

**CITY OF VAUGHAN**  
**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 18, 2021**

Item 2, Report No. 25, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), which was adopted, as amended, by the Council of the City of Vaughan on May 18, 2021, as follows:

***By receiving the following communications:***

**C6     *Rose Savage, dated May 5, 2021; and***  
**C33    *Hiten Patel, dated May 12, 2021.***

**2.     2020 WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW INTERIM REPORT**

**The Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommends:**

- 1)     That the report of the Deputy City Manager, Administrative Services and City Solicitor, dated May 5, 2021, be received;**
- 2)     That the presentation by Mr. Jack Ammendolia, Dr. Robert Williams and Dr. Zachary Spicer, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., Argentia Road., Mississauga, and Communication C6, presentation material, be received;**
- 2)     That the comments from Ms. Irene Ford, Irish Moss Court, Vaughan and Communication C3, dated May 4, 2021, be received; and**
- 3)     That the following Communications be received:**
  - C1.    Mr. Robert A. Kenedy, President of the MacKenzie Ridge Ratepayers Association, dated May 3, 2021;**
  - C2.    Mr. Tony Malfara, dated May 4, 2021;**
  - C4.    Ms. Alexandra Ney, dated May 4, 2021; and**
  - C5.    Ms. Patricia Pedari, dated May 5, 2021.**

**Recommendations**

- 1.     That Council provide direction on the preferred ward boundary configuration as presented by the consultant team.**

## Committee of the Whole (Working Session) Report

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**DATE:** Wednesday, May 05, 2021

**WARD(S):** ALL

**TITLE:** 2020 WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW INTERIM REPORT

**FROM:**

Wendy Law, Deputy City Manager, Administrative Services and City Solicitor

**ACTION:** DECISION

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**Purpose**

To provide Council with an interim report on the 2020 Ward Boundary Review, including the preliminary ward boundary options prepared by the consultant team and the results of the initial round of stakeholder consultation. Council will be able to provide feedback and direction prior to receiving the final recommendations for a decision at the Committee of the Whole meeting in June.

**Report Highlights**

- The City of Vaughan has retained Watson and Associates Economists Ltd., ICA Associates and Dr. Robert J. Williams and Dr. Zachary Spicer to conduct a comprehensive and independent Ward Boundary Review.
- By 2030, the City of Vaughan is expected to grow by approximately 68,900 people, to a total population of 408,900, an increase of roughly 20%.
- 915 people engaged with the online survey, 3,000 unique individuals visited the Ward Boundary Review webpage, and approximately 4,750 liked, shared or commented on the project across multiple social media platforms.

**Recommendations**

1. That Council provide direction on the preferred ward boundary configuration as presented by the consultant team.

## **Background**

At its meeting of May 27, 2020, Council approved the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session) that staff be directed to undertake a Ward Boundary Review. Council received the presentation from the City Clerk, on the subject of Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review, and determined that a review should take place but that its focus should be on a ward boundary review, and not a council composition review that would consider changes to the size, composition or organization of Council.

The City of Vaughan retained Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. in association with ICA Associates, and Dr. Robert J. Williams and Dr. Zachary Spicer to serve as the consultant team for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive and independent Ward Boundary Review.

## **Previous Reports/Authority**

[Direction for Ward Boundary and Council Composition Review, CW\(WS\) May 27, 2020](#)

## **Analysis and Options**

The first phase of the 2020 Ward Boundary Review involved a series of stakeholder consultations with the Mayor and Members of Council, municipal staff and engagements with area school boards. The consultant team also conducted a public consultation, with a discussion paper made available on the project webpage, an online survey and a series of four virtual public open houses to capture feedback on the existing ward boundaries and the guiding principles of the review. The public participation in the first phase of public engagement is outlined in Table 1.

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>4,764</b> | Social media engagements and interactions                             |
| <b>3,434</b> | Unique visits to the Ward Boundary Review webpage                     |
| <b>585</b>   | People answered some of the key questions in the survey               |
| <b>375</b>   | People left thoughtful explanations to some of their survey responses |
| <b>31</b>    | People attended one of the four virtual public open houses            |

Table 1. Phase One Public Engagement Stats

The consultant team evaluated the existing ward boundaries according to the five core principles:

1. Representation by Population;

2. Consideration of Communities of Interest and Neighbourhoods;
3. Consideration of Current and Future Population Trends;
4. Consideration of Physical Features and Natural Boundaries; and
5. Effective Representation.

Based on this detailed analysis, the consultant team prepared the three preliminary options, identified in their report at Attachment 1. The preliminary options developed by the consultant team have been socialized with the public through a second round of public consultation, undertaken in March 2021, including a new online survey, four virtual public open houses, and interactive mapping tools and presentations available on the project webpage.

The final report and recommendations of the consultant team will be presented to Council for a final decision at Committee of the Whole (2) on June 8, 2021. These final recommendations will reflect the feedback received during the second round of public consultation and a final review of population growth data.

### **Financial Impact**

There is no financial implication associated with this report.

### **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

There are no regional impacts associated with this report. School boards were engaged by the consultant team as part of the stakeholder consultation process.

### **Conclusion**

The preliminary options prepared by the consultant team and identified in Attachment 1, reflect the results of a detailed analysis of demographic and geographic data on the City of Vaughan, along with stakeholder interviews, public open houses and an online survey. Socialization of the proposed options commenced in March, with a second round of public open houses and a new online survey to capture feedback on the preliminary ward boundary options. Feedback from the second round of stakeholder consultation and engagement will form the basis of the final recommendations by the consultant team, who will present their findings at Committee of the Whole (2) in June, at which time Council will be asked to confirm their decision to adopt one of the recommended options, or to maintain the status quo.

**For more information**, please contact: Evan Read, Manager, Elections and Special Projects, ext. 8241

## **Attachments**

1. 2020 Ward Boundary Review - Preliminary Options Report, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. in association with: ICA Associates, Dr. Robert J. Williams, Dr. Zachary Spicer, March 24, 2021

## **Prepared by**

Evan Read, Manager, Elections and Special Projects, ext. 8241  
Todd Coles, City Clerk, ext. 8281

## **Approved by**



Wendy Law  
Deputy City Manager  
Administrative Services & City Solicitor

## **Reviewed by**



Jim Harnum  
City Manager



# 2020/2021 Ward Boundary Review

City of Vaughan

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## Preliminary Options Report

March, 2021

Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.  
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[info@watsonecon.ca](mailto:info@watsonecon.ca)

In association with: ICA Associates  
Dr. Robert J. Williams  
Dr. Zachary Spicer



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# 1. Background

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

The primary purpose of the study is to prepare Vaughan Council to make decisions on whether to maintain the existing ward structure or to adopt an alternative. This report provides a set of alternative ward boundary designs that have been created based upon preliminary research and the first round of public consultation with the residents of Vaughan.

This review is premised on the democratic expectation that municipal representation in Vaughan would be effective, equitable, and an accurate reflection of the contemporary distribution of communities and people across the City.

# 2. Study Objective

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 Vaughan's public engagement practices during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) public health emergency 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 Vaughan, based on the principles identified.

In December 2020, the Consultant Team prepared a Discussion Paper that set out:





- The parameters and purpose for the review;
- The basic electoral arrangements in Vaughan;
- Council's legislative authority to modify electoral arrangements in the City; and
- An initial assessment of the City's current ward boundary system.<sup>1</sup>

The Discussion Paper also provided a set of guiding principles that will inform the study and the work of the Consultant Team:

- Representation by Population;
- Consideration of Current and Future Population Trends;
- Consideration of Physical and Natural Boundaries;
- Consideration of Communities of Interest; and
- Effective Representation.

Each principle is described in detail in the Discussion Paper.

The purpose of this Preliminary Options Report is to provide:

- A summary of the work completed to date;
- A summary of the information received from the public engagement sessions and tools, such as the survey and website; and
- A series of preliminary ward boundary options for consideration.

### 3. Project Structure and Timeline

Council adopted the terms of reference for the W.B.R. in May 2020. Work completed to date includes:

- Research and data compilation;
- Interviews with councillors, the Mayor, municipal staff, and engagement with school board staff; and
- Public consultation on the existing ward structure.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.vaughan.ca/projects/city\\_government/boundary\\_review/General%20Documents/Vaughan%202020%20Ward%20Boundary%20Review%20Discussion%20Paper\\_Accessible.pdf](https://www.vaughan.ca/projects/city_government/boundary_review/General%20Documents/Vaughan%202020%20Ward%20Boundary%20Review%20Discussion%20Paper_Accessible.pdf)



Interviews with staff and Council, and meetings with the Clerk's office and other staff concerning this study, were conducted virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic. With regard to engagement of school board staff, each of the boards operating in Vaughan were made aware of the W.B.R. and were informed that the Consultant Team was available for questions/interviews. One board enquired further and was provided with information regarding the possible implications of any possible ward boundary changes. Following public health guidelines on gatherings, the Consultant Team also conducted the initial round of public consultation (four sessions) electronically.

## 4. Existing Population and Forecast Growth in the City of Vaughan

As previously discussed, a basic premise of representative democracy in Canada is the notion that the geographic areas used to elect a representative should be reasonably balanced with one another in terms of population. Accordingly, a detailed population estimate for the City of Vaughan, including its constituent wards and communities, was prepared to allow evaluation of the existing ward structure and subsequent alternatives in terms of representation by population in the current year (2021).

The City of Vaughan is forecast to experience significant population growth over the next decade and beyond. For this reason, it is important that this study assess 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 to 2030. A population and housing forecast for the City for the 2021 to 2030 period was determined, and the results of this analysis are discussed below.

### 4.1 Existing Population and Structure

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As mentioned, this study needs to look at the existing as well as future population distribution. An early 2021 population estimate was derived by utilizing the 2016 Census and a review of building permit activity from 2016 through 2020, with an assumed six-month lag from issuance to occupancy. Vaughan's estimated 2021



population is 340,000 and includes the net Census undercount.<sup>2</sup> The City's 2021 total population is presented by existing ward structure in Table 4-1. As shown, Ward 1, which covers the entirety of north Vaughan, has the highest population of all the wards at 77,420, while Ward 2 on the west side of Vaughan has the smallest population at 56,200, for a difference of 21,220 between the smallest and largest wards.

Table 4-1: 2021 Population by Ward

| Ward                | 2021 Total Population |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Existing Wards      |                       |
| Ward 1              | 77,420                |
| Ward 2              | 56,200                |
| Ward 3              | 69,910                |
| Ward 4              | 67,850                |
| Ward 5              | 68,660                |
| <b>City-wide</b>    | <b>340,000</b>        |
| <b>Ward Average</b> | <b>68,010</b>         |

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2021.  
Note: Numbers have been rounded

## 4.2 Forecast Population Growth, 2021 to 2030

The City of Vaughan was the fastest-growing municipality in Canada between 1996 and 2006 with its population increasing by approximately 80% during this time period, having grown by over 430% from 1991 to 2016. This rapid growth is anticipated to continue across the City and ward boundaries should consider and accommodate Vaughan's projected growth and population shifts to maintain a general equilibrium in representation by population over a three-election cycle (2022, 2026, and 2030). This principle's significance was reinforced by the community through the Phase 1 survey responses, as approximately 33% of survey respondents prioritized equal

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<sup>2</sup> The net Census undercount is an adjustment to the population to account for the net number of persons who are missed (i.e. over-coverage less under-coverage) during enumeration and is estimated at approximately 3.0%.



representation by population and an additional 31% prioritized future population trends when designing wards.

In accordance with the City's Official Plan, Vaughan's population is expected to increase to 416,600 by 2031. The Consultant Team has prepared City population growth metrics for the 2021 to 2030 period, guided by regional growth targets and policy objectives, along with a comprehensive review of opportunities to accommodate future residential growth through plans of subdivision (registered unbuilt, draft approved and proposed), site plan applications, and intensification potential (in particular the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre – the V.M.C.). Anticipated population growth over the 2021 to 2030 period was identified on a sub-geographic unit (S.G.U.) level.

By 2030, Vaughan's population is anticipated to grow by approximately 68,900, bringing the total population (including undercount) to approximately 408,900, an increase of approximately 20%, as shown in Table 4-2. A significant amount of the City's growth is anticipated to occur within the V.M.C., a quadrant of developments north of Highway 407 along Highway 7. The V.M.C is anticipated to grow from approximately 7,000 people to over 23,000 by 2030 through a large number of high-density buildings, some of which have already started development. In addition to the V.M.C., additional intensification is expected within the built-up area (B.U.A.), but a majority of the growth outside the V.M.C is anticipated in north Vaughan in its designated greenfield areas (D.G.A.), north of Major Mackenzie Drive – 55% of the City's population growth is anticipated within the D.G.A.



Table 4-2: Population Growth, 2021 to 2030

| Ward                | 2021 Total Population | 2030 Total Population | 2021-2030 Change |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Existing Wards      |                       |                       |                  |
| Ward 1              | 77,420                | 110,300               | 32,880           |
| Ward 2              | 56,200                | 61,570                | 5,370            |
| Ward 3              | 69,910                | 77,860                | 7,950            |
| Ward 4              | 67,850                | 88,220                | 20,370           |
| Ward 5              | 68,660                | 70,950                | 2,290            |
| <b>City-wide</b>    | <b>340,000</b>        | <b>408,900</b>        | <b>68,900</b>    |
| <b>Ward Average</b> | <b>68,010</b>         | <b>81,780</b>         | <b>13,770</b>    |

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2021.

Note: Numbers have been rounded.

## 5. Public Consultation

The first phase of the W.B.R. incorporated a public engagement component that was delivered virtually and designed to:

- Inform residents of Vaughan about the reasons 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.

Following public health guidelines put in place following the COVID-19 outbreak, four virtual public consultation sessions were conducted throughout January 2021 – one session on both January 12 and 13, and two sessions on January 14. The Consultant Team's presentation and other information about the review, including the audio recording of the Virtual Public Open Houses, are available on the City's website:

[https://www.vaughan.ca/projects/city\\_government/boundary\\_review/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.vaughan.ca/projects/city_government/boundary_review/Pages/default.aspx)

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



- Existing Ward Structure – Strengths and weaknesses of the current ward structure.
- Guiding Principles – Which guiding principles should be given the greatest priority in the development of ward boundaries?

The feedback and comments collected through the public consultation process are reflected in the analysis presented below and have helped inform the preliminary set of ward options. 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 preliminary options presented herein.

## 6. What We Heard

In December 2020, the City of Vaughan created a project web page for all documents and information about the W.B.R. All communications could direct people to that page using social media and other outreach. People could visit the site, read some context, download a background report and, most importantly, were urged to complete a survey. The City also prepared a whiteboard-style explainer video describing the overall process of the W.B.R.

As a result of the City's outreach and communications activities, traffic to the project web page was surprisingly high and informative:

- 67 social media posts on three platforms and press releases stimulated thousands of engagements/interactions (4,764) and wide reach (estimated at 178,594);
- Over 3,434 people visited the website;
- 585 people answered some of the key questions in the survey;
- 375 people left thoughtful explanations of some of their choices; and
- 31 people attended the online town hall meetings.

Input from the survey itself confirmed what research was beginning to indicate; the detailed summary is in Appendix B.

- The majority of survey respondents thought having five local councillors elected from five wards was adequate to their needs.



- Most people felt that the current wards adequately represent them, but satisfaction varied from ward to ward, from 42% satisfied in Ward 4 and a high of 59% in Ward 5.
- Many people identified the large size and population of Ward 1 as an issue to be looked into, yet quite a few also saw the issues of the north as similar.
- Most importantly for the next phase of the project, people prioritized population parity both now (32.5%) and in the future (31.3%) as the most important guiding principles, yet almost a quarter of respondents (22.7%) thought that communities of interest should be the top priority. Future population parity was the clear second choice for most people. The geographic features principle was prioritized by the fewest number of people.

Written responses also revealed some out-of-scope issues to acknowledge for future discussions.

- People have a lot of concerns about the continued rapid growth and urbanization of the City and these concerns were triggered by the discussion of ward boundaries. They are worried about planning, traffic, infrastructure, and the changing identity of the City.
- There were frequent mentions of the confusion between the roles of local councillors and regional councillors who are elected at-large, this despite the contexts set on the project page and survey.

## 7. Evaluation of Existing Ward Structure

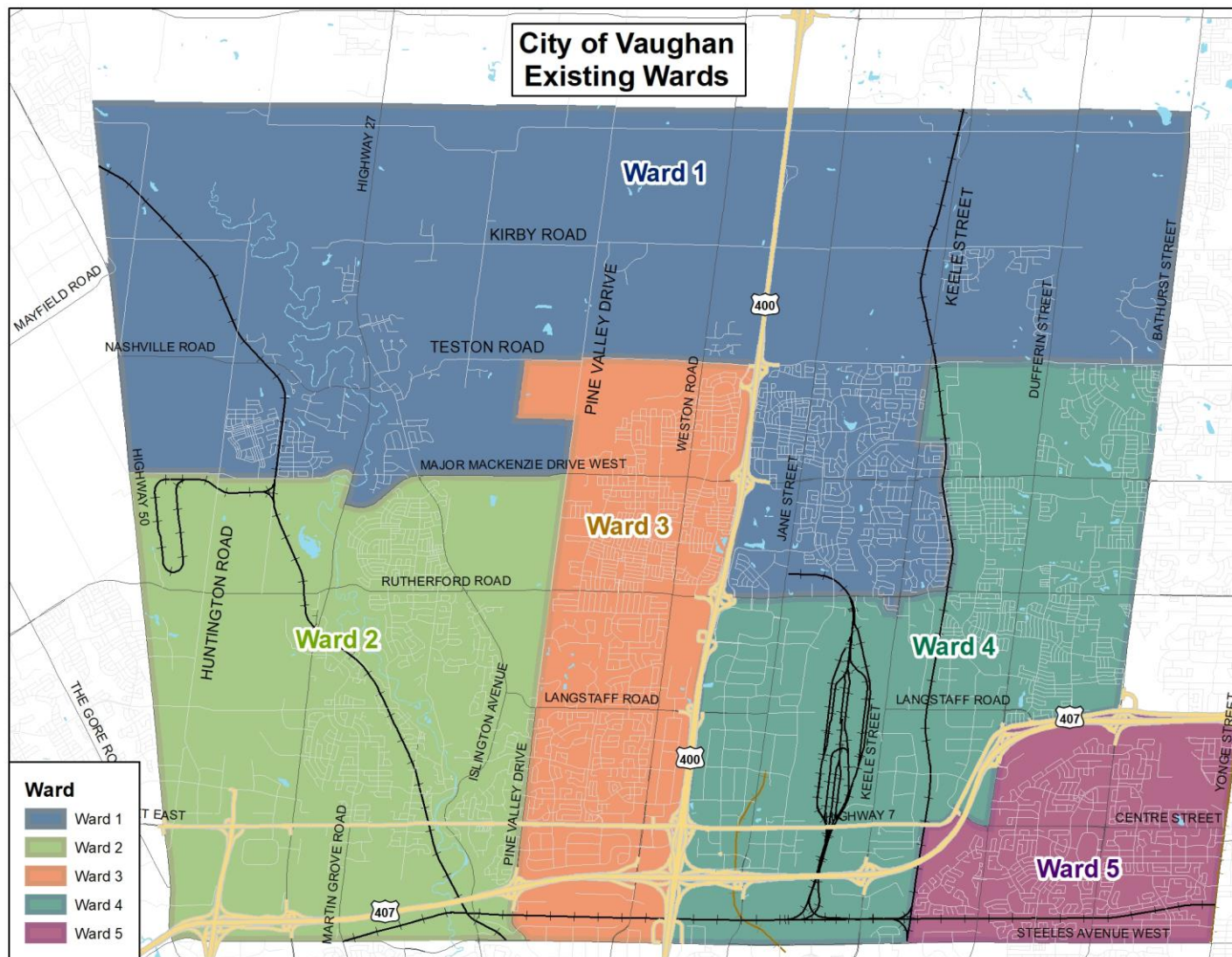
The survey conducted as part of the initial phase of public consultation also asked respondents to assess the current wards in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. These responses can be used to add depth to the preliminary evaluation of the existing ward structure included in the Discussion Paper that addressed the wards in terms of the guiding principles. For reference, the current wards are presented in Figure 7-1, below.

The Discussion Paper is available on the City of Vaughan's website. In it is a detailed preliminary evaluation of the current ward structure. This section revisits that evaluation, integrating information received during consultation.





Figure 7-1: Existing Ward Structure







## 7.1 Representation by Population

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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. This is the concept of representation by population (“rep by pop”) or “one person, one vote” – where the vote of any one person carries roughly the same weight as that of any other person. In some places (such as parts of the United States) this principle of voter parity is enforced rigorously – almost to the exclusion of any other factor – so that there is almost no variation in the population of electoral units within a particular jurisdiction.

In the Carter decision,<sup>3</sup> 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. The Court concluded that some degree of variation from parity (“relative parity”) may be justified and, at times, even necessary “on the grounds of practical impossibility or the provision of more effective representation.”

Since there are variations in the densities and character of communities and neighbourhoods across Vaughan, the guiding principles make clear that some flexibility in applying the principle of representation by population is acceptable. That is, the concept of “equitable” (that is, fair) representation – not necessarily “equal” representation – is legitimate, although the closer the population of the wards is to parity, the more the entire design can be assessed as successful.

As a working premise, a range of variation of 25% above or below the optimal ward population will be considered acceptable. This is a rather generous range of tolerance from parity, but in the absence of any guidance in the *Municipal Act, 2001* or provincial regulations, it is based on long-standing parameters for the federal redistribution process. The goal in any case will be to reduce the range of variation among the wards as much as possible.

Moreover, in our opinion, developing wards within a narrower range of population variation would make the achievement of the other recognized guiding principles difficult to achieve successfully.

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<sup>3</sup> Reference re: Provincial Electoral Boundaries (Saskatchewan) [1991] 2 S.C.R.



The degree of parity in each ward will be determined through the calculation of what will be called an “optimal” ward in Vaughan, a figure computed by dividing the number of wards by the total population of the City. The population of a ward will be considered “optimal” when it falls within 5% above or below that number. Note that as the overall population changes, the optimal size of a ward will also change.

An example of optimal sizes for Vaughan’s five-ward system for the 2021 and 2030 populations is shown below in Table 7-1.

Table 7-1: Optimal Range for a Five-Ward System

| <b>Symbol</b> | <b>Description</b>       | <b>Variance</b> | <b>2021 Population Range</b> | <b>2030 Population Range</b> |
|---------------|--------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| OR+           | Outside Range - High     | 25%             | 85,013                       | 102,225                      |
| O+            | Above Optimal            | 5%              | 71,411                       | 85,869                       |
| O             | Optimal Population Range | -               | 68,010                       | 81,780                       |
| O-            | Below Optimal            | -5%             | 64,611                       | 77,691                       |
| OR-           | Outside Range - Low      | -25%            | 51,008                       | 61,335                       |

Based upon the figure calculated for the City’s overall 2021 population (340,400) and a five-ward system, the optimal population would be 68,010. In 2031, the City’s forecast population is 408,900 and the optimal ward population would be 68,010.



Table 7-2: Estimated Population by Existing Ward, 2021

| Ward                      | 2021 Total Population | 2021 Population Variance | Optimal Range |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Existing Wards            |                       |                          |               |
| Ward 1                    | 77,420                | 1.14                     | O+            |
| Ward 2                    | 56,200                | 0.83                     | O-            |
| Ward 3                    | 69,910                | 1.03                     | O             |
| Ward 4                    | 67,850                | 1.00                     | O             |
| Ward 5                    | 68,660                | 1.01                     | O             |
| <b>City-wide</b>          | <b>340,000</b>        |                          |               |
| <b>Optimal Population</b> | <b>68,010</b>         |                          |               |

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2021.

Note: Numbers have been rounded.

Population data suggests that three of the present wards are in the optimal range of variance and the other two wards are within the acceptable range of variation, one above and one below. Based upon the empirical evidence and the observations of many survey respondents, the present wards successfully adhere to the representation by population principle.

## 7.2 Consideration of Communities of Interest and Neighbourhoods

Care should be taken to ensure communities of interest remain intact during the design of ward boundaries. Such communities represent social and economic groups that may have deep historical roots, but they can also be social, economic, or religious in nature, depending on the history and composition of the municipality in question.

This principle addresses two perspectives: what is divided by ward boundaries and what is joined together? 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 be cohesive units composed of areas with common interests related to representation, not just contrived arithmetical divisions of the City.

Wards should have a “natural” feel to those that live within them, meaning that they should have established internal communication and transportation linkages and boundaries should be drawn taking existing connections into consideration. This is done to avoid creating wards that combine communities with dissimilar interests and no obvious patterns of interaction.

Vaughan has traditionally five identifiable communities of interest of varying sizes: Concord, Kleinburg, Maple, Thornhill, and Woodbridge, with other recognizable neighbourhoods (such as Vellore) emerging as complete communities. Once the area reaches maturity, the V.M.C. could rightfully be considered a community of interest as well.

At present, most ward boundaries respect these communities within Vaughan, but since there is some uncertainty about the actual extent of communities such as Concord, Thornhill, and Maple, some boundaries could be viewed as artificially dividing those communities. Kleinburg and Maple are both within the same ward (Ward 1) despite being distinct communities and physically separated in the ward both by distance and Highway 400. Woodbridge is a sizable community and is now spread over parts of two of the present wards.

It would be difficult to say that the current ward system respects all identifiable communities of interest in the individual wards, either by keeping them intact or by combining them in plausible groupings.

## **7.3 Consideration of Current and Future Population Trends**

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As noted in the Discussion Paper, the current population within Vaughan’s ward system is reasonably well-balanced; however, as demonstrated above in the growth forecasts, Vaughan will grow substantially over the next decade. This growth also promises to be uneven in nature, with significant population growth expected in certain parts of the City, such as the V.M.C. and parts of the current Ward 1.

This principle is directed towards maintaining a balance through subsequent municipal elections. It is generally not practical to change electoral boundaries for every election;



hence, the wards designed in 2021 will seek to accommodate anticipated changes in the size and distribution of the population and electors over the next three elections in 2022, 2026, and 2030.

As in the previous population principle, the goal is to design a system that will comprise wards that are generally in equilibrium to one another as growth takes place. The concept of an optimal ward size (with an associated range of variation) will be used to assess the success of the individual wards and the overall configuration making use of a population and housing forecast for Vaughan and its neighbourhoods for the 2021 to 2030 period.

Table 7-3: Existing Wards' 2030 Population Distribution

| Ward               | 2030 Total Population | 2030 Population variance | Optimal Range |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Ward 1             | 110,300               | 1.35                     | OR+           |
| Ward 2             | 61,570                | 0.75                     | O-            |
| Ward 3             | 77,860                | 0.95                     | O             |
| Ward 4             | 88,220                | 1.08                     | O+            |
| Ward 5             | 70,950                | 0.87                     | O-            |
| City-wide          | 408,900               |                          |               |
| Optimal Population | 81,780                |                          |               |

These forecasts show that three of the wards are at or acceptably close to optimal, but the distribution of population between two of the wards is unacceptable since one is almost outside the bottom of the range of variation and the other is well above the range. Based upon the empirical evidence and the observations of many survey respondents, the present wards are unlikely to ensure that the representation by population principle can be sustained over the next decade.

## 7.4 Consideration of Physical Features and Natural Boundaries

Ward boundaries should be easily recognizable and take advantage of natural and built geographic features such as arterial roads and railway lines. Often these features



already tend to separate communities within the City, which usually explains their historical use as boundary lines between existing wards.

The most visible physical boundary within Vaughan is Highway 400, which crosses the entire municipality in a north-south alignment. As a result, the communities on the west (e.g. Woodbridge, Kleinburg) and east (Maple, Concord, Thornhill) would seem to have little routine interaction with each other. The highway limits patterns of commerce and socialization within the City and serves as a plausible ward boundary south of Teston Road. North of Teston Road, however, one of the wards crosses that highway. There is also a slight anomaly in the case of the boundary of Wards 4 and 5 where those wards cross Highway 407.

For the most part, ward boundaries in Vaughan meet this principle but the way these 400-series highways are used is problematic.

## **7.5 Effective Representation**

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As stated in the Discussion Paper, the guiding principles are subject to the overarching principle of “effective representation,” meaning that, to extent possible, each resident should have comparable access to an elected representative and each councillor should speak on behalf of an equal number of residents. Deviations from population parity can be justified if they contribute to more effective representation.

Effective representation is not based on the performance of incumbent councillors. It is, rather, a concept that is premised on serving the on-going relationship between residents and elected officials – not just on the way the resident is “counted” on election day, although that is an important component of a fair system of representation. The expectation should be that the wards support the capacity of councillors to represent their constituents, rather than hinder councillors performing those responsibilities. Are the individual wards plausible and coherent units of representation? Are they drawn in such a way that representatives can readily play the role expected of them? Do they provide equitable (that is, fair) access to councillors for all residents of the municipality?

The combination of accelerating population imbalances, the mix of neighbourhoods and communities within the wards, and the population disparity between Ward 1 and the other wards all suggest that the present wards in Vaughan fall short of providing effective representation.



In our Discussion Paper we provided an initial evaluation of the current ward system. The current system failed in some regards to meet the ward boundary principles and, therefore, cannot be said to serve the residents of the City well now and into the future. We have since taken the feedback received through our various engagement activities and again, for the most part, members of the public have confirmed many of our initial perceptions.

Figure 7-2: Present Vaughan Ward Configuration Evaluation Summary

| Principle                                  | Does the Current Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle? | Comment   |
|--|--|---|
| Representation by Population               | <b>Somewhat Successful</b>                                     | All wards are within the acceptable range of variation, although the difference between the largest and smallest is 16,880 people.  |
| Communities of Interest and Neighbourhoods | <b>No</b>  | Current ward boundaries do not comfortably contain single, identifiable communities of interest.  |
| Current and Future Population Trends       | <b>Largely Unsuccessful</b>                                    | Preliminary analysis would suggest that four wards are in the optimal range (i.e. 25% variation), but only one is optimal (i.e. 5% variation). Ward 1 is well above the acceptable range resulting in a large disparity between Ward 1 and Ward 2 (2030 difference of almost 50,000). |
| Physical Features as Natural Boundaries    | <b>Somewhat Successful</b>                                     | Most markers used as boundaries of the wards are straightforward, although Highway 400 bisects Ward 1.  |
| Effective Representation                   | <b>Largely Unsuccessful</b>                                    | Accelerating population imbalances, the mix of communities within the wards and the extreme range of population disparity hinder effective representation.  |



## 8. Alternative Ward Boundary Options

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

If Council decides to change the ward boundary system, what would alternatives look like? The Consultant Team has prepared preliminary options for consideration at this stage of the W.B.R. Keeping the identifiable communities of interest intact, creating wards with roughly equal populations, and providing for effective representation throughout Vaughan poses a challenge, given the large geography and uneven population distribution across the City. As outline above in detail in Table 7-1, Table 8-1 below is a represents the symbols and colours used when evaluating the population distribution for both 2021 and 2030 populations by ward.

Table 8-1: Optimal Range

| Symbol | Description              | Variance |
|--------|--------------------------|----------|
| OR+    | Outside Range - High     | 25%      |
| O+     | Above Optimal            | 5%       |
| O      | Optimal Population Range | -        |
| O-     | Below Optimal            | -5%      |
| OR-    | Outside Range - Low      | -25%     |

### Preliminary Option 1:

This first option can be considered a “minimal change” option since it preserves the main features of the existing wards, although only Ward 2 is completely unchanged. In this option, Ward 1 remains the largest ward by area across the northern part of the





City, but is actually increased in size by taking in a small area from Ward 3 west of Pine Valley Drive and a more extensive area from the present Ward 4 by “swapping” neighbourhoods on either side of Major Mackenzie Drive East. The boundary of the proposed Ward 5 extends north of Highway 407 and east of Dufferin Street to include neighbourhoods that strongly identify with Thornhill.

The overall 2021 population distribution is very similar to the present wards but would reduce the gap between the largest and smallest wards by 2031.



Figure 8-1: Preliminary Option 1

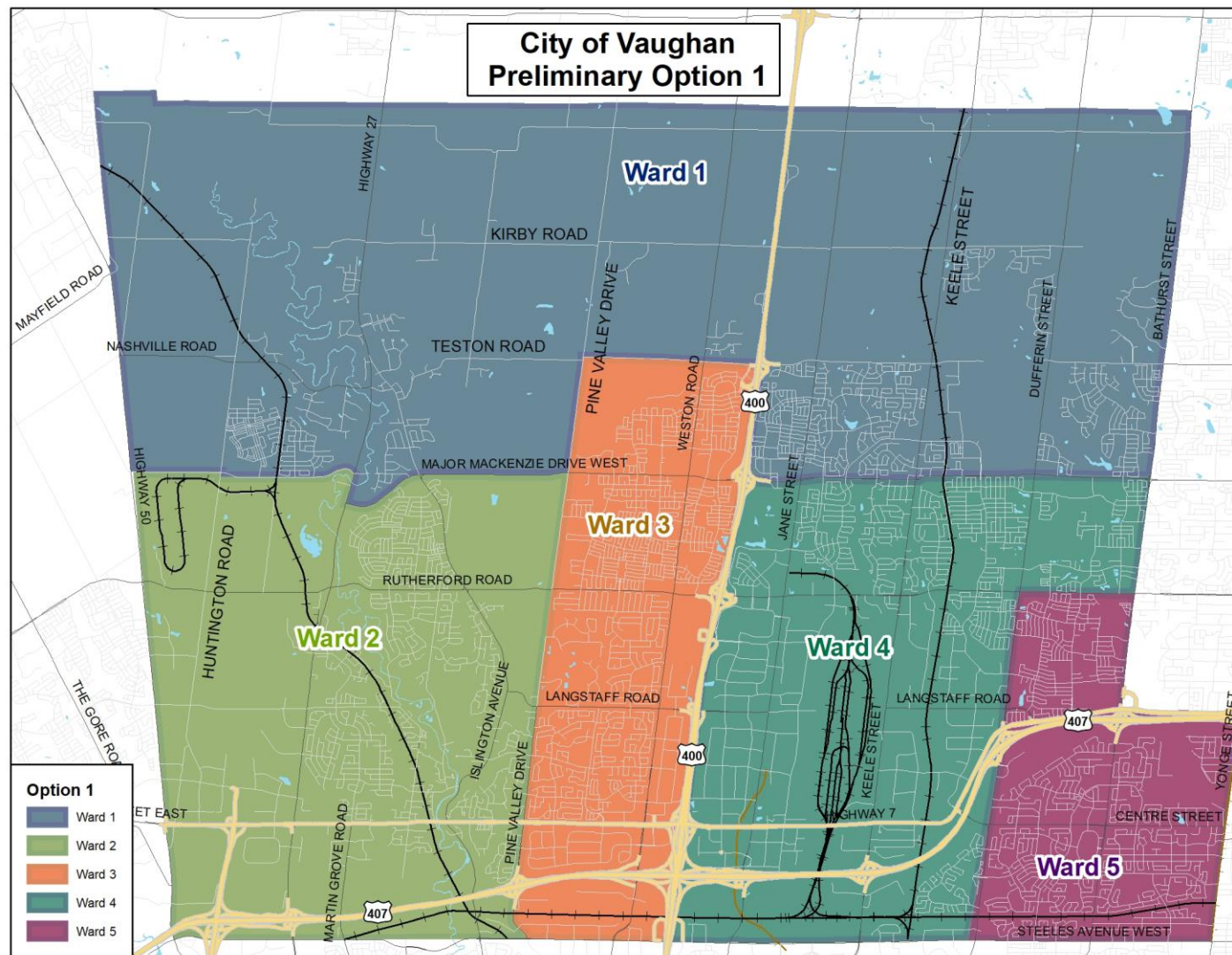




Table 8-2: Preliminary Option 1 – Population by Proposed Ward

| Ward                        | 2021 Total Population | 2021 Population Variance | Optimal Range | 2030 Total Population | 2030 Population Variance | Optimal Range |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Preliminary Option 1</b> |                       |                          |               |                       |                          |               |
| Ward 1                      | 65,470                | 0.96                     | O             | 101,250               | 1.24                     | O+            |
| Ward 2                      | 56,200                | 0.83                     | O-            | 61,570                | 0.75                     | O-            |
| Ward 3                      | 69,740                | 1.03                     | O             | 75,160                | 0.92                     | O-            |
| Ward 4                      | 67,340                | 0.99                     | O             | 87,130                | 1.07                     | O+            |
| Ward 5                      | 81,280                | 1.20                     | O+            | 83,770                | 1.02                     | O             |
| <b>City-wide</b>            | <b>340,000</b>        |                          |               | <b>408,900</b>        |                          |               |
| <b>Ward Average</b>         | <b>68,010</b>         |                          |               | <b>81,780</b>         |                          |               |

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. 2021.

Note: Numbers have been rounded

Figure 8-2: Preliminary Option 1 Evaluation Summary

| Principle  | Does the Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle? | Comment  |
|--|--|--|
| Representation by Population                             | <b>Somewhat Successful</b>                             | All wards are within the acceptable range of variation, although the difference between the largest and smallest is 16,880 people. |
| Protection of Communities of Interest and Neighbourhoods | <b>Somewhat Successful</b>                             | Ward 1 still includes communities remote from one another, but other wards are more coherent than at present.                      |
| Current and Future Population Trends                     | <b>Largely successful</b>                              | Two wards are narrowly within the acceptable range of variation; one ward is at optimal size.                                      |
| Physical Features as Natural Boundaries                  | <b>Yes</b>   | Clean and recognizable features serve as boundaries.   |
| Effective Representation                                 | <b>Largely successful</b>                              | Uneven population distribution and the mix of communities within one ward hinder effective representation.                         |



## **Preliminary Option 2:**

Preliminary Option 2 provides a way to align the wards in a manner that achieves the representation by population principle for both the 2022 municipal election and the two subsequent elections. In this option all five wards are modified, although the proposed change to Ward 5 only involves moving a small non-residential area west of Dufferin Street and north of Highway 7 into Ward 5 to use Highway 407 as the boundary. The major realignments would divide the present Ward 1 into two wards at Highway 400, one centred on Kleinburg and the other on Maple, and the present Ward 2 would be extended eastwards from Pine Valley Drive to Highway 400 (excluding the Vellore neighbourhood north of Rutherford Road. In this option, Major Mackenzie Drive and Rutherford Road serve as the boundary between the proposed Wards 1 and 2 to the west of Highway 400 and between the proposed Wards 3 and 4 east of Highway 400 combined (respectively) with Pine Valley Drive and Dufferin Street.

Preliminary Option 2 is successful at meeting all the guiding principles being considered in this W.B.R.



Figure 8-3: Preliminary Option 2

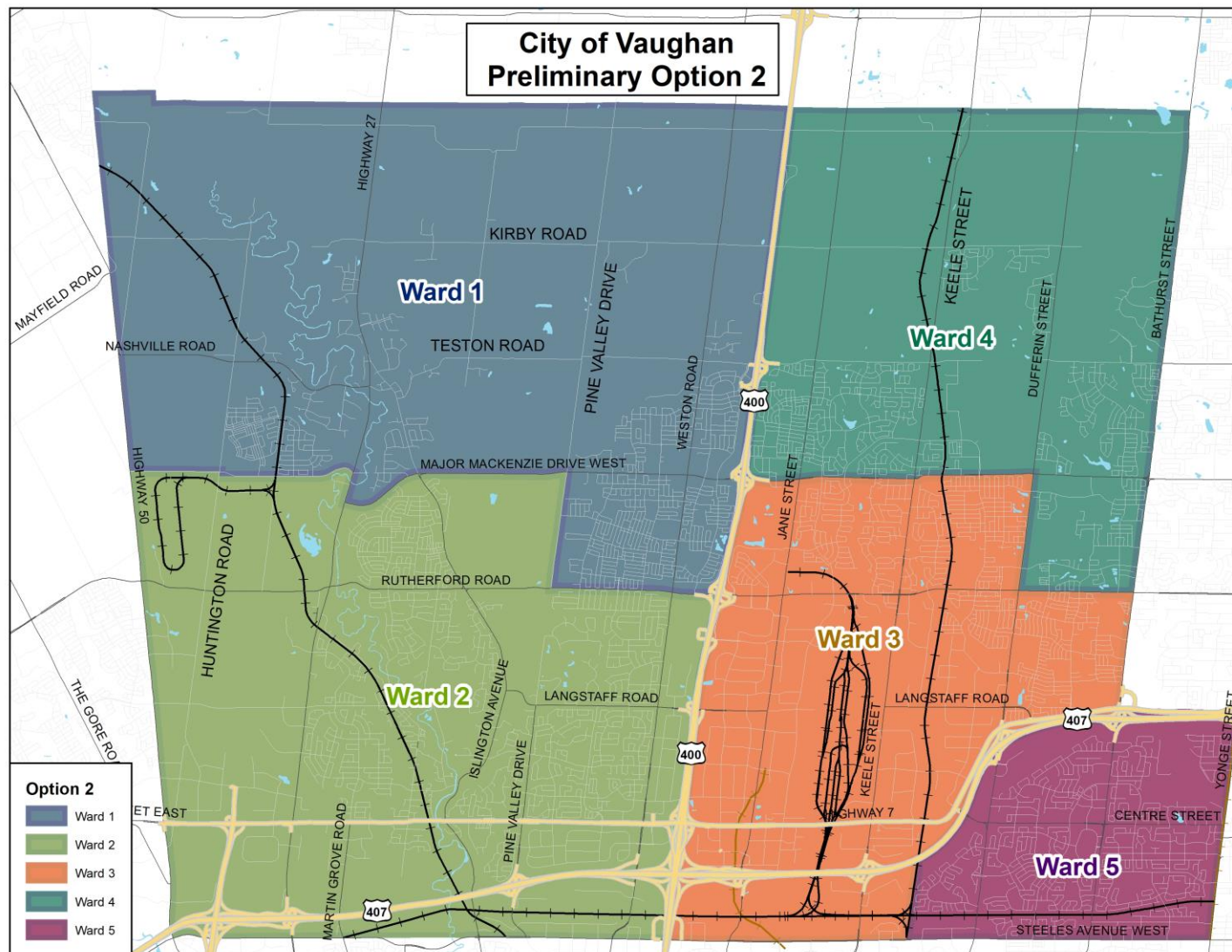






Table 8-3: Preliminary Option 2 – Population by Proposed Ward

| Ward                        | 2021 Total Population | 2021 Population Variance | Optimal Range | 2030 Total Population | 2030 Population Variance | Optimal Range |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Preliminary Option 2</b> |                       |                          |               |                       |                          |               |
| Ward 1                      | 62,140                | 0.91                     | O-            | 91,590                | 1.12                     | O+            |
| Ward 2                      | 80,340                | 1.18                     | O+            | 86,670                | 1.06                     | O+            |
| Ward 3                      | 69,480                | 1.02                     | O             | 89,070                | 1.09                     | O+            |
| Ward 4                      | 59,410                | 0.87                     | O-            | 70,620                | 0.86                     | O-            |
| Ward 5                      | 68,660                | 1.01                     | O             | 70,950                | 0.87                     | O-            |
| <b>City-wide</b>            | <b>340,000</b>        |                          |               | <b>408,900</b>        |                          |               |
| <b>Ward Average</b>         | <b>68,010</b>         |                          |               | <b>81,780</b>         |                          |               |

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. 2021.

Note: Numbers have been rounded

Figure 8-4: Preliminary Option 2 Evaluation Summary

| Principle  | Does the Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle? | Comment  |
|--|--|--|
| Representation by Population                             | Yes  | Two wards are optimal; others are well within the acceptable range.  |
| Protection of Communities of Interest and Neighbourhoods | Largely successful                                     | Overall plausible groupings of neighbourhoods; some ambiguity about the extent of the Thornhill and Maple communities. |
| Current and Future Population Trends                     | Yes  | All wards are well within the acceptable range, distribution well balanced.  |
| Physical Features as Natural Boundaries                  | Yes  | All boundaries are clear and recognizable.   |
| Effective Representation                                 | Yes  | Principles contributing to effective representation are met.   |



### **Preliminary Option 3:**

The difference between Preliminary Options 2 and 3 is the proposed realignment of the Vellore community, for these purposes considered to be the area bounded by Highway 400, Major Mackenzie Drive West, Pine Valley Drive and Rutherford Road. In Preliminary Option 2, the area was included in the proposed Ward 1 along with Kleinberg and surrounding areas west of Highway 400, whereas in this Preliminary Option it is aligned with the proposed Ward 2 and Woodbridge. All other features of Preliminary Option 2 are retained in Preliminary Option 3.

The net impact of this change creates a population imbalance between the two wards west of Highway 400 in 2021 that was not found in Preliminary Option 2, which is largely corrected by 2030. The crucial question for this Preliminary Option is whether it is more appropriate to align Vellore with Kleinburg or with Woodbridge. If the latter is considered more suitable, it would mean a deliberate decision on the part of Council to place greater emphasis on the community of interest principle than achieving the population principle in the short term.

Preliminary Option 3 successfully meets most of the guiding principles being considered in this W.B.R. and the exception (representation by population) may strengthen the achievement of another crucial principle (protection of communities of interest).



Figure 8-5: Preliminary Option 3

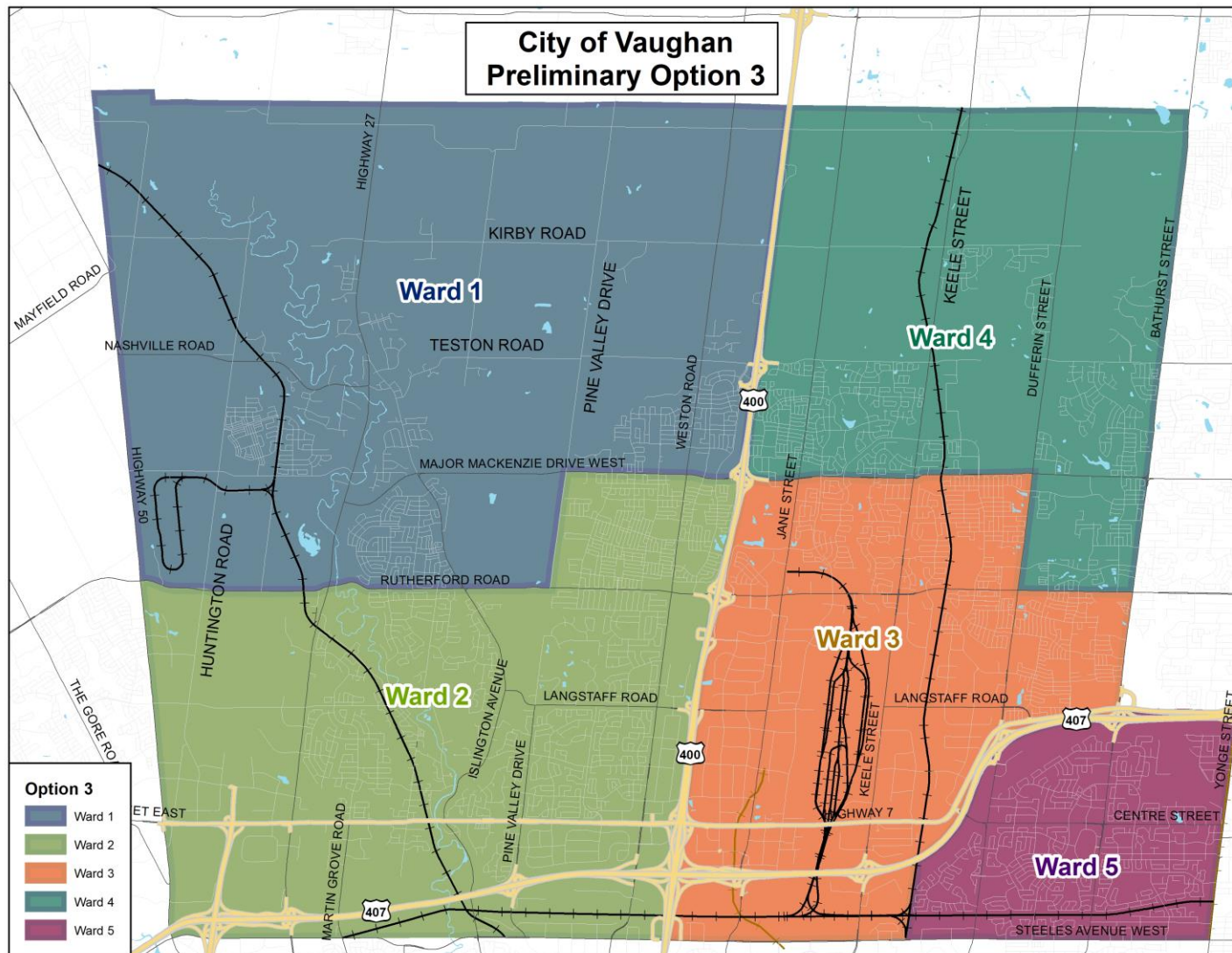






Table 8-4: Preliminary Option 3 – Population by Proposed Ward

| Ward                        | 2021 Total Population | 2021 Population Variance | Optimal Range | 2030 Total Population | 2030 Population Variance | Optimal Range |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Preliminary Option 3</b> |                       |                          |               |                       |                          |               |
| Ward 1                      | 47,180                | 0.69                     | OR-           | 76,430                | 0.93                     | O-            |
| Ward 2                      | 95,300                | 1.40                     | OR+           | 101,830               | 1.25                     | O+            |
| Ward 3                      | 69,480                | 1.02                     | O             | 89,070                | 1.09                     | O+            |
| Ward 4                      | 59,410                | 0.87                     | O-            | 70,620                | 0.86                     | O-            |
| Ward 5                      | 68,660                | 1.01                     | O             | 70,950                | 0.87                     | O-            |
| <b>City-wide</b>            | <b>340,000</b>        |                          |               | <b>408,900</b>        |                          |               |
| <b>Ward Average</b>         | <b>68,010</b>         |                          |               | <b>81,780</b>         |                          |               |

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. 2021.

Note: Numbers have been rounded

Figure 8-6: Preliminary Option 3 Evaluation Summary

| Principle  | Does the Ward Structure Meet the Respective Principle? | Comment   |
|--|--|---|
| Representation by Population                             | <b>Largely successful</b>                              | Three wards are within the acceptable range of variation (including two at optimal); significant imbalance between Wards 1 and 2. |
| Protection of Communities of Interest and Neighbourhoods | <b>Largely successful</b>                              | Overall plausible groupings of neighbourhoods; some ambiguity about the extent of the Thornhill and Maple communities.            |
| Current and Future Population Trends                     | <b>Largely successful</b>                              | All wards are within the acceptable range but distribution becomes more unbalanced.   |
| Physical Features as Natural Boundaries                  | <b>Yes</b>   | All boundaries are clear and recognizable.  |
| Effective Representation                                 | <b>Yes</b>   | Principles contributing to effective representation are generally met.  |



## 8.1 Evaluation Summary

In the Discussion Paper and earlier in this paper we have established that the current ward boundary system in Vaughan does not provide for effective representation. The Consultant Team, therefore, recommends that changes would better accommodate growth within the City and protect communities of interest.

The three options provided in this report provide a spectrum of potential alternatives. Recognizing the strengths of the existing system, the first option provides minimal changes but allows for better accommodation of growth towards the 2030 election cycle. Options 2 and 3, however, provide more extensive re-designs of the wards. Below, we provide an evaluation of the options. Options 2 and 3 better provide for effective representation. While Option 1 builds from the current strengths of the ward boundary map, it does have significant disparities between certain wards. Options 2 and 3 better account for these population disparities, with Option 2 better aligning population now and in the future. Options 2 and 3 also better protect communities of interest.

Figure 8-7: Preliminary Options – Evaluation Summary

| Preliminary Option | Representation by Population | Protection of Communities of Interest and Neighbourhoods | Current and Future Population Trends | Physical Features as Natural Boundaries | Effective Representation |
|--------------------|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1                  | Somewhat Successful          | Somewhat Successful                                      | Largely successful                   | Yes                                     | Largely successful       |
| 2                  | Yes                          | Largely successful                                       | Yes                                  | Yes                                     | Yes                      |
| 3                  | Largely successful           | Largely successful                                       | Largely successful                   | Yes                                     | Yes                      |

Levels of evaluation for how the Guiding Principles are met

|     |                    |                     |    |
|-----|--------------------|---------------------|----|
| Yes | Largely successful | Somewhat Successful | No |
|-----|--------------------|---------------------|----|



Higher Rating

Lower Rating



## 8.2 Further Considerations

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

Designing an electoral system that will deliver effective representation to such a diverse and growing community requires some accommodation: designs that put an emphasis on representation by population today can hinder fair representation for residents who will locate in growing parts of the City in the coming decade. Designs that place a priority on grouping selected urban neighbourhoods can result in the over- or under-representation of those same communities around the Council table. Grouping several distinctive communities in the same ward may systematically reduce the voice of minorities, whether they be geographic, economic, or social.

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



# Appendix A

## Public Engagement Snap Shot





# Appendix B

## Public Engagement

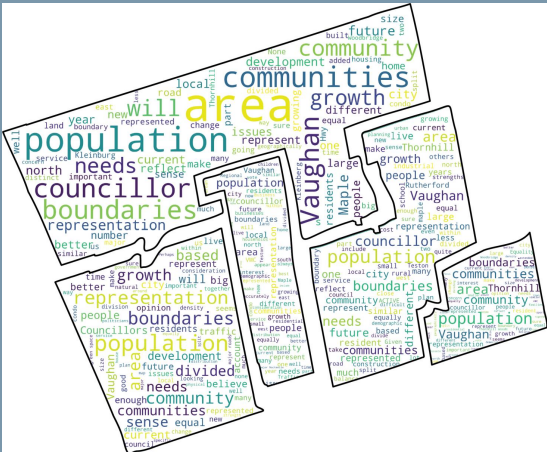




# WBR Phase 1 Consultation Results Summary

*What we heard...*

City of Vaughan  
FEBRUARY 2021



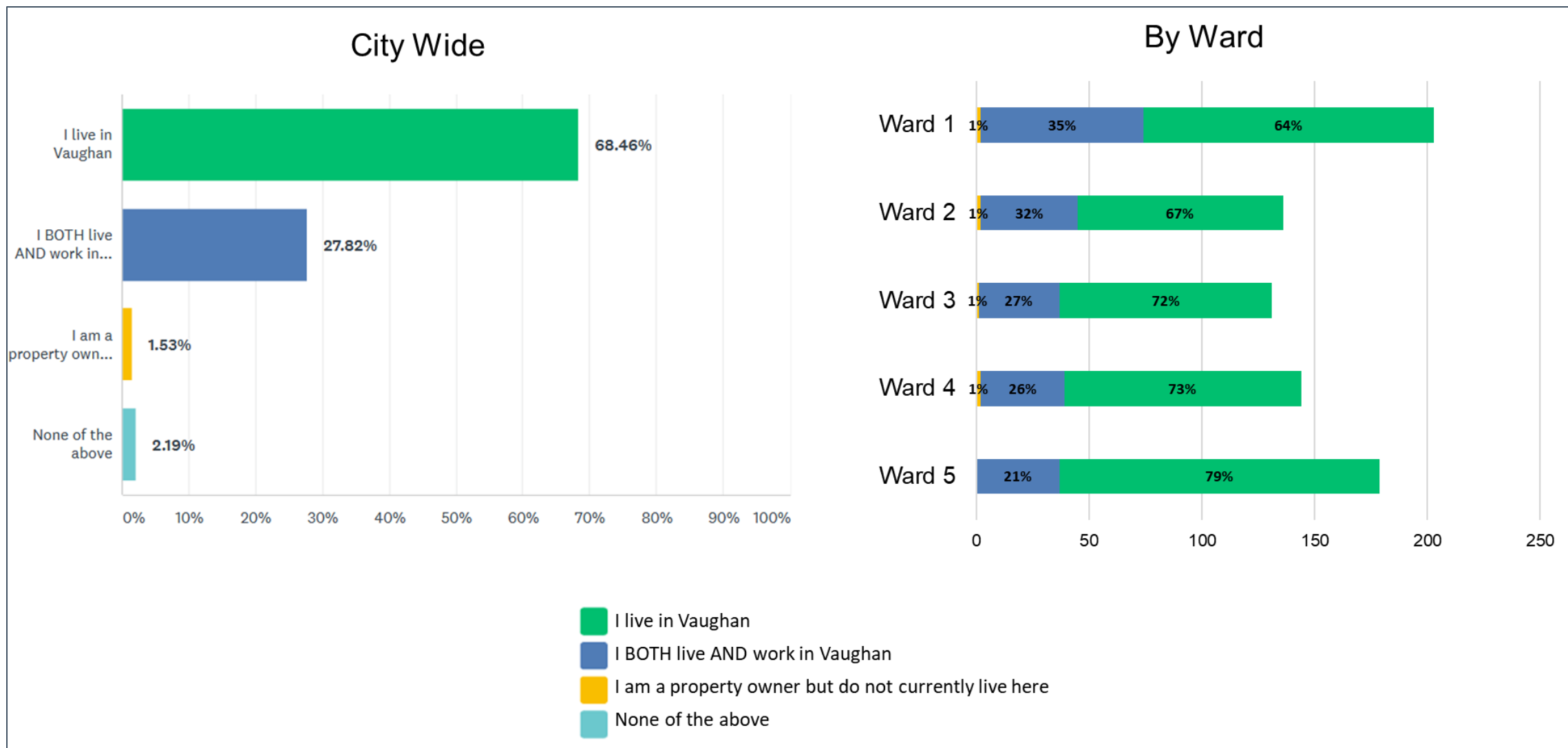
# Which of the following best describes you?



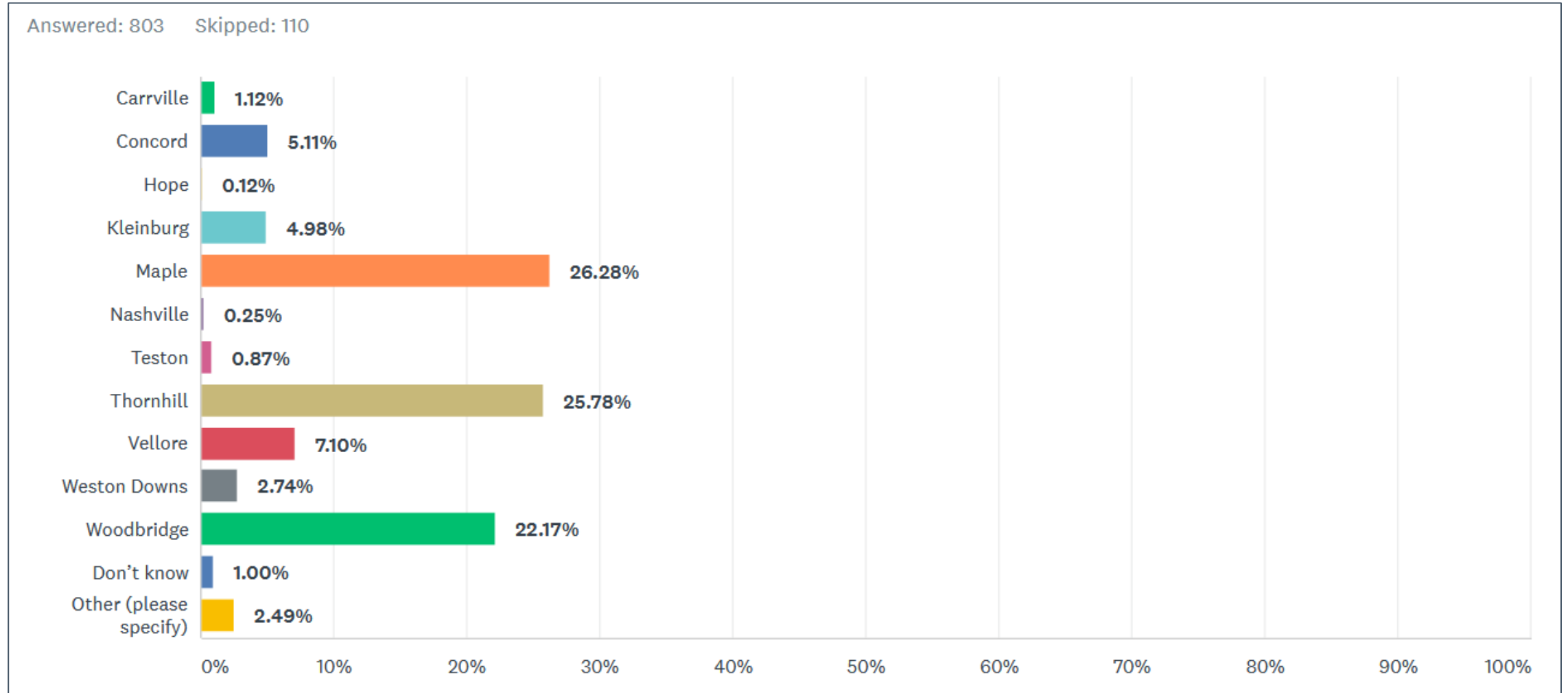
- Almost all survey respondents were from Vaughan.
- There was a good cross-section of responses from the different wards, yet somewhat more responses from Wards 1 and 5 than from Wards 2, 3, and 4.
- Over 900 people clicked on the survey, almost 800 started to answer a question or two, and most importantly...
  - 585 followed through to answer the key questions; and
  - 375 of those people left thoughtful written explanations for their choices. This level of involvement in a ward boundary review is considered to be very high.
- The four virtual town hall events attracted 31 people who generated dozens of questions that were answered right away.



# Which of the following best describes you?

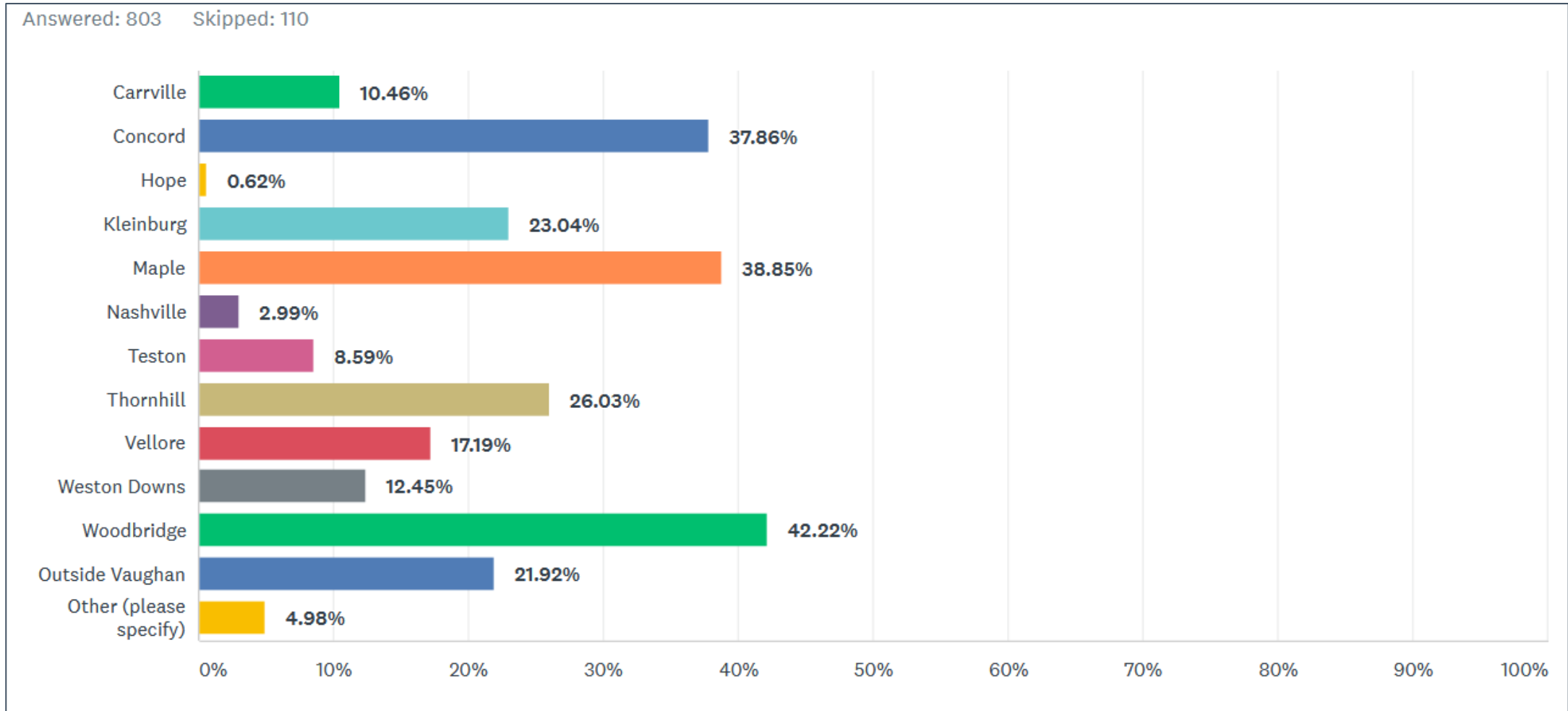


# In which main community within the ward do you reside?

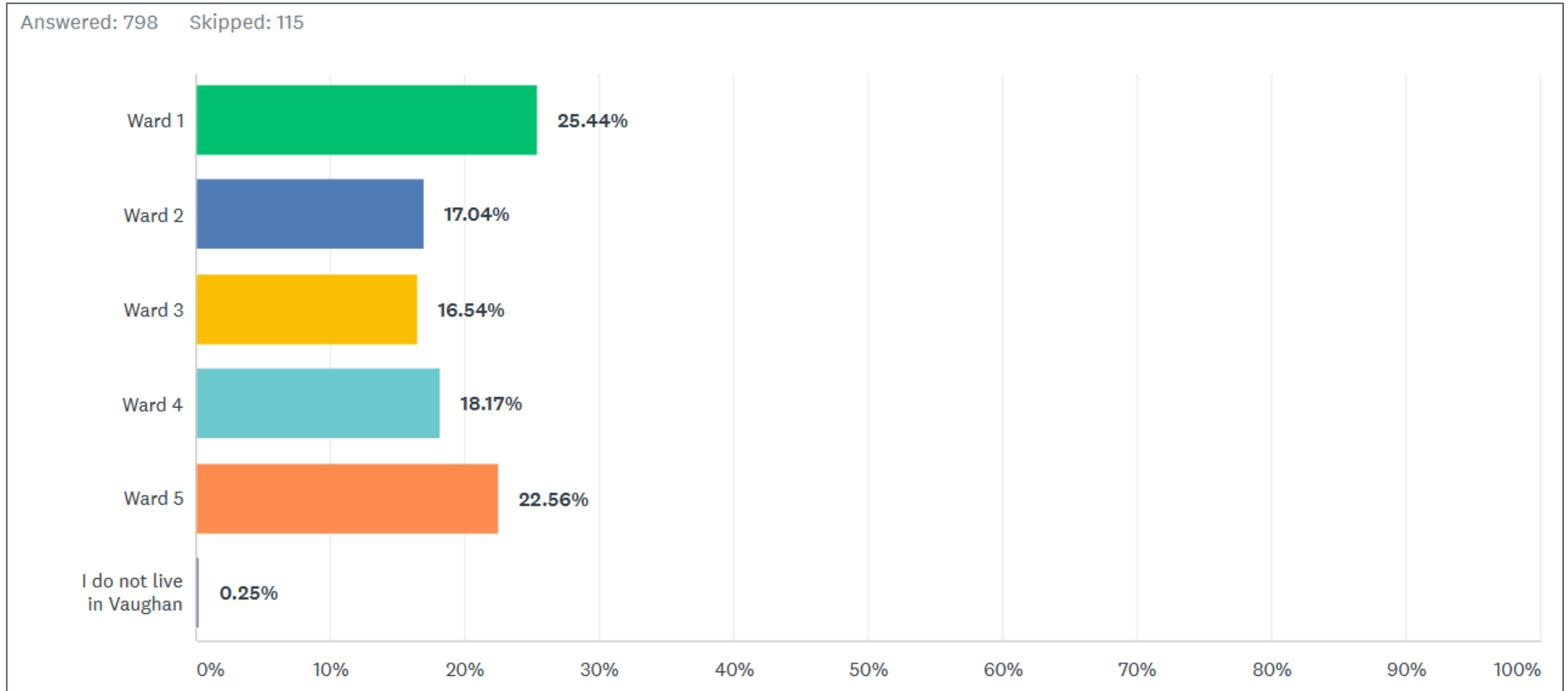


# Please select up to three additional communities in Vaughan to which you feel you are connected?

(e.g. for shopping, work, school, etc.)



# In which ward do you live? Use the map below to help you if you're not sure.

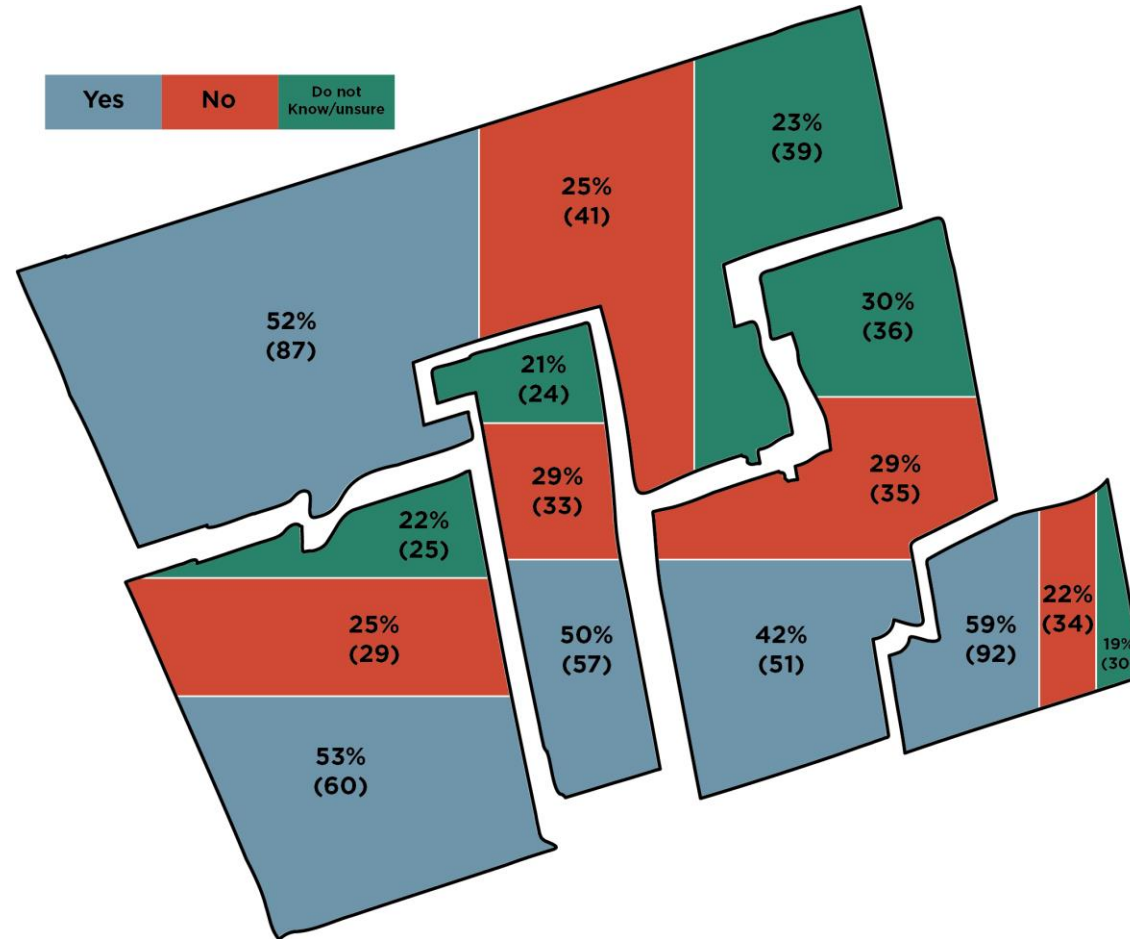


# Do you feel the current ward boundaries accurately represent you?



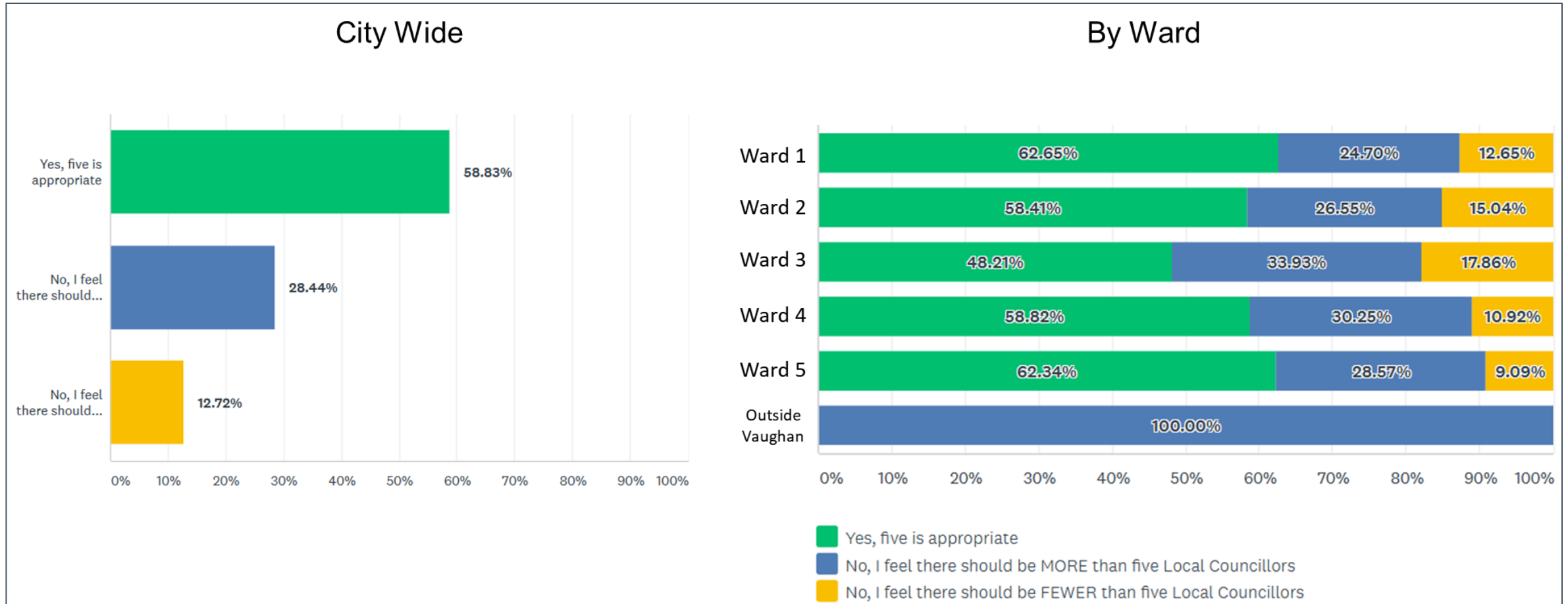
- While people are relatively satisfied with how well represented they are, many had more to say about what works and what does not work. For example:
  - Ward 1 is very large and needs some re-thinking.
  - Urbanization and population growth might make the wards go out of balance. The current wards do not take future growth into account.
  - Highways (in particular the 400) need to be taken into consideration.
  - "Pockets of communities that really do not associate."
  - Large wards are hard to represent.
  - It is not clear how the old wards were created. The boundaries could make more sense.
  - General confusion and frustration with the role of Regional Councillors, though this is out of the scope for this review.
  - A substantial minority would like to look at the question of how many councillors are needed to represent the growing population.
  - Satisfaction is often linked to the responsiveness of individual councillors, not the boundaries themselves...also out of the scope for the review, but important to hear.

# Do you feel the current ward boundaries accurately represent you?

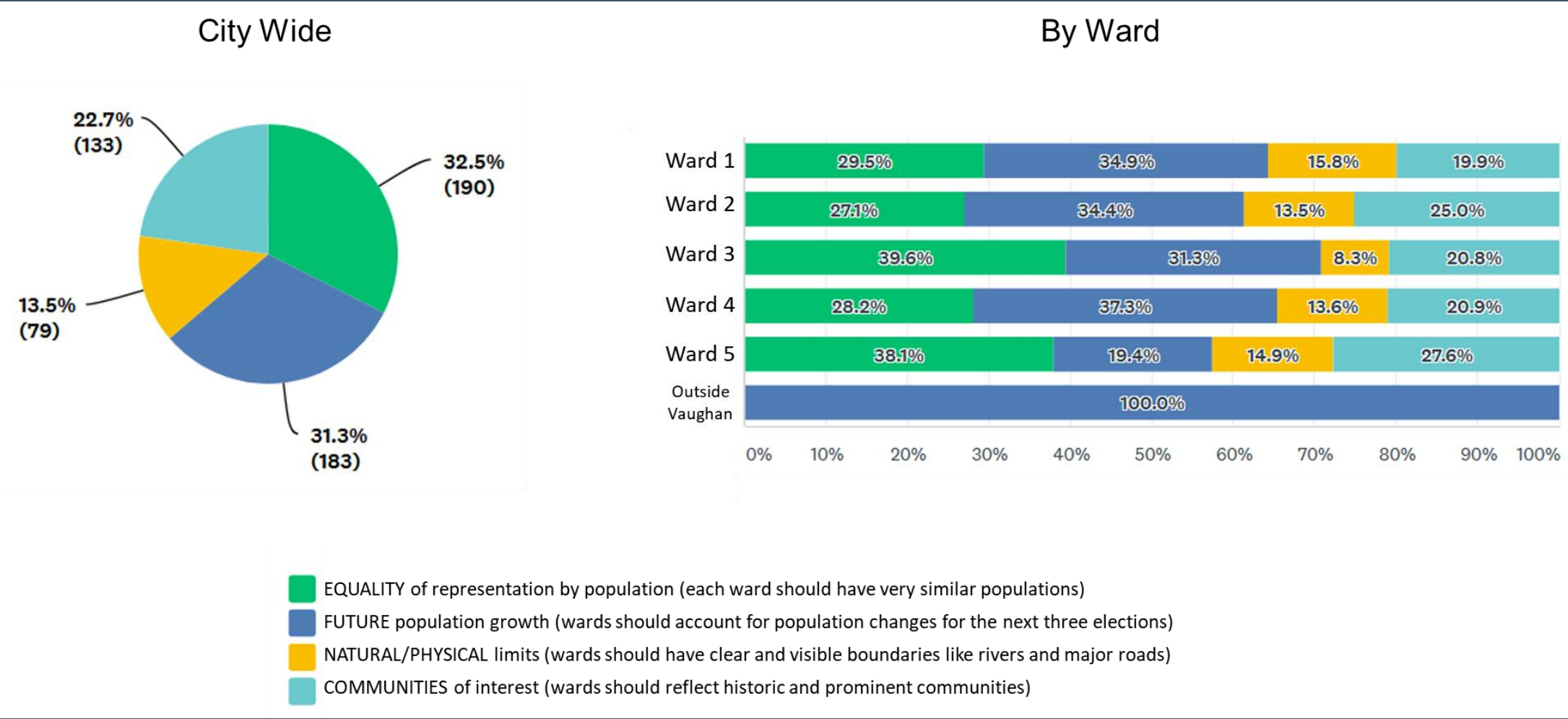




# Does the City have the right number of Local Councillors? (not including the Mayor and three Regional Councillors)



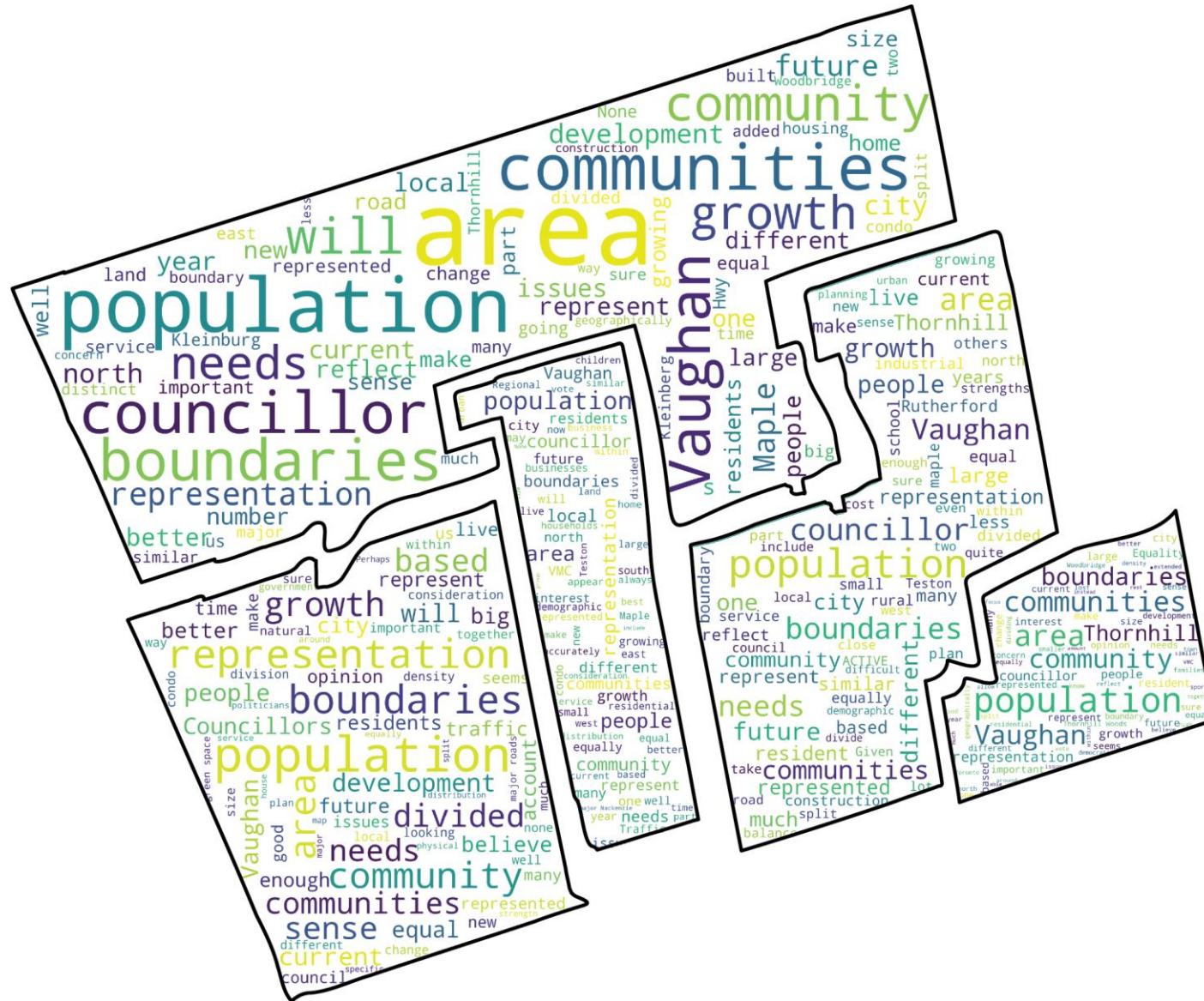
Which principle do you believe should be given the highest priority as the Consultant Team assesses the ward boundaries in Vaughan? The others would still be considered but given less emphasis.



Which principle do you believe should be given the highest priority as the Consultant Team assesses the ward boundaries in Vaughan? The others would still be considered but given less emphasis.



- Of the 585 who answered this question, almost half took the time to explain their answers.
- Equality and fairness are clearly high values among respondents. Several people argued that focusing on getting the numbers balanced might have a unifying effect, because the wards would reduce the emphasis on differences among neighbourhoods, in ethnicity, class, and income levels. Residents have connections across the City and emphasizing differences can cause unnecessary "rifts." Mostly, the arguments in favour of equality have to do with a councillor's ability to represent people and help their constituents in a timely manner.
- The surprisingly large percentage of people who prioritized future growth were clear that Vaughan is still growing and they want to see good planning. There is a lot of concern/awareness of issues around traffic, new developments, and infrastructure demands.
- Over 25% of respondents prioritized communities of interest for ward boundaries, citing concerns that councillors "represent my values," and maintaining and preserving historic characteristics, and focusing on policy issues that matter the most to people. It is important to residents that communities not "get lost with population growth," or at least they should not get split up.
- Among the small group of respondents who prioritized physical and natural boundaries, a concern for the environment bubbled up, as did the importance of clear boundaries because they support a sense of identity.





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