

TO: Chair and Members of the District Boundary Resident Review Panel

SUBMITTED BY:  **Original Signed**

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: September 23, 2022

SUBJECT: 2022 District Boundary Project – Phase Two Public Engagement Process

ORIGIN

December 14, 2021 motion of Halifax Regional Council to conduct the 2022 District Boundary Review in two phases and to return to Council with an Administrative Order for its consideration to establish a committee of experts to conduct Phase Two of the District Boundary Review.

February 8, 2022 motion of Halifax Regional Council to adopt Administrative Order Number 2022-001- GOV as set out in Attachment 1 of the staff report dated December 20, 2021 to establish a District Boundary Resident Review Panel reporting to Regional Council through Executive Standing Committee to conduct Phase Two of the 2022 Municipal District Boundary Review process.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Administrative Order 2022-001-GOV, Respecting the Special Advisory Committee for the 2022 Halifax Regional Municipality District Boundary Review, Section 5:

Duties of the Committee:

5. The Committee shall advise Council, through Executive Standing Committee, on proposed boundaries for the electoral districts of the Municipality by:
- (a) leading a public engagement process in alignment with this Administrative Order and guidance from past decisions of the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board;
 - (b) analyzing responses and themes from public engagement to inform the Committee's recommendations to Council; and
 - (c) adjusting the current district boundaries to develop proposed boundaries that take into consideration:
 - (i) the direction of Regional Council from Phase One of the District Boundary review;
 - (ii) the results of the public engagement process; and
 - (iii) the objectives set out in section 368(4) of the Municipal Government Act, including consideration of the number of electors, relative parity of voting power, population density, community of interest, and geographic size

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the District Boundary Resident Review Panel approve the proposed public engagement schedule, survey, and presentation parameters for Phase Two of the District Boundary Review project as outlined in the discussion session and attachment two of this report.

BACKGROUND

In February 2022, Regional Council established the District Boundary Resident Review Panel to advise on the boundaries of the municipal polling districts.

On June 14, 2022, Regional Council completed Phase One of the Review by confirming the number of polling districts and the number of councillors at sixteen. Phase Two looks at polling district boundaries across the municipality and the distribution of polling districts within the municipality. In accordance with the provisions of section 368(4) of the Municipal Government Act (MGA)¹, this phase considers the number of electors, relative parity of voting power, population density, communities of interest, and geographic size.

The Panel's duties include leading the public engagement activities for Phase Two of the Review. Since its initial meeting in June 2022, the Panel developed a map that proposes polling district boundaries for the sixteen districts that meet the considerations of section 368(4) of the MGA and considers factors such as the current and projected growth and development of the municipality.

DISCUSSION

Balancing the necessary considerations of section 386(4) of the MGA is challenging. The District Boundary Resident Review Panel is tasked with providing a public engagement option that strives to meet the requirements of listed in section 386(4). As stated by the Utility and Review Board in HRM's 2003 application (2004 NSUARB 11):

[82] Based on the evidence in this hearing, including some of the background materials used by Mr. Radchuck in developing his report, and the witnesses of HRM, the Board has determined that the target variance for parity shall be +10%, provided community of interest issues are generally satisfied. Any variance in excess of +10% must be justified in writing, and the more a variance exceeds 10% the greater and more detailed the written explanation that will be required. The Board would be reluctant, however, to approve a variance greater than +25%, particularly given the urban character of most of HRM. In addition, the Board considers it appropriate that relatively rapid changes in population in particular districts be considered. In particular, a negative variance for areas experiencing rapid growth should help to ensure maintenance of reasonable relative parity over a reasonable period of time.

...

[86] With respect to community of interest, the Board finds the criteria that should be taken into account include the following:

1. history;
2. recreational issues;
3. tax rates, i.e., area rates;
4. services (water and sewer);
5. fire protection service areas;
6. traffic infrastructure and pattern;
7. planning boundaries;
8. language and ethnic origin;

¹ Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act - <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/municipal%20government.pdf>.

9. school districts;
10. shopping patterns and business centres.

This list is not meant to be exhaustive.

[87] The Board recognizes that several community of interest factors may overlap, meaning that the final delineation of a boundary must strike a compromise or accommodation among a number of factors. Further, communities of interest may change with the passage of time. Additionally, certain parts of HRM are experiencing faster growth rates compared to other parts of HRM, where neighbourhoods remain more stagnant...

At its September 14, 2022 meeting, the District Boundary Resident Review Panel adopted a mapping option for use in its public engagement activities. HRM GIS staff have finalized the corresponding maps and confirmed the elector counts based on the direction provided by the Panel. These proposed boundaries have only been approved for use in the public engagement activities for Phase Two: they do not represent the final mapping option for the project. The following is an overview of the elector counts for the mapping option that will be used for the public engagement as adopted by the District Boundary Resident Review Panel on September 14, 2022:

Proposed District	Estimated Elector Count (2021)	% of Average Electors per district	Elector Count Difference from Average	Range Difference	Notes on voter parity
1	26,685	114.7	+3,423	Exceeds high range	Exceeds the +10 % variance by 1096 electors. Recommendation to maintain due to limited future growth.
2	24,144	103.8	+881	Within range	Falls within the +/- 10 % variance and allows room for future growth.
3	21,407	92.0	-1855	Within range (low)	Falls within the +/- 10 % variance. Allows room for future growth.
4	19,843	85.3	-3780	Out of low range	Falls outside of the +/- 10 % variance. Allows room for future growth.
5	20,366	87.5	-2897	Out of range (low)	Falls outside of the +/-10% variance. The Panel determined the proposed district should be maintained as is due to expected future growth.
6	22,503	96.7	-759	Within range	Falls within the +/-10% variance and allows for future growth.
7	23,716	101.9	+454	Within range	Falls within the +/-10% variance and allows for future growth.
8	21,655	93.1	-1608	Within range	Falls within the +/-10% variance and allows for future growth.
9	22,356	96.1	-906	Within range	Falls within the +/-10% variance and allows for future growth.
10	24,989	107.4	+1726	Within range (high)	Falls within the high range. Recommendation to proceed with boundary changes based on future growth projections.
11	24,598	105.7	+1335	Within range (high)	Falls within the high range +10% variance. Recommendation to proceed with boundary changes as is based on future growth projections.
12	21,484	92.4	-1779	Within range	Falls within the high range +10% variance and allows for future growth.
13	22,806	98.0	-457	Within range	Falls within range and allows for future growth.
14	24,597	105.7	+1334	Within range (high)	Falls within the high range of the +10% variance. Recommendation to proceed with proposed boundary changes based on future growth.

15	25,324	108.9	+2061	Within range (high)	Falls within the high range +10% variance. Recommendation to proceed with proposed boundary changes based on future growth
16	25,729	109.7	+2266	Within range (high)	Falls within the high range +10% variance. Recommendation to proceed with proposed boundary changes based on future growth
Total	372,002				
Average	23,263				
10%	2,326				
Low Range (-10%)	20,936				
High Range (+10%)	25,589				

Public Engagement Schedule

On July 13, 2022 staff presented the District Boundary Resident Review Panel with a memorandum outlining the public engagement options for Phase Two of the District Boundary Review Project. The public engagement activities as recommended by staff feature an online survey developed by Narrative Research; five in-person public engagement sessions, with a virtual participation option, facilitated by Narrative Research; and three additional in-person public engagement sessions hosted by municipal Community Councils. The locations and dates for the engagement sessions were presented to the District Boundary Resident Review Panel at its August 24, 2022 meeting and approved in principle. A public engagement subcommittee was established by the District Boundary Resident Review Panel including the following members:

- John Ariyo
- Kate Sullivan
- Pamela Brennan

The public engagement subcommittee met four times between August 24 and September 8, 2022 and provided feedback on the proposed engagement plan. The engagement sessions are spread out across HRM and include information sessions within urban, suburban and rural areas of the municipality. Each session will include a presentation of the current and proposed district boundaries, where changes been proposed and will solicit feedback from the public on these proposed changes.

Due to time constraints with the overall project, the possibility of hosting an in-person engagement session in each district is not feasible. The public engagement sessions include a virtual participation option in which all residents of HRM can participate either virtually or in person. Additionally, members of the public are also encouraged to send their correspondence on the proposed boundary changes to the Municipal Clerk’s Office, so that it can be shared with the District Boundary Resident Review Panel, or to speak during public participation at a regular meeting of the District Boundary Resident Review Panel. The feedback received from these public engagement sessions will be captured in a “What we Heard Report” and provided to the District Boundary Resident Review Panel for consideration when developing its final report and recommendation to the Executive Standing Committee on Phase Two of the District Boundary Review Project at its November 28, 2022 meeting.

The public engagement schedule, including the dates and location of the in person public engagement session, is set out in attachment 2.

Draft Survey Parameters

Similar to that of Phase One, an online survey is being proposed for Phase Two of the District Boundary Review Process. The survey will include background information related to the 2022 District Boundary Review Project, the direction from Phase One of the study, and provide qualifying information on five criteria outlined in section 368(4) of the Municipal Government Act (MGA). The survey will ask respondents to identify their current district and direct them to the newly proposed district boundaries. The survey will include descriptions of the current districts (2016) and the proposed changes for 2024. The survey will specify where changes have been made and will seek specific feedback from respondents on whether the changes work well or if other considerations should be included. The survey will be based on the mapping option adopted by the Panel on September 14, 2022.

Additional survey demographic information such as age, gender, ethnicity, length of residency in HRM and voter eligibility will be included for classification purposes. The information collected from this survey will inform the “what we heard report” and will be provided to the District Boundary Resident Review Panel for consideration in its final report and recommendation to the Executive Standing Committee on Phase Two of District Boundary Review project. The survey will go live on October 3 and run to October 17, 2022. A link will be provided on halifax.ca/boundaryreview and the survey will be sent to Narrative Research’s East Coast Voice online panel, to ensure a minimum level of survey completions were achieved across a representative sample of residents.

Draft Presentation Parameters

Presentations on the proposed boundary changes will be provided at each in person/virtual public engagement session and Community Council meeting. Similar to that of the survey, the presentations will include descriptions of the current districts (2016), the proposed changes for 2024, and seek specific feedback from respondents on whether the changes work well or if other considerations should be included when establishing new electoral boundaries. The presentations will be tailored to the communities in which they are held, but will also provide residents an opportunity to give feedback on the proposed changes for the rest of the municipality. Similarly, the presentations provided at Community Council will focus primarily on the proposed district changes within the jurisdiction of the Community Council and allow residents to comment on other proposed boundary changes throughout the municipality.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staff have awarded Narrative Research Associates with a contract to develop a survey and assist with the collection and analysis of data from the public engagement activities related to Phase Two. The cost for these services is \$48,571.70 net HST incl. Additionally, a communications plan was developed to promote the survey, public engagement meetings, and other forms of engagement in print ads in media outlets across the municipality, digital ads, graphic communications on HRM’s digitalized screens. The total cost of the Communications plan is \$6,988.34 for a total of \$55,560.04 for the Phase Two study of the District Boundary Review. This funding is available in the approved 2022/2023 operational budget in A125 – 6399 (Elections– Contract Services).

RISK CONSIDERATION

The District Boundary Review is a legislatively required action. Administrative Order 2022-001-GOV (section 9) requires that the District Boundary Resident Review Panel submit its final report and recommendation to Executive Standing Committee by its November 2022 meeting to ensure that the project remains on track to meet the NSUARB application deadline of December 31, 2022.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There was no community engagement required as part of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

The District Boundary Resident Review Panel may choose to suggest amendments to the public engagement outreach for Phase Two of the District Boundary Review Project. Due to timeline constraints, substantive changes to the public engagement schedule is not recommended.

ATTACHMENTS

1. District Maps – Proposed 2024 Electoral Boundaries Mapping Option
 2. 2022 District Boundary Review Phase Two Public Engagement schedule
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A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

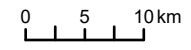
Report Prepared by: Liam MacSween, Elections and Special Projects Manager, 902.233.5207

Report Approved by: John Traves, K.C., C.D, Municipal Solicitor
Executive Director, Legal and Legislative Services, 902.490.4219.

Report Approved by: Caroline Blair-Smith, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate Services,
902.490.8456

Halifax Regional Municipality
District Review
Proposed Districts

Proposed Districts Sept14

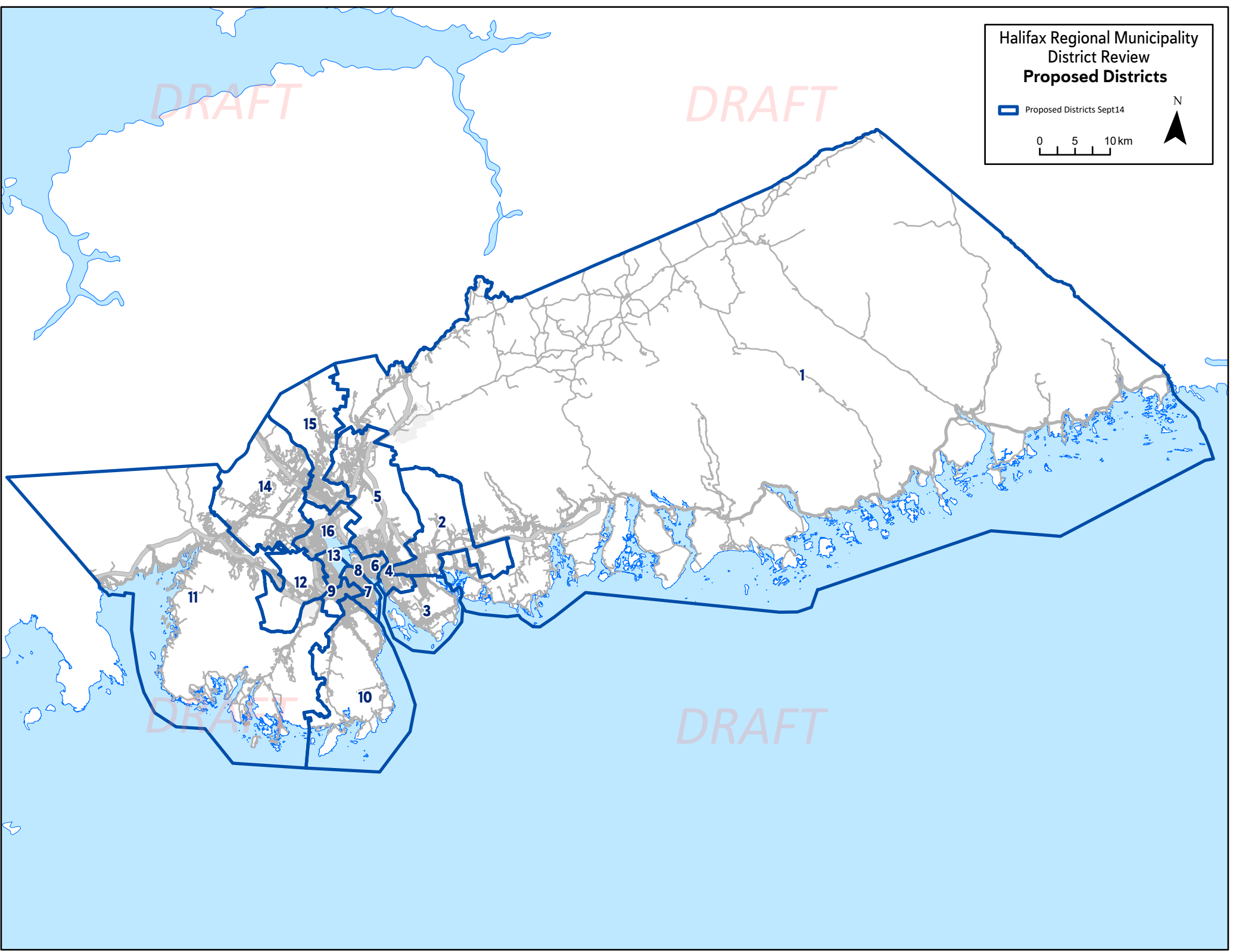


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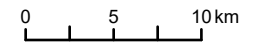
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Halifax Regional Municipality District Review District 1

-  Proposed Districts Sept14
-  Community Boundary

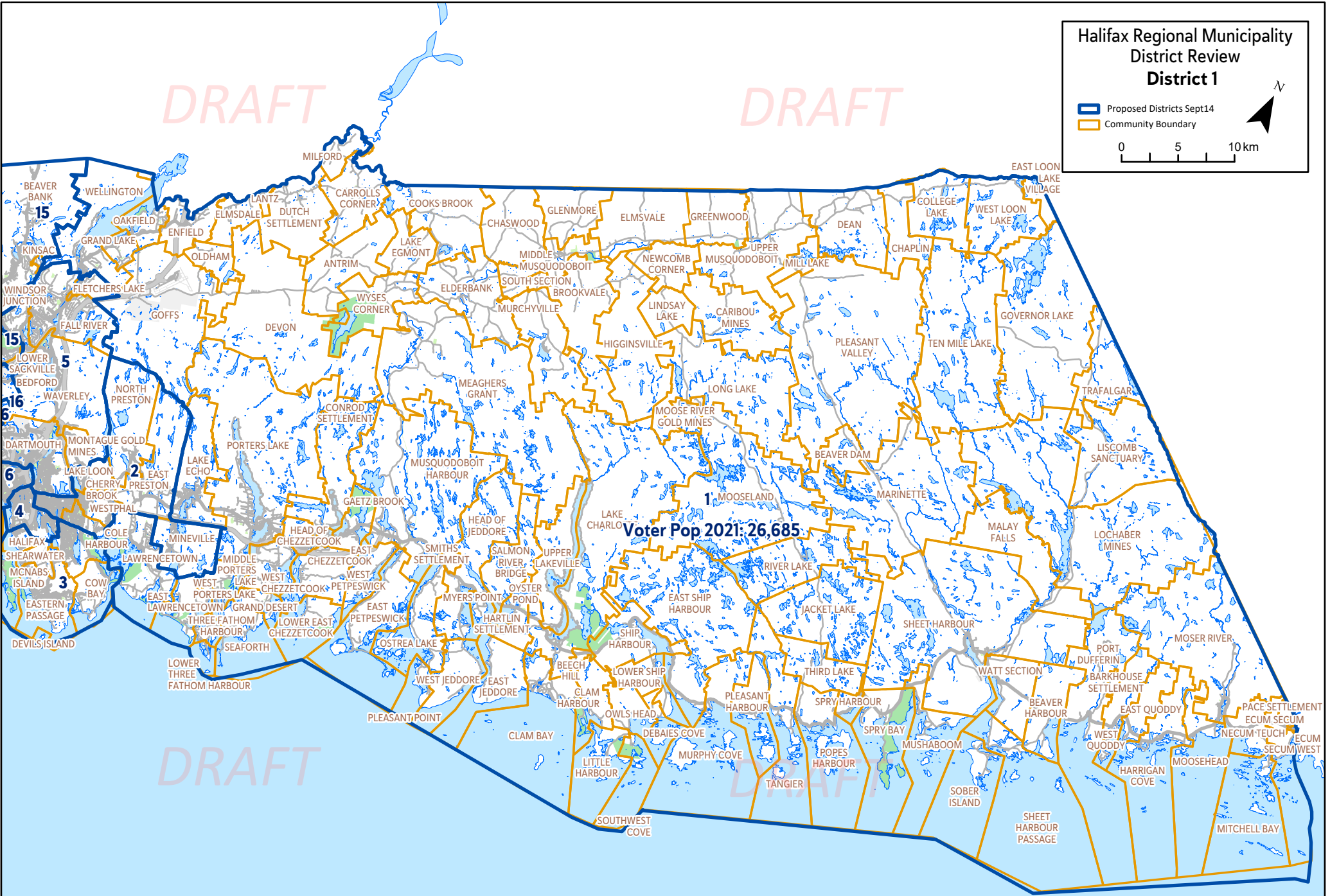


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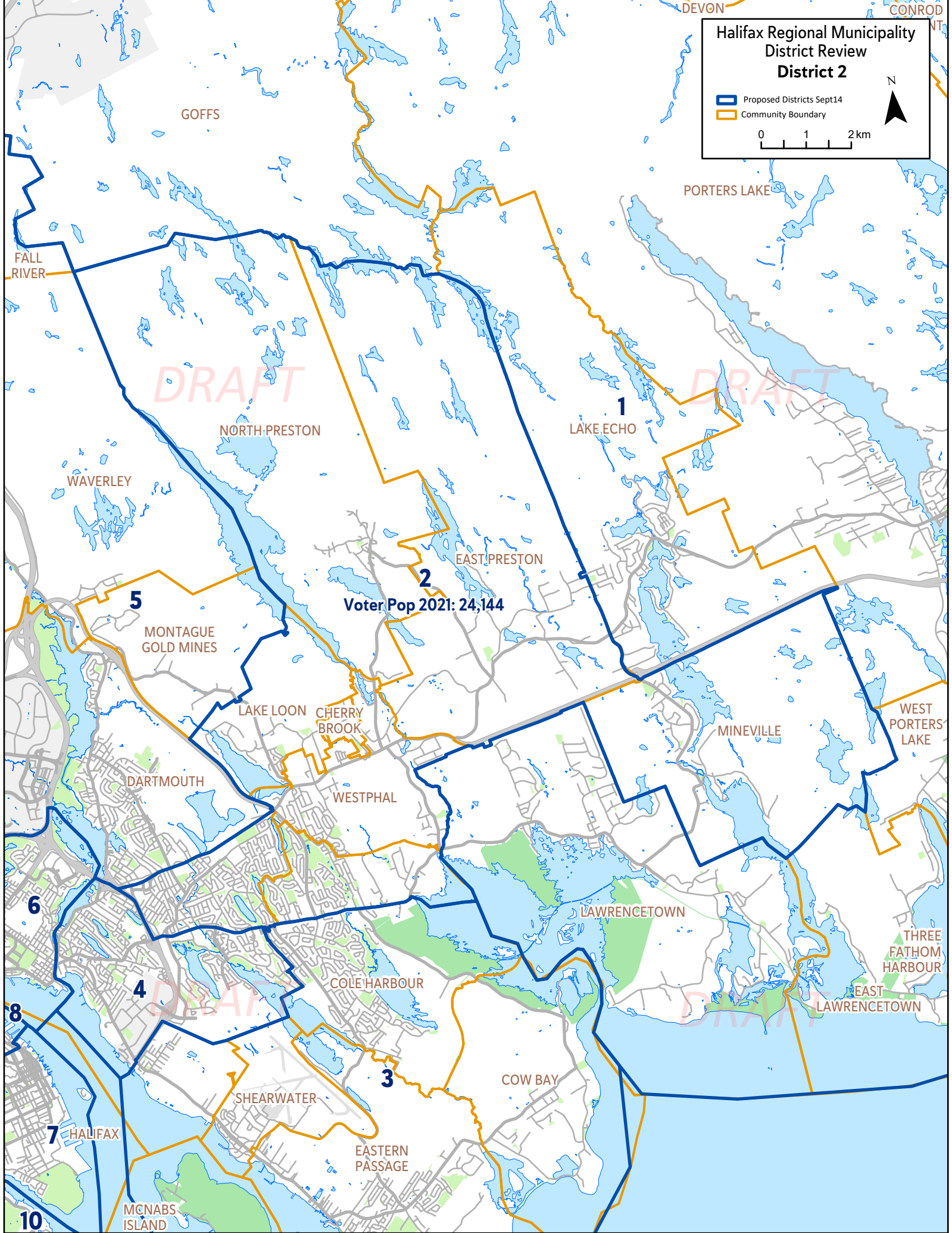
Voter Pop 2021: 26,685

**Halifax Regional Municipality
District Review
District 2**



▬ Proposed Districts Sept14
▬ Community Boundary

0 1 2 km


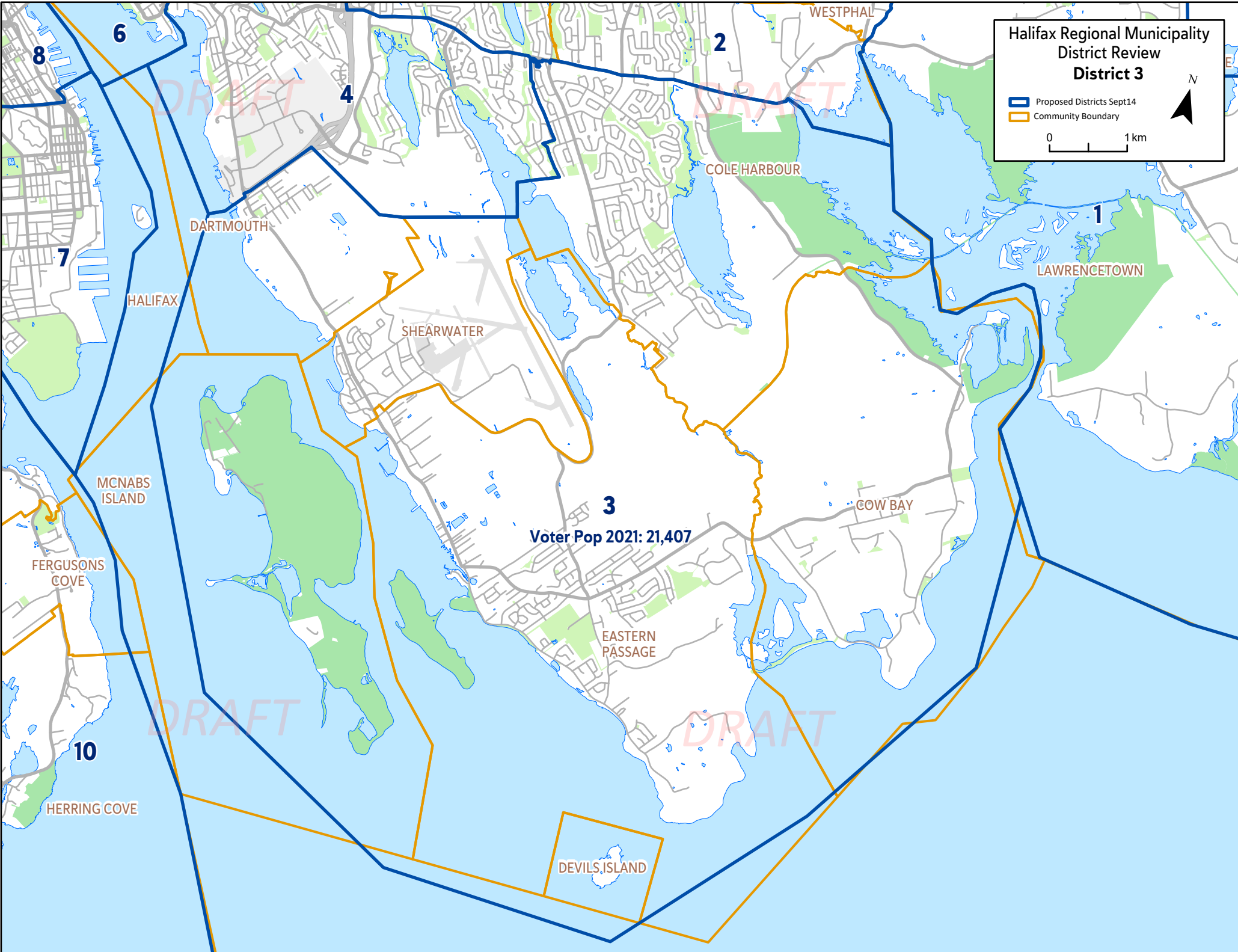
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**Halifax Regional Municipality
District Review
District 3**


-  Proposed Districts Sept14
-  Community Boundary

0 1 km

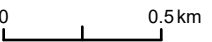



Halifax Regional Municipality District Review District 4

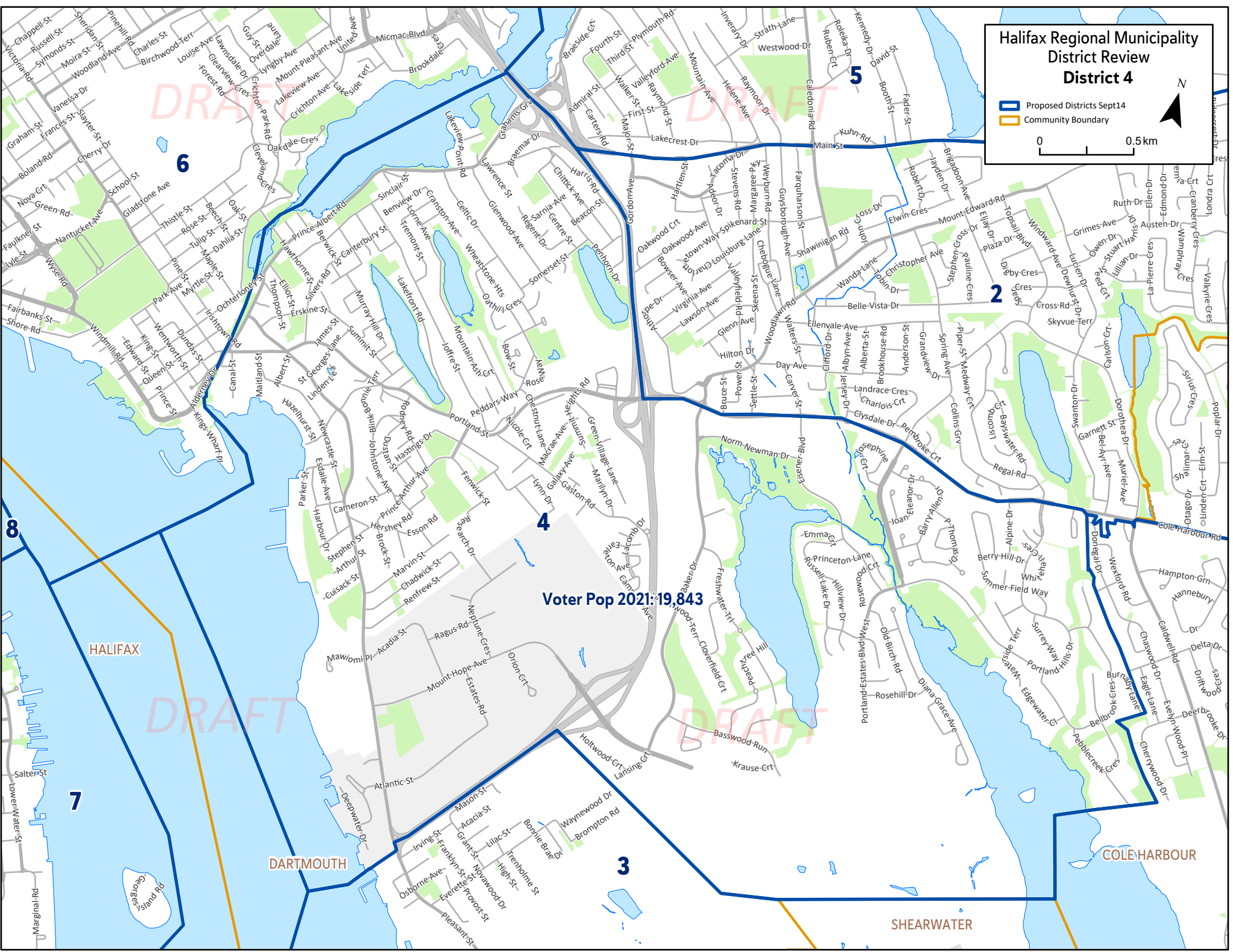
▬ Proposed Districts Sept14
▬ Community Boundary



N



0 0.5 km



Voter Pop 2021: 19,843

6

4

5

2

8

7

3

HALIFAX

DARTMOUTH

SHEARWATER

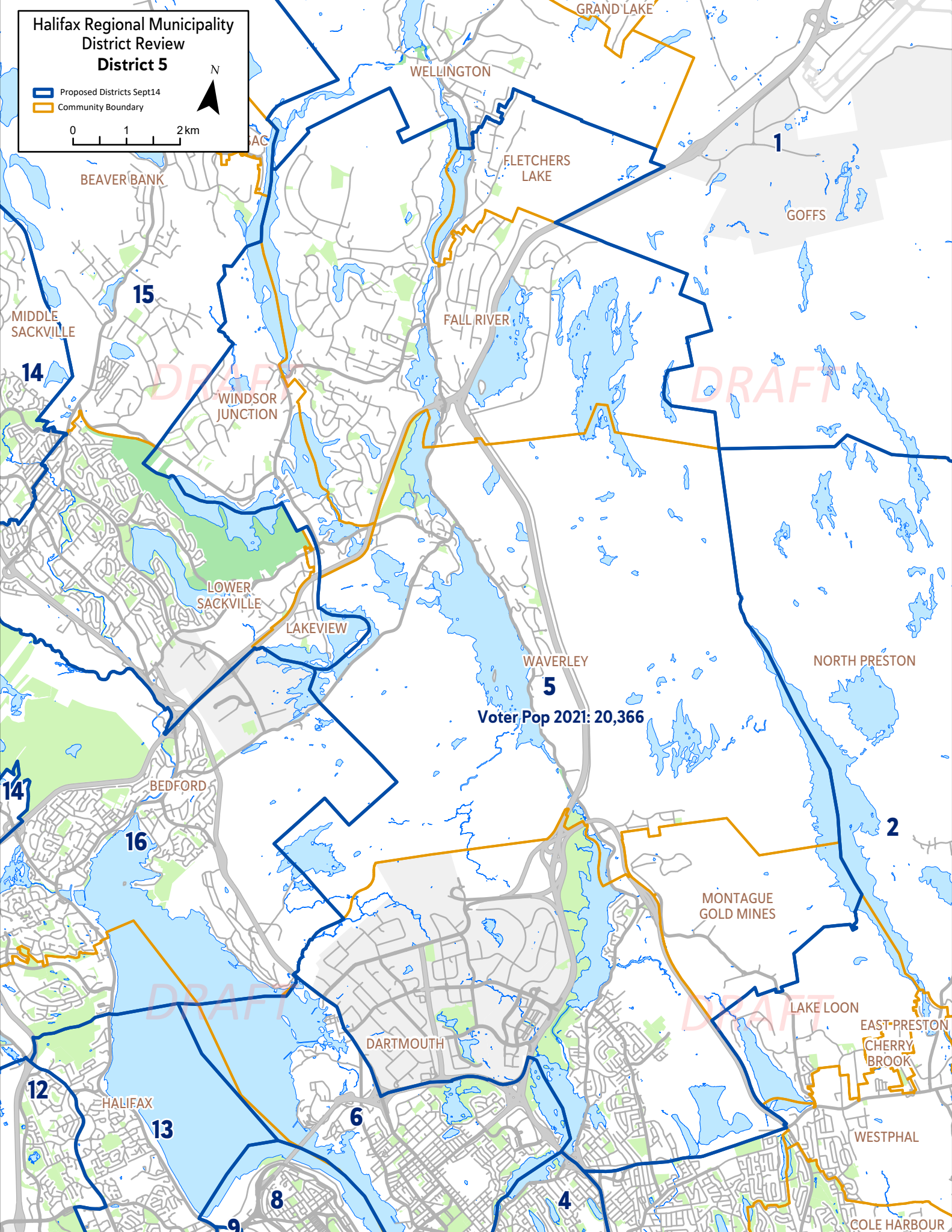
COLE HARBOUR

Halifax Regional Municipality
District Review
District 5

- Proposed Districts Sept14
- Community Boundary




0 1 2 km




Voter Pop 2021: 20,366

Halifax Regional Municipality District Review District 6

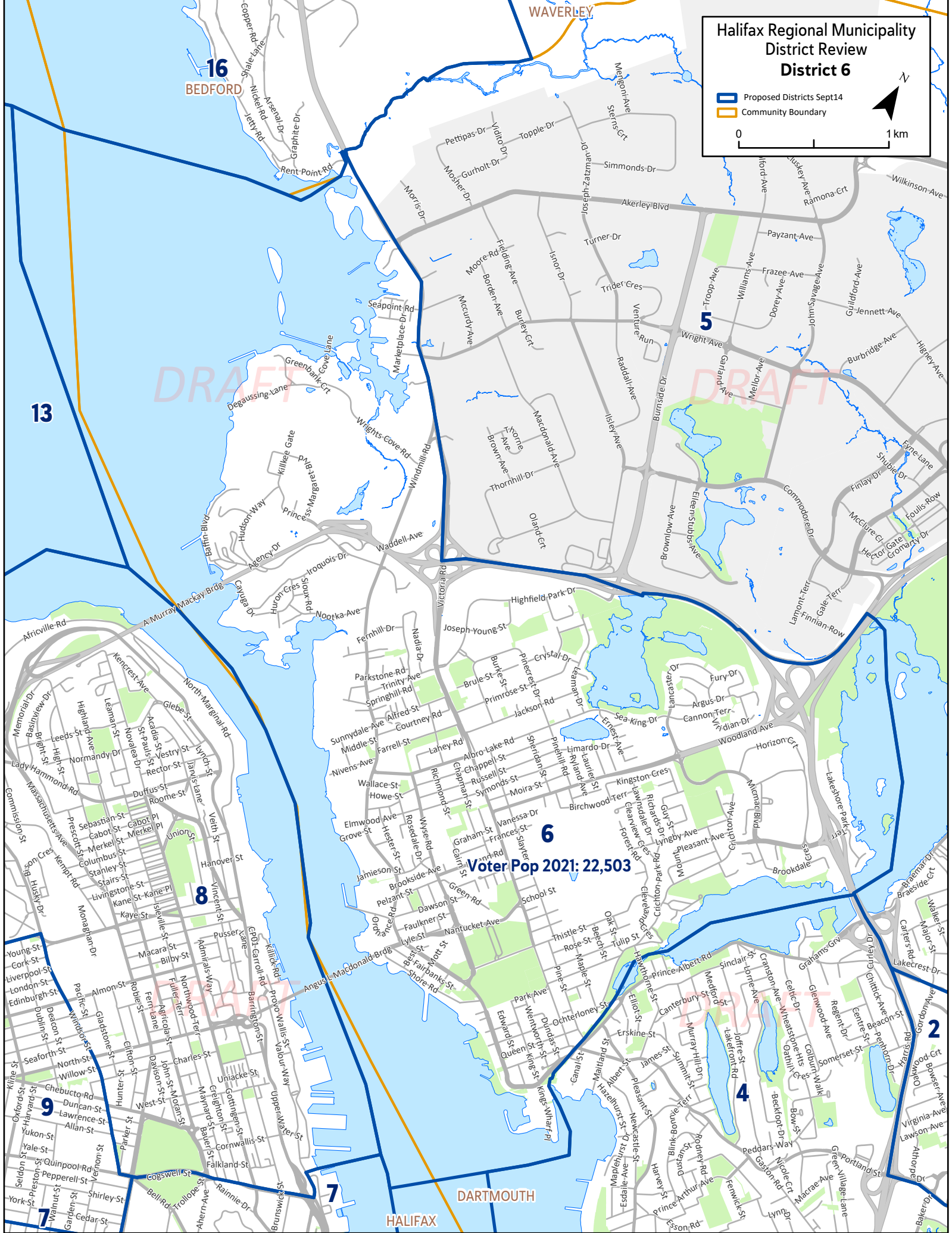
- Proposed Districts Sept14
- Community Boundary





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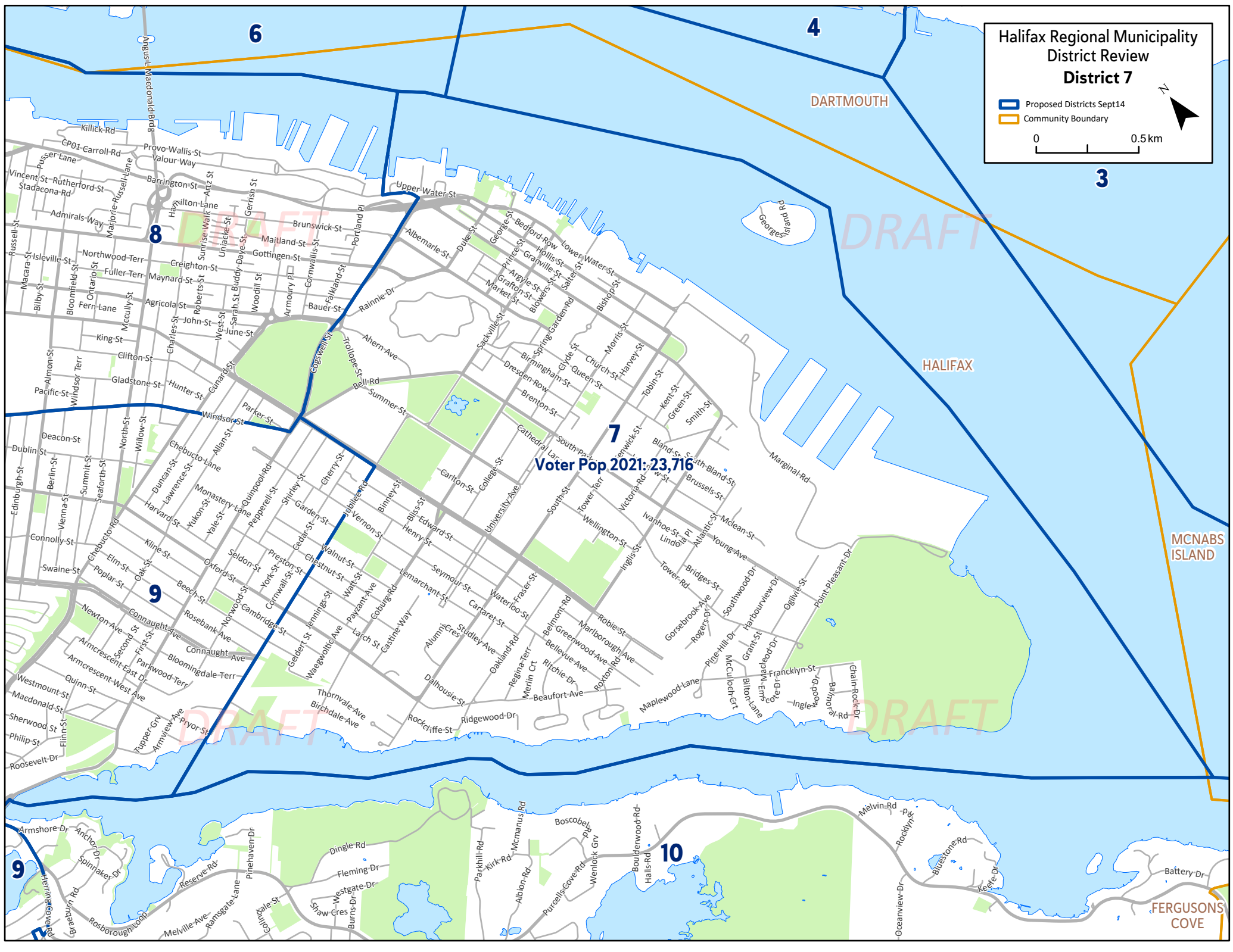
0 1 km



Halifax Regional Municipality District Review District 7

-  Proposed Districts Sept14
-  Community Boundary

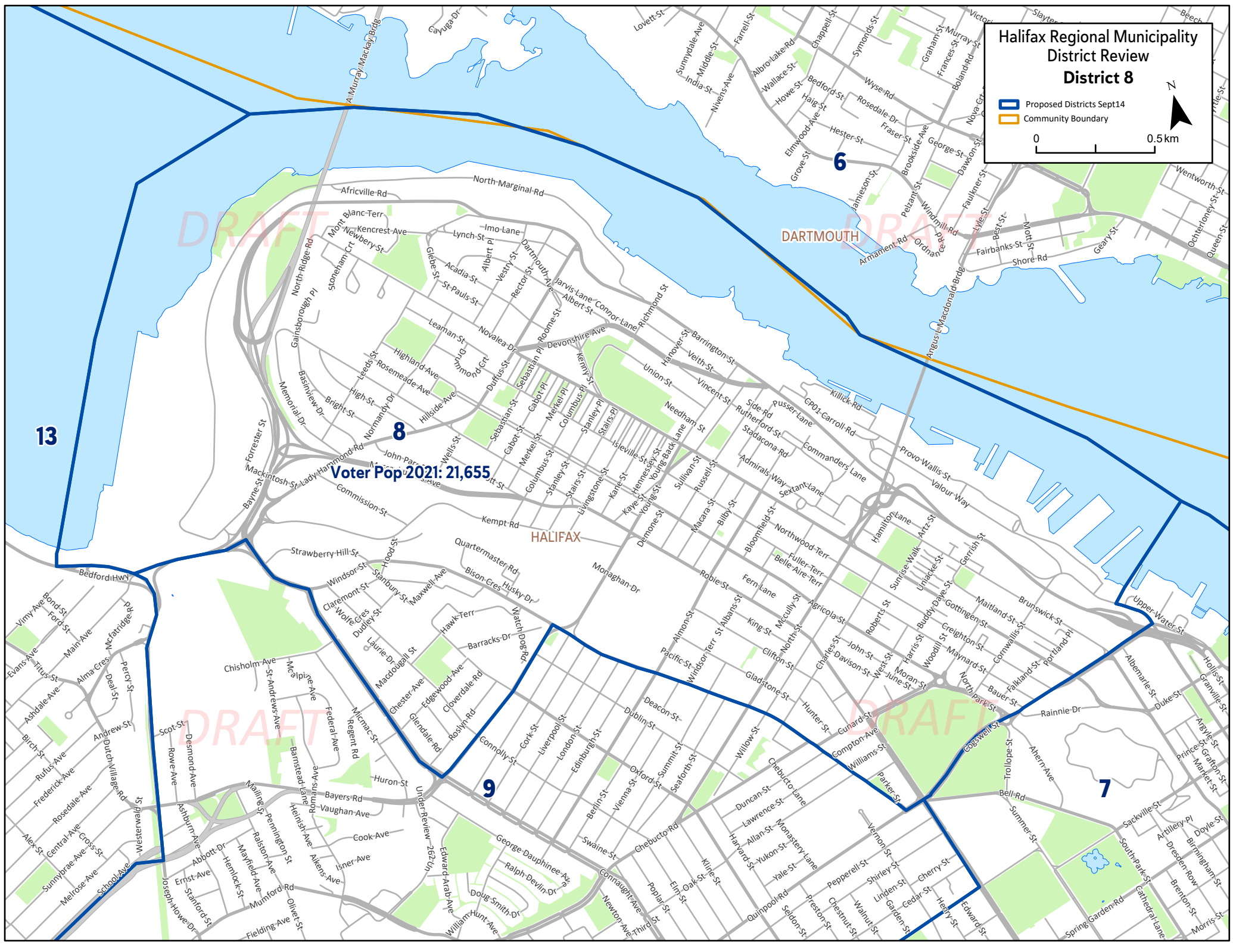
0 0.5km

Halifax Regional Municipality District Review District 8

- █ Proposed Districts Sept14
- █ Community Boundary


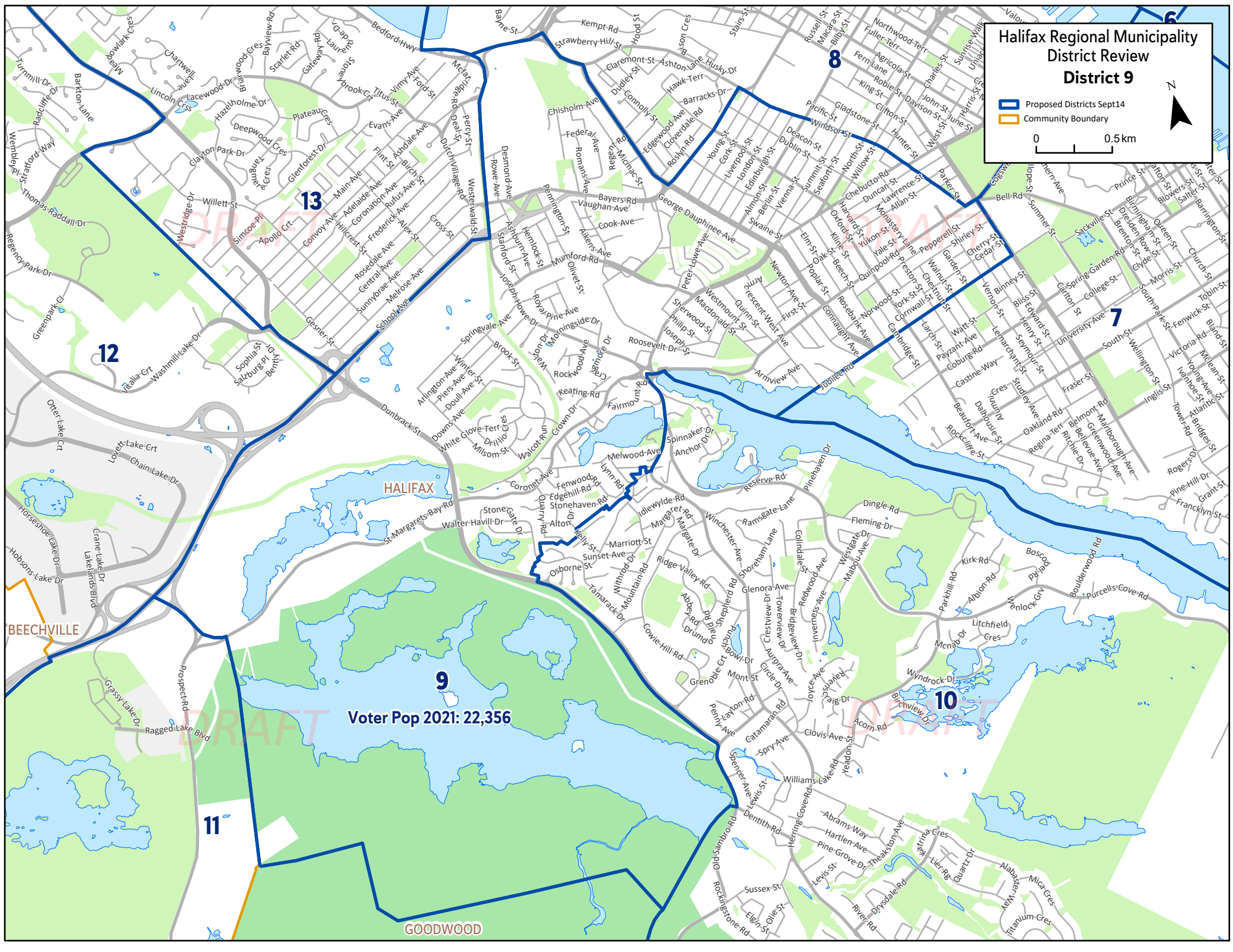
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Halifax Regional Municipality District Review District 9

■ Proposed Districts Sept14
■ Community Boundary

0 0.5 km

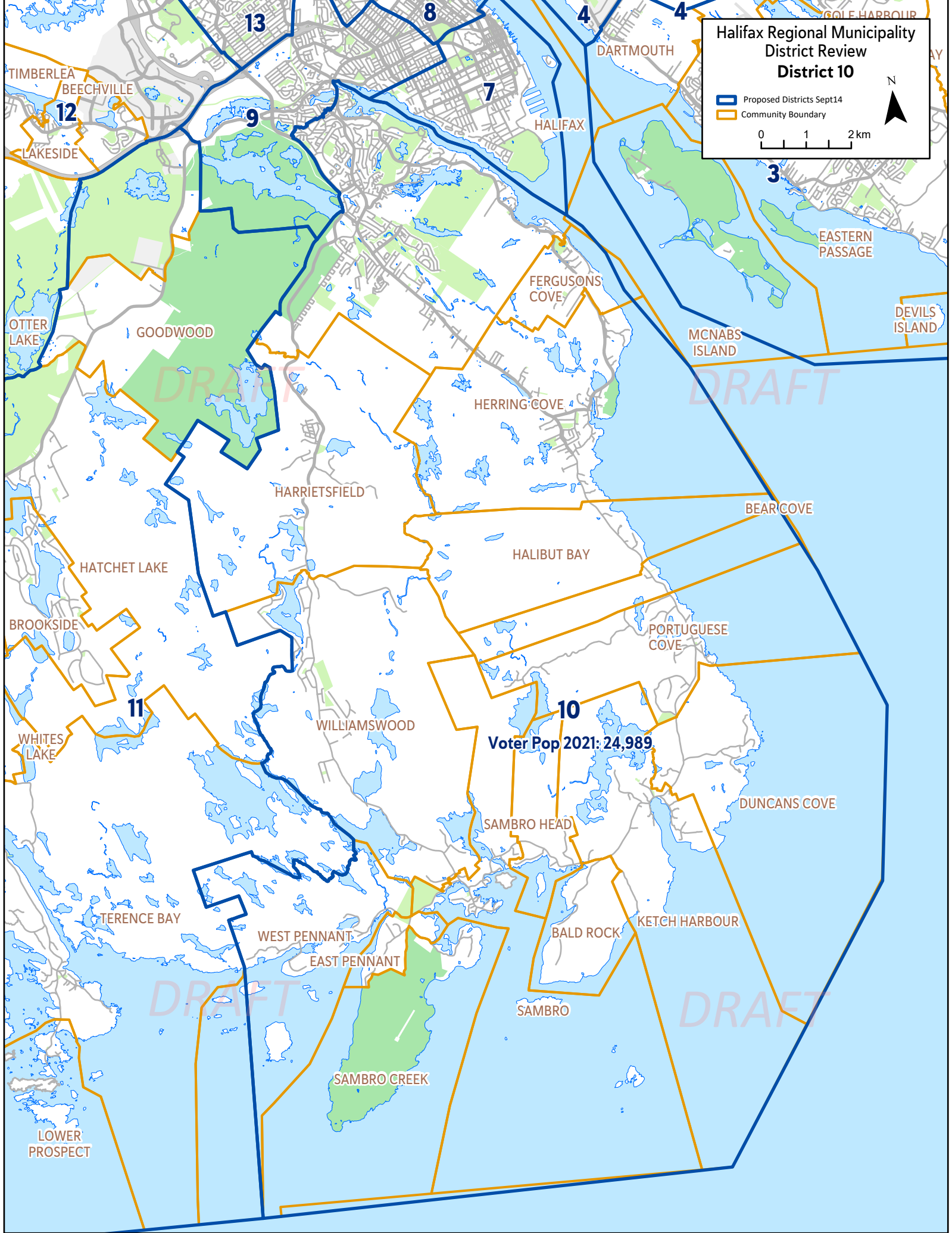



**Halifax Regional Municipality
District Review
District 10**

- Proposed Districts Sept14
- Community Boundary

0 1 2 km

N



10
Voter Pop 2021: 24,989

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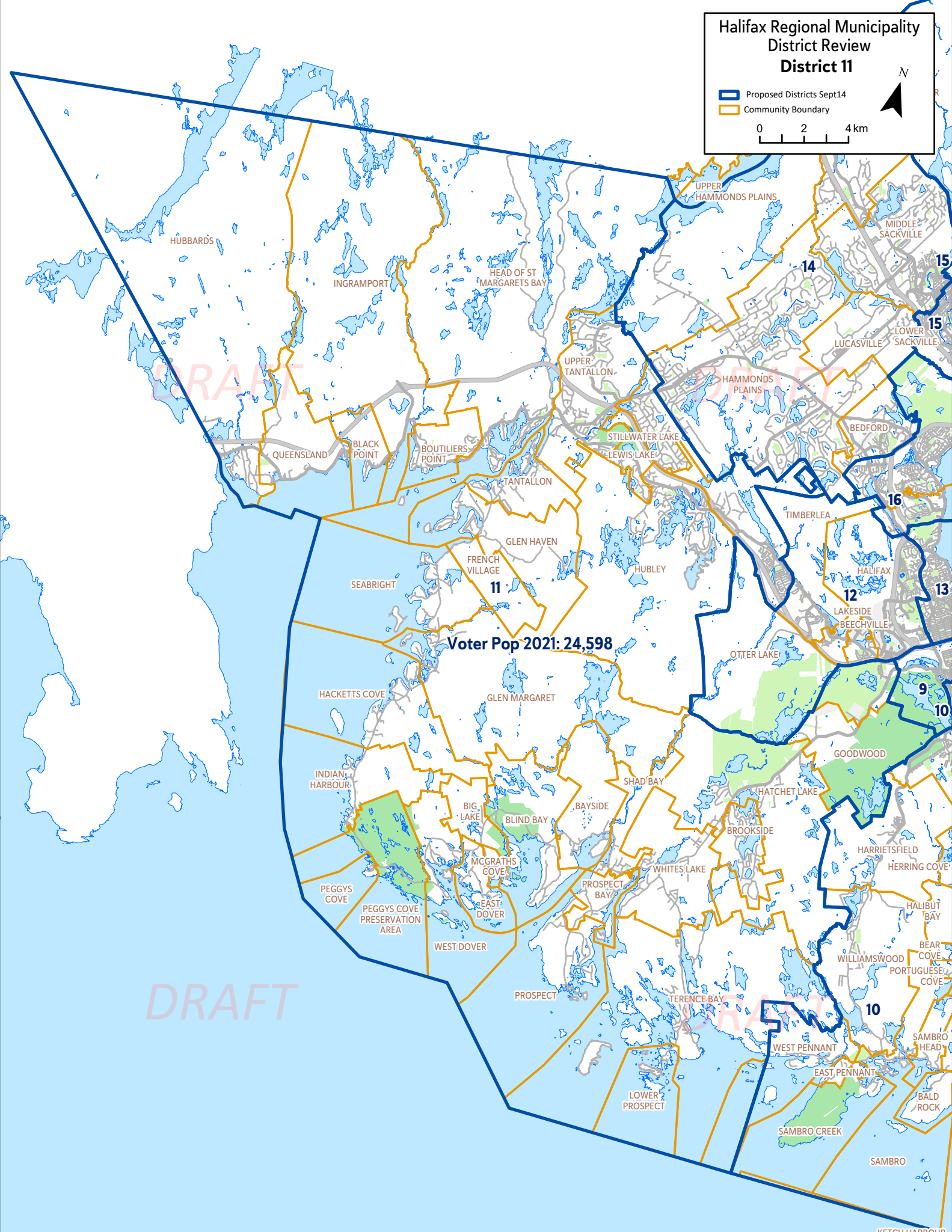
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Halifax Regional Municipality District Review District 11



Legend:
■ Proposed Districts Sept14
■ Community Boundary

Scale: 0 2 4 km

North Arrow


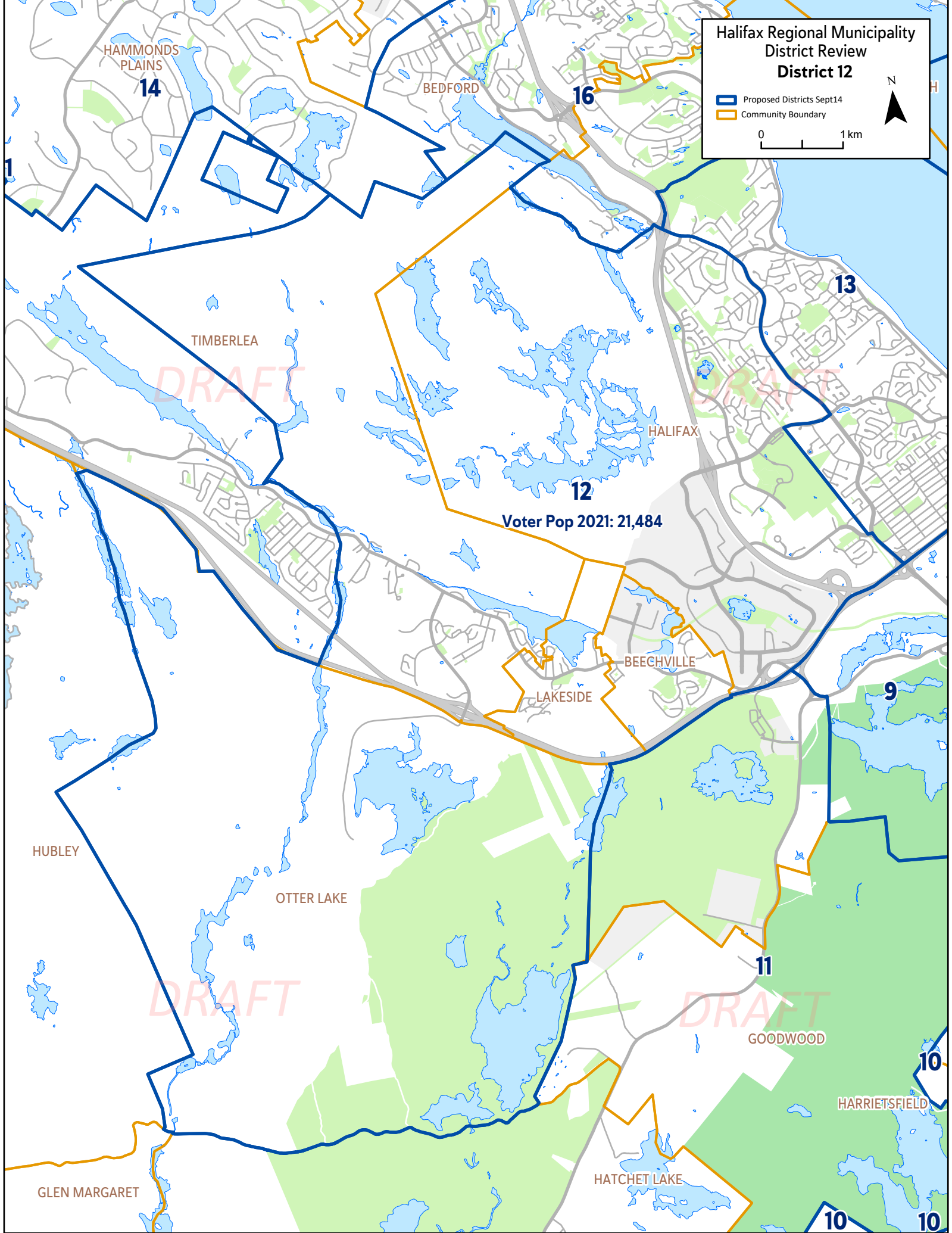


**Halifax Regional Municipality
District Review
District 12**

-  Proposed Districts Sept14
-  Community Boundary

0 1 km

N

HAMMONDS
PLAINS
14

BEDFORD
16

13

HALIFAX

12

Voter Pop 2021: 21,484

BEECHVILLE

LAKESIDE

9

HUBBLEY

OTTER LAKE

11

GOODWOOD

10

HARRIETSFIELD

GLEN MARGARET

HATCHET LAKE

10

10

**Halifax Regional Municipality
District Review
District 13**

- ▬ Proposed Districts Sept14
- ▬ Community Boundary

0 1 km

N

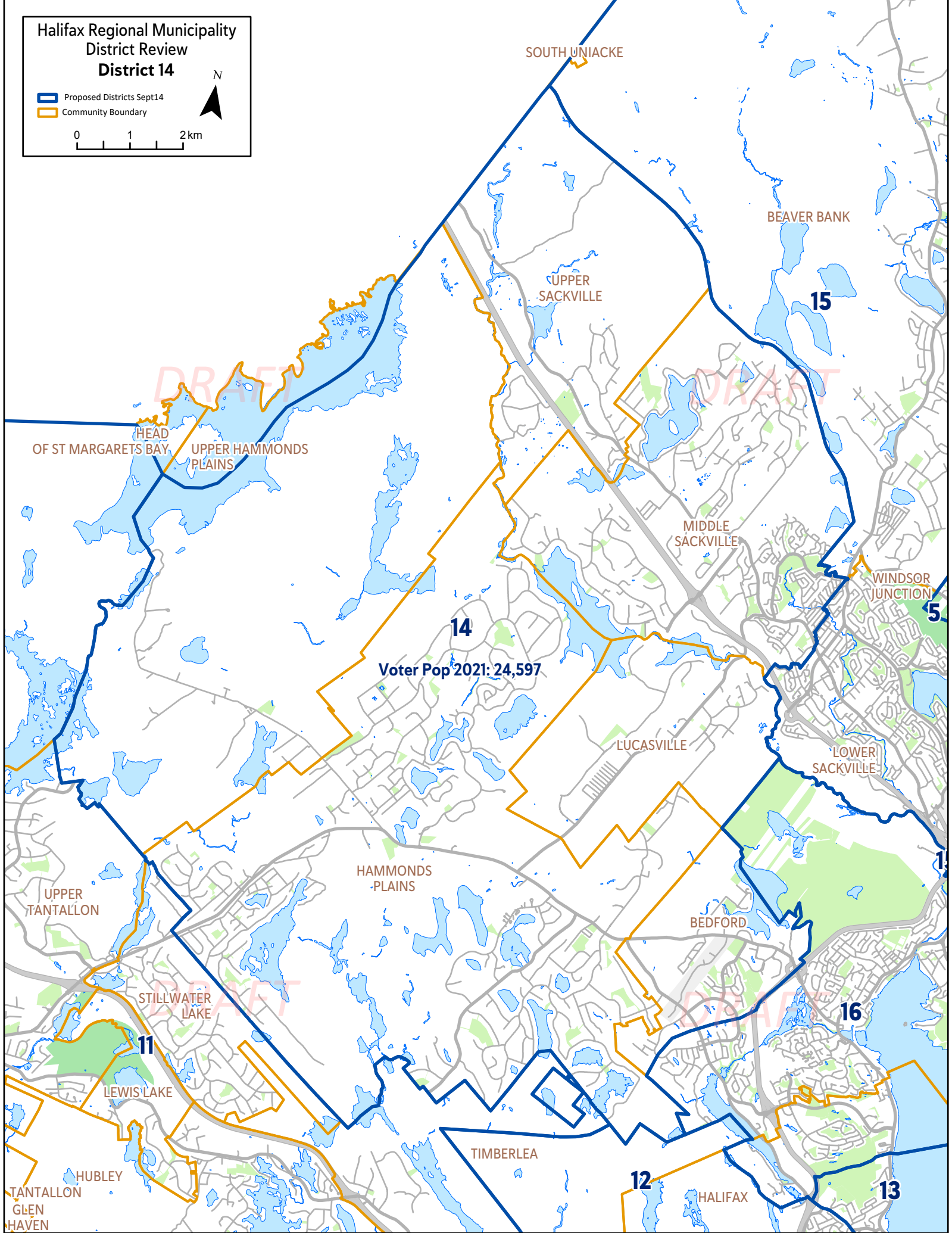


Halifax Regional Municipality
District Review
District 14

- Proposed Districts Sept14
- Community Boundary



0 1 2 km



Voter Pop 2021: 24,597

14

15

5

1

16

12

13

11

UPPER TANTALLON

STILLWATER LAKE

LEWIS LAKE

HUBLEY

TANTALLON
GLEN HAVEN

HAMMONDS PLAINS

TIMBERLEA

BEDFORD

LUCASVILLE

LOWER SACKVILLE

WINDSOR JUNCTION

MIDDLE SACKVILLE

UPPER SACKVILLE

BEAVER BANK

SOUTH UNIACKE

OF ST MARGARETS BAY

HEAD

UPPER HAMMONDS PLAINS

Halifax Regional Municipality
District Review
District 15

- Proposed Districts Sept14
- Community Boundary

N



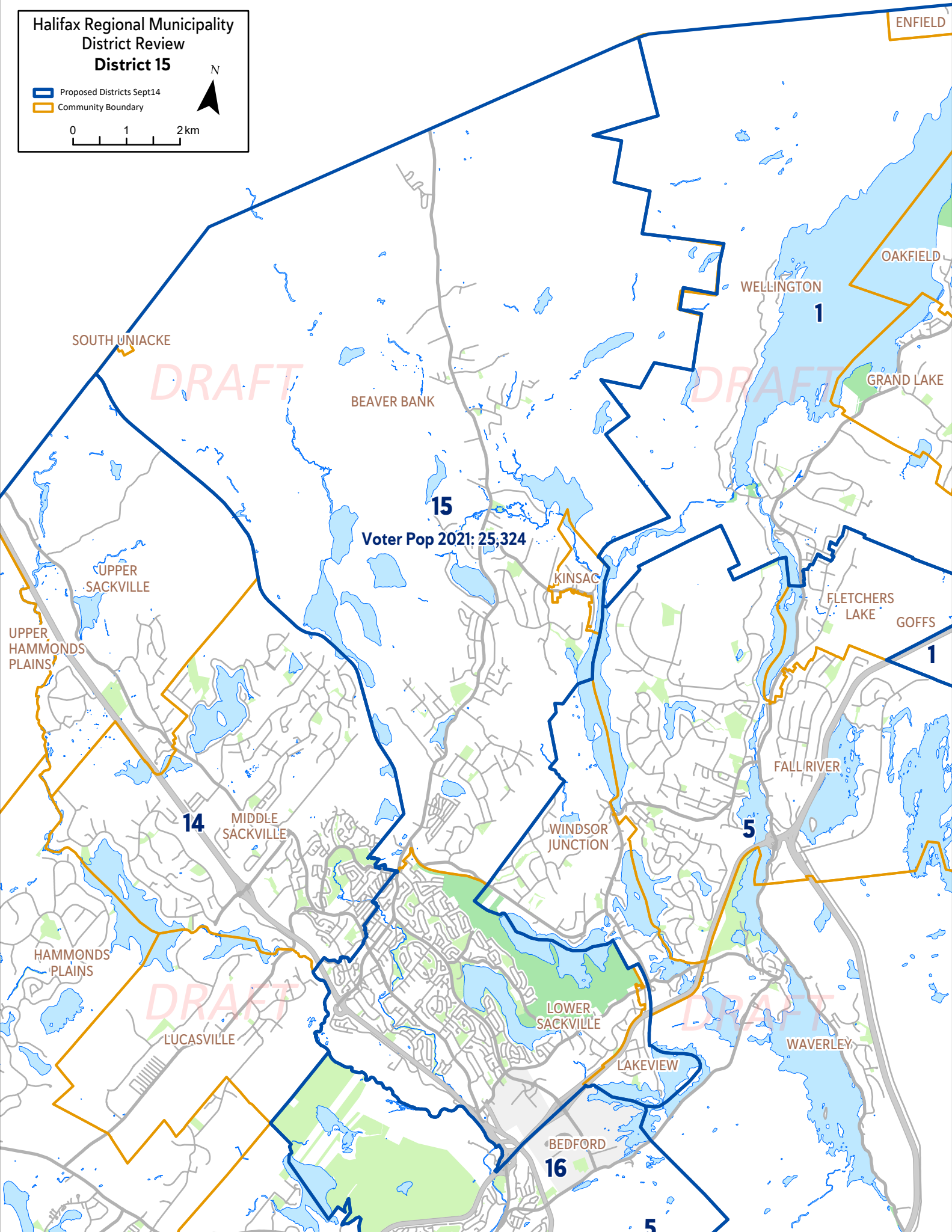
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15
Voter Pop 2021: 25,324

ENFIELD

OAKFIELD

WELLINGTON

1

GRAND LAKE

SOUTH UNIACKE

BEAVER BANK

KINSAC

FLETCHERS LAKE

GOFFS

1

UPPER HAMMONDS PLAINS

UPPER SACKVILLE

FALL RIVER

14

MIDDLE SACKVILLE

WINDSOR JUNCTION

5

HAMMONDS PLAINS

LUCASVILLE

LOWER SACKVILLE

LAKEVIEW

WAVERLEY

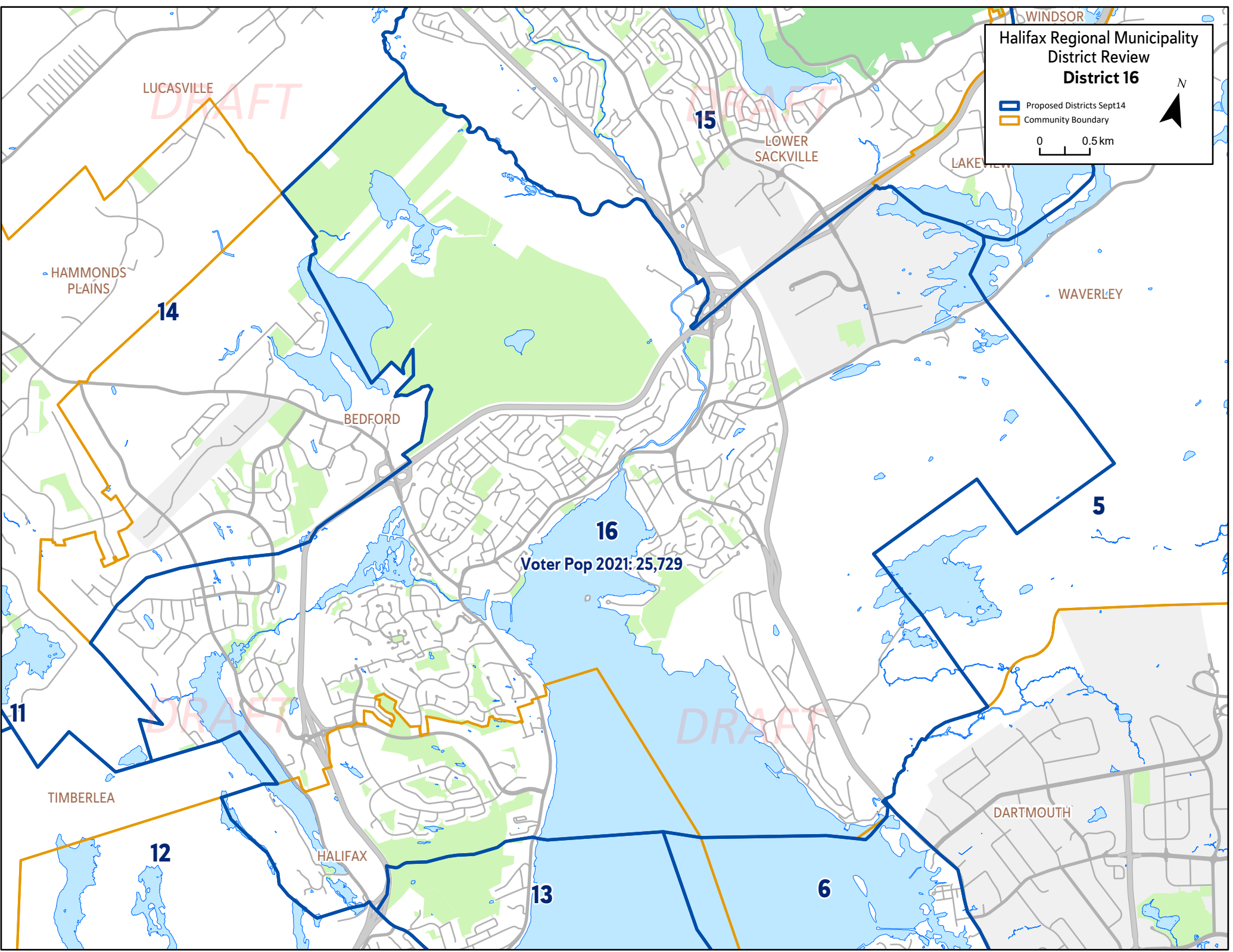
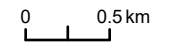
BEDFORD

16

5

Halifax Regional Municipality District Review District 16

- Proposed Districts Sept14
- Community Boundary



16
Voter Pop 2021: 25,729

LUCASVILLE

15

LOWER SACKVILLE

LAKEVIEW

HAMMONDS PLAINS

14

WAVERLEY

BEDFORD

5

11

TIMBERLEA

12

HALIFAX

13

6

DARTMOUTH

Attachment 2

Date	Public Engagement Activity	Location/Time
Wednesday, September 28, 2022	First Narrative in-person public engagement session	Sackville Public Library, 636 Sackville Drive, Lower Sackville – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This meeting includes a virtual participation option via Zoom.
Thursday, September 29, 2022	Second Narrative in-person public engagement session	Captain William Spry Community Centre, 16 Sussex St. Halifax – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This meeting includes a virtual participation option via Zoom.
Monday, October 3, 2022	Online survey launches	Survey link to be posted on halifax.ca/boundaryreview .
Thursday, October 6, 2022	Harbour East – Marine Drive Community Council in-person public engagement session	Harbour-East Marine Drive Community Council Meeting Space, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, October 11, 2022	Halifax and West Community Council public engagement session	Council Chamber, 3 rd Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, October 11, 2022	Third in-person Narrative public engagement session	Musquodoboit Harbour Public Library and Recreation Centre, Highway 7, Musquodoboit Harbour – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This meeting includes a virtual participation option via Zoom.
Wednesday, October 12, 2022	Fourth Narrative in-person public engagement session	Wallace Lucas Community Centre, 596 Lucasville Road, Lucasville – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This meeting includes a virtual participation option via Zoom.
Thursday, October 13, 2022	Fifth Narrative in-person public engagement session	North Preston Community Centre, 44 Simmonds Road, North Preston – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This meeting includes a virtual participation option via zoom.
Monday, October 17, 2022	North West Community Council in-person public engagement session	Bedford Hammonds Plains Community Centre, 202 Innovation Drive, Bedford - 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Monday, October 17, 2022	Online survey closes	Survey link to be removed from halifax.ca/boundaryreview .