



Phase 2 – Preliminary Options

Municipality of North Perth

2023 Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review

October 11, 2023

905-272-3600
info@watsonecon.ca

In Association with: Dr. Robert J. Williams



1. Background

The Consultant Team submitted a report to North Perth Council on July 10, 2023¹, based on research and consultations in relation to Phase 1 of the Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review that set out some considerations for the modification of the way members of Council will be elected in the 2026 municipal election and beyond.

The possible considerations addressed in the report included:

- whether to modify the overall size of council as permitted under the *Municipal Act, 2001* s. 217;
- whether to continue to elect the Deputy Mayor at-large or to revert to assigning responsibility to Council to select one of its members as Deputy Mayor, as originally provided for in the Ministerial Restructuring Order for the County of Perth dated June 26, 1997, but modified in 1999 to the present format;
- whether to continue to elect a County Councillor from among the elected members of Council or to change the method of election by having the position filled through the election of a Councillor at-large;
- whether to continue to elect Councillors in wards or at-large; and
- whether to continue to elect Councilors in wards represented by different numbers of Councillors, as at present, or in wards that elect a uniform number of Councillors.

Council unanimously adopted a resolution that directed the Consultant Team to undertake Phase 2 of the Review with the objective of presenting to Council options that include:

- the election of the Deputy Mayor at-large;
- the election of one Councillor at-large who will serve as County Councillor; and
- the election of up to eight councillors in single-member wards.

This Report will set out a series of Preliminary Options for various ward configurations that are based on the third bullet of this resolution and are evaluated in terms of a set of guiding principles for future wards in North Perth that can contribute to the achievement

¹ Available at www.northperth.ca/CCWBR



of effective representation for the residents of the municipality. These guiding principles are explained in Topical Discussion Paper F and were applied to the existing wards in Topical Discussion Paper G.¹

The initial Preliminary Options assume a ten-member council composed of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and County Councillor, all elected by general vote and seven wards that each elect one Councillor.

Since the primary foundation of effective representation is the achievement of population parity (that is, to the extent possible, residents should be equally represented and wards should have reasonably equal population totals), the distribution of seven wards in 2023 will inevitably result in four wards centered on the Listowel settlement area, two wards in the southern part of the municipality and one ward in the north.² This allocation means that the long-standing representation of the residents of Listowel in a single ward will change, so that every effort will need to be made to capture the various Listowel residential and commercial clusters in plausible and coherent groupings, usually understood as “communities of interest.”

The Consultant Team regularly hears suggestions in a municipality such as North Perth with both a rural and urban population that wards should be drawn so that councillors can “appreciate” these two perspectives by including both rural and urban residents in each ward. However, our understanding of effective representation favours a ward scenario where these two communities of interest are placed in separate wards to the extent possible. Specifically, this means that the Consultant Team will avoid developing wards that include a part of Listowel as well as a large rural area since the net effect would be, on the one hand, to split the shared interests of the Listowel community into as many as seven small artificial fragments but, on the other hand, to create wards where the rural population could be routinely outnumbered by Listowel residents. In such a scenario neither the urban or the rural community of interest is distinctively represented around the council table thereby reducing the capacity of the ward system itself to provide fair and effective representation for North Perth residents.

¹ Available at www.northperth.ca/CCWBR

² The 2021 distribution of population of the three present wards indicates that approximately 61% resides in Listowel ward, 25% in Elma ward and 14% in Wallace ward.



It is also important to note the use of the term “preliminary” in relation to the options presented here since the Consultant Team recognizes that the size and demographic reality of the modern municipality can be represented in varying configurations depending on the priority attached to the four guiding principles in the design of a plausible system of representation. More importantly, Preliminary Options are intended to contribute to discussion within the community during this phase of the C.C. & W.B. R. about the best format to elect ward councillors in North Perth. In other words, since there is no obvious “right answer,” several alternatives can be suggested that group interests within the municipality in different ways. The perspectives gathered during the consultations will assist in helping Council make its decision about a “redivision” of North Perth, as it is phrased in the *Municipal Act, 2001*, s. 217.

2. Preliminary Option 1 (7 Wards)

Preliminary Option 1 features two wards (proposed Wards 2 and 3) that include areas of the present Listowel ward north of Perth Line 86 up to Perth Line 87 divided at Wallace Avenue North extending from Road 165 to Road 157. Elma St. is used from Mitchell Rd to Nichol Ave. containing Main St. within two wards and two wards (proposed Wards 4 and 5) that include the area of the present Listowel ward south of Perth Line 86 divided at Wallace Avenue South but expanded to include the area between the extension of Road 157 to Road 153 on the east and Road 166 on the west. The proposed Ward 1 maintains the present Wallace ward except for the areas moved to the proposed Wards 2 and 3. The proposed Ward 6 includes the eastern side of the present Elma Ward down to Perth Line 72 where the boundary follows that Line in a westerly direction to the municipal boundary with Huron East. The proposed Ward 7 is anchored by the Atwood settlement area in the south and includes the area west of Road 158 and north of Perth Line 72, where Ward 6 includes the remaining territory of the present Elma Ward as depicted in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Preliminary Option 1

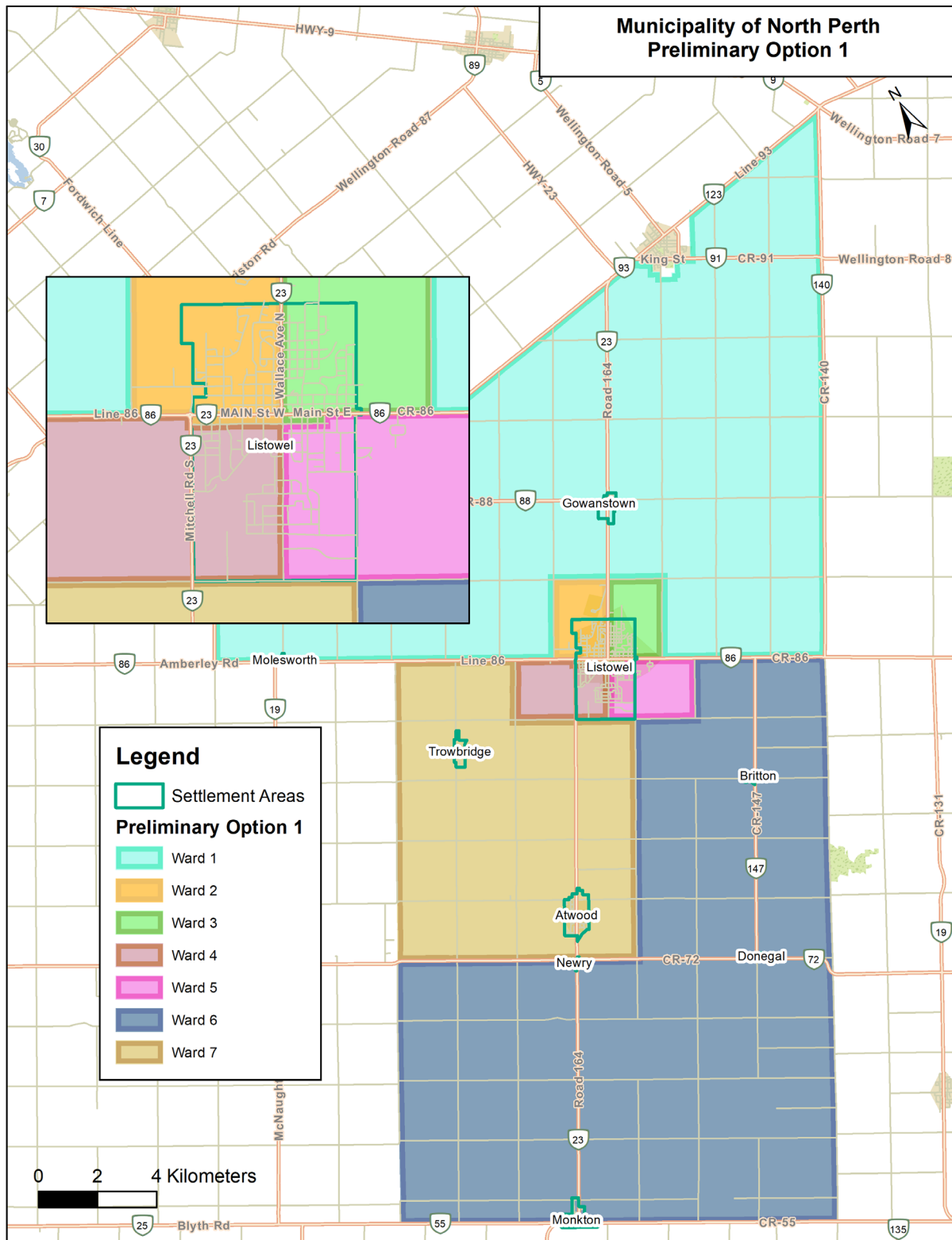




Table 1 indicates that two of the Listowel wards in Preliminary Option 1 (proposed Wards 2 and 4) fall above the acceptable population range in 2023 and proposed Ward 4 is forecast to grow slightly further away from optimal by 2034. The proposed Ward 6 is predominantly rural with no major settlement areas; as a result, the population is at the bottom of population range in 2023 and falls below the range in 2034. All other wards are within the 25% range of variation in 2023 and 2034 (with the proposed Ward 3 at the optimal point).

On balance, Preliminary Option 1 is much closer to population parity than the present ward system.

Table 1: Preliminary Option 1
2023-2034 Population by Ward

Preliminary Option 1									
Ward	Councillors	2023 Population (Including Undercount)	2023 Total Population/ Councillor	2023 Total Population/ Councillor Variance	Optimal Range	2034 Population (Including Undercount)	2034 Total Population/ Councillor	2034 Total Population/ Councillor Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	1	2,160	2,160	0.86	O-	2,170	2,170	0.76	O-
Ward 2	1	3,370	3,370	1.34	OR+	3,320	3,320	1.17	O+
Ward 3	1	2,180	2,180	0.87	O-	2,710	2,710	0.95	O
Ward 4	1	3,200	3,200	1.27	OR+	3,860	3,860	1.36	OR+
Ward 5	1	2,730	2,730	1.09	O+	3,330	3,330	1.17	O+
Ward 6	1	1,880	1,880	0.75	OR-	1,880	1,880	0.66	OR-
Ward 7	1	2,080	2,080	0.83	O-	2,640	2,640	0.93	O-
Total	7	17,610				19,920			
Average		2,516				2,846			

Note: Buildout of existing Listowel urban lands. Non-allocated population of 5,300 by 2034 for the Listowel settlement area. Numbers have been rounded.

The ward boundaries are identifiable and rely on primary and secondary roadways. The proposed Wards 1 and 6 still includes large geographic areas that are primarily rural and the proposed Ward 7 includes both a rural area and the Atwood settlement area. Given the forecast growth in Atwood, this proposed ward is the only one of the seven with a discernable mixed community of interest.

Preliminary Option 1 satisfactorily meets most of the guiding principles being considered in this review.¹

¹ See Topical Discussion Paper G: www.northperth.ca/CCWBR



Table 2: Preliminary Option 1 Evaluation Summary

Guiding Principle	Evaluation		Comment	
Representation by Population (population parity)	Largely successful*		Three of the seven wards are outside the range of variation, but population distribution amongst the rest of the wards is generally acceptable.	
Population Growth Trends and Projections	Largely successful*		Two of the seven wards forecast to fall outside the range of variation by 2034 with one ward at optimal. Other wards generally acceptable	
Representation of Communities of Interest	Largely successful		Listowel divided into four compact geographic neighbourhoods. Rural interests dominate in two wards. One ward mixed urban & rural.	
Geographical and Topographic Features as Boundaries	Yes		All markers used as boundaries of the wards are straightforward.	
Effective Representation	Largely successful		This option retains some familiarity with and aspects of the present design while incorporating changes that address inequities in the present design based on changing settlement patterns and growth. This option largely meets the guiding principles.	
	Yes	Largely successful	Partially successful	No

* The Consultant Team does not assign the designation “Yes” unless all wards fall within the acceptable population range.



3. Preliminary Option 2 (7 Wards)

In Preliminary Option 2, the proposed Ward 1 maintains the present Wallace ward since two wards (proposed Wards 2 and 3) are drawn within the present Listowel ward north of Perth Line 86 (dividing the Main Street core into four wards) and divided at Wallace Avenue North. Two wards (proposed Wards 4 and 5) include the area of the present Listowel ward south of Perth Line 86 divided at Wallace Avenue South but the proposed ward 5 also includes an additional area on the east as far as the of Road 153. The proposed Ward 6 includes the eastern side of the present Elma Ward down to Perth Line 71 where the boundary follows line in a westerly direction to the municipal boundary with Huron East. The proposed Ward 7 is anchored by the Atwood settlement area in the south and includes the area west of Road 158 and north of Perth Line 71 as depicted in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Preliminary Option 2

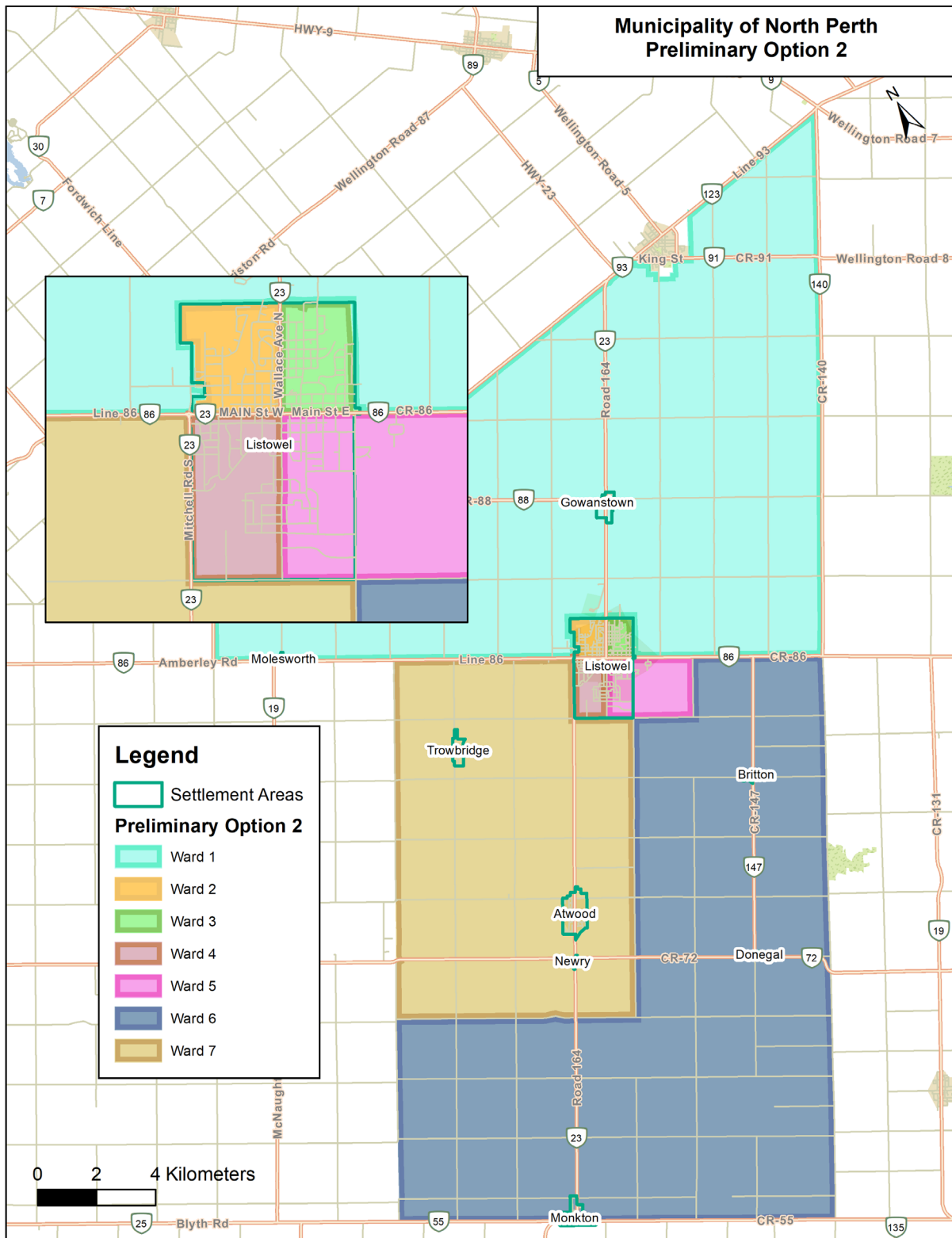




Table 3: Preliminary Option 2
2023-2034 Population by Ward

Preliminary Option 2									
Ward	Councillors	2023 Population (Including Undercount)	2023 Total Population/ Councillor	2023 Total Population/ Councillor Variance	Optimal Range	2034 Population (Including Undercount)	2034 Total Population/ Councillor	2034 Total Population/ Councillor Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	1	2,450	2,450	0.97	O	2,450	2,450	0.86	O-
Ward 2	1	2,890	2,890	1.15	O+	2,840	2,840	1.00	O
Ward 3	1	1,950	1,950	0.78	O-	2,480	2,480	0.87	O-
Ward 4	1	2,850	2,850	1.13	O+	3,340	3,340	1.17	O+
Ward 5	1	2,870	2,870	1.14	O+	3,460	3,460	1.22	O+
Ward 6	1	1,720	1,720	0.68	OR-	1,720	1,720	0.60	OR-
Ward 7	1	2,880	2,880	1.14	O+	3,610	3,610	1.27	OR+
Total	7	17,610				19,920			
Average		2,516				2,846			

Note: Buildout of existing Listowel urban lands. Non-allocated population of 5,300 by 2034 for the Listowel settlement area. Numbers have been rounded.

Table 3 indicates that the four proposed Listowel wards in Preliminary Option 2 (proposed Wards 2 -5) fall within the acceptable population range in 2023, with three almost equal in population with one another. While the population in the four wards diverges by 2034, the proposed Ward 2 is forecast to be at the optimal point by 2034. Because of the shift of the boundary from Perth Line 72 to Perth Line 71, the population of the proposed Ward 6 (predominantly rural with no major settlement areas) falls below the population range in both 2023 and 2034. Conversely, in the proposed Ward 7, the forecast growth in Atwood nudges it slightly above the acceptable population range by 2034. The combination of small population and large area is a reasonable compromise for the elected Councillor to represent.

On balance, Preliminary Option 2 is much closer to population parity than the present ward system.

The ward boundaries are identifiable and rely on primary and secondary roadways. The proposed Wards 1 and 6 still includes large geographic areas that are primarily rural and the proposed Ward 7 includes both a rural area and the Atwood settlement area. Given the forecast growth in Atwood, this proposed ward is the only one of the seven with a discernable mixed community of interest.



Preliminary Option 2 satisfactorily meets most of the guiding principles being considered in this review.¹

Table 4: Preliminary Option 2 Evaluation Summary

Guiding Principle	Evaluation	Comment	
Representation by Population (population parity)	Largely successful*	One of the seven wards is outside the range of variation (2023), but population distribution amongst the rest of the wards is generally acceptable.	
Population Growth Trends and Projections	Largely successful*	Two of the seven wards forecast to fall outside the range of variation by 2034 with one ward at optimal. Other wards are generally acceptable.	
Representation of Communities of Interest	Largely successful	Listowel divided into four compact geographic neighborhoods. Rural interests dominate in two wards. One ward consists of mixed urban & rural. Former Wallace ward remains unchanged.	
Geographical and Topographic Features as Boundaries	Yes	All markers used as boundaries of the wards are straightforward and clear.	
Effective Representation	Largely successful	This option retains some familiarity with and aspects of the present design while incorporating changes that address inequities in the present design based on changing settlement patterns and growth. This option largely meets the guiding principles.	
Yes	Largely successful	Partially successful	No

* The Consultant Team does not assign the designation “Yes” unless all wards fall within the acceptable population range.

¹ See Topical Discussion Paper G: www.northperth.ca/CCWBR



4. Preliminary Option 3 (7-Wards)

In Preliminary Option 3, the proposed Listowel wards are identical to those proposed in Preliminary Option 2 with the exception of a small area south of Main Street moved from the proposed Ward 5 to the proposed Ward 2. Two wards (proposed Wards 2 and 3) are drawn within the present Listowel ward north of Perth Line 86 divided at Wallace Avenue North. Two wards (proposed Wards 4 and 5) include the area of the present Listowel ward south of Perth Line 86 (except as noted above) divided at Wallage Avenue South but the proposed ward 5 also includes an additional area as far as Road 153 on the east.

The proposed Ward 1 is extended south to Line 84 (rather than Line 86 as in the present system, and Preliminary Options 1 and 2) on either side of Listowel. South of Line 84, the proposed Ward 6 crosses the Municipality on an east-west axis between Lines 84 and 78; the boundary then follows Road 158 east of Atwood and Newry south to Line 60 then east to Road 166 and south to the municipal border to include Monkton. The proposed Ward 7 includes Atwood and Newry and includes most of the area west of Road 159 except the area bordering the south of the municipality around Monkton that has been placed in the proposed Ward 6 as depicted in Figure 3.



Figure 3: Preliminary Option 3

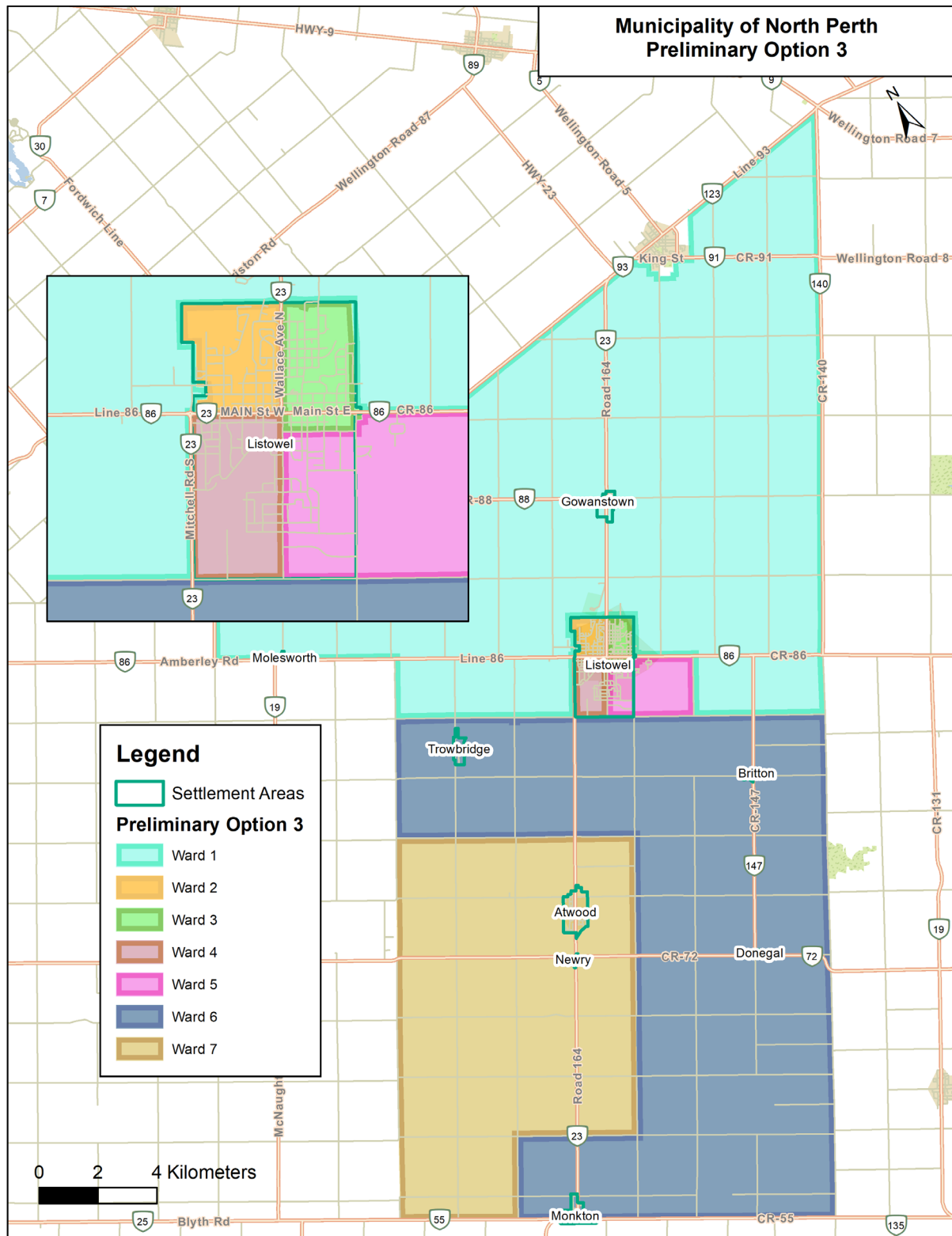




Table 5 indicates that the four proposed Listowel wards in Preliminary Option 3 (proposed Wards 2 -5) fall within the acceptable population range in 2023, with one currently within the optimal range and two at the optimal point by 2034. Of the four Listowel wards, three are almost equal in population with one another. As a result of the shift of the boundary from Line 86 to Line 84, the population of the proposed Ward 1 falls above the population range in 2023 and but within the range by 2034. Despite the boundary adjustments, the proposed Ward 6 remains predominantly rural with no major settlement areas and falls at or below the optimal population range in both 2023 and 2034. The proposed Ward 7 is also a sparsely populated area but the forecast growth in Atwood places it comfortably in the acceptable population range by 2034.

On balance, Preliminary Option 3 is as close to population parity as can be expected in a municipality where growth is occurring in the centre of a largely rural area.

Table 5: Preliminary Option 3
2023-2034 Population by Ward

Preliminary Option 3									
Ward	Councillors	2023 Population (Including Undercount)	2023 Total Population/ Councillor	2023 Total Population/ Councillor Variance	Optimal Range	2034 Population (Including Undercount)	2034 Total Population/ Councillor	2034 Total Population/ Councillor Variance	Optimal Range
Ward 1	1	3,230	3,230	1.28	OR+	3,410	3,410	1.20	O+
Ward 2	1	2,890	2,890	1.15	O+	2,840	2,840	1.00	O
Ward 3	1	2,340	2,340	0.93	O-	2,870	2,870	1.01	O
Ward 4	1	2,850	2,850	1.13	O+	3,340	3,340	1.17	O+
Ward 5	1	2,480	2,480	0.99	O	3,080	3,080	1.08	O+
Ward 6	1	1,920	1,920	0.76	O-	1,920	1,920	0.67	OR-
Ward 7	1	1,890	1,890	0.75	O-	2,450	2,450	0.86	O-
Total	7	17,610				19,920			
Average		2,516				2,846			

Note: Buildout of existing Listowel urban lands. Non-allocated population of 5,300 by 2034 for the Listowel settlement area. Numbers have been rounded.

The ward boundaries are identifiable and rely on primary and secondary roadways. The proposed Wards 1 and 6 still include large geographic areas that are primarily rural where the proposed Ward 7 includes both a rural area and the Atwood settlement area. Given the forecast growth in Atwood, this proposed ward is the only one of the seven with a discernable mixed community of interest.



Preliminary Option 3 satisfactorily meets most of the guiding principles being considered in this review.¹

Table 2: Preliminary Option 1 Evaluation Summary

Guiding Principle	Evaluation	Comment	
Representation by Population (population parity)	Largely successful*	One of the seven wards is outside the range of variation, but one is at optimal (2023). The population distribution amongst the rest of the wards is generally acceptable.	
Population Growth Trends and Projections	Largely successful*	One of the seven wards are forecast to fall outside the range of variation by 2034 with two wards within the optimal range. Other wards are generally acceptable.	
Representation of Communities of Interest	Largely successful	Listowel divided into four compact geographic neighbourhoods. Rural interests dominate in two wards. One ward mixed urban & rural.	
Geographical and Topographic Features as Boundaries	Yes	All markers used as boundaries of the wards are straightforward clear.	
Effective Representation	Largely successful	This option retains some familiarity with and aspects of the present design while incorporating changes that address inequities in the present design based on changing settlement patterns and growth. This option largely meets the guiding principles.	
Yes	Largely successful	Partially successful	No

* The Consultant Team does not assign the designation “Yes” unless all wards fall within the acceptable population range.

¹ See Topical Discussion Paper G: www.northperth.ca/CCWBR



5. Next Steps

The options presented here are preliminary; they reflect the application by the Consultant Team of the core principles for this review to the distribution of population and communities within North Perth.

Designing an electoral system that will deliver effective representation to a diverse and growing community requires some accommodation: for example, designs that put an emphasis on representation by population today may hinder fair representation for residents who will locate in the municipality in the coming decade.

The purpose of this report is to stimulate discussions in North Perth, to encourage residents to “think outside the box” of representation. The options are deliberately called “preliminary” since the next step is to gather the perspectives of residents on this new approach to electing the members of their municipal council.

These options for a new ward configuration will be presented to a live Public Information Centre at:

PIC #1:

When: 7 pm on Wednesday October 11, 2023

Where: Council Chambers, 330 Wallace Avenue North, Listowel

PIC #2:

When: 2 pm on Thursday October 12, 2023

Where: Virtual Meeting (www.northperth.ca/CCWBR)

PIC #2 will be recorded and available until Monday October 31, 2023, at www.northperth.ca/CCWBR. Residents are encouraged to attend or observe one of the two meetings and, most importantly, to complete the survey that will be distributed at the meeting or available online.

The perspectives of residents are an important part for Council in making its decision.