

Craig - please forward to the ICRC commissioners.

Ed English
Northwest Austin Coalition (NWAC) representative

ICRC Commissioners,

It was an honor and privilege to have the opportunity to come before the Commission as an Invited Guest on October 26, 2013. The Commission has the difficult task of evaluating considerable citizen input from all areas of the city, and the tasks remaining before the Commission are without a doubt challenging. The efforts exhibited by the Commission to take the redistricting process forward in a fair and timely fashion are deserving of a "Thank You" from all of Austin.

In an effort to provide a summary of the points made during our presentation, we offer the following.

Presentation overview or themes

1. Compromise

Every map must at some level be a compromise. The maps we presented to the Commission offer different boundaries for the districts drawn in our previous version presented October 7. The current map preserves the more core areas of our districts of interest -- Districts 6 and 10.

2. Collaboration

The ultimate goal of the redistricting process is to generate a series of districts that "fit" as well as possible into a larger set, in this case the entire city. We and neighboring communities to our east have worked together to present a map that represents just such a collaborative effort.

3. Building upon what has been done

The Commission spent a great deal of time in drafting its first map. We believe that much of that effort resulted in districts that can be used as a solid base for the next map the Commission generates. To that point, of the five proposed districts included in our maps, three are identical to the districts already drawn by the Commission.

Notes and comments regarding the districts included in our October 26 map

1. District 1 -- identical to the District 1 drawn by the Commission on September 28.

2. District 10 -- identical to the District 10 drawn by the Commission on September 28. Considerable citizen input has been offered requesting changes to the southeastern corner of this district. One option available to the Commission is to move precincts in this area into an adjacent District 9 (assuming our proposed District 7 is adopted). To compensate for the drop in population in District 10, some precincts in the southwestern corner of District 6 could be moved into District 10. Currently District 6 is over deviation and can tolerate the removal of precincts within reasonable limits. This exchange of precincts from 6 to 10 would mean that no other districts would need to be modified to make this change.

3. District 6 -- identical to the District 6 drawn by the Commission on September 28. We firmly believe that the boundary between District 6 and 7 should remain as has been drawn by the Commission.

4. District 4 -- modified. The map we proposed for District 4 retains the vast majority of the District 4 drawn by the Commission on Sept 28. As was requested by some representatives from Precinct 248 (Wooten), we moved it from District 4 into District 7. The resulting changes in population and Hispanic representation in District 4 are completely compensated for by adjusting the northern boundary of District 4 and with one very small change to the southeastern most corner of the district as well.

5. District 7 -- modified. The northern end of District 7 is the same as has been drawn by the Commission except for the changes we propose to District 4. The central section of District 7 is the same as has been drawn by the Commission except for the movement of Precinct 248 into District 7. It is the southern boundary for District 7 that represents the most significant change over what has been drawn by the Commission. The southern boundary was based upon two considerations. Those were the guidance of representatives from various neighborhood associations within the District and the desire to draw a district that hits the population target right on the nose. Representatives from various areas within the district supported the inclusion of this district in our proposal and provided input as to what neighborhoods should be included. At the same time it was also paramount that maximum flexibility be available for the inclusion or exclusion of neighborhoods along this southern boundary based upon the preferences of those neighborhoods. Because the population for District 7 as proposed is at just .3% (234 people) over target, the full +/- 5% allowable deviation is available for adjustments to the southern boundary as the ICRC sees fit and based upon citizen input. In general we believe our proposed District 7 represents a very viable alternative to the District 7 as is currently drawn on the Commission's September 28 map.

We hope this letter provides a helpful summary of the information we presented while before the Commission as Invited Guests. Please feel free to call upon us at any time should you need additional information or have questions regarding our proposed district maps.

Respectfully,
Ed English
NWAC Representative