

Municipality Of North Perth Council Composition And Ward Boundary Review FAQs

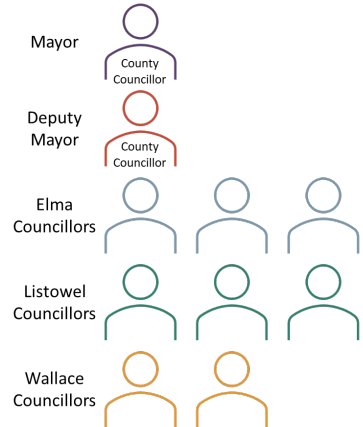
WHAT IS A WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW?

A ward is a geographical division of a municipality for administrative or political purposes.



A Ward Boundary Review (WBR) is a task conducted on behalf of a municipality to assess whether the present wards constitute an effective and equitable system of representation and, if not, to propose alternatives.

The Municipality of North Perth is governed by a ten-member Council, composed of a Mayor, a Deputy Mayor and 8 local Councillors who represent three wards. In addition, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, who are both elected at-large, and one of the local Councillors (elected by Council) represent North Perth on the County of Perth council.



Ward Map:

<https://watsonae.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=9dbfb60e671472ea7198213b7cea8a9>

WHAT DOES COUNCIL COMPOSITION MEAN?

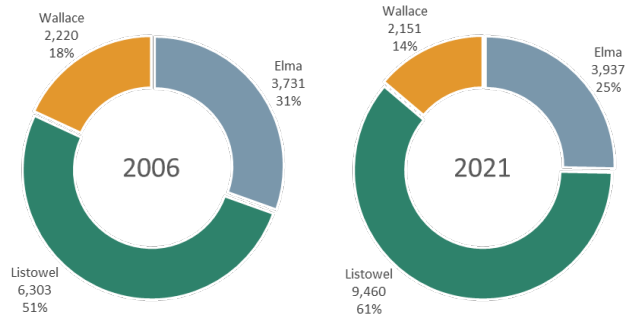
Under Ontario legislation, a municipal council must consist of no fewer than five members, one of whom is the Mayor who must be elected at-large. Councillors may be elected in wards, at-large or some combination of the two systems. There is no prescribed maximum size for a municipal Council and no direction about whether to elect Councillors in wards or at-large.

The Council Composition Review component of this study will assess whether the present number of councillors should be changed and, if so, what number would be appropriate for a municipality like North Perth. The review would also consider the implications of dissolving the ward system to elect local councillors.

WHY IS NORTH PERTH DOING THIS REVIEW?

The ward boundaries in North Perth have not been reviewed since 1998. Since then, the Municipality has changed considerably, and it is time to at least review the wards to see if they still reflect current population trends.

In addition, residential and population growth has not been uniform and over the next decade will continue to be concentrated in specific areas. This means that there is and will continue to be variation in population between wards. The Municipality should aspire to a ward system that represents each of its residents equally.



WHAT DOES A COUNCIL COMPOSITION AND WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW MEAN FOR ME?

North Perth’s Council makes important decisions about the Municipality that impact your daily life. The councillors in the Municipality are elected in separate wards. A successful system should ensure that the Municipality has the right number of councillors and that all areas of the Municipality are represented fairly and accurately so that your voice and needs are reflected in Council decision-making.

The review is being completed to ensure that the electoral system functions in a way that is representative of the entire community.

WHAT WILL BE CONSIDERED IN THIS REVIEW?

The objective is to ensure that residents benefit from an effective and equitable system of representation. This will be achieved by initially evaluating the suitability of the present council composition and the present and proposed wards using these guiding principles:



Effective representation



Representation by population (population parity)



Municipal growth trends (consider population for 3 election cycles)



Representation of Communities of interest (recognize community groupings/avoid fragmenting communities of interest)



Geographical and topographical features as boundaries (easily recognizable, make use of permanent natural features)

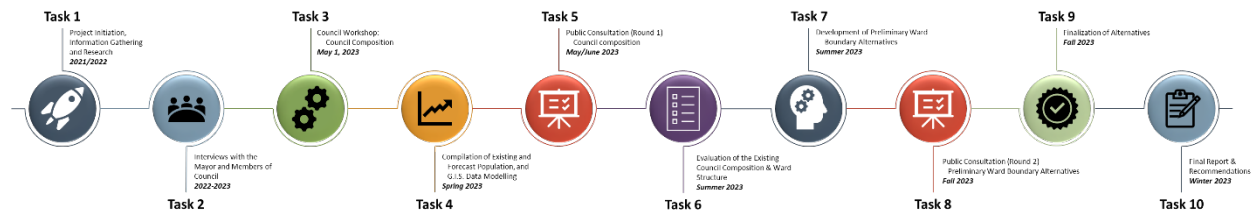
WHO IS CONDUCTING THE WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW?

The Municipality has retained Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. and Dr. Robert Williams to conduct a comprehensive and independent Council Composition and WBR through a process established by Council.

www.northperth.ca/ccwbr

Together the consultant team has conducted close to thirty ward boundary reviews in Ontario. They will use their experience to assess the present electoral arrangements in North Perth and provide recommendations and design alternatives consistent with the guiding principles.

HOW AND WHEN WILL THE WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW BE CONDUCTED?



DISCOVERY

2022

First, the consultants will gather information on the present ward system from interviews with Town staff and elected officials, and compile data on the present and projected population.

DEVELOPMENT

Spring 2023

The consultants will assess council composition and the present ward boundaries and develop alternative designs.

ENGAGEMENT

1st Round May 2023/2nd Round TBD

Public consultation is essential for the review process to be legitimate and effective, by allowing the community to provide input on the current and proposed ward boundary structures. The first phase of public consultation will focus on the evaluation of both the existing council and wards and considerations of council composition. The second phase of public consultation will focus primarily on council composition recommendations and ward boundary reconfiguration options.

- Public consultation sessions (i.e. open houses) will be held both in-person and virtually to advise the public and gain their feedback. Visit the Town's website for information.
- Surveys will be available during the open house sessions, as well as on this website www.northperth.ca/ccwbr

APPROVAL/ADOPTION

Winter 2023/2024

A final report will be submitted to Council, who will:

- determine the size of council,
- determine how members of council are elected (i.e. at large, in wards or at-large); and
- divide, redivide or dissolve existing wards.

RECONSIDERATION (if required)

Municipal electors may also petition Council or appeal ward boundary decisions to the Ontario Land Tribunal (formerly the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal and formerly the Ontario Municipal Board.)

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW?

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