

Sample of Other Municipal Ward Boundary Reviews in 2014-2018

Municipality	Details
<p>City of Toronto</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On June 11, 2013, Council authorized the City Manager to retain a third-party consultant to undertake a ward boundary review. The City of Toronto had 44 wards at the time. • After a competitive Request for Proposal process, the Bid Committee on March 5, 2014, awarded a contract to a consultant. • On June 10, 2014, Council approved a project work plan, civic engagement and public consultation strategy. • On May 24, 2016, the Executive Committee considered the consultant’s final report, which, as noted by a staff report, “recommends a ward boundary structure that applies judicially recognized principles, considers leading electoral and public policy research and advice, and draws upon the input received through a two-step broad engagement and consultation strategy with the Toronto public, communities, key stakeholders and Members of City Council.” The Executive Committee referred the matter to the City Manager and requested that he ask the consultant to provide additional information regarding a few potential additional ward boundary options, to undertake any required additional consultation with the public, stakeholders and Members of Council, and to prepare a revised report for consideration. • Additional consultation was conducted in August and September 2016. A supplementary report was released in October 2016. • The consultant’s final report and supplementary report were submitted to Council on November 8 and 9, 2016. The consultant recommended a 47-ward structure. <p>Review Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On November 8 and 9, 2016, Toronto City Council adopted the 47-ward option. The Council-approved by-laws to establish the new ward configuration were appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) by several parties. <p>Ontario Municipal Board/Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Outcome</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On December 15, 2017, the OMB largely upheld Council’s decision – dismissing all but one appeal that it allowed, in part, to make one “discrete” boundary change. The Board’s decision stated that the work undertaken by the Toronto Ward Boundary Review that led to by-laws setting out a 47-ward structure was “comprehensive” and that “the ward structure delineated in the By-laws provides for effective representation and corrects the current population imbalance amongst the existing 44 wards.” The OMB further noted that, “The decision made by Council to adopt the By-laws was defensible, fair and reasonable. The decision by Council to implement a 47-ward structure does not diverge from the principles of voter equity and effective representation. In this regard, there is nothing unreasonable in the decision of Council.”¹ • Two of the parties sought leave to appeal the OMB decision. The Ontario Divisional Court found that there was no basis for its intervention and dismissed the motion for leave to appeal on March 6, 2018.
<p>City of Hamilton</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On June 27, 2012, Council directed the City Clerk to prepare, for the consideration of the General Issues Committee in the first quarter of 2015, Terms of Reference and a timeline for a comprehensive ward boundary review. The ward boundary review was to begin before June 30, 2015, with the assistance of a consultant, and be completed by June 30, 2017, for the 2018 municipal election. Hamilton had 15 wards at the time. • In March 2015, an Information Report set out “a guideline of the terms of reference” for the review, and stated that a Request for Proposal process was underway, with the expectation of having consultant(s) hired in May or June of 2015. • The study completed by the consultant included four phases, as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review background data and technical analysis, develop public engagement strategy and initiate the consultation process with City staff and elected officials to gather insights into the present ward system; 2. Hold public information and engagement sessions concentrating on the existing ward structure and guiding principles (Round 1 Consultation); 3. Prepare an interim report on preliminary options and hold public consultations on preliminary options (Round 2 Consultation); and 4. Finalize alternatives and prepare a final report with recommendations for Council.

¹ While it was anticipated that the 2018 Municipal Elections in the City of Toronto would proceed in accordance with the 47-ward structure adopted by Council and largely affirmed by the OMB, the provincial government introduced legislative changes in July 2018 that would replace the outcome of the ward boundary review with a mandatory 25-ward structure.

- On October 27, 2016, a final report was presented to the General Issues Committee for consideration. The report presented two ward boundary options for Council’s consideration: a 15-ward option and a 16-ward option. Direction was approved at the meeting:
 1. That Members of Council be requested to submit any further suggestions they may have for alternative ward boundary model options; and
 2. That the consultant team be directed to compile any additional ward boundary model options from Members of Council into a consolidated report that would also include the two options presented at the meeting, and report back to a future General Issues Committee meeting.
- On February 1, 2017, a further amended final report was presented to the General Issues Committee. It included three options as excerpted below:
 - Option 1 – A “modified version of the existing ward structure based on Council feedback provided by members of Council after the [General Issues Committee] meeting of October 27, 2016.”
 - Option 2 – A 15-ward option “which strives to optimize population parity (representation by population),” and was a “modified version of the 15-ward Option presented in the Final Report.”
 - Option 3 – A 16-ward option “that, through the addition of one ward, achieves a reasonable population balance by ward and preserves communities of interest while finding better effective representation than a 15-ward option.” This option provided “virtually the same configuration as the 16-ward Option presented in the Final Report.”

Review Outcome

- On February 8, 2017, Council approved ward boundary Option 1 from the amended final report, which was the modified version of the existing ward structure, based on feedback from Members of Council after the General Issues Committee meeting on October 27, 2016. Council’s decision with respect to the ward boundaries was appealed to the OMB by two parties.

Ontario Municipal Board/Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Outcome

- On December 12, 2017, the OMB allowed one of the appeals (the other was settled prior to the hearing) and ordered the City to amend its by-law to reflect Option 2 as presented in the consultant’s amended Final Report.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board concluded “that while the process followed by the City for the ward boundary review was appropriate, the City’s decision to adopt the City Preferred Ward Boundaries was not reasonable.” [The “City Preferred Ward Boundaries” was an amended version of the Council-approved ward boundaries that resulted from the settlement with one of the appellants]. • The OMB decision further stated that “it was not reasonable for the City to adopt Option 1 ... and ultimately, the slightly altered Preferred Ward Boundaries, as it did so on the overriding concern of protecting western rural interests. In so doing, voter parity was insufficiently addressed and other communities of interest were effectively ignored...” Additional information regarding the Hamilton ward boundary review may be found in the staff report and in Document 2.
<p>City of Vaughan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In February 2013, the City of Vaughan received a petition calling for ward boundaries to be revised. • On April 23, 2013, City Council passed a resolution stating that it was committed to conducting “a broad-based ward boundary review sufficiently in advance of the 2018 municipal election, to allow for broad public consultation, the collection of independent evidence on population growth, the development of a finite number of ward boundary proposals for consideration by the public, and ultimately a single proposed configuration that in itself will be the subject of public consultation and Council’s consideration.” • Council’s refusal to act on the petition was appealed to the OMB. The Board dismissed the appeal on November 1, 2013. Its decision stated that “the Board agrees that the Council of the City of Vaughan should not be rushed into making a change to its ward system and that the proposed review in advance of the 2018 election is more than adequate because the five ward system protects existing and future emerging communities and protects relative voter parity that is the foundation of effective representation.” • In April 2016, the City retained an independent consultant team to conduct the ward boundary review. • Three options that met the test for effective representation were subject to public consultation, which included three community meetings and other outreach efforts. • The final report recommended maintaining five wards, with adjustments to ward boundaries to balance projected ward populations for the project’s target year of 2022. <p>Review Outcome</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On January 18, 2017, Committee of the Whole recommended Council receive the final ward boundary review report as contained in a report from the City Clerk. On January 24, 2017, Council received the report, which meant that the recommendations to revise ward boundaries were not adopted.
<p>Prince Edward County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On January 7, 2015, Council approved a motion that included a review of the size of Council among its short-term goals for 2015. The municipality had 10 wards (with 15 Councillors as well as one Mayor) at that time. Special Council meetings were held in the spring and early summer of 2015 to establish proposals regarding Council size and composition. On July 16, 2015, Council confirmed four options to be put forward for public consultation and comment in September/early October 2015. Consultation included an online survey as well as nine public meetings. <p>Review Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On November 10, 2015, Council approved a proposal for nine wards, as well as the election of 13 Councillors and one Mayor. One party appealed Council’s by-law to the OMB. <p>Ontario Municipal Board/Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On November 30, 2017, the OMB determined that the by-law was appropriate and dismissed the appeal. The Board’s decision stated: “The public consultation process was open and fair and the engagement by the public was impressive. The Board is satisfied that Council had proper regard for the greater public good, and only after assiduous consideration made its decision. The Board finds no reason to interfere with the decision made by County Council.”