



CW DATE April 15/09

ITEM NO. 6-11

TOWN OF INNISFIL STAFF REPORT

STAFF REPORT NO. CRP-016-09

DATE: April 15, 2009

TO: Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Susan Downs, Director of Corporate Services

SUBJECT: Ward Boundary Review

CROSS REF.:

RECOMMENDATION:

It is therefore recommended:

That Staff Report CRP-016-09, dated April 15, 2009 from the Director of Corporate Services be received; and

That the report be posted on the Town's website with an invitation for the public to submit comments; and

That a public meeting be advertised and scheduled for May 13th, 2009 to receive input from the public; and

That Members of Council submit comments to the Clerk, by April 30, 2009.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this report is to respond to Council directive CR-210.08, "That the Clerk be requested to review the current ward system for Innisfil with the intent of having a more balanced population and to prepare a report for Council's consideration". Council last considered ward boundary changes at its meeting held on January 15, 2005 at which time it was agreed to make no changes to the ward boundaries.

The current ward system has evolved over time. Prior to the 1988 Election, Council was elected at large. In 1987, Council authorized staff to apply to the Ontario Municipal Board for an order to divide the municipality into wards. The resulting Board Order divided the municipality into

five wards with one (1) representative for each ward with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor being elected at large. This new council structure came into effect with the 1988 election. There was a further adjustment to seven wards following the 1990 amalgamation involving Cookstown and parts of Tecumseth and West Gwillimbury which came into effect in 1992. At that time, Council expanded to nine (9) members; seven (7) wards with one representative for each ward along with a Mayor and Deputy Mayor elected at large. Since that time, as various communities grew, the disparity in ward populations increased to the point that it may now be desirable to re-divide the wards to provide more equitable representation by population. "Representation by Population" is a cornerstone of our democracy and the equality of the vote is part and parcel of this principle. To put it another way votes should carry equal weight. The disparity in population in the wards has now grown to be quite large. Ward 1 has a population of 2,002 whereas Ward 3 population is 7,387.

Another factor to be considered is the quality of representation as well as workload of ward Councillors. When a ward becomes too large it detracts from a Councillor's ability to effectively represent his/her constituents. As well, this diminishes from a fair and equitable distribution of the workload. For these reasons and to achieve a more equitable ward population distribution, it may be appropriate to re-divide the wards.

This report presents options to re-divide the existing seven (7) wards. The assumption has been made here that Council does not want to make changes to the composition of Council or the number of wards and consequently these matters are not addressed in this report. Should this not be the case Council has the option of providing direction in this regard.

ANALYSIS/CONSIDERATION:

Process

Section 222 of the Municipal Act empowers Council to divide or re-divide the municipality into wards. This section also provides that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing may pass regulations to set criteria to be used in establishing ward boundaries. To-date this has not been done.

The requirement previously in the Municipal Act to hold a public meeting prior to enacting any by-law to re-divide wards has been repealed. However, public participation is desirable and it is recommended that at least one (1) public meeting be held to receive public input on any ward boundary changes. Further, Council's Provision of the Notice Policy and Section 222 of the Municipal Act provides that the municipality shall give notice within 15 days of the passing of a by-law to re-divide wards and to give notice of the 45 day appeal period during which the by-law can be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. It would be desirable to have any by-law to re-divide the wards passed prior to Council's summer break period to allow sufficient time for an Ontario Municipal Board hearing in the event of an appeal.

Ward Criteria

As indicated above, the Minister has authority to pass regulations to establish criteria for ward boundaries, but to date has not done so. In reviewing various reports written on ward re-divisions and academic literature, various criteria are used in establishing wards. The most important criteria is that as far as practicable wards should be as equal as possible in population. However, other factors do come into play such as respecting communities, recognizing special geographic features, population trends and diversity of interests. In this regard, interest has been expressed in “strip wards”, each of which would have a diversity of lakeshore, hamlets and agricultural lands. Options reflecting this are presented for consideration. In addition, the number of electors in the various wards is a consideration. On average in Innisfil, 84% of the population are electors. The ratio of electors/population ranges from 78% in Ward 1 and 91% in Ward 5. It is also desirable that boundary lines be clear and easily identifiable. In order to accommodate these criteria in varying degrees it has become generally acknowledged that an acceptable range in ward populations is plus or minus $\pm 25\%$ from the average ward population.

Map “A” shows the current wards. Population figures are 2006 Statistics Canada data and the current range is Ward 1 at 2,002 to Ward 3 at 7,307. Consequently the range is substantially, greater than the $\pm 25\%$, from the average being, 4,567.

Five (5) options are presented for Council’s consideration. Options 1, 1A, and 2 are a variation of the current wards. Both generally meet the criteria usually followed in determining ward boundaries as noted above. The $\pm 25\%$ is maintained for the most part with the exception of Ward 1 in the longer term. The population projections have been provided by planning staff. Should the projections in the other wards, where most of the development is to occur be less than forecasted, the deviation from the average population for Ward 1 may not be as great and in any event would be reasonably in line with the other wards.

Maintaining this $\pm 25\%$ objective is somewhat more challenging in the case of strip wards. If a premium is placed on achieving a diversity of communities within each ward, the greater deviation from the average population may be an acceptable trade off. This is ultimately a political consideration. Option 5 is presented as something closer to the status quo with a somewhat better population distribution than is the case with current wards, but does not meet the $\pm 25\%$ criteria.

OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES:

Council has the following options:

1. Adopt the recommendation and proceed with the process to implement new wards for the next municipal election.
2. Direct the Clerk to prepare alternative proposals for consideration.
3. Direct the Clerk to report on possible changes to Council composition and ward representation.

4. Take no action in which case the current wards would remain in effect for the next municipal election.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

None to be considered.

CONCLUSION:

It would be appropriate to invite public comment on the ward boundary re-division and hold a public meeting to receive input from the public prior to Council considering any by-law to implement ward boundaries. Consequently it is being recommended that Council consider receiving public input and schedule a public meeting as set out in the recommendation section of this report.

PREPARED BY:



John D. Beach, Clerk

APPROVED BY:

Susan Downs, Director of Corporate Services

REVIEWED FOR SUBMISSION



Lawrence Allison
Chief Administrative Officer

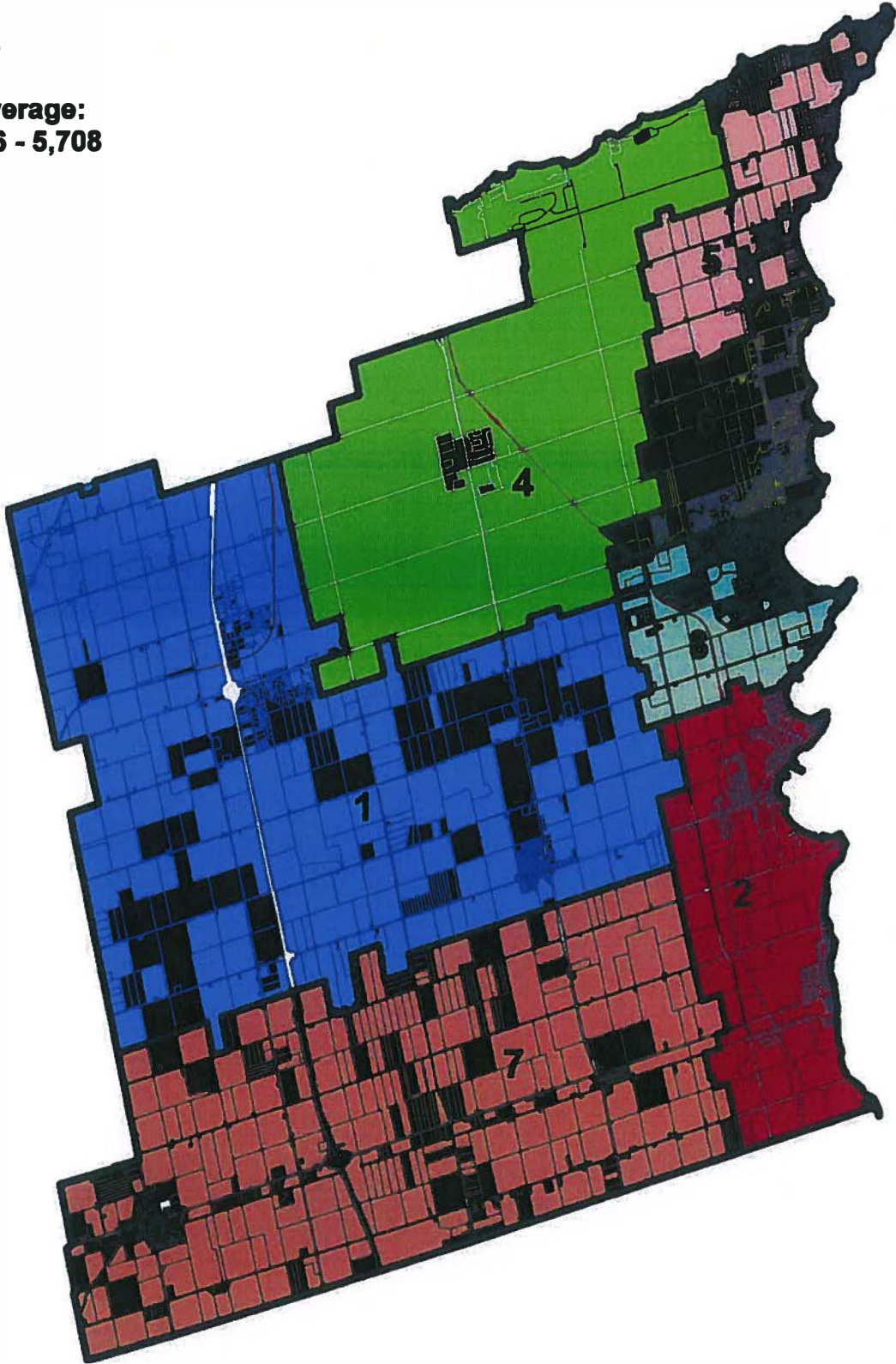
Attached:

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Current Wards

Ward 1 - 2002
Ward 2 - 4326
Ward 3 - 7387
Ward 4 - 3850
Ward 5 - 4897
Ward 6 - 6758
Ward 7 - 2753
TOTAL: 31,973

Range from average:
+ / - 25%: 3,426 - 5,708



Option 1

Current Population
Ward 1 - 4776
Ward 2 - 3626
Ward 3 - 5339
Ward 4 - 4731
Ward 5 - 3493
Ward 6 - 3761
Ward 7 - 5529
TOTAL: 31,175

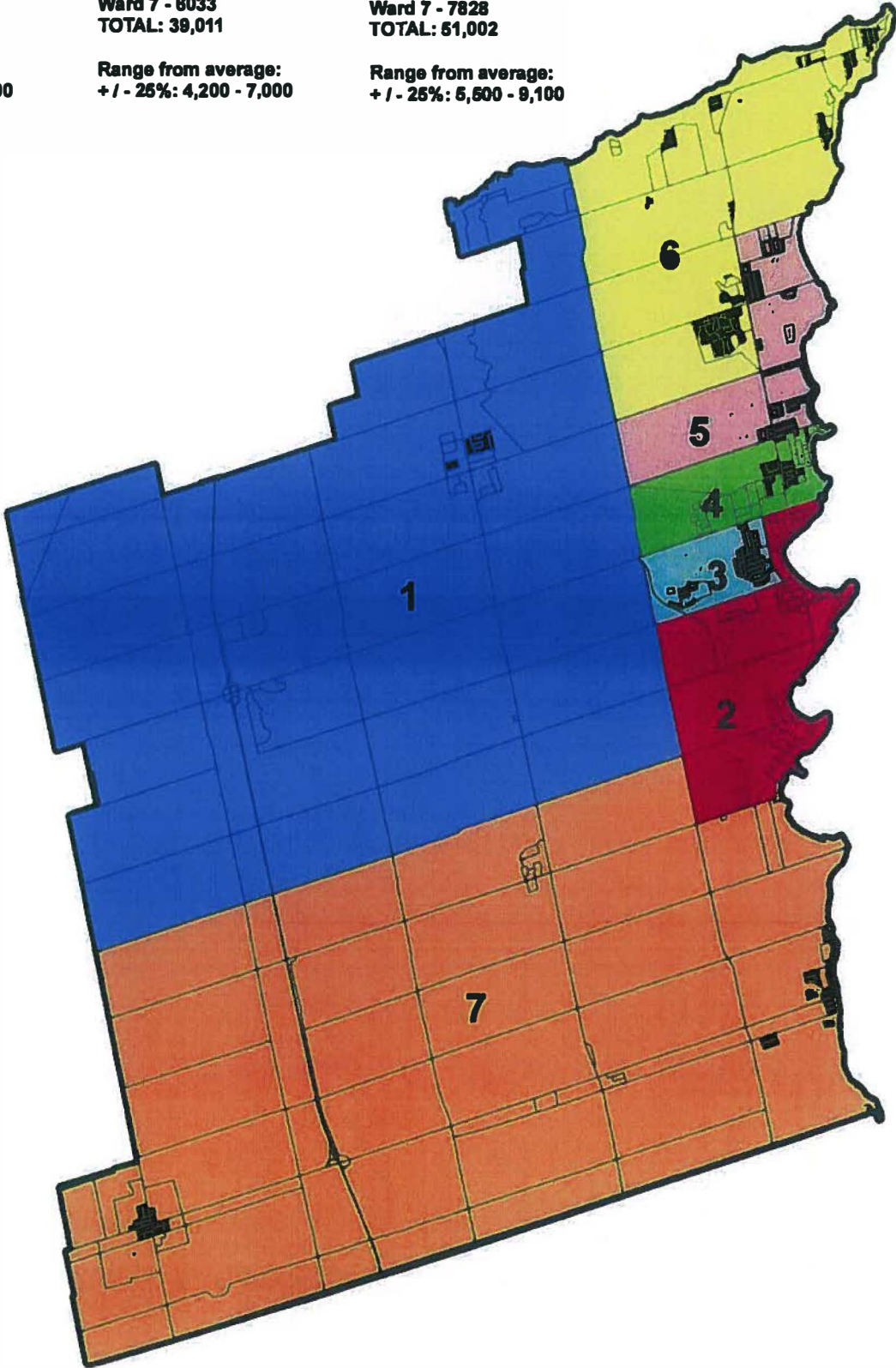
5 Year Projection
Ward 1 - 4866
Ward 2 - 5786
Ward 3 - 8437
Ward 4 - 6642
Ward 5 - 4193
Ward 6 - 3856
Ward 7 - 6033
TOTAL: 39,011

10 Year Projection
Ward 1 - 4951
Ward 2 - 7486
Ward 3 - 10,016
Ward 4 - 6580
Ward 5 - 5819
Ward 6 - 6523
Ward 7 - 7828
TOTAL: 61,002

Range from average
+/- 25%: 3,300 - 5,600

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 4,200 - 7,000

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 5,600 - 9,100



Option 1A

Current Population

Ward 1 - 4776
Ward 2 - 3526
Ward 3 - 5339
Ward 4 - 4731
Ward 5 - 3493
Ward 6 - 3781
Ward 7 - 5529
TOTAL: 31,176

5 year Projection

Ward 1 - 4866
Ward 2 - 5766
Ward 3 - 8437
Ward 4 - 6842
Ward 5 - 4193
Ward 6 - 3866
Ward 7 - 6033
TOTAL: 39,011

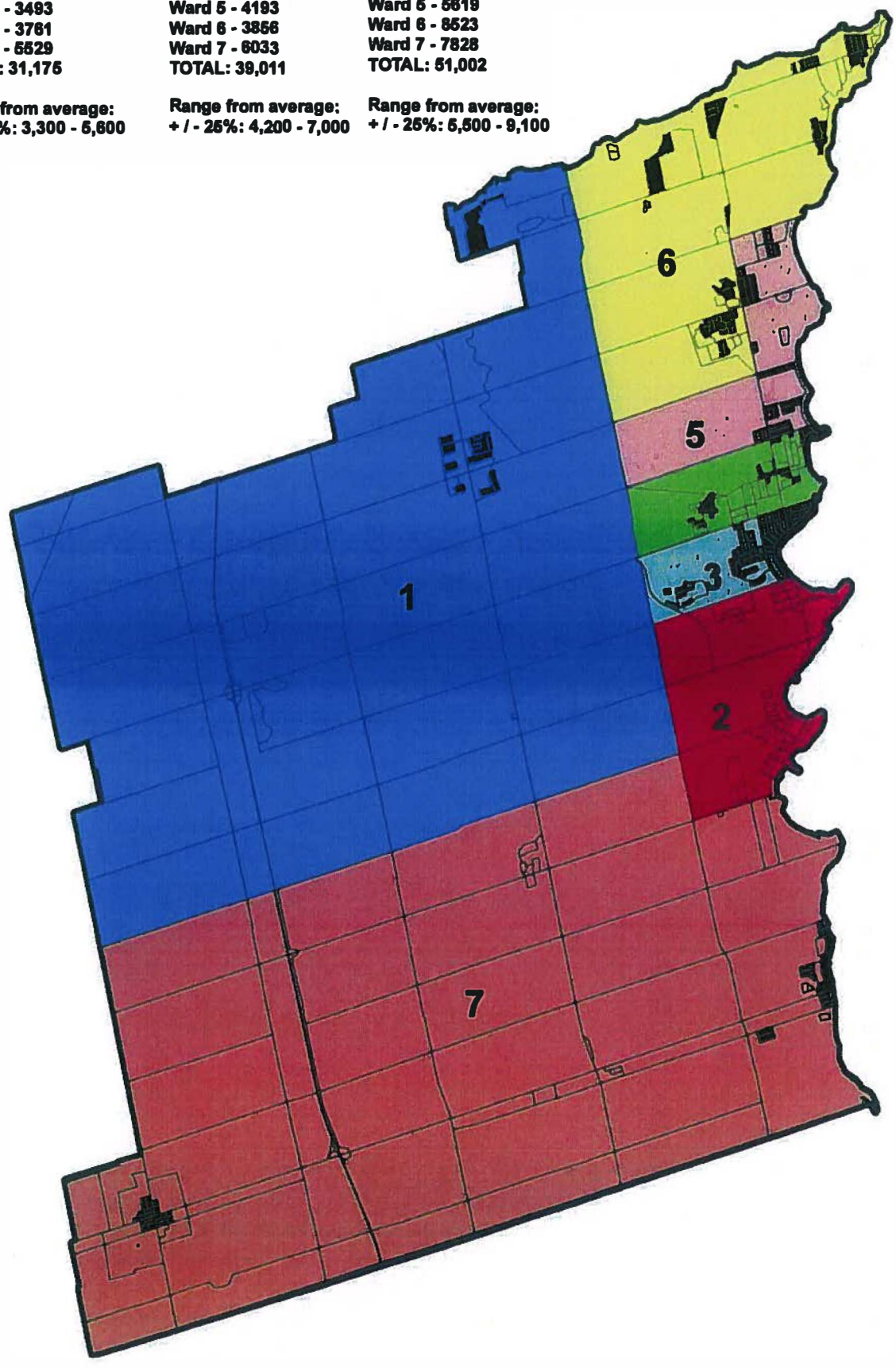
10 year Projection

Ward 1 - 4951
Ward 2 - 7485
Ward 3 - 10,016
Ward 4 - 8580
Ward 5 - 5619
Ward 6 - 8523
Ward 7 - 7828
TOTAL: 51,002

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 3,300 - 6,600

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 4,200 - 7,000

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 5,500 - 9,100



Option 2

Current Population

Ward 1 - 4284
Ward 2 - 4731
Ward 3 - 4134
Ward 4 - 4731
Ward 5 - 3493
Ward 6 - 4273
Ward 7 - 5529
TOTAL: 31,176

5 Year Projection

Ward 1 - 4363
Ward 2 - 6990
Ward 3 - 7232
Ward 4 - 6842
Ward 5 - 4193
Ward 6 - 4358
Ward 7 - 6033
TOTAL: 39,011

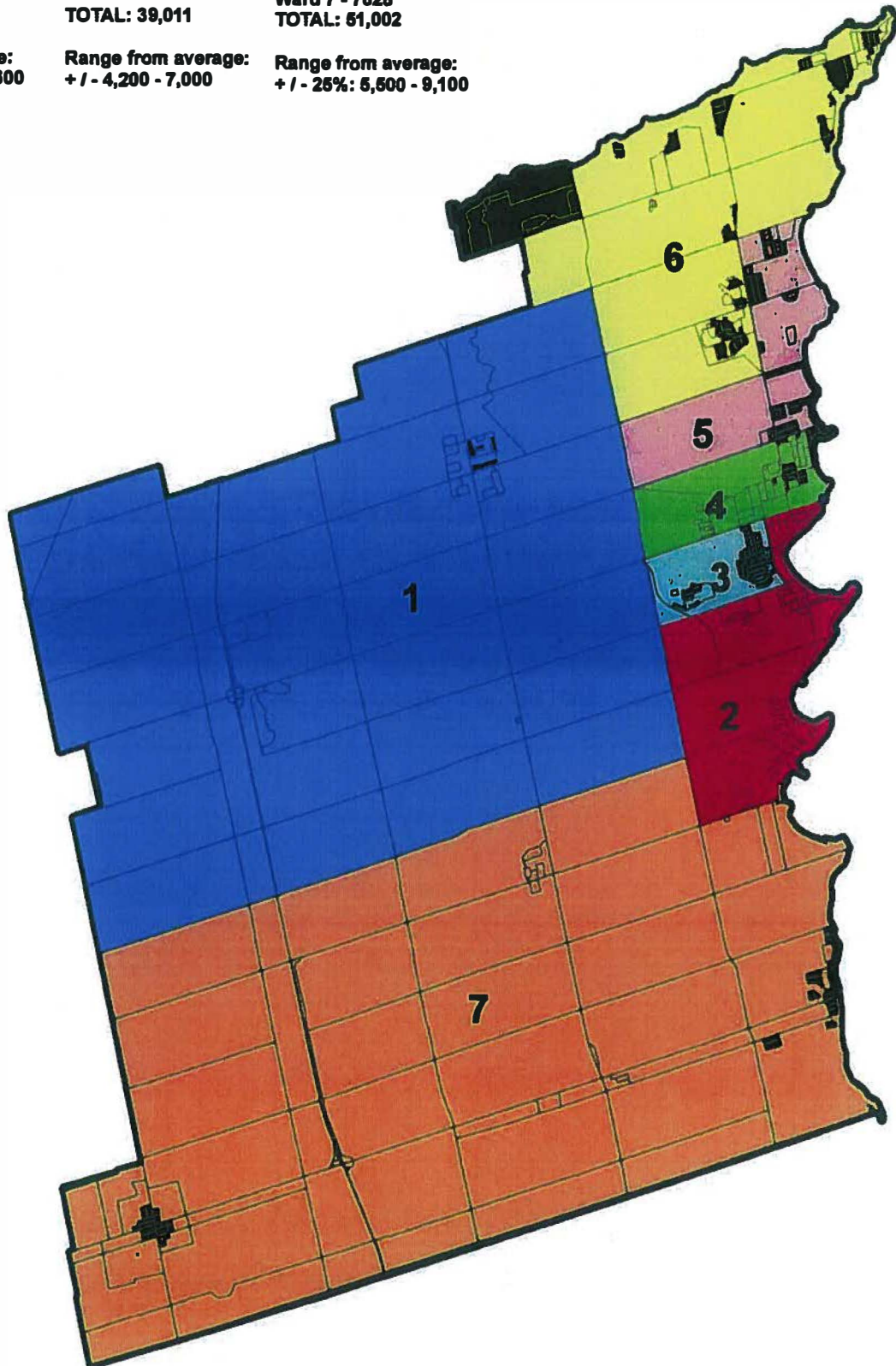
10 Year Projection

Ward 1 - 4438
Ward 2 - 8690
Ward 3 - 8811
Ward 4 - 8580
Ward 5 - 5819
Ward 6 - 9036
Ward 7 - 7828
TOTAL: 61,002

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 3,300 - 5,600

Range from average:
+/- 4,200 - 7,000

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 5,600 - 9,100



Option 3

Current Population
Ward 1 - 4807
Ward 2 - 6069
Ward 3 - 5003
Ward 4 - 5866
Ward 5 - 3088
Ward 6 - 3628
Ward 7 - 2724
TOTAL: 31,176

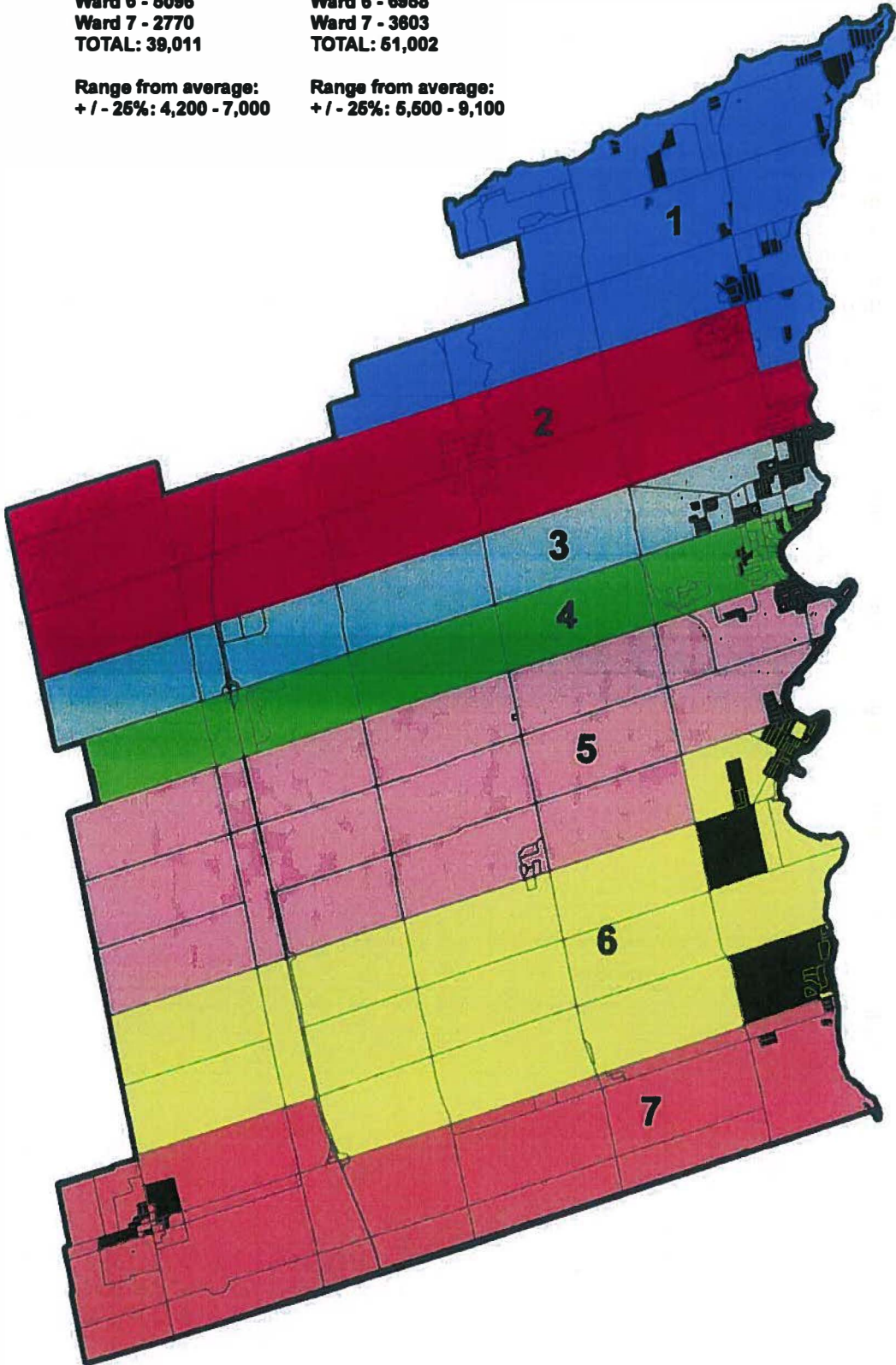
5 Year Projection
Ward 1 - 5592
Ward 2 - 6129
Ward 3 - 6114
Ward 4 - 8973
Ward 5 - 4337
Ward 6 - 5096
Ward 7 - 2770
TOTAL: 39,011

10 Year Projection
Ward 1 - 11,698
Ward 2 - 6204
Ward 3 - 6862
Ward 4 - 10,662
Ward 5 - 5137
Ward 6 - 6968
Ward 7 - 3603
TOTAL: 61,002

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 3,300 - 5,600

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 4,200 - 7,000

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 5,600 - 9,100



Option 4

Current Population

Ward 1 - 2236
Ward 2 - 2571
Ward 3 - 8059
Ward 4 - 5003
Ward 5 - 5898
Ward 6 - 5325
Ward 7 - 4083
TOTAL: 31,175

5 Year Projection

Ward 1 - 2321
Ward 2 - 3271
Ward 3 - 8129
Ward 4 - 8114
Ward 5 - 9005
Ward 6 - 8042
Ward 7 - 4129
TOTAL: 39,011

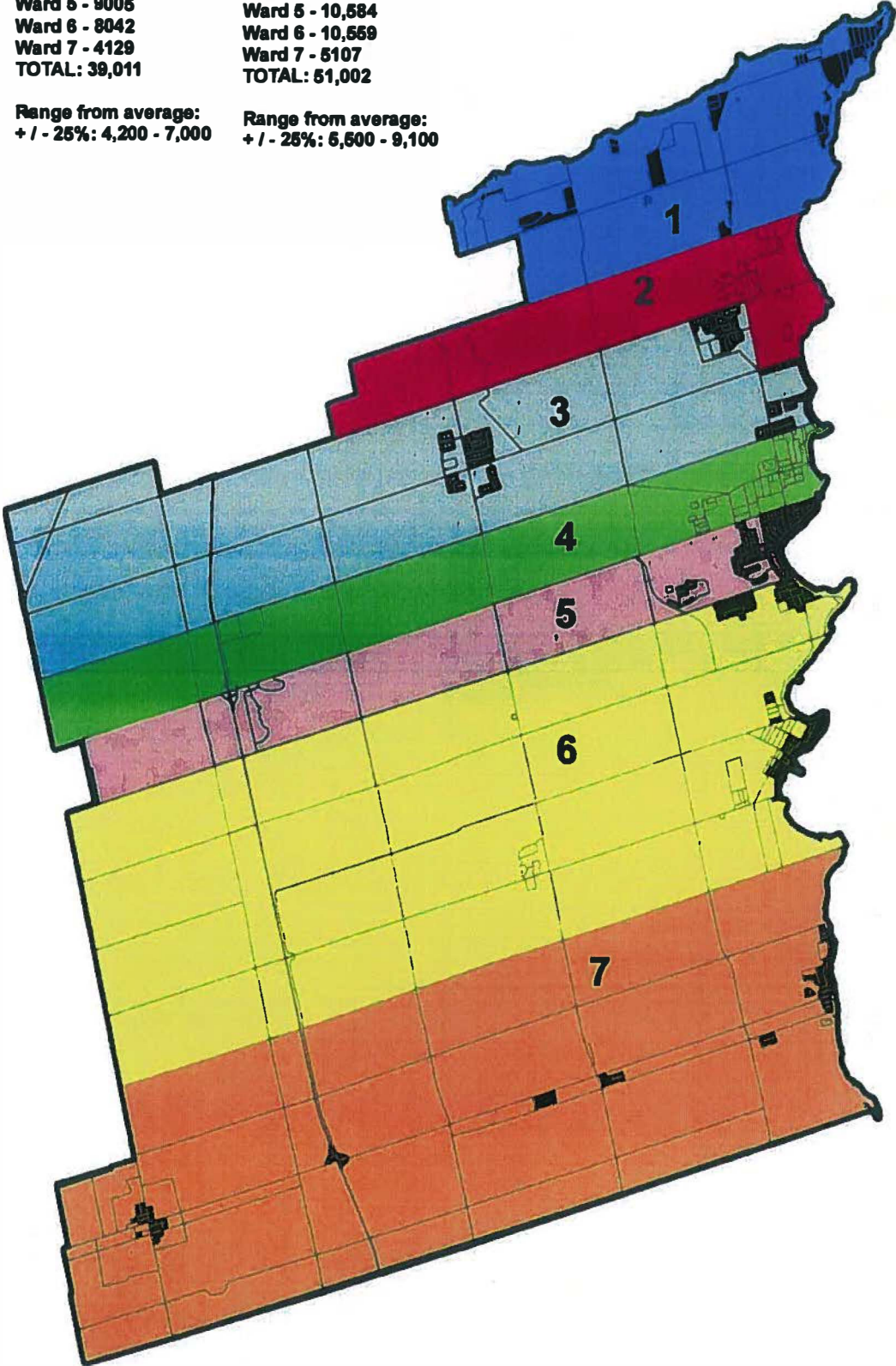
10 Year Projection

Ward 1 - 6999
Ward 2 - 4897
Ward 3 - 6204
Ward 4 - 6852
Ward 5 - 10,584
Ward 6 - 10,559
Ward 7 - 5107
TOTAL: 51,002

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 3,300 - 5,600

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 4,200 - 7,000

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 5,500 - 9,100



Option 5

Current Population

Ward 1 - 2258
Ward 2 - 3952
Ward 3 - 5339
Ward 4 - 3538
Ward 5 - 5442
Ward 6 - 6563
Ward 7 - 4083
TOTAL: 31,175

5 Year Projection

Ward 1 - 2325
Ward 2 - 8611
Ward 3 - 8437
Ward 4 - 3618
Ward 5 - 6217
Ward 6 - 7674
Ward 7 - 4129
TOTAL: 39,011

10 Year Projection

Ward 1 - 2342
Ward 2 - 9111
Ward 3 - 10,016
Ward 4 - 3704
Ward 5 - 12,310
Ward 6 - 8412
Ward 7 - 6107
TOTAL: 51,002

Range from average
+/- 25%: 3,300 - 5,600

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 4,200 - 7,000

Range from average:
+/- 25%: 5,500 - 9,100

