

Hello ICRC Members,

I am concerned about the 9/28/13 preliminary maps <http://www.austinredistricting.org/maps/interactive-preliminary-map/> splitting the on campus student vote. Every dorm on the UT campus is inside district 9 except for the Creekside dormitory which is in district 5. As a former resident of that dorm, this concerns me.

Creekside was originally intended as a dorm for law and graduate students but now is the last all male dorm at UT and holds 190 undergraduate students. This dorm is isolated from the main undergraduate areas of campus which creates a barrier for its residents to become involved in the campus community. This would increase further if for example the District 9 councilperson has an event for students on campus, but the Creekside residents aren't invited because they aren't in that district. I highly doubt a District 5 councilperson would hold an event for students on campus with only one small dorm in their district. This would make partnering with UT ResLife more complicated since all of their residents aren't represented by one councilperson, even though they are in a small geographic area. UT ResLife would not be able to have a single councilperson to point to if there were city problems for students on campus. By placing this dorm in a different district than all other on campus housing, the specific needs of students who live on campus will be divided.

I understand the desire to have districts of a similar size, and I realize that this would only exacerbate the already population heavy district 9 and small district 5, but dividing student on campus housing is not the solution to this problem. Creekside is already located right next to the border between District 5 and 9 so it could extremely easily be drawn into district 9. In fact, Creekside park which is immediately west of the dorm, where many residents enjoy its volleyball court, is already in district 9. There are only 190 residents in this dorm which is 0.23% of the population target for each district.

Please consider amending the council lines to include the Creekside dormitory into district 9 so that all UT students who live on campus will be represented by the same councilperson and not have their needs divided.

Thanks,
Torsten Knabe
Class of 2012

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