of the existing ward structure. The map maintains two wards in the northern area of the City and the present lakefront four-ward configuration. The major modification would see the western boundary of the present Ward 5 move from Appleby Line to Walkers Line, and the northern boundary move from Dundas Street to the Q.E.W. The present Ward 4 would become an L-shaped area between Guelph Line and Appleby Line in the south, with the area in the present Ward 5 north of the Q.E.W. added to the east. The proposed Wards 1 and 2 are identical to those in Preliminary Option 1. Both northern wards (proposed Wards 3 and 6) would be well above the optimal population range for the 2026 municipal election and would continue to be the most heavily populated wards by 2035, as well as being the largest wards by area. As is the case now, these wards are a combination of scattered rural communities and well-established suburban neighbourhoods.

The boundaries of the proposed wards adhere to perceptible arterial roadways and only depart to follow a natural feature between the proposed Wards 1 and 3. The Q.E.W. and Highway 403 divide some wards, as is the case in the current arrangement. Each of the three planned M.T.S.A.s are contained in a single ward. While the population parity principle is not achieved in 2025, future population growth will mean all wards will lie in the acceptable range by 2035. Again, this option could be considered one that the City can grow into over time.

Figure 4-4
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 2 – 2035 Population Parity (v1)
Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2021 Total Population			2025 Total Population			2035 Total Population		
	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	25,053	0.80	OR-	25,914	0.79	OR-	33,890	0.91	O-
Ward 2	27,732	0.89	O-	30,243	0.92	O-	36,044	0.97	O
Ward 3	38,618	1.24	OR+	40,335	1.23	OR+	40,427	1.09	O+
Ward 4	29,123	0.93	O-	29,992	0.92	O-	36,444	0.98	O
Ward 5	29,642	0.95	O	30,622	0.94	O-	34,887	0.94	O-
Ward 6	36,780	1.18	OR+	39,180	1.20	OR+	41,188	1.11	O+
Total/Average	186,948	31,158		196,286	32,714		222,880	37,147	

Source: Derived by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. from the draft population projections – 2024 Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.



Figure 4-5
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 2 – 2035 Population Parity (v1)

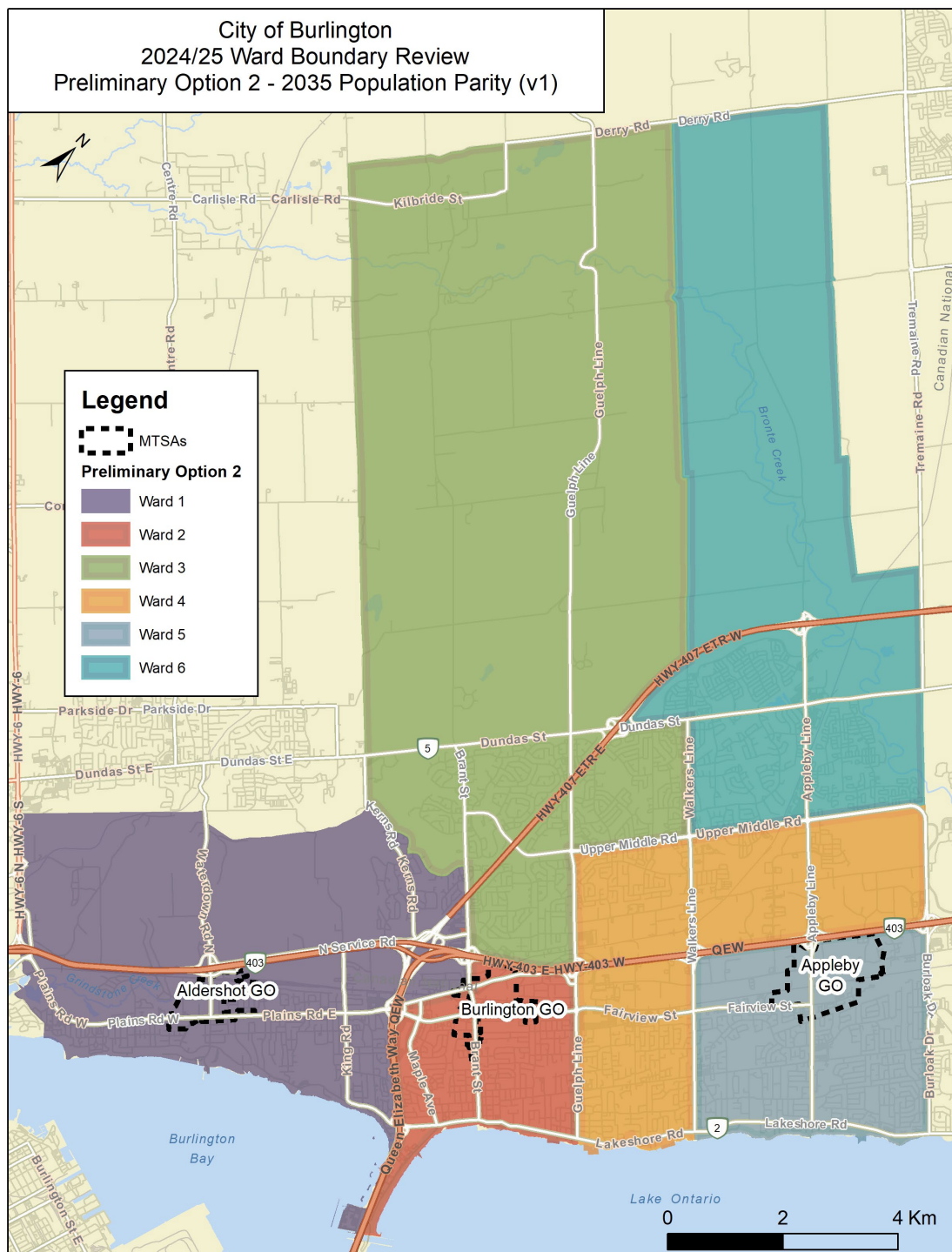




Figure 4-6
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 2 – 2035 Population Parity (v1)
Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	No	Three of the six wards currently fall outside the 15% population variation range.
Future Population Trends	Yes	All wards fall within the 15% population variation range by 2035.
Communities of Interest	Largely Successful	Proposed ward boundaries respect identifiable communities of interest, although the rural population of the City is included in wards with sizeable urban neighbourhoods.
Geographic Representation	Yes	Proposed boundaries are along the City's perceptible arterial road network with one exception.
Effective Representation	Partially Successful	Population parity will not be achieved immediately, and two wards combine a large population with a large geographic area.

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



4.3 Preliminary Option 3 – 2035 Population Parity (v2)

Preliminary Option 3 looks to provide population parity for 2035 while still maintaining some of the existing ward structure and most of the features of Preliminary Option 2.

The map maintains the present lakefront four-ward configuration but includes one true rural ward rather than the two “mixed” northern wards, as found in the current system and in Preliminary Options 1 and 2. As a result, the present Ward 6 is reduced considerably in size to include only the area between Highway 407, Upper Middle Road, Walkers Line, and Dundas Street. The 2025 population of the more compact ward falls just above the optimal range, however, and is forecast to be comfortably within that range in 2035. As was the case in Preliminary Option 2, the proposed Ward 3 is the largest by both area and population in 2025. What is relevant here is that, despite absorbing the rural population of the present Ward 6 population, the proposed single rural ward would still meet the population parity principle in 2035.

Like Preliminary Option 2, the western boundary of the present Ward 5 would move from Appleby Line to Walkers Line and the northern boundary would move from Dundas Street to the Q.E.W. The present Ward 4 would become an L-shaped area between Guelph Line and Appleby Line in the south, with the area in the present Ward 5 north of the Q.E.W. added to the east. The proposed Wards 1 and 2 are identical to those in Preliminary Option 1.

The boundaries of the proposed wards adhere to perceptible arterial roadways and only depart to follow a natural feature between the proposed Wards 1 and 3. The Q.E.W. and Highway 403 divide some wards, as is the case in the current arrangement. Each of the three planned M.T.S.A.s are contained in a single ward. While the population parity principle is not achieved in 2025, future population growth will mean all wards will lie in the acceptable range by 2035.



Figure 4-7
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 3 – 2035 Population Parity (v2)
Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2021 Total Population			2025 Total Population			2035 Total Population		
	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	25,053	0.80	OR-	25,914	0.79	OR-	33,890	0.91	O-
Ward 2	27,732	0.89	O-	30,243	0.92	O-	36,044	0.97	O
Ward 3	39,259	1.26	OR+	41,000	1.25	OR+	41,117	1.11	O+
Ward 4	29,123	0.93	O-	29,992	0.92	O-	36,444	0.98	O
Ward 5	29,642	0.95	O	30,622	0.94	O-	34,887	0.94	O-
Ward 6	36,139	1.16	OR+	38,515	1.18	OR+	40,497	1.09	O+
Total/Average	186,948	31,158		196,286	32,714		222,880	37,147	

Source: Derived by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. from the draft population projections – 2024 Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.



Figure 4-8
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 3 – 2035 Population Parity (v2)

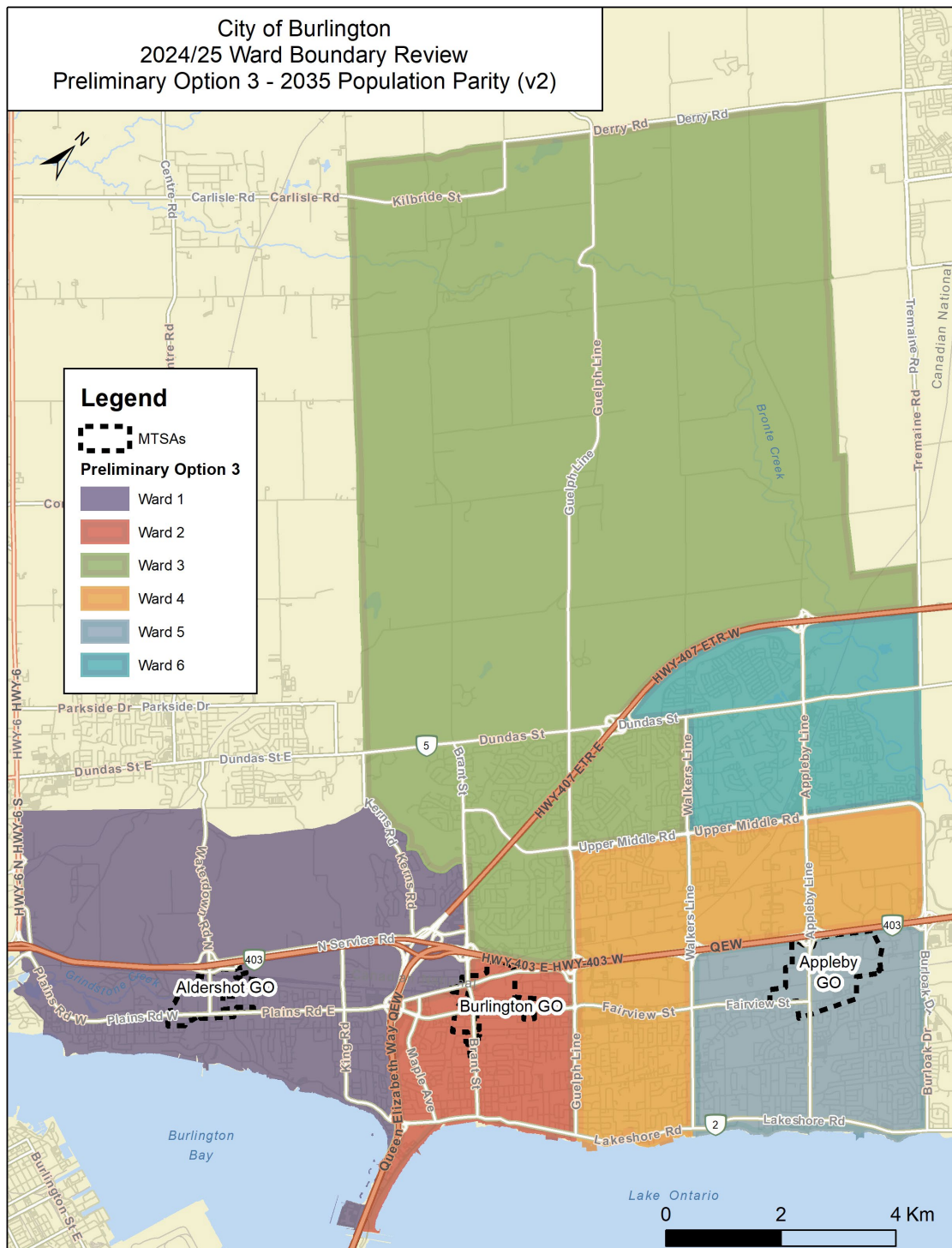




Figure 4-9
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 3 – 2035 Population Parity (v2)
Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	No	Three of the six wards currently fall outside the 15% population variation range.
Future Population Trends	Yes	All wards fall within the 15% population variation range by 2035.
Communities of Interest	Yes	Proposed ward boundaries respect identifiable communities of interest; the northern rural population of the City is included in a single ward.
Geographic Representation	Yes	Proposed boundaries are along the City's perceptible arterial road network with one exception.
Effective Representation	Largely Successful	Population parity will not be achieved immediately. One ward combines a large population with a large geographic area.

The degree to which each guiding principle is satisfied is ranked as “Yes” (fully satisfied), “Largely Successful,” “Partially Successful,” or “No” (not satisfied).



4.4 Preliminary Option 4 – 2025 Population Parity (v1)

Preliminary Option 4 looks to provide population parity for the short and longer term, but includes some adjustments to five of the six wards compared to the configuration proposed in an earlier design that addressed population parity (Preliminary Option 3). In this option, only the proposed Ward 5 is identical to the wards in Preliminary Option 3.

The proposed Ward 1 is extended to Dundas Street and Brant Street with a triangular-shaped addition between Brant Street and Highway 407, bordered on the north by a utility corridor just south of the Brant Hills Community Centre. The resulting ward falls at the optimal population point, but the main contribution of the change would be to bring the proposed Ward 3 close to the optimal population point for 2025. The northern boundary of the proposed Ward 2 is moved to the Q.E.W./Highway 407 corridor in this option, adding the Freeman neighbourhood to the ward (where it is in the current ward system). By moving a small area east of Walkers Line on the north side of Upper Middle Road from the proposed Ward 6 in Preliminary Option 2 to the proposed Ward 4, both wards move closer to parity in 2025 and remain close to the optimal point in 2035.

A major drawback to this option is the geographic size of the proposed Ward 3 (the single rural ward in this option) and the possible impact on the lines of communication within that ward between the neighbourhoods at the extreme southern end of the ward (south of Upper Middle Road) and the extensive rural community. This configuration also splits the Brant Hills neighbourhood into two wards.

The boundaries of the proposed wards largely adhere to perceptible arterial roadways and only depart to follow a natural feature for short distances between the proposed Wards 1 and 3 and Wards 4 and 6. The Q.E.W. and Highway 403 divide some wards, as is the case in the current arrangement. Each of the three planned M.T.S.A.s are contained in separate wards.

The strongest attribute of Preliminary Option 4 is that the population parity principle is achieved in 2025, and the distribution of future population growth will mean all wards will continue to lie in the acceptable range by 2035 and the population between smallest and largest wards being less than 7,000.



Figure 4-10
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 4 – 2025 Population Parity (v1)
Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2021 Total Population			2025 Total Population			2035 Total Population		
	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	31,129	1.00	O	32,716	1.00	O	40,597	1.09	O+
Ward 2	29,324	0.94	O-	31,885	0.97	O	37,772	1.02	O
Ward 3	32,240	1.03	O	33,576	1.03	O	33,703	0.91	O-
Ward 4	31,354	1.01	O	32,285	0.99	O	38,735	1.04	O
Ward 5	29,642	0.95	O	30,622	0.94	O-	34,887	0.94	O-
Ward 6	33,259	1.07	O+	35,200	1.08	O+	37,187	1.00	O
Total/Average	186,948	31,158		196,286	32,714		222,880	37,147	

Source: Derived by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. from the draft population projections – 2024 Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.



Figure 4-11
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 4 – 2025 Population Parity (v1)

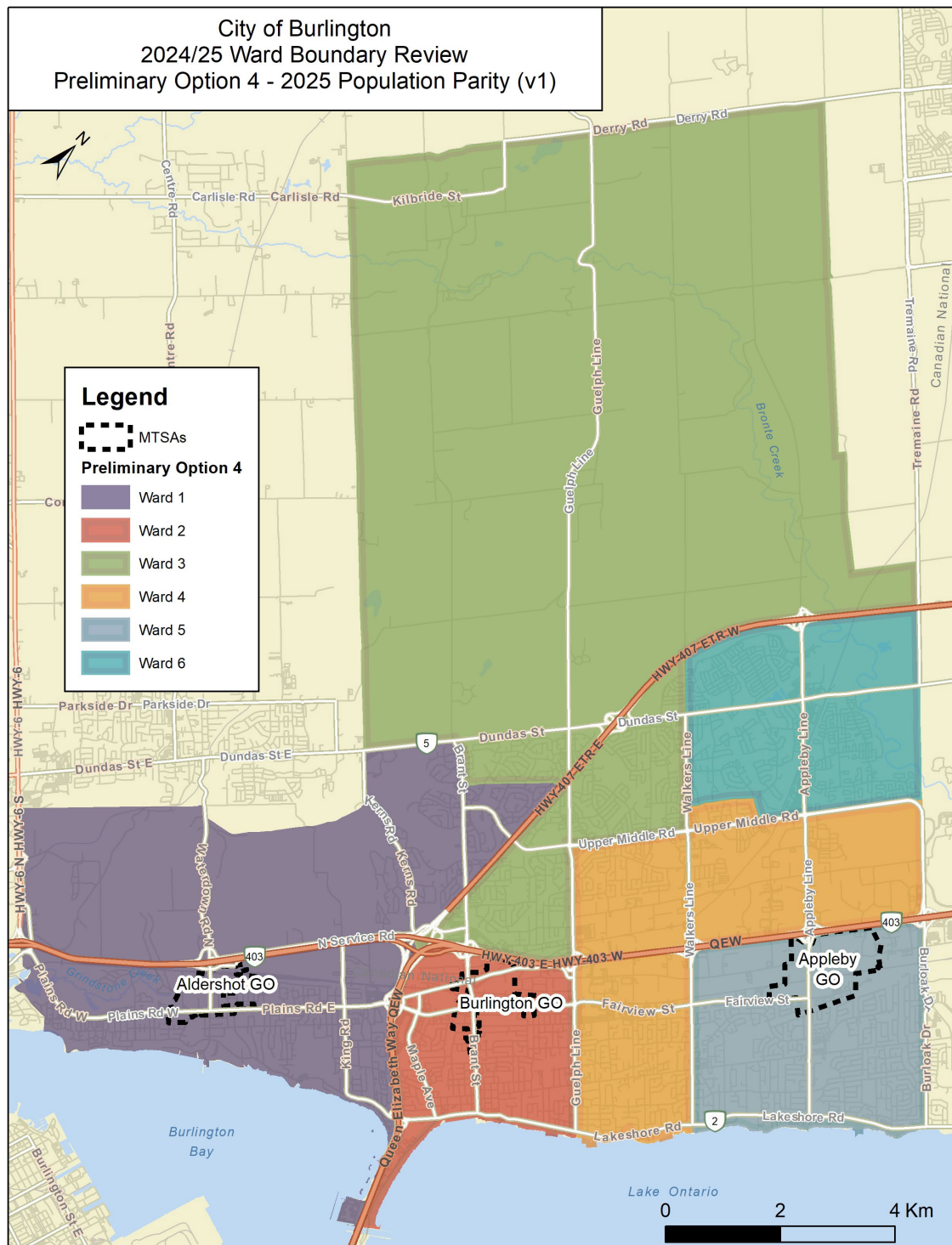




Figure 4-12
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 4 – 2025 Population Parity (v1)
Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	Yes	Four of the six wards fall at the optimal point; none are currently outside the acceptable range of variation.
Future Population Trends	Yes	Three of the six wards fall at the optimal point; none are outside the acceptable range of variation by 2035.
Communities of Interest	Largely Successful	Proposed ward boundaries respect many identifiable communities of interest; the northern rural population of the City is included in a single ward.
Geographic Representation	Largely Successful	Proposed boundaries are along the City's perceptible arterial road network with two limited exceptions.
Effective Representation	Largely Successful	One ward is a large geographic area with a rural-urban mix.

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



4.5 Preliminary Option 5 – 2025 Population Parity (v2)

Preliminary Option 5 looks to provide population parity for 2025; however, to reach that goal, the Option proposes what many may perceive as dramatic changes to the Burlington ward system they are used to. Ward maps should not be regarded as permanent features of the electoral process, and sometimes mere “tune-ups” may fall short of achieving a system of effective representation. The extent of population change in Burlington and the distribution of new neighbourhoods since the present wards were drawn up in 1996 should give pause to consider whether a fresh approach is worth considering.

To get closer to population parity for 2025, Preliminary Option 5 includes a largely rural ward in the City’s north, but one that is smaller than the single rural wards in Preliminary Options 3 and 4, since most of it lies north of Dundas Street with an additional block down to Upper Middle Road between Appleby Line and Burloak Drive. Even with that addition, the population remains lower than optimal but within the acceptable range. The proposed Ward 1 has always been considered exclusively the “Aldershot” ward, although it includes a rural area. In Preliminary Option 5, proposed Ward 1 is extended north to Dundas Street as far as Brant Street with additional territory between the Q.E.W./Highway 403 corridor and Fairview Street, as far as the Guelph Line. The population of the proposed ward falls close to the optimal point in 2025 (the goal of this option) but rises outside the optimal range of variation by 2035 because it both encompasses the Aldershot M.T.S.A. and would likely be impacted significantly by the Burlington M.T.S.A. developments.

An innovation in Preliminary Option 5 is the extension of the traditional “downtown” ward (the present Ward 2) east all the way to Appleby Line to include communities between New Street and the lakefront. Like the proposed Ward 1, the population of the proposed ward falls even closer to the optimal point in 2025 but rises outside the optimal range of variation by 2035 because it encompasses much of the Burlington M.T.S.A. developments. The remaining three wards include blocks of neighbourhoods grouped successfully together and delineated by major roadways that are roughly similar in population in 2025. The proposed Ward 5 begins below the optimal point but rises above that point, since the Appleby M.T.S.A. developments are located there.

The boundaries of the proposed wards adhere to perceptible arterial roadways. The Q.E.W. and Highway 403 divide some wards, as is the case in the current arrangement.



While this option provides relatively good population parity in the short term, some wards – notably Ward 1 – fall outside of an acceptable population range as we get closer to 2035. Achieving relatively good parity in the short term, means accepting certain trade-offs regarding communities of interest. For instance, Ward 1 stretches over the QEW, which many feel has more in common with downtown Burlington than Aldershot. This option also notably places the Burlington GO M.T.S.A into two wards.

Figure 4-13
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 5 – 2025 Population Parity (v2)
Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2021 Total Population			2025 Total Population			2035 Total Population		
	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	32,595	1.05	O	34,286	1.05	O	44,760	1.20	OR+
Ward 2	31,671	1.02	O	34,380	1.05	O+	37,670	1.01	O
Ward 3	32,703	1.05	O	33,629	1.03	O	33,586	0.90	O-
Ward 4	31,543	1.01	O	32,606	1.00	O	34,671	0.93	O-
Ward 5	29,285	0.94	O-	30,155	0.92	O-	38,991	1.05	O
Ward 6	29,151	0.94	O-	31,229	0.95	O	33,201	0.89	O-
Total/Average	186,948	31,158		196,286	32,714		222,880	37,147	

Source: Derived by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. from the draft population projections – 2024 Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.



Figure 4-14
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 5 – 2025 Population Parity (v2)

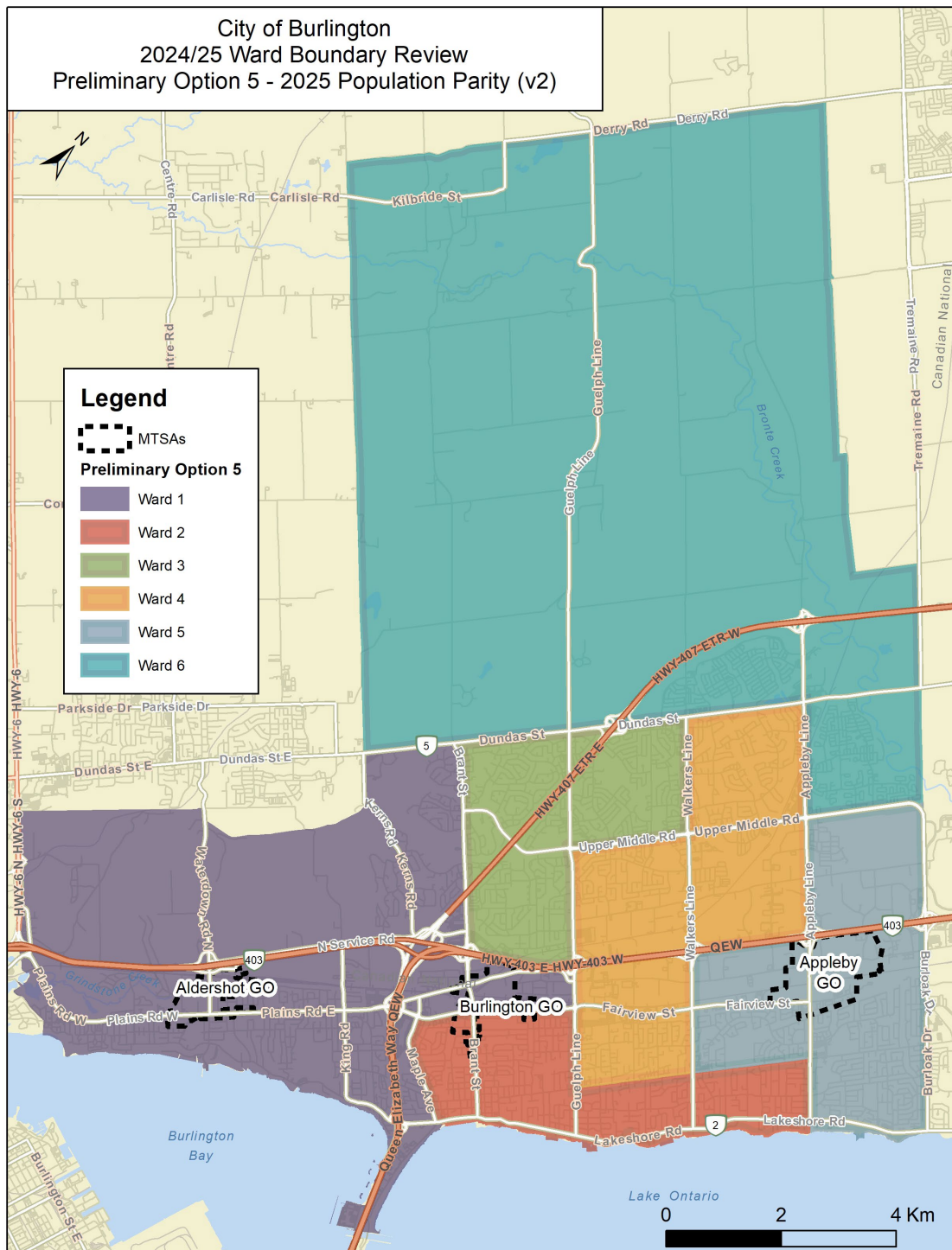




Figure 4-15
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 5 – 2025 Population Parity (v2)
Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	Yes	Four of the six wards fall at the optimal point; none are outside the acceptable range of variation.
Future Population Trends	Largely Successful	Two of the six wards fall at the optimal point; one is outside the acceptable range of variation because two M.T.S.A.s will impact growth in that ward.
Communities of Interest	Largely Successful	Proposed ward boundaries respect identifiable communities of interest; the northern rural population of the City is included in a single ward.
Geographic Representation	Yes	Proposed boundaries are along the City's perceptible arterial road network.
Effective Representation	Largely Successful	The wards achieve population parity in the short but are less successful in the longer term.

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



4.6 Preliminary Option 6 – Communities of Interest (School Board Review Areas)

Preliminary Options 2, 3, 4, and 5 were developed with the population parity principle as the priority and were successful in achieving it to varying degrees in the short or longer term. As observed throughout the C.C.W.B.R., however, population parity is not the only guiding principle that contributes to effective representation. Preliminary Option 6 was therefore developed by placing a priority on the communities of interest principle, generally adopting school boundaries and family of schools' classifications for the City of Burlington to serve as the starting point. School boundaries can help identify community connections and interaction patterns.

The first thing to notice is that none of the proposed wards match those drawn based on population figures in the other Preliminary Options, representing a departure from earlier options that prioritized population parity. The option includes a single northern ward that is bounded by clean lines running along Dundas Street at the Oakville municipal boundary, the Q.E.W./Highway 407 corridor, Brant Street, and a natural feature between the proposed Wards 1 and 3, as found in Preliminary Options 2 and 3. The proposed Ward 1 extends as far east as Brant Street with the addition of the compact triangular Freeman neighbourhood north of Plains Road. The densely populated area east of Brant Street and south of the Q.E.W./Highway 407 corridor and Dundas Street is divided into four wards that differ significantly from one another in population.

An extended ward south of Fairview Street that includes much of the Burlington lakefront east of the Q.E.W. splits the traditional downtown at Brant Street, while the adjacent ward to the north includes almost the entire area south of the Q.E.W./Highway 407 corridor. Both wards are outside the optimal range of population, one above and one far below. Two of the three M.T.S.A.s are split between multiple wards.

While this option provides for less population parity than the previous options, it better contains communities of interest within single wards. How well this is accomplished will be assessed during the second round of public engagement. This option can be considered an “alternative view” that prioritizes one of the guiding principles over the others, providing additional options to re-imagine the current boundaries for the public and members of Council.



Figure 4-16
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 6 – Communities of Interest
Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2021 Total Population			2025 Total Population			2035 Total Population		
	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	37,556	1.21	OR+	39,097	1.20	OR+	47,875	1.29	OR+
Ward 2	37,524	1.20	OR+	40,154	1.23	OR+	43,216	1.16	OR+
Ward 3	29,955	0.96	O	32,613	1.00	O	34,549	0.93	O-
Ward 4	34,862	1.12	O+	35,872	1.10	O+	39,670	1.07	O+
Ward 5	18,023	0.58	OR-	18,558	0.57	OR-	22,824	0.61	OR-
Ward 6	29,028	0.93	O-	29,991	0.92	O-	34,747	0.94	O-
Total/Average	186,948	31,158		196,286	32,714		222,880	37,147	

Source: Derived by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. from the draft population projections – 2024 Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.



Figure 4-17
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 6 – Communities of Interest

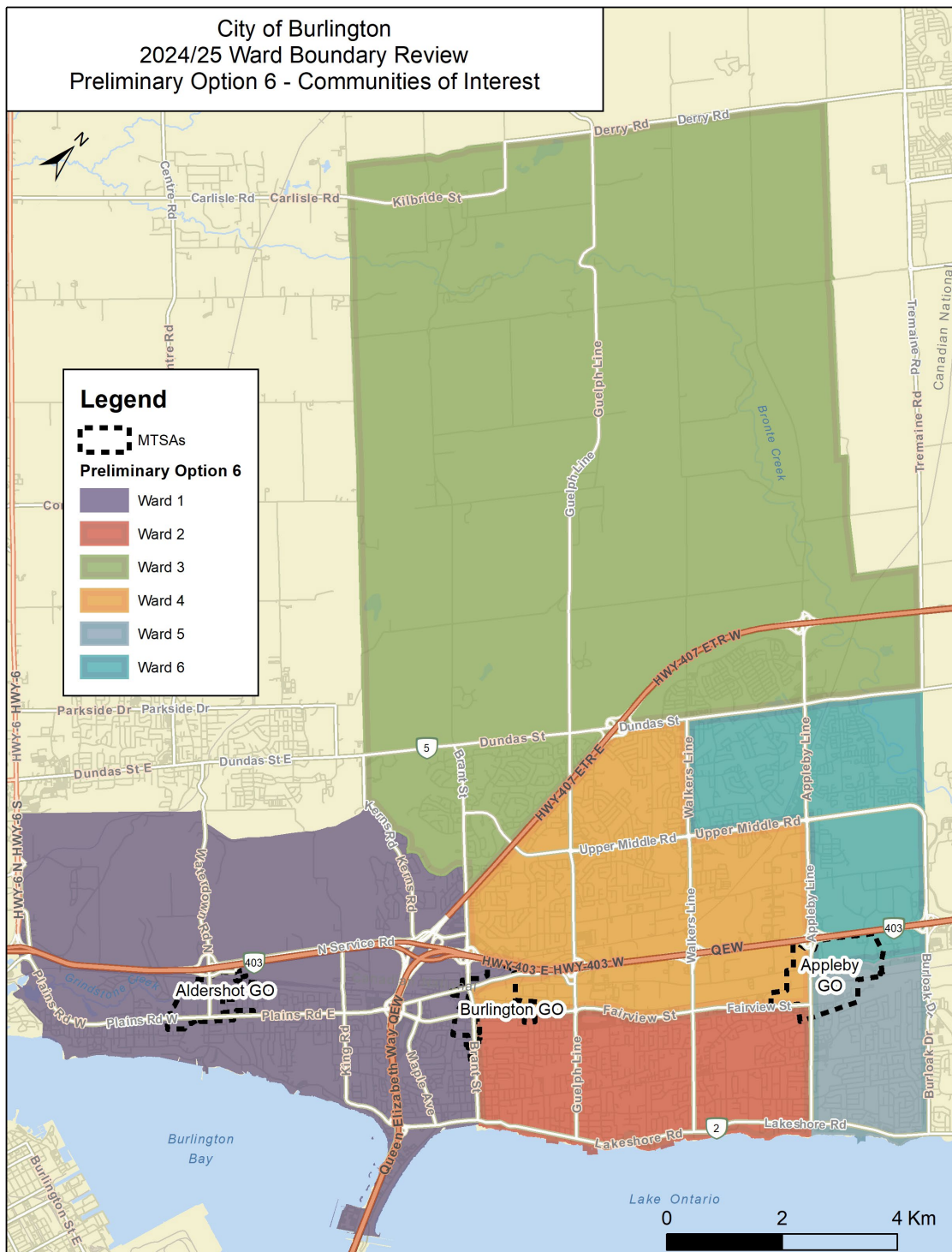




Figure 4-18
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 6 – Communities of Interest
Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	No	Three wards are outside the acceptable population range and only one ward has an optimal population.
Future Population Trends	No	Three wards are outside the acceptable population range with no wards being in the optimal range.
Communities of Interest	Yes	Most communities of interest are contained within single ward boundaries, as identified by school boundaries and families of schools' classifications.
Geographic Representation	Yes	Most proposed boundaries are along the City's perceptible arterial road network.
Effective Representation	Partially Successful	The range of population between the smallest and largest wards biases the weight of votes cast by individual councillors.

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



4.7 Preliminary Option 7 – Balanced Guiding Principles

Preliminary Option 7 is considered a “balanced guiding principles” option; that is, it combines what worked well in the previous options to form a hybrid proposal. For example, there is a single northern rural ward and three lakefront wards, and the combined area of the proposed Wards 1 and 2 is identical to the area included in the current Wards 1 and 2 except for a small triangle between Brant Street, Highway 407 and the QEW/Highway 403 that is moved to the proposed Ward 4. The QEW is also a cleaner boundary between the proposed Wards 1 and 2 than the present Maple Avenue/ QEW/Highway 403 line. The proposed Wards 3 and 4 begin with the largest populations, but since neither includes an M.T.S.A. development, they will be very close to parity by 2035 as other wards absorb the M.T.S.A. developments.

With the minor exception of the boundary between the proposed Wards 3 and 5 east of Appleby Line, all boundaries follow major arterial roadways and the three M.T.S.A. developments are in individual wards. The Q.E.W. and Highway 403 divide some wards, as is the case in the current arrangement. By adding the area south of Dundas Street and east of Appleby Line to the proposed Ward 6, the predominantly rural area is not only the largest by geographic size, but places that rural population into the ward with the largest population in 2035.

Overall, Preliminary Option 7 provides an acceptable balance of population in 2025 with one low-population ward in the mix and grows into a system that comes remarkably close to population parity in 2035.

Figure 4-19
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 7 – Balanced Guiding Principles
Population by Proposed Ward

Ward	2021 Total Population			2025 Total Population			2035 Total Population		
	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range	Population	Population Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	26,003	0.83	OR-	27,454	0.84	OR-	35,342	0.95	O
Ward 2	29,324	0.94	O-	31,885	0.97	O	37,772	1.02	O
Ward 3	33,923	1.09	O+	35,067	1.07	O+	36,578	0.98	O
Ward 4	35,270	1.13	O+	36,264	1.11	O+	36,268	0.98	O
Ward 5	28,981	0.93	O-	29,976	0.92	O-	34,742	0.94	O-
Ward 6	33,447	1.07	O+	35,639	1.09	O+	42,177	1.14	O+
Total/Average	186,948	31,158		196,286	32,714		222,880	37,147	

Source: Derived by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. from the draft population projections – 2024 Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.



Figure 4-20
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 7 – Balanced Guiding Principles

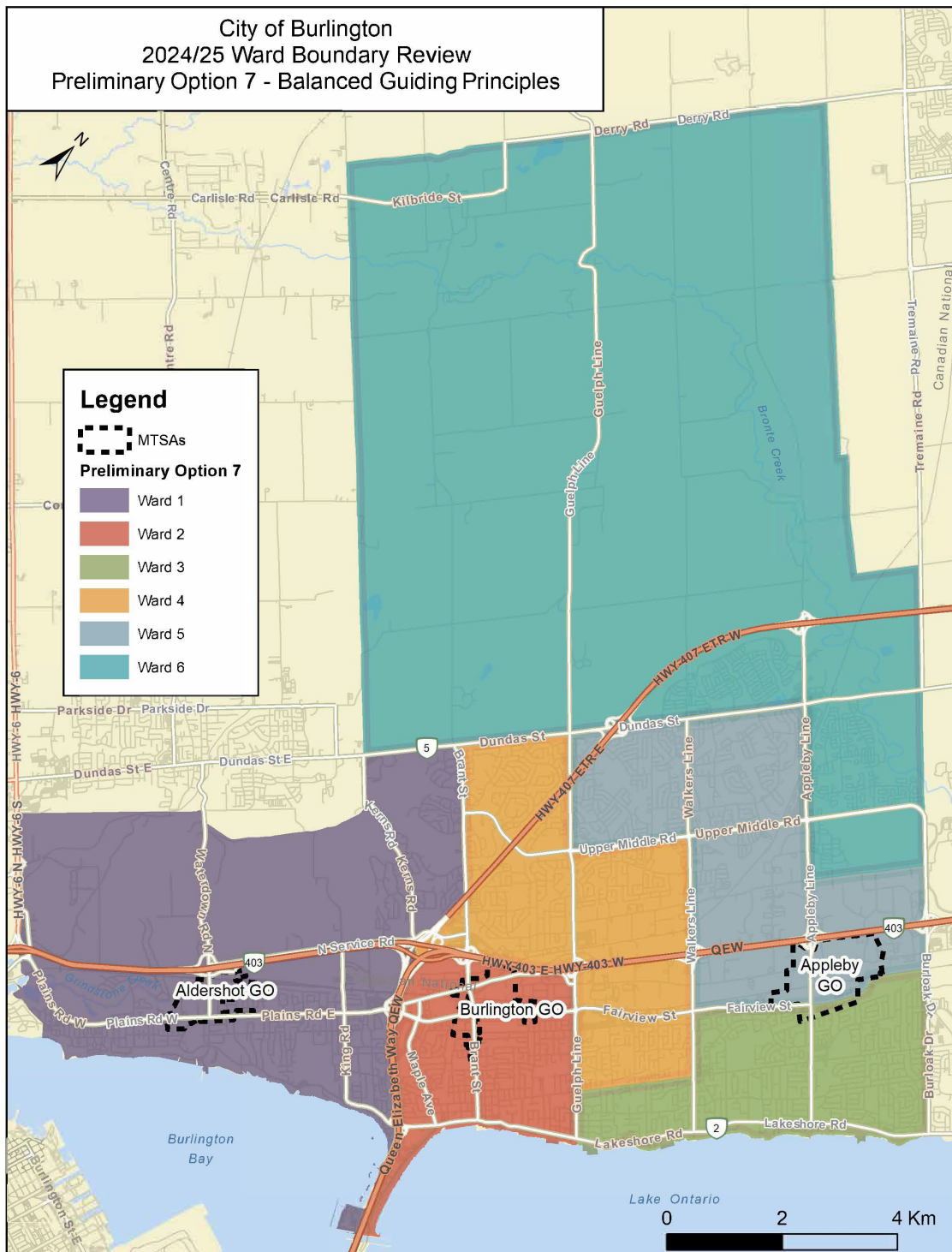


Figure 4-21
City of Burlington
Preliminary Option 7 – Balanced Guiding Principles
Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	Largely Successful	One ward is slightly below the acceptable population range, one is optimal, and the remaining are in the acceptable 15% range.
Future Population Trends	Yes	Four wards are at the optimal point and the remaining are in the acceptable 15% range.
Communities of Interest	Largely Successful	Rural population in the proposed Ward 6 is significantly outnumbered by urban residents.
Geographic Representation	Yes	Most proposed boundaries are along the City's perceptible arterial road network.
Effective Representation	Largely Successful	One ward includes both the largest population and largest area. All others are good.

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

5. Further Considerations

The options presented herein are preliminary; they reflect the application of the core principles for this review to the distribution of population and communities within the City of Burlington.

Designing an electoral system that will deliver effective representation to such a diverse and growing 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 City in the coming decade. Designs that place a priority on grouping selected neighbourhoods can result in the over- or under-representation of those same communities around the council table. Grouping several distinctive communities in the same ward may systematically reduce the voice of minorities, whether they be geographic, economic, or social.

The purpose of this report is to stimulate discussions in Burlington and encourage residents to consider their preferred ward boundary configurations for the City. The options included are deliberately called “preliminary” since much of the next phase of this review involves gathering the perspectives of residents on these alternatives.

6. Next Steps

Following the second phase of public engagement, where the preliminary options outlined in this report will be presented to the public for feedback, the Consultant Team will prepare a final report and presentation for Council. This final report will include at least one recommended option. Council will then decide whether to adopt a new ward configuration or retain the existing ward system.