



Ward Boundaries Review

The Nation Municipality

Final Report

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1. Introduction

1.1 Terms of Reference

Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., in association with Dr. Robert J. Williams, hereafter referred to as the Consultant Team, was retained by The Nation Municipality to conduct a comprehensive Ward Boundaries Review (W.B.R.).

1.2 Study Objectives

The primary purpose of the W.B.R. is to prepare Municipal Council to make decisions about whether to maintain the existing ward structure or to adopt an alternative arrangement. The project has a number of key objectives:

- 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 guiding principles adopted for the study;
- Develop and conduct an appropriate consultation process in accordance with The Nation'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 2022, 2026 and 2030 municipal elections; and
- Deliver a report that will set out recommended alternative ward boundaries to ensure effective and equitable electoral arrangements for The Nation, based on the principles identified.

1.3 Project Structure and Timeline

The W.B.R. commenced in September 2019 and this report was to be presented to Council in the spring of 2020. The imposition of measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 will delay the completion of the Review.

Work completed to-date includes:

- Research and data compilation;



- Interviews with Councillors, the Mayor and municipal staff;
- Population and growth forecasting and data modelling to 2030;
- Development of three preliminary ward boundary alternatives;
- Public consultation on the existing ward structure and preliminary alternatives; and
- Development of final options and recommendations, and preparation of a Final Report (this document constitutes the Final Report).

1.4 Public Consultation

The W.B.R. incorporated a public engagement component which included two 2-hour public open houses that were designed to:

- Inform residents of The Nation about the reason for the W.B.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 development of alternative ward boundaries.

Three preliminary ward boundary options were presented to residents of The Nation at two public consultations, one in St-Isidore on February 4, 2020 and one in Limoges on February 5, 2020. The Consultant Team's presentation and other information about the review and the preliminary options is available on the Municipality's website:

<https://nationmun.ca/en/our-council-staff/ward-boundaries/>.

At the consultation meetings, the public was provided with information and context with respect to the evaluation of the existing ward structure and the preliminary ward boundary alternatives through a presentation with simultaneous translation. This was complemented by a series of bilingual display boards and members of the Consultant Team were in attendance to respond to questions from attendees. Attendees were asked to comment on the existing ward structure, guiding principles and preliminary options through a comment sheet available in both English and French, which was also made available at the open houses and through the project web page.



Through the public consultation open houses and the project website's online comment/feedback form, participants were invited to provide their input/opinions with respect to the following:¹

- **Existing Ward Structure** – Strengths and weaknesses of the current ward structure.
- **Guiding Principles** – Which Guiding Principles should be given the highest priority in the development of ward boundaries?
- **Preliminary Ward Options** – What are the preferences with respect to the various Preliminary Ward Options presented?

The W.B.R. public consultation process received a moderate level of public participation. The feedback and comments collected through the public consultation process are reflected in the analysis presented herein and have helped inform the findings and recommendations. While public input from consultation provides valuable insight into the Review, it is not relied on exclusively. The Consultant Team utilized the public input in conjunction with its professional expertise and experience in W.B.R.s along with best practices to develop the recommended options presented herein.

2. Context

2.1 What is a Ward Boundary Review?

The basic requirement for any electoral system in a representative democracy is to establish measures to determine the people who will constitute the governmental body that makes decisions on behalf of electors. Representation in Canada is organized around geographic areas, units referred to as constituencies in the federal and provincial parliaments and typically as wards at the municipal level, as is the case in The Nation.

A W.B.R. is a task designed to develop units of representation based on the distribution of the inhabitants of a municipality who will elect a member of the municipal council. That is the only purpose of a ward. Since municipalities experience demographic shifts as a result of new residential development and changes in the composition of their

¹ 70 submissions (66 online and 4 hard copy) were received using the feedback/comment form.



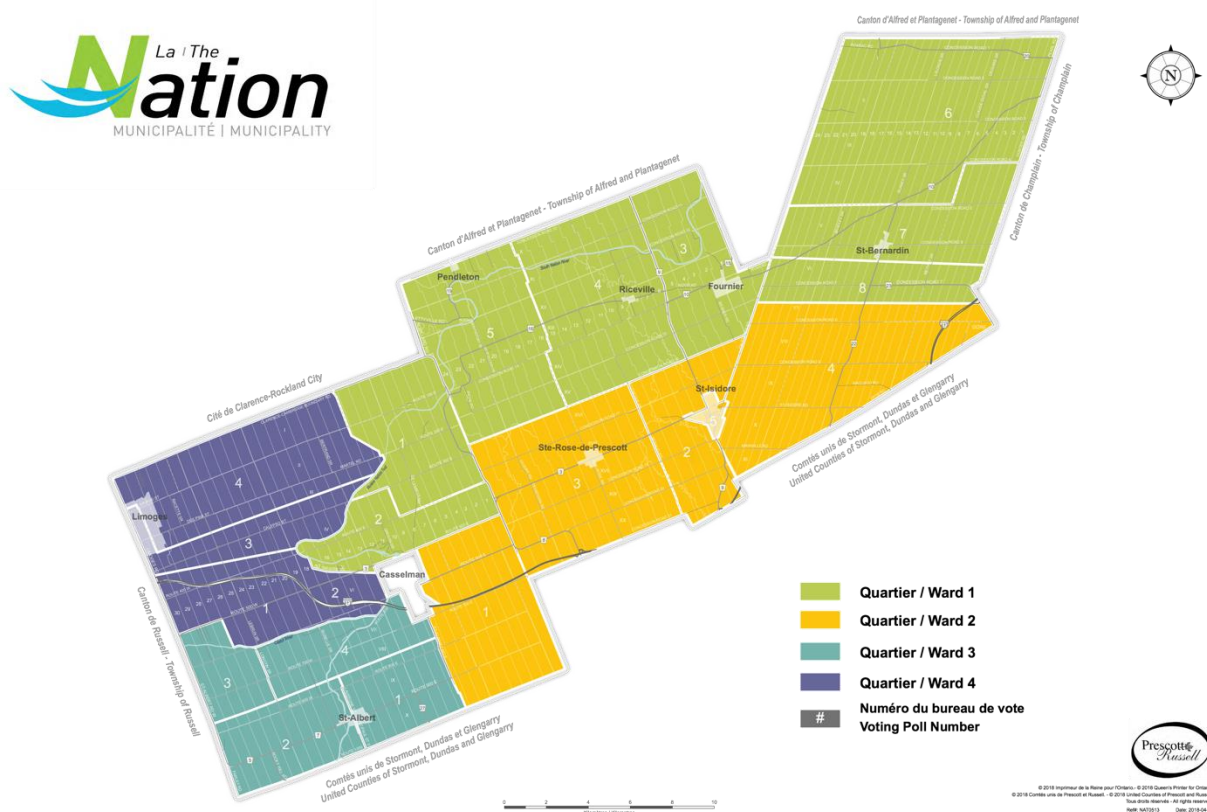
population, electoral arrangements need to be reviewed periodically to ensure that representation remains fair and that electors have an opportunity to elect candidates they feel can truly represent them and their neighbours.

The Nation W.B.R. is premised on the legitimate democratic expectation that municipal representation in The Nation will be effective, equitable and an accurate reflection of the contemporary distribution of communities and people across the Municipality.

2.2 Why A Ward Boundary Review Now?

At present, The Nation’s Municipal Council is comprised of five members, including the Mayor, who is elected at-large and four Councillors elected in four wards. The existing ward structure is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Current Ward Structure in The Nation



The Nation’s four-ward system was established in 1997 when the Municipality was created by the amalgamation of the former geographic Townships of Caledonia,



Cambridge and South Plantagenet and the Village of St-Isidore. The original ward boundaries have remained unchanged.

Since amalgamation, The Nation's population has increased by 28%, from an estimated 10,900 in 1997 to 13,900 in 2020.¹ Population growth within the Municipality has created some inequalities in ward-to-ward populations, which is expected to be increased through future residential development, particularly in the urban settlement areas within the Municipality.

2.3 The Nation's Ward Boundary Review Process

Municipal councils have the legal authority to create, change and even eliminate ward boundaries for the purpose of electing municipal councillors. Provincial legislation, however, does not provide a framework for the review and adjustment of electoral arrangements in Ontario municipalities.

There are only two sections of the *Municipal Act, 2001* (s. 222 and s. 223) that address this question and they are significant because of what is omitted. The basic provision, found in s. 222 (1), simply authorizes a municipality "to divide or redivide the municipality into wards or to dissolve the existing wards." It permits a municipal council to pass a by-law setting out those electoral arrangements but the review of electoral boundaries is not subject to a stipulated schedule, to a standardized process or to established criteria. Furthermore, despite a statement in the *Municipal Act* that the Minister "may prescribe criteria," none actually exist.

Therefore, it is up to each municipal council to determine when a review should occur, to set the terms of reference for its review, including the process to be followed, and to establish criteria or guiding principles to evaluate the municipality's electoral system.

In the absence of standard practices and principles, municipalities look to relevant Ontario Municipal Board² decisions, case law and best practices followed in other municipalities to establish appropriate guiding principles. A "Backgrounder" prepared by

¹ 1997 permanent population is an interpolated estimate derived from 1996 and 2011 Statistics Canada Census population data. 2020 population estimated by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. Population includes Census undercount of approximately 3.7%.

² Now known as the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT).



the Consultant Team (dated November 4, 2019) outlined the study objectives, guiding principles and study process. The Guiding Principles are particularly important since without such provisions in place there is a risk that an electoral review may lead to unfair, ill-conceived or politically motivated results.

The W.B.R. in The Nation applied five Guiding Principles to evaluate the suitability of the present wards and to develop alternative designs. The five Guiding Principles adopted for the study are:

- Representation by Population;
- Population and Electoral Trends;
- Representation of Communities of Interest;
- Geographical and Topographical Features; and
- Effective Representation.

These Guiding Principles embody criteria similar to those adopted in recent W.B.R.s across Ontario and reflect those cited in relevant Ontario Municipal Board/LPAT decisions with respect to appeals of ward boundary by-laws. The Guiding Principles are discussed in further detail in section 3.1.

No ward system design can uniformly meet all the Guiding Principles since some criteria may work at cross-purposes to one another (for example, can wards be composed of plausible groupings of communities while still achieving population parity among the wards?). As well, the priority attached to certain principles makes some designs more desirable in the eyes of different observers. Ultimately, the ward design adopted by Council should be the one that best fulfills as many of the Guiding Principles as possible.

2.4 Public Engagement Feedback – Considerations for this Review

Public input from consultation provided the Consultant Team with valuable information to help inform the development of the evaluation framework utilizing the guiding principles, the existing ward boundary evaluation and development of ward boundary options. Four general observations about the public consultation feedback are necessary to note, as outlined below:



1. Turnout at the two public meetings and responses to the survey were heavily skewed towards residents of Ward 4. The attendance at the meeting in Limoges was significant (approximately 70 people), some of whom also attended the meeting the previous evening in St-Isidore. While overall the survey did not generate a significant number of responses, 63% of the respondents identified themselves as residents of Ward 4 (compared to less than 3% from Ward 3). Close to 60% of responses were completed in English, but this may be in deference to the unilingual Consultant Team. Submissions made in French were translated for use in preparing this report.
2. A great many participants addressed issues outside the scope of the W.B.R., both at the public meetings and in their survey responses. To some, The Nation itself is said by some residents to be an unworkable entity. A response from Ward 1 asserted that “The Amalgamation is a complete failure. It doesn’t work.” The fact that Casselman chose to remain a separate entity was mentioned by some residents as detrimental to the financial viability and community cohesion of the Municipality. Modifying the ward boundaries, it was argued, would not solve these fundamental flaws.

Such perspectives overlapped with those offered by residents who were more interested in revising the external boundaries of the Municipality – in some cases advocating that The Nation should be dissolved and its territory redistributed to other municipalities. A respondent suggested that “Wards 1 and 2 should join Alfred-Plantagenet” but most comments addressed the northwest corner of The Nation. In a phrase, this perspective viewed solving the question of ward representation within The Nation through moving the Limoges settlement area entirely into – or entirely out of – Russell Township, with some bias towards the former: “We should be looking at “amalgamating Limoges into Russell.”

At each meeting, the Consultants made it very clear that a change to the external boundary is not part of its mandate and such modifications can only be implemented by the Province, not by The Nation’s Municipal Council. The topic nevertheless re-appeared in many survey responses but will not figure into recommendations to Council in this report.

3. At each session, the Consultant Team addressed its mandate and emphasized that the purpose of the consultation was to gather perspectives from residents on



the ward system itself. For some, the public meetings and survey instead provided an opportunity to express their views on a range of topics which were not relevant to the W.B.R.. For many respondents, these critiques also overlap with the previous points: “the resources of the Municipality should be concentrated on the areas with the most taxpayers,” and “Ward 4 has most of the population thus most of the tax contribution, but doesn't receive the equal in services in turn.”

While residents are welcome to offer their views on the decisions made by Council and to advocate for their preferences, the W.B.R. consultation process is not a substitute for an all-candidates meeting during an election campaign, for example, and such perspectives will not directly determine the recommendations made in this report.

4. The tone and direction of many of the written responses suggest that some residents seemed to have pre-conceived solutions to the W.B.R. (“There should be 2 councillors for Ward 4”) and were uninterested in the preliminary options prepared for the consultation. Residents were asked in the survey to rank the preliminary options to enable the Consultant Team to assess how well they were perceived to meet the Guiding Principles for wards in The Nation. Many respondents tended instead to use the numbers to indicate the strength of their preference. For example, they left all options blank, and marked “1” or “5” for their most and least preferred. Another common approach was to mark all options “5”, except for their favoured option. The results of the survey are not as helpful as they could have been, although raising questions about the absence of certain alternatives was helpful (“Why were the options only designed for four wards?” “Why was the option of electing all councillors at-large not considered?” “What about electing a fifth councillor at-large?”) and will be addressed later in this report.

The feedback and comments received through the consultation process may reflect serious political grievances, but only some of them are relevant to this Review. It is important to recall that the comments illustrate the opinions of self-selected residents rather than being a definitive survey of the population. Neither the Consultant Team nor Council should rely exclusively on this information.



3. Guiding Principles for The Nation's Ward Boundaries Review

3.1 Overview

As previously mentioned, a key objective of the W.B.R. is to evaluate the suitability of the present wards in terms of the Guiding Principles and to develop alternative designs that are consistent with these principles.

The following five Guiding Principles were adopted for the purposes of the W.B.R. in The Nation to ensure that an effective and equitable system of representation is selected.

Representation by Population

- To the extent possible, every Councillor will generally represent the same number of constituents with some variation acceptable to take account of residential density and the patterns of settlement in the Municipality;
- The acceptable range of population variance will not exceed 25% unless it can be justified as a way to meet one of the other criteria; and
- Non-resident electors will be considered in the determination of population in the wards.

The concept of representation by population (“rep by pop”) has a long history in Canada, usually associated with the idea that elective offices in a particular jurisdiction are distributed in such a way that each one is associated with roughly the same number of people or of electors. In some democracies this principle of voter parity is enforced rigorously – almost to the exclusion of any other factor – so that there is practically no variation in the population of electoral units within a particular jurisdiction.

In the most significant judicial ruling on electoral representation in Canada, 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.¹ The Court concluded that some degree of variation from parity would be acceptable and, at

¹ *Reference re: Provincial Electoral Boundaries (Saskatchewan)* [1991] 2 S.C.R. This is often cited as the *Carter* decision.



times, even necessary to achieve effective representation (a concept that will be discussed below). In other words, representation should at least be equitable (that is, fair) when it cannot be mathematically equal.

In this Review, the closer the population of the individual wards is to parity, the more the entire design can be assessed as equitable. Since, however, there are clear variations in the densities and characteristics of residential settlement across the Municipality, electoral units based strictly on “population parity” may vary significantly in area. This was, in fact, the dilemma addressed in the *Carter* decision. Extrapolating from the Court’s ruling and given the large geographic size of The Nation and its scattered population clusters, it may not be appropriate to simply seek a population balance since wards that are unreasonably large in area are more difficult to represent. The Consultant Team will consider some population variation acceptable and in this Review the range will be understood to be 25% above or below the population of what will be called an “optimal” ward in The Nation. This is a rather generous range of tolerance from parity but is based on long-standing parameters for the federal redistribution process and will be discussed again below.

Population and Electoral Trends

- Wards will be designed so as to maintain equitable representation by population, to the extent possible, over a three-election cycle (2022, 2026 and 2030); and
- Population projections will be based on adopted Municipal-wide residential growth forecasts and other planning data compiled in 2019.

The implementation of changes to ward boundaries in The Nation in 2020 is intended to bring the wards more closely into alignment with population changes over the past decade. This principle, however, seeks wards that do not merely “catch up” with such changes but address the Municipality’s future by giving some weight to projected population growth that is based on validated residential growth forecasts and other planning data.

In other words, it encourages the adoption of wards that are able to absorb increases in population without returning to an unfavourable imbalance over the next three municipal elections. The core evaluation premise will be the concept of an optimal future population for proposed wards.



Representation of Communities of Interest

- Wards will be composed of plausible groupings of communities and established settlements; and
- To the extent possible, wards will have regard for the rural nature of the Municipality.

As discussed in relation to representation by population, 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). One of the customary other considerations is “community of interest.” Since the rationale is that electoral districts should, as far as possible, be cohesive units and areas with common interests related to representation, wards will be composed of plausible groupings of communities and established settlements.

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 make their home. More importantly, the responsibilities of the municipality are also closely associated with where people live; roads and their maintenance, the utilities that are connected to or associated with their dwelling, and the myriad of social, cultural, environmental and recreational services are often based on residential communities. Even municipal taxation is inextricably linked to one’s dwelling. Identifying such communities of interest comes from a recognition that geographic location brings shared perspectives that should be reflected in the 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 assemble 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.



In The Nation, there is a nuance on this principle that the Consultant Team is directed, to the extent possible, to have regard for the rural nature of the Municipality. The challenge is to give proper consideration to the rural community of interest in the design of a ward system, especially in light of the growth of the urban population within Limoges and St-Albert. Without doubt, the geographic characteristics of the Municipality and its core economic activities confirm the importance of this component of the principle.

Geographical and Topographical Features

- The boundaries used to delineate wards should be straightforward and easily recognizable and, to the extent possible, reflect customary patterns of communication among communities and settlements within the Municipality; and
- Wards will be contiguous in shape and as compact as possible.

This principle directs that, where feasible, ward boundaries should make use of permanent features of the Municipality rather than create new, perhaps artificial, lines that may not be easily identified or widely understood by residents. In this context, the “natural” lines may include both environmental features and infrastructure (usually transportation or other corridors) that influence the way people move around the Municipality.

Not all such physical features will be used, since some wards will have to be composed of identifiable communities that border on one another despite sometimes being separated by such a “marker.”

Effective Representation

- The previous four principles are all subject to the overarching principle of “effective representation” as enunciated by the Supreme Court of Canada in the *Carter* case (that is, *Reference re Prov. Electoral Boundaries (Sask.)*, [1991]); and
- This principle is intended to ensure that residents have comparable access to their elected representative and each Councillor will speak in governmental deliberations on behalf of approximately the same number of residents.



This principle is drawn from an interpretation of the “right to vote” as articulated by the Supreme Court of Canada in the *Carter* decision of 1991 where the Court concluded that the “right to vote” is understood to be “the idea of having a voice in the deliberations of government as well as the idea of the right to bring one's grievances and concerns to the attention of one's government representative.” For The Nation residents to have “a voice” that can be heard, wards across the Municipality must not only provide equitable access to elected officials but each Councillor must be seen to be “speaking for” roughly the same number of residents when it comes to Council decision-making.

Moreover, since this is an “overriding” principle, it will serve as a kind of summary evaluation of wards (and the ward system itself) built around the other four principles. For example, are the proposed individual wards plausible and coherent units of representation? How well do they provide equitable access to Councillors for all residents of the Municipality? Are the proposed wards of a size, scale and shape that a representative can serve her or his constituents successfully? In summary, do the wards constitute a system that can be judged to deliver effective representation even if some of the specific principles are only partially successful?

3.2 Relative Weighting of Guiding Principles

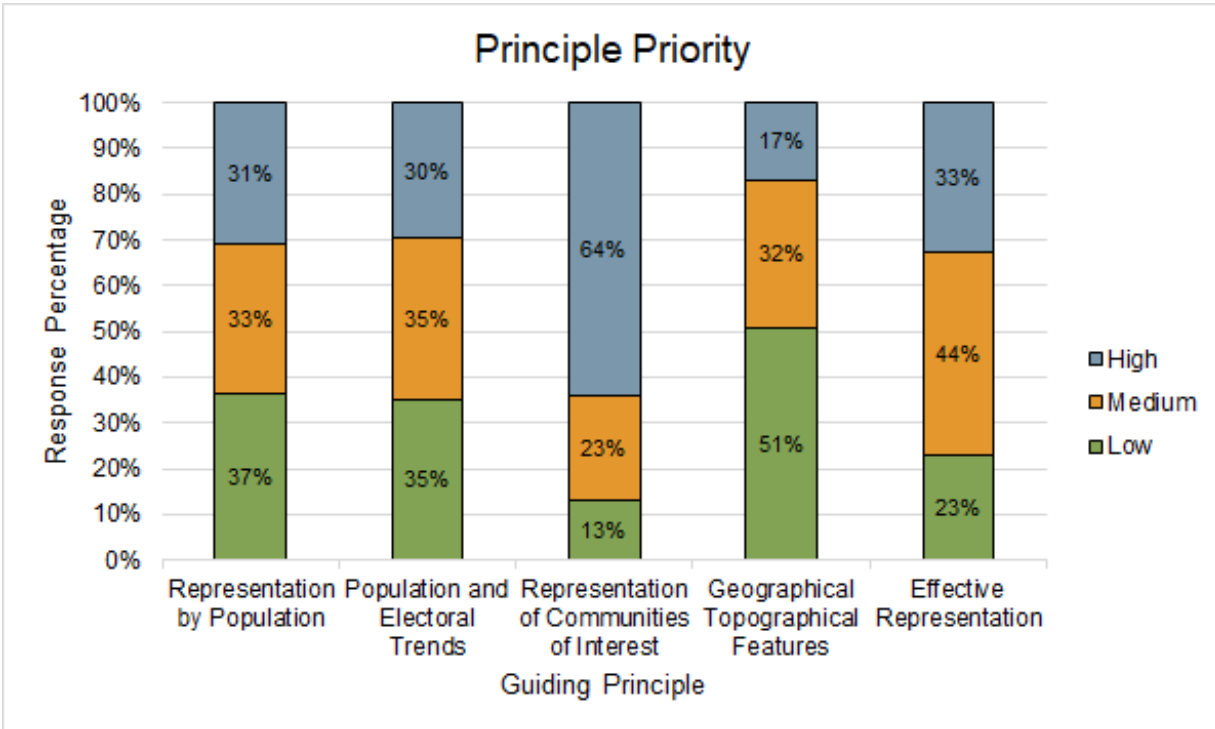
No ward system design can uniformly meet all the Guiding Principles since some criteria may work at cross-purposes to one another. As well, the priority attached to certain principles makes some designs more desirable in the eyes of different observers.

The public consultation was designed to better understand the priorities attached to the five principles among The Nation’s residents. As part of the consultation process, residents were asked which principles should be given the highest priority in the design of the wards.

While it is important to consider all the Guiding Principles in the evaluation process, feedback received from the public consultation suggests that the Representation of Communities of Interest principle was most often rated as a high priority and least often as a low priority, as illustrated in Figure 2. Effective Representation, Representation by Population and Population and Electoral Trends were ranked as a high priority by roughly the same proportion of respondents with nearly one-third of respondents judging the two population principles as a low priority.



Figure 2: Prioritization of Guiding Principles based on Public Consultation Responses



Ultimately, the ward design adopted by The Nation Council should be the one that best fulfills as many of the five Guiding Principles as possible, but it should have regard for the input received from the public through the consultation process.

4. The Nation Population and Growth Trends

As previously discussed, 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. In order to evaluate the existing ward structure and subsequent alternatives in terms of representation by population in the existing year (2020), a detailed population estimate for the Municipality and its respective wards and communities was prepared.

The Nation is forecast to experience moderate population growth and population shifts over the next decade. For this reason, it is important that this study assess the representation by population for both existing and future year populations. In accordance with the study terms of reference, the analysis considered representation of population over the next three municipal elections through 2030. As such, a population



and housing forecast for the Municipality and its communities for the 2020 to 2030 period was generated. The results of this analysis are discussed below.

4.1 Existing Population and Structure

The Nation's 2020 population is estimated to total 13,900.¹ The Municipality's 2020 total population by settlement area as well as rural population is presented in Figure 3. As shown, 24% (population of 3,280) is located in Limoges followed by 7% (1,030) in St-Isidore, 5% (710) in St-Albert, 2% (220) in St-Bernardin, 1% (200) in Fournier, 1% (140) in Ste-Rose-de-Prescott, 1% (90) in Riceville and 1% (80) in Pendleton. The balance, 59% (population of 8,160), is located within the Municipality's rural area.

Figure 3: The Nation Population by Community

Community	2020 Population ¹	% Share
Limoges	3,280	24%
St-Isidore	1,030	7%
St-Albert	710	5%
St-Bernardin	220	2%
Fournier	200	1%
Ste-Rose-de-Prescott	140	1%
Riceville	90	1%
Pendleton	80	1%
Rural	8,160	59%
The Nation Municipality	13,900	100%

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

¹ Includes Census undercount of approximated 3.7%.

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

4.2 Forecast Population Growth, 2020 to 2030

Forecast Municipal-wide population growth over the 2020 to 2030 period was guided by the United Counties of Prescott and Russell Growth Forecast and Land Needs

¹ Reflects an early-2020 population estimate which includes a Census undercount of approximately 3.7%.



Analysis,¹ updated to reflect the 2016 Statistics Canada Census and recent development trends. Community level growth allocations were guided by a comprehensive review of opportunities to accommodate future residential growth through plans of subdivision (registered unbuilt, draft approved and proposed) and discussions with Municipal planning staff.

The Nation is expected to experience moderate population growth and shifts over the next decade. By 2030, the Nation’s population is expected to reach approximately 15,130, an increase of 9% (approximately 1,220 people).² Approximately three-quarters of the population growth, totalling approximately 940, is expected in Limoges as illustrated in Figure 4. St-Albert is also expected to experience moderate population growth over the period, with an increase of approximately 120 people over the period. The highest population growth is anticipated in new urban greenfield areas within existing Ward 4.

Figure 4: The Nation’s 2020 to 2030 Population Growth by Community

Community	2020 Population ¹	2030 Population ¹	Population Growth, 2020-2030
Limoges	3,280	4,220	940
St-Isidore	1,030	1,040	10
St-Albert	710	830	120
St-Bernardin	220	210	-10
Fournier	200	200	0
Ste-Rose-de-Prescott	140	150	10
Riceville	90	90	0
Pendleton	80	80	0
Rural	8,160	8,310	150
The Nation Municipality	13,900	15,130	1,220

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

¹ Includes Census undercount of approximately 3.7%.

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

¹ United Counties of Prescott and Russell Growth Forecast and Land Needs Analysis prepared by Hemson Consulting Ltd. updated December 2015.

² Reflects Census undercount of approximately 3.7%.



5. Assessment of The Nation's Existing Ward Structure

A preliminary evaluation of the existing ward structure in The Nation is found in the Consultant Team's presentation and related materials. That discussion applied the five Guiding Principles to the individual wards and the overall design and is summarized in Figure 8 below.

Representation by Population

The goal of this Review is to design a system of representation that achieves relative parity in the population of the wards, with some degree of variation acceptable in light of 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. Based on the Municipality's overall 2020 population (13,900) and a four-ward system, the optimal population size for a ward will be 3,475.

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. 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.

As illustrated in Figure 5, the current population data suggests that one ward (Ward 4) is beyond the upper range of acceptable variation, while two others (Ward 2 and 3) are below the bottom of the acceptable range. Only one of the wards (Ward 1) is within the acceptable range of "parity." These figures confirm that the existing wards fall short of meeting the "representation by population" principle.



Figure 5: The Nation's Population by Existing Ward, 2020

	2020 Population	Variance	
Ward 1	3,070	0.88	O-
Ward 2	2,570	0.74	OR-
Ward 3	2,370	0.68	OR-
Ward 4	5,890	1.69	OR+
Ward Average	3,475	1.00	

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

Population and Electoral Trends

This principle calls for wards that are generally in equilibrium to one another as population change takes place over the next decade. Based on the Municipality's forecast population for 2030 (15,130) and a four-ward system, the optimal population size for 2030 would be 3,785. As shown in Figure 6, the population in the present wards in 2020 will become more imbalanced over the period. Forecast population growth is concentrated primarily in Limoges with the result that the present Ward 4 population will become increasingly imbalanced with the other three wards.

Figure 6: The Nation Population by Existing Ward, 2030

	2030 Population	Variance	
Ward 1	3,110	0.82	O-
Ward 2	2,640	0.70	OR-
Ward 3	2,520	0.67	OR-
Ward 4	6,860	1.81	OR+
Ward Average	3,785	1.00	

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

Representation of Communities of Interest

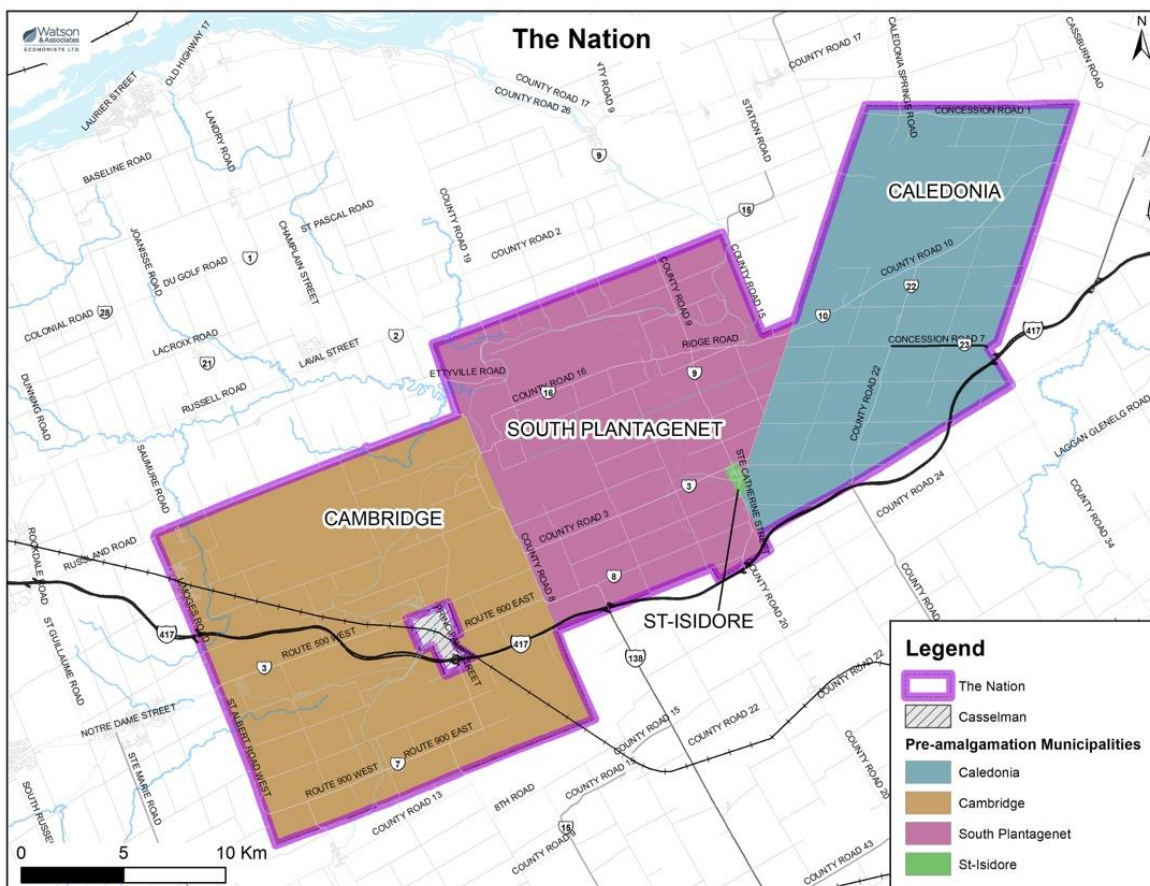
There are many long-established population clusters in The Nation; the largest are Limoges, St-Isidore and St-Albert. There are also smaller settlements scattered through the central and eastern part of the Municipality (St-Bernardin, Fournier, Ste-Rose-de-Prescott, Riceville and Pendleton, for example). There is a significant agricultural production zone, however, that occupies most of the Municipality's territory, plus smaller



uninhabited areas, most notably the Larose Forest and Alfred Bog. The 2020 rural population is estimated at around 7,900 – just under 60% of the total population of The Nation.

The present wards were apparently deliberately designed to avoid using the boundaries of the pre-amalgamation Townships of Cambridge, South Plantagenet and Caledonia (see Figure 7). While a design of this kind helps to overcome the tendency observed in many amalgamated Ontario municipalities to cling to these earlier “identities” long after a new municipality is created, in The Nation the present wards have largely obscured those historical components. Wards 1 and 2 actually include portions of all three of the pre-amalgamation Townships, with Ward 2 including all four of the pre-amalgamation municipalities since it encompasses the former Village of St-Isidore as well. The former Cambridge Township was divided into four parts with each quarter allocated to a different ward and with all four wards bordering the Village of Casselman.

Figure 7: Pre-Amalgamation Municipalities in The Nation





It is difficult to describe either Ward 1 or Ward 2 as constituting a plausible community of interest since neither is compact nor a coherent collection of localities. Ward 1 includes the northern part of The Nation from the Larose Forest in the west through Riceville, Fournier and St-Bernardin to the eastern municipal border with the Township of Champlain (approximately 45 km) primarily along County Road 16. If St-Bernardin can be considered the main centre of Ward 1, it lies about 30 km from the western boundary of the ward. Ward 2 includes a corresponding extensive southern agricultural zone along the boundary with the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry from the Township of Champlain to Casselman (approximately 30 km) but including settlements at St-Isidore and Ste-Rose-de-Prescott with the main population cluster (St-Isidore) more than 25 km from the extreme western boundary of the ward.

On the other hand, two of the present wards (both within the boundaries of the former Cambridge Township) are relatively compact and are each centred on a single settlement area (St-Albert in Ward 3 and Limoges in Ward 4).

On the whole, it appears that the present wards were not designed to capture communities of interest in The Nation and they cannot be judged as successfully meeting this principle.

Geographical and Topographical Features

Ward boundaries in The Nation are a mix of roadways and rivers; in three wards there is a mix of both kinds of markers. Ward 1 is defined by a clean but irregular set of lines that follow secondary roads (especially Concession Road 16 and Route 500 East) on its northern side but a portion of a more significant highway (St-Albert Road) where it borders Ward 3. Ward 4 is largely demarcated by the South Nation and Castor Rivers but the boundary is altered to a more notional line in the west where it follows a lot line up to Route 500 West (thereby including Forest Park in Ward 3) and in the north where it cuts through the Larose Forest to the border with Clarence-Rockland.

In reality there are not many significant features within The Nation that can serve as boundaries east of Casselman and on the west the rivers are not used consistently as boundaries. Wards in The Nation cannot be judged as successfully meeting this principle.



Effective Representation

The concept of representation rests on the relationship between those who live in an electoral district and the official elected to give a voice to those people; it anticipates accessibility in both directions. The application of the “effective representation” principle is not an evaluation of the capacity of incumbent councillors to serve the wards; rather, it is an indicator of the extent to which there are inherent constraints in a given ward or wards that hinder the capacity for electors and representatives to stay “connected.”

The capacity for effective representation in a ward is influenced both by the actual number of potential “voices” that may wish to be heard and by opportunities for face-to-face interaction. While the actual population in each ward in The Nation will be relatively small by comparison with other municipalities in eastern Ontario, it is important that the population is distributed equitably as a foundation for effective representation.

It is not equitable to ask one elected official to represent a large population dispersed across a large geographic area, and another to serve a smaller population living in a comparatively compressed area. In the present configuration in The Nation, the ward with the largest population today (Ward 4) is the smallest in area and the two largest wards by area include smaller populations. The exception is Ward 3 that is both the smallest in area and population.

There are also potential hindrances to “effective representation” in The Nation; for example, internal means of communication are challenging in two wards since they are not coherent units of representation and the population of the wards is unbalanced. The present wards are only partially successful in meeting the effective representation principle.

The cumulative test for “effective representation” is conventionally more subjective than the evaluations applied to the other principles.

One of the implications of the population imbalances identified above is that the voice of some residents is diluted in comparison to others; that is, the 2,570 and 2,370 residents of the present Wards 2 and 3, respectively, are entitled to one representative, but so are the 5,890 residents of the present Ward 4. By 2030, the population of the present Ward 4 (6,860) compared to the present Wards 2 and 3 (2,640 and 2,520, respectively) would significantly dilute the representation of residents of the former. These variations pose a challenge in delivering fair representation.



Overall Evaluation

One of the questions posed on the public feedback survey asked residents to rank the Preliminary Options but included the option of keeping the current ward structure (that is, to make no change). For many of the residents who completed the survey, keeping the current wards was preferred over adopting one of the preliminary alternatives (this choice ranked first on about 60% of the surveys).

What is notable are the reasons provided for retaining the current wards since they echo the critiques noted above in relation to public participation. First, there were few comments that endorsed the entire ward system itself and no respondent offered explicit support for the present configuration for Wards 1, 2 and 3.

The endorsement of the current system presented in survey responses clustered around three themes:

- familiarity: we are comfortable with these wards (“the boundaries have been set and there are no problems with the current boundaries”);
- leave the boundaries but add a second councillor to the present Ward 4 (“There shouldn't be ANY changes to the Wards boundaries and if anything, a councillor should be added to further represent Limoges”) or divide it in two (“Take the current ward and split it if need be but keep the boundaries as is”);
- leave the present Ward 4 for now because the proposed options are not acceptable or because alternatives to the four-ward system have not been considered (“Status quo may be the better option until other options, like adding a ward, are investigated and put against the 3 options presented.” “No change. No splitting resident[s] of Limoges.”)

These assessments do not constitute a principled endorsement of the status quo.

Residents who commented on the weaknesses of the present wards were largely viewing them through the perspective of what is widely perceived as the “severely deficient representation at council for my ward” [that is, Ward 4]. Two themes are evident:

- the heavy population concentration around Limoges: “Due to its urban nature, residents in Ward 4 are close to being only 50% represented at council in



comparison to the next most populated ward (according to the numbers provided)”; and

- the fundamental demographic differences between Ward 4 and the other three wards: “Ward 1 is too wide and the population is too spaced out (hard to get people to get together).” “No 1, big ward; low population; No 2, big ward; low population; No 3, big ward; low population; No 4, development ward, non-agricultural, residential.”

The former weakness is, in fact, the primary reason for conducting the W.B.R. while the latter is an inherent feature of the distribution of settlement across the Municipality now and in the foreseeable future that should be addressed by redrawing the ward boundaries.

As noted above, our own analysis suggests that the existing ward boundary configuration in The Nation does not meet the expectations for three of the five Guiding Principles.

Figure 8: Existing Ward Configuration Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Current Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	No	Two wards are at or below the acceptable range of variation and another is well above the optimal size.
Population and Electoral Trends	No	Two wards are below the acceptable range of variation and another is well above the optimal size.
Representation of Communities of Interest	No	Two wards (1 & 2) not plausible collections of localities.
Geographical and Topographical Features	Partially successful	Boundary lines use natural features inconsistently (Wards 3-4) or do not take into account major transportation corridors (Highway 417).



Principle	Does the Current Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Effective Representation	Partially successful	Acceptable area and population balance in three wards but not the fourth (Ward 3 – smallest area, smallest population).

Meets Requirements of Guiding Principle?

Yes	Largely successful	Partially successful	No
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← Higher Rating

Lower Rating →

In our professional assessment, it would be improbable that a review aiming to meet the principles set out for this W.B.R. would recommend a structure that follows the existing ward boundaries. All told, the public consultation and this analysis point to few justifications for retaining the present configuration and favour the conclusion that Council should not endorse the current ward configuration.

6. Options

In November 2019, Council approved three recommendations from the Consultant Team related to an electoral system for The Nation:

1. That Council affirm (under its authority in the *Municipal Act, 2001* s. 217 (1) 4) that Councillors in The Nation will be elected by wards and that each ward will elect one Councillor.
2. That Council (under its authority in the *Municipal Act, 2001* s. 222 (1)) directs the Consultant Team that any alternatives it presents to redivide the Municipality will include options to elect a five-member Council.
3. That alternative ward systems presented to Council will be based on the five Guiding Principles articulated in this report.

Each of these recommendations relates to a key characteristic of the method used to elect members of the Municipal Council in The Nation. Over the course of the study,



the recommendations were considered in the development of several possible electoral structure alternatives for The Nation and helped frame the Preliminary Options that were presented at the public consultation meetings and the Final Options presented herein. These alternatives and the reasons underpinning them are discussed below.

6.1 Councillors will be Elected in One-Member Wards

There is no standard model of representation in Ontario municipalities. The *Municipal Act, 2001*, at s. 222 (1) authorizes a municipality “to divide or redivide the municipality into wards or to dissolve the existing wards” through a by-law and at s. 217 (1) (4) provides that “other than the head of council, members shall be elected by general vote or wards or by any combination of general vote and wards.” Beyond those entries, though, there are no conditions or constraints imposed by the Province to help formulate a local decision to adopt one system or another.

In a “general vote” system, all Councillors (as well as the Mayor) would be elected by all electors of the municipality. For some people, this would eliminate the challenge of having to divide the municipality into wards at all, let alone having to “redive” the municipality from time to time. For others the expectation is that each of those elected would be serving the interests of “both urban and rural communities” rather than the segment of the municipality located in each ward. That is, wards are viewed as “divisive” and adversarial. Neither of these are plausible reasons to “dissolve” wards in The Nation.

A general vote system for electing Councillors could be compatible with a municipality laid out in a spatial pattern where a population and commercial node is surrounded by less densely populated areas directly connected to the centre by a grid of rural roads, as may be more typical of rural Ontario. Many amalgamated municipalities like The Nation that include large rural areas, however, do not conform to that simple pattern.

The Nation has two small population centres (St-Isidore and St-Albert) at some distance from one another, a separate rapidly growing “suburban” settlement area (Limoges) near the municipal border with the Township of Russell (essentially part of the greater Ottawa residential market) plus a significant rural population. Despite the presence of several residential clusters across the Municipality, there is actually no “centre”; the Municipality is arguably less coherent politically than many municipalities, with no



obvious focal point that effectively connects the main population centres to one another. This is not a configuration that lends itself to a general vote system.

The diversity and complexity of The Nation were confirmed repeatedly in submissions by residents to the survey and are facts that cannot be disputed. An electoral system that fails to address that reality is unlikely to provide effective representation to most residents of The Nation. It is the considered conclusion of the Consultant Team that a ward system continues to be the appropriate electoral model for The Nation and Council has consciously endorsed the continuation of a ward-based electoral system.

The first recommendation approved by Council on November 25, 2019 under its authority in the *Municipal Act, 2001* s. 217 (1) (4) not only affirms that Councillors in The Nation will continue to be elected by wards but also that each ward will elect one Councillor. It was reported earlier (in the evaluation of the present wards, for example) that for many people a desirable modification to the existing system would be to simply add a second councillor to Ward 4 “and don’t change anything else.” In other words, they urged Council to adopt a mixed-ward system in which one ward elected two Councillors and three wards elected one Councillor each.

The Consultant Team acknowledges the wish of many residents for a two-member ward based in Ward 4 to reflect the population concentration without dividing the urban community of interest in Limoges but concluded that an asymmetrical system of this kind would not in principle be appropriate. A central tenet of electoral democracy in Canada is “one person, one vote.” A system in which some electors are routinely entitled to two votes while others in the same Municipality have only one vote in the determination of the Municipal Council is far from a “fair and equitable” system of representation that could be defended successfully before the LPAT if appealed. The first recommendation approved by Council affirms that representation will be symmetrical: one ward, one Councillor.

6.2 Options to Elect a Five-member Council

The second recommendation approved by Council on November 25, 2019 directed the Consultant Team that any alternatives it presents to redivide the Municipality will include options to elect a five-member Council. To be clear, the term “five-member Council” is based on a Municipal Council consisting of a Mayor and four Councillors; this arrangement is considered to be “the composition of council” in the *Municipal Act, 2001*



s. 217 (1) where the term is used to describe the total number of elected officials. The Act authorizes a local municipality “to change the composition of its council” subject to five enumerated rules, the most relevant of which is: “There shall be a minimum of five members, one of whom shall be the head of council.” The Nation’s Municipal Council has been at that minimum size since amalgamation and is not out of line with the arrangements made in many other smaller Ontario municipalities, even within the United Counties of Prescott and Russell.

Figure 9: Council Composition: United Counties of Prescott and Russell

Municipality	Population (2016 Census)	Council Size: Mayor AND
Alfred and Plantagenet	9,680	6 Councillors
Casselman	3,548	4 Councillors
Champlain	8,706	8 Councillors
Clarence/Rockland	24,512	8 Councillors
Hawkesbury	10,263	6 Councillors
East Hawkesbury	3,296	4 Councillors
The Nation	12,808	4 Councillors
Russell	16,520	4 Councillors

The three Preliminary Options presented to residents in February 2020 were all four-ward designs. As noted in the Backgrounder, it is not part of the mandate of the Consultant Team “to determine whether the composition of council is appropriate to govern the municipal corporation effectively.” In other words, the W.B.R. is not addressing the appropriate composition of council to carry out the essential governmental functions of a Municipal Council, such as overseeing service delivery or providing scrutiny of the Municipal staff.

Rather, the priority of the W.B.R. is to ensure that the community can be satisfactorily represented through its ward configuration and the Preliminary Options were developed with the goal of redesigning the existing structure of four wards in keeping with the recommendation approved by Council on November 25, 2019. The Consultant Team believed that it could provide equitable representation to residents of The Nation through four-ward options and did not develop options with more wards (and more Councillors) for consideration at the February public consultation sessions.



The Backgrounder, however, held out the possibility that the Consultant Team could consider a system to elect more than four Councillors as a means to provide “more effective and equitable representation across the Municipality.” As will be discussed below, further technical analysis of the three Preliminary Options and opinions expressed in the public consultation process has prompted the development of an option that would lead to a change in the composition of The Nation’s Council by increasing the number of wards from four to six.

Several respondents to the survey endorsed an increase in the number of Councillors to five through the addition of a “councillor-at-large.” The Consultant Team considered the implications of such a change and set it aside in favour of altering the ward system. For one thing, this format could discourage many potential candidates since it would require more resources to campaign across the entire Municipality than in a single ward. More importantly, it is not clear what the role of a separately elected councillor-at-large would be since such an innovation would create two “classes” of Councillor with no distinctive governmental function for a councillor-at-large to fulfill. Finally, a general vote for a Council seat would give an advantage to candidates who appeal to voters in larger population centres. It is the view of the Consultant Team that it is preferable to address representation for larger population centres through a redivision of the wards rather than over-riding the distribution of Councillors through an at-large seat.

6.3 Just Maintain the Existing Ward Structure

Provincial legislation does not require municipalities to review, let alone adjust, their electoral arrangements on a pre-determined schedule. Furthermore, there are no conditions established by the Province that would oblige Council to modify ward boundaries. Through the public consultation process, several residents offered the opinion that this entire W.B.R. is unnecessary or premature in nature. One course of action open to Council, then, would be to choose to leave the present boundaries in place indefinitely.

As presented in Chapter 5, this Review has concluded that the existing ward boundaries used to elect members of the Council in The Nation fall well short of meeting the principles that were adopted for this Review (as reflected in the third recommendation approved by Council on November 25, 2019). As previously noted, it is the Consultant Team’s independent professional assessment that it would be inadvisable to leave in



place a system that has demonstrable shortcomings. Such a decision could even be open to a petition from residents (s. 223 of the *Municipal Act*) that might eventually require a defence of the present ward system before the LPAT that could not be provided to the Municipality by the Consultant Team.

6.4 Preliminary Options

The following presents preliminary ward boundary alternatives in The Nation that are derived from the guiding principles and other insight derived from the Consultant Team's experiences in developing ward boundary systems in other Ontario municipalities. Public feedback on these Options was solicited through the public consultation process. The Preliminary Options are discussed below.

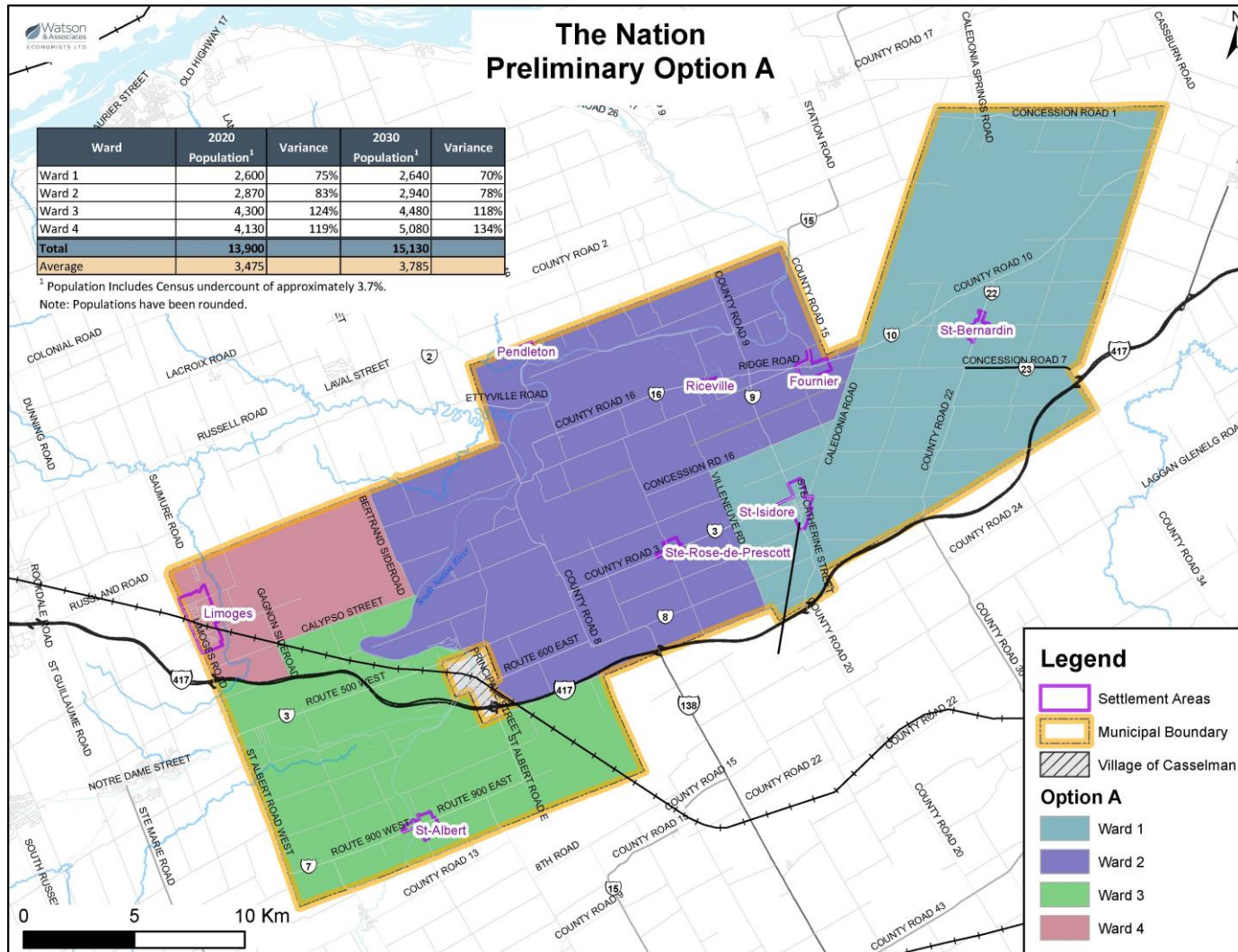
6.4.1 Preliminary Option A

Preliminary Option A is presented in Figure 10. Key features include the following:

- Ward 1 captures the eastern-most part of the Municipality, including the former Caledonia Township and the settlement area of St-Isidore, extending west to Caledonia Road, Concession Road 16 and Villeneuve Road.
- Ward 2 encompasses the central part of the Municipality from Caledonia Road, Concession Road 16 and Villeneuve Road in the east to Bertrand Side Road, South Nation River and the Village of Casselman in the west and Highway 417 to the south.
- Ward 3 represents the southwest portion of the Municipality including the settlement area of St-Albert and is bound to the north by Highway 417, Gagnon Sideroad, Calypso Sideroad, South Nation River, the Village of Casselman and Highway 417.
- Ward 4 represents the northwest part of the Municipality, including the settlement area of Limoges and bound to the east and south by Bertrand Sideroad, Calypso Street, Gagnon Sideroad and Highway 417.



Figure 10: Preliminary Option A





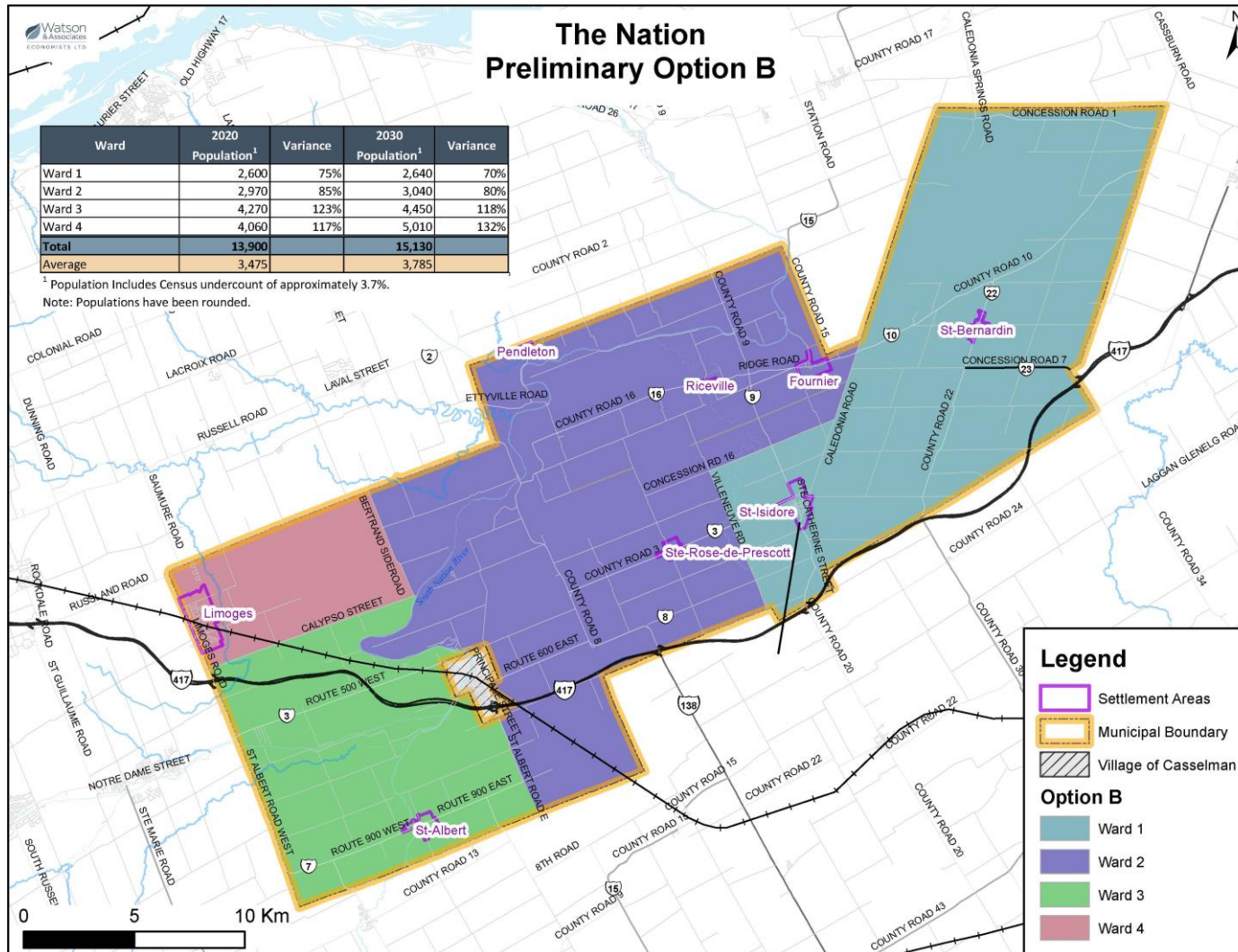
6.4.2 Preliminary Option B

Preliminary Option B is presented in Figure 11. Key features include the following:

- Same as in Preliminary Option A, Ward 1 captures the eastern-most part of the Municipality, including the former Caledonia Township and the settlement area of St-Isidore, extending west to Caledonia Road, Concession Road 16 and Villeneuve Road.
- Ward 2 encompasses the central part of the Municipality from Caledonia Road, Concession Road 16 and Villeneuve Road in the east to Bertrand Side Road, South Nation River, the Village of Casselman and St-Albert Road. Unlike Preliminary Option A, Ward 2 extends south of Highway 417.
- Ward 3 represents the southwest portion of the Municipality including the settlement area of St-Albert and is bound to the north by Calypso Road, and South Nation River, the Village of Casselman and St-Albert Road to the east.
- Ward 4 represents the northwest part of the Municipality, including the settlement area of Limoges and bound to the east by Bertrand Sideroad and Calypso Street to the south.



Figure 11: Preliminary Option B





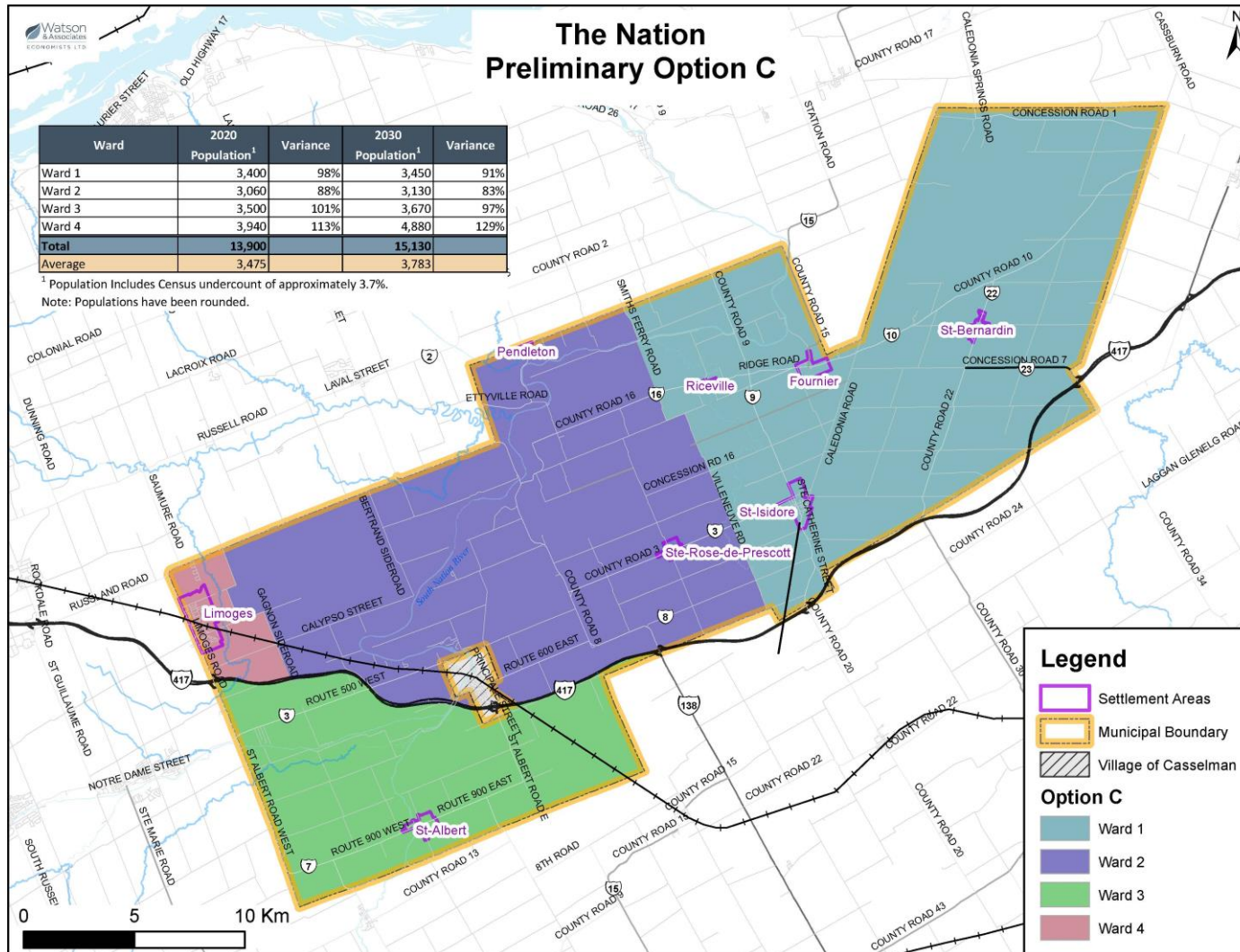
6.4.3 Preliminary Option C

Preliminary Option C is presented in Figure 12. Key features include the following:

- Ward 1 encompasses the eastern half of the Municipality, extending west to Smiths Ferry Road and Villeneuve Road, and includes the settlement area of St-Isidore, St-Bernardin, Fournier and Riceville.
- Ward 2 encompasses the central part of the Municipality bound by Smiths Ferry Road and Villeneuve Road to the east, Gagnon Road, Des Pins Street, Racette Road, Indian Creek and Grant Road to the west and Highway 417 and the Village of Casselman to the south.
- Ward 3 represents the southwest portion of the Municipality including the settlement area of St-Albert and is bound to the north by Highway 417.
- Ward 4 represents the northwest part of the Municipality, including the settlement area of Limoges and bound to the east by Gagnon Road, Des Pins Street, Racette Road, Indian Creek and Grant Road and Highway 417 to the south.



Figure 12: Preliminary Option C

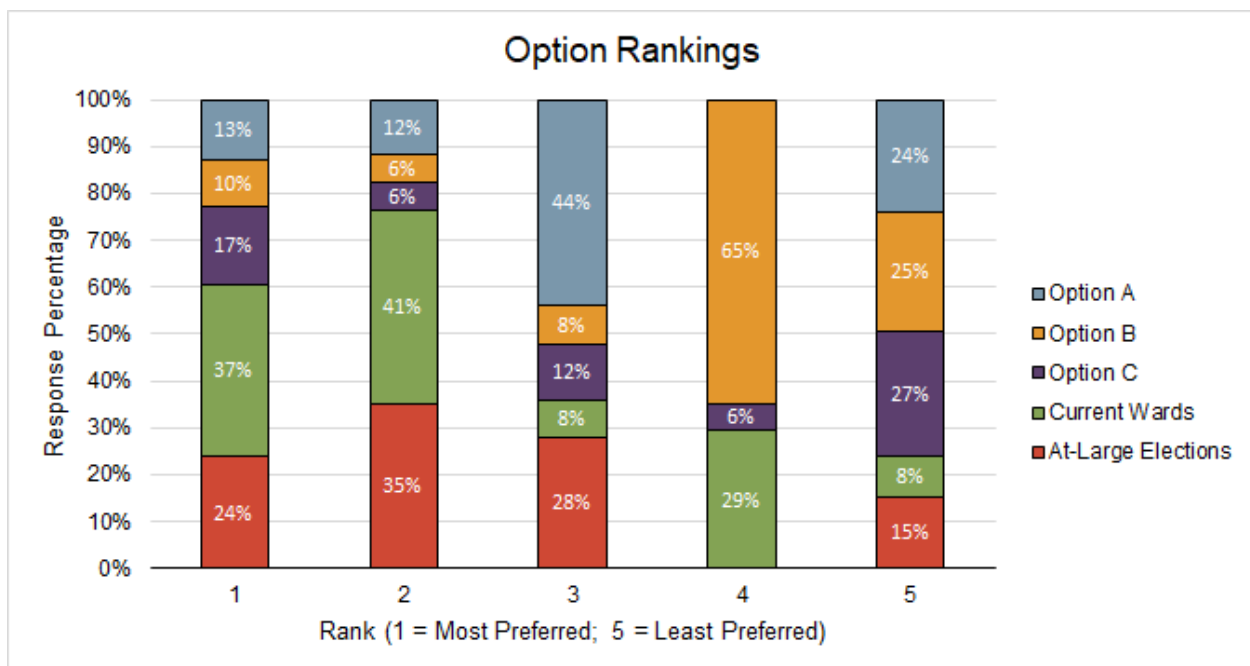




6.5 Public Response to Preliminary Ward Options

As previously discussed, feedback on the Preliminary Options was solicited through public consultation. Respondents were asked to rank their preferred ward boundary configuration (of the three Preliminary Options, existing ward structure and an at-large system). The results are presented in Figure 13. As noted in Chapter 2, the results of the survey were not as insightful as they could have been since many respondents chose to place a high priority on two alternatives (the current wards and at-large elections) that fall outside the objective of providing effective and equitable electoral arrangements for The Nation, based on the principles identified for the review.

Figure 13: Ward Options and Preference of Respondents Based on Ranking



The tone and volume of public responses that addressed the Preliminary Options were, however, informative and challenging in terms of various strong objections voiced on the way Wards 3 and 4 were drawn. These perspectives have given the Consultant Team reasons to re-consider the Preliminary Options. For example, to adjust the present Ward 4 to a size closer to optimal (that is, closer to achieving the representation by population principle – see Chapter 5), Preliminary Option C included a purely urban ward north of Highway 417 – a concept endorsed in principle by many respondents. That idea was rejected by other respondents since it was seen to exclude portions of a



community of interest south of Highway 417 currently in Ward 4 that identifies with Limoges, despite being outside the defined settlement area (shown on the three Preliminary Options maps). Preliminary Options A and B addressed the population issue by retaining some of the non-urban area east of Limoges, but to do so had to move some or all of the area south of Calypso Road into Ward 3 to bring the population of that ward closer to parity (that is, closer to achieving the representation by population principle) – only to hear that residents of this area did not, after twenty years located in a ward largely north of the Castor River, identify themselves with a ward that included St-Albert. The point is that the location of a ward boundary requires a justifiable choice: who to include and on what grounds to do so.

In a four-ward design with a 20-plus-year history, demographic and geographic complexity and growth pressures, it is unlikely that there will be unanimous endorsement of any redivision.

7. Recommended Options

Based on the feedback received through public consultation, technical analysis and further refinement, two potential final ward boundary configurations (Options 1 and 2) were developed and are presented herein. These include:

Option 1

Option 1 is presented in Figure 14, along with population characteristics in Figure 15, and a summary of the evaluation in Figure 16. Key features include the following:

- Ward 1 encompasses the eastern half of the Municipality, extending west to Smiths Ferry Road and Villeneuve Road, and includes the settlement areas of St-Isidore, St-Bernardin, Fournier and Riceville.
- Ward 2 encompasses the central part of the Municipality bound by Smiths Ferry Road and Villeneuve Road to the east, Bertrand Sideroad and South Nation River to the west, and Highway 417 and the Village of Casselman to the south.
- Ward 3 represents the southwest portion of the Municipality, including the settlement area of St-Albert, and is bound to the north by Route 500 West and Highway 417.



- Ward 4 represents the northwest part of the Municipality, including the settlement area of Limoges, and bound to the east by Bertrand Sideroad, South Nation River and Highway 417, and by Route 500 West to the south.

Given the strong expression and obvious evidence that the Limoges settlement area is different from the rest of The Nation, Option 1 is viewed as a way to capture those attributes in a single ward as well as enhancing effective representation across the entire Municipality. The present and forecast population of Ward 4 is outside the range of variation normally associated with a ward system but can be justified as the way to meet the community of interest principle.

On balance, the Consultant Team can recommend Option 1 as a suitable four-ward design for The Nation that places priority on the community of interest principle by recognizing that it is necessary to make the population principles a lower priority.



Figure 14: Recommended Option 1 Ward Structure

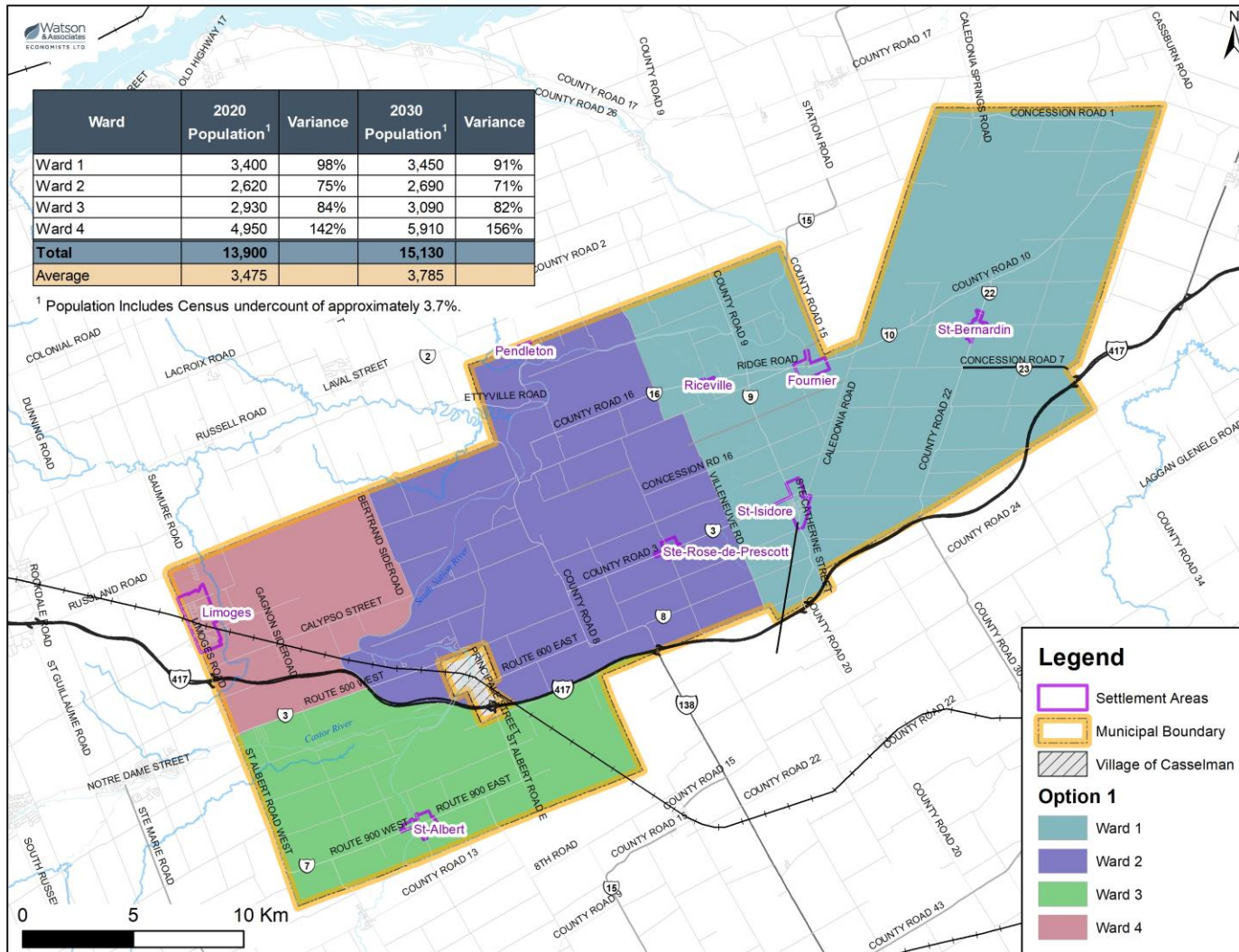




Figure 15: Recommended Option 1 Population Distribution

Ward	2020 Population ¹	Variance	2030 Population ¹	Variance
Ward 1	3,400	98%	3,450	91%
Ward 2	2,620	75%	2,690	71%
Ward 3	2,930	84%	3,090	82%
Ward 4	4,950	142%	5,910	156%
Total	13,900		15,130	
Average	3,475		3,785	

¹ Population Includes Census undercount of approximately 3.7%.

Figure 16: Recommended Option 1 Ward Configuration Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Current Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	No	One ward above the acceptable range of variation and another is at the lower end of the range.
Population and Electoral Trends	No	One ward above the acceptable range of variation and another below the acceptable range of variation.
Representation of Communities of Interest	Yes	All wards plausible collections of localities.
Geographical and Topographical Features	Yes	Boundary lines use permanent natural or transportation features.
Effective Representation	Yes	Acceptable area and population balance in all wards.



Option 2

The objective of finding a way to achieve population parity despite the complications just noted cannot be overlooked as the primary goal of an electoral redistribution and has led to the development of a six-ward alternative, designated Option 2, with that in mind. To achieve better balance, the population cluster in the present Ward 4 requires a reallocation of some of that population to another ward. The implication, of course, is that the community of interest as understood in Option 1 is not maintained, but the arrangement can be justified as the way to meet the representation by population principle. A six-ward design – rather than a five-ward design – ensures that Council is composed of an odd number of members but also allows the design to incorporate predominantly rural wards that are more compact than in a four-ward system. Although the priority of this Option is to seek a population balance, it successfully meets all of the Guiding Principles for the Review.

Option 2 is presented in Figure 17, along with population characteristics in Figure 18, and a summary of the evaluation in Figure 19. Key features include the following:

- Ward 1 captures the eastern-most part of the Municipality, including the former Caledonia Township and the settlement areas of St-Bernardin and Fournier, extending west to County Road 9, Concession Road 18, Caledonia Road, the eastern boundary of the St-Isidore settlement area and Ste-Catharine Street.
- Ward 2 covers the east-central part of the Municipality and includes the settlement areas of St-Isidore, Ste-Rose-de-Prescott and Riceville. Ward 2 is bound to the east by County Road 9, Concession Road 18, Caledonia Road, the eastern boundary of the St-Isidore settlement area and Ste-Catharine Street, and bound to the west by County Road 8.
- Ward 3 represents the southwest portion of the Municipality, including the settlement area of St-Albert, and is bound to the north by the Castor River, the Village of Casselman and Highway 417.
- Ward 4 encompasses the west-central part of the Municipality and is bound to the east by County Road 8, Highway 417, the Village of Casselman and Castor River to the south, and Montée Rainville Road, Highway 417, Baker Road, Calypso Street and Bertrand Sideroad to the west.



- Ward 5 encompasses the northern part of Limoges, extending south to the CN rail line and east to Baker Road, Calypso Street and Bertrand Sideroad.
- Ward 6 covers the southern part of Limoges and neighbouring areas to the south and east including Forest Park and Gagnon. Ward 5 is bound to the north by the CN rail line, the Castor River to the south, and Montée Rainville Road, Highway 417 and Baker Road to the east.



Figure 17: Recommended Option 2 Ward Structure

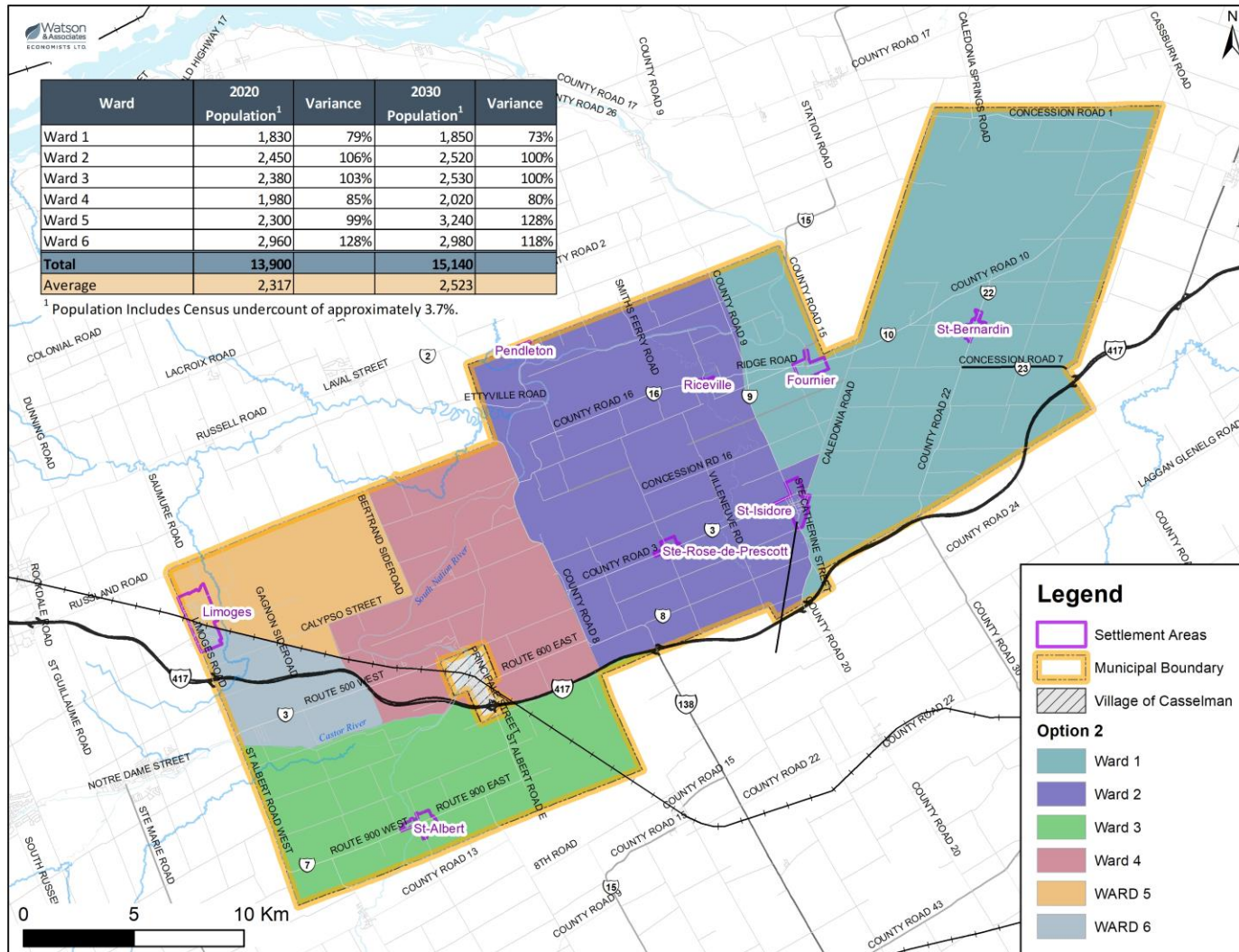




Figure 18: Recommended Option 2 Population Distribution

Ward	2020 Population ¹	Variance	2030 Population ¹	Variance
Ward 1	1,830	79%	1,850	73%
Ward 2	2,450	106%	2,520	100%
Ward 3	2,380	103%	2,530	100%
Ward 4	1,980	85%	2,020	80%
Ward 5	2,300	99%	3,240	128%
Ward 6	2,960	128%	2,980	118%
Total	13,900		15,140	
Average	2,317		2,523	

¹ Population Includes Census undercount of approximately 3.7%.

Figure 19: Recommended Option 2 Ward Configuration Evaluation Summary

Principle	Does the Current Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle?	Comment
Representation by Population	Largely successful	One ward slightly above the acceptable range of variation but all others at or near optimal size.
Population and Electoral Trends	Largely successful	One ward slightly above the acceptable range of variation and one slightly below the acceptable range of variation one but all others within the acceptable range of variation.
Representation of Communities of Interest	Largely successful	Limoges settlement area divided to contribute to population balance across The Nation.
Geographical and Topographical Features	Yes	Boundary lines use permanent natural or transportation features.
Effective Representation	Yes	Acceptable area and population balance in all wards.



The two Options (Options 1 and 2) presented herein were designed to address shortcomings identified in the present system by providing wards that are better balanced in population now and over the next three elections, and to better reflect the communities of interest. In our assessment, the Final Options offer more effective representation than the current ward structure. Either choice would be defensible, though, in the event of an appeal to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal.

This report will be presented to Municipal Council at a meeting to be scheduled when restrictions on public meetings related to preventing the spread of COVID-19 are lifted. Depending on Council's decision on the Final Options contained in this report, ratification of a by-law to implement the preferred option is expected to occur in as soon as possible after that date.