
2001 Redistricting Plan
Multnomah County Commissioner Districts
July 2001

Suzanne Flynn, Multnomah County Auditor
Matt Nice, Senior Management Auditor





SUZANNE FLYNN, Auditor
Multnomah County

501 SE Hawthorne, Room 601
Portland, Oregon 97214
Telephone (503) 988-3320
Telefax (503) 988-3019
www.multnomah.lib.or.us/aud

MEMORANDUM

Date: 7/13/01

To: Diane Linn, Multnomah County Chair
Maria Rojo de Steffey, Commissioner, District 1
Serena Cruz, Commissioner, District 2
Lisa Naito, Commissioner, District 3
Lonnie Roberts, Commissioner, District 4

From: Suzanne Flynn, County Auditor

Subject: Reapportionment Plan

Attached is the proposed plan to reapportion the commissioner districts. According to County Charter, the Auditor is required to determine the population distribution among the commissioner districts no later than August 1 in the year the census is released and recommend a plan to redraw district lines if the population of any district is more than 103% of any other district. We found that District 4 (East) was 22.4% larger than District 2 (North) and that redrawing district boundaries was required. Our plan more than meets Charter requirements; the largest district is now only 100.035% more than the smallest, near mathematical equality.

As required by the Charter, the plan was reviewed with the Elections Division. We retained, as nearly as possible, the general geographic characteristics of districts established by charter.

Further, we maintained many of the previous boundaries and created new boundaries that are easily recognizable to minimize confusion.

In preparing these boundaries, we used the Charter, Oregon Revised Statutes, United States Supreme Court rulings, and suggestions from the Multnomah County Elections Division. We also included information in this report about the characteristics of the population that should be useful to the Commissioners and citizens.

We would like to thank the Multnomah County GIS Program, County Attorney, and Elections Division for their assistance in this process.

Recent History of County Commissioner Districts

Reapportionment is the process of reassigning a number of representatives to established districts. The number and district boundaries do not change, but the number of members per district does. Redistricting is the process of changing the district boundaries. The number of members per district does not change, but the districts' boundaries do. Both reapportionment and redistricting processes occurred in Multnomah County after voters amended its Home Rule Charter in November 1984. The Charter Review Commission prepared an amendment that reduced commissioner districts from five to four and provided that the Chair of the Board be elected at large. In proposing this ballot measure, the Charter Review Commission reapportioned and redistricted using 1980 Census data. Redistricting the four commissioner districts occurred again in 1991.

Home Rule Charter Mandates

The Multnomah County Home Rule Charter Section 3.15 directs the Auditor to determine from decennial census data whether the population of any commissioner district is more than 103 percent of the population of any other commissioner district. If such a disproportion is found, the Charter directs the Auditor, in consultation with the Multnomah County Elections Division, to prepare and present to the Board of County Commissioners a plan for modifying the commissioner district boundaries by August 1 of that year. The Charter allows the Board 45 days after receipt of the County Auditor's plan to alter by ordinance the boundaries of the commissioner districts.

Methodology

In preparing our redistricting plan, we analyzed existing boundaries, considered alternative boundaries, and assessed them by the guidelines presented below. We consulted with the Multnomah County Elections Division, used data made available to us by the U.S. Census Bureau, and utilized the mapping resources of the Multnomah County GIS program.

We mapped existing commissioner districts onto Census 2000 maps to identify the census tracts and more than 13,000 blocks contained in the county. We tallied population counts of the tracts and blocks of the commissioner districts to determine their 2000 populations.

This special project was not included in our FY00-01 audit schedule. However, it was required by Charter mandate and was performed in accordance with the General Standards section of *Government Auditing Standards*.

Redistricting Guidelines

The Multnomah County Home Rule Charter specifies that the Auditor shall be guided by the following points in drawing up a plan to adjust the commissioner districts:

- No district will be more than 103 percent of the population of any other commissioner district
- The general geographic characteristics of districts established by the Charter shall be retained as nearly as possible

The Multnomah County Elections Division staff also suggested the following guidelines:

- ☑ Follow simple, recognizable boundaries, such as major arterials and geographic boundaries, that can be easily understood by the citizens
- ☑ Avoid using boundaries that could change, such as city or school districts

In the past the Multnomah County Elections Division also used state legislative boundaries as a guideline to draw commissioner district boundaries. However, legislative districts are being redrawn and the process is not yet complete.

We also considered guidelines adopted in ORS 188.010, which state that, where practicable:

- ☑ districts should be contiguous
- ☑ districts should be of equal population
- ☑ districts should utilize existing geographic or political boundaries whenever possible
- ☑ districts should not divide communities of common interest
- ☑ districts should be connected by transportation links
- ☑ districts should not be drawn for the purpose of favoring any political party, incumbent legislator, or any other person
- ☑ districts should not be drawn for the purpose of diluting the voting strength of any language or ethnic minority group

Characteristics of Existing Commissioner Districts

Since 1990, the population of Multnomah County has grown 13.1%, from 583,887 to 660,486. The County has also become more diverse, with nearly 21% of the population identified as persons of color (race, not including ethnic categories), up 8% from 1990. Exhibit 1 displays 2000 Census demographics of Multnomah County by existing districts.

Exhibit 1

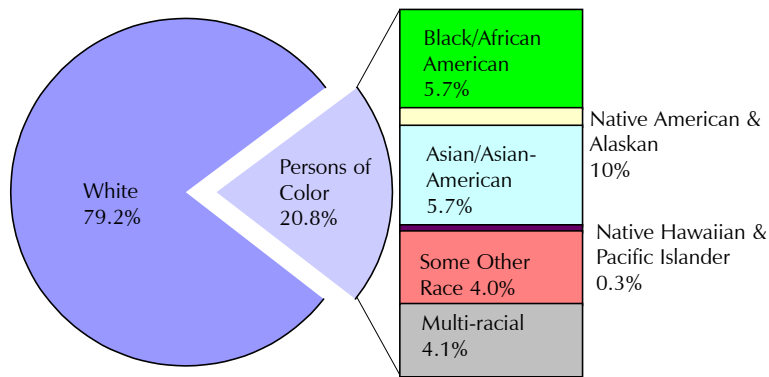
2000 Census Demographics of Multnomah County Citizens by Existing Districts

District	Total Population	Single Race Selection						Multi-racial	Hispanic/Latino (any race)
		White	Black/African-American	Native American/Alaskan	Asian/Asian-American	Hawaiian-Pacific Islander	Other		
1 West	157,913	137,954	3,592	1,377	7,120	350	2,572	4,948	6,236
2 North	154,888	103,295	25,392	1,975	7,623	935	7,649	8,019	14,158
3 Central	158,071	126,276	3,897	1,633	14,000	482	5,220	6,563	10,052
4 East	189,614	155,300	4,553	1,800	8,895	553	11,179	7,334	19,161
Total	660,486	522,825	37,434	6,785	37,638	2,320	26,620	26,864	49,607

Exhibit 2 shows the present racial breakdown of the county, not including Hispanics or Latinos. During the 2000 Census, individuals were able to identify both their race and ethnicity, therefore Hispanic and Latino represent concentrations of that ethnicity across all racial categories. The Hispanic and Latino (ethnicity) population has more than doubled to 7.5% of the total county population. Exhibit 3 illustrates the growth of the Hispanic and Latino population across existing districts from 1990 to 2000. District 4 (East) showed the greatest increase of more than 7%.

Exhibit 2

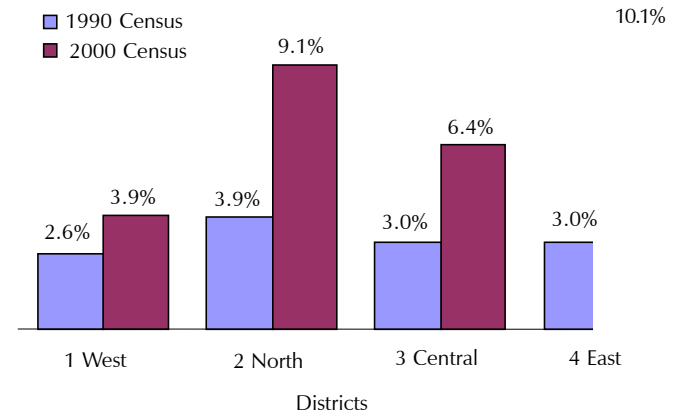
2000 Census Demographics of Multnomah County Citizens by Existing District



Note: Persons of Color does not include the ethnicity Hispanics & Latinos, which account for 7.5% of the total county population

Exhibit 3

Hispanic and Latino Population Across Existing Districts



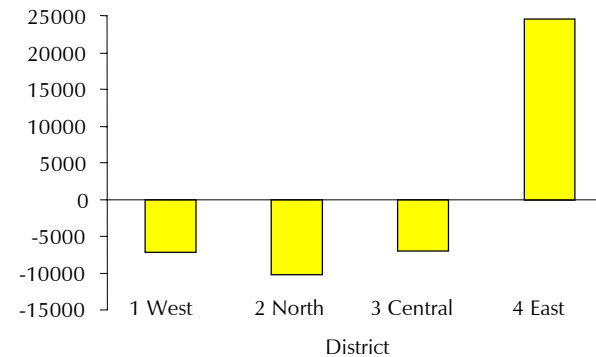
Redistricting Required

Population changes triggered a need for redistricting based on our calculations of the ideal-sized commissioner district of 165,122 persons (the 2000 county population divided by the number of districts). We found population variance ranging from 10,234 under the ideal to 24,492 over. District 4 (East) is 22.4 percent larger than District 2 (North), mandating redistricting under the Home Rule Charter. Exhibits 4 and 5 below display the existing districts, 2000 population, and deviation from the ideal district population.

Exhibit 4
2000 Population in Existing Districts

Commissioner District (representative)	2000 Population
District 1, West (Rojo de Steffey)	157,913
District 2, North (Cruz)	154,888
District 3, Central (Naito)	158,071
District 4, East (Roberts)	189,614

Exhibit 5
Population Variance from Ideal



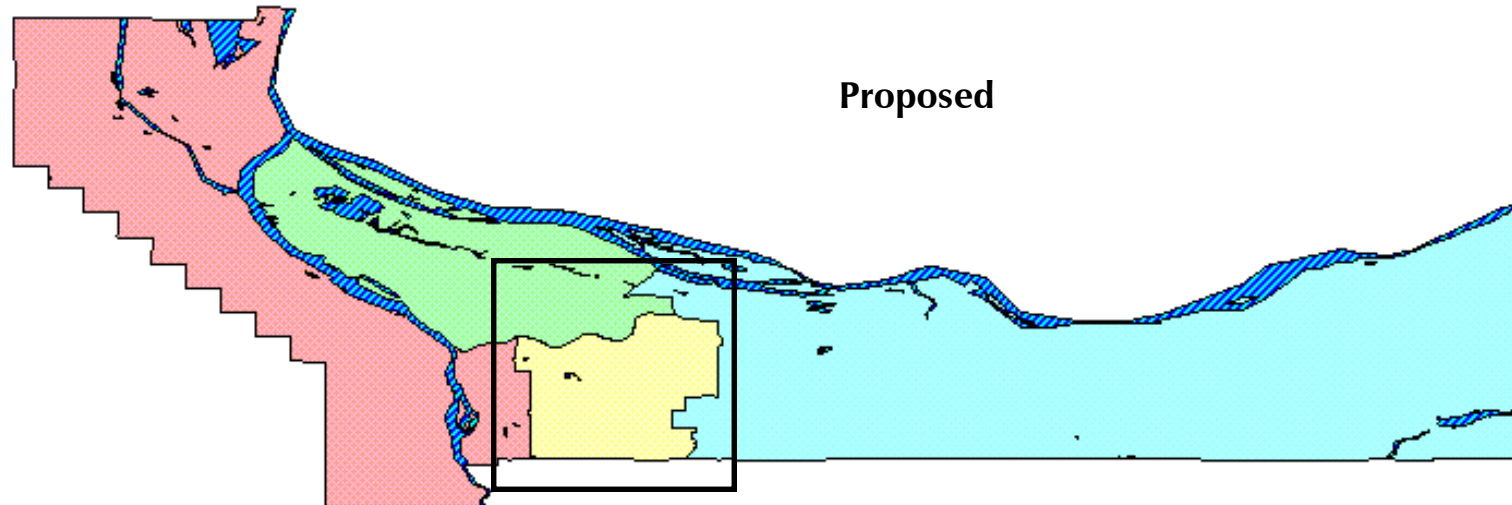
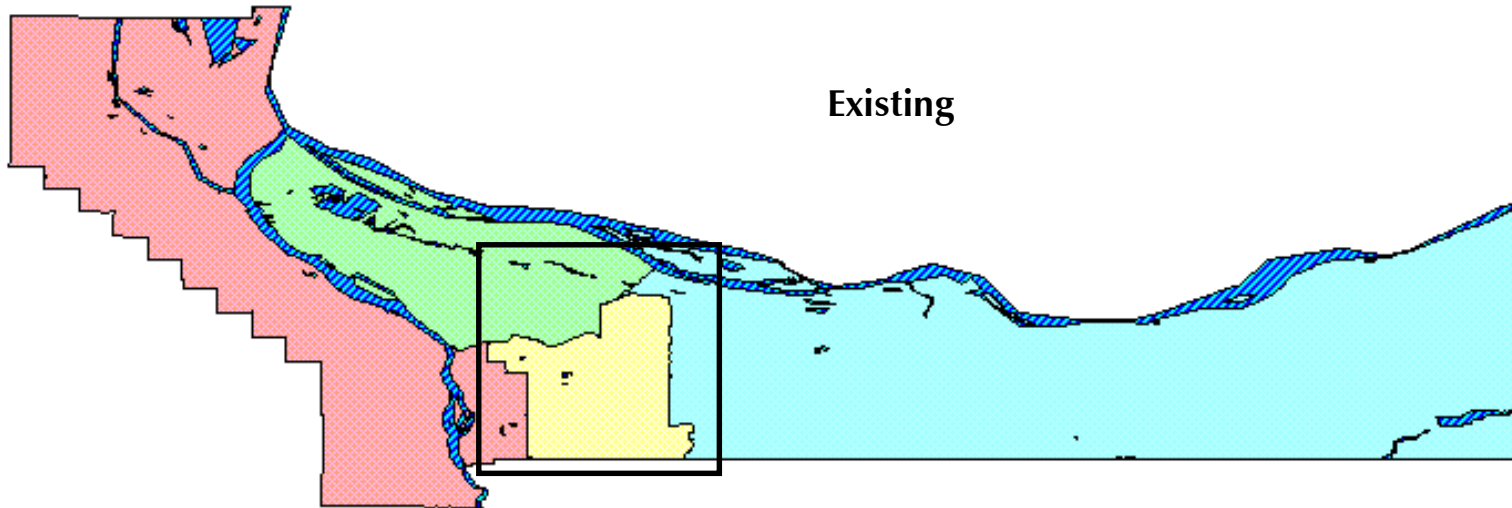
Proposed Redistricting Plan

Exhibit 6 displays the existing and proposed commissioner districts (areas of change are boxed), followed by more detailed maps. We expanded District 1 (West) northeasterly along the Union Pacific Railroad parallel to the Banfield Freeway (I-84) to 33rd Avenue to increase its population. District 2 (North) was expanded along the Union Pacific Railroad parallel to the Banfield Freeway southeasterly to 122nd Avenue. This significantly shifted District 3 (Central) to the east as far as 148th Avenue, stepping south and west to 122nd Avenue. In addition, the northern boundary of District 3 was moved south to follow the Union Pacific Railroad parallel to the Banfield Freeway east, thereby reducing District 4 (East) population. Along the boundary between Districts 1 and 3, we continue much of the existing boundary of 39th Avenue, keeping consistent the number of local street boundaries.

The Appendix contains the proposed common description and census tracts and blocks for each district.

Existing and Proposed Commissioner Districts

Exhibit 6



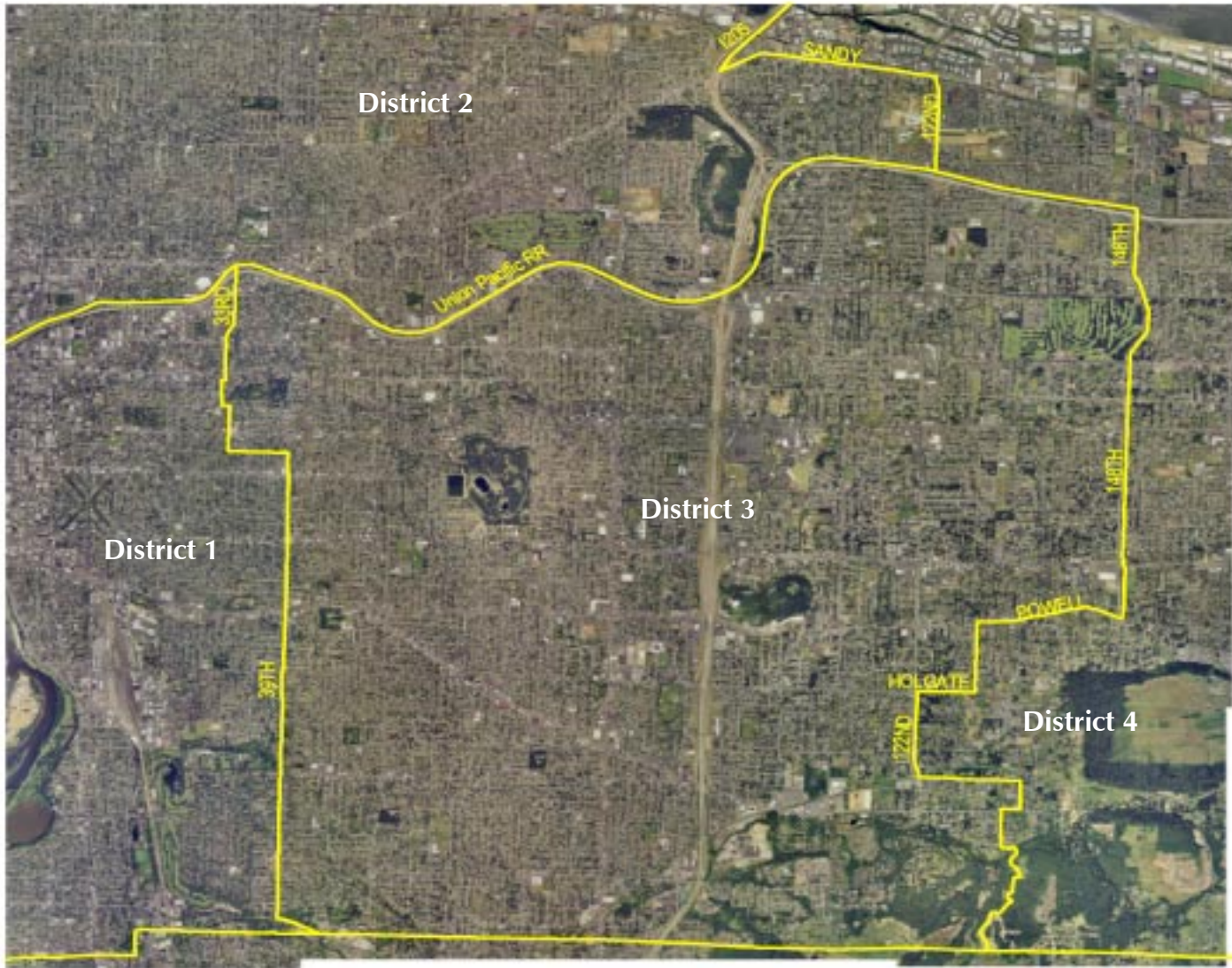
Note: Boxed area represents locations where district boundaries changed



Existing



Multnomah County
Commissioner Districts
Based on 1990 Census



Proposed



The proposed plan meets most of the redistricting guidelines. Occasionally, trade-offs had to be made to balance guidelines not in agreement. For example, devising districts that achieved the mathematically exact ideal populations would result in more boundaries on local streets that would be difficult for citizens to identify. The following sections discuss the proposed plan within the context of each guideline.

Equal Population Distribution. All the districts in the proposed plan vary from the ideal by approximately two-hundredths of one percent—near mathematical equality. The range in deviation is from 30 persons above the ideal to 28 persons below the ideal, for a total range of 58 persons. Any deviation from the exact numerical ideal was a result of balancing other redistricting guidelines. Exhibit 7 shows the populations of the proposed districts.

Exhibit 7

Populations of Proposed Districts

District	2000 Population	Percent of Smallest District	Percent Over (Under) Ideal	Number of Persons Over (Under) Ideal
District 1, West	165,096	100.001%	(0.02%)	(26)
District 2, North	165,152	100.035%	0.02%	30
District 3, Central	165,094	100.000%	(0.02%)	(28)
District 4, East	165,144	100.030%	0.01%	22

Retaining Same General Districts. According to the Charter, we were also required to retain the general geographic characteristics of the existing districts. Under this plan, a total of 41,917 persons, or about six percent of the county population, changes districts. Thus, 94 percent of the population remains in its same district with its current election schedule. This proposal transfers 7,183 persons from District 3 (Central) to District 1 (West), and 10,264 from District 3 (Central) to District 2 (North). Finally, 24,470 persons were shifted from District 4 (East) to District 3 (Central).

Contiguous Districts. All districts are contiguous, with only one district crossing a body of water. District 1 (West) presently crosses the Willamette River, and it is necessary to continue that feature barring major growth in the westside population. Many connecting bridges join the west and east portions of the district.

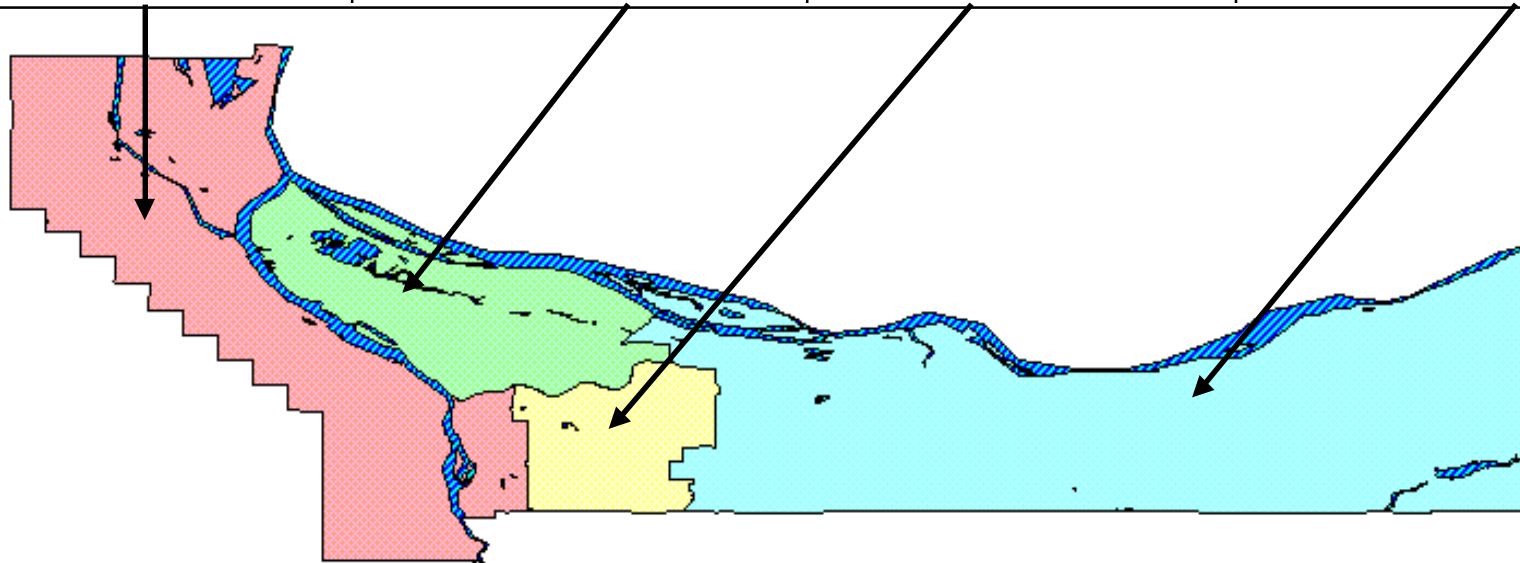
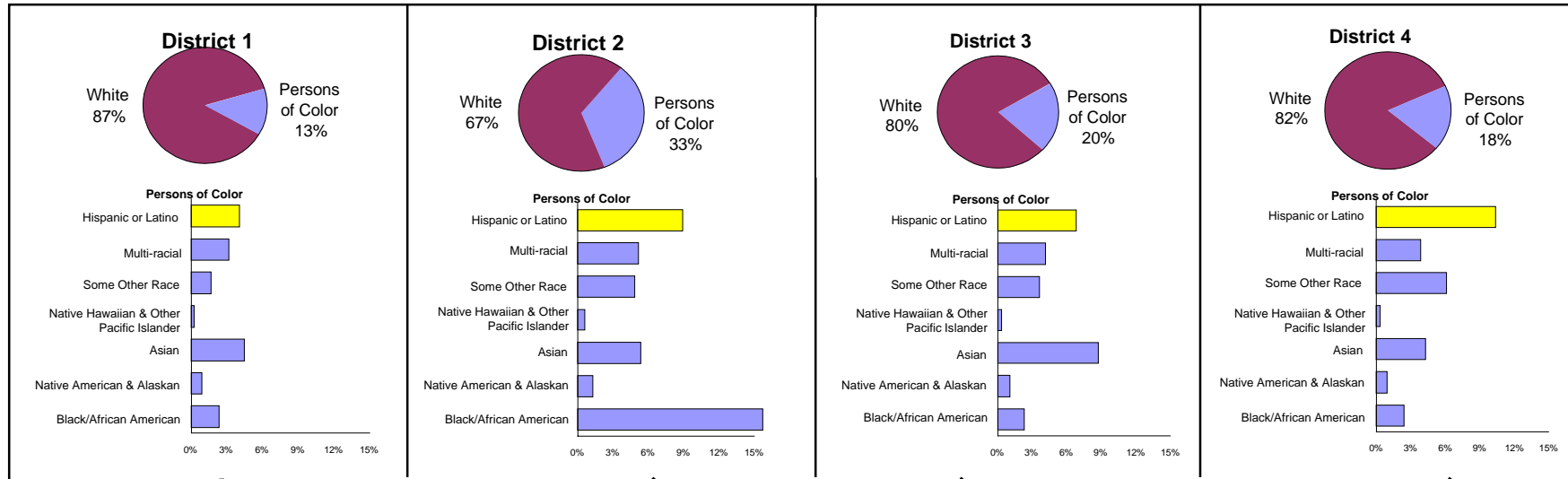
Utilization of Existing Geographic or Political Boundaries. *Oregon Revised Statutes* parallel our own Home Rule Charter mandate of preserving the same general geographic characteristics of the districts. Present boundaries were extended or retained wherever possible to simplify districts and adjust population. For example, 122nd Avenue, 39th Avenue, and the Union Pacific Railroad parallel to the Banfield Freeway follow this guideline. In addition, some prior boundaries were left unchanged while the populations were shifted. Examples of this can be seen at Sandy Boulevard and at 122nd Avenue.

Boundary Simplification. The 1991 redistricting process focused heavily on district boundary simplification, which enabled citizens to better identify and petition their elected representatives. The 1991 plan reduced the number of district boundaries from 137 to 55. Strong consideration was given to retaining simplified district boundaries. This redistricting proposal increases the number of boundaries from 55 to 59.

Avoid Using Boundaries that Could Change. There are no district boundaries defined by city limits that could change as a result of annexations. In addition, no district boundaries were chosen based on school district lines, which may also change as a result of redistricting or growth.

Representation of Language or Ethnic Minorities. *Oregon Revised Statutes* and the *United States Voting Rights Act* prohibit the intentional dilution of the voting strength of any language or ethnic minority group. Of the existing districts, District 2 (North) contains the largest concentration of any census minority group, Black/African-Americans, at 16.4 percent. The proposed redistricting plan keeps that community intact, but adds population because the district was under-populated. However, there are no other census tracts that could be added which contain as high a concentration of Black/African-Americans. As a result the District 2 (North) Black/African-American population decreased to 15.7 percent. The map following (Exhibit 8) shows racial and ethnic comparisons for each proposed district. The breakdowns by census category of existing and proposed commissioner districts are shown in Exhibit 9. Exhibit 9 also includes the ethnicity category "Hispanic or Latino."

Racial and Ethnic Demographics of Proposed Districts



Note: The pie chart section "Persons of Color" does not include Hispanics and Latinos. The Census Bureau designated Hispanics and Latinos as an ethnicity (separate from race) and the percentages for each district are represented in the bar chart above (top bar).

Exhibit 9

Racial Composition of Existing and Proposed Districts

District	Single Race Selection							Multi-racial Existing/Proposed	Hispanic or Latino (any race) Existing/Proposed
	White Existing/Proposed	Black/ African- American Existing/Proposed	Native American or Alaskan Existing/Proposed	Asian/ Asian- American Existing/Proposed	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Existing/Proposed	Other Race Existing/Proposed			
1 West	87.36 / 87.25	2.27 / 2.34	0.87 / 0.89	4.51 / 4.47	0.22 / 0.22	1.63 / 1.67	3.13 / 3.17	3.95 / 4.03	
2 North	66.69 / 67.20	16.39 / 15.68	1.28 / 1.26	4.92 / 5.35	0.60 / 0.59	4.94 / 4.80	5.18 / 5.12	9.14 / 8.89	
3 Central	79.89 / 79.87	2.47 / 2.30	1.03 / 1.05	8.86 / 8.73	0.30 / 0.30	3.30 / 3.59	4.15 / 4.15	6.36 / 6.78	
4 East	81.90 / 82.31	2.40 / 2.35	0.95 / 0.91	4.69 / 4.25	0.29 / 0.29	5.90 / 6.06	3.87 / 3.82	10.11 / 10.34	
Total	79.16%	5.67%	1.03%	5.70%	0.35%	4.03%	4.07%	7.51%	

Representation of Communities of Common Interest. *Oregon Revised Statutes* state that communities of common interest should not be divided. The existing districts recognize the larger communities of interest in Multnomah County. By retaining these same general districts, the proposed redistricting plan complies with this guideline. We spoke with each of the County Commissioners regarding communities of interest in their respective districts. Several communities of interest were identified during this process, and great care was taken to prevent their separation. These were: the City of Maywood Park, the Rockwood District, Gateway District, and the four east county cities of Gresham, Troutdale, Wood Village, and Fairview.

District 1 (West) contains the entire county west of the Willamette River including the downtown area, as well as the area immediately adjacent to, and connected by, many of the county's bridges.

District 2 (North) continues to follow the Union Pacific Railroad parallel to the Banfield Freeway (I-84), instead of crossing this boundary. This major transportation corridor also serves as a dividing line between the neighborhoods on the east side of the Willamette River. Special care was taken not to separate the City of Maywood Park.

District 3 (Central) has shifted east, now incorporating most of the remaining mid-county City of Portland neighborhoods. This consolidates most of the citizens of Portland under three commissioners (West, Central, and North). In addition, we took care not to spilt the Gateway District, as it was identified as a community of interest.

District 4 (East), contains the four cities of Gresham, Troutdale, Wood Village, and Fairview. This district also includes much of the unincorporated population of the County and very little of the City of Portland, which is primarily contained within the other three districts. In addition, the Rockwood District from 162nd Avenue to 201st Avenue and from Glisan Street to Division Street was determined to be a community of interest, and was not split.

By following these larger communities of interest and some major geographic boundaries, the proposed redistricting plan has followed many neighborhood association boundaries. However, because districts must be approximately equal in population and must also retain their general geographic characteristics we could not follow all neighborhood boundaries.

Connection by Transportation Links. This *Oregon Revised Statute* guideline pertains more to legislative districts that contain several counties rather than to the redistricting of a single county. Nevertheless, easy access to all parts of a district is a consideration on the local level. For example, the Willamette River could represent an impediment to transportation between the west and east portions of District 1. However, access between the two portions is relatively easy by means of the Burnside, Morrison, Hawthorne, Marquam, Ross Island, and Sellwood bridges.

Political Considerations. This office did not conduct any research into the voter registration or voting patterns of any area of the county. The redistricting plan was not designed to favor any political party, incumbent legislator, or any other person.

Appendix

District 1, West

Bounded on the north by Columbia County; bounded on the east as follows: Washington State line at the Columbia River, south to the Willamette River, south on the Willamette River to the Union Pacific R.R. at the Steel Bridge, east on the Union Pacific R.R. parallel to the Banfield Freeway (I-84) to 33rd Ave., south on 33rd Ave. becoming 32nd Ave. to Stark St., east on Stark St. to 33rd Ave., south on 33rd Ave. to Salmon St., east on Salmon St. to 39th Ave., south on 39th Ave. and its extension to the Portland Traction R.R. right-of-way (40 Mile Loop Trail), southeast on the Portland Traction R.R. right-of-way to the Clackamas County line; bounded on the south by Clackamas County; and bounded on the west by Washington County. This district consists of the following census tracts, block groups, and blocks:

All of census tracts 1, 2, 9.01, 9.02, 10, 11.01, 11.02, 12.01, 12.02, 13.02, 21, 43, 45, 46.01, 46.02, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60.01, 60.02, 61, 62, 63, 64.01, 64.02, 65.01, 65.02, 66.01, 66.02, 67.01, 67.02, 68.01, 68.02, 69, 70, 71; and those portions of census tracts as follows: tract 3.01, block group 1 consisting of blocks 2-7 and 12-17, block group 2 consisting of blocks 1, 2, 4, 10-24, and 999, and all of block group 3; tract 3.02, block group 4 consisting of blocks 1-30 and 36, and all of block groups 5, 6, and 7; tract 13.01, block group 2 consisting of blocks 8-18, block group 3 consisting of blocks 2-7 and 9-20, and block group 4 consisting of blocks 2-5 and 11-16; and tract 20 block groups 1, 2, 4, 5, and portions of block group 3 consisting of blocks 0 and 13.

District 2, North

Bounded on the north by the Washington State line at the Columbia River; bounded on the east and south as follows: beginning at the Washington State line at the Columbia River at a point west of Government Island (coinciding with the northwestern boundary of census tract 102), southeast along the south channel of the Columbia River to the I-205 Freeway, south on the I-205 Freeway to Sandy Blvd., northeast and east on Sandy Blvd. to 122nd Ave., south on 122nd Ave. to the Union Pacific R.R., west along the Union Pacific R.R. parallel to the Banfield Freeway (I-84) to the Willamette River at the Steel Bridge; bounded on the west by the Willamette River. This district consists of the following census tracts, block groups, and blocks:

All of census tracts 22.01, 22.02, 23.01, 23.02, 24.01, 24.02, 25.01, 25.02, 26, 27.01, 27.02, 28.01, 28.02, 29.01, 29.02, 29.03, 30, 31, 32, 33.01, 33.02, 34.01, 34.02, 35.01, 35.02, 36.01, 36.02, 36.03, 37.01, 37.02, 38.01, 38.02, 38.03, 39.01, 39.02, 40.01, 40.02, 41.01, 41.02, 42, 44, 72.01, 72.02, 74, 75, 76, 78; and those portions of census tracts as follows: tract 73 block group 1 consisting of blocks 3-13, 25-71, and 991-997; tract 77 block group 1 consisting of blocks 3-30 and all of block group 2; tract 79 block group 1 consisting of blocks 4-21 and all of block group 2; and tract 95.02 block group 3 consisting of blocks 4-6.

District 3, Central

Bounded on the north and east as follows: beginning at the intersection of 33rd Ave. and the Union Pacific R.R. parallel to the Banfield Freeway (I-84), east along the Union Pacific R.R. parallel to the Banfield Freeway (I-84) to 148th Ave., south on 148th Ave. to Powell Blvd., west on Powell Blvd. to 130th Ave., south on 130th Ave. to Holgate Blvd., west on Holgate Blvd. to 122nd Ave., south on 122nd Ave. to Ramona St., east on Ramona St. to 136th Ave., south on 136th Ave. to Foster Rd., west on Foster Rd. to 134th Ave., south on 134th Ave. to Deardorff Rd., south on Deardorff Rd. to the Clackamas County line; bounded on the south by Clackamas County; bounded on the west as follows: beginning at the Clackamas County line and the Portland Traction R.R. right-of-way (40 Mile Loop Trail) near Johnson Creek Blvd. and 45th Pl., northwest along the Portland Traction R.R. right-of-way to the extension of 39th Ave. and 39th Ave. continuing north on 45th Ave. to Salmon St., west on Salmon St. to 33rd Ave., north on 33rd Ave. to Stark St., west on Stark St. to 32nd Ave., north on 32nd Ave. becoming 33rd Ave. to the Union Pacific R.R. parallel to the Banfield Freeway (I-84). This district consists of the following census tracts, block groups, and blocks:

All of census tracts 4.01, 4.02, 5.01, 5.02, 6.01, 6.02, 7.01, 7.02, 8.01, 8.02, 14, 15, 16.01, 16.02, 17.01, 17.02, 18.01, 18.02, 19, 80.01, 80.02, 81, 82.01, 82.02, 83.01, 83.02, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89.02, 92.01, 92.02, 93.02; and those portions of census tracts as follows: tract 3.01 block group 1 consisting of blocks 0, 1, 8-11, 18, and 19, block group 2 consisting of blocks 0, 3, and 5-9; tract 3.02 block groups 1, 2, 3, and portions of 4 consisting of blocks 0, 31-35, and 37 ; tract 13.01 block group 1, portions of block group 2 consisting of blocks 0-7, portions of block group 3 consisting of blocks 0, 1, and 8, and portions of block group 4 consisting of blocks 0, 1, 6-10, and 17-20; tract 20 portions of block group 3 consisting of blocks 0 and 13; tract 89.01 portions of block group 2 consisting of blocks 3-11 and all of block group 3; tract 90 portions of block group 1 consisting of blocks 2-6 and portions of block group 2 consisting of block 13, and portions of block group 3; consisting of blocks 0-3; tract 91.01 consisting of portions of block group 2; tract 94 consisting of portions of block group 1, block 26 and all of block groups 2, 3, and 4.

District 4, East

Bounded on the north at the Washington State line at the Columbia River; bounded on the east by Hood River County; bounded on the south by Clackamas County; and bounded on the west as follows: beginning at the intersection of the Clackamas County line and Deardorff Rd., north on Deardorff Rd. to 134th Ave., north on 134th Ave. to Foster Rd., east on Foster Rd. to 136th Ave., north on 136th Ave. to Ramona St., west on Ramona St. to 122nd Ave., north on 122nd Ave. to Holgate Blvd., east on Holgate Blvd. to 130th Ave., north on 130th Ave. to Powell Blvd., east on Powell Blvd. to 148th Ave., north on 148th Ave. to the Union Pacific R.R. parallel to the Banfield Freeway (I-84), west along the Union Pacific R.R. parallel to the Banfield Freeway (I-84) to 122nd Ave., north on 122nd Ave.

to Sandy Blvd., west and southwest on Sandy Blvd. to the I-205 Freeway, north on the I-205 Freeway to the south channel of the Columbia River, northwest along the south channel of the Columbia River to the Washington State line at a point west of Government Island. This district consists of the following census tracts, block groups, and blocks:

All of census tracts 91.02, 93.01, 95.01, 96.03, 96.04, 96.05, 96.06, 97.01, 97.02, 98.01, 98.03, 98.04, 99.01, 99.02, 99.03, 100.01, 100.02, 101, 102, 103.03, 103.04, 103.05, 103.06, 104.02, 104.05, 104.06, 104.07, 104.08, 104.09, and 105; and those portions of census tracts as follows: tract 73 consisting of portions of block group 1, blocks 0-2, 14-24, 72-110, 989, 990, 998 and 999; tract 77 consisting of portions of block group 1, blocks 0-2 and 31-32; 79 consisting of portions of block group 1, blocks 0-3; 89.01 block group 1, and consisting of portions of block group 2, blocks 0-2; tract 90 consisting of portions of block group 1, blocks 0-1 and 7-11, portions of block group 2, blocks 0-12 and 14-16; tract 91.01 block group 1; tract 94 portions of block group 1, blocks 0-25; and tract 95.02 block groups 1, 2, and portions of block group 3, blocks 0-3 and 7-16.