City of Swan

Discussion Paper

City of Swan Wards and Representation Review

22/09/2026



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Version control

Version	Date	Issue description
01	12 August 2026	Original issued August Ordinary Council Meeting
02	23 September 2026	Amended explanation of positive/negative variance
03	2 October 2026	Amended Option 3 whole locality descriptor

The City of Swan acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this region, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and their descendants.

1. Executive Summary

The City of Swan is undertaking a Wards and Representation Review to address an imbalance in elector representation within the Whiteman Ward and to ensure equitable representation across the City. The review is being conducted under the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995* and follows the City's previous review completed in 2022/2023.

The City currently comprises five wards represented by 14 Councillors, with the Mayor elected by all electors across the district. While four wards remain within the Local Government Advisory Board's recommended elector-to-Councillor ratio deviation of ±10%, the Whiteman Ward currently records a deviation of -14.64%, placing it outside the acceptable range and necessitating a review. Without intervention, modelling indicates this imbalance will worsen over time

The review considers the statutory assessment factors required by the Local Government Advisory Board, including:

- Elector-to-Councillor ratios.
- Physical and topographical features.
- Demographic trends and projected growth.
- Communities of interest.
- Economic factors.

The City is experiencing significant growth, with its population forecast to increase from approximately 190,000 residents in 2026 to more than 273,000 by 2046. Near-term growth is concentrated in areas including Ellenbrook, Brabham, Dayton, Henley Brook, Bennett Springs and Bullsbrook, while some established suburbs are expected to experience relatively stable or declining populations. This uneven growth presents challenges in maintaining balanced representation over the longer term.

In developing options, the City undertook extensive modelling of elector forecasts, ward boundaries, Local Area Plans (LAPs), communities of interest and future growth areas. Four options are presented for community consideration:

Option 1 – No Wards, 14 Councillors plus Mayor

A district-wide representation model where all Councillors represent the entire City. This option creates uniform representation and simplifies elections but may weaken local representation and community identity across a geographically large and diverse local government area.

Option 2 – Five Wards, 14 Councillors plus Mayor

This option retains five wards and 14 Councillors while substantially realigning ward boundaries and councillor allocations. It achieves strong alignment with Local Area Plans, removes all cross-ward LAPs and improves representation in growth areas, particularly within Whiteman Ward. While Whiteman initially remains marginally outside the preferred ratio range, projected growth brings the ward into compliance over time.

Option 3 – Five Wards, 12 Councillors plus Mayor

This option reduces the Council from 14 to 12 Councillors while maintaining five wards. It delivers acceptable representation ratios and achieves estimated governance savings of approximately $113,000 per annum. However, it results in some fragmentation of communities of interest, with multiple cross-ward LAPs and larger elector loads per Councillor.

Option 4 – Five Wards, 14 Councillors plus Mayor

This option makes targeted boundary and representation adjustments while largely preserving the existing ward structure. It maintains acceptable elector-to-Councillor ratios, provides continuity for the community and requires the least structural change. However, future growth patterns, particularly within Whiteman Ward, may require another review before the next statutory review period.

No preferred option has been identified by Council at this stage. The options are intended to stimulate discussion and provide a basis for community feedback. Community submissions will assist Council in determining its preferred proposal before a recommendation is submitted to the Local Government Advisory Board and ultimately considered by the Minister for Local Government.

Public consultation is scheduled from **23 September 2026 to 20 November 2026**, with Council expected to determine its preferred model in December 2026. Any approved changes are anticipated to take effect for the **October 2027 local government elections**.

2. Background

For the election of Councillors and the representation of electors throughout a district, local governments in Western Australia have either a ward system in place or a no ward system. A ward system provides for the division of the local government district into "wards" (usually a collection of suburbs) with Councillors elected from each ward. A no ward system provides for all Councillors to be elected by all electors throughout its district. Regardless if a local government has a ward system or not, Councillors are to represent all the electors and residents across the whole local government district, not just those electors within their respective ward.

No district boundary adjustments have been contemplated as part of this review. To consider this would increase the complexity of the review due to a different set of legislative requirements that will need to be met together with wider consultation requirements.

No engagement has occurred with any neighbouring local government authorities on this ward and boundary review.

The City of Swan (the City) has resolved to undertake a review of its representation. The purpose of this review is to specifically address the imbalance of representation within the Whiteman Ward. In doing this, other Ward boundaries and representation have also required a review and proposed amendments.

The last review of wards and representation in the City was undertaken in 2022/2023 and it is now appropriate to carry out another review.

2.1 Process to undertake a wards and representation review

The review process involves a number of steps:

- Council resolves to undertake the review
- Public submission period opens
- Information provided to the community for discussion
- Public submission period closes
- Council considers all submissions and relevant factors and makes a decision
- Council submits a report to the Local Government Advisory Board (LGAB) for its consideration
- The LGAB submits a recommendation to the Minister for Local Government (the Minister)

Any changes approved by the Minister will be in place for the next ordinary election where possible.

2.2 Review timeline

August 12, 2026	Council resolves to undertake a Ward and Representation Review
September 23, 2026 to November 20, 2026	Public consultation
November 2026	Officers prepare report on assessment of options, considering all submissions
December 9, 2026	Review presented to Council to: • Adopt wards and representation structure; and • Determine how to implement changes. *Absolute majority required*

By January 31, 2027	City to notify the Advisory Board of the outcome of the review
	Advisory Board considers Council's proposal and makes a recommendation to the Minister; and The Minister may accept or reject the Advisory Board's recommendation but cannot change it.
October 18, 2027	Changes come into effect

2.3 Factors for consideration

When considering changes to the City's wards and representation, the Council as part of the review process, must have regard to the following factors:

Ratio of Elected Members to Electors

It is expected that each local government will have similar ratios of electors to Councillors across the wards of its district, generally falling within a deviation of plus or minus (+/-) 10%.

Physical and topographical Features

These may be natural or manufactured features that will vary from area to area. Water features such as rivers and catchment boundaries may be relevant considerations. Coastal plain and foothills regions, parks and reserves may be relevant as well as similarities and differences between areas within the local government.

Demographic Trends

Several measures of the characteristics of human populations, such as population size, and its distribution by age, sex, occupation and location provide important demographic information. Current and projected population characteristics will be relevant as well as similarities and differences between areas within the local government.

Community of Interest

The term community of interest has a number of elements. These include a sense of community identity and belonging, similarities in the characteristics of the residents of a community and similarities in the economic activities. It can also include dependence on the shared facilities in an area as reflected in catchment areas of local schools and sporting teams, or the circulation areas of local newspapers. Neighbourhoods, suburbs and towns are important units in the physical, historical and social infrastructure and often generate a feeling of community and belonging.

Economic Factors

Economic factors can be broadly interpreted to include any factor that reflects the character of economic activities and resources in the area. This may include the industries that occur in a local government area (or the release of land for these) and the distribution of community assets and infrastructure such as road networks.

Of all the assessment factors considered by the LGAB, the Councillor/elector ratio factor is the most relevant.

If the LGAB considers the City has submitted a proposal which correctly takes into account these factors, it will recommend the proposal to the Minister.

If, in the LGAB's opinion, a proposal does not correctly take these factors into account, it may request that a revised proposal addressing all the factors be submitted. If the local government does not comply, the LGAB may recommend a proposal to the Minister which correctly takes these factors into account.

3. Current Situation

The City is a large geographical area with boundaries which extend from Bullsbrook in the north, Bushmead in the south, Ballajura in the west and Gidgegannup in the east.

Currently, the City has 14 Councillors elected from five wards. The Mayor is elected by electors of the district.

Wards have been generally constructed to include whole suburbs rather than dividing a suburb between two or more wards. Exceptions occur for the suburbs of Henley Brook, Middle Swan, Lexia and the area known as Orchid Park (area bounded by Marshall Road, Tonkin Highway, Reid Highway and Beechboro Road North), in the suburb of Bennett Springs.

The current wards and representation arrangements were a result of a review conducted in 2022/2023. As a result of this review, the number of Councillors was reduced from 15 to 14 and a number of ward boundaries were adjusted to ensure all wards were within the +/- 10% ratio deviation for the Councillor to elector ratio.

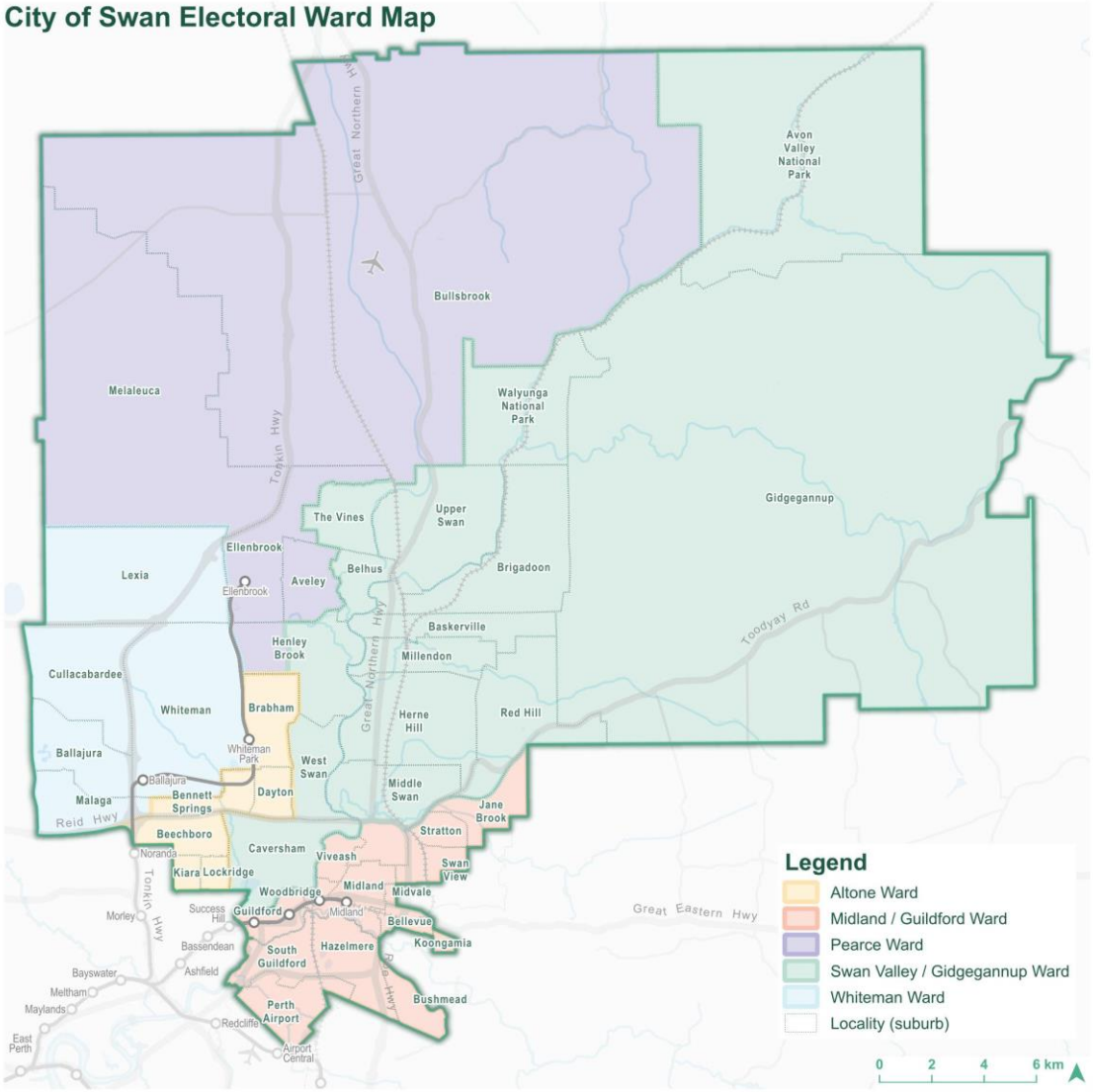
This was achieved by:

- Transferring the suburb of Brabham from Whiteman Ward to Altone Ward;
- Transferring that part of the suburb of Caversham in Altone Ward to the Swan Valley/Gidgegannup Ward;
- Transferring part of the suburb of Middle Swan, that part not located within the Swan Valley Planning Act Area, from Swan Valley/Gidgegannup Ward to the Midland/Guildford Ward; and
- Transferring that part of the suburb of Lexia from the Pearce Ward to the Whiteman Ward;
- Transferring that part of the suburb of Henley Brook located within the Whiteman Ward to the Pearce Ward; and
- Transferring the area known as Orchid Park (area bounded by Marshall Road; Tonkin Highway, Reid Highway and Beechboro Road North), in the suburb of Bennett Springs, from the Altone Ward to the Whiteman Ward.

These changes were implemented for the 2023 local government elections.

In normal circumstances, the City would be required to conduct a ward and representation review within an eight year period (i.e. 2030/31). As the Whiteman Ward electors to Councillor ratio is currently outside the +/- 10% ratio deviation, it is considered prudent to undertake a wards and representation review now to ensure appropriate representation across all Wards.

The current ward structure is as follows:



The electors to Councillor ratio as at 8 April 2026, are as follows:

Ward	No. of Councillors	No. of Electors	Ratio of Electors to Councillor	% Ratio Deviation
Altone	3	25,844	8,615	4.17
Midland/Guildford	3	24,831	8,277	0.09
Pearce	4	33,509	8,377	1.30
Swan Valley/Gidgegannup	2	17,475	8,738	5.66
Whiteman	2	14,118	7,059	-14.64*
Total	**14**	**115,777**	**8,270**	

*The variance is expected to be within a range of +/- 10%.

The variance is calculated by subtracting the average electors to Councillor ratio for the whole district from the average electors to Councillor ratio for a ward. The result is then divided by the average electors to Councillor ratio for the whole district and multiplied by 100 to give a percentage. A negative result indicates that a ward is over-represented, while a positive result indicates that a ward is under-represented.

In practical terms, a positive variance means that each Councillor in the ward represents more electors than the district average, resulting in comparatively lower representation per elector. Conversely, a negative variance means that each Councillor represents fewer electors than the district average, resulting in comparatively higher representation per elector.

Interpretation of Variance

The objective of the review is not to maximise or minimise representation for individual wards, but to achieve equitable representation across the district as a whole. Variance should therefore be understood as a measure of relative level of representation in each ward compared to the district average.

4. Discussion Paper

This Discussion Paper has been developed to assist the community to consider options and ideas for the review of the City's wards and representation. The community's feedback is important, and the community is invited through the submission process to propose options. All submissions received must be considered by Council.

Modelling has been done based on both reducing council member numbers and not reducing council member numbers. Section 2.17 of the *Local Government Act 1995* provides that the minimum number of councillors for a district where the population is greater than 75,000 is 8 and the maximum number of councillors is 14. Given the City's population is estimated to be approximately 188,000, the City can have anywhere between 8 to 14 council members and a popularly elected Mayor.

4.1 Assessment of factors

A general discussion of the assessment factors as they apply to the City follows:

Ratio of Electors to Councillor in the Various Wards

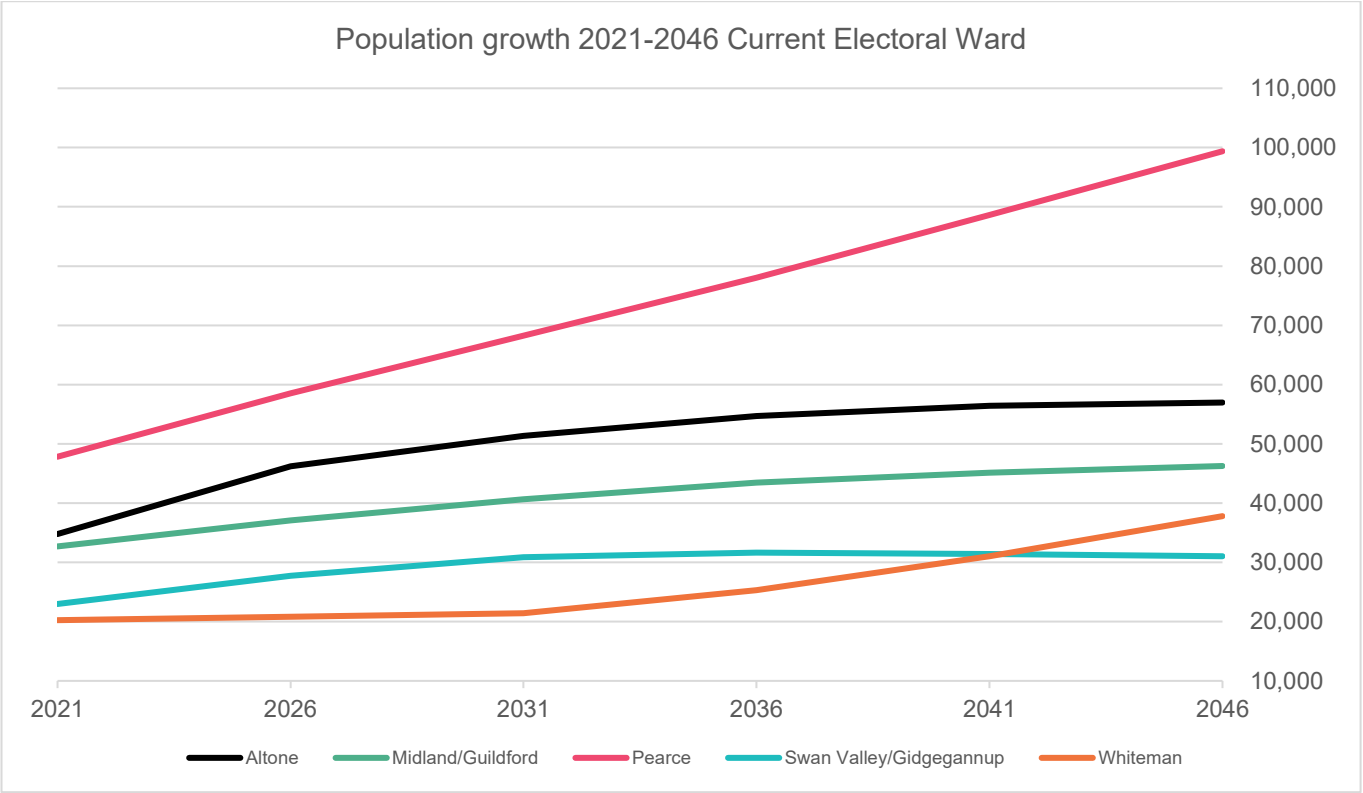
The percentage ratio variation is calculated by subtracting the electors to Councillor ratio for the whole district from the average electors to Councillor ratio for a ward. The result is then divided by the average electors to Councillor ratio for the whole district and multiplied by 100 to give a percentage. A **positive result** indicates that each Councillor represents more electors than the district average and therefore the ward is comparatively **under-represented**. A **negative result** indicates that each Councillor represents fewer electors than the district average and therefore the ward is comparatively **over-represented.**

The options presented in this Discussion Paper aim to achieve balanced representation.

For any ward review it is preferable that any changes to the electors to Councillor ratio consider possible growth and decline in population, thereby resulting in an increase or decrease of electors to Councillor ratio before the next review takes place (required to be conducted within eight years). However, it cannot be determined with any certainty what increase or decrease in population will occur in each area.

Based on the projected population growth by Informed Decisions (.id) in January 2026, and the modelling done by the City's Strategic Planning team, it is estimated the City's population will grow by 13,844 people to 204,245 people between 2026 and 2029*, which is distributed unevenly across current electoral wards.

*These numbers are derived from modelling; there is a slight misalignment with those available on the Forecast.id website.



The City currently has an overall elector-to-population ratio of 60.8%.

Based on this proportional assumption built into the study's modelling, it is estimated to add 10,244 electors from 2026 to 2029. Pearce and Altone Wards are expected to gain about 4,000 and 3,400 electors respectively. Whiteman Ward will gain fewer than 100 electors, as many of the residential developments are expected to accelerate after 2031.

Ward	Population Change 2026-29	Additional Electors 2026-29	Population Change 2026-36	Additional Electors 2026-36	Population Change 2026-46	Additional Electors 2026-46
Altone	+3,196	+3,429	+8,482	+6,400	+10,769	+7,672
Midland/ Guildford	+2,180	+1,347	+6,396	+3,749	+9,189	+5,459
Pearce	+6,066	+4,186	+19,505	+12,181	+40,842	+25,774
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	+2,334	+1,234	+3,898	+1,912	+3,297	+1,564
Whiteman	+68	+48	+4,468	+1,836	+16,966	+8,212
Grand Total	**+13,844**	**+10,244**	**+42,749**	**+26,078**	**+81,063**	**+48,681**

In the scenario where councillor numbers and ward boundaries remain unchanged, Whiteman Ward's deviation is forecast to increase from -14.6% in 2026 to -23.0% by 2031. This means the ward would become increasingly over-represented compared with the district average. All other wards are expected to remain within a 10% deviation during this period.

Ward	No. of Councillors	Estimated Elector 2027	E/C Ratio 2027	Deviation 2027	Estimated Elector 2029	E/C Ratio 2029	Deviation 2029	Estimated Elector 2031	E/C Ratio 2031	Deviation 2031
Altone	3	28,156	9,385	+8.5%	29,276	9,759	+8.4%	30,375	10,125	+8.5%
Midland/Guildford	3	25,356	8,452	-2.3%	26,183	8,728	-3.0%	27,001	9,000	-3.5%
Pearce	4	35,471	8,868	+2.5%	37,661	9,415	+4.6%	39,789	9,947	+6.6%
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	2	18,016	9,008	+4.1%	18,709	9,355	+3.9%	19,062	9,531	+2.2%
Whiteman	2	14,104	7,052	-18.5%	14,167	7,084	-21.3%	14,373	7,187	-23.0%
Total	**14**	**121,103**	**8,650**		**125,996**	**9,000**		**130,600**	**9,329**	

Physical and Topographical Features

The City covers an area of 1,042 square kilometres and is geographically the largest local government authority in the Perth metropolitan area.

Natural features

The City contains two major National Parks – Walyunga and Avon Valley. There are 45 bushland and 73 foreshore reserves totalling approximately 1,200 hectares.

The Swan River flows in a generally south west direction through the City. A number of creeks and rivers that flow into the Swan River are also located in the City: Wooroloo Brook, Avon River, Susannah Brook, Jane Brook, Ellen Brook, Helena River, Blackadder Creek and Bennett Brook.

The Darling Scarp is a low escarpment running north-south to the east of the Swan Coastal Plain in the eastern part of the City.

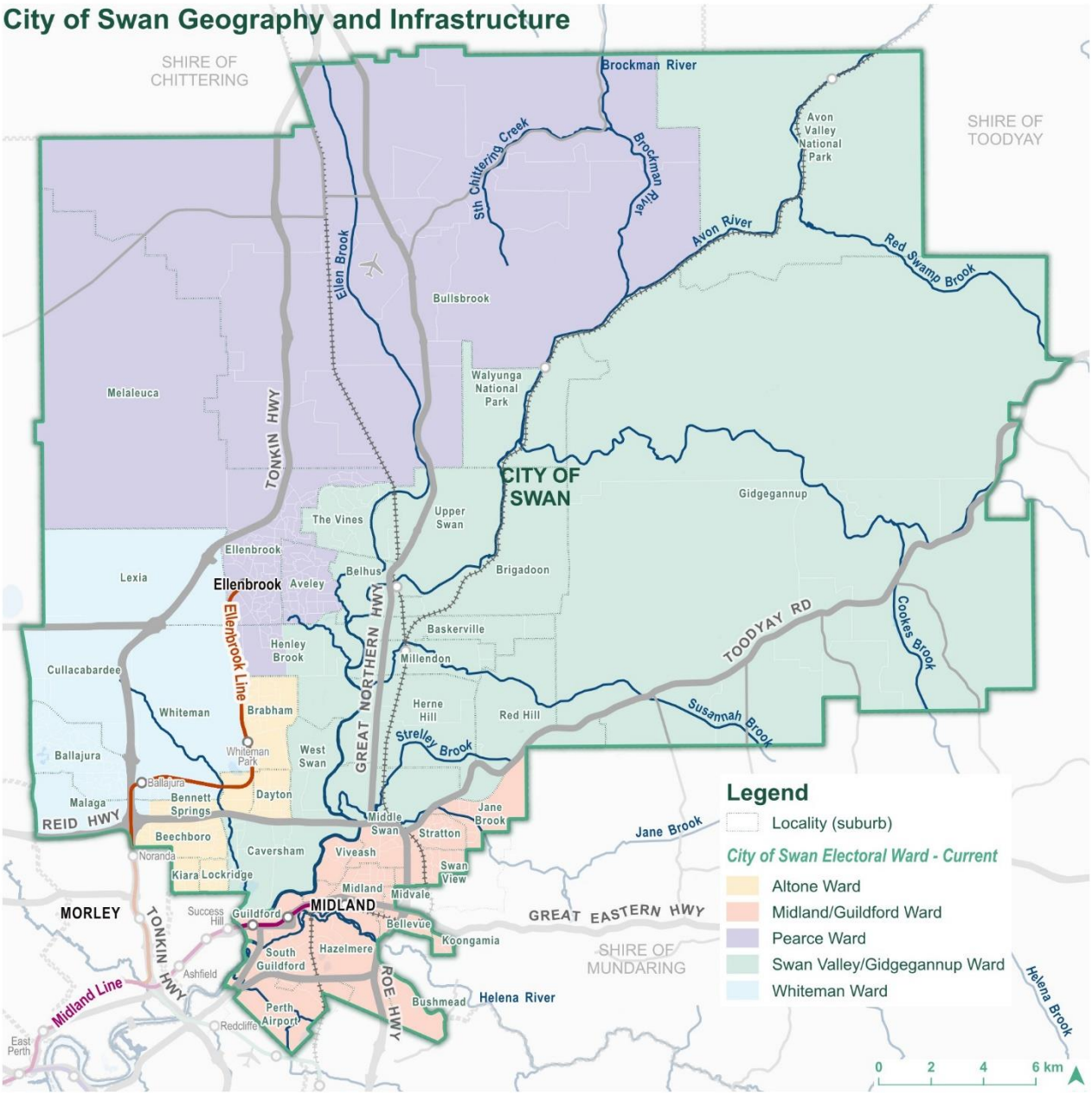
Transport Infrastructure

Major transport corridors and key highways including the Great Eastern, Great Northern, Tonkin, Roe and Reid Highways are all within the City's boundaries. Other major arterial roads within the City include Gnangara Road, Henley Brook Avenue, Marshall Road, Drumpellier Drive, Toodyay Road and Stock Road.

Freight rail and national and state passenger rail routes are also within the City's boundaries.

The State Government's METRONET program, the Morley-Ellenbrook Line (Ballajura, Whiteman Park and Ellenbrook stations) and the relocated Midland station are now in operation. With the planned future stations at Bennett Springs East and Bellevue, public transport within the City has been greatly expanded.

This transport infrastructure provides important connectivity for residential and economic activities within the City.



Buildings and Public Open Space

The City has a significant number of assets that support the delivery of community services and are focal points for community life. They are located across the City and assist in defining each community's identity as well as providing social, environmental, and economic benefits. The City's focus is to maintain and improve assets in older developments while planning for future needs in residential growth areas.

Localities (suburbs) as a reference

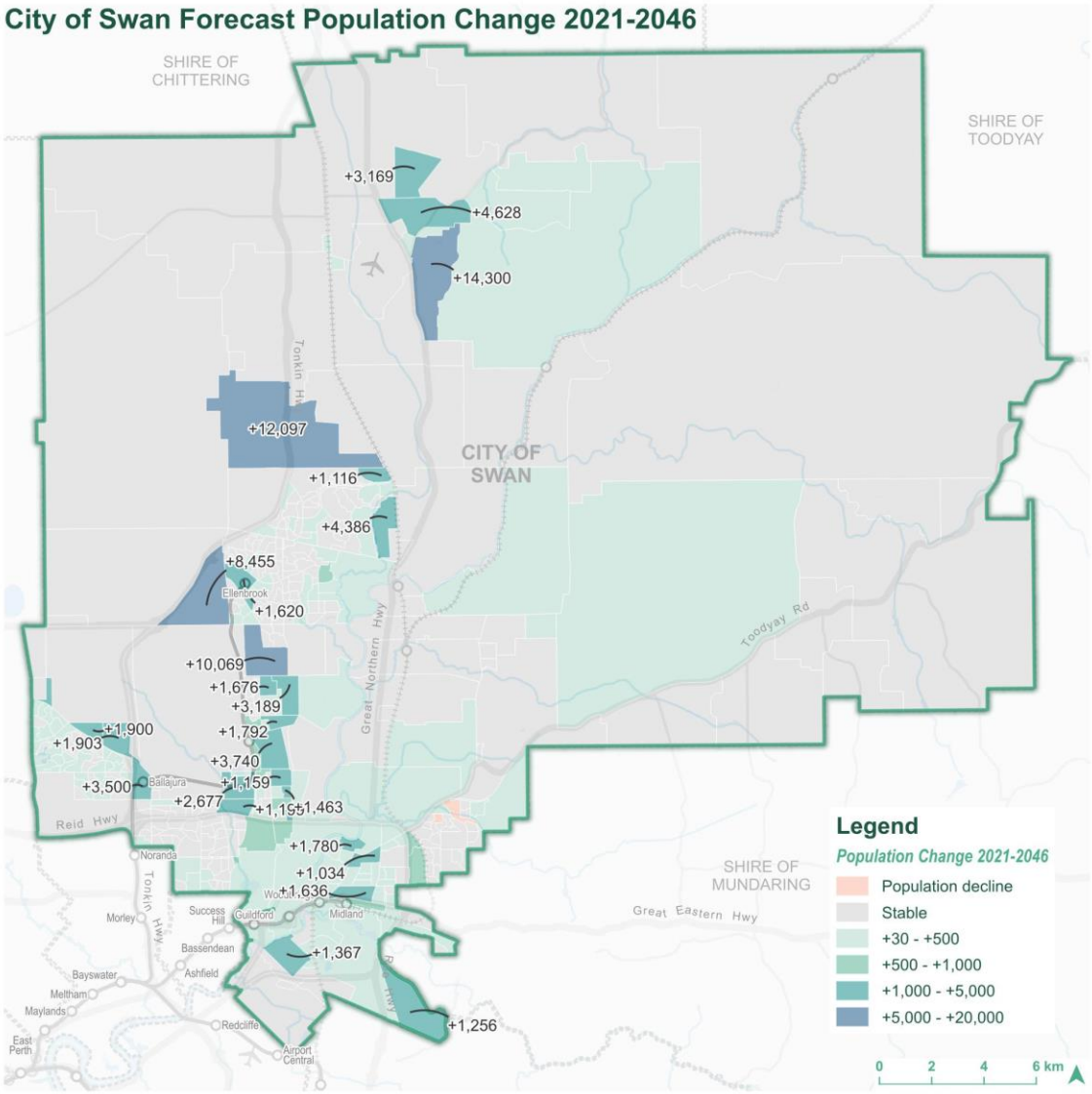
When undertaking community engagement, it can be difficult to communicate across ward local areas. The suburb (locality) is the main reference point, as it appears in residents' addresses. For example, The Vines' eastern boundary is along Ellen Brook Creek, naturally separating it from Upper Swan, while many local streets are shared with the suburb of Ellenbrook. The Vines community may find they have more of a community of interest with the Pearce Ward than the Swan Valley/Gidgegannup Ward.

Demographic Trends

The number of residents in the City has increased rapidly over the last 35 years, growing from approximately 52,000 in 1991 to an estimated population of 190,769 in 2026 and forecast to grow to 273,701 by 2046*.

*Based on Forecast.id, January 2026.

The City's diverse character means that population trends differ widely across the City.



Most of the residential growth has occurred along the METRONET Morley-Ellenbrook Line in Ellenbrook, Henley Brook, Brabham, Bennett Springs, and Caversham.

In the medium- to long-term, population growth is expected to shift further north, including Bullsbrook and North Ellenbrook. Population growth is gaining momentum in and around the Midland Activity Centre, as well as in infill development in existing residential areas.

In contrast, there are parts of the City where population change is expected to be minimal. For example, the Swan Valley is protected from major residential development. Also, suburbs including Ballajura, Kiara, Lockridge and parts of Beechboro and part of Bennett Springs within the Altone Ward that

underwent their primary development phase during the 1990's, will experience stable, even declining population growth, as households mature.

Population size and growth vary across wards with for example some areas growing more rapidly whilst others remain more rural with smaller populations. This variation in growth makes it harder to maintain balanced representation, particularly when aiming for each ward to have multiple councillors. In some cases, ward populations may be too small to support the required number of councillors under the mandated ratio, increasing the risk that a ward will be represented by only one councillor.

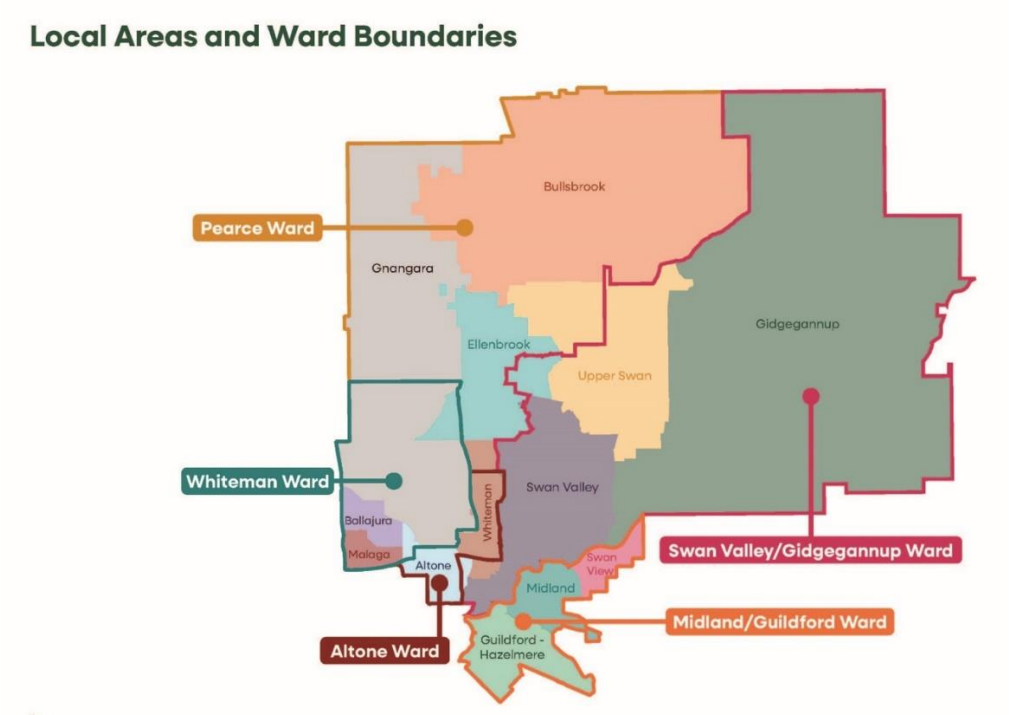
Community of Interest

Local Area Planning

Prior to the adoption of LAPs, the City implemented a Place Planning approach from 2001, consisting of eight Place Plans. The City's Local Area Plan (LAP) framework was introduced in 2013 under the Council's Integrated Planning Framework, providing a structured mechanism for local communities to identify and address local issues through a consultative planning process.

The LAP approach recognised that the City is made up of a diverse range of geographic communities and communities of interest, each with distinct needs, aspirations and service expectations. Building on this foundation, LAPs were established as a cost-effective means of undertaking localised community engagement across a broad range of planning and service delivery matters, ensuring that local priorities can be reflected in the City's planning and decision-making processes.

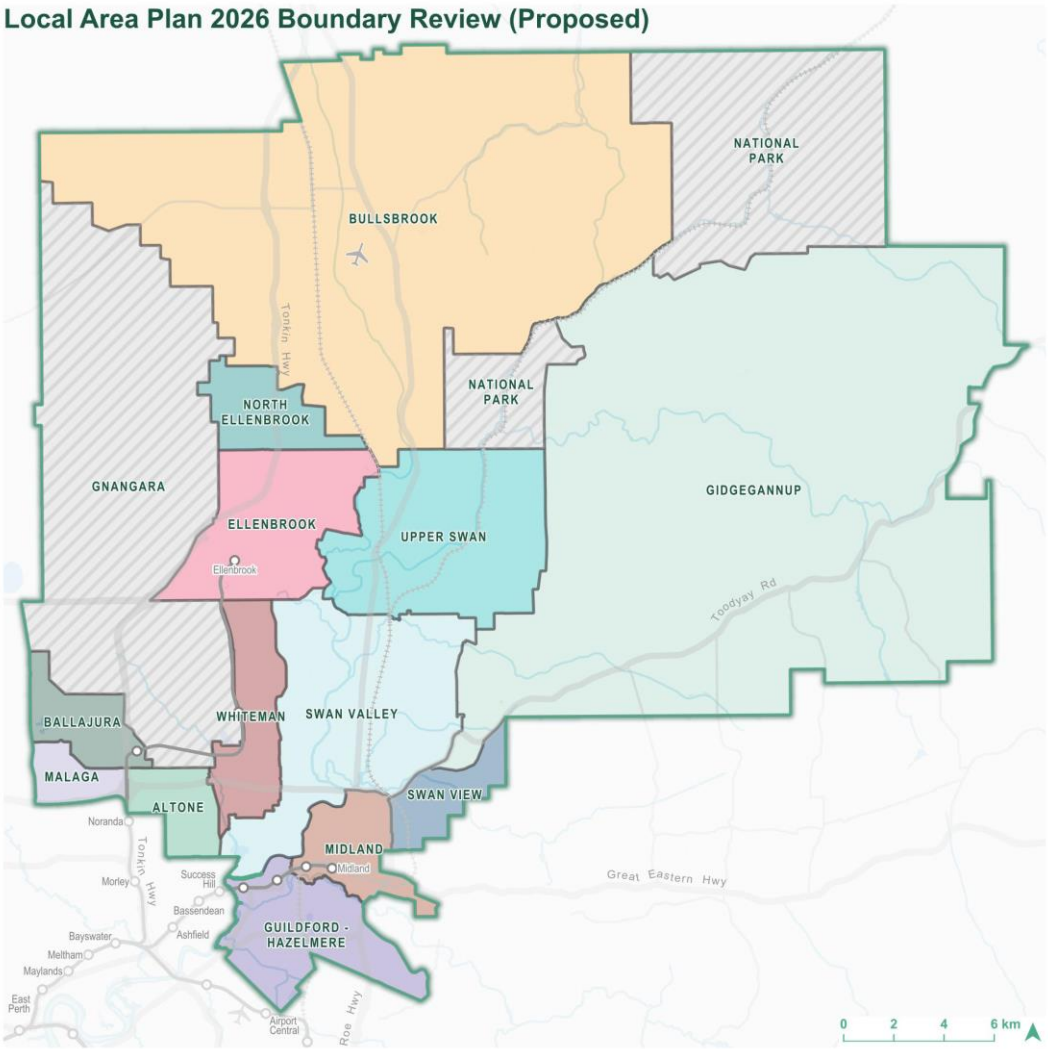
There are a total of 13 local areas recognised across the City, for which 12 LAPs have been developed.



LAPs represent the City's existing, community-validated delineation of communities of interest. Splitting a LAP across ward boundaries fragments a recognised community of interest, undermining meaningful representation. It is recommended that Ward boundaries align with LAP boundaries to ensure councillors represent cohesive communities.

LAP boundaries are currently under review, anticipating rapid population growth surrounding the transit corridors of Midland and Ellenbrook line, North Ellenbrook and Bullsbrook district centres. The review's objectives largely align with the ward boundary review criteria for the community of interest.

Another main consideration in the LAP boundary review is alignment with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Statistical Area boundaries. It enables consistent, accurate data sourcing for analysing and tracking demographic changes, as many analytical reporting uses the ABS boundary as a baseline for data capture.



Heritage

The local aboriginal people and custodians of the land are the Whadjuk Noongar people. The Noongar people have long since inhabited the historic lands of the Swan coastal plain, dating back some 40,000 years. The land provided a natural abundance of food and water resources and the traditional owners developed a rich history of customs in the area.

The town of Guildford and the surrounding areas in the Whadjuk region sit on important country and have always been an important meeting place for Noongar people. The area contains many campsites and spiritual sites which have been used to the present day.

There are many chapters of the City's unique heritage, including the establishment of agriculture and viticulture in the Swan Valley and the development of the railways and Midland Junction in the late nineteenth century.

European settlement dates back to 1829 when Guildford was established as one of three nodes of settlement for the Swan River Colony. As the furthest navigable point of the Swan River, Guildford became an inland port, providing the main link between Perth and the country districts. The first agricultural ventures by colonial settlers began in 1829.

Guildford was declared a Historic Town in 1984, and in 2019 was included in the State Register of Heritage Places. Its historical buildings, rich heritage and proximity to the Swan Valley are an attraction to visitors.

Midland has been occupied by settlers since 1832. However, little development occurred until 1886, when the Midland Railway Company commenced operations. In 1891 the township of Midland Junction was established. Iconic sites such as the former Midland Railway Workshops and the historical civic and retail "junction" of the town centres are important historical elements of Midland.

The City contains a number of Heritage Places in areas including Guildford, Woodbridge, Midland, the Swan Valley and Bullsbrook.

Swan Valley

Viticulture emerged over 181 years ago, making the Swan Valley the oldest wine region in Western Australia and one of the oldest in Australia. The Swan Valley has considerable historical and cultural value as a viticultural, agricultural and tourism region.

Rural

In addition to the Swan Valley, Bullsbrook and Gidgegannup are significant rural areas within the City. These rural areas provide similar services, facilities and amenities to their communities. They are relatively disconnected from other urban areas within the City and the Perth metropolitan region. Land use within these areas includes:

- Low density forms of residential land use;
- Agricultural rural land and primary production;
- Equestrian activities include horse training, agistment, breeding and dealing; and
- Basic raw material extraction and mining.

Significant growth is expected within Bullsbrook, with plans for residential, commercial and industrial growth in the near future.

Residential Areas – 1970's onwards

The City's rapid growth has been a relatively new occurrence, but each stage and area of growth has resulted in different characteristics and needs for each of those communities. Examples of growth which have resulted in communities connected by common interests are provided below:

- During the late 1960's, Lockridge was partly developed as a housing estate and underwent urban renewal in the late 1990's. In the 1970's, development of the area north of Benara Road (Beechboro) took off with the first subdivision. The suburb of Kiara was approved and named in 1990 and the suburb now known as Bennett Springs was developed during the 1990's.
- Ballajura was developed as a residential suburb from 1978 and the population increased rapidly during the early 1990's.
- Development of Stratton saw the first residents move into the area in 1991 and Jane Brook was created in 1994.

- The Vines, centred around the development of The Vines Golf Course and Resort, saw its first residents in 1989. Development of Ellenbrook commenced in 1994 and it became one of Perth's fastest growing suburbs. Aveley, previously a part of Ellenbrook, became a suburb in 2006.
- The Urban Growth Corridor (UGC) was identified a critical development to accommodate the growth of the Perth metropolitan region. The UGC includes Brabham, part of Bennett Springs, Dayton and part of Caversham. Major residential development projects are also occurring in Henley Brook, between Brabham and Ellenbrook.

Economic Factors

The City offers a wide variety of locations suitable for all business types. There are more than 14,000 businesses, employing approximately 93,000 people in 2025. Health care and social assistance overtook construction to become the largest industry in the City, followed by Transport, Postal and Warehousing, Construction, Retail Trade, Manufacturing and Education and Training. Construction remains the largest number (19.6%) of registered businesses within the City.

In 2024/25, the City's Gross Regional Product is estimated at $15.97 billion. The City of Swan contributed 5.7% of Western Australia's employment and 3.2% of its value added. Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest employer, generating 11,324 local jobs, followed by Transport, Postal and Warehousing, generating 10,218 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs.

The City contains major rail and road transport hubs servicing both passenger and freight demands.

Major investment and infrastructure projects include the Perth Darwin National Highway, the completed NorthLink project, the ongoing EastLink project, the Perth Airport North precinct, the proposed intermodal transport hub in Bullsbrook, Gateway WA project and METRONET. The build-out of these infrastructure projects will see new uses and opportunities for population growth and economic development in these areas.

Midland

Midland is the Strategic Metropolitan Centre in Perth's north east sub-region and plays a key role in providing access to goods, services and employment in Perth's east and the nearby Avon Valley region. Through the urban renewal program, Midland's role as a strategic metropolitan centre is strengthening. To date, the program includes the expansion of Midland public hospital, the General Practice Super Clinic and specialist medical services including WA's only bone and tissue bank.

New residential and commercial developments include the redevelopment of the old Railway Workshops and Midland Saleyards, Curtin University medical campus, the new private hospital within the historic workshops' precinct, and public open space in Railway Square. Midland is a designated Business Fibre Zone and can support the internet needs of high value office-based industries.

Ellenbrook

Ellenbrook has been classified by the State Government as a Secondary Centre. It provides retail, commercial, entertainment and light industrial areas all of which provide business and employment opportunities.

Industrial Areas

The City has a number of existing industrial centres such as Hazelmere, South Guildford, and Malaga. Malaga is one of the City's major industrial suburbs and the City's largest employment centre. Hazelmere and South Guildford have seen significant growth in recent years with ready access to air and rail freight transport as well as being situated very close to major road transport routes. A number of

high profile and multinational companies have chosen Hazelmere as the location to invest and establish their business.

The Bullsbrook area has been identified by the State Government as a Priority Industrial Site. Construction on the Stock Road upgrade is now complete, which connects Great Northern Highway with Tonkin Highway. The project provides a new road link for direct access to a new industrial area and enables heavy haulage and oversized loaded trucks to bypass around the Bullsbrook townsite. This upgrade has transformed Bullsbrook into an industrial hub.

Perth Airport land abuts Hazelmere with the northern section of the Airport sitting within the City. This northeastern metropolitan fringe serves as a major logistics, transport and tourism hub connecting directly to the Airport. It is considered one large area of land contiguous with Swan and a shared community of interest.

The Swan Valley

The Swan Valley and surrounds is regarded as one of Western Australia's premier tourism regions. It is a renowned grape growing region containing world-class wineries, restaurants, cafes, galleries, fresh food produce, breweries, distilleries, recreational activities, antiques, nature-based attractions, arts, crafts, trails and accommodation.

Tourism continues to drive economic and social benefits from visitor expenditure, which supports new jobs, investment attraction and better facilities for our communities and visitors. The Swan Valley makes a significant contribution to the local economy with approximately 4.4 million people visiting each year with visitor expenditure in 2024 of approximately $544 million.

4.2 Consideration of options

The proposed wards and representation options are detailed in **Part 5.**

The City of Swan is a Band 1 local government. Given the size and diverse nature of the City, the Discussion Paper will only include Options for five wards and representation based on 12 or 14 Councillors (and a directly elected Mayor).

Council does not have an established position on any Option and the Options set out below may provide discussion and are not definitive.

The options are examples only and there are many variations and members of the community may have other options that fit the criteria for wards that comply with the requirements of the Act.

Elector numbers used for the purposes of this review were the elector numbers as at 31 March 2026.

Methodology

The methodology combines detailed spatial modelling with a structured option assessment framework to evaluate ward boundary configurations for the City of Swan. Elector data at the SA1 level from the Western Australian Electoral Commission is integrated with .id population forecasts to project elector numbers and calculate future elector-to-councillor (E/C) ratios for upcoming election cycles.

A range of ward structure options—guided by key approaches such as minimal change, Local Area Plan (LAP) alignment, reducing Councillor numbers to 12, and balanced outcomes—are developed and refined through sub-option modelling. These options are then rigorously tested against the Local Government Advisory Board's five statutory assessment factors, with clear pass/fail thresholds focused

primarily on maintaining E/C ratios within ±10%, ensuring geographic continuity, supporting at least two councillors per ward, and preserving communities of interest through LAP alignment.

The process results in a shortlist of viable options that balance representational equity, demographic change, and community cohesion for inclusion in the discussion paper.

4.3 Naming of wards

We welcome feedback on the current Ward names and suggested changes.

The discussion paper acknowledges that the naming of Whiteman Ward (most commonly associated with the Ballajura locality) has long been confusing for the community, mainly because the UGC (in Altone Ward) is now the Whiteman Local Area Plan, which borders Whiteman Park and is in close proximity to the new Whiteman Park Station. This review will consider options to address this including whether the alignment with our current ward names remains.

Examples:-

Pearce Ward

This name provides no geographical context for its residents which is usual for local community of interests whereby there is shared suburban identity, natural features and lifestyle. It doesn't relate to its topography or landmarks of the area, and can cause confusion with the federal Division of Pearce which spans multiple local governments.

Swan Valley/Gidgegannup Ward

This Ward name more clearly reflects its community of interest with successfully grouping two major semi rural and agricultural hubs with similar lifestyle and planning needs. Both areas prioritise the preservation of large lot living, agricultural lands and rural landscapes.

While they serve different primary functions (tourism/agriculture versus rural residential living), they share the overarching community of interest revolving around low-density, green, and lifestyle-driven environments.

The City has undertaken detailed modelling on a range of options for consideration of this review.

There have been two key criteria that have been discounted. First, no options involving non contiguous boundaries. Second, where an option failed to sustain population growth and remain within the accepted elector growth over an 8 year period. The review has endeavoured to avoid splitting suburbs in considering options given the importance of LAPs and has sought to minimise boundary overlaps between wards.

5. Proposed wards and representation options

5.1 Option 1 – no wards with a total of 14 Councillors, plus Mayor

No Ward	No. of Elected Member	Estimated Elector 2027	E/C Ratio 2027	Deviation 2027	Estimated Elector 2029	E/C Ratio 2029	Deviation 2029	Estimated Elector 2031	E/C Ratio 2031	Deviation 2031
Councillors	**14**	**121,103**	**8,650**	**N/A**	**125,996**	**9,000**	**N/A**	**130,600**	**9,329**	**N/A**

Councillor + Mayor	**15**	**121,103**	**8,074**	**N/A**	**125,996**	**8,400**	**N/A**	**130,600**	**8,707**	**N/A**

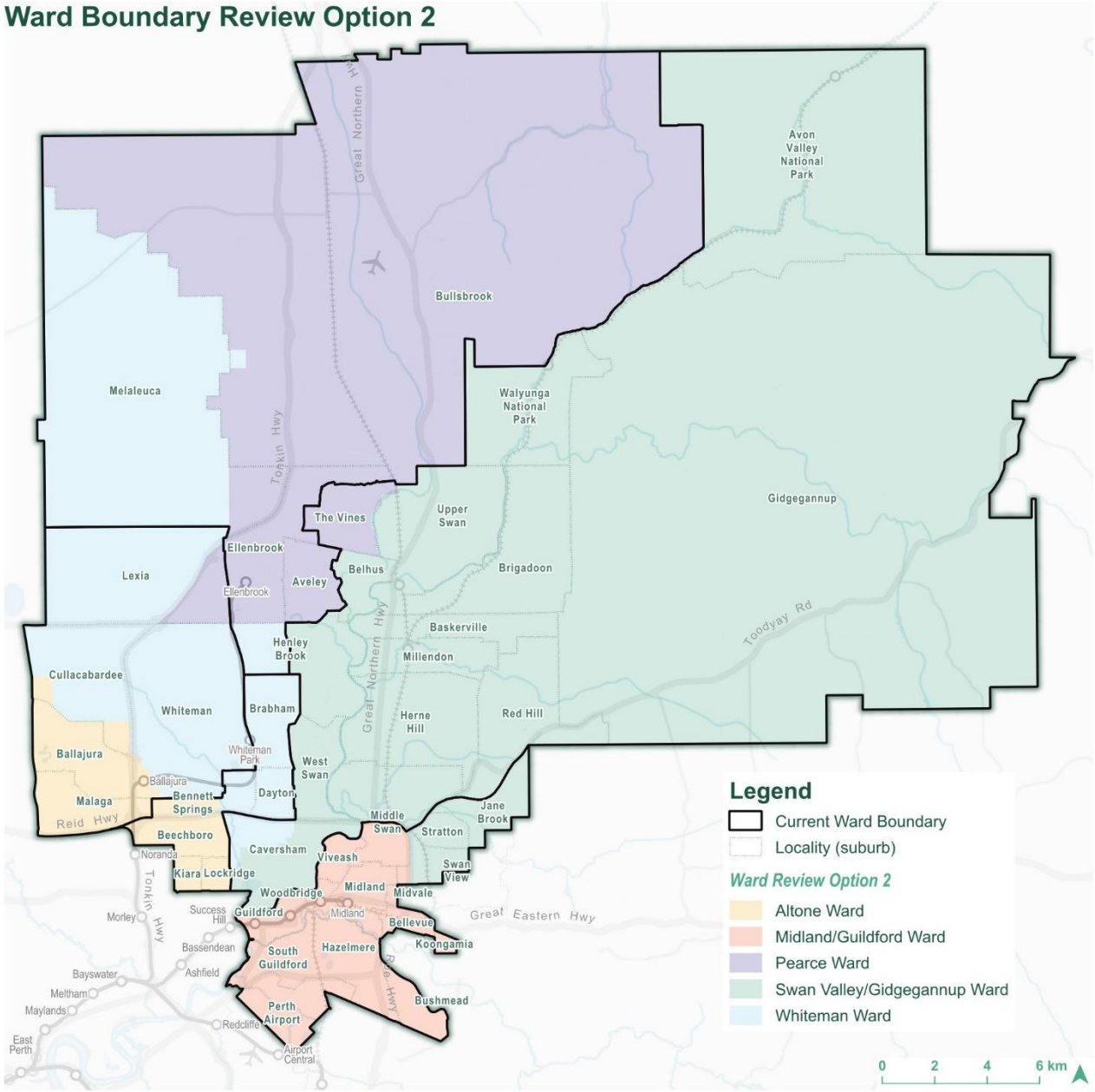
Assessment of factors

Ratio of electors to Councillors	As of April 8, 2026, the ratio of electors to Councillors is 8,270 to 1. When there are no wards, each Councillor will represent up to 8,650 electors in 2027, 9,000 electors in 2029, and 9,329 electors in 2031. By 2031, assuming all 15 elected members—including the Mayor and Councillors—share representation equally, each will oversee approximately 8,707 electors. Without wards, all Councillors serve the entire City, resulting in a consistent elector-to-Councillor ratio that remains within the allowable ±10% deviation.
Physical and topographic features	As there are no ward boundaries, geographic continuity is inherently maintained across the whole local government area, satisfying this factor.
Demographic trends	The at-large structure removes the need to allocate councillors by ward, and with 14 Councillors in total, representation would reflect population size and growth, meeting the minimum requirement.
Community of interest	Without ward boundaries, recognised Local Area Plans (LAPs) are not preserved within discrete representation areas, resulting in multiple communities of interest being fragmented and failing this factor.
Economic factors	There are no constraints associated with this factor, and this option presents no specific economic considerations that affect its feasibility.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	**Balanced representation:** Each Councillor represents the whole community.
	Flexibility in representation: Councillors can address issues across the whole City without geographic restriction.
	Simplicity: Election process is much simpler for the community to understand.
Disadvantages	**Weakened local representation:** Electors may feel that they are not adequately represented if there is no affinity with any of the Councillors.
	Reduced community-of-interest alignment: Local Area Plans and cohesive communities are not preserved in the representation.
	Size of the City: geographically, the City of Swan is the largest local government in the Perth metropolitan area. Councillors may feel overwhelmed by having to represent all electors and may not have the time or opportunity to understand and represent all the issues.
	Accountability challenges: Residents may be unsure which Councillor to contact for local issues.

5.2 Option 2 - 5 wards with a total of 14 Councillors, plus Mayor



Ward	No. of Councillors	Estimated Elector 2027	E/C Ratio 2027	Deviation 2027	Estimated Elector 2029	E/C Ratio 2029	Deviation 2029	Estimated Elector 2031	E/C Ratio 2031	Deviation 2031
Altone	3	27,121	9,040	+4.5%	27,229	9,076	+0.9%	27,564	9,188	-1.5%
Midland/Guildford	2	16,867	8,434	-2.5%	17,491	8,746	-2.8%	18,200	9,100	-2.5%
Pearce	4	36,387	9,097	+5.2%	37,487	9,372	+4.1%	38,842	9,711	+4.1%
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	2	17,402	8,701	+0.6%	18,160	9,080	+0.9%	18,550	9,275	-0.6%
Whiteman	3	23,326	7,775	-10.1%	25,629	8,543	-5.1%	27,444	9,148	-1.9%
Total	**14**	**121,103**	**8,650**		**125,996**	**9,000**		**130,600**	**9,329**	

Summary of features under option 2

Ward	Boundary	Number of Councillors		Land Area
Altone	Changed	3	Unchanged	2.7%
Midland/Guildford	Changed	2	Changed from 3	3.8%
Pearce	Changed	4	Unchanged	27.7%
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	Changed	2	Unchanged	51.1%
Whiteman	Changed	3	Changed from 2	14.8%

There will be no cross-ward Local Area Plans and 8 cross-ward localities:

Ward	Whole LAP	Cross Ward LAP	Whole Locality	Cross Ward Locality
Altone	Altone Ballajura Malaga	None	Ballajura, Beechboro, Kiara, Lockridge, Malaga	1 Bennett Springs, 2 Cullacabardee, 3 Whiteman
Midland/ Guildford	Guildford - Hazelmere Midland	None	Bellevue, Bushmead, Guildford, Hazelmere, Koongamia, Midland, Perth Airport, South Guildford, Viveash, Woodbridge	4 Middle Swan 5 Midvale
Pearce	Bullsbrook Ellenbrook North Ellenbrook	None	Aveley, Bullsbrook, Ellenbrook, The Vines	6 Lexia
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	Gidgegannup National Park Swan Valley Swan View Upper Swan	None	Avon Valley National Park, Baskerville, Belhus, Brigadoon, Gidgegannup, Herne Hill, Jane Brook, Millendon, Red Hill, Stratton, Swan View, Upper Swan, Walyunga National Park, West Swan	4 Middle Swan 5 Midvale 7 Caversham, 8 Henley Brook
Whiteman	Gnangara Whiteman	None	Brabham, Dayton, Melaleuca	1 Bennett Springs, 2 Cullacabardee, 3 Whiteman 6 Lexia 7 Caversham, 8 Henley Brook

Assessment of factors – option 2

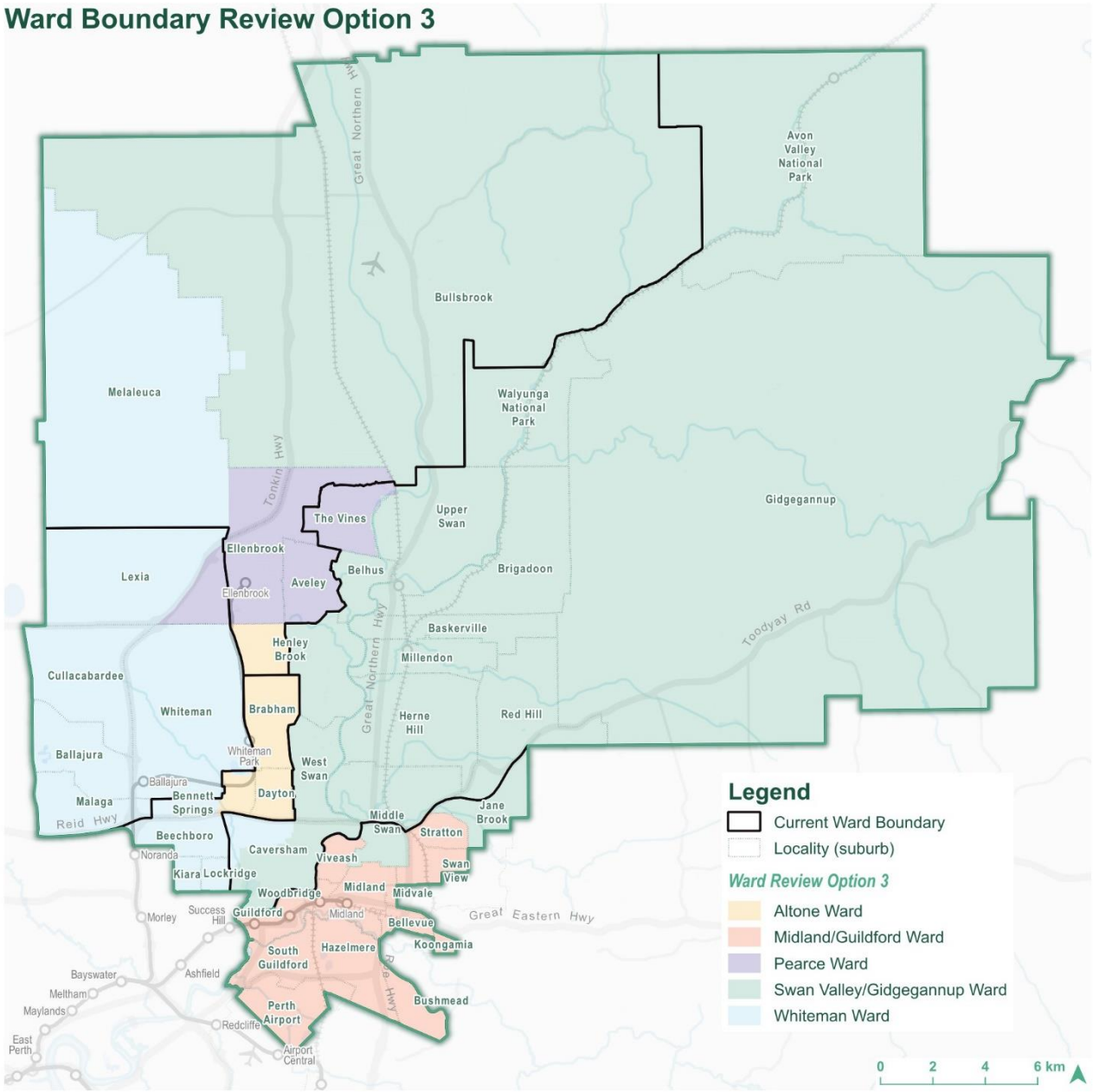
Ratio of electors to Councillors	The option addresses this factor by redistributing high-growth areas—particularly into Whiteman Ward— to reduce its current level of over-representation and progressively move the ward towards a more equitable level of representation relative to the district average. This acknowledges a short-term deviation of -10.1% in 2027 but with forecasted population growth to bring the E/C ratio within acceptable limits as it rapidly improves to -5.1% in 2029 and -1.9% in 2031.
Physical and topographic features	Geographic continuity is maintained by designing boundaries that follow settlement patterns and infrastructure links. Adjustments include adding Caversham fringe and Henley Brook to Whiteman to keep wards contiguous and connected, while preserving Gnangara LAP's state forest.
Demographic trends	The option reallocates rapidly growing areas like Brabham, Dayton, and Bennett Springs to Whiteman Ward and adjusts councillor distribution. It also moves Swan View LAP areas from Midland/Guildford ward to the slower-growing Swan Valley/Gidgegannup to preserve effective multi-member wards.
Community of interest	This factor is addressed by aligning fully with Local Area Plan boundaries, correcting the previous misalignment where Whiteman LAP and Whiteman Park station were in Altone Ward, and consolidating them into Whiteman Ward to establish a clearer community of interest with no cross-ward LAPs.
Economic factors	The option addresses rural-urban transitional areas in Caversham by partitioning the locality and consolidating urban growth regions within the Whiteman ward. It also categorizes older suburbs within Altone, including Ballajura due to its distinctive characteristics. Additionally, it reallocates emerging greenfield development sites in North Ballajura and West Ellenbrook to adjacent urban wards.

Advantages and Disadvantages – option 2

Advantages	**Improved representational balance over time:** Redistributing high-growth areas into Whiteman Ward manages population growth, keeping elector-to-Councillor ratios within acceptable limits for future elections.
	Strong community of interest alignment: Full alignment with Local Area Plan boundaries, including correcting the Whiteman/Altone misalignment, ensures cohesive and clearly defined communities with no cross-ward LAPs.
	Logical land-use and growth planning: Clear grouping of urban growth areas, established suburbs, and emerging greenfield developments supports coordinated planning and more targeted service delivery.
Disadvantages	**Short-term imbalance risk:** The reliance on future population growth to correct Whiteman's initial -10.1% deviation in 2027 introduces a temporary representational imbalance.
	Boundary adjustments may disrupt familiarity: Reallocating areas such as Swan View LAP to the Swan Valley/Gidgegannup ward and "swapping" Ballajura and Malaga to the Altone ward may reduce community familiarity with ward structures in the short term.
	Peri-urban areas: Stratton has more in common with a suburban Ward like Midland/Guildford than with a more rural Ward, such as Swan Valley/Gidgegannup.
	Reduced role of Midland/Guildford Ward: Midland/Guildford Ward experiences reductions in both land area and the number of Councillors, which

may limit its representation despite its strategic importance as a key activity and employment centre.

5.3 Option 3 - 5 wards with a total of 12 Councillors, plus Mayor



Ward	No. of Councillors	Estimated Elector 2027	E/C Ratio 2027	Deviation 2027	Estimated Elector 2029	E/C Ratio 2029	Deviation 2029	Estimated Elector 2031	E/C Ratio 2031	Deviation 2031
Altone	2	18,457	9,229	-8.6%	20,622	10,311	-1.8%	22,368	11,184	+2.8%
Midland/Guildford	2	20,514	10,257	+1.6%	21,265	10,633	+1.3%	22,015	11,008	+1.1%
Pearce	3	31,215	10,405	+3.1%	31,269	10,423	-0.7%	31,385	10,462	-3.9%
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	2	18,927	9,464	-6.2%	20,604	10,302	-1.9%	22,192	11,096	+2.0%

Whiteman	3	31,990	10,663	+5.7%	32,236	10,745	+2.3%	32,640	10,880	-0.0%
Total	**12**	**121,103**	**10,092**		**125,996**	**10,500**		**130,600**	**10,883**	

Summary of features under option 3

Ward	Boundary	Number of Councillors		Land Area
Altone	Changed	2	Changed from 3	1.4%
Midland/Guildford	Changed	2	Changed from 3	4.0%
Pearce	Changed	3	Changed from 4	3.3%
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	Changed	2	Unchanged	75.2%
Whiteman	Changed	3	Changed from 2	16.0%

There will be 3 cross-ward Local Area Plans and 4 cross-ward localities:

Ward	Whole LAP	Cross Ward LAP	Whole Locality	Cross Ward Locality
Altone	None	1 Whiteman	Brabham, Dayton	1 Bennett Springs 2 Henley Brook
Midland/ Guildford	Guildford - Hazelmere	2 Midland 3 Swan View	Bellevue, Bushmead, Guildford, Hazelmere, Koongamia, Midland, Midvale, Perth Airport, South Guildford, Stratton, Swan View, Viveash, Woodbridge	None
Pearce	Ellenbrook	None	Aveley, Ellenbrook, The Vines	3 Lexia
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	Bullsbrook Gidgegannup National Park North Ellenbrook Swan Valley Upper Swan	2 Midland 3 Swan View	Avon Valley National Park, Baskerville, Belhus, Brigadoon, Bullsbrook, Gidgegannup, Herne Hill, Jane Brook, Middle Swan, Millendon, Red Hill, Upper Swan, Walyunga National Park, West Swan	2 Henley Brook 4 Caversham
Whiteman	Altone Ballajura Gnangara Malaga	1 Whiteman	Ballajura, Beechboro, Cullacabardee, Kiara, Lockridge, Malaga, Melaleuca, Whiteman	1 Bennett Springs 3 Lexia 4 Caversham

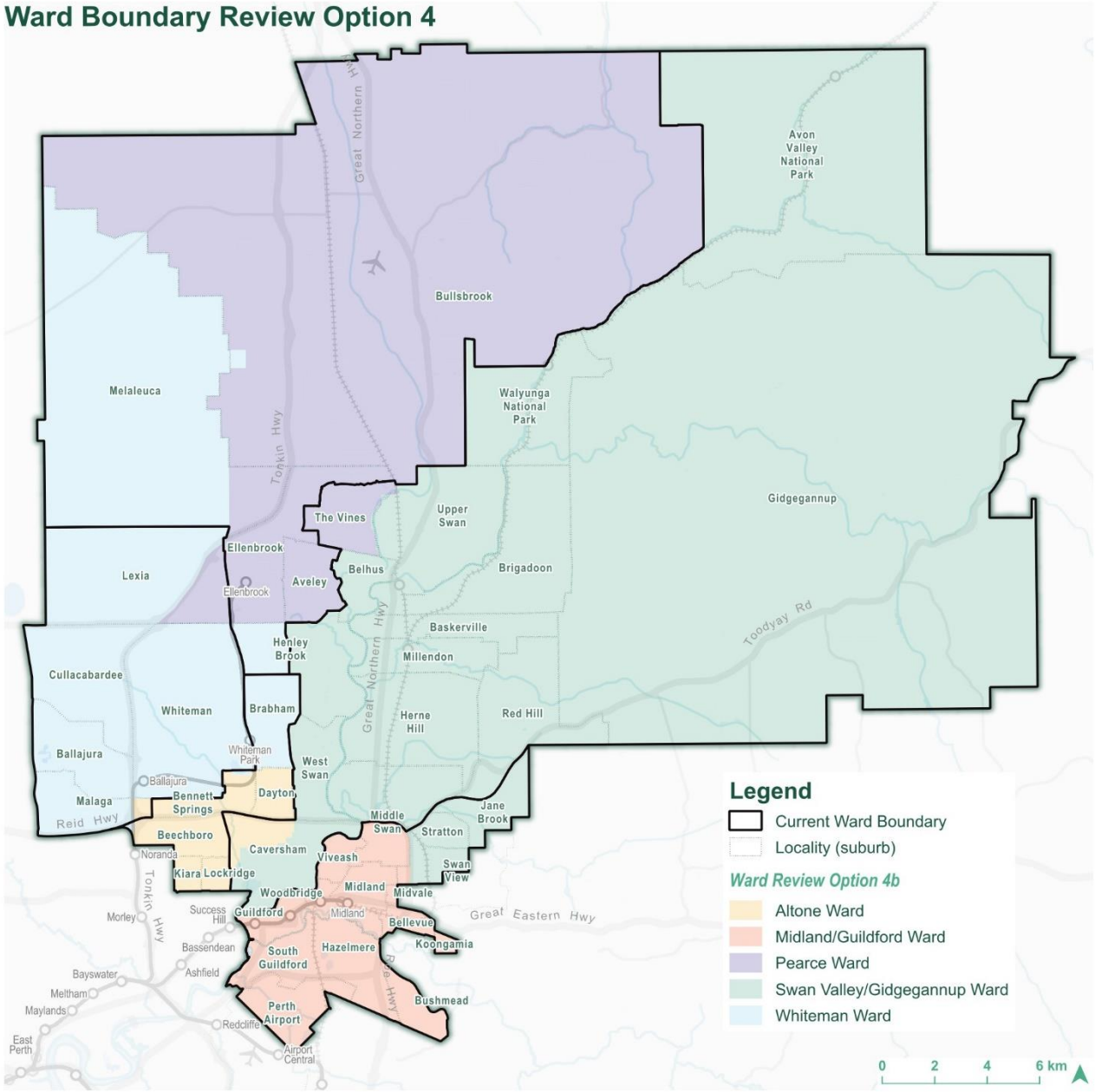
Assessment of factors – option 3

Ratio of electors to Councillors	The option maintains acceptable elector-to-Councillor ratios by redistributing population across five wards. Altone, Midland/Guildford and Swan Valley/Gidgegannup are represented by two Councillors each, while the remaining wards have three Councillors.
Physical and topographic features	Geographic continuity is maintained by combining Bullsbrook with Swan Valley/Gidgegannup and grouping the southern Urban Growth Corridor portion of Caversham (south of Reid Highway) within Whiteman Ward. The Vines is also consolidated with the Ellenbrook-based Pearce Ward.
Demographic trends	The option responds to growth by strengthening Whiteman Ward with Caversham growth areas and established residential communities, including Beechboro, Kiara, Lockridge and western Bennett Springs.
Community of interest	The option improves alignment by grouping The Vines with Ellenbrook.
Economic factors	The option broadly reflects economic and land-use patterns by balancing the urban growth rates of residential suburbs within Whiteman and Altone, and linking Bullsbrook to the broader rural, agricultural, and tourism-based Swan Valley/Gidgegannup Ward.

Advantages and Disadvantages – option 3

Advantages	**Reduced cost of governance:** Reducing the number of Councillors from 14 to 12 is likely to reduce the cost of maintaining Councillors. The cost saving of this option is estimated to be in the vicinity of $113,000 per annum
	Maintains complete Ellenbrook LAP: Moving The Vines into Pearce Ward with Ellenbrook creates a more coherent Ellenbrook-Pearce community and removes the need to engage with a cross-ward LAP.
	Strengthened growth-area representation: Keeping the near-term growth areas in Dayton, Henley Brook, and Brabham within a reduced Altone Ward creates a more balanced population-growth buffer and improves alignment between future population growth and similar community-of-interest representation.
	Effective and efficient decision-making: a reduction in Councillor numbers will enable views to be gathered in a more timely manner and decision-making may be easier.
	Community consultation: Can be achieved through a variety of means in addition to individuals and groups contacting their Councillor directly.
Disadvantages	**Reduced representation per resident:** With only 12 Councillors, each elected member represents a larger population, potentially reducing accessibility to Councillors and increasing representation workloads.
	Higher community fragmentation: The option results in three cross-ward LAPs and four cross-ward localities, creating more community-of-interest issues than other options presented for comment.

5.4 Option 4 - 5 wards with a total of 14 Councillors, plus Mayor



Ward	No. of Councillors	Estimated Elector 2027	E/C Ratio 2027	Deviation 2027	Estimated Elector 2029	E/C Ratio 2029	Deviation 2029	Estimated Elector 2031	E/C Ratio 2031	Deviation 2031
Altone	3	24,784	8,261	-4.5%	25,193	8,398	-6.7%	25,508	8,503	-8.9%
Midland/Guildford	2	16,867	8,434	-2.5%	17,491	8,746	-2.8%	18,200	9,100	-2.5%
Pearce	4	36,387	9,097	+5.2%	37,487	9,372	+4.1%	38,842	9,711	+4.1%
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	2	17,402	8,701	+0.6%	18,160	9,080	+0.9%	18,550	9,275	-0.6%
Whiteman	3	25,663	8,554	-1.1%	27,665	9,222	+2.5%	29,500	9,833	+5.4%
Total	**14**	**121,103**	**8,650**		**125,996**	**9,000**		**130,600**	**9,329**	

Summary of features under option 4

Ward	Boundary	Number of Councillors		Land Area
Altone	Changed	3	Unchanged	1.7%
Midland/Guildford	Changed	2	Changed from 3	3.8%
Pearce	Changed	4	Unchanged	27.7%
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	Changed	2	Unchanged	51.1%
Whiteman	Changed	3	Changed from 2	15.8%

There will be 1 cross-ward Local Area Plan and 5 cross-ward localities.

Ward	Whole LAP	Cross Ward LAP	Whole Locality	Cross Ward Locality
Altone	Altone	1 Whiteman	Beechboro, Bennett Springs, Dayton, Kiara, Lockridge	1 Caversham
Midland/ Guildford	Guildford - Hazelmere Midland	None	Bellevue, Bushmead, Guildford, Hazelmere, Koongamia, Midland, Perth Airport, South Guildford, Viveash, Woodbridge	2 Middle Swan 3 Midvale
Pearce	Bullsbrook Ellenbrook North Ellenbrook	None	Aveley, Bullsbrook, Ellenbrook, The Vines	4 Lexia
Swan Valley/ Gidgegannup	Gidgegannup National Park Swan Valley Swan View Upper Swan	None	Avon Valley National Park, Baskerville, Belhus, Brigadoon, Gidgegannup, Herne Hill, Jane Brook, Millendon, Red Hill, Stratton, Swan View, Upper Swan, Walyunga National Park, West Swan	1 Caversham 2 Middle Swan 3 Midvale 5 Henley Brook
Whiteman	Ballajura Malaga Gnangara	1 Whiteman	Ballajura, Brabham, Cullacabardee, Malaga, Melaleuca, Whiteman	4 Lexia 5 Henley Brook

Assessment of factors – option 4

Ratio of electors to Councillors	The option maintains acceptable E/C ratios by making targeted adjustments to councillor distribution in only two wards, balancing representation while avoiding broader structural changes, although future growth in Whiteman may require review beyond 2031.
Physical and topographic features	Geographic continuity is preserved with minimal changes to existing ward boundaries, ensuring that familiar spatial arrangements remain largely intact while accommodating minor refinements, such as regrouping The Vines into the Pearce Ward.
Demographic trends	The option responds conservatively to population growth by retaining councillor numbers in Swan Valley/Gidgegannup despite slower growth and adjusting Midland and Whiteman, though the differing growth rates across wards indicate that further review may be required before the 2033 election.
Community of interest	This option balances LAP alignment with minimal disruption by preserving most existing community groupings while implementing targeted adjustments to improve coherence. These include reallocating the Swan View LAP to the Swan Valley/Gidgegannup Ward, thereby enhancing the overall community of interest, distinct from the Midland/Guildford Ward, which is characterized by a Strategic Activity Centre and industrial areas in Hazelmere.
Economic factors	The option reflects existing economic patterns by largely retaining the current ward structures while making minor adjustments to accommodate residential growth areas in Brabham, Whiteman, Bennett Springs and Henley Brook.

Advantages and Disadvantages – option 4

Advantages	**Minimal change and stability:** This option involves the smallest changes to ward compositions, with only two wards changing their number of Councillors, maintaining overall structural continuity and making it easier for the community to understand and transition.
	Retention of representation in rural areas: Swan Valley/Gidgegannup Ward retains its number of Councillors despite slower growth, preserving representation for rural and semi-rural communities.
	Targeted and balanced: Selective changes, including the reduction in Midland and adjustments in Whiteman, address key growth areas while maintaining acceptable E/C ratios without requiring a full redistribution of wards.
Disadvantages	**Future review likely required:** With strong growth in Whiteman and slower growth in Altone, the current balance may not be sustainable, making another ward review likely before the 2033 election.
	Ongoing representation imbalance in Altone: Altone remains a very small ward by land area (1.7%) but is represented by three Councillors due to its large population, which may continue to raise concerns about proportionality and perception of fairness.
	Peri-urban areas: Stratton has more in common with a suburban Ward like Midland/Guildford than with a more rural Ward, such as Swan Valley/Gidgegannup.
	Reduced role of Midland Ward: Midland Ward experiences both a reduction in land area and the number of Councillors, which may limit its representation despite its strategic importance as a key activity and employment centre.

6. Impact of changes

After undertaking community consultation, the Council will make a proposal to the Advisory Board. The effect of proposed changes on existing Councillors will depend on the precise proposal put forward.

When offices of Councillor are to be redistributed into new wards, the implementation method must give consideration to Schedule 4.2 of the Act.

In summary, this provides that as near as is practical, half of the total number of Councillors are to retire every 2 years and as near as practical to half of the Councillors representing each ward, are to retire every 2 years. It will also be necessary to include a recommendation to allocate the existing Councillors to wards, which must also be done in accordance with the provisions and intent of the Act.

7. Community consultation

Thank you for your interest in the City's review of its wards and representation. We welcome your submission.

Submissions can be:

- Entered via the City's website www.swanengage.com/wards-and-representation-review
- Emailed to swan@swan.wa.gov.au
- Posted to City of Swan, PO Box 196, Midland WA 6936, or
- Hand delivered to City of Swan Administration Centre, 2 Midland Square, Midland

Submissions should contain the reference 'Wards and Representation Review' and include your name and address.

For enquiries regarding the review please contact the City on (08) 9267 9267.

Submissions close midnight Friday, November 20, 2026.

2 Midland Square, Midland
PO Box 196, Midland DC WA 6936

Enquiries (08) 9267 9267
www.swan.wa.gov.au

City of Swan

Contact details:

Helen Harrison
(08) 9267 9267
Email swan@swan.wa.gov.au