Council District Boundary Commission
Evaluation of Options A thru F

This memo summarizes staff's assessment of the six redistricting map options produced relative to the eight criteria adopted by the Council District Boundary Commission. As part of this exercise, compactness and contiguity were examined separately, bringing the number of criteria to nine. Each criterion was examined individually and assigned a numerical score that was then applied to each of the six map options. The scores for all criteria have been compiled in a table at the end of this evaluation to produce an overall score for each of the six options. These overall scores should be viewed strictly as another factor for the Commission to consider when evaluating the six options and need not be deterministically applied.

Although impossible to completely eliminate all subjectivity from the process, the intent was to develop as impartial a system as practicable to evaluate each map option. It is recognized that criteria may sometimes conflict and more subjective considerations might legitimately influence the Commission's final determination with respect to the option(s) that best serves the interests of the citizens of Richardson.

Total Population Deviation

All options except Option F maintain a total population deviation under 10% consistent with federal guidelines. This is the Commission's most important criterion to keep in mind and the one most easily measured and controlled. From the smallest total deviation to the largest, the six options rank as follows: D, C, A, B, E and F. Accordingly, scores assigned to each option range from 5 to zero, respectively.

Compact Districts

As directed by the Commission, staff calculated the land area and perimeter dimension of each district configuration for each of the six options. A ratio of the perimeter to land area was then calculated to produce a measure of "compactness" for each district in each of the six options. The individual district ratios were then tallied for each option and the results ranked from lowest to highest—the lowest number representing the option comparatively having the most compact district configurations overall. The lower the number, the more relatively compact the district configurations. From the lowest compactness score to the highest, the six options rank as follows: B, A, C, D, E and F, with scores assigned to each from 5 to zero, respectively.

Contiguous Districts

As a measure of contiguity, the number of shared or adjacent boundaries for each individual district in each of the six options was calculated (i.e., a district abutting one other district was assigned a score of "1"; a district abutting two others was assigned a score of "2"; etc.). The scores for the four districts were then summed to provide a single "continuity score" for each option. Based on this method, Options A, B and C emerged as the maps having the greatest degree of contiguity, their scores comprising 10 points; Option D was next with 8 points, followed by Options E and F each having 6 points.

Boundaries Follow Easily Identifiable Features

The City's thoroughfare system follows a relatively evenly spaced grid that provides for boundaries that are easily identifiable. All options that have been prepared include boundaries that align with major streets or creeks. Consequently, all six map options were assigned the same score of "1" for this particular criterion.

Minority Population Voting Strength

In conducting its review the Department of Justice will compare the newly adopted Council District boundary map with the one previously approved, which serves as a benchmark.

Every one of the six options produced maintains essentially the same balance of minority population distribution as exists today (i.e., the same districts have the highest concentrations of the same minority populations). All six map options were therefore assigned the same numerical score of "1" relative to this criterion.

Effect on Incumbents

None of the six options would displace any incumbent Council member currently required to reside within the boundaries of his or her district. Since all map options equally fulfill this criterion, each of the six was assigned the same score of "1" for this criterion.

HOA Boundaries

Presently, it is possible for up to four (4) City Council members to be elected from a single HOA (i.e., one geographically-based place plus the three at large places). A Council District boundary bisecting a single HOA would create two opportunities for Council places that correspond to geographic districts. Consequently, the potential is created for up to five (5) City Council members to be elected from a common HOA. This potential for an increased concentration of representation could be viewed as a negative by the Department of Justice.

Additionally, legal counsel has advised that Neighborhood and Homeowners Associations constitute existing communities of interest. As communities of interest, it is recommended that these associations not be split by Council district boundaries, but kept geographically intact. For scoring purposes, all options that keep HOA and Neighborhood Association boundaries intact, i.e., Options A through D and Option F, were assigned one point. Option E, which includes Council district boundaries that bisect two HOAs was assigned no points relative to this criterion.

Central Expressway

Historically, the extension of Council district boundaries across Central Expressway was not encouraged—a view that is not held today. City Council has indicated that extending Council district boundaries beyond Central Expressway may be a desirable means to moderate perceived issues of east/west divisiveness. Therefore, those options that include Council districts boundaries that extend beyond Central Expressway were assigned one point for each district that accomplishes this objective. Options A, B and C all include two districts extending across Central Expressway and were assigned 2 points each. The remaining three options, D, E and F included one district each that breaches the Central Expressway corridor and so were awarded one point.

Account for Future Growth

Several areas within Richardson are likely to experience population growth within the next ten years. Those locations likely to yield the greatest increases include the Bush Turnpike Station area, the Spring Valley Station District, and the University of Texas at Dallas. Other areas that may also add population include, Phase 2 of the Eastside development, the panhandle, and the West Spring Valley Corridor. These areas are distributed throughout Richardson and, depending on the final configuration of Council district boundaries, could accommodate population growth in most of the Council districts.

This criterion is perhaps the least important because it speaks to future potential and not current necessity. Ensuring that the maximum population deviation of 10% is maintained through this process is essentially mandatory and so restricts the Commission's ability to give significant consideration to future growth potential.

Options C and E include Council districts that would provide for some future growth without exceeding the 10% total population threshold. Option F does account for future growth but exceeds the 10% maximum deviation limit. None of the remaining three options (A, B and D) provides for significant future population growth (i.e., exceeding 1% within a district). For this criterion Options C and E were assigned one point each. No other options were awarded points.

Summary Table

The following table consolidates all the scores for all nine criteria and tallies them to arrive at an overall score. The higher the overall score, the more fully the eight criteria are satisfied.

Criteria	A	B	C	D	E	F
Deviation Less than 10%	3	2	4	5	1	0
Compact	4	5	3	2	1	0
Contiguous	10	10	10	8	6	6
Follow Easily Identifiable Features	1	1	1	1	1	1
Does Not Dilute Minority Voting Strength	1	1	1	1	1	1
Does Not Displace Incumbents	1	1	1	1	1	1
Respects HOA Boundaries	1	1	1	1		1
Number of Districts That Cross Central Expressway	2	2	2	1	1	1
Accommodates Future Growth	0	0	1	0	1	0
Total	**23**	**23**	**24**	**20**	**13**	**11**